



BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

DECEMBER 2, 2020

THE WELCOME AND SHARING OF COMMUNITY CONCERNS.

We extend to you a warm welcome to you this evening. We hope and pray that you will be blessed by your presence in worship (wherever you are), as you remember those you love and acknowledge the pain and sorrow you may be experiencing these days. Our prayer for all of you is that the light of our Savior Jesus Christ might shine through the darkness and grant you everlasting comfort and peace.

THE PRAYER OF PREPARATION

God of compassion and love, **we thank you for caring about the sorrow and pain we are experiencing, at a time when many are laughing and filled with great joy. This particular holiday season is difficult for us, as we remember the many losses in our lives. May this time in your presence, grant us comfort and peace, as we acknowledge our feelings, and rest in the eternal hope you offer through Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.**

BEARING OF THE LIGHT Prelude music

Jennifer Kinblom

*THE CALL TO WORSHIP

ONE: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who lived in a land of deep shadow a light has shone.

ALL: For the burden that was weighing upon them, God has broken in pieces.

ONE: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

ALL: And the Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth, and we have seen his glory.

ONE: In him was life, and that life was the light of all.

ALL: The light shines on in the darkness, and the darkness has never, never been able to put it out.

OPENING HYMN: WOV #738 Healer of our Every Ill

Congregations joins in with 'refrain'

Refrain

Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to - mor - row,
give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.

*THE INVOCATION

L: God of Mercy, hear our prayer in this Season, **for ourselves and our families who live with the painful memories of loss. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of Jesus Christ who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. AMEN**

LITANY OF HOPE (Psalm 121)

L: I will lift up mine eyes to the hills. From where does my help come?

ALL: My help comes from God who made heaven and earth.

L: God who keeps you will not slumber, nor suffer your foot to be moved.

ALL: Behold the Holy One who keeps Israel shall not slumber or sleep.

L: The Almighty is your keeper and the shade on your right hand.

ALL: The sun shall not hurt you by day or the moon by night.

L: The Creator shall preserve you from all evil and shall preserve your soul.

ALL: Thanks be to God who preserves our going out and our coming in from this time forth and forevermore.

L: This first candle we light is to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their face, their voice, the memory that binds them to us in this season.

ALL: May God's eternal love surround them. *(The 1st candle is lit during silence.)*

L: This second candle we light is to redeem the pain of our loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, the loss of normal activities and gatherings. We pause to gather up the pain of the past and offer it to God, asking that from God's hands we receive the gift of peace.

ALL: Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future. As we grasp your hands and receive the embrace of your peace. *(The 2nd candle is lit during of silence.)*

L: This third candle we light is to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember these past weeks and months; the disbelief, the anger, the down times, the sadness of reminiscing, the inability to experience the hugs and handshakes of family and friends. We also remember all those who stand with us and give thanks for all the support we have known.

ALL: Let us remember that God defeats the darkness. *(The 3rd candle is lit during silence.)*

L: This fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope, which the Christmas story offers to us. Here we remember that God who shares our life promises us a place and time where there will be no more pain and suffering.

ALL: Let us remember our Savior Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, who bears the light and shows us the way, unveiling the truths of eternal life. *(The 4th candle is lit during silence.)*

* PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

L: In the spirit of this season let us now humbly ask God for all the things we need; for ourselves as we participate in whatever way we can this Christmas. God in your mercy **ALL: hear our prayer.**

L: For our families and friends that they may continue to help and support us. God in your mercy **ALL: hear our prayer.**

L: For the person we have loved that has died. For all the losses that we've known, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise. God in your mercy **ALL: hear our prayer.**

L: For all our family and friends, that they may know love, peace, and happiness in you. God in your mercy **ALL: hear our prayer.**

L: For the peace proclaimed by the Christmas angels to come throughout the whole world. God in your mercy **ALL: hear our prayer.**

L: God of great compassion and love. Listen to the prayers of these, your people. Grant to all especially the bereaved and troubled ones this Christmas, the blessing we ask in the name of Christ. **ALL: Amen**

* BLESSING: May you sense God is with you. May you allow God to mold you into what you are divinely capable of being. May you experience the peace of God that surpasses all understanding. In the name of God the Father, † Son and Holy Spirit, now and forever. **Amen.**

* JENNIFER sends us outside with music, as we BEARING THE LIGHT and make our way to the front of the church for the lighting of the *Christmas Love Lights*

Thank you for coming this evening. *While we may not know the burdens you carry this Christmas season, we trust that God does and will continue to be beside you...loving you dearly. May the peace of God which surpasses all understanding be with you tonight and in the days to come.*

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Christ shows the way,
Brings the truth,
Bears the light,
Gives us hope.

