



St. Ambrose Episcopal Church
900 Edgewater Blvd.
Foster City, CA 94541
www.stambrosefostercity.org

Blue Christmas Service

Thursday, December 15, 2022, 6:30 p.m.

Welcome to the Blue Christmas service. Through this service we will offer prayers and support each other. This is a safe place and all are welcome. Let your emotions be what they need to be and know that in this place all are safe and all are loved. Thank you for joining us. Welcome!

Gathering Music

8 Stay with me Bleibet hier

p *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p* *p*

Stay with me, re - main here with me, watch and
Blei - bet hier und wa - chet mit mir, wa - chet und
pray, tet. watch chet and und pray. tet.
be tet. wa - chet und be tet.

Opening Prayer

Officiant: The Lord be with you.

People: **And also with you.**

Officiant: Let us pray.

O God of mystery, we turn our hearts to you this evening. We come before you in need of peace, grateful for life and ever aware of your promises of guidance and protection. We want to place our trust in you but our hearts grow fearful and anxious. We forget so easily that you will be with us in all that we experience. Teach us to be patient with ourselves and to be open to the changes which we are now going through. **Amen.**

THE FIRST READING

Isaiah 43: 1-2, 4-7

But now thus says the LORD, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you; I will

bring your offspring from the east, and from the west I will gather you; I will say to the north, 'Give them up', and to the south, 'Do not withhold; bring my sons from far away and my daughters from the end of the earth—everyone who is called by my name, whom I created for my glory, whom I formed and made.'

The Word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God

Psalm 139 (*Said in unison by all*)

**1 Lord, you have searched me out and known me; *
you know my sitting down and my rising up;
you discern my thoughts from afar.**

**2 You trace my journeys and my resting-places *
and are acquainted with all my ways.**

**3 Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, *
but you, O Lord, know it altogether.**

**4 You press upon me behind and before *
and lay your hand upon me.**

**5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; *
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.**

**6 Where can I go then from your Spirit? *
where can I flee from your presence?**

**7 If I climb up to heaven, you are there; *
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.**

THE SECOND READING

Romans 8: 26-27, 37-39

Likewise the Spirit helps us in our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we ought, but that very Spirit intercedes with sighs too deep for words. And God, who searches the heart, knows what is the mind of the Spirit, because the Spirit intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

The Word of the Lord

ALL: Thanks be to God

Sequence Hymn: *O Come O Come Emmanuel*

Hymnal 56 Verses 1, 6, 8

The Holy Gospel

Officiant: The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

***People:* Glory to you, Lord Christ.**

'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.'

Officiant: The Gospel of the Lord.

***People:* Praise to you, Lord Christ.**

Homily

The Rev. Jason Lucas

Candle Lighting Litany of Remembrance

We light this candle to remember those persons who we loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us this season which anticipates Christmas.

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

(Pause for silence.)

We light this second candle to redeem the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, the loss of dreams. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to You, O God, asking that into our open hands, You will place the gift of peace.

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

(Pause for silence.)

We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months and, for some of us, years of blue times. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, the pain. We open ourselves to receive healing and hope.

People: Let us remember that the Light of Christ defeats darkness.

(Pause for silence.)

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 who goes with us into our tomorrows.

(Pause for silence.)

Celebrant: Compassionate Lord Jesus, there are those among us who are grieving over what might have been. A death or loss has changed our experience of Christmas. We find ourselves adrift, alone, in pain, feeling blue. Please be near us this night and during the remainder of this season. *Amen.*

The Peace

Officiant: The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People: And also with you.

The Holy Communion

Offertory

Silent Night

Hymnal 111

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 our thanks and praise!

Celebrant:

It is indeed right, O God, for you made us and before us, you made the whole earth. What we do here, we do in imitation of what Christ first did. To his followers in every age, Jesus gave an example and command rooted in the experience he shared with his disciples in an upstairs room in Jerusalem.

On the night in which he was betrayed, and as they were sitting at a meal, Jesus took a piece of bread and broke it. He gave it to his disciples saying, "This is my body. It is broken for you. Do this to remember me." Later, after they had eaten, he took a cup of wine and said, "This cup is the new relationship with God made possible because of my death. Drink this all of you, to remember me."

So now we do as Jesus did. We take this bread and this wine, the produce of earth and fruit of human labor. In these, Jesus promised to be present, and through these he can make us whole. Merciful God, send your Holy Spirit upon this bread and wine and fill them with the fullness of

Christ. And let that same Spirit rest on us, both comforting and converting us anew as we gather in Christ's name. All this we ask through your Son, Jesus Christ, by him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, God of all Mercy, now and forever. *Amen.*

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,
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

Celebrant: God of promise, you have prepared a banquet for us.

People: **Happy are those who are called to the Supper of the Lamb.**

Music during communion *Wait for the Lord* source: Taize

The image shows a musical score for the hymn 'Wait for the Lord'. It consists of two systems of music, each with a vocal line and a piano accompaniment line. The key signature is one sharp (F#) and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are: 'Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.' and 'Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!'. The piano accompaniment features a steady, rhythmic pattern of chords and single notes.

Closing Prayer: attributed to St. Francis (said by all in unison)

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love;
Where there is injury, pardon; Where there is discord, union;
Where there is doubt, faith; Where there is despair, hope;
Where there is darkness, light; Where there is sadness, joy.
Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console;
To be understood as to understand; To be loved as to love.
For it is in giving that we receive;
It is in pardoning that we are pardoned;
And it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen.

The Blessing

Remember whom you love
Remember what is sacred

Remember what is true
Remember that you will die and that this day is a gift
Remember how you wish to live and may the blessing of God Almighty,
Father, Son and Holy Spirit
Be with you always. *Amen.*

The Dismissal

Closing hymn

Comfort, comfort ye my people

Hymnal 67

You are invited and welcome to join us for Christmas Services

December 24, 2022

4:30 pm Carols 5:00 pm Holy Eucharist

10:30pm Carols 11:00 pm Holy Eucharist