

A row of lit candles in glass holders, receding into the distance. The background is dark with soft, out-of-focus bokeh lights in shades of blue and gold. The text 'Blue CHRISTMAS' is overlaid in white.

# *Blue* CHRISTMAS

WASHINGTON NATIONAL CATHEDRAL

## SERVICE PARTICIPANTS

### PRESIDER

The Reverend Canon Jan Naylor Cope  
*Provost*

### HOMILIST

The Reverend Canon Leonard L. Hamlin, Sr.  
*Canon Missioner and Minister of Equity and Inclusion*

### GOSPELLER

The Very Reverend Randolph Marshall Hollerith  
*Dean*

### ASSISTING CLERGY

The Reverend Canon Rosemarie Logan Duncan  
*Canon for Worship*

The Reverend Canon Kelly Brown Douglas  
*Canon Theologian*

The Reverend Patrick L. Keyser  
*Associate Priest for Worship*

The Reverend Spencer Brown  
*Priest Associate*

The Reverend Lucretia Mann

### MUSICIANS

Thomas M. Sheehan  
*Organist and Associate Director of Music*

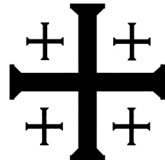
Jasmine Jacobs, *singer*

### READERS

Auriol Europe Greene  
Billy Cramer

### INTERCESSOR

Eddie Ching



# BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

December 19, 2023 • 7:00 PM

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*The people's responses are in bold.*

## PRELUDE

*Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

Keith Chapman (1945–1989)

*The people stand as able.*

## THE BIDDING

### THE GATHERING OF THE PEOPLE

We cry to the Lord who counts and collects our tears.

**Be with us now.**

In our grief and our pain, our bodies and spirits cry out.

**Hear us, O Lord. Amen.**

Hear my prayer, O Lord; let my cry come to you. Do not hide your face from me in the day of my distress. Incline your ear to me; answer me speedily in the day when I call. (*Psalm 102:1-2*)

## HYMN • 66 (STANZAS 1, 3–4)

*Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus*

*Stuttgart*

*The soloist sings the first stanza, then all are invited to join in singing stanzas 3 and 4.*

1. Come, thou long - ex - spect - ed Je - sus, born to set thy peo - ple free;  
3. Born thy peo - ple to de - liv - er, born a child, and yet a king,  
4. By thine own e - ter - nal Spi - rit rule in all our hearts a - lone;  
from our fears and sins re - lease us, let us find our rest in thee.  
born to reign in us for ev - er, now thy gra - cious king - dom bring.  
by thine all - suf - fi - cient mer - it raise us to thy glo - rious throne.

## THE OPENING PRAYER

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray.

Almighty God, open us to your healing power. We entrust ourselves to your care, knowing that you are doing for us and for all the world far better things than we can ask or imagine. With you as our companion and guide, strengthen us to hope for all that is good, and to fear no evil. For your love is stronger than death, and your faithfulness reaches to the heavens; and to you we give glory, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, now and to the ages of ages. **Amen.**

*The people are seated.*

## THE PSALM

Psalm 13

Salmo 13

How long, O Lord?

Will you forget me for ever?

How long will you hide your face from me?

How long shall I have perplexity in my mind,  
and grief in my heart, day after day?

How long shall my enemy triumph over me?

Look upon me and answer me, O Lord my God;

give light to my eyes, lest I sleep in death;  
lest my enemy say, "I have prevailed over this one,"  
and my foes rejoice that I have fallen.

But I put my trust in your mercy;

my heart is joyful because of your saving help.

I will sing to the Lord who has dealt with me richly;

I will praise the name of the Lord Most High.

¡Ay Dios! ¿Hasta cuándo?

¿Me olvidarás por siempre?

¿Hasta cuándo me ocultarás tu rostro?

¿Hasta cuándo tendré la mente confundida  
y el corazón afligido todo el día?

Mi enemigo, ¿hasta cuándo va a triunfar?

Mírame y respóndeme, Señor;

alúmbrame los ojos para burlar la muerte,  
para que no se jacte mi adversario en mi derrota  
ni mis enemigos celebren mi caída.

Pero yo pongo mi confianza en tu bondad;

mi corazón celebra tu socorro.

Cantaré a Dios, que me ha colmado de abundancia;

y alabaré el nombre del Altísimo.

## A READING

*An Unending Love*

Rami M. Shapiro (b. 1951)

We are loved by an unending love.

We are embraced by arms that find us  
even when we are hidden from ourselves.

We are touched by fingers that soothe us  
even when we are too proud for soothing.

We are counseled by voices that guide us  
even when we are too embittered to hear.

We are loved by an unending love.

We are supported by hands that uplift us  
even in the midst of a fall.

We are urged on by eyes that meet us  
even when we are too weak for meeting.

We are loved by an unending love.

Embraced, touched, soothed, and counseled,

Ours are the arms, the fingers, the voices;

Ours are the hands, the eyes, the smiles;

We are loved by an unending love.

*The people stand as able at the introduction to the hymn.*

*Blessed Be the God of Israel**Sung by all.**Thornbury*

1. Blessed be the God of Is - rael who comes to set us free;  
 2. He from the house of Da - vid a child of grace has given;  
 3. On pri - son - ers of dark - ness the sun be - gins to rise,  
 he vis - its and re - deems us, he grants us lib - er - ty.  
 a Sa - vior comes a - mong us to raise us up to heaven.  
 the dawn - ing of for - give - ness up - on the sin - ner's eyes.  
 The pro - phets spoke of mer - cy, of free - dom and re - lease;  
 Be - fore him goes his her - ald, fore - run - ner in the way,  
 He guides the feet of pil - grims a - long the paths of peace.  
 God shall ful - fill his prom - ise and bring his peo - ple peace.  
 the pro - phet of sal - va - tion, the har - bin - ger of Day.  
 O bless our God and Sa - vior, with songs that nev - er cease.

## THE HOLY GOSPEL

Luke 1:67-79

Lucas 1:67-79

The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ  
 according to Luke.

**Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

John's father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and spoke this prophecy: "Blessed be the Lord God of Israel, for he has looked favorably on his people and redeemed them. He has raised up a mighty savior for us in the house of his servant David, as he spoke through the mouth of his holy prophets from of old, that we would be saved from our enemies and from the hand of all who hate us. Thus he has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors, and has remembered his holy covenant, the oath that he swore to our ancestor Abraham, to grant us that we, being rescued from the hands of our enemies, might serve him without fear, in holiness and righteousness before him all our days. And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High; for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways, to give knowledge of salvation to his people by the forgiveness of their sins. By the tender mercy of our God, the dawn from on high will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace."

The Gospel of the Lord.

**Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Santo evangelio de nuestro Señor Jesucristo  
 según Lucas.

**Gloria a ti, Cristo Señor.**

Zacarías, el padre del niño, lleno del Espíritu Santo y hablando proféticamente, dijo: «¡Bendito sea el Señor, Dios de Israel, porque ha venido a rescatar a su pueblo! Nos ha enviado un poderoso salvador, un descendiente de David, su siervo. Esto es lo que había prometido en el pasado por medio de sus santos profetas: que nos salvaría de nuestros enemigos y de todos los que nos odian, que tendría compasión de nuestros antepasados y que no se olvidaría de su santa alianza. Y éste es el juramento que había hecho a nuestro padre Abraham: que nos permitiría vivir sin temor alguno, libres de nuestros enemigos, para servirle con santidad y justicia, y estar en su presencia toda nuestra vida. En cuanto a ti, hijito mío, serás llamado profeta del Dios altísimo, porque irás delante del Señor preparando sus caminos, para hacer saber a su pueblo que Dios les perdona sus pecados y les da la salvación. Porque nuestro Dios, en su gran misericordia, nos trae de lo alto el sol de un nuevo día, para dar luz a los que viven en la más profunda oscuridad, y dirigir nuestros pasos por el camino de la paz.»

El evangelio del Señor.

**Te alabamos, Cristo Señor.**

*The people are seated at the invitation of the homilist.*

THE HOMILY

The Reverend Canon Leonard L. Hamlin, Sr.

MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Light a Candle*

*Sung by the cantor.*

Joel Lindsay (b. 1961) and Wayne Haun

Light a candle  
For the old man who sits staring  
Out a frosty windowpane.

Light a candle  
For the woman who is lonely  
And every Christmas is the same.

For the children who need  
More than presents can bring.

*Refrain*      Light a candle, light the dark,  
                  Light the world, light a heart or two,  
                  Light a candle for me;  
                  I'll light a candle for you.

Light a candle  
For the homeless and the hungry,  
A little shelter from the cold.

Light a candle  
For the broken and forgotten,  
May the season warm their souls.

Can we open our hearts  
To shine through the dark?

*Refrain*

And in this special time of year  
May peace on earth surround us here  
And teach us there's a better way to live.

And with every flame that burns  
We must somehow learn  
That love's the greatest gift  
That we could ever give.

*Refrain*

*The people stand as able.*

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Let us declare our faith in God.

**We believe in God the Father,  
from whom every family  
in heaven and on earth is named.**

**We believe in God the Son,  
who lives in our hearts through faith,  
and fills us with his love.**

**We believe in God the Holy Spirit,  
who strengthens us  
with power from on high.**

**We believe in one God,  
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.  
Amen.**

*The people are seated.*

## LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

### *First Candle*

We light this candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices.

### *Silence*

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.**

### *Second Candle*

We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss: loss of love, loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy.

### *Silence*

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, and renew us, O God.**

### *Third Candle*

We light this third candle to remember ourselves in this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens.

### *Silence*

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 remember that dawn defeats the darkness.**

### *Fourth Candle*

We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light, healing, and hope that God offers to us in the story of Christmas.

### *Silence*

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 the way with us.**

*Meditative music will play during this time. You are invited to maintain silence, reflect on the concerns of your heart, and pray for healing in body, mind, spirit, or relationship.*

## MUSICAL REFLECTION

*Es ist ein Ros entsprungen*

Margaretha Christina de Jong (b. 1961)

*The presider offers a concluding prayer, and the people respond, Amen.*

*The people stand as able.*

## THE PEACE

The peace of God be always with you.

**And also with you.**

*The people greet one another with a sign of God's peace and then are seated.*

# THE HOLY COMMUNION

An offering is received to support the Cathedral's ministry of sharing God's love. All are invited to make a gift as they depart, online at [cathedral.org/give](http://cathedral.org/give), or by scanning the QR code on the back cover of this leaflet.

The altar is prepared for Holy Communion.

HYMN • 112

*In the Bleak Midwinter*

*Cranham*

1. In the bleak mid-win - ter, frost - y wind made moan, earth stood hard as i - ron,  
2. Our God, heaven can - not hold him, nor earth sus - tain; heaven and earth shall flee a - way  
3. An - gels and arch - an - gels may have gath - ered there, cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim  
4. What can I give him, poor as I am? If I were a shep - herd,  
wa - ter like a stone; snow had fall - en, snow on snow, snow on  
when he comes to reign: in the bleak mid - win - ter a sta - ble - place suf -  
throng - ed the air; but his mo - ther on - ly, in her maid - en  
I would bring a lamb; if I were a wise man, I would do my  
snow, in the bleak mid - win - ter, long a - go.  
ficed the Lord God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.  
bliss, wor - shiped the be - lov - ed with a kiss.  
part; yet what I can I give him give my heart.

The people stand as able.

## THE GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord is here.  
**God's Spirit is with us.**

Lift up your hearts.  
**We lift them to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.  
**It is right to offer thanks and praise.**

In your Son you suffered with us and for us, offering us the healing riches of salvation and calling us to freedom and holiness.

Therefore with people of every nation, tribe and language, with the whole Church on earth and in heaven, joyfully we give you thanks and say:

**Holy, holy, holy Lord, God of power and might,  
heaven and earth are full of your glory.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

**Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.  
Hosanna in the highest.**

All glory and honor to you, God of grace, for you gave your only Son Jesus Christ once for all on the cross to be the one perfect sacrifice for the sin of the world, that all who believe in him might have eternal life.



The night before he died, he took bread, and when he had given you thanks, he broke it, gave it to his disciples, and said: Take, eat, this is my body which is given for you; do this to remember me.

After supper he took the cup, and when he had given you thanks, he gave it to them and said: Drink this, all of you, for this is my blood of the new covenant which is shed for you and for all for the forgiveness of sins; do this as often as you drink it, to remember me.

Therefore heavenly Father, in this sacrament of the suffering and death of your Son, we now celebrate the wonder of your grace and proclaim the mystery of our faith.

**Christ has died.**

**Christ is risen.**

**Christ will come in glory.**

Redeemer God, rich in mercy, infinite in goodness, we were far off until you brought us near and our hands are empty until you fill them.

As we eat this bread and drink this wine, through the power of your Holy Spirit feed us with your heavenly food, renew us in your service, unite us in Christ, and bring us to your everlasting kingdom.

O the depths and riches of your wisdom, O God; how unsearchable are your judgments and untraceable your ways. From you, and through you, and for you are all things. To you be the glory for ever. AMEN.

#### THE LORD'S PRAYER

Notre Père..., Padre nuestro..., Vater unser...,

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 trespasses,  
as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation,  
but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,  
for ever and ever. Amen.

#### THE BREAKING OF THE BREAD & THE FRACTION ANTHEM

*The presider breaks the bread in silence.*

Come now, O Prince of Peace, make us one body.

Come, O Lord Jesus, reconcile your people.

#### THE INVITATION TO COMMUNION

*All who seek God and a deeper life in Christ are welcome to receive Holy Communion. Please move at the direction of the ushers. You may receive the bread in open and outstretched hands and respond to receiving Communion by saying "Amen." Gluten-free wafers are available; please make your need known to the minister. Receiving the bread only is full participation in the Eucharist. For those who wish to consume wine, there are separate chalices for drinking and intincting (dipping the bread). You may either drink from a silver chalice or intinct (dip the bread) into a glass chalice. If you prefer to receive a blessing instead of receiving Communion, you may indicate your choice by crossing your hands across your chest. Those who wish to have Holy Communion brought to them at their seat should notify an usher.*

*Those unable to receive Communion today are invited to say the Prayer of Spiritual Communion.*

## MUSIC AT COMMUNION

*A Stable Lamp Is Lighted*

*Sung by the cantor.*

David Hurd (b. 1950)

A stable lamp is lighted,  
Whose glow shall wake the sky;  
The stars shall bend their voices,  
And every stone shall cry.  
And every stone shall cry,  
And straw like gold shall shine;  
A barn shall harbor heaven,  
A stall become a shrine.

This child through David's city  
Shall ride in triumph by;  
The palm shall strew its branches,  
And every stone shall cry.  
And every stone shall cry,  
Though heavy, dull, and dumb,  
And lie within the roadway  
To pave his kingdom come.

Yet he shall be forsaken,  
And yielded up to die;  
The sky shall groan and darken,  
And every stone shall cry.  
And every stone shall cry,  
For stony hearts of men;  
God's blood upon the spearhead,  
God's love refused again.

But now, as at the ending,  
The low is lifted high;  
The stars shall bend their voices,  
And every stone shall cry.  
And every stone shall cry,  
In praises of the Child  
By whose descent among us  
The worlds are reconciled.

*(Richard Wilbur, 1921–2017)*

*The people stand as able.*

## THE POSTCOMMUNION PRAYER

Loving God, we give you thanks for restoring us in your image and nourishing us with spiritual food in the Sacrament of Christ's Body and Blood. Now send us forth a people, forgiven, healed, renewed; that we may proclaim your love to the world and continue in the risen life of Christ our Savior. Amen.

## THE CLOSING PRAYER

Merciful and loving God, we pray for your Holy Spirit to be at work within us, all of us who are gathered here tonight; may your Holy Spirit comfort us, may it sustain us, may it remind us of your constant love for us. In your Holy Name we pray. Amen.

## PRAYER FOR THE NIGHT

Let us pray.

Lord,  
it is night.

The night is for stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;  
what has not been done has not been done;  
let it be.

The night is dark.

Let our fears of the darkness of the world and of our own lives  
rest in you.

The night is quiet.

Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,  
all dear to us,  
and all who have no peace.

The night heralds the dawn.

Let us look expectantly to a new day,  
new joys,  
new possibilities.

In your name we pray.

Amen.

#### THE BLESSING

May the God of Grace heal you, body and soul. May your pain cease.

May your strength increase.

May your fears and worries be released.

And may blessings, love, and joy surround you—now and always. **Amen.**

#### THE DISMISSAL

Go in peace, with courage to face the coming days with hope, with God by your side.

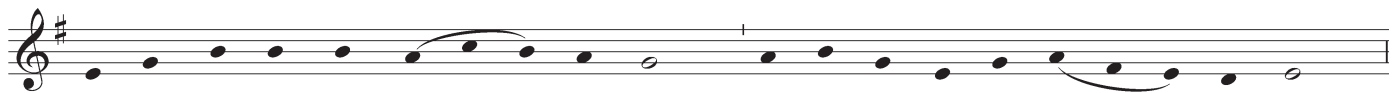
**Thanks be to God.**

#### HYMN • 56 (STANZAS 1–2, 6–7)

*O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

*Sung by all.*

*Veni, veni, Emmanuel*



1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el,  
2. O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest all things might - i - ly;  
6. O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us by thy draw - ing nigh;  
7. O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the hearts of all man - kind;



that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.  
to us the path of know - ledge show, and teach us in her ways to go.  
dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.  
bid thou our sad di - vi - sions cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace.



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

#### POSTLUDE

*Jul*

John Morén (1854–1932)

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