



Blue Christmas Service
5:30 p.m., Dec. 21, 2025
at Zion's Lutheran Church

Welcome friends and guests: For the most people, Christmas is a time of celebration and joy. For others, this is a difficult time of year. Many people are carrying significant weights: fear, grief, loss, depression, anxiety, financial stress, uncertainty, aging parents or sick children, health... We know that the public tone of the season does not resonate with many people's private experience and we are here for you

Serving this Evening:

Worship Leader — Pastor Lisa Rygiel & Jo Moss

Musician -- Jeff Wahl

Ushers -- Mark Moss & John Rygiel

Christmas Worship Service:

Christmas Eve: 7 p.m., Wednesday, Dec. 24

Other Information: Restrooms are in the Fellowship Hall adjoining the sanctuary; our ushers can direct you. For pastoral care, call Vicar Lisa Rygiel at the church (719-846-7785) or contact her via email: zionsluth@gmail.com. Additional information about Zion's can be found on our website at: zionsluth.org.



***Zion's Lutheran is a
Reconciling in Christ (RIC) community.***

Gathering & Time of Silent Reflection

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with you all. **And also with you.**

Opening Prayer

Generous and gracious God...that they do not suffer alone. **Amen.**

Lighting of the Christ Candle

Merciful God, in this season of rejoicing...The season heaps joy upon us. **Yet, we who come here, we carry more than joy; We carry loss, worry, grief, regret, and pain.**

Come weary, seeking rest from expectations. We also seek a Holy presence to be with us. **We come to this place, by the resilient grace of God: A Love that never lets us go.**

God Speaks to Us

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 11:1-5

¹“But on this humbled ground, a tiny shoot, hopeful and promising, will sprout from Jesse’s stump; A branch will emerge from his roots to bear fruit. ²And on this child from David’s line, the Spirit of the Eternal One will alight and rest. By the Spirit of wisdom and discernment He will shine like the dew. By the Spirit of counsel and strength He will judge fairly and act courageously. By the Spirit of knowledge and reverence of the Eternal One, ³He will take pleasure in honoring the Eternal. He will determine fairness and equity; He will consider more than what meets the eye and weigh in more than what he’s told. ⁴So that even those who can’t afford a good defense will nevertheless get a fair and equitable judgment. With just a word, He will end wickedness and abolish oppression. With nothing more than the breath of His mouth, He will destroy evil. ⁵He will clothe himself with righteousness and truth; the impulse to right wrongs will be in his blood.”

Prayer of Approach

We gather to remember those who have touched our lives, glad memories and happy stories, and love that we hold dear. **We name those that have been life itself to us.**

We gather in the name of Jesus, vulnerable as an infant, joyful and happy as a youth, wise and caring as an adult. **We gather in the presence of God, who brings life, light and hope to all.**

All creatures -- great and small -- are precious in God’s sight. **No one is ever alone or forgotten. We are all worthy, forgiven and loved.**

Come, let us gather in the Spirit of hope and peace. **We worship in the name of joy and love. Amen**

Time of Meditation & Contemplation

Music & Storytelling by Jeff Wahl, a solo guitarist whose music weaves intricate finger-style technique, genre-blending compositions, and evocative storytelling.

Prayer

Holy One, you are with us in times of trouble and in times of peace...Comfort us with Your abiding peace. **Amen.**

Ceremony of Commemoration

We light a candle in memory of those who gave us birth, who nurtured us, offered love, and cherished us. **We remember mothers and fathers, stepparents, guardians, and grandparents, and all of our family and friends through the ages.**

We light a candle in memory of those who have been joined to us in the great circle of family. **We remember sisters and brothers, aunts, uncles, and cousins, those near to us and far away.**

We light a candle in memory of those who have left us before we expected, those we hold dear, and with whom we still walk with in our dreams. **We remember children, stepchildren, and grandchildren, those who leaped within the womb and who danced upon the earth.**

We light a candle in memory of those whom we came to know through the eyes of love. We hold sacred the faces and memories of years past, of those who brightened our days and lit up our lives. **We remember dearest loves and closest friends, who changed our lives forever.**

We light a candle in memory of our beloved animals, who shared in our lives, guarded us and our flocks from danger, gave us unconditional love and made our lives more enjoyable. **We remember our pets that live in our hearts forever.**

We light a candle for those we do not know, O God, who, like us, have suffered loss, who live with grief, who long for peace and justice, who long for friendship and healing. **We remember your people, of every time and place.**

Finally, we leave one candle unlit, mindful of the great truth of this life, that in the fullness of time we too, will join our loved ones in a realm without sorrow and pain, in the company of Unending Love.

For these and all your children, we give thanks for life, hope and courage. Amen.

(Please take the smooth glass stones that you were given as you entered the sanctuary. Hold them, one in each hand, between your forefinger and thumb. Mentally, press into them your concerns, your pain, your losses, your failings. Pray over them. Give those emotions over to God.)

Closing Prayers & Benediction

Divine Heart of Mercy, in your steadfast love you call us along the journey from despair to hope. Allow us to see the trickles of light trespassing on shadow's spaces. May slivers of expectation move us into places filled with your warm promises. **Amen.**

The God of all consolation bless you in every way, grant you hope all the days of your life, restore you to health and grant you salvation, fill your heart with peace, and lead you to eternal life. Almighty God bless you, the Father, the ☩ Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Go in Peace, Christ is with you. **Thanks be to God.**

Thank you to Jeff Wahl for helping to lead this year's Blue Christmas Service



Jeff Wahl is a solo guitarist whose music weaves intricate finger-style technique, genre-blending compositions, and evocative storytelling.

Drawing inspiration from legends like Tommy Emmanuel, Leo Kottke, Michael Hedges, and Andrés Segovia, Jeff creates a sound that is both technically masterful and emotionally resonant.

With a style rooted in acoustic finger-style traditions and shaped by decades of performance and exploration, Jeff's playing moves effortlessly between lyrical melodies, driving rhythms, and atmospheric harmonics.

His original compositions are rich with nuance—each one telling a story, each performance inviting listeners into a deeper connection with the music.

Whether performing in intimate venues, concert halls, or community spaces, Jeff creates an experience that's as heartfelt as it is unforgettable.

When he's not performing, Jeff continues to write, record, and share his passion for music with others. His recordings are available on major streaming platforms, and his live shows are beloved for their authenticity, warmth, and musicianship.

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Opening Prayer: written by Quentin Chin, in *Our Longest Night: A Service of Hope at Christmas Time*. Posted on the United Church of Christ website, <http://www.ucc.org/>.

Blue Christmas Introduction: The Rev. Dr. Kate Schlechter.

The Pastor's Workshop, by Lisa Degrenia, Dec 14, 2021 Christmas, Liturgy, Longest Night at <https://thepastorsworkshop.com/an-order-of-worship-for-a-blue-christmas-service-aka-a-longest-night-service>.

Sending Prayer: written by Michelle L. Torigan in *Blue Christmas Prayer Service* at *God Goes Pop Culture* at <https://michelletorigan.com/2019/12/16/blue-christmas-prayer-service>.