



Blue
CHRISTMAS

Friday at 7:00 pm
Dec 19
2025



East Liberty
Presbyterian Church

www.ELPC.church

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

Prelude: While We Are Waiting, Come

Welcome and Opening

Everyone is invited to pick up one small rock upon entry.

* All Earth Is Waiting

Unison

The musical score is written for a unison voice part in 4/4 time, with a key signature of one sharp (F#). It consists of four systems of music. Each system includes a vocal line with lyrics and a bass line with chord symbols. The lyrics are: 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, 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 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 - 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.

Chord symbols: D, F#m, Em, A7, D, F#m, G, A, Bm, F#m, G, D, Bm, F#m, Em, A7, Em, F#7/A, D

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

Words and music © 1972 The Pastoral Musicians; tr. © 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House; harm. used by permission of Juan Francisco Chávezy

OneLicense.net #A-700877

TAULÈ
11 11.12.12

♩=70-76

CLM18 Put Your Trust In God

Fi - ez - vous en Lui, ne craig - nez pas. La paix de Dieu gar - de -
Put your trust in God, and do not fear. God's peace will dwell deep with -

ra vos cœurs. Fi - ez - vous en Lui. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!
in your hearts. Put your trust in God. Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia!

OneLicense.net #A-700877



Psalm 42 (*Inclusive Bible translation*) & **Sung Response: * Alleluia** (*in tune of "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"*)

(VENI EMMANUEL) Stephen Pishner



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.



Al - le - lu - ia, al - le - lu - ia.

© 2013 GIA Publications.
OneLicense.net #A-700877

Psalm 42 (*Select verses*)

Like a deer,
longing for streams of cool water,
my whole being longs for you, my God.
My soul aches with thirst for God,
for a God that lives!
When can I go and see God face to face?

ALLELUIA

My only food, day or night, is my tears;
they recriminate me:
"Where is your God?" they say.
These things I remember
as I pour out my soul like water—
how I'd go with the crowds
and lead them into God's house,
amid cries of gladness and thanksgiving,
drunk with the dance of celebration.

ALLELUIA

"Why so dispirited?" I ask myself.
"Why so churned up inside? Hope in God!"
I know I'll praise God once again,
for you are my Deliverance;
you are my God.

ALLELUIA

This is why my heart despairs:
I remember other days with you,
The primeval Deep is echoing
in the sound of your waterfalls;
your torrents rage and break over me,
overwhelming me.

ALLELUIA

I say to God, my rock:
"Why have you forgotten me?
Why do you keep me in mourning,
oppressed by an unseen enemy?"
My bones are shattered by their words,
foes taunt me constantly:
"Where is your God?" they say.

ALLELUIA

"Why so dispirited?" I ask myself. "Why so
churned up inside? Hope in God!"
I know I'll praise God once again,
for you are my Deliverance;
you are my God.

ALLELUIA

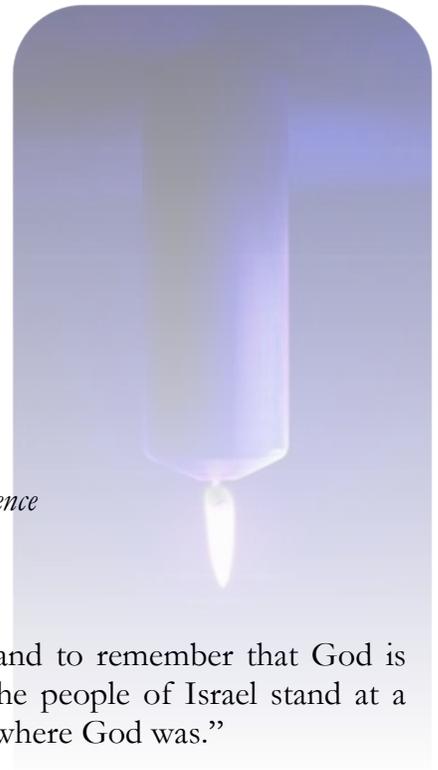
Community Opening (adapted from Kate Bowler's "A Blue Christmas")

Leader: Our hearts are empty without You
Barren and cold
But for the bold
Hope that You Yourself
Planted within

People: **In the mighty name of God**
In the saving name of Jesus
In the strong name of the Spirit
We come
We cry
We watch
We wait
We look
We long for you

Leader: Sometimes we long for the morning
For a refrain
From etchings in pain
Yet our loneliness
Draws us to You

People: **In the mighty name of God**
In the saving name of Jesus
In the strong name of the Spirit
We come
We cry
We watch
We wait
We look
We long for You



Reflective Silence (adapted from David Schell) followed by 2-3 minutes of silence

*What have you come for? What are you watching and waiting for?
What are you crying and looking for? What do you long for?*

“This evening’s service is a time to look for light in darkness, and to remember that God is present in both. After the ten commandments in Genesis 20, the people of Israel stand at a distance, but in verse 21, Moses draws near to the thick darkness where God was.”

The thick darkness where God was...

“If you find yourself in what feels like thick darkness tonight, you may not only not be far away from God, even as it feels that way, you may very well be exactly where God is.”

* 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 - shipped the be - lov - ed With a kiss.
Yet what I can I give Him: Give my heart.

Advent Candle Lighting Liturgy (*adapted from Young Clergy Women International*) led by the Deacons

First Candle

Leader: The first candle we light to remember those persons whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their voice, their face, the memory that binds them to us in this season. We hold them before God, giving thanks for their lives in ours.

Please take a moment to remember those who have died. I invite you to name them in the silence of your hearts....

People: God, hold us.

Second Candle

Leader: The second candle we light is to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs with the security they bring, the loss of health in ourselves or in family members, the loss of joy and peace in our lives from the stresses which surround us, the loss and loneliness we experience when our loved ones do not share our faith.

Please take a moment to acknowledge all the losses. I invite you to name them, in the silence of your hearts....

People: God, be present in the gaps.

Third Candle

Leader: The third candle we light for those who experience a loss of direction in their lives. We want so much to have a sense of direction, to know where we are and where we ought to be headed. But the darkness and the questions stay.

Please take a moment to remember those who need guidance. I invite you to name them, in the silence of your hearts...

People: God, help us find you.

Fourth Candle

Leader: The fourth candle we light as a sign of hope, the hope that the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a life where God is fully present and incarnate with us.

Please take a moment to experience God's hopeful presence in our midst...

People: God, bring us hope.



Reflecting Quietly on All That is Heavy *(silence kept for 3-5 minutes)*

What burdens are you holding tonight? Loss? Pain? Stress? Confusion? Worry? Hold your stone. In the quiet, be as present as you're able to be and reflect on what you are holding tonight. Know that God is with you, holding it and holding you.

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.

OneLicense.net #A-700877

Release Of What Is Heavy Burden & Anointing With Oil

As you feel led, everyone is invited to come down the center aisle, release your stone/what is heavy, be anointed with oil, receive a simple blessing, and return by the side aisle.

* **O Come, O Come, Emmanuel** (verses 1, 2, 5 and 6 only)



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.

TEXT: Latin prose, pre-9th cent.; trans. composite
 MUSIC: Plainsong; adapt. Thomas Helmore, 1852; arr. John Weaver, 1988
 Music Arr. © 1990 John Weaver

VENI EMMANUEL
 LM with refrain

CCLI #689547

Community Closing

Leader: Join me as we bless this longest night. Blessed are we,

People: **Gathered by candlelight in these dark times. In the confusion and pain that envelops us. We receive your comfort. It reaches to the core of our tired bodies, our worried minds, and our heavy hearts. Your light has come to us in the songs sung, the words spoken, and in the faces all around, our companions along the way.**

Leader: Blessed are we,

People: **Who have poured out our hearts, and look for your light. Bless us this Christmas as we come softly to your cradle, just as we are. Amen.**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

— Participants In Today's Service —

Rev. Sarah Robbins (she/they)
Rev. BJ Woodworth (he/him)
Taizé Musicians
ELPC Deacons
Wayne Gaines

— Sunday Worship Services —

8:45 am.....**Journey Worship.** An interactive, energetic service for those seeking a fresh encounter with the gospel of Jesus Christ.
(No service on Sun Dec 28, Jan 4, or Jan 11)

11 am.....**Sanctuary Worship.** Our largest service with a multi-cultural congregation and music from organ, piano and choir.

— Weekday Worship —

Taizé: Prayerful Song and Quiet Meditation

Chants and periods of meditative silence modeled after the Taizé community in France. Rev. BJ Woodworth leads this service in the Chapel.

Wednesdays, 7 pm
(No service on Dec 24 or Dec 31)

Prayer Room (in Highland Ave hallway)

Come to sit and pray in silence. Come to experience the quiet in the midst of the wonderful busyness.



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

5 PM FRIENDS & FAMILY SERVICE
10 PM CANDLELIGHT SERVICE (music begins at 9:30)

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

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 for fellowship and prayer.

Tuesdays, 8-8:30 am

Meeting ID: 896 9680 6662 • Passcode 116

Cathedral Yoga

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

Wednesdays, 6-7 pm
(No yoga on Dec 24 or Dec 31)

Journey Dance

Enjoy an evening of healthy, energizing, funky and divine dancing on the 3rd Friday of every month.

3rd Friday of month, 7:00-8:30 pm

Pray Always in All Ways: ELPC Spiritual Pathways Weekly Gatherings

Wednesdays, Jan 21, 28, Feb 4 and 11
at ELPC from 5:30-7pm

-and-

Weekend Retreat

Friday, Jan 23 at 6 pm to Sunday, Jan 25 at 11 am
at Villa Maria Retreat Center

Have you ever wondered what prayer is or if you even believe in prayer? Have you ever longed to pray more but struggled to know how? Whether you feel like a novice or practiced expert, we all need to practice prayer. There is no right or wrong way to pray, nor is there no one starting point or a finish line. There is only the continual showing up to practice prayer and allowing our deepest longings for God, others and the world to emerge. Together we will talk about our struggles and hopes with prayer and explore a wide variety of prayer forms, including body prayer, prayer beads, icons, silent, written fixed-hour prayer and prayer as simple awareness in life. It will be playful, inspiring and interactive with lots of time to practice together.

WEEKLY GATHERINGS: Register online at
<https://tinyurl.com/PrayAlwaysClasses2026>



WEEKEND RETREAT: Register online by Jan 11 at
<https://tinyurl.com/PrayAlwaysRetreat2026>





East Liberty Presbyterian Church

www.ELPC.church



May the Lord be with you this holiday season.