



Presbyterian
Community Church
of the Rockies



Wednesday, December 18, 2024
5:00 p.m.

1700 Brodie Avenue, Estes Park, Colorado 80517

Blue Christmas

A Service for Healing and Hope

PRELUDE Fantasy on “Stille Nacht, Heilige Nacht” and “Still, Still, Still”
Franz Gruber & Austrian Carol
Pianist, Verlene Thorp

Leader: The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

Leader: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shone. For the yoke that was weighing upon them, and the burden upon their shoulders, you have broken in pieces, O God, our Redeemer.

WELCOME The Rev. Dr. Christine Dempsey

PRAYER FOR COMPASSION (Unison)

O God, you know us inside and out. In your compassion forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF ACCEPTANCE

HYMN #309 “Of the Father’s Love Begotten”

CENTERING PRAYER (Unison)

God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves and for our families who live with painful thoughts and memories. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of your Christ, who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

LIGHTING OF FOUR ADVENT CANDLES

FIRST CANDLE

Leader: The first candle we light to remember that the newborn Jesus came to us in the darkness and the cold. In the eerie silence of the night and the landscape of abandonment, Jesus came.

God reminds us that even in the worst of circumstances when we are consumed by grief or exposed and lonely, that God can wrap us in everlasting hope.

HYMN #37 “Infant Holy, Infant Lowly”

SECOND CANDLE

Leader: The second candle we light is to remember that Jesus did not come into the world alone. God did not just make him appear in that dark night but surrounded him with loving parents. On this night when we feel alone, may we be comforted by the people in our lives who have been present for us, those people who nurtured us, those people that were here even when everyone else was gone.

But God, when memories don't suffice, help remind us that we are never alone in you. You hear our prayers, you comfort our souls, love us unconditionally. Let us lean into this faith that you have rooted in us that we might find peace in this winter time.

HYMN #24 “Away in a Manger”

THIRD CANDLE

Leader: The third candle we light when we do not know where to go, when we have lost direction. Many of us who had once outlined a clear path now find ourselves in the regret of life. Perhaps illness, or necessity, death or tragedy changed our life's trajectory.

But, we are reminded today about the light, the star that gives us direction. This is the star that alerted the shepherds and guided the kings. When our path seems murky, it is Jesus who is the Christ who gives us guidance and assurance in this life that God has given us.

HYMN #36 “In the Bleak Mid-Winter”

FOURTH CANDLE

Leader: The fourth candle we light as a sign of hope, the hope that the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering. It is a reminder that the light is spread from one candle to the next—it is the light of Christ. It is the light of the World.

When Jesus tells us that he is the light of the world, we are reminded that it is through Jesus that death has no more hold over us. Just as the light takes over the darkness so does the promise of Christ who reminds us that in him there is no darkness at all.

HYMN #53

“What Child is This”

A READING FROM THE SCRIPTURES

Ephesians 5:8-14

MEDITATION

“Enthusiasm”

The Rev. Dr. Christine Dempsey

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

“Huron Carol”

attributed to Jean de Brebeuf; arr. Lisa D. Lucas

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Leader: In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask our God for all the good things we need: For ourselves as we participate in this Christmas as special people coping with our many different losses. God, hear our prayer.

People: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For our families and friends, that they may continue to help and support us. God, hear our prayer.

People: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For any person we have loved who has died, for all the losses we know in our lives, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise. God, hear our prayer.

People: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For our family and friends, that you may bless them with love, peace, and joy. God, hear our prayer.

People: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For peace throughout the world as proclaimed by the Christmas Angels on that faraway hillside. God, hear our prayer.

People: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For greater understanding of the lessons of love and acceptance as taught by Jesus your Christ. God, hear our prayer.

People: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: 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 Jesus, who taught us to pray:

People: 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

CLOSING

HYMN #110 (GLORY TO GOD) SEE FOLLOWING PAGE "Love Has Come"

Leader: May the hope of the Christ Child sustain us through this darkness.

People: That together we may shine again. Amen.

POSTLUDE "Veni, Veni, Emmanuel" Anthony Giamanco



*On this long dark night we await the coming of Christ.
We long for the light of his presence,
With us and in us.
When our souls are deeply troubled,
and our hearts break with the weight of sorrow,
may our grief be seasoned with love,
and our sorrow be buoyed by hope.
In our times of God-forsakenness and estrangement,
May we gaze on the innocent One,
made perfect through suffering
and see in him our vulnerable God,
who saves in weakness and pain.
May our suffering empty us of pride,
and lead us to true joy
our only security,
in Christ the infinite depths of God's grace.*

Christine Sine



Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Tuesday, December 24th

5:00pm

Hear the story of the birth of Jesus through
scripture, carols, choir, bells
& organ

