



Kensington Presbyterian Church

Blue Christmas

December 21, 2020

WELCOME, during these times of physical isolation we are putting out these worship services that you can do at home.¹ This doesn't mean you have to do them alone. You can invite those who live with you, or connect with others through the phone or computer, or even in small groups outside.

If you have any prayer requests, ideas, or just want to talk, please reach out to your elder or Rev. Peter (Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca).

Announcements

Christmas Eve: Dec 24th at 7:00 p.m.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84809937801?pwd=T3RaNThNdk9BRVN6UXEwNnNZengyQT09>

or phone: 438-809-7799

Meeting ID: 848 0993 7801

Passcode: 7864826

Regular Worship: Sunday's at 10:30 a.m.

Visiting: The government considers ministers to be essential workers. If you need a visit, please contact Rev. Peter.

Prayer Group: will be meeting through Zoom on Wed. at 11:30 a.m.

Contacts

Church Office: 514-486-4559.....info@Kensingtonchurch.ca

Rev. Peter Rombeek (pastor).....Peter@Kensingtonchurch.ca

Antoinette (families).....Antoinette@Kensingtonchurch.ca

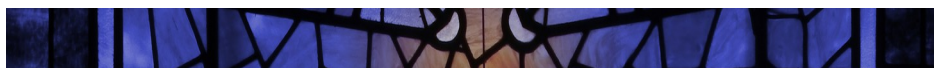
¹ note: that the footnotes are not as thorough as an academic paper That said, chunks of this service are adapted from adapted from Daniel Benedict, OSL, Blue Christmas for the Cathedral of St. Andrew's



Friedrich Peter RCA, God's Heart, 2007.

God's hope by F Peter

Before you start we invite you to have five candles set up,
leaving the middle one as the 'Christ Candle'.



Call to worship (John 1: 1-5)

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God,
and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God.
All things came into being through him, and without him not
one thing came into being. What has come into being in him
was life, and the life was the light of all people.

**The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.**



Light the Christ Candle

♪ Hymn: It came upon the midnight clear.....pg 6



Readings

Psalms 22² (responsive)

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?

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

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

**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.

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

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.

2 selected verses

Matthew 11:28-29

“Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened,
and I will give you rest.

Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me;
for I am gentle and humble in heart,
you will find rest for your souls.”

Response:

These passages remind us that God knows there are times when
we are weary; when we are afflicted. Like the perfect parent,
God does not hide from us. God hears, holds, and cries with
us. Let us approach our saviour, our comforter, in prayer.



Prayer of Approach³

Loving God,

who waits with us and walks beside us,

who speaks into all memory and shares every thought,

wait with us now, making this moment precious and close.

Help us lose ourselves in you:

in the depth of love that is generous enough to hold us,

strong enough to wrap us,

eternal enough to call us and patient enough to accompany us.

May we find the richness of this time,

the wealth of memory and value of story,

the certainty of promise,

the healing of laughter,

the generosity of time.

May we find what we need to find,

know what we need to know

and trust what we need to trust in you.

Amen

3 adapted from *Blue Christmas*. ed. Ruth Burgess. Wild Goose Publ

♪ Hymn: Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming.....pg 7

Litany of Remembrance



The first candle is lit.



We light this first candle to remember
those whom we have loved and who
have left this reality.

We pause to remember their faces, their voices, their bodies, their
spirits.

We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to
us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for
the Light.

**We remember them with love. May God's eternal love
surround them.**

A period of silent reflection

♪ **Oh come, Oh come, Emmanuel:** verse 1.....pg 8

Oh come, Oh come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the son of God appear.
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.



The second candle is lit.



We light this second candle to remember
the pain of loss:

loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs,
loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy.

We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and
we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and
open hands You will place the gift of peace, shalom.

We remember that through You all things are possible.

**Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your
future.**

A period of silent reflection

♪ **Oh come, Oh come, Emmanuel:** verse 3

O come thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far
and nigh; to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in
her ways to go.

Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.



The third candle is lit.



We light this third candle to remember
ourselves this Christmas time.

We pause and remember the past weeks,
months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with
our burdens.

We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory,
the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain.

We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen
short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you,
for all that we have suffered.

We accept and lay before you the time we have walked alone,
in darkness; and in knowledge of our own mortality.

**We remember that our journey has included dark times,
and while sometimes we turned away from the light,
the light itself has not failed.**

**We remember on this longest night
that dawn will come.**

A period of silent reflection

♪ **Oh come, Oh come, Emmanuel:** verse 6

Oh come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
our spirits by thine advent here;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
and death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.



The fourth candle is lit.

We light this fourth candle to remember
faith, the gift of light and the hope
that God offers to us in the story of
Christmas, which began with insecurity, and humbleness.
We remember that the loving God who came to share this life
with us promises us comfort and peace.



**We remember the One who shares our burdens,
who shows us the way to the Light,
and who journeys with us into all our tomorrows.**

A period of silent reflection

♪ **Oh come, Oh come, Emmanuel:** verse 7

Oh come desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart, one mind;
Bid envy, strife and discord cease,
and be thyself our source of Peace
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

A period of silent reflection

📖 reading: Psalm 23⁴

The Lord is my shepherd,
I shall not want.
In grass meadows He makes me lie down,
by quiet waters guides me.
My life He brings back.
He leads me on pathways of
justice for His name's sake.
Even though I walk through
the darkest valley,
I fear no harm,
for You are with me.
Your rod and Your staff -
they comfort me.
You set out a table before me
in the face of my foes.
You moisten my head with oil,
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and kindness shall pursue me
all the days of my life.
And I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.



Good Shepherd - J Dupre



Eucharist, Source & Summit - Garcia

⁴ a combination of NRSV and Robert Alter's translation in *The Book of Psalms*. W.W. Norton



Prayer

Dear Jesus, you are the Good Shepherd - our shepherd.
 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,
 you are still with us - not watching from a distance,
 but walking with us... sometimes holding us in your arms.
 Help us to remember you;
 to listen for your voice
 in the words of family, friends, and strangers.
 Warm our hearts and awaken hope,
 that we may know you in the world and in our lives.
 Let the light of your holy Spirit shine in the darkness,
 lighting the way for all who feel depressed, despair,
 lost, left, or forgotten.
 Have your light shine so securely in our hearts
 that when we leave this time it may shine on,
 for us and for those we meet along the way. Amen.



reading: Luke 2: 1-14

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. All went to their own towns to be registered. Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

In that region there were shepherds living in the fields, keeping watch over their flock by night. Then an angel of the

Lord stood before them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified. But the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger.' And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying,

'Glory to God in the highest heaven,
 and on earth peace, goodwill among people!'

Hymn: Silent Night.....pg 9

Benediction

In this time of worshiping God, we embrace and claim the darkness that is present both in the world and in our own lives. As people who are familiar with the darkness, we also know that we can be illumined by the light of the Christ Child this Christmas season.

May the Christ Child, born in a lowly stable, who knows isolation, disappointment, pain and the death of loved ones... may Christ bring us light, comfort, peace, and joy this holiday season.

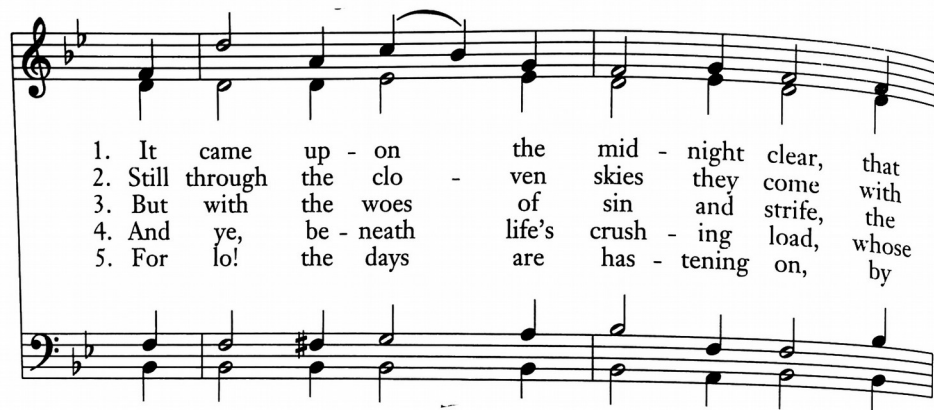
May the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ
 the love of God

and the companionship of the Holy Spirit
 be with you all. Amen.



The Manger - M Moyers

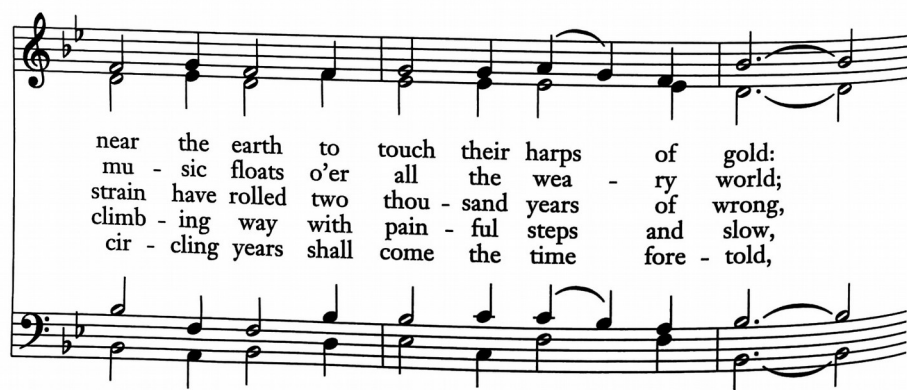
It came upon the midnight clear



1. It came up - on the mid - night clear, that
 2. Still through the clo - ven skies they come, whose
 3. But with the woes of sin and strife, the
 4. And ye, be - neath life's crush - ing load, whose
 5. For lo! the days are has - tening on, by




glo - rious song of old, from an - gels bend - ing
 peace - ful wings un - furled, and still their heaven - ly
 world has suf - fered long; be - neath the an - gel
 forms are bend - ing low; who toil a - long the
 pro - phets seen of old, when with the ev - er -



near the earth to touch their harps of gold:
 mu - sic floats o'er all the wea - ry world;
 strain have rolled two thou - sand years of wrong,
 climb - ing way with pain - ful steps and slow,
 cir - cling years shall come the time fore - told,

Words: Edmund Hamilton Sears (1810–1876), alt Music: Richard Storrs Willis (1819–1900)



"To all the earth good - will and peace, from
 a - bove its sad and low - ly plains they
 but we, through din of war, hear not the
 look now! for glad and gold - en hours come
 when peace shall o - ver all the earth God's

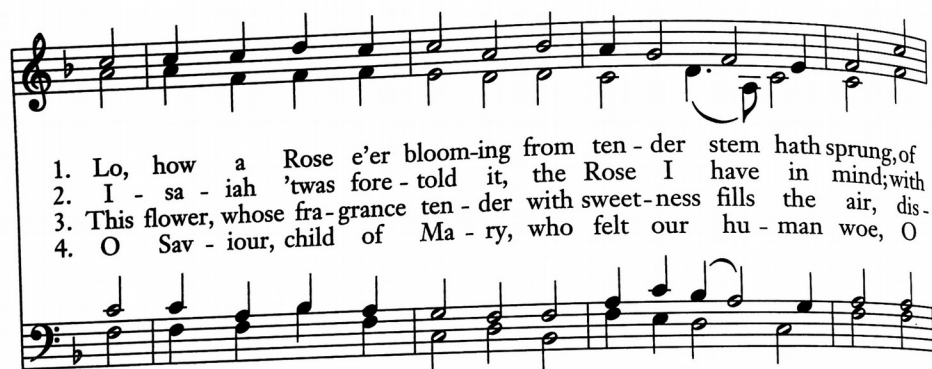


heaven's all - gra - cious King"; the world in sol - emn
 bend on hov - ering wing, and ev - er o'er its
 love - song which they bring. Oh hush the noise, Oh
 swift - ly on the wing. Oh rest be - side the
 pro - mised splen - dours fling, and all the world take



still - ness lay to hear the an - gels sing.
 ba - bel sounds the bless - ed an - gels sing.
 still the strife and hear the an - gels sing.
 wea - ry road and hear the an - gels sing.
 up the song, which now the an - gels sing.

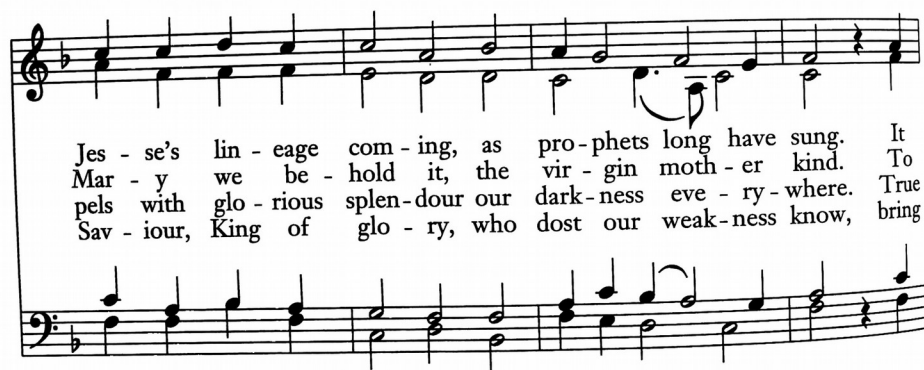
Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming



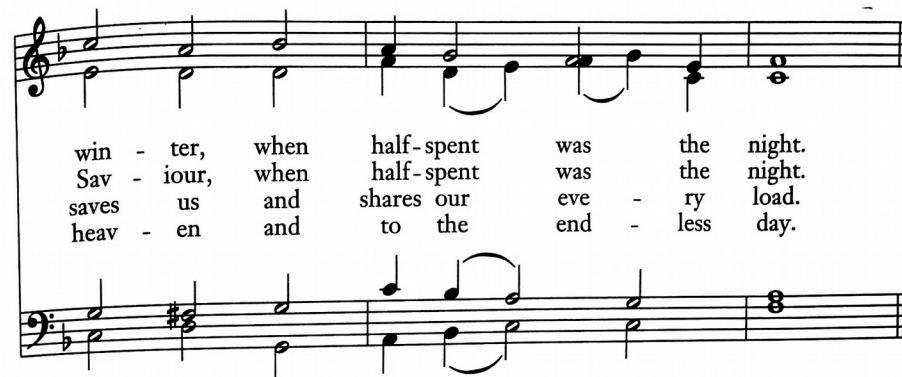
1. Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom-ing from ten-der stem hath sprung, of
 2. I - sa - iah 'twas fore - told it, the Rose I have in mind; with
 3. This flower, whose fra-grance ten-der with sweet-ness fills the air, dis-
 4. O Sav - iour, child of Ma - ry, who felt our hu - man woe, O



came, a flower - et bright, a - mid the cold of
 show God's love a - right, she bore to us a
 flesh, yet ver - y God, from sin and death he
 us at length, we pray, to the bright courts of



Jes - se's lin - eage com - ing, as pro-phets long have sung. It
 Mar - y we be - hold it, the vir - gin moth - er kind. To
 pels with glo - rious splen-dour our dark-ness eve - ry - where. True
 Sav - iour, King of glo - ry, who dost our weak-ness know, bring



win - ter, when half-spent was the night.
 Sav - iour, when half-spent was the night.
 saves us and shares our eve - ry load.
 heav - en and to the end - less day.



The Birth
 Paul Gauguin

Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel

1. Oh come, oh come, Em-man - u - el, and ran-som cap-tive
 2. Oh come, oh come, thou Lord of might, who to thy tribes on
 3. Oh come, thou Wis-dom from on high, and or - der all things
 4. Oh come, thou Branch of Jes - se, free thine own from Sa-tan's
 5. Oh come, thou Key of Da - vid, come and o - pen wide our

Em Bm G Am Em D Bm C

Is - ra - el, that mourns in low - ly ex - ile here,
 Si - nai's height, in an-cient times didst give the law,
 far and nigh; to us the path of knowl - edge show,
 tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple save,
 heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on high

Am Bm Em Am Em Bm

6. Oh come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer
 our spirits by thine advent here;
 disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
 and death's dark shadows put to flight. Rejoice!...
7. Oh come, desire of nations, bind
 all peoples in one heart, one mind;
 bid envy, strife and discord cease,
 and be thyself our source of peace. Rejoice!...

Words: Latin, 13th century; translation, John Mason Neale (1818-1866); French, H. Écuyer
 Music: Gregorian plainsong; arrangement, Healey Willan (1880-1968)

Words: public domain Music: arrangement, copyright © Michael Willan, executor of the estate of Healey Willan

Refrain

un - til the Son of God ap-pear.
 in cloud and maj-es - ty and awe.
 and cause us in her ways to go. Re-joice, re-joice!
 and give them vic-tory o'er the grave.
 and close the path to mis - er - y.

Em D G Am Em G D Em Bm

Em-man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el.

G Am D Em G/B Em Am Bm Em

1. Oh! viens bientôt, Emmanuel,
 nous délivrer du joug cruel,
 et du péché briser la loi;
 ton peuple entier s'attend à toi.
 Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel,
 voici venir Emmanuel!

2. Oh! viens bientôt, que ta clarté
 dissipe nos obscurités.
 Errants et tristes dans la nuit,
 nous appelons le jour qui luit.
 Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel,
 voici venir Emmanuel!

3. Oh! viens bientôt, descends vers nous,
 Saint Fils du ciel, aimant et doux.
 Aux cœurs troublés apporte donc
 la paix divine du pardon.
 Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel,
 voici venir Emmanuel!

4. Oh! viens bientôt, puissant Sauveur,
 nous réveiller de nos langueurs!
 Il n'est que toi, céleste Pain,
 qui puisse apaiser notre faim.
 Joyeux, levez les yeux au ciel,
 voici venir Emmanuel!

Silent Night

1. Si - lent night! ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2. Si - lent night! ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3. Si - lent night! ho - ly night! Son of God,
 1. Stil - le Nacht, hei - li - ge Nacht! Al - les schläft,

ho - ly in - fant so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heaven - ly hosts sing "Hal - le - lu - jah, Christ, the Sav - iour is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at thy
 Hol - der Kna - be im lok - ki - gen Haar, schlaf in himm - lich - er

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child,
 at the sight: glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from thy ho - ly face,
 ein - sam wacht nur das trau - te hoch - hei - li - ge Paar.

peace; sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - iour is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at thy birth.
 Ruh', schlaf in himm - lich - er Ruh'.

Words: German, Joseph Mohr (1792–1848), translation, John Freeman Young (1820–1885)
 Music: Franz Gruber (1787–1863)

God's hope
 F Peter

