

All Saints' Anglican Church, Westboro
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All Saints' Westboro



Photo by Stephen Rouble

Blue Christmas

December 20th, 2020

4:30 pm

In-person service that will also be recorded

The Ven. Christopher Dunn

The Rev. Simone Hurkmans

The Rev. Deacon Dr. Jarrett Carty

Music: Edith Troup

Children and Youth: Julie Newlands

This service is being recorded, so if you attend in-person, there is a possibility that you may appear on the recording.

The hymns will be sung by a cantor. If you are attending the in-person service, please refrain from singing as congregational singing is not permitted during the Amber Stage.

Prelude

Welcome

Hymn: In the Quiet Curve of Evening (VU 278) ***(Edith)***

*In the quiet curve of evening,
in the sinking of the days,
in the silky void of darkness, you are there.*

*In the lapses of my breathing,
in the space between my ways,
in the crater carved by sadness, you are there.
You are there, you are there, you are there.*

*In the rests between the phrases,
in the cracks between the stars,
in the gaps between the meaning, you are there.
In the melting down of endings,
in the cooling of the sun,
in the solstice of the winter, you are there.
You are there, you are there, you are there.*

*In the mystery of my hungers,
in the silence of my rooms,
in the cloud of my unknowing, you are there.*

*In the empty cave of grieving,
in the desert of my dreams,
in the tunnel of my sorrow, you are there.
You are there, you are there, you are there.*

Opening Prayer

Leader: In the beginning, when it was very dark,
God said, 'Let there be light.'

All: And there was light.
(A candle is placed on the table)

Leader: In the beginning, when it was very quiet,
the Word was with God.

All: And what God was, the Word was.
(A Bible is placed on the table)

Leader: When the time was right, God sent the
Son.

All: He came among us; he was one of us.
(A sign of the Son – a cross – is placed on the table)

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

**All: The Word became flesh and dwelt
among us, full of grace and truth.**

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

All: **The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to extinguish it.**

Leader: We look for light, but find darkness; for brightness, but walk in gloom. We grope like those who have no eyes; we stumble at noon as at twilight.

All: **You are the light of the world; be light in our darkness, O Christ.**

Leader: If I say, 'Let only darkness cover me, and the light about me be night,' even the darkness is not dark to you; the night is as bright as the day; for darkness is as light to you.

All: **You are the light of the world; be light in our darkness, O Christ.**

Leader: Blessed be your name, O God, for ever; you reveal deep and mysterious things. You are light, and in you is no darkness. Our darkness is passing away; already the true light is shining.

All: **You are the light of the world; be light in our darkness, O Christ. Amen.**

Stories of Light

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 1, 2)
(Jarrett)

*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.*

*O come, O Wisdom from on high,
who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show,
and teach us in her ways to go. Ref.*

Reading: Genesis 1:1-5 – The Light of Creation

Reader: In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth, the earth was a formless void and darkness covered the face of the deep, while a wind from God swept over the face of the waters. Then God said, “Let there be light”; and there was light. And God saw that the light was good; and God separated the light from the darkness. God called the light Day, and the darkness he called Night. And there was evening and there was morning, the first day.

Reader: Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.

All: 'Anyone who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

Reader: We light this candle to remember those we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices, the memories that bind them to us in this season.

(The first candle is lit)

Reader: So let us say

All: May God's eternal love surround them.

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 3, 4)
(Jarrett)

*O come, O come, great Lord of might,
who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law,
in cloud and majesty and awe. Ref.*

*O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem,
from every foe deliver them
that trust your mighty power to save,
and give them victory o'er the grave Ref.*

Reading: Isaiah 42:5-9 – The Light of Peace

Reader: Thus says God, the Lord, who created the heavens and stretched them out, who spread out the earth and what comes from

it, who gives breath to the people upon it and spirit to those who walk in it: I am the Lord, I have called you in righteousness, I have taken you by the hand and kept you; I have given you as a covenant to the people, a light to the nations, to open the eyes that are blind, to bring out the prisoners from the dungeon, from the prison those who sit in darkness. I am the Lord, that is my name; my glory I give to no other, nor my praise to idols. See, the former things have come to pass, and new things I now declare; before they spring forth, I tell you of them.

Reader: Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.

All: 'Anyone who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

Reader: We light this second candle to redeem the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health. 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.

(The second candle is lit)

Reader: So let us say

All: Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into your future.

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 5, 6)
(Jarrett)

*O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. Ref.*

*O come, O Dayspring from on high
and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight. Ref.*

Reading: Revelation 22:1-5 – The Light of Promise

Reader: Then the angel showed me the river of the water of life, bright as crystal, flowing from the throne of God and of the Lamb through the middle of the street of the city. On either side of the river is the tree of life with its twelve kinds of fruit, producing its fruit each month; and the leaves of the tree are for the healing of the nations. Nothing accursed will be found there any more. But the throne of God and of the Lamb will be in it, and his servants will worship him; they will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. And there will be no more

night; they need no light of lamp or sun,
for the Lord God will be their light, and
they will reign forever and ever.

Reader: Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.

**All: 'Anyone who follows me will not walk
in darkness, but will have the light of
life.'**

Reader: We light this third candle to remember
these past weeks and months: the
disbelief, the anger, the down times, the
joy and sorrow of memories, the family
and friends who care for us. We give
thanks for the support we have known.

(The third candle is lit)

Reader: So let us say

**All: Remember that after every night
comes the dawn of a new day.**

Hymn: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v. 7)
(Jarrett)

*O come, Desire of nations, bind
in one the hearts of humankind;
O bid our bitter conflict cease,
and be for us the Prince of Peace. Ref.*

Reading: John 1:1-5, 9, 14 – The Light of Hope

Reader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through him, and without him not one thing came into being. What has come into being in him was life, and the life was the light of all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.

Reader: Jesus said, 'I am the light of the world.

All: 'Anyone who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.'

Reader: We light this fourth candle to remember our faith and the gift of hope that the Christmas story offers us. We give thanks for all the support we have known.

(The fourth candle is lit)

Reader: So let us say

All: Remember the One who shows us the way, who brings the truth and bears the light.

Hymn: *Let There Be Light* (Common Praise 572)
(Chris)

*Let there be light, let there be understanding,
let all the nations gather, let them be face to face;*

*Open our lips, open our minds to ponder,
open the door of concord opening into grace;*

*Perish the sword, perish the angry judgement,
perish the bombs and hunger, perish the fight for
gain;*

*Hallow our love, hallow the deaths of martyrs,
hallow their holy freedom, hallowed be thy name;*

*Thy kingdom come, thy spirit turn to language,
thy people speak together, thy spirit never fade;*

*Let there be light, open our hearts to wonder,
perish the way of terror, hallow the world God made.*

Reflection: The Rev. Simone Hurkmans

Leader: God of our struggle, show us your mercy.

All: We are in need of your strength.

Leader: Show us your face, you who have given us
birth.

**All: Look upon us, restore us to wholeness:
in your name we pray.**

**Hymn: *Breathe on me Breath of God* (CP 649)
(Simone)**

*Breathe on me, breath of God, fill me with life anew,
That I may love what thou dost love, and do what
thou wouldst do.*

*Breathe on me, breath of God, until my heart is pure,
Until my will is one with thine to do and to endure.*

*Breathe on me, breath of God, till I am wholly thine,
Until this earthly part of me glows with thy fire
divine.*

*Breathe on me, breath of God, so shall I never die,
But live with thee the perfect life of thine eternity.*

Time of Contemplation

*(Opportunity for individuals to light candles while
we listen to musical offerings) (Edith –
instrumental)*

Prayers of the People

Leader: In the spirit of this season, let us now
confidently ask God for all the things we
need: for ourselves, as we participate in
whatever way we can this Christmas –
Living God,

All: Join us in our journey.

Leader: For our families and friends, that they may continue to help and support us – Living God,

All: Join us in our journey.

Leader: For those we have loved and who have died, for all the losses that we know, that all may find new life in your everlasting promise – Living God,

All: Join us in our journey.

Leader: For all our families and friends, that they may know love, peace, and happiness in you – Living God,

All: Join us in our journey.

Leader: For the peace proclaimed by the Christmas angels, to come throughout the world – Living God,

All: Join us in our journey.

Leader: God of great compassion and love, listen to the prayers of your people. Grant to all, especially the bereaved and troubled this Christmas, the blessing we ask in the name of Christ, who taught us to pray, saying:

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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.

Hymn: Sing, my Soul (John L. Bell) (Edith)

*Sing, my soul, when hope is sleeping,
sing when faith gives way to fears;
sing to melt the ice of sadness,
making way for joy through tears.*

*Sing, my soul, when sickness lingers,
sing to dull the sharpest pain;
sing to set the spirit leaping;
healing needs a glad refrain.*

*Sing, my soul, of the One who shaped me,
let me wander far away,
ran with open arms to greet me,
brought me home again to stay.*

*Sing, my soul, when light seems darkest,
sing when night refuses rest;
sing though death should mock the future:
what's to come by God is blessed.*

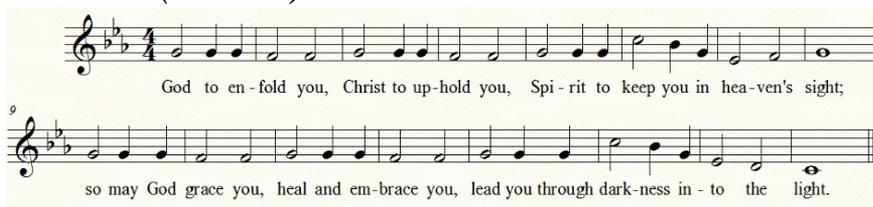
(This song is a paraphrase of a letter from an elderly, saintly woman whose testimony is that, even in her lowest days, when she speaks to God he

listens, and then she sings to rejoice both her heart and his.)

Reader: Let us pray.

All: **God of light and love, pour upon us the new light of your incarnate Word, Jesus the Anointed One, that this light, enkindled in our hearts, may shine in our lives; through Jesus Christ, who lives and reigns with you, in the unity of the Holy Spirit, now and for ever. Amen.**

Hymn: God to Enfold You (Voices United)
(Simone)



God to en-fold you, Christ to up-hold you, Spi-rit to keep you in hea-ven's sight;
so may God grace you, heal and em-brace you, lead you through dark-ness in-to the light.

Blessing

Leader: The light of God to make us unafraid
the power of God to protect us
the joy of God to heal us
the grace of God to bless us and keep us
truthful,
now and evermore.

All: Amen.

Postlude

When the service ends, please remain in your seats while the music plays. When you feel comfortable, please leave through the Richmond Road doors, keeping physical distance.

