



The Church of Saint Andrew

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE OF HOPE AND HEALING
DECEMBER 20, 2020

7:00 PM

Welcome to this Blue Christmas Service of Healing and Hope. In whatever you are experiencing this festive season, you are welcome to pray, reflect, grieve, remember, and to hear the story of hope. God is near. The time is yours, however you need it. The thoughts and prayers of the people of The Church of St. Andrew are with you.

The First Candle

Lisa Ricca

Leader: We light this candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices.

Silence

Leader: We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us this season that anticipates Christ.

***ALL:* May God's eternal love surround them.**

The Second Candle

Lystra-Ann Lee Sam

Leader: We light this second candle to redeem the pain and loss – the loss of relationships, the loss of health, the loss of jobs and the loss of financial security. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our welcome hearts and open hands, you place the gift of peace.

***ALL:* Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your future.**

The Third Candle

Ellen McCollum

Leader: We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and for some of us, years of down times. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and the pain of reflecting on our own mortality.

***ALL:* Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.**

The Fourth Candle

Janis Guash

Leader: We light this fourth candle to remember our faith and the gift of hope that God offers to us in the Christmas story. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

***ALL:* Let us remember the one who shows the way and who goes with us into our tomorrows.**

THE COLLECT OF THE DAY

Presider: God be with you.

ALL: 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.

Please read together responsively.

CANTICLE I: A SONG OF JONAH

Jonah 2: 2-7, 9

I called to you, O God, out of my distress, and you answered me; *
out of the belly of Sheol I cried, and you heard my voice.

**You cast me into the deep, into the heart of the seas, *
and the flood surrounded me;
all your waves and billows passed over me.**

Then I said, "I am driven away from your sight; *
how shall I ever look again upon your holy temple?"

**The waters closed in over me, the deep was round about me; *
weeds were wrapped around my head at the roots of the mountains.**

I went down to the land beneath the earth, *
yet you brought up my life from the depths, O God.

**As my life was ebbing away, I remembered you, O God, *
and my prayer came to you, into your holy temple.**

With the voice of thanksgiving, I will sacrifice to you; *
what I have vowed I will pay, for deliverance belongs to the Lord!

THE CANDLE LIGHTING LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

First Reader

Kaylee Mullane

God who is with us, in this season of looking forward, of anticipating the celebration of your Son's birth and return in glory, we often find ourselves uncomfortable, uneasy, worried and sad. The lights and gaiety, the music, the bright joy around us, often make us more unquiet, more out of step, feeling even more disconnected and different,

Silence

Second Reader

Mario Ricca, Jr.

Some of these feelings come from false expectations. Others come from real situations and issues that face us or those we love. Some are from events we may influence and some are beyond our control. Trusting in your grace and provision, we name these situations and face the pain and dislocation they cause us. We claim your promise to companion us in bearing them. We claim your steadfast love for us, knowing you will help us find peace for our troubled spirits. We claim your wise and merciful power, that you will meet each need as is best for us.

Silence

Third Reader

Terry Fausak

God of Light and Life, we light this candle for all those who are struggling with issues involving physical or mental health. We especially remember those struggling with cancer, depression, or thoughts of suicide. May its light remind us all of the healing available to us in Christ Jesus. Hear our prayers that anguish be minimized and your good plan fulfilled for each who suffer.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Fourth Reader

Shirley Juliano

We light this candle for all those who are struggling with issues involving financial concerns, job loss, seemingly insurmountable debt. May its light remind us all that you are the Great Provider, you will give us our daily bread. Empower us to take the steps we need to solve these problems. Draw us to the right people and programs to help us.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Fifth Reader

Donna Barr

We light this candle for all those who grieve. You know our deepest need, you understand our pain- lost dreams, lost opportunities, the separation of death. May its light remind us that we are not orphaned, we are not alone. Grant us grace that in pain we may find comfort, in sorrow hope, and in death resurrection.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Sixth Reader

Alex Baltovski

We light this candle for all those who wrestle with the chains of addiction. Help us to name that which enslaves us and face it: food, alcohol, drugs, pornography, shopping, escapism, self-medication, and self-abuse in all its forms. May this candle bring your light to those secret, and not so secret, activities of imprisonment. Hear our prayers for deliverance and freedom; help us and those we love break the hold of these evils.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Seventh Reader

Catherine Genovese

We light this candle for all those who are victims of violence in any of its forms. May its light lead us to peace, safety, and truth. Pour forth encouragement to claim your help in healing physically and spiritually, to trust in your justice, to find assistance, to resist blaming ourselves, to be confident in the future you have planned for us, a future full of hope.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Eighth Reader

David Barr

We light this candle for all those who are experiencing the pain of broken relationships with family, children, spouses, and friends. May its light remind us of the pure communion you desire for all your creation. Our desire for this same communion makes estrangement so painful. Lead us to relinquish the hold broken relationships have on us, to forgive ourselves for our contribution to the breach, to forgive those who have hurt us, to take the steps to mend that relationship, if possible. Lord, we know that sometimes we suffer from a broken relationship with someone who is now dead. Help us to prayerfully examine, receive and extend forgiveness in that situation, that we may live again.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Ninth Reader

Jami Parrinello

We light this candle for all those who are suffering the consequences of war, famine and unbridled disease. May its light remind us of your holy calling to everyone who believes you are the light of the world. Change the hearts of all who resort to violence, who seek revenge. Protect those who find themselves far from home serving their nations or the needy. We know you are in the midst of those in anguish and pray that your healing presence will be seen, felt, and embraced. Reveal to us how to join in your saving work- to make tangible gifts to alleviate suffering, to support those on the front lines of natural and manmade disasters, to pray unceasingly for peace in our families, our neighborhoods, our world.

ALL: **O come, Emanuel, come.**

Silence

Tenth Reader

Nancy Vomero

We light this candle for all those who are estranged from you, who are besieged with doubts, who are overwhelmed by the world and do not claim your presence in their lives. We pray for them, and therefore ourselves, for we confess that each of us knows this condition. Lord, may the light of your love lead us all home to you.

ALL: O come, Emanuel, come.

Silence

Presider: Accept these prayers and offerings, O God, in mercy and tenderness, in the name of Christ Jesus our Lord.

ALL: Amen.

THE HYMN

O come, O come Emmanuel, vs. 1, 5

Catherine Lavender, soprano

During the singing of the hymn, you are invited to offer to God a special intention in your heart, and to hold a lighted candle at your camera for all to see as a reminder of the promise of God's salvation.

**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!**

**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.**

THE PEACE

BCP p. 332

Presider: The peace of Christ be always with you.

ALL: And also with you.

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

THE LORD'S PRAYER

BCP, p. 364

**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 CONCLUDING PRAYER

Presider: Purify our conscience, Almighty God, by your daily visitation, that your Son Jesus Christ, at his coming, may find in us a mansion prepared for himself; who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, one God, now and for ever.

***ALL:* Amen.**

THE BLESSING

Presider: God's Blessing be with you.
Christ's peace be with you.
The Spirit's outpouring be with you,
Now and always.

***ALL:* Amen.**

THE DISMISSAL

Presider: Let us bless the Lord.

***ALL:* Thanks be to God.**

Presider: May the peace of God which passes all understanding keep our hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.

***ALL:* Amen.**