



Rockville United Church  
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ  
Blue Christmas Service  
December 7, 2025 ~ Hybrid Worship  
4:00 p.m.



**A TIME OF GATHERING****GREETING AND OPENING PRAYER**

One: Tonight we gather with one another and within ourselves.

**All: *We come as we are to God.***

One: Tonight we gather with hopes and with questions.

**All: *We come as we are to God.***

One: Tonight we gather with doubts and with dreaming.

**All: *We come as we are to God.***

One: Tonight we come as we are to God,

**All: *And God promises to meet us here.***

One: Let us pray,

God, we come to you as we are tonight.

All around us we see the lights of Christmas;

we hear the sounds of joyful celebration;

at times, we struggle with how to respond.

As the nights have grown longer,

sadness and emptiness, loneliness and pain

wrap around the hearts of many of us.

We aren't always able to put into words

that which causes us to feel melancholy rather than joy.

And so we offer up to you all those things

that weigh heavy on our hearts, all that worries us,

all that makes us afraid, all that causes us pain and sorrow.

Come to us, heal our pains, relieve our worry,

comfort our loneliness, soothe our fears.

Give us strength for today, courage for tomorrow,

and peace for the past.

We ask these things in the name of Christ,

who shares our life in joy and sorrow,

death and new birth, despair and promise.

**All: *Amen. We wait upon you Holy One.***

**\*HYMN**

**O Come, O Come Emmanuel**  
(verses 1 & 2)

Chalice Hymnal, No. 118

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

Refrain:

*Rejoice, rejoice! Emmanuel  
shall come to thee, O Israel!*

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer, our spirits by thine advent here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's deep shadows put to flight. Refrain

**READING**

**Ecclesiastes 3: 1-8**

**MUSICAL MEDITATION**

***In the Bleak Mid-winter***

**A TIME OF LAMENT**

**READING**

**“An Un-Natural Disaster”**

Anonymous

**READING**

**“For Grief”**

by John O'Donohue

**NAMING OUR LOSSES**

**MUSICAL MEDITATION**

***Be Still My Soul***

**SILENT REFLECTION**

**PRAYER**

by Andrew Foster

**A TIME OF COMFORT**

**PRAYER**

**“Quiet One”**

by Joyce Rupp

Into the din of our inner confusion  
***You come, gentle as a single snowflake.***  
Into the rush of our continual hurry  
***You come, slow as a melting icicle.***  
Into the pressure of endless activity  
***You come, easy as restful breathing.***  
Into the constant voices of demand

***You come, silent as a falling star.***  
Quiet One, restorer of stillness,  
***You are present. Waiting to be welcomed.***

**\*HYMN**

***My Shepherd You Supply My Need***  
(verses 1 & 2)

Chalice Hymnal, No. 80

My Shepherd, You supply my need; most holy is your name;  
in pastures fresh, you make me feed, beside the living stream.  
You bring my wand'ring spirit back when I forsake your ways;  
you lead me for your mercy's sake, in paths of truth and grace.

When through the shades of death I walk, your presence is my stay;  
one word of your supporting breath drives all my fears away.  
Your hand, in sight of all my foes, does still my table spread;  
my cup with blessings overflows, your oil anoints my head.

**READINGS**

**Isaiah 40:1-5**

**Matthew 11:28-29**

**NAMING COMFORTING THINGS**

*You are invited to write down things that bring you comfort and come forward  
to place your card on the table.*

**PRAYER OF COMFORTING THINGS**

**SILENT REFLECTION**

**READING**

“Collect day 31” by Padraig o Tuama in Being Here

**A TIME OF HOPE**

**MUSICAL MEDITATION**

***Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence***

**LITANY OF SHORT DAYS AND LONG NIGHTS**

Ted Loder, Guerrillas of Grace, adapted

O God of all seasons and senses, grant us your sense of 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 waiting:  
***of snow joining the mystery of the hunkered-down seeds  
growing in their sleep,  
watched over by gnarled-limed, grandparent trees  
resting from autumn's staggering energy;  
of the silent, whirling earth circling to race back home to the sun.***

In this seasons of short days and long nights,  
of grey and white and cold, teach us the lessens of endings:  
***of children growing, friends leaving, jobs concluding, stages finishing,  
loved ones dying, hearts grieving, grudges waning, excuses ending.***

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 a 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.***

## A TIME OF SENDING

### READING

“First Coming”

by Madeleine L’Engle

### CLOSING PRAYER

This evening, we embrace and claim the darkness that is present both in the world and in our own lives. As people who are familiar with darkness, we know that there is beauty and wisdom, comfort and strength even within darkness.

***In darkness we can rest and gather our strength. We know that darkness allows us to perceive the light.***

In darkness we gather to be illumined by the light of Christ ever coming into the world. Recall to us again the hope of the Christ Child, born as an outcast, on the margins, in a lowly stable, who comes to bring light, comfort, peace, hope and love to us and to all in need.

***We light candles to remind us of the light of Christ, your light of love in our world.***

May the hope of Christ sustain us.

***May God hold us in the light of love. Amen.***

### LIGHTING CANDLES

### MUSICAL MEDITATION

Prayer of St. Francis

sung by Carey Creed

**BENEDICTION**

“Benedictus”

Jan L. Richardson

**POSTLUDE**

***Let All Things Now Living***

Trad. Welsh melody

*Please join us for refreshments following the service.*

**Worship Leaders**

Rev. Jennifer Knutsen, Senior Pastor

Rev. Guy Johnson, Associate Pastor

Phyllis Windle, Liturgist

Jody Marshall, Hammer Dulcimer

**Welcome to Rockville United Church!**

*We are glad you have joined us for worship this afternoon. We trust that you will find RUC to be a welcoming and engaging place to explore the life of faith within a community that honors each person's spiritual journey. We encourage you to ask questions, visit our website, and share your contact information at the welcome table near the front doors.*

*I hope to greet you personally following worship, and invite you to contact me.*

*Blessings,*

*Rev. Jennifer Knutsen*

*[jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org](mailto:jennifer@rockvilleunitedchurch.org)*

Our complimentary Wi-Fi network is **RUC Mesh**. The password is **heavenly**.



Please Scan Me To Give To RUC.



**Rockville United Church**

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)/United Church of Christ  
355 Linthicum Street, Rockville, Maryland 20851  
301-424-6733 ~ [www.RockvilleUnitedChurch.org](http://www.RockvilleUnitedChurch.org)  
(Office Hours: Wed, Fri—10am to 3pm or by appointment)  
Ecumenical † Just Peace † Open & Affirming † More Light