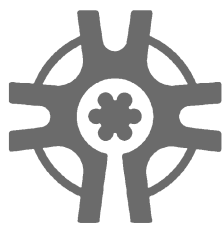


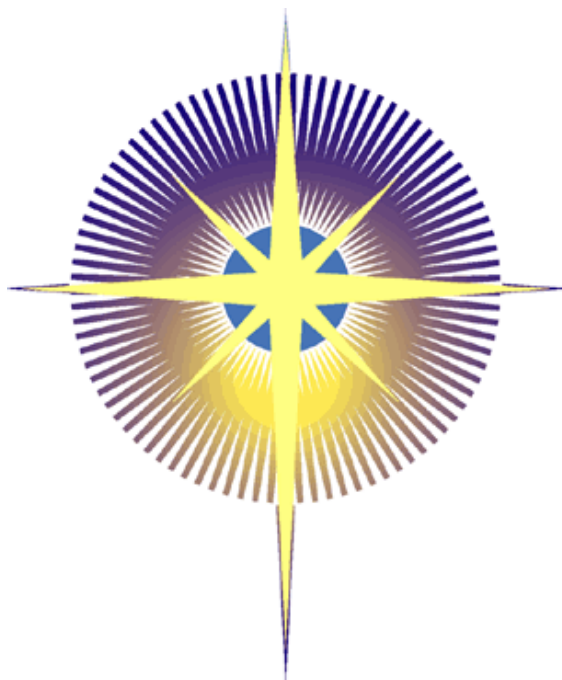
Welcome to



Grace St. Paul's

E P I S C O P A L C H U R C H

A Progressive Community — Loving God, Serving Others, Journeying Together



A Blue Christmas Service

Sunday, December 16, 2012, 6:30 p.m.

Here you will find an energized and inclusive community of people seeking God's reconciling and transforming presence in their lives. Grace St. Paul's is a safe place to connect your spirit without disconnecting your mind. Experience Christ's love in a diverse congregation that celebrates individual gifts. Participate in liturgies that are rich and innovative. Take part in spiritual formation for all ages. Reach out to the world and act for social justice. We welcome you to share in this joyful journey!

About Tonight's Service

Service Participants

<i>Clergy:</i>	The Rev. Debbie Royals, The Rev. Nancy Meister Book
<i>Lay Leaders & Healers:</i>	Ann Misenhimer, Chris Ledyard, Kay Bigglestone, Linda Hutson, GSP Community of Hope
<i>Altar Guild:</i>	Chuck Hannan, Nanalee Raphael
<i>Musicians:</i>	Dr. Pamela Decker, The Rev. Allen Breckenridge



Grace St. Paul's

EPISCOPAL CHURCH
A PROGRESSIVE COMMUNITY

Loving God, Serving Others, Journeying Together

2331 East Adams Street • Tucson, Arizona 85719

Visit us on the Web: www.gsptucson.org

Phone (520) 327-6857 • Fax (520) 327-1347

Emergency Pastoral Care (520) 668-5727

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 9 a.m.-4 p.m. • Friday 9 a.m.-noon

The Rev. Steve Keplinger, Rector: Rector@grace-stpauls.org

The Rev. Debbie Royals, Priest Associate: debroyals@yahoo.com

Rosalind Garcia: Rosalind.Garcia@grace-stpauls.org

KiKi Fenik: ParishAdmin@grace-stpauls.org

David Wachter: gsp1@dakotacom.net

Weekly Worship

Monday

11:30 a.m.-1:30 p.m. – Drop-in
Spiritual Direction

Sunday

8 a.m. – Communion Service
10 a.m. – Communion Service

Tuesday

6 p.m. – Evening Prayer
7 p.m. – Meditation Group

Wednesday

7 a.m. – Communion Service

Thursday

5:30 p.m. – Spirit Now Service

A Blue Christmas Service

The Rev. Debbie Royals, Celebrant

A Service for Those Who Find This Season Difficult

Welcome to this “Blue Christmas” service. For some, memories of past experiences and the pain of present experiences and situations can become overwhelming. Christmas Eve, Christmas Day, or New Year’s Eve can be very difficult and a reminder of the challenges in our lives. In this service, we invite you to listen. We invite you to pray. We invite you to sing. We invite you to meditate upon the pain and anguish you may bring—and we invite you to offer your pain to the Christ child. And we trust that you will find hope and comfort in knowing that you are not alone.

Prelude

Greeting and Invitation

Musical Meditation Offering

The Rev. Allen Breckenridge

Words of Invitation [2 Cor. 1:4b-5, NRSV]

God consoles us in all our affliction, so that we may be able to console those who are in any affliction. For just as the sufferings of Christ are abundant for us, so also our consolation is abundant through Christ.

Opening Prayer

Gary L. Lake Dillensnyder

O God, our God, we shrink before the great mystery of your presence and power. You are the source and redeemer of life; we are the mortal ones who work so very hard to trust in you and the eternity you provide. Only you fully know and understand the places that we find ourselves: between faith and doubt, light and darkness, hope and despair, love and fatigue of spirit, joy and harsh reality, peace and unrest. Only you can deliver us from what seems too real unto the truth of your consolation. We seek not to be comfortable, for that would be selfish and contrary to your call to joyful obedience as servant-disciples. We do seek, to be comforted, for we know that You are our Comforter. So help us in this night, to see beyond the darkness unto your glorious light, to move in heart and mind beyond our grief unto your ever-present care; and in it all to find in this season of celebration your permission to be and to feel as is fully human. For we long to know Christmas despite our pain and sadness, even though it might be celebrated by us in a minor key; in the One who was born to set us free and give us the gift of life. **Amen.**

Silence

The Lighting of the First Candle

Leader:

We light this candle to remember all those we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us during this season of holy waiting.

People: **May God's eternal love surround them.**

Opening Hymn

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (stanzas 1, 2, 6, 7 & 8)



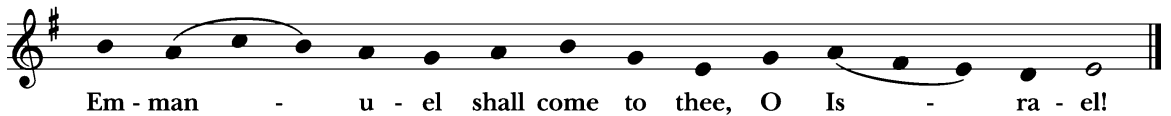
1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
2 O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
3 O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy
4 O come, thou Branch of Jes - se's tree, free them from
5 O come, thou Key of Da - vid, come, and o - pen
6 O come, thou Day - spring from on high, and cheer us
7 O come, De - sire of na - tions, bind in one the
8 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som



1 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
2 all things might - i - ly; to us the path of know - ledge
3 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the
4 Sa - tan's ty - ran - ny that trust thy might - y power to
5 wide our heaven - ly home; make safe the way that leads on
6 by thy draw - ing nigh; dis - perse the gloom - y clouds of
7 hearts of all man - kind; bid thou our sad di - vi - sions
8 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile



1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.
3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.
4 save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave. Re - joice! Re - joice!
5 high, and close the path to mis - er - y.
6 night, and death's dark shad - ow put to flight.
7 cease, and be thy - self our King of Peace.
8 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.



Words: Latin, ca. 9th cent.; ver. *Hymnal 1940*, alt.

No. 56, *The Hymnal 1982*

Music: *Veni, veni, Emmanuel*, plainsong, Mode 1, Processionale, 15th cent.; adapt. Thomas Helmore (1811-1890);
acc. Richard Proulx (b. 1937)

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A Reading from the Continuing Revelation of God to People of Faith

[TS Eliot, from "East Coker"]

I said to my soul, be still, and let the dark come upon you which shall be the darkness of God... I said to my soul, be still, and wait without hope for hope would be hope for the wrong thing; there is yet faith but the faith and the love and the hope are all in the waiting. Wait without thought, for you are not ready for thought; so the darkness shall be the light, and the stillness the dancing.

God, I want "green pastures" in my life, I'm always in search of something better.

People: A place to rest.

You have the perfect places in mind for me, quiet meadows beside crystal clear water to drink.

People: You know what will refresh my soul.

Show me those places, I am trying to trust in you.

People: And teach me to follow you every day as if there was no other. Amen.

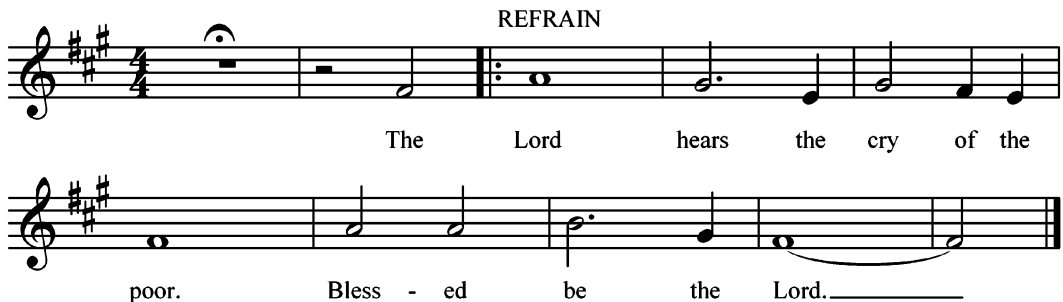
The Lighting of the Second Candle

We light this second candle to redeem our wounds. We remember before us the pain and loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, and the loss of health. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, Holy One. We pray that into our broken hearts and open hands, you place the gift of peace.

People: Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us in your future.

Song

The Lord hears the cry of the poor



VERSES



1. I will bless the Lord at all times, _____ God's praise
 2. Let the low - ly hear and be glad: _____ the Lord
 3. Ev - 'ry spir - it crushed God will save; _____ will be
 4. We pro - claim the great - ness of God, _____ God's praise



ev - er in my mouth. _____ Let my soul glo - ry in the
 lis - tens to their pleas; _____ And to hearts bro - ken God is
 ran - som for their lives; _____ will be safe shel - ter for their
 ev - er in our mouth; _____ ev - 'ry face brightened in God's



Lord, _____ for God hears the cry of the poor. _____ The
 near, _____ for God hears the cry of the poor. _____ The
 fears, _____ for God hears the cry of the poor. _____ The
 light, _____ for God hears the cry of the poor. _____ The

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Prayers for Compassion *(after a time of silent prayer)*

Holy One, you know us inside and out. In your compassion forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name.

Assurance of Acceptance *(based on Isaiah 49:14-16)*

There are times when all we see is the darkness; we may cry out, “God has forsaken me; God has forgotten me.” But, God says to us, “I shall never forget you! I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands!”

By the grace of Christ we are accepted and loved by God. **Amen.**

Prayer for Illumination

Gracious God, nourish us tonight with your Word, that we may be strengthened and encouraged through Jesus the Christ, the bread of heaven. **Amen.**

Chant

Refrain

Kristopher E. Lindquist



Show us the Way of com- pas- sion, — the Way of joy and peace. —



Show us the Way of com - pas - sion, — the Way of joy and peace. —

Verse



Show us the Way, show us the Way, show us the Way of life. —



Show us the Way, show us the Way, show us the Way of life. —

Music & text © 2001, 2005 KELmusic.com

Reflection

The Rev. Debbie Royals

During the period of silence following the reflection you are encouraged to write down grief, fears, losses that are weighing on you this season. You have been given an envelope for your prayers. Please seal the envelope. They will not be opened by anyone and will be shredded unopened after the service.

You are encouraged as you feel so moved to light a candle of hope for the future. After doing so, you may place your envelope on the tree.

Healing stations have been set up at the altar rail. Anyone who would like to receive the sacrament of healing by laying on of hands and anointing may proceed to these areas. Our ministers will be available for confidential and personal prayer with you.

Musical Meditation Offering

The Rev. Allen Breckenridge

Quiet meditative music will be playing during this time. You are invited to maintain silence. This time will conclude with a chant. You are invited back into this space of song and prayer as you are moved.

A Reading from the Continuing Revelation to God's People

["Advent," by Jessica Powers]

Advent

I live my Advent in the womb of Mary.
And on one night when a great star swings free
From its high mooring and walks down the sky
To be the dot above the Christus i,
I shall be born of her by blessed grace.
I wait in Mary-darkness, faith's walled place,
with hope's expectance of nativity.
I know for long she carried me and fed me,
Guarded and loved me, though I could not see.
But only now, with inward jubilee,
I come upon earth's most amazing knowledge:
Someone is hidden in this darkness with me.

The Lighting of the Third Candle

We light this third candle to remember ourselves in this holy time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and for some of us, years of down times. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and the pain of reflecting on our own mortality.

People: Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.

Chant

Kristopher E. Lindquist

May all be - ings be hap - py, all be - ings be at peace.

May all be - ings be hap - py, all be - ings be at peace.

All free from suf - fer - ing, all free from suf - fer - ing.

All be - ings hap - py, all be - ings be at peace.

Text inspired by Buddhist chant text.

Music & text © 2001, 2005 KELmusic.com

A Reading from the Christian Gospel [*Matthew 11:28-30*]

When burdens get piled on top of other burdens, the load can crush us or at least seem like it is crushing. Jesus offers to help carry our burdens and responsibilities. “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.”

The Lighting of the Fourth Candle

This fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope which God offers to us in the Christmas story. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

People: Let us remember the one who shows the way and goes with us into tomorrow.

A Reading from the Hebrew Tradition [*“An Unending Love” by Rabbi Rami Shapiro*]

“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.”

Candle Lighting Song

“A Candle Is Burning” by Sandra Dean, 1986



1. A can - dle is__ burn - ing, a__ flame warm and bright; a__
2. A can - dle is__ burn - ing, a__ can - dle of Peace; a__
3. A can - dle is__ burn - ing, a__ can - dle of Joy; a__
4. A can - dle is__ burn - ing, a__ can - dle of Love; a__



can - dle of Hope in De - cem - ber's dark night. While
can - dle to sig - nal that__ con - flict must cease. For
can - dle to wel - come brave Ma - ry's new boy. Our
can - dle to point us to__ heav - en a - bove. A



an - gels sing bless - ings from heav'n's star - ry sky our
Je - sus is__ com - ing to__ show us the way; a__
hearts fill with won - der and__ eyes light and glow as__
ba - by for__ Christ - mas, a__ won - der - ful birth; for__



hearts we pre - pare now, for__ Je - sus is nigh.
mes - sage of Peace hum - bly__ laid in the hay.
Joy bright - ens win - ter like__ sun - shine on snow.
Je - sus is bring - ing God's Love to our earth.

Words: Sandra Dean, 1986

Music: *Cradle Song*, melody William James Kirkpatrick (1838-1921)

Closing Prayer

from Ted Loder, *Guerillas of Grace*

O God of all seasons and senses, grant us the sense of your timing to submit gracefully and rejoice quietly in the turn of the seasons.

In this season of short days and long nights,
of grey and white and cold,
teach us the lessons of endings;
children growing, friends leaving, loved ones dying,
grieving over,
grudges over,

blaming over,
excuses over.

O God, grant us a sense of your timing.
In this season of short days and long nights,
of grey and white and cold,
teach us the lessons of beginnings;
that such waitings and endings may be the starting place,
a planting of seeds which bring to birth what is ready to be born—
something right and just and different,
a new song, a deeper relationship, a fuller love—
in the fullness of your time.

O God, grant us the sense of your timing.

Blessing and Dismissal

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.**

Closing Chant


Refrain

Kristopher E. Lindquist



Now we go in peace, now we go with hearts of glad - ness,
We have seen the signs of New Hu - man - i - ty.
Now we go in peace, now we go with hearts of glad - ness,
Pro - mis - es from You of All That We May Be.

Verse



Old things pass a - way, Be - hold, the New is come,



Dreams and vi - sions of the Spir - it that We All Are One.



Old things pass a - way, Be - hold, the New is come,



Dreams and vi - sions of the Spir - it that We All Are One. *Repeat Refrain*

Text inspired by Song of Simeon, Luke 2:29-30.

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***After the service you are invited to join us
in the church entrance for cider and cookies.***