

Blue Christmas Worship Service



December 13, 2020

[VIDEO OF WORSHIP SERVICE](#)

***Live-stream video is unavailable for this service.** *The worship service will be video recorded and will be available in the VIDEO LINK or on the “Bethel CRC Lacombe” Youtube channel after the Worship service at approximately 8:00 p.m. on Sunday.

**Have Candles & note paper for Prayers of Remembrance available if desired.

WELCOME

This evening we gather during this Christmas season in a spirit of somber remembrance. While the rest of the world seems to be celebrating the joyous occasion, we come to manger realizing that the world is cold as stone, feelings of loneliness and loss overwhelm, and our heart cries out help me be strong, help me. I invite each of you this evening not to hide or suppress those feelings, but embrace them, realizing that they bring you much closer to the real Christmas story.

For this evening we remember the true story helpless babe born into a world that was struggling, a world that was questioning where was God, and world crying out why? The helpless babe born in cold stone room without the joyous welcome we often picture. The helpless babe born in a family that was poor, tired, and frightened. The helpless babe who would change all this for the world.

We Gather in God's Presence

Lord, you are the God who saves me; day and night I cry out to you. May my prayer come before you; turn your ear to my cry. I am overwhelmed with troubles, and my life draws near to death. I am counted among those who go down to the pit; I am like one without strength. (Psalm 88:1-4)

Lighting of the Christ Candle

The people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep darkness a light has dawned ... For to us a child is born, to us a son is given, and the government will be on his shoulders. And he will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. Of the greatness of his government and peace there will be no end. (Isaiah 9:2 & 6-7)

Song: O Little Town of Bethlehem LUYH 88

God's Greeting/Mutual Greetings

WE REMEMBER AND SEEK COMFORT

Advent Candle Lighting:

A Litany of Remembrance

FIRST CANDLE: Persons who have been Loved and Lost

PASTOR: We light the first Advent candle and remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us in this season.

PEOPLE: Lord, surround us all with your eternal love.

Song:

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel LUYH 61:1

Words of comfort: Psalm 103:13-17

As a father has compassion on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear him; for he knows how we are formed, he remembers that we are dust. The life of mortals is like grass, they flourish like a flower of the field; the wind blows over it and it is gone, and its place remembers it no more. But from everlasting to everlasting the Lord's love is with those who fear him, and his righteousness with their children's children

SECOND CANDLE: Pain of Loss

PASTOR: We light a second candle mindful of the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, or the loss of health. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands you will place the gift of peace.

PEOPLE: Hold, help, heal us, O God.

Song:

O Come, O Come Emmanuel LUYH 61:6

Words of Comfort: Psalm 139:11-12 (NLT)

I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night but even in darkness I cannot hide from you. To you the night shines as bright as day. Darkness and light are the same to you.

THIRD CANDLE: Pain of Our Loss

LEADER: *We light a third candle to remember ourselves and the pain of our loss in this Christmas season. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and, for some of us, years of difficult times. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, the fears.*

PEOPLE: **We remember that the dawn overcomes the darkness.**

Song:

O Come, O Come Emmanuel LUYH 61:5

PRAYERS OF REMEMBRANCE

People are invited to hang their Prayers of Remembrance on the Christmas Tree.

Words of Comfort: Psalm 34:19 (NLT)

The righteous person faces many troubles, but the Lord comes to the rescue each time.

FOURTH CANDLE:

Remember others suffering with us

PASTOR: *We light a fourth candle to remember all who have shared in our sorrow. We thank you for their compassion, for their presence with us in times when our hurt went deeper than words could express. We remember that you, Lord, came to sympathize with our weakness and to carry our sorrows.*

PEOPLE: **We thank you for those who held us and pointed to your light.**

Song:

O Come, O Come Emmanuel LUYH 61:7

Words of Comfort: Matthew 5:4,7

Blessed are those who mourn, for the will be comforted.

Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy.

Prayer of Comfort

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scripture: Matthew 11:28-30

Message: Come All Who are Weary

WE RESPOND IN HOPE

Prayer of Hope Litany

PASTOR: *God of compassion, we come again to you as Christmas nears. We grieve over what might have been. A death or loss or struggle tarnishes our experience of this season. We feel cut off from joy, lost from what we once felt, wondering if the light will indeed come. We find ourselves adrift, alone, lost. Lord, help us find our way. Loving God, hear our prayer,*

PEOPLE: and in your merciful love, answer.

PASTOR: *The Advent season reminds us of what used to be but is no more. Memories of what was, and the fear of what may be, keep us from the joy of today. All around are the sounds of celebration, but joy eludes us. Be near us this night. Loving God, hear our prayer,*

PEOPLE: and in your merciful love, answer.

PASTOR: *In this season of Advent waiting, we bring you those sorrows and longings too deep for words. Hear the groans of our heart and tend us with your comfort and grace. Loving God, hear our prayer,*

PEOPLE: and in your merciful love, answer.

In the silence, we bring you our own words of need, our own words of hope. (silence)

PASTOR: *In this dark night, let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives rest in you. In the quietness of this night, may your peace enfold us and all dear to us, and all who have no peace. Keep us in the truth that the night is nearly over; the day is almost here. We look expectantly to a new day, to new joys. Loving God, hear our prayer,*

PEOPLE: and in your merciful love, answer.

**Words of Hope: Psalm 33:22, Isaiah 40:31,
Romans 15:13**

May your unfailing love be with us, Lord, even as we put our hope in you.

Those who hope in the Lord will renew their strength. They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary, they will walk and not be faint. May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may overflow with hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

**Lighting of Candles and Song of Peace:
Silent Night LUYH 85**

While we sing Silent Night, all who wish are invited to prayerfully light a candle - in memory, in honor, in gratitude, in hope, in love - inviting the love of Christ to dispel our darkness.

PASSING OF THE PEACE

Benediction: 1 Peter 5:10-11

And the God of all grace, who called you to his eternal glory in Christ, after you have suffered a little while, will himself restore you and make you strong, firm and steadfast. To him be the power forever and ever. Amen.