



## BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

DECEMBER 1, 2021

***This worship is being livestreamed. Your presence in the sanctuary signifies your agreeing to be on our live broadcast. If you prefer to not be on camera, you can sit near the back of the sanctuary.***

*If you are a visitor with us today, we are grateful that God brought you here. There is great joy in gathering with one another to voice our cares and concerns...as well as our thanks to God. Measures have been put in place to provide a safe environment for us to gather in church to worship.*

### THE WELCOME AND SHARING OF COMMUNITY CONCERNS

*We extend a warm welcome to you this evening. We hope and pray that you will be blessed by your presence in worship, as we name together pain and sorrow you may be experiencing. Our prayer is that the light of our Savior Jesus Christ might shine through the darkness and grant you 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 around us are laughing and filled with great joy. This particular holiday season is difficult for many of us, as we remember the many losses in our lives. God, may this time in your presence, grant us comfort and peace. We openly acknowledge our feelings, and rest in the eternal hope you offer through Jesus Christ, in whose name we pray, Amen.**

BEARING OF THE LIGHT as we sing "*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*"

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

*Refrain* Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

2 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. *Refrain*

\*THE CALL TO WORSHIP (Please join in with **bold text**) *Inspired by Isaiah 9 and Gospel of John 1*

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: *Healer of our Every Ill*

*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.



- 1 You who know our fears and sad - ness, grace us with your
- 2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing how your grace is
- 3 Give us strength to love each oth - er, ev - 'ry sis - ter,
- 4 You who know each thought and feel - ing, teach us all your



peace and glad - ness; Spir - it of all com - fort, fill our hearts.  
still un - fold - ing, give us all your vi - sion, God of love.  
ev - 'ry broth - er; Spir - it of all kind - ness, be our guide.  
way of heal - ing; Spir - it of com - pas - sion, fill each heart.

Text: Marty Haugen, b. 1950  
Music: HEALER OF OUR EVERY ILL, Marty Haugen  
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\*THE INVOCATION

L: God of Mercy, hear our prayer in this Season, **for ourselves and our families who live with the pain of loss. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace in our hearts. 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 my 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.**

HEBREWS 12: 1-4

gOSPEL OF JOHN 1:1-14, 16

MESSAGE

Pastor Mary Eide

LITURGY OF REMEMBERING AND NAMING

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.)*

GRIEF SHARE what is it? How can it support you? [www.griefshare.org](http://www.griefshare.org)

Pastor Tony Hill

HYMN “*Hymn of Promise/In the Bulb There is a Flower*” Led by Rev. Joel Certa-Werner



1 In the bulb there is a flow - er; in the seed, an ap - ple tree;  
2 There's a song in ev - 'ry si - lence, seek - ing word and mel - o - dy;  
3 In our end is our be - gin - ning; in our time, in - fin - i - ty;



in co - coons, a hid - den prom - ise: but - ter - flies will soon be free!  
there's a dawn in ev - 'ry dark - ness, bring - ing hope to you and me.  
in our doubt there is be - liev - ing; in our life, e - ter - ni - ty;



In the cold and snow of win - ter there's a spring that waits to be,  
From the past will come the fu - ture; what it holds, a mys - ter - y,  
in our death, a res - ur - rec - tion; at the last, a vic - to - ry,



un - re - vealed un - til its sea - son, some - thing God a - lone can see.

\* 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 have 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, this 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.**

\* You can place your slip of paper in the bowl found at the back of the church and watch it melt away. *Michelle sends us back into the world with music. If you would like to join us outside at the front of the church for the lighting of the Christmas Love Lights, please take a candle with you at the rear of the sanctuary...as we BEAR THE LIGHT OF CHRIST to brighten the world around us.*

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***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.

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

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MENTAL HEALTH RESOURCE GUIDE can be found in the Gathering Place just outside the sanctuary.

An expansive directory for help and ways you can volunteer in Dunn County <https://healthdunnright.org/online-community-resource-guide/> (which includes Mental Health Guide)

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