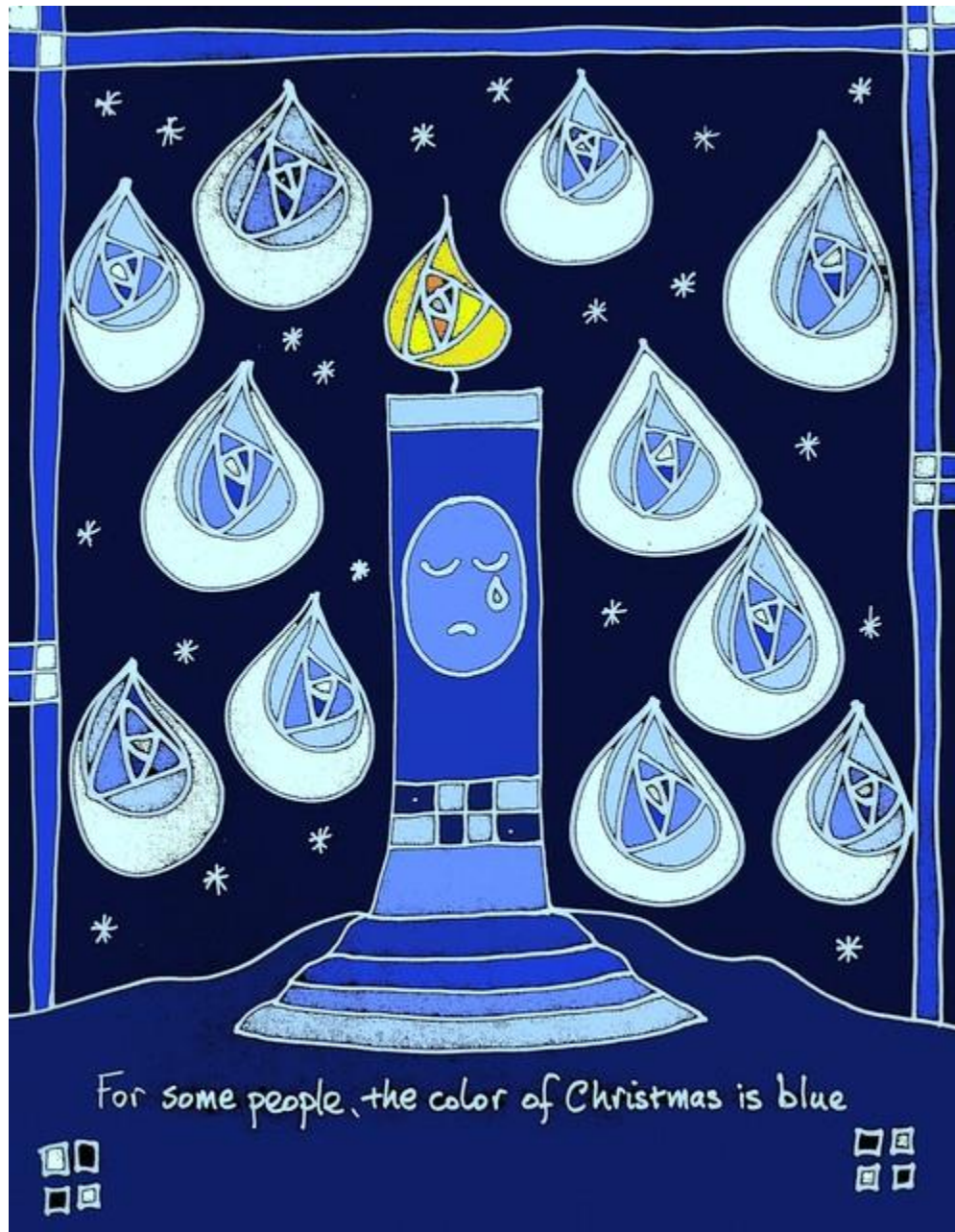


## A Blue Christmas Eucharist

December 17, 2025



*The holiday season can be a time when those of us who have lost loved ones or gone through a difficult year can feel depressed or sad. The long nights and short days cause some people to feel “blue” with an absence of joy in their lives. There is even a term for this feeling – Seasonal Affective Disorder – or sad.*

*The holiday season can be a difficult time of year for people who do not feel joy in their lives. Celebrating Christmas Eve or New Year’s Eve can feel like the beginning of another lonely year. In this Eucharist we recognize that this is not a season of joy for everyone. And yet, we are not alone. God has come into the world in the form of the Christ Child. God loves us in all the joys and sorrows of life, and it is that faith which we as Christians embrace in finding peace and comfort in our lives.*

**Celebrant**     **Blessed be God, Father, Son and Holy Spirit.**  
**All**             **And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.**

*Celebrant*     Almighty God, to you all hearts are open, all desires known, and from you no secrets are hid:  
Cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may  
perfectly love you, and worthily magnify your holy Name; through Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

*Celebrant*     The Lord be with you.

**People**         **And also with you.**

*Celebrant*     Let us pray.

Lord, be our light when the shadows are falling. Lord, be our light when the darkness threatens to overwhelm us. Lord, be our life in times of trouble. Lord, be our light as we watch and wait for the dawning of your new creation which you have promised in Jesus Christ our Savior. **Amen.**

## **THE PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD**

### **The First Lesson    Isaiah 61:1-3**

Lay Reader    A reading from the book of the prophet Isaiah...

The Spirit of the Lord God is upon me, because the Lord has anointed me; he has sent me to bring good news to the oppressed, to bind up the brokenhearted, to proclaim liberty to the captives, and release to the prisoners; to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor, and the day of vengeance of our God; to comfort all who mourn; to provide for those who mourn in Zion – to give them a garland instead of ashes, the oil of gladness instead of mourning, the mantle of praise instead of a faint spirit.

Reader:        The Word of the Lord.

**All:**            **Thanks be to God**

### **Psalm 42:1-7**

As the deer longs for the water-brooks,  
so longs my soul for you, O God.

My soul is athirst for God, athirst for the living God;  
when shall I come to appear before the presence of God?

My tears have been my food day and night,  
while all day long they say to me,  
"Where is now your God?"

I pour out my soul when I think on these things:  
how I went with the multitude and led them into the house of God,  
With the voice of praise and thanksgiving,  
among those who keep holy day.  
Why are you so full of heaviness, O my soul?  
And why are you so disquieted within me?  
Put your trust in God;  
for I will yet give thanks to him,  
who is the help of my countenance, and my God.

Celebrant      The Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew  
People          **Glory to you, Lord Christ**

**Gospel    Matthew 11:28-30**

Jesus said, "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."

Celebrant      The Gospel of the Lord.  
People          **Praise to you, Lord Christ**

Homily          The Rev. Dr. Beverley Rader

**Hanging of the Memory Ornaments**

*Ornaments are placed on the tree in memory of members who died since the last Blue Christmas.*

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

*The Advent wreath candles are lit while we remember those memories that hold us this holiday season.*

Celebrant      We light the first candle to remember those persons who have been loved and lost. We give thanks for their lives among us, and we commend them to our loving God.  
People          **God grant them eternal love and peace.**

Celebrant      We light the second candle to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health. We offer to God the aches and pains of our hearts and pray for peace and comfort.  
People          **Refresh, restore and renew us, O God.**

Celebrant      We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas season. We come before God with our pains, griefs, sorrows and sadness, and pray for life in all its abundance.  
People          **God, your light overcomes the darkness: bring light into our darkness.**

Celebrant      The fourth candle is a symbol of our hope in the God who makes life new every morning. We live in the confidence that pain and tears will one day vanish and that joy will come to the sorrowful.  
People          **Lord Jesus, you are the one who shows us the way and goes with us into our tomorrows.**

Celebrant      Christ yesterday and today, the beginning and the end, Alpha and Omega, all time belongs to you, and all ages; to you be glory and power through every age and forever. **Amen.**

**CONFESSION AND ABSOLUTION**

Celebrant      Let us confess our sins against God.  
All              **Holy and gracious God, there are parts of us that will not listen to the angels' song of glad tidings. We believe their tidings of great joy are not for us. We grieve, O God, and hold tight to our sorrows. We confess not our pain, but our embrace of it and our stubborn refusal of your grace and love. Forgive us, O God. Continue to love us and**

**help us finally to hear your assurance that you travel beside us, and you will help carry our burdens.**

*Celebrant* Almighty God have mercy upon you, forgive you all your sins through our Lord Jesus Christ, strengthen you in all goodness, and by the power of the Holy Spirit keep you in eternal life.  
**Amen.**

*Celebrant* The peace of the Lord be always with you.  
**All** **And also with you.**

## **THE SERVICE OF THE TABLE**

*Please sit, stand or kneel for the Eucharistic prayer*

Offertory Sentence

*Eucharistic Prayer B*

*BCP 367*

*Celebrant* The Lord be with you.

**People** **And also with you.**

*Celebrant* Lift up your hearts.

**People** **We lift them to the Lord.**

*Celebrant* Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**People** **It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

*The Celebrant proceeds:*

It is a right and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Because you sent your beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing. Therefore, we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, who forever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name.

**All** **Sanctus**

**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.**

*The Celebrant continues:*

We give thanks to you, O God, for the goodness and love which you have made known to us in your creation; in the calling of Israel to be your people; in your Word spoken through the prophets; and above all in the Word made flesh, Jesus, your Son. For in these last days you sent him to be incarnate from the Virgin Mary, to be the Savior and Redeemer of the world. In him, you have delivered us from evil, and made us worthy to stand before you. In him, you have brought us out of error into truth, out of sin into righteousness, out of death into life.

On the night before he died for us, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore, according to his command, O Father,

**We remember his death,  
We proclaim his resurrection,  
We await his coming in glory.**

*The Celebrant continues:*

And we offer our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving to you, O Lord of all; presenting to you, from your creation, this bread and this wine.

We pray you, gracious God, to send your Holy Spirit upon these gifts that they may be the Sacrament of the Body of Christ and his Blood of the new Covenant. Unite us to your Son in his sacrifice, that we may be acceptable through him, being sanctified by the Holy Spirit. In the fullness of time, put all things in subjection under your Christ, and bring us to that heavenly country where with all the saints, we may enter into the everlasting heritage of your sons and daughters; through Jesus Christ our Lord, the firstborn of all creation, the head of the Church, and the author of our salvation.

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory are yours, Almighty Father, now and forever. **Amen.**

*Celebrant* And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,  
**All** **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, the power, and the glory, for ever and ever. Amen.**

*Priest* Alleluia. Christ our Passover is sacrificed for us;  
**People** **Therefore, let us keep the feast. Alleluia.**

*Celebrant* The gifts of God for the people of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

## **COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE**

*All are welcome to the Lord's Table to receive the bread and wine of Christ's Body and Blood. The wine will be offered by intinction, which means that you may dip the wafer into the small cup offered by the Lay Assistant. Please do not put your fingers into the wine. If you do not wish to receive the wine, just receive the wafer and return to your seat. The Church teaches that you receive the full Christ in either the bread or wine. There is no requirement to receive both. Gluten-free wafers are available upon request.*

Communion Music

*Celebrant* The Body of Christ, the bread of heaven.  
**Communicant** **Amen.**

*Deacon* The Blood of Christ, the cup of salvation.  
**Communicant** **Amen.**

*After reception of Holy Communion, you are invited, if desired, to go to the back of the church for healing prayer and anointing with oil by a licensed pastoral care minister.*

## **CLOSING PRAYER**

*Celebrant* Let us pray.

**Eternal God, heavenly Father, you have graciously accepted us as living members of your Son our Savior Jesus Christ, and you have fed us with the spiritual food in the Sacrament of his Body and Blood. Send us now into the world in peace, and grant us strength and courage to love and serve you with gladness and singleness of heart; through Christ our Lord. Amen.**

## **THE BLESSING**

Christ the Sun of Righteousness shine upon you, scatter the darkness from before your path, and make you ready to meet him when he comes in glory; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit be upon you and remain with you always. **Amen.**

## **Closing Hymn**

Deacon: Let us go forth in the name of Christ. Alleluia.

Dismissal Response: **Thanks be to God. Alleluia**