

TRINITY EPISCOPAL CHURCH

BLUE CHRISTMAS: A SERVICE OF REMEMBRANCE AND HOPE

DECEMBER 17, 2021

7:00 PM



A PLACE OF WELCOME, HOPE & HEALING

120 Sigourney Street, Hartford, Connecticut 06105-2796
860.527.8133 www.trinityhartford.org

Welcome!
Whether this is your first time at Trinity, your first time in a long time,
or if you've been here before,
we are delighted that you are worshiping with us.

WELCOME TO OUR GUESTS If you are new to Trinity, we hope that you will introduce yourself and sign one of the guest books at either entrance to the Church. Restrooms are located in two places. Exit through the rear doors of the Sanctuary and go to your right. The white doors on your left are the restrooms. Restrooms can also be found if you exit the door at the front right of the Sanctuary and go down the hall toward the exit to the parking lot. The restrooms are on your right once you pass the fireplace.

MASK POLICY Masks at indoor services are now required for those who are vaccinated and non-vaccinated.

NAMETAGS In order to make it easier for us to get to know each other, we ask everyone to wear a nametag. If you do not have a reusable nametag, there are stickers and markers at each entrance. If you would like to have a reusable nametag made for you, please print your name on the clipboard next to the trays of reusable nametags.

ABOUT OUR WORSHIP Most of the worship service is printed in this leaflet. Music that is not printed in the leaflet can be found in *The Hymnal 1982* (the red book on the shelf under the chair in front of you) or in *Lift Every Voice and Sing II* (the red, black, and green book found on a cart at each entrance). We stand, if able, for the hymns and stand or kneel, according to one's personal tradition, for prayer.

Welcome to Blue Christmas: A Service of Remembrance and Hope. This is a time when we can, with others, acknowledge the difficult feelings we have at Christmas time, the reasons for them, and offer them to God. For some, Christmas Day is the most difficult; for others, Christmas Eve, or New Year's Eve, or the beginning of another lonely New Year. Whatever memories of past experiences and pain of present experiences you may be carrying, we pray that you will find hope and comfort in knowing that you are not alone and that Emmanuel, God with us, is near.

PRELUDE

Silent Night

Franz Gruber, arr. Mark Hayes (b. 1952)

THE LITURGY OF THE WORD

WELCOME

The Rev. D. Littlepage

Presider

Praised are you, Lord our God, Ruler of the universe whose word brings the evening dusk. You open the gates of dawn with wisdom, change the day's divisions with understanding, set the succession of seasons and arrange the stars in the sky according to your will. You create day and night, rolling light away from darkness and darkness away from light. Eternal God, your rule shall embrace us forever. Praised are you, Sovereign God, for each evening's dusk. (An Evening Prayer from "Siddur sim Shalom" The Prayerbook of Conservative Judaism in the US.)

People

Amen.

GATHERING HYMN

The King Shall Come When Morning Dawns

1982 Hymnal #73

The musical score is written for a four-part choir (Soprano, Alto, Tenor, Bass) and piano accompaniment. It consists of three systems of music. Each system has a vocal line with five staves (one for each voice part) and a piano accompaniment line with two staves (treble and bass clef). The key signature is one sharp (F#), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are printed below the vocal staves.

1 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns and
 2 Not, as of old, a lit - tle child, to
 3 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns and
 4 and let the end - less bliss be - gin, by
 5 The King shall come when morn - ing dawns and

1 light tri - um - phant breaks; when beau - ty gilds the
 2 bear, and fight, and die, but crowned with glo - ry
 3 earth's dark night is past; O haste the ris - ing
 4 wear - y saints fore - told, when right shall tri - umph
 5 light and beau - ty brings: Hail, Christ the Lord! Thy

1 east - ern hills and life to joy a - wakes.
 2 like the sun that lights the morn - ing sky.
 3 of that morn, the day that e'er shall last;
 4 o - ver wrong, and truth shall be ex - tolled.
 5 peo - ple pray, come quick - ly, King of kings.

Presider The Lord be with you.
People *And also with you.*

Presider Let us pray.
God of Mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent Season for ourselves and our families who live with painful experiences of loss. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of Christ who entered the world at Christmas to share our life in sorrow and joy, death and new birth, despair and promise.

All Amen.

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 9:2-7

A Reading from the Prophet Isaiah

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 Counsellor, 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 onwards and for evermore.
The zeal of the LORD of hosts will do this.

Reader Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.
People *Thanks be to God.*

- 1 Out of the depths have I called to you, O LORD; LORD, hear my voice; *
let your ears consider well the voice of my supplication.
- 2 If you, LORD, were to note what is done amiss, *
O LORD, who could stand?
- 3 For there is forgiveness with you; *
therefore you shall be feared.
- 4 I wait for the LORD; my soul waits for him; *
in his word is my hope.
- 5 My soul waits for the LORD, more than watchmen for the morning, *
more than watchmen for the morning.
- 6 O Israel, wait for the LORD, *
for with the LORD there is mercy;
- 7 With him there is plenteous redemption, *
and he shall redeem Israel from all their sins.

A reading from Dom Helder Camara

In the middle of the night, when stark night was darkest, then you chose to come. God's resplendent first-born sent to make us one. The voices of doom protest: "All these words about justice, love and peace—all these naïve words will buckle beneath the weight of a reality which is brutal and bitter, ever more bitter." It is true, Lord, it is midnight upon the earth, moonless night and starved of stars. But can we forget that You, the son of God, chose to be born precisely at midnight?

Reader Here ends the reading.

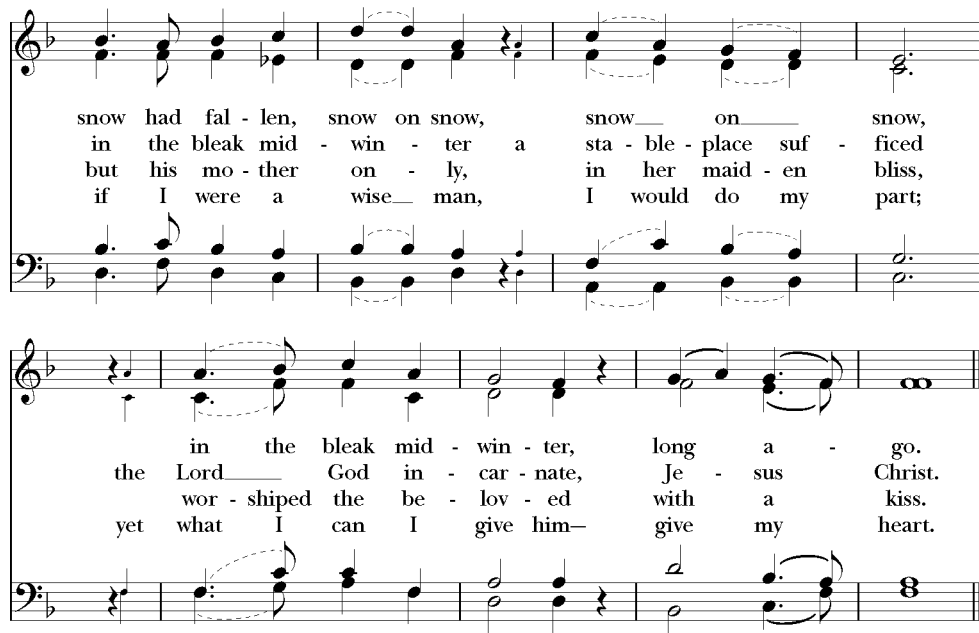
SEQUENCE HYMN

In the Bleak Midwinter

1982 Hymnal #112

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor — earth sus - tain;
 3 An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there,
 4 What — can I give him, poor — as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heaven and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign:
 cher - u - bim and se - ra - phim throng - ed the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;



Words: Christina Rossetti (1830-1894) Music: Cranham, Gustav Theodore Holst (1874-1934)

THE HOLY GOSPEL

John 1: 1-18

Presider The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to John.

People *Glory to you, Lord Christ.*

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

There was a man sent from God, whose name was John. He came as a witness to testify to the light, so that all might believe through him. He himself was not the light, but he came to testify to the light. The true light, which enlightens everyone, was coming into the world.

He was in the world, and the world came into being through him; yet the world did not know him. He came to what was his own, and his own people did not accept him. But to all who received him, who believed in his name, he gave power to become children of God, who were born, not of blood or of the will of the flesh or of the will of man, but of God.

And the Word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory as of a father's only son, full of grace and truth. (John testified to him and cried out, "This was he of whom I said, "He who comes after me ranks ahead of me because he was before me." ') From his fullness we have all received, grace upon grace. The law indeed was given through Moses; grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No one has ever seen God. It is God the only Son, who is close to the Father's heart, who has made him known.

Presider The Gospel of the Lord.

People *Praise to you, Lord Christ.*

Please be seated.

HOMILY

The Rev. D. Littlepage

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE WITH CANDLE LIGHTING

Leader We light this candle confident that God will redeem our pain of loss: loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, loss of joy, loss of a sense of normalcy. I invite your own prayers, silently or aloud. *(Pause)*

We gather the pain of the past into our wounded hearts and open hands, and offer it to you, O God, asking that you take it, and then, into our empty, open hands, place the gift of peace.

People *We remember that through You all things are possible. Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into your future.*

*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.*

Leader We light this candle to remember those persons whom we have loved and see no longer. We pause to remember individual names, faces, voices, their bodies. I invite your own prayers, silently or aloud. *(Pause)*

We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us in this season in which we anticipate Christmas.

People *We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.*

*O come thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Leader We light this candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and for some of us, years that have been heavy with our burdens. *(Pause for Silent Prayer)*

We remember and lay before you the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, the anger, and pain.

People *Let us remember that weeping may endure for the night, but joy comes in the morning.*

*O come thou day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by thy advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Leader We light this candle to remember the gift of faith and hope that God offers us in the Christmas story. We remember that in Jesus, God shares our life completely, and promises us a place and time where there is no pain or grief, forever.

People *Let us remember the One who shows the way, the One who goes with us into all our tomorrows.*

Leader In the spirit of this season, let us now ask God for what we need for ourselves as people coping with loss, pain, suffering, loneliness, grief, or sadness during this season. *Pause for reflection and prayer, either silently or aloud.*

People *God, we come to you as Christmas nears with the 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.*

*O come desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of humankind
Bid then our sad, divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

Leader 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 sounds of celebration that are often hard for us to share. Emmanuel,

People *be with us this night and through this season.*

Presider Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for Your love's sake.

People *Amen.*

THE PEACE

Presider The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People *And also with you.*

OFFERTORY MUSIC Oh Poor Little Jesus
George Chien, Soloist

During the offertory music, you are invited to come forward to take a candle, light it, and place it in the sand. Feel free to name aloud a loved one who you've lost or any other person or situation you're feeling sorrow over or to light your candle(s) in silence.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING: EUCHARISTIC PRAYER 2

Enriching Our Worship (1)

Presider The Lord be with you.

People *And also with you.*

Presider Lift up your hearts.

People *We lift them to the Lord.*

Presider Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

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

Presider 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

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

Presider 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 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.

People Amen.

Presider And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
All 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.

THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD

Presider Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;
People *Therefore let us keep the feast. Alleluia.*

COMMUNION MUSIC Interlude on "Coventry Carol" W.S. Lloyd Webber (1914-1982)

THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Enriching Our Worship

Presider Let us pray.
All 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.

PRAYER FOR A PEACEFUL NIGHT (*said together*)

A New Zealand Prayer Book

Lord it is night.
 The night is for stillness. Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.
 What has been done has been done; What has not been done has not been done.
 Let it be.

The night is dark. Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you.
 The night is quiet.
 Let the quietness of your peace enfold us, all dear to us, and all who have no peace.
 The night heralds the dawn.
 Let us look expectantly to a new day, new joys, new possibilities.
 In your name we pray. Amen.

THE BLESSING

Unison or harmony

1 What child is this, who, laid to rest, on
 2 Why lies he in such mean es - tate where
 3 So bring him in - cense, gold, and myrrh, come,

Ma - ry's lap is sleep - ing? Whom an - gels greet with
 ox and ass are feed - ing? Good Chris - tian, fear: for
 peas - ant, king, to own him; the King of kings sal -

an - thems sweet, while shep - herds watch are keep - ing?
 sin - ners here si - lent Word is plead - ing.
 va - tion brings, let lov - ing hearts en - throne him.

Refrain

This, this is Christ the King, whom shep - herds
 guard and an - gels sing; haste, haste to
 bring him laud, the babe, the son of Ma - ry.

Words: William Chatterton Dix (1837-1898) Music: Greensleeves, English melody; harm. *Christmas Carols New and Old*, 1871



The words of the service are taken from *The Book of Common Prayer*.

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Cover Art: We are grateful to The Rev. George Chien (UMC, MCC) for creating the artwork on the cover.

Upcoming December Events

Saturday, Dec. 18th, 7:00pm - Lessons & Carols

Featuring The Choir School of Hartford and Trinity Episcopal Church Adult Choir, this service is modeled after the traditional service of 9 Lessons and Carols from King's College, with choral anthems responding to each of 9 scripture passages that tell the story of Jesus' birth. Our Lessons & Carols service will highlight under-represented composers and will be a triumphant musical celebration for this most special season.

Friday, Dec. 24th - Christmas Eve

Christmas Eve at Trinity Episcopal Church will include an early service at 5:00pm and a late service at 10:00pm, which will feature the adult choir as well as The Choir School of Hartford singing works by Darke and Joubert, among others. The late service will begin at 9:30pm with an extended prelude of special instrumental and vocal music.

Sunday, Jan. 2nd, 9:00pm - Christmas Compline

Join us for our third monthly service of compline. This late-night service of choral music is held in a darkened sanctuary and will feature Christmas choral works sung in an intimate atmosphere of candles and prayer.