



## Blue Christmas Service

Wednesday, December 8, 2021 6:00 PM

### Welcome

*As you enter this space you are invited to come forward to light a candle in honor of those who we see no longer.*

### A Time of Silence

*Welcome to this Blue Christmas service, a time when we can, as a community, acknowledge the sadness we feel at Christmas time. This time of the year is marked with longer nights and shorter days when memories of past experiences and the pain of present reality can become overwhelming. Recognizing that this is not a season of joy for everyone, in this service we will be invited to reflect on the darkness, pain, loneliness, and the sorrow we may feel and offer it all to our great sign of hope, the Holy Child of Bethlehem. We pray that all of us will find hope and comfort in knowing that we are not alone.*

### Prelude

### Opening Song

1. I wonder as I wander out under the sky,  
How Jesus the Savior did come for to die.  
For poor on'ry people like you and like I...  
I wonder as I wander out under the sky.
2. When Mary birthed Jesus 'twas in a cow's stall,  
With wise men and farmers and shepherds and all.  
But high from God's heaven a star's light did fall,  
And the promise of ages it then did recall.
3. If Jesus had wanted for any wee thing,  
A star in the sky, or a bird on the wing,  
Or all of God's angels in heav'n for to sing,  
He surely could have it, 'cause he was the King.

### The Gathering of the People

**Celebrant:** Light and peace, in Jesus Christ, our Lord.  
**People:** **Thanks be to God.**



**“I Wonder as I Wander”**

*Celebrant:* If I say, “Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night,” darkness is not dark to you, O Lord; the night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to you are both alike.  
*Psalm 139:10-11*

### **Collect for Advent**

*Celebrant:* Let us pray.

Almighty God, give us grace to cast away the works of darkness, and put on the armor of light, now in the time of this mortal life in which your Son Jesus Christ came to visit us in great humility; that in the last day, when he shall come again in his glorious majesty to judge both the living and the dead, we may rise to the life immortal; through him who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever. **Amen.**

### **The Readings**

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah. **(9:2-7)**

The people who walked in darkness  
have seen a great light;  
those who lived in a land of deep darkness—  
on them light has shined.  
You have multiplied the nation,  
you have increased its joy;  
they rejoice before you  
as with joy at the harvest,  
as people exult when dividing plunder.  
For the yoke of their burden,  
and the bar across their shoulders,  
the rod of their oppressor,  
you have broken as on the day of Midian.  
For all the boots of the tramping warriors  
and all the garments rolled in blood  
shall be burned as fuel for the fire.  
For a child has been born for us,  
a son given to us;  
authority rests upon his shoulders;  
and he is named  
Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God,  
Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.  
His authority shall grow continually,  
and there shall be endless peace  
for the throne of David and his kingdom.  
He will establish and uphold it  
with justice and with righteousness  
from this time onward and forevermore.  
The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Psalm 121

I lift up my eyes to the hills; \*  
from where is my help to come?  
My help comes from the Lord, \*  
the maker of heaven and earth.  
He will not let your foot be moved \*  
and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.  
Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel \*  
shall neither slumber nor sleep;  
The Lord himself watches over you; \*  
the Lord is your shade at your right hand,  
So that the sun shall not strike you by day, \*  
nor the moon by night.  
The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; \*  
it is he who shall keep you safe.  
The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in, \*  
from this time forth for evermore.

*People*      **Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now,  
and will be for ever. Amen.**

Sequence Hymn:    *“Coventry Carol”*

Hymn #247

Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child, Bye bye, lully, lullay.  
Lully, lullay, thou little tiny child, Bye bye, lully, lullay.

**The Gospel**

*Deacon*      The Holy Gospel of Our Lord Jesus Christ According to Luke. (2:8-20)

*People*      **Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, ‘Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.’ And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, ‘Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!’ When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, ‘Let us go now to Bethlehem and see this thing that has taken place, which the Lord has made known to us.’ So they went with haste and found Mary and Joseph, and the child lying in the manger. When they saw this, they made known what had been told them about this child; and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds told them. But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all they had heard and seen, as it had been told them.

*Deacon*      The Gospel of the Lord.

*People*      **Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

**Sequence Hymn** *(continued)*

That woe is me, poor child, for thee And ever mourn and day  
For thy parting neither say nor sing, "Bye bye, lully, lullay."

**Sermon**        The Rev. Matt Holcombe

**Meditation**        *"Winter Song"*

by Sarah Bareilles and Ingrid Michaelson  
Sung by Amalia Dobbins

**Prayers of the People**

*Reader*            God, our loving creator,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            God, the Son who came to save us from the brokenness of death,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            God, the Holy Spirit who is present in our midst,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When grief surrounds us,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When sorrow overwhelms,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When we are weary and in need of strength,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When we feel lost and sick at heart,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When we don't know what to say or how to pray,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When we do not have any answers,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            When we are in need of comfort and consolation,

**People**            **Be with us.**

*Reader*            God, we come to you as Christmas dawns with pain growing inside us. As the nights have been growing longer, so has the darkness wrapped itself around our hearts. In this season of our longest nights, we offer to you the pain in our hearts, the traumas that some of us cannot put into words.

*People*            Loving God, hear our prayer,  
**And in your merciful love, answer.**

*Reader*            Compassionate God, there are those among us who are grieving over what might have been. A death or loss has changed our experience of Christmas. Once it was a special day for us too, but someone has died or moved away. Or we have lost a job, or a cause. We find ourselves adrift, alone, lost. Lord help us find our way.

*People*            Loving God, hear our prayer,  
**And in your merciful love, answer.**

*Reader*            The Christmas season reminds us of all that used to be and cannot be anymore. The memories of what was, the fears of what may be, stifle us. All around us we hear the sounds of celebration. But all we experience is a sense of feeling blue. Please be near us this night.

**People** Loving God, hear our prayer,  
**And in your merciful love, answer.**

*Reader* I invite you to now offer your own prayers and thanksgivings.

*Silence*

Gathering all of these prayers, Lord Christ, we ask that you be near and close to use this night.  
Comfort us with your presence in this season.

**Peace** May the peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**And also with you.**

## Announcements

**Offertory Hymn:** “O come, o come, Emmanuel”

Hymn #56

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel!*

5. O come, thou Key of David, come,  
and open wide our heavenly home;  
make safe the way that leads on high,  
and close the path to misery.

*Refrain*

6. O come, thou Dayspring from on high,  
and cheer us by thy drawing nigh;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death’s dark shadow put to flight.

*Refrain*

## The Great Thanksgiving Prayer 2

Enriching Our Worship

*Celebrant* All things come of thee O Lord.  
**People** **And of thine own have we given thee.**

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

**People** **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

**People** **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People** **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*Celebrant* We praise you and we bless you, holy and gracious God, source of life abundant.

From before time you made ready the creation. Your Spirit moved over the deep and brought all things into being: sun, moon, and stars; earth, winds, and waters; and every living thing.

You made us in your image, and taught us to walk in your ways. But we rebelled against you, and wandered far away; and yet, as a mother cares for her children, you would not forget us.

Time and again you called us to live in the fullness of your love. And so this day we join with Saints and Angels in the chorus of praise that rings through eternity, lifting our voices to magnify you as we say

*People*

**Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.  
Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

*Celebrant*

Glory and honor and praise to you, holy and living God.  
To deliver us from the power of sin and death and to reveal the riches of your grace, you looked with favor upon Mary, your willing servant, that she might conceive and bear a son, Jesus the holy child of God.

Living among us, Jesus loved us. He broke bread with outcasts and sinners, healed the sick, and proclaimed good news to the poor. He yearned to draw all the world to himself yet we were heedless of his call to walk in love.

Then the time came for him to complete upon the cross the sacrifice of his life, and to be glorified by you. On the night before he died for us, Jesus was at table with his friends. He took bread, gave thanks to you, broke it, and gave it to them, and said: "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

As supper was ending, Jesus took the cup of wine. Again he gave thanks to you, gave it to them, and said: "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is poured out for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Now gathered at your table, O God of all creation, and remembering Christ crucified and risen, who was and is and is to come, we offer to you our gifts of bread and wine, and ourselves, a living sacrifice.

Pour out your Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Body and blood of Christ. Breathe your Spirit over the whole earth and make us your new creation, the Body of Christ given for the world you have made.

In the fullness of time bring us, with St. Michael and all your saints, from every tribe and language and people and nation, to feast at the banquet prepared from the foundation of the world.

Through Christ and with Christ and in Christ, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, to you be honor, glory, and praise, for ever and ever. **Amen.**

*Celebrant* And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

## The Lord's Prayer

The Book of Common Prayer Pg. 364

**Our Father, who art in heaven,  
hallowed be thy Name,  
thy kingdom come,  
thy will be done,  
on earth as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our trespasses,  
as we forgive those  
who trespass against us.  
And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.  
For thine is the kingdom,  
and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.**

## Breaking of the Bread

Enriching Our Worship

*The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.*

*Celebrant* This is the true bread which comes down from heaven and gives life to the world.

**People** **Whoever eats this bread will live for ever.**

*Celebrant* The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

## Communion Hymn: "What Child is This"

Hymn #115

1. What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?  
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet, while shepherds watch are keeping?  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.
2. Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding:  
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here, the silent Word is pleading.  
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.
3. So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh, come, peasant, king, to own him:  
The King of kings salvation brings, let loving hearts enthrone him.  
This, this is Christ he King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;  
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary.

## Post Communion Prayer

Enriching Our Worship

**Loving God,  
we give you thanks  
for restoring us in your image  
and nourishing us with spiritual food**

**in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood.  
Now send us forth  
a people, forgiven, healed, renewed;  
that we may proclaim your love to the world  
and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.**

### **Final Blessing**

*Celebrant*      May the babe of Bethlehem bring you peace.  
                      May the child of Nazareth bring you joy.  
                      May the man of Galilee bring you strength.  
                      May the Christ of Calvary bring you courage.  
                      May the risen Jesus bring you hope.  
                      May the ascended Christ a foretaste of his heavenly glory.  
                      And may the Blessing of God the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be with you and live in you,  
                      forever and ever. **Amen.**

**Closing Hymn:**      *"Silent night, holy night"*

Hymn #111

1.    Silent night, holy night,  
      all is calm, all is bright  
      round yon virgin mother and child.  
      Holy infant, so tender and mild,  
      sleep in heavenly peace.
  
2.    Silent night, holy night,  
      shepherds quake at the sight,  
      glories stream from heaven afar,  
      heavenly hosts sing alleluia;  
      Christ, the Savior, is born!
  
3.    Silent night, holy night,  
      Son of God, love's pure light  
      radiant beams from thy holy face,  
      with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
      Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

### **Dismissal**

*Deacon*            May the hope of the Christ Child sustain us through this darkness.  
*People*            **That together we may shine again. Amen.**

**Postlude**        "Winter – Largo" from *The Four Seasons*

Antonio Vivaldi

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