

# Welcome to St. Andrew's Presbyterian Church



## Blue Christmas

A Service of Remembrance & Hope

**December 21st, 2024**

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\*Denotes to stand if able

**SUNDAY SHEPHERD**

**Judy Bernethy**

**GATHERING FOR WORSHIP**

**PRELUDE**

St. Andrew's Carillon

**PRAISE TO GOD**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

Pastor: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by God, and without God nothing came to be. What came to be through God was life, and this life was the light of the world.

**People: The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

**WELCOME**

**CANDLE LIGHTING LITURGY**

Pastor: We light this first candle to remember our loved ones lost, whose presence we ache for, whose spirit we miss, whose absence we grieve.

**People: God, we ache.**

Pastor: This candle represents the wide range of losses we and others in our lives are grieving right now: broken relationships, the loss of health, jobs, faith that used to be certain, and dreams that were shattered.

**People: God, we are grieving**

Pastor: We light this candle for our weary souls, for the burdens we are carrying, for our heavy hearts.

**People: God, we long for light.**

Pastor: We light this candle as a symbol of our desire for hope and peace in this season, to remember despite the darkness, light and love can seep in.

**People: God, we are open to your light and love.**

Pastor: We light these candles in thanksgiving for loved ones lost, for past health and joy that now seems so distant. We light these candles in prayer, that we will feel God's love in our present sorrow. We light these candles in hope, for the promises of God yet to be revealed.

**People: Glory to God. Amen**

**HYMN # 250**

*"O Little Town Of Bethlehem" v. 1 – 4*

**FIRST READING: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11**

## **PSALM 22 (Responsive)**

Pastor: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words of my groaning?

**People: O my God, I cry by day but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.**

Pastor: In you, our ancestors trusted. They trusted and you delivered them.

**People: It was you who brought me from the womb, you who kept me safe on my mother's breast. Since my mother bore me, you have been my God.**

Pastor: Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

**People: God does not despise the affliction of the afflicted. God does not hide from me. When I cry to God, God hears me. Thanks be to God.**

## **PSALM 23 (In-Unison)**

**The LORD is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; he leadeth me beside the still waters. He restoreth my soul; he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his Name's sake. Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death, I will fear no evil; for thou art with me; thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me. Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of mine enemies; thou annointest my head with oil; my cup runneth over. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days of my life, and I will dwell in the house of the LORD forever.**

## **SPECIAL MUSIC**

*"Nachemu"* by Elana Arian, Central Synagogue New York

## **SECOND READING: Isaiah 40**

## **ACTS OF REMEMBRANCE**

### **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE (Responsive)**

Pastor: ...[Continues]... Lord, hear our prayer,

**All: And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Pastor: ...[Continues]... Lord, hear our prayer.

**All: And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Pastor: ...[Continues]... Lord, hear our prayer.

**All: And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Pastor: ...[Continues]... Lord, hear our prayer,

**All: And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Pastor: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake.

Amen.

**HYMN # 262**

*"Away In A Manger" v. 1 – 3*

**THIRD READING:** Luke 2: 1-7

**OFFERING OF LIGHT (Responsive)**

Pastor: ...[Continues]... Let us pray.

**All: Gentle God of love, help us reach out together for the light of faith, for renewal and recovery and a new day coming. Grant that hope may come to rest in our hearts, and let it go forth with us into the darkness, this night and in the nights to come, until we see the dawn.**

Pastor: Lighten our darkness, we beseech you, O God; give us light in the night season; and by your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night. Amen.

**PSALM 121 (In-Unison)**

**I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills, from whence cometh my help. My help cometh from the Lord, who hath made heaven and earth. He will not suffer thy foot to be moved; he that keepeth thee will not slumber; behold, the God that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep. The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand. The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon at night. The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil and shall sustain thy soul. He shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in, from this time forth and even forevermore.**

**PRAYER (Responsive)**

Pastor: Let us pray.

**All: Almighty God, we thank you for your constant love and for the blessings of this day. We know that even when we cannot see or feel you, still you are there. Help us to remember you and to listen for your voice in the words of family, friends, and strangers. Kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you reveal yourself in the world and in our lives. Let the light of your holy Spirit shine like these candles in the darkness, lighting the way for all who feel despairing, lost, or forgotten, and grant that it may come to dwell so deeply in our hearts that when we leave this place it may shine on, for us and for those we meet along the way. Amen.**

**HYMN # 253**

*"Silent Night" v. 1 – 4*



## THE LORD'S SUPPER

### INVITATION

### INSTITUTION AND DISTRIBUTION OF ELEMENTS

Hymn # 500 "Be Known to Us" Plays during distribution of the bread and cup.

### PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER (In-Unison)

**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.**

### SILENT PRAYER

#### CONCLUDING PRAYERS (Responsive)

Pastor: Let us pray.

**All: Another day will come, O God. I know not what it may bring forth, but make me ready, God, for whatever it may be. If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely. If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly. If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently. And if I am to do nothing, help me do it gallantly. Make these words more than words, and give me the Spirit of thy Peace. Amen.**

Pastor: O God, support us all the day long in this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen.

### PASSING OF THE PEACE

Pastor: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

**People And also with you.**

*(People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.)*

### BLESSING

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**THANK YOU FOR JOINING US TODAY!**

