



BLUE CHRISTMAS

Experiencing God's Love, Hope, & Comfort

DECEMBER 14 | 7:00PM

grace.org/bluechristmas

**Blue Christmas: A Service of Hope and Healing
for the Holiday Season**

*Grace Chapel, Lexington Campus
December 14, 2021*

Prelude: Oh Holy Night (Instrumental) Nia Green
Songwriter: Adolphe Adam Worship Leader

Welcome and Prayer Sunny Toews
Pastor of Community Care

*Call to Worship *John 1:1-5; 14* Sunny Toews
Pastor of Community Care

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with
God and the Word was God.

**All: He was with God in the beginning. Through Him all
things were made; without Him nothing was made
that had been made.**

Leader: In Him was life, and that life was the light of men.
The light shines in the darkness, but the darkness has
not overcome it.

**All: The Word became flesh and made his dwelling
among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one
and only Son, who came from the Father, full of grace
and truth.**

Lighting of the Candles Pat Spaziani and Stephanie Richardson
GriefShare Leaders

*Hymn Oh Little Town Of Bethlehem Nia Green
Songwriter: Phillips Brooks Worship Leader

**Denotes congregation standing (as you are able).*

*O little town of Bethlehem, How still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, The silent stars
go by*

*Yet in thy dark streets shineth, The everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years, Are met in thee
tonight*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, Descend to us we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in, Be born in us today*

*We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings
tell, O come to us abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel*

*We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings
tell, O come to us abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel*

*We hear the Christmas angels, The great glad tidings
tell, O come to us abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel*

O come to us abide with us, Our Lord Emmanuel

Tag - Oh Come Let Us Adore Him - Songwriter: John Francis Wade

Verse 1

*O come let us adore him, O come let us adore him
O come let us adore him, Christ the Lord*

Verse 2

*For he alone is worthy, For he alone is worthy
For he alone is worthy, Christ the Lord*

Verse 3

*We'll give him all the glory, We'll give him all the glory
We'll give him all the glory, Christ the Lord*

*Responsive Reading

Dave Morreale and Sharon Dhavale
Pastoral Residents

Psalm 139: 1-12

Leader: You have searched me, LORD, and you know me. You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my thoughts from afar.

All: You discern my going out and my lying down; you are familiar with all my ways. Before a word is on my tongue you, LORD, know it completely.

Leader: You hem me in behind and before, and you lay your hand upon me. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too lofty for me to attain.

All: Where can I go from your Spirit? Where can I flee from your presence? If I go up to the heavens, you are there; if I make my bed in the depths, you are there.

Leader: If I rise on the wings of the dawn, if I settle on the far side of the sea, even there your hand will guide me, your right hand will hold me fast.

All: If I say, "Surely the darkness will hide me and the light becomes night around me," even the darkness will not be dark to you; the night will shine like the day, for darkness is as light to you. O Wisdom, Lord and Ruler, Root of Jesse, Key of David, Rising Sun, King of the Nations, Emmanuel, Come Lord Jesus.

**Denotes congregation standing (as you are able).*

Lighting of the First Advent Candle

Kent Morsch
Stephen Minister

Leader: This first candle we light to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their face, their voice. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us in this season.

All: May God's eternal love surround them.

A reflective pause while the first candle is lit.

Lighting of the Second Advent Candle

Jean Middleton
Stephen Minister

Leader: This second candle we light to redeem the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, and the loss of financial security. We pause to gather up the pain of the past and offer it to you, O God, asking that from Your hands, we receive the gift of peace.

All: Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into your future.

A reflective pause while the second candle is lit.

Lighting of the Third Advent Candle

Diana Chism
(En)Courage

Leader: This third candle we light to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us, years of difficult times. We remember the disbelief, the anger, the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and pain.

All: Let us remember that light defeats darkness.

A reflective pause while the third candle is lit.

Lighting of the Fourth Advent Candle

Chris Haydon
Pastor of Care and Support

Leader: This fourth candle we light to remember our faith and the gift of hope which God offers to us in the Christmas story. We remember that God, who gives us life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

**All: Let us remember the one who shows the way,
who brings the truth, and who bears the light and goes
with us into our tomorrow.**

A reflective pause while the fourth candle is lit.

Solo: Because He Lives Nia Green
Songwriters: Bill Gaither/ Worship Leader
Gloria L Gaither

*God sent His Son, They called Him Jesus
He came to love, Heal and forgive
He lived and died, To buy my pardon
An empty grave is there, To prove my Savior lives*

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow
Because He lives, All fear is gone
Because I know, He holds the future
And life is worth the living, Just because He lives*

*And then one day, I'll cross that river
I'll fight life's final war with pain
And then as death, Gives way to victory
I'll see the lights of glory, And I'll know He lives*

*Because He lives, I can face tomorrow
Because He lives, All fear is gone
Because I know, He holds the future
And life is worth the living, Just because He lives*

And life is worth the living, Just because He lives

The Prayers of the People

Sunny Toews
Pastor of Community Care

Leader: God of wisdom, we come to you this Christmas Season tired, in turmoil, and in pain. As the nights have grown longer, so has darkness grown and wrapped itself around hearts. In this season of longest night, we ask your healing blessings upon all that we carry in our hearts-sorrow we fear may never end, wounds we cannot even put into words. Lord, hear our prayer, and in your merciful love, answer.

All: **God of mercy and compassion, there are those among us who are grieving over what might have been. Death or loss or terrible hurt has changed our experience of Christmas. We remember that once it was a special day for us too, but someone or something precious has gone away from us in this life. We have lost a loved one, a job, a goal, a cause, or a dream. We find ourselves adrift and alone. We are weary from the journey, and we have found no room at the inn. We come to you seeking rest, and peace, and shelter from the storm. Lord, hear our prayer. And in your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: God of grace, in the spirit of the season, grant us all that we need to comfort us as we journey through this Christmas season. We ask that you shelter and sustain all of us, both here and throughout the world, who wander or want or weep or are heavy laden, that we may be lifted up in courage and journey on in Thy peace. Lord, hear our prayer. And in Your merciful love, answer.

All: **God of love, in this Christmas Season, we embrace and offer up to you all that used to be which is now lost to us and cannot be again. With celebration all around us, memories of what was, and fears of what may be, weigh heavy on our hearts. Please hold us close in your embrace, be near to us this night, until the light**

**returns, and morning comes. Lord, hear our prayer,
and in Your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: 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, grant
compassion to the afflicted, and all for Thy love's sake.
Amen.

Message "God's Greater Comfort" Stephen Nyakairu
Passage: 2 Corinthians 1: 3-11 Watertown
Campus Pastor

**Invitation to light candles: All who wish may come forward to light a
candle in memory of someone or as a sign of hope.**

*Hymn Silent Night, Holy Night
Songwriter: Joseph Mohr

*Silent Night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin mother and Child.
Holy Infant so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace,
Sleep in heavenly peace.*

*Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight
Glories stream from heaven afar
Heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born
Christ the Savior is born*

*Denotes congregation standing (as you are able)

*Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face
With the dawn of redeeming grace
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth
Jesus Lord, at Thy birth*

Closing Remarks and Benediction

Bryan Wilkerson
Senior Pastor

You may wish to linger quietly here in the Sanctuary. Stephen Ministers will be available for prayer. Stephen Ministers will also be available for prayer in the Prayer Chapel. Please feel free to approach any of the people wearing a blue Stephen Minister badge.

Please join us in the Courtyard for a time of refreshment.

GriefShare is a 13-week program for those coping with the death of a family member or friend and provides education about the process of grief, as well as support from others in similar circumstances. You don't have to go through the grieving process alone. The next series starts on March 17, 2022 from 10:00am to 12pm at 2 Militia Drive, Lexington in Room 101. www.grace.org/article/griefshare/

Pathways to Parenthood is a support ministry that comes alongside people who have a heart for children but are struggling to become a mother or a father. Our confidential meetings will be a place where one is supported and prayed for throughout all of the physical, emotional, and spiritual trials this stage of life may bring. They meet bi-weekly on Sunday's. The next gathering will start at 9:15am on December 19, 2021 at 2 Militia Drive, Lexington in room 101.

www.grace.org/article/pathways-to-parenthood

(En)Courage is a support ministry for cancer patients, caregivers, and post-cancer individuals. The meetings are intended to be a prayerful place where members may find encouragement, support, and strength. We pray, we share, we listen, and we'd love to hear your story. The next meeting will be from 10:30am to 12pm on December 17, 2021, via Zoom. www.grace.org/article/encourage/

Celebrate Recovery is a Christian recovery ministry for anyone dealing with hurts, habits, and hang-ups that are keeping them from discovering and living God's best plan for their life. CR will start meeting in the courtyard at 59 Worthen Road at our Lexington campus on December 20th at 6:30pm. For more information go to www.grace.org/cr/.

Stephen Ministry is a one-on-one care ministry grounded in Jesus' command to love one another. Through one-to-one caring relationships, those who are hurting receive the love and care they need to support them. If you would like to be connected to a Stephen Minister, please contact Pastor Sunny Toews at stoews@grace.org.



Care & Support

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