

Blue CHRISTMAS

Acknowledging
that pain and
struggle coincide
with the season's
joy, and looking
past the darkness
of winter and
toward the promise
of the holiday

Friday at 7:00 pm

Dec 6

2024



East Liberty
Presbyterian Church

www.ELPC.church

116 South Highland Ave
Pittsburgh, PA 15206
www.ELPC.church



Prelude: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Welcome and Opening Centering and Silence

* All Earth Is Waiting

Unison

D F#m Em A7

1. All earth is wait-ing to see the Prom-ised One,
 2. Thus says the proph-et to those of Is - ra - el,
 3. Moun-tains and val-leys will have to be made plain;
 4. In low - ly sta - ble the Prom-ised One ap-peared,

D F#m G A

and o - pen fur-rows, the sow - ing of our God. All the
 "A vir - gin moth - er will bear Em-man - u - el": one whose
 o - pen new high-ways, new high-ways for our God, who is
 yet feel that pres-ence through - out the earth to - day, for Christ

Bm F#m G D

world, bound and strug-gling, seeks true lib - er - ty; it
 name is "God with us," our Sav - ior shall be, through
 now com - ing clos - er, so come all and see, and
 lives in all Chris-tians and is with us now; a -

Bm F#m Em A7 Em F#7/A D

1-3 4

cries out for jus - tice and search-es for the truth.
 whom hope will blos-som once more with-in our hearts.
 o - pen the door-ways as wide as wide can be.
 gain, on ar - riv - ing Christ brings us lib-er-ty.

WORDS: Alberto Taulè, 1972; tr. Gertrude C. Suppe, 1987, alt.
 MUSIC: Alberto Taulè, 1972; harm. Skinner Chávez-Melo, 1988

TAULÈ
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 Chávez

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♩=70-76

NB8 In God Alone

In God a-lone my soul can find rest and peace, in God my peace_ and joy.
Mon â - me se re - po - se en paix sur Dieu seul: de lui vient mon - sa - lut.

On - ly in God my soul can find its rest, — find its rest — and peace. In
Oui, sur Dieu seul mon â - me se re - po - se, se re - po - se en paix. Mon

Last time

Last time

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Come, Jesus.

From the depths of our being this prayer rises up: Come, Jesus. Come for all those who are suffering; come for those who have no hope.

Like John the Baptist, we would like to prepare your ways, and to allow your light to radiate through in our lives, that light which has already risen on the world. (Brother Alois of Taizé)

Psalm 74 (selected verses; from "Psalms for Praying" by Nan C. Merrill)

Sung Response: 20 O Lord, Hear My Prayer (verse 1)

The image shows a musical score for a song. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment. The tempo is marked as quarter note = 72. The key signature has one sharp (F#). The first system of music has a vocal line with the lyrics: "O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O". The piano accompaniment has a bass line with a steady eighth-note rhythm. The second system of music has a vocal line with the lyrics: "Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me. O". The piano accompaniment continues with the same bass line. Chord symbols are written above the vocal line: Em, C6, D, G, C, Am6, B, Em, C6, D, G6, Am, B, Em. The word "fine" is written above the final notes of both systems.

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O Beloved of my heart, what does it mean
That I feel separated from you?
How is it that I fear your anger
And condemnation?
I have known your Presence
In days gone by, when you counseled me
As a guide and a friend.

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER

I remember your Holy Temple,
Within my heart, in your mercy,
Direct me once again
Before fear destroys me
And leads me too far astray?

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER

Doubt and anxiety have crept
Into the Inner Tabernacle,
Erecting walls as a defense,
My mind dwells on hurts of the past
And foresees a dim future,
All the beauty and joy of companioning with you
Is lost in the anger that consumes me;
I become a prisoner in my own being.
I say to myself, "I will subdue these fears,"
Even knowing that only your refining fire
Will rout them out.

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER

When I call upon you, O Beloved,
Pride and arrogance flee,
And your strength upholds me.
You revive my spirit, and I live in peace;
For you are with the poor in spirit forever.

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER

I shall always remember your covenant,
As the shadows within rise up to the Light.
Love will stand by as these fears are released;
In the Silence where we meet,
I shall praise your name!

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER

Come, O Beloved, counsel me with love;
In your mercy, direct me once again
Before fear destroys me
And leads me too far astray!
O Companioning Presence,
Make your home in my heart.

O LORD, HEAR MY PRAYER

The Word/Meditation: Psalm 13 *(from "Psalms for Praying" by Nan C. Merrill)*

How long, my Beloved? Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I bear this pain in my soul, and live with sorrow all the day?
How long will fear rule my life?

Notice my heart and answer me, O my Beloved;
Enlighten me, lest I walk as one dead to life;
Lest my ego fears say, "We have won the day;"
Lest they rejoice in their strength.

As I trust in your steadfast Love;
My heart will rejoice; for in you is freedom.
I shall sing to the Beloved, who has answered my prayers a thousand fold!
Come, O Beloved, make your home in my heart.

Silence *(lasting approximately 5-7 minutes)*

Prayer *(from "A Weary World: Reflections for a Blue Christmas" by Kathy Escobar)*

God,
Help us live in the places that don't make sense.
Help us keep hobbling through the hard.
Help us remember that no matter how confused,
broken, tired, or faithless we might feel,
you are with us and we are part of your story.



36 In The Bleak Midwinter

CRANHAM Irregular

Christina Rossetti, c. 1872; alt.

Gustav Theodore Holst, 1906

1. In the bleak mid - win - ter, Frost - y wind made moan,
 2. Our God, heaven can - not hold Him, Nor earth sus - tain;
 3. An - gels and arch - an - gels May have gath - ered there,
 4. What can I give Him, Poor as I am?

Earth stood hard as i - ron, Wa - ter like a stone;
 Heaven and earth shall flee a - way When He comes to reign:
 Cher - u - bim and ser - a - phim Thronged the air;
 If I were a shep - herd, I would bring a lamb;

Snow had fall - en, snow on snow, Snow on snow,
 In the bleak mid - win - ter A sta - ble - place suf - ficed
 But His moth - er on - ly, In her maid - en bliss,
 If I were a wise man, I would do my part;

In the bleak mid - win - ter, Long a - go.
 The Lord God in - car - nate, Je - sus Christ.
 Wor - shiped the be - lov - ed With a kiss.
 Yet what I can I give Him: Give my heart.

Candle Lighting Liturgy

Candle #1

For those who have died this year

We light this first candle to remember the people in our lives who died this past year, whose presence we ache for, whose spirit we are missing, whose absence we grieve.

Unison response: God, we ache.

Candle #2

Honoring the pain of losses

We light this second candle to represent the wide range of losses we and others in our lives are grieving right now, broken relationships, the loss of health, jobs, faith that used to be certain, and dreams that were shattered.

Unison response: God, we are grieving.

Candle #3

To honor ourselves, our souls, what we're feeling and experiencing

We light this third candle for our weary souls; for the burdens we are carrying, for heavy hearts.

Unison response: God, we long for light.

Candle #4

A desire for hope and peace

We light this fourth candle as a symbol of our desire for hope and peace in this season, to remember that amidst the darkness, light and love can seep in.

Unison response: God, we are open.



Silent and Spoken Prayers

Please feel free to add your spoken petitions.

A note about praying for others out loud: Some people are comfortable with having their prayer concerns lifted up in public worship. Others are not. Before you share aloud any prayer concerns, please be sure that you are not breaking confidentialities.

Whether or not you say the person's name out loud, God hears and receives the intentions of your heart.

NB53 The Lord's Prayer

Our Fa - ther who art in heav - en, hal - lowed be thy name; thy king - dom come;

thy will be done, on earth as it is in heav - en. Give us this day our dai - ly bread;

for - give us our tres - pass - es as we for - give those who tres - pass a - gainst us;

lead us not in - to temp - ta - tion, but de - liv - er us from e - vil. For thine is the King - dom,

and the pow - er, and the glo - ry, for - ev - er and ev - er. A - men.

Prayer over the Anointing Oil *(in unison)*

You are invited if you so desire to come forward down the center aisle to be anointed with oil and receive a simple blessing this evening. Come forward as you feel led.

Bless this oil, O Lord, pressed from the fruit of the earth. Let it be a holy ointment for the wounds and worries of those who receive it. May it be a sign to all of us of your constant desire to touch our lives and bring us to health and wholeness. Bless us, O Lord, as we come before you and seek to experience through the touch of others, your everlasting love. Amen.



* O Come, O Come, Emmanuel



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
4 O come, thou Root of Jes - se, free thine own from



cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
all things might - i - ly: to us the path of knowl - edge
tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny; from depths of hell thy peo - ple



here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
show; and teach us in her ways to go. Re-joyce! Re-joyce!
law in cloud and maj - es - ty and awe.
save and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.



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

5 O 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.

6 O come, Desire of nations, bind
all peoples in one heart and mind;
bid envy, strife, and discord cease;
fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.

☪ SPIRITUAL LIFE EVENTS ☪

Contemplative Prayer

Monday morning *Contemplative Prayer* will restart tomorrow, Sept 9 from 7:30-8 am. Please join Pastor BJ Woodworth on Zoom (Meeting ID: 959 8065 3992; Passcode: bestill) for 30 minutes of communal silence and guided meditation on scripture.

Mondays, 7:30-8 am

Tuesday Morning Zoom Prayer Group

ELPC offers an online prayer group each Tuesday morning from 8-8:20 am, hosted by ELPC member Steve Evrard. These 20-minute sessions feature scripture readings, responsive prayer, and interactive dialogue. All are welcome at this opportunity for fellowship and prayer.

Tuesdays, 8-8:30 am

Meeting ID: 896 9680 6662 • Passcode 116

or you may call in by dialing 929.205.6099

Meditation Hour

The Spiritual Life Committee invites you to join John Benedict in the Chapel each Tuesday from 6-7 pm for an hour devoted to meditation. The session will include an opening reading, silent sitting, and walking. John is a retired psychologist and a long time student and practitioner of insight meditation.

Tuesdays, 6-7 pm

Cathedral Yoga

Yamuna will lead yoga in-person in the Sanctuary before the 7 pm Taizé Prayer service.

Wednesdays, 6-7 pm

**The Rev. BJ Woodworth is Minister
of Taizé Prayer here at ELPC.**

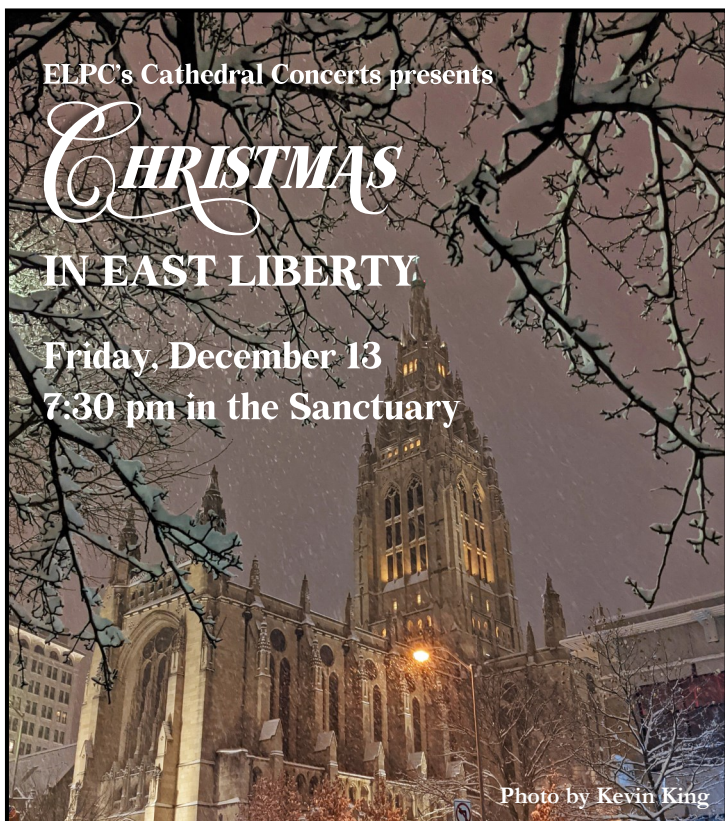
BJ is also Director of Spiritual Life Ministries and is available to provide spiritual direction to anyone who is a part of the ELPC community (attending a worship service makes YOU a part of that community).

He can be reached at:
412.441.3800 x241
BJW@coh.net



May the Lord be with you this holiday season.

ELPC EVENTS



LGBTQIA+ Ministry's Spiritual Gathering – Dec 15

You are invited to attend the LGBTQIA+ Ministry's spiritual gathering on Sunday, Dec 15 at 12:30 pm. Join us to share lunch and conversation. Allies and LGBTQIA+ folks alike welcome! Contact Wil Forrest (Wil@coh.net).



Jam with the YAMs – Dec 15

If you're 18–40 years old, join members of our *Young Adult Ministry* (YAMs) after worship on Sunday, Dec 15 at Noon for pizza and bowling in ELPC's 1930s duck pin bowling alley. Old friends and new visitors are equally welcome to attend! RSVP to Sara Hackett (SaraH@coh.net).

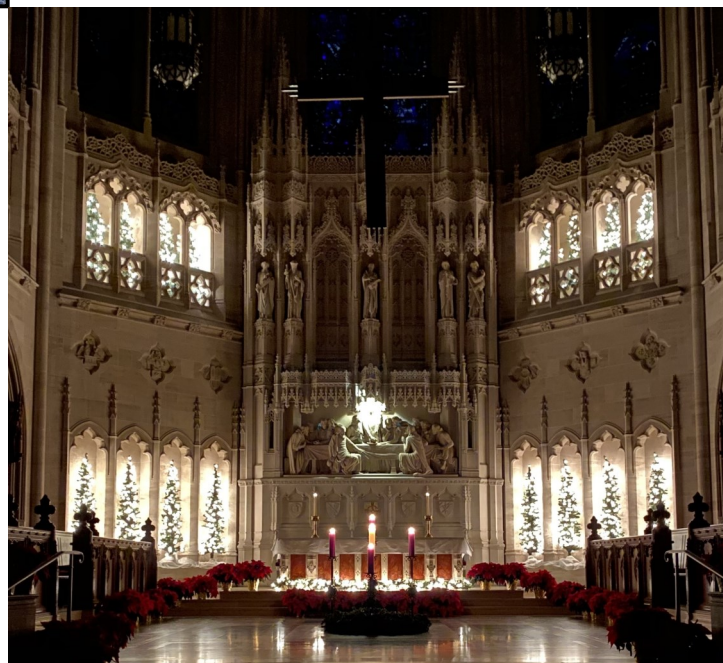
RCC Holiday Concert – Dec 7

The Renaissance City Choir will present *A Very Ruby Holiday* in concert on Saturday, Dec 7 at 7 pm at ELPC! From your favorite holiday standards to asking Santa to *Bring Me a Man*, this concert will bring the holiday fun. RCC will be joined by the WVU Chamber Singers. Following the concert there will be a cookie social. For ticket info, visit www.rccpittsburgh.com.



Strengthen Your Finances with Open Hand Ministries

Are you considering homeownership but are worried about affordability? Are you struggling to maintain financial discipline in light of the increased cost of living? If you answered yes, you are not alone. To find how the Open Hand Ministries community can help you reach your financial goals, contact Wayne Younger (office@openhandpittsburgh.org; 412.924.1409).



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

5 PM FRIENDS & FAMILY SERVICE
10 PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

Both services will be held in the Sanctuary, feature the celebration of the Lord's Supper and candle lighting, and will be led by Pastor Michael Diaz.

The ELPC building
will be closed for Christmas on
Wednesday, Dec 25, and Thursday, Dec 26.