

Hosted by OUR SAVIOUR'S CALLED TO CARE COMMITTEE
GRACE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
& OUR SAVIOUR'S UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

BLUE CHRISTMAS HEALING SERVICE

Dec. 18, 2025

** All who are able please stand*

L: Leader; P: People
Accompanist: Nicole Burdick

A Word of Welcome and Instruction

INVITATION

L: Come. God has drawn you here this day, so again, I say, come. Rest here. Put down all that you have carried. You have done well but it is time to rest. You may be lonely but look around. You are not alone in your grief, your fears, your bone-deep weariness. On earth, you are loved. In God, you are known.

*CALL TO WORSHIP

L: We do not know God's plan for us. We stumble and fall, careening out of control as we wrestle the pain, inside of us, and out.

P: Stay alert! We do not know the hour when God will bring relief to those crying out for mercy.

L: We hide ourselves away, not wanting to burden others with the complexities of our pain.

P: Stay alert! We do not know the hour when God will relieve us of the grief we carry.

L: We chastise ourselves for being weak and broken when we are cowering in fear.

P: Stay alert! We do not know the hour when God will heal us and venerate our bravery.

L: We stand here, exhausted and sick of prayer when the answers do not come.

P: Stay alert! We do not know the hour when God will whisper faith directly into our ears, when joy will spill from our lips like pearls slipping a string.

L: We have been waiting. It feels like our time will never come.

P: Stay alert! God comes to us both as an infant in a barn and as a man suffering on the cross. God knows our pain and loves us no matter what.

HYMN: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

R86/Projected

*PRAYER OF INVOCATION

ALL: Emmanuel, we come to you when there is nowhere else to go. We crawl on our knees across the glass of grief, of loss, of anger, and abandonment. We drown in the suffering of our siblings halfway around the world and in our own homes, begging you for justice and mercy. Hear

us, Beloved One! Hear our small sorrows and deep torments and to them, speak peace.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

FIRST CANDLE

L: As we light the candle of hope, we ask, O God, where is our hope? Where are your known plans to give us a future? Where is the hope that renews our strength when we've experienced such long stints of loss? How do we set our minds on things above when we are so tired and confused? How do we trust that the fires we walk through will not burn us when we have been burned before?

P: In the darkness, Lord, lead us to the light of Hope. (silence)

SECOND CANDLE

L: As we light the candle of peace, we ask, O God, where is our peace? Where is the peace that passes understanding? Where is the peace in which we lie down and sleep, where you make us to dwell in safety? Where is the peace in our world, in our homes, and our hearts? Where is the peace for those who have loved and lost, who have experienced trauma, who have made mistakes?

P: In the darkness, Lord, lead us to the light of Peace. (silence)

THIRD CANDLE

L: As we light the candle of joy, we ask, O God, where is our joy? How do we celebrate amongst grief? How do we exercise the muscles of laughter amidst tears? Where is our joy for this life when we are surrounded by so much death? Where is our joy in this community when we are isolated by so much loneliness? Where is our joy in this day that you have made? How can we be glad in it?

P: In the darkness, Lord, lead us to the light of Joy. (silence)

FOURTH CANDLE

L: As we light the candle of love, we ask, O God, where is our love? Where do we find it again once we've invested it in such fragile bodies no longer here? Where do we find it again after an ending, a tragedy, a betrayal? Where is love amongst so much hate? Where is love amongst so much pain? Where is love for our neighbor when we cannot see your image within them? Where is love for ourselves when we cannot see your image within us?

P: In the darkness, Lord, lead us to the light of Love. (silence)

SCRIPTURE LESSON: Luke 2:8-19

REFLECTION: "Where is the good news, great joy, and peace for me?"

Rev. Clay Salmela

PASTORAL PRAYER

HYMN: "In the Bleak Midwinter"

R102/Projected

CHRIST CANDLE

L: As we light the Christ candle, we ask, O God, where is Christ? He is here among us, sharing in our life, promising us a place and time of no more pain and suffering. He is here among us, giving us today what we need for today. He is here among us, showing us God's self in each other, in nature, in memory, in healing—however slowly. He is here among us, with a yoke that is easy and a burden that is light. He is here among us, resurrecting. He is here among us, not leaving us. He is here among us, not forsaking us. He is here among us, still.

P: God is here among us, still.

L: Let us pray.

ALL: God who came near, is near, and will come near again, wrap these names in your unquestionable presence at this time. We thank you that all of the darkness in the universe cannot squelch a single flame. Lead us to your Light, O Lord. Comfort us on the winding road of grief. Steady us on the disorienting road of change. Fill us on the empty road of loss. Connect us on the lonely road of despair. Heal us in ways for which we don't know how to ask. Meet us in places and people where we'd least expect you. We thank you for the Christmas Story and the gift that it offers us in telling us to "Keep going. God has come."

L: In the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

P: Amen.

LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES

The lighting of the candles symbolizes our struggles. We invite any who wish to, to come forward and light a candle(s) letting their flame symbolize what you are grieving. You may also simply remain seated and chose one of the candle flames to represent that which you are grieving. When everyone who wishes to has come forward, we will lite any remaining candles.

HYMN: "Silent Night"

R95/Projected

BENEDICTION

L: We do not go out into the night alone. Our souls are bound together by the grace of our Triune God, in whom all may find rest. Remember, you are always welcome here. Come. Rest. Be loved.

ALL: Amen.

*Postlude