

Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church

6:30 p.m. Worship Service • December 13, 2021

Blue Christmas: A Service of Healing and Wholeness



The intention of the Blue Christmas service is to allow all who are down, mourning a loss, uncertain about the world around them, or simply struggling for any reason to engage in those feelings through prayer and reflection. We hope this will be a deeply meaningful way of connecting with God and owning these feelings.

Welcome members and guests to our worship service today. If you are visiting, we encourage you to sign the guest register located in the narthex. Please include your home address, email address and phone number. In each pew, there is a card that you can fill out if you wish to have a consult with the pastor and/or leave us more information about you. **Worship times on Sunday mornings are 8:30 and 11:00 a.m.**

The nursery is available, however since there are no attendants at this time. Feel free to use it as needed.

Trinity offers an induction loop for the benefit of hearing impaired worshippers. To use, please switch your hearing aid to "T." If you are unsure if your hearing aid is compatible, please contact your audiologist.



The Reverend Tina Melusky, Pastor

Pastor Melusky's office hours:

Monday: 9 - 2; Tuesday: 9 -10:30, 11:30 - 12:15

Wednesday 9:30 - 12; Thursday 9 - 12

(Times are occasionally flexible with monthly meetings,
but feel free to call for an appointment or drop in)

Geoffrey Bell, Director of Music Ministries

Congregation of Trinity Lutheran, Ministers of the Word

6812 River Road, Newport News, VA 23607

Church office: (757) 245-7861; Pastor's cell: (734) 239-4013

www.trinitylutheran-nn.com

Trinity Lutheran is a partner church with Peninsula Pastoral Counseling Center,
THRIVE Peninsula and LINK

Link to Trinity Lutheran School website: <https://trinitynn.com/>

Cover image by JoAnne Rawls.

Prelude

All Is Well

Michael W. Smith; arr. Mark Hayes

*All is well, all is well; angels and men rejoice
For tonight, darkness fell into the dawn of love's light.
Sing alleluia.*

Welcome

(We begin in quiet reflection, seeking to come before God to find peace, comfort and restoration)

Call to Worship

Today we come looking for the Christ child.

We come, bringing our hurts, our worries, our fears.

We come seeking relief from pain. With the psalmist of old we say,

“O Lord, you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living.

Give heed to my cry, for I am brought very low.”

Gathering Hymn

As the Dark Awaits the Dawn

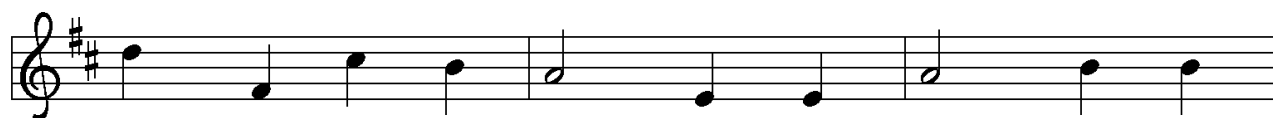
ELW 261



1 As the dark a - waits the dawn,
2 As the blue ex - pec - tant hour
3 As the moon re - flects the sun
4 Shine your fu - ture on this place,



so we a - wait your light. O Star of
be - fore the sil - v'ring skies, we long to
un - til the night's de - crease, may we your
en - light - en ev - 'ry guest, that through us



prom - ise, scat - ter night, lov - ing bright, lov - ing
see your day a - rise, whole and wise, whole and
heal - ing light re - lease, liv - ing peace, liv - ing
stream your ho - li - ness, bright and blest, bright and



bright, till shades of fear are gone.
wise, O lu - cent Morn - ing Star.
peace, un - to your ho - ly dawn.
blest; come dawn, O Sun of grace.

Greeting

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

Prayer of the Day

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shone. For the yoke that was weighing upon them, and the burden upon their shoulders, you have broken in pieces, O God, our Redeemer. Let us pray together:

God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves and for our families who live with painful thoughts and memories. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of your Christ, who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the LORD,
the majesty of our God.
Strengthen the weak hands,
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
"Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you."
Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf unstopped;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness,
and streams in the desert;

the burning sand shall become a pool,
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp,
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.
A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God's people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.
And the ransomed of the LORD shall return,
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Word of God, word of life. **Thanks be to God.**

Psalm: 146 (read responsively)

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help,
whose hope is in the Lord their God;
who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;
who keeps promises forever;
who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.
The Lord sets the captive free.
The Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;
the Lord loves the righteous.
The Lord cares for the stranger;
the Lord sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.
The Lord shall reign forever,
your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

Gospel Acclamation

The musical score is written for two staves, Treble and Bass clef, in the key of D major (one sharp). The lyrics are: "Wait for the Lord, whose day is near." and "Wait for the Lord: be strong, take heart!". The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a final cadence on a whole note.

Gospel Lesson: Matthew 11: 28-30

The Holy Gospel according to St. Matthew, the 11th chapter.

Glory to you, O Lord.

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

The Gospel of the Lord.

Praise to you, O Christ.

The assembly is seated.

Homily

Pastor Tina

Silence is kept for reflection after the sermon.

A Liturgy of Remembrance with Candle Lighting

The assembly is seated.

First Candle

The first candle we light to remember those persons whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names their voices, their faces, the memories that bind them to us in this season. We hold them before God, giving thanks for their lives in ours. Let us pray:

Lord, we lift up our loved ones to you. We give thanks for the gift of resurrection and the promise that our loved ones are resting in your eternal care. Thank you for the gift each of these people has been in our lives. We pray that on the days that are

hard, you fill us with strength and hope for the journey, on the days that are easier, may you walk with us, guiding our steps. Help us to find joy in the people, and events and the beauty of nature which surrounds us. May we at all times feel your comforting presence surrounding us. Amen.

Hymn:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v.1)

ELW 257

**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 you, O Israel.**

Second Candle

The second candle we light is to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs and the security they bring, the loss of health in ourselves or in family members, the loss of joy and peace in our lives from the stresses which surround us, the loss and loneliness we experience when the world feels heavy. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands you will place the gift of peace. Let us pray:

God of mystery, we turn our hearts to you. We come before you in need of peace, grateful for the mystery of life and ever keenly aware of your promises of guidance and protection. We want to place our trust in you, but our hearts grow fearful and anxious. We forget so easily that you will be with us in all that we experience. Teach us to be patient with the transformation of our lives and to be open when change comes into our lives. Amen.

Hymn:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 2)

ELW 257

**O come, O Wisdom from on high,
embracing all things far and nigh:
in strength and beauty come and stay;
Teach us your will and guide our way.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

Third Candle

The third candle we light for those who experience a loss of direction in their lives. We want so much to have a sense of direction, to know where we are and where we ought to be headed. But the darkness and the questions stay. You ask us to be full of faith, to believe deep within that you are our signpost, that you are our wisdom and our guide, and to trust in your presence. Your words to us are clear: "Do not fear, I go before you." Let us pray:

God of our depths, we ask you to be our guide. Help us to have a strong sense of inner direction and grant that we may have the reassurance of knowing that we are on the right path. Take our lives and use them according to your will. Take all that is lost in us and bring it home with you. Amen.

Hymn:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 6)

ELW 257

**O come, O Dayspring, come and cheer;
O Sun of justice, now draw near.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night
And death's dark shadow put to flight.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

Fourth Candle

The fourth candle we light as a sign of hope, the hope that the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises to come to us in peace, offering a gentle hand and a word of grace. Let us pray:

O God, we give you thanks that, in the midst of darkness, you promise to be a light that no darkness can overcome. We give you thanks that you breathe hope into this world and into our hearts. Help us to turn to you when we struggle and when we rejoice. May we feel the joy of your presence with us each and every day, trusting that in all things you walk by our sides. Amen.

Hymn:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 7)

ELW 257

**O Come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
Refresh the hearts that long for you;
Restore the broken, make us new.
Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.**

Sharing of the Peace

The peace, which enables people to live in unity and in the spirit of mutual forgiveness, comes from Christ, whose word has been proclaimed.

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

The assembly is seated.

1 In the bleak mid - win - ter, frost - y wind made moan,
 2 Heav - en can - not hold him, nor earth sus - tain;
 3 What . . . can I give him, poor as I am?

earth stood hard as i - ron, wa - ter like a stone;
 heav'n and earth shall flee a - way when he comes to reign;
 If I were a shep - herd I would bring a lamb;

snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on snow,
 in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble place suf - ficed
 if I were a wise . . . man I would do my part;

in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.
 the Lord . . . God al - might - y, Je - sus Christ.
 yet what I can I give him— give my heart.

Remembrance of Baptism

(At this time, you are invited to come forward and light a candle as a sign of hope, as a sign of a loved one who has gone before us, as a sign of your need for God's presence. You may also dip your fingers in the font and make the sign of the cross in remembrance of God's grace and love shown to us in baptism. Afterwards, you may come to Pastor Tina for a time of individual prayer for healing and for anointing with oil either your hands or your forehead. You do not have to come forward if you do not wish, and you may remain in your pew in prayer and reflection.)

Closing Prayer

Holy and gracious God, we give you thanks for your presence with us tonight, for your dwelling amongst your people in darkness and in light. Fill our hearts with hope for the days that are to come. May your peace, which surpasses all understanding, descend upon this world and within our hearts. We entrust all of our hopes and fears to you in the name of your Son, Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us to pray . . .

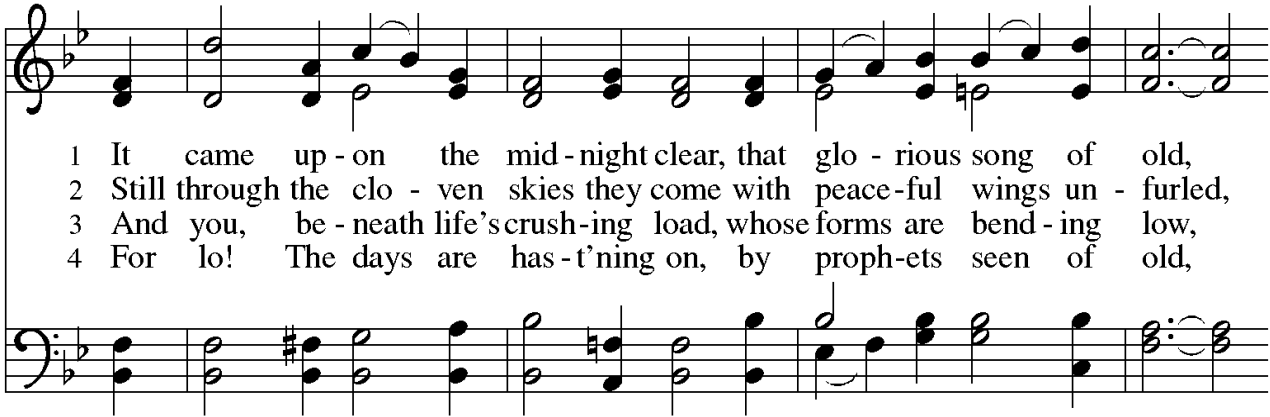
Lord's Prayer

**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,
forever and ever. Amen.**

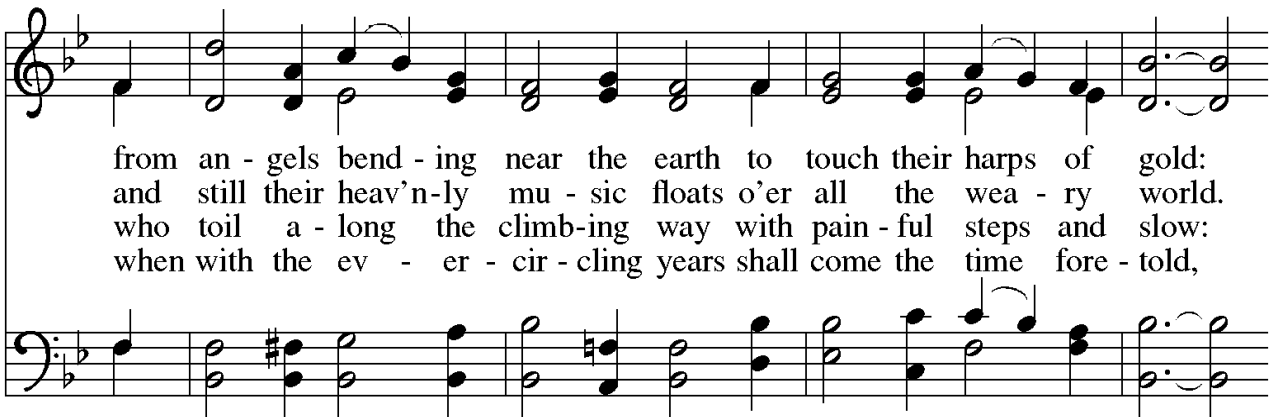
Blessing

May the light of Christ illumine the darkness of this world, binding up that which is broken, and returning our hearts to wholeness. May Christ bring light, comfort, peace, and joy this holiday season.

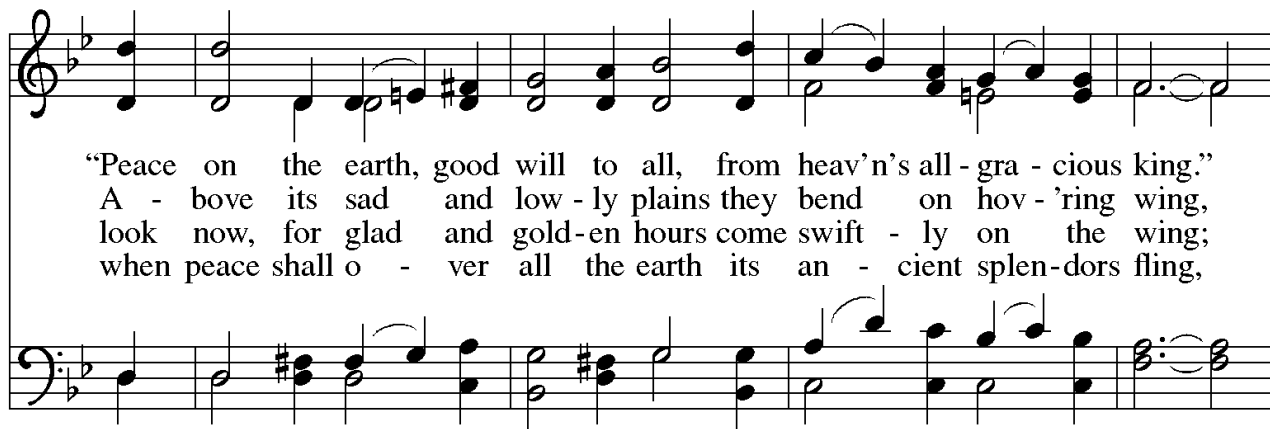
Amen.



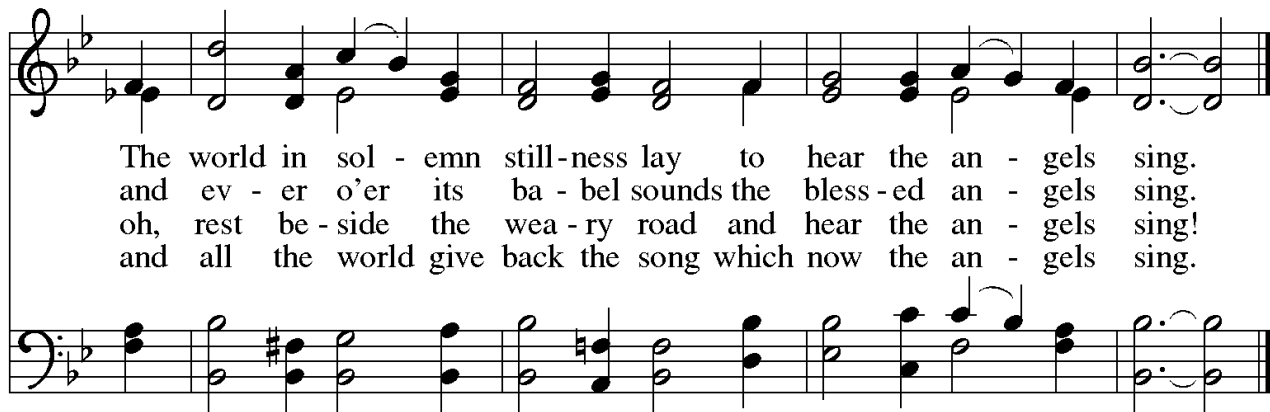
1 It came up - on the mid - night clear, that glo - rious song of old,
 2 Still through the clo - ven skies they come with peace - ful wings un - furled,
 3 And you, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose forms are bend - ing low,
 4 For lo! The days are has - t'ning on, by proph - ets seen of old,



from an - gels bend - ing near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 and still their heav'n - ly mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world.
 who toil a - long the climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow:
 when with the ev - er - cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,



“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heav'n's all - gra - cious king.”
 A - bove its sad and low - ly plains they bend on hov - 'ring wing,
 look now, for glad and gold - en hours come swift - ly on the wing;
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth its an - cient splen - dors fling,



The world in sol - emn still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 and ev - er o'er its ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 oh, rest be - side the wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing!
 and all the world give back the song which now the an - gels sing.

Dismissal

Go in peace. Go in hope. Go in love. Christ is with you always.

Amen. Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Arioso on *Veni Emmanuel*

Franklin D. Ashdown