



*A growing, faithful, inclusive,
and caring community
committed to the ministry
and teachings of Jesus Christ.*

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A Service of Blue Christmas
Celebrating those we love during Advent
December 14, 2025

Welcome to our Blue Christmas service. By gathering together, we acknowledge that we are often keenly aware of our grief during the holidays, as we are reminded that someone dear to us is no longer here. May this service be a time for you to rest, pray, and receive God's care. You are not alone.

Prelude

Lighting of Advent Wreath

All standing, the Celebrant says

Celebrant You, O God, are my lamp;
my God, you make my darkness bright.

People *You, O God, are my lamp;*
my God, you make my darkness bright.

Celebrant You have been my helper:
People *My God, you make my darkness bright.*

Celebrant You, O God, are my lamp;
People *my God, you make my darkness bright.*

Celebrant Let my prayer be set forth, O God:
People *As incense in your sight.*

Celebrant God is my light and my salvation.
People *God is my light and my salvation.*

Celebrant God is the strength of my life:
People *And my salvation.*

Celebrant I will bless God at all times:
People *And praise shall ever be in my mouth.*

Celebrant For with you is the well of life,
People and in your light we see light
With you is the well of life,
and in your light we see light.

Celebrant Your love, O God, reaches to the heavens,
People and your faithfulness to the clouds:
And in your light we see light.

Celebrant Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the
People Holy Spirit.
With you is the well of life,
and in your light we see light.

The Collect

Celebrant

God of compassion and strength, as Mary stood at the foot of the cross, we, too, come before you with broken hearts and tearful eyes. Keep us mindful that you know our pain, and free us to see the promise of the resurrection at work in our lives. Amen.

Bidding Prayer

Beloved in Christ, in this season of Advent, as we rest in a time of waiting for the moment when the Light of God's love comes into the world, we recognize that there are places within our hearts that feel the absence of those who have reflected that light to us with great beauty.

Therefore, as we gather as siblings in Christ, we see in one another the faces of those loved by God, and faces that have loved those who have gone before us. Let us take this time to listen and pray, in the reading of scripture and the in stillness, as a time to remember those whom we love dearly, whose presence still feels as near to us in their absence as it did by their presence in life.

In this season of awaiting the celebration of that first Silent Night when God's Son Jesus entered into life with us in order to bring us eternal life, we remember our loved ones. May God grant us hearts to know and love God's Son, and to feel Jesus' care and peace this night.

The Lighting of the First Candle

Leader We light this candle to remember all those we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, and their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us during this season of holy waiting.

People *May God's eternal love surround them.*

First Reading

Isaiah 49:14-16a

¹⁴ But Zion said, "The Lord has forsaken me;
my Lord has forgotten me."

¹⁵ Can a woman forget her nursing child
or show no compassion for the child of her womb?
Even these might forget,
yet I will not forget you.

¹⁶ See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands.

The Lighting of the Second Candle

Leader We light this second candle to redeem our wounds. We remember before us the pain and loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, and the loss of health. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, Holy One. We pray that into our broken hearts and open hands, you place the gift of peace.

People *Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us in your future.*

Psalm 23

1 O God, you are my shepherd; *
I shall not be in want.

2 You make me lie down in green pastures *
and lead me beside still waters.

3 You revive my soul *
and guide me along right paths for the sake of your Name.

4 Though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death,
I shall fear no evil; *
for you are with me; your rod and your staff, they comfort me.

5 You spread a table before me in the presence of those who
trouble me; *
*you have anointed my head with oil,
and my cup is running over.*

6 Surely your goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life, *
and I will dwell in the house of God for ever.

The Lighting of the Third Candle

Leader We light this third candle to remember ourselves in this holy time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and years. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and the pain of reflecting on our own mortality.

People *Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.*

Second Reading

Gone from My Sight

Henry Van Dyke

I am standing upon the seashore.

A ship, at my side, spreads her white sails to the moving breeze and starts for the blue ocean.

She is an object of beauty and strength.

I stand and watch her until, at length, she hangs like a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky come to mingle with each other.

Then, someone at my side says, "There, she is gone."
Gone where?

Gone from my sight – that is all.

She is just as large in mast, hull and spar as she was when she
left my side,
and just as able to bear her load of living freight to her
destined port.
Her diminished size is in me – not in her.

And, just at the moment
when someone at my side says, "There, she is gone,"
there are other eyes that are watching for her coming;
and other voices ready to take up the glad shout:
"Here she comes!"

And that is dying.

Reader: Hear what the Spirit is saying to God's people.

People: Thanks be to God.

Reflection

Dcn. Rebecca Smith

The Lighting of the Fourth Candle

Leader This fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope which 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.

People *Let us remember the one who shows the way and goes with us into tomorrow.*

Fourth Reading

John 6:35-40

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

People Glory to you, Lord Christ.

Jesus said to them, "I am the bread of life. Whoever comes to me will never be hungry, and whoever believes in me will never be thirsty. But I said to you that you have seen me and yet do not believe. Everything that the Father gives me will come to me, and anyone who comes to me I will never drive away; for I have come down from heaven, not to do my own will, but the will of him who sent me. And this is the will of him who sent me, that I should lose nothing of all that he has given me, but raise it up on the last day. This is indeed the will of my Father, that all who see the Son and believe in him may have eternal life; and I will raise them up on the last day."

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise to you, Lord Christ.

Reflection

Mother Lisa Aguilar

Time of Prayer and Reflection

Instrumental

*The people are invited to come forward to light a candle
in honor of their loved one. Even though they have died,
their light continues to shine in our lives.*

Prayers of the Faithful

Dear Friends: It was our Lord Jesus himself who said, "Come to me, all you who labor and are burdened, and I will give you rest." Let us pray, then, for our brothers and sisters, who now rest from their labors, and have entered into the light of God's eternal sabbath rest. Bless again, O Lord, your servants, who have returned to you.

*We remember our loved ones,
Who are in your hands always, O Lord.*

Wash them in the holy font of everlasting life, and clothe them in their heavenly wedding garment.

*We remember our loved ones,
Who are in your hands always, O Lord.*

May they hear your words of invitation, "Come, you blessed of my Father."

*We remember our loved ones,
Who are in your hands always, O God.*

May they gaze upon you, Lord, face to face, and taste the blessedness of perfect rest.

*We remember our loved ones,
Who are in your hands always, O God.*

May angels surround them, and saints welcome them in peace.

*We remember our loved ones,
Who are in your hands always, O God.*

Celebrant

God of all, we pray to you for those we love, but see no longer: Grant them your peace; let light perpetual shine upon them; and, in your loving wisdom and almighty power, work in them the good purpose of your perfect will; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Celebrant

Almighty God, Father of mercies and giver of comfort: Deal graciously, we pray, with all who mourn; that, casting all our care on you, we may know the consolation of your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen.*

Blessing

The priest blesses the people, saying

May the God of grace heal you, body and soul.

May your pain cease.

May your courage increase.

May your fears and worries be released.

And may blessings, love, and joy surround you, now and always.

The blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be upon you and remain with you for ever. *Amen.*

Dismissal

Deacon Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.

Postlude

Please Save the Date for our Advent, Christmas, and Epiphany services as we plan for the holidays together!

Advent IV, Sunday 12/21:

8:30 AM **Holy Eucharist**

10:30 AM **Holy Eucharist**

Christmas Eve, Wednesday 12/24:

3:00 PM **A Christmas Eve Eucharistic service** led by our Joyful Noise Band, which will be streamed online and available to view later in the evening for anyone unable to attend. This will include singing the Candlelit Carol of Silent Night.

10:30 PM **A hymn-sing of Christmas carols** as we prepare for the late night service.

11:00 PM **A late night Christmas Eve Eucharistic service** with the organ and choir, including the singing of the Candlelit Carol.

Christmas Day, Thursday, 12/25: No Services Scheduled

First Sunday of Christmas, 12/28:

8:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist

Feast of the Epiphany, 1/4/2025:

8:30 AM Holy Eucharist

10:30 AM Holy Eucharist with an Epiphany pageant