



**Blue Christmas Service  
December 21, 2022**

St Paul's Anglican Church, Lindsay ON

**Incumbent**

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This service is based upon Evening Prayer,  
The Book of Alternative Services,  
Anglican Church of Canada

**PROCESSIONAL HYMN: #122** In the Bleak Midwinter

**Officiant:** Light and Peace in Jesus Christ Our Lord

**People: Thanks be to God**

**Lighting of the fourth Advent Candle** (tune: Away in a Manger)

**A Candle is burning, a candle of love,  
A candle to point us to heaven above,  
A baby for Christmas, a wonderful birth,  
For Jesus is bringing God's love to our earth.**

**Advent Thanksgiving**

**Officiant:** Blessed are you, O Lord our God. ruler of the universe, creator of light and darkness. In this holy season, when the sun's light is swallowed up by the growing darkness of the night, you renew your promise to reveal among us the splendour of your glory, enfleshed and visible to us in Jesus Christ your Son. Through the prophets you teach us to hope for his reign of peace. Through the outpouring of his Spirit, you open our blindness to the glory of his presence.

Strengthen us in our weakness. Support us in our stumbling efforts to do you will and free our tongues to sing your praise. For you all honour and blessing are due, now and for ever.

**Amen**

**Gathering of the Community**

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**THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

**1<sup>ST</sup> READING – Isaiah 40:1-2, 6-11**

Comfort, O comfort my people,  
says your God.  
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem,  
and cry to her  
that she has served her term,  
that her penalty is paid,  
that she has received from the Lord's hand  
double for all her sins.

A voice says, 'Cry out!'  
And I said, 'What shall I cry?'  
All people are grass,  
their constancy is like the flower of the field.  
The grass withers, the flower fades,  
when the breath of the Lord blows upon it;  
surely the people are grass.

The grass withers, the flower fades;  
but the word of our God will stand for ever.  
Get you up to a high mountain,  
O Zion, herald of good tidings;  
lift up your voice with strength,  
O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings,  
lift it up, do not fear;  
say to the cities of Judah,  
'Here is your God!'  
See, the Lord God comes with might,  
and his arm rules for him;  
his reward is with him,  
and his recompense before him.  
He will feed his flock like a shepherd;  
he will gather the lambs in his arms,  
and carry them in his bosom,  
and gently lead the mother sheep.

**Reader:** The word of the Lord

**People: Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 23**

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**2<sup>nd</sup> READING – Revelation 21:1-7**

Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying,  
'See, the home of God is among mortals.  
He will dwell with them;  
they will be his peoples,  
and God himself will be with them;  
he will wipe every tear from their eyes.  
Death will be no more;  
mourning and crying and pain will be no more,  
for the first things have passed away.'

And the one who was seated on the throne said, 'See, I am making all things new.' Also he said, 'Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true.' Then he said to me, 'It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the

end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children.

Reader: The word of the Lord  
**People: Thanks be to God.**

### **The Gospel - Matthew 11:25-30**

**All: "Glory to you, Lord Jesus Christ"**

At that time Jesus said, 'I thank you, Father, Lord of heaven and earth, because you have hidden these things from the wise and the intelligent and have revealed them to infants; yes, Father, for such was your gracious will. All things have been handed over to me by my Father; and no one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son and anyone to whom the Son chooses to reveal him.

'Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

**All: "Praise to you, Lord Jesus Christ"**

**Reflection** – The Rev. Bonnie Skerritt

### **Candle Lighting**

***A time of silent prayer follows the candle lighting***

Officiant: We light four candles tonight in honor of our loved ones. We light one for our grief, one for our courage, one for our memories, and one for our love.

This candle represents our grief. We own the pain of losing loved ones, of dreams that go unfulfilled, of hopes that evaporate in despair. *(A candle is lit and a brief silence follows.)*

This candle represents our courage. It symbolizes the courage to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to share our feelings honestly and openly with each other, and to dare to hope in the midst of pain. *(A candle is lit and a brief silence follows.)*

This candle represents our memories. For the times we laughed together, cried together, were angry with each other or overjoyed with each other. We light this candle for the memories of caring and joy we shared together. *(A candle is lit and a brief silence follows.)*

This candle represents our love. The love we have given, and the love we have received. The love that has gone unacknowledged and unfelt, and the love that has been shared in times of joy and sorrow. *(A candle is lit and a brief silence follows.)*

I invite you to light your own candle to represent your burdens, griefs, sorrows, all those things that make Christmas a "blue" time for you.

You may want to light a tea-light in memory of those you love but see no longer. You are invited to speak the name of your loved one out loud as you do so. When you have lit your candle you are invited to pray silently.

We light the Christ candle, remembering that Jesus Christ is always in the center of our lives. He hears our cries, he knows our hearts and, in the midst of all our thoughts and emotions, he offers us hope and healing. *(Christ Candle is lit.)*

**All: Comforting God, wrap us in your presence in this time of remembrance. As these candles symbolize your light, help us find that light, a light that will guide us day by day, step by step, as we try to live life fully and wholly. We cherish the special ways in which we have been touched by our loved ones. We thank you for the gift their lives have been to us. Now comfort us, encourage us, empower us through the working of your Holy Spirit. Amen.**

**Hear, O Israel**

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**OFFERTORY HYMN - #105** I Heard the Voice of Jesus Say

### **Prayer over the Gifts**

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Officiant: Gracious God,  
By the power of the Spirit  
Who sanctified the mother of your Son,  
Make holy all we offer you this day.  
We ask this in the name of Jesus Christ the Lord.  
**Amen**

### **Prayers of the People – Litany 18**

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**Anthem:** #420 (MP) Like a Candle Flame

### **The Collect**

**All: Creator of the universe, watch over us and keep us in the light of your presence. May our praise continually blend with that of all creation, until we come together to the eternal joys which you promise in your love; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.**

### **The Lord's Prayer**

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### **Dismissal**

Officiant Let us bless the Lord.  
People **Thanks be to God.**  
Officiant May the Lord of peace give us peace in all ways and at all times. **Amen.**

### **RECESSIONAL HYMN - #35 (Sing) Hope is a Star**

**Refrain:** *When God is a child there's joy in our song.  
The last shall be first and the weak shall be strong,  
And none shall be afraid.*

Hope is a star that shines in the night,  
Leading us on till the morning is bright. **(refrain)**

Peace is a ribbon that circles the earth,  
Giving a promise of safety and worth. **(refrain)**

Joy is a song that welcomes the dawn,  
Telling the world that the Saviour is born. **(refrain)**

Love is a flame that burns in our heart.  
Jesus has come and will never depart. **(refrain)**