



Service of Lament – November 27, 2022  
Little Trinity Church

For our Service of Lament on November 27th you are being asked to prepare a document in which you can name your losses. The key elements of your document would be to respond to three questions: **What have you lost? How are you experiencing the loss? And How can you pray your loss?**

**What have you lost?**

Certainly, if a loved one has died, you would be quite clear about your loss and how the pandemic complicated the mourning process. But we have experienced many other losses during this time: the loss of financial security; diminished health, particularly with protracted illnesses like long COVID, but also with the reduction of access to our health care system for other aspects of our physical health; work-related stresses, especially health care and other front line workers; alienation from family and friends, either because of forced physical isolation, or because of the breakdown of the relationship; the loss of classroom collegiality for grade school, secondary and post-secondary students; the loss of in-person milestones such as proms, graduations, baptisms and weddings; the loss of access to the leisure and recreational activities that were integral to the maintenance of our physical and mental health; the painful isolation of lockdowns for those already alone and lonely; the death of a pet at a time when their love and companionship were so important; and the loss of possibilities and opportunities, things that might have been that now cannot be. You are invited to name your losses as you reflect on the last two and a half years, even if it may seem relatively insignificant to you.

**How are you experiencing that loss?**

To the best of your ability, express what that which you have lost has meant to you; how you have felt and are feeling because of your loss; how your life is different since your loss; and do you see a way forward yet? Do not be distressed if the answer to this last question is “no.” Often it takes time, sometimes a lot of time, for a way forward to be seen. So be patient with yourself and the process - and with the grief of others.

During our service on the 27th you will have the opportunity to bring your document up to place it on the communion table as an act of surrender or relinquishment of your loss to God. Because this represents surrendering it to God, it will not be returned to you after the service. Rather, all the documents will be gathered up at the end of the service, taken outside and burned as an act of sacrifice and an offering of our prayers to God (see Revelation 8:4). This is not meant to suggest that the grieving process is finished; that is very unlikely.

It is simply a reminder that we have sought to relinquish this loss into God’s hands. Mourning - and relinquishing - are a process, elements of which will have to be repeated over and over again during our grief journey.

November 27th is also the first Sunday of Advent so the lighting of the first candle of the Advent wreath, the hope candle, will be an important part of our service, because when we as Christians mourn, we do so in a way that makes room for hope.

**How can you pray your loss?**

If you are able, turn this into a prayer to God. Tell God what you’ve lost and how you are experiencing it. There is no need for poetic words, but there is for honesty and authenticity. Remember the honesty and authenticity of the Psalmists. Pray your hurt, anger, disappointment. Angry words are far more valuable than cold silence toward God. So be bold.



What have you lost?



How are you experiencing that loss?

Write out a short prayer to God (a phrase or a few sentences), entrusting yourself and your griefs to Him:

