

HARROLD ZION EVANGELICAL CHURCH
GREENSBURG, PENNSYLVANIA
TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21, 2021
7:00 PM



www.harroldzion.org

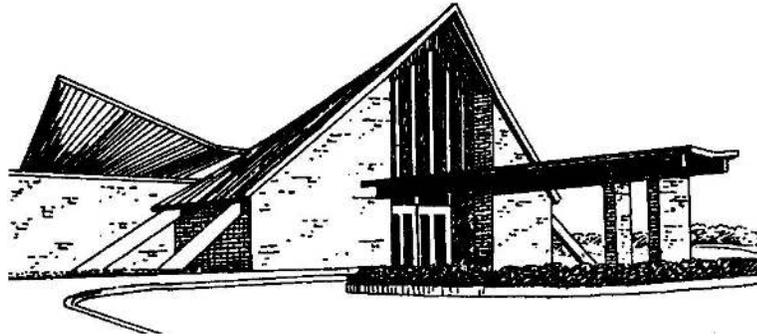
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724-837-7327

Harrold Zion Evangelical Lutheran Church

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WELCOME TO OUR WORSHIP!

- **It is a joy to welcome our visitors!** Please sign the guest book in the Welcome Center at the rear of the church and take a Welcome Packet which is filled with information about Harrold Zion. Please introduce yourself to the greeter in the Welcome Center and to the pastor as you leave worship. We hope you return soon!
- **Thank you for wearing a mask.** If you haven't signed in as you entered, the ushers will bring the sign in sheet to you.
- **Please maintain** a distance of three feet unless you are in the same family
- **Children's busy bags** are available in the Narthex. Bags include crayons, coloring sheets, children's bulletin and a snack. Please take the bag home after worship.
- **There is a prayer request book** on a podium in the Welcome Center. Please write name(s) in the book prior to the service to have names included in the prayers.
- **Large print bulletins** are available from any usher for those needing them.
- **Hearing devices** are available from any usher for those needing them.
- **Receiving Holy Communion** - We believe the body and blood of Christ to be present in the bread and wine. All who are baptized are invited to share in this meal. Please come forward at the usher's direction. Non-communing children may come forward for a blessing. If you desire communion in the pew, please inform one of the ushers so that you may receive communion there.

Blue Christmas
Tuesday, December 21, 2021
A Service of Wholeness and Healing

Prelude

Duet - *Away in a Manger*

Martin

P. "Comfort, comfort my people, says God"

There are many moments in our lives when we need comfort. There are tough times when we yearn for consolation. The suffering people who looked for the long-awaited Messiah were given a hope-filled image of God in the writings of Isaiah. It expresses the belief that no matter what happens to us, God will be there to comfort and support us. Christmas can be a time for many when we are in need of that reassurance and comfort.

Perhaps we are grieving over the loss of a loved one, struggling with illness, or have experienced the loss of a job. We wonder how we will get through the holidays.

*Those looking for comfort, hope, wholeness, and renewal join in a time of quiet reflection and meaningful words and music.
All shared in the good news of "God with us: Immanuel!"*

CALL TO WORSHIP

P. Today we come looking for the Christ Child.

C. We come, bringing our hurts, our worries, our fears.

P. We come seeking relief from pain. With the psalmist of old we say,

C. "O Lord, you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Give heed to my cry, for I am brought very low."

HYMN #279 O Little Town of Bethlehem



CALL TO CONFESSION

P. Dear Lord, we come to you this day to express our failures and confusion regarding our relationship with you:

C. You know that we come to you with heavy hearts that we find hard to unburden. It is particularly in this time of year when the darkness of long solstice nights collides with the brilliance of Christmas lights, that we find it hard to express our losses.

P. We may be confused, sad, lonely, and feeling our losses without remembering that you are always there to support us. We tend even toward anger at you, Lord, because we feel in some way it is your will that we are unhappy. Sometimes we feel cut off from you because we allow our many hurts to engulf us. We lack trust in you.

C. Open us to the understanding that you are the source of all love and we need not feel so alone in our grief. Grant us wisdom to know that you—most of all—can be trusted, and that you are with us, especially when we are at our absolute worst.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

P. Let us open our lives to God's healing presence and receive our Lord's acceptance of us!

C. We know, God of Love, that you are always with us even in our very darkest of times. We know that you forgive our many transgressions and that by leaning into your infinite patience and strength, we receive your mercy, your care, and your grace today. Amen.

HEARING OF THE WORD

Old Testament Isaiah 40: 1-5; 28-31

New Testament John 14: 26-27

Prayer

P. God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves, and for our families and friends who live with the struggles of illness and the pain of loss. We ask for 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. **C. Amen.**

MEDITATION

INTERCESSION FOR HEALING

P. The God of strength moves within us;

C. the God of courage hears our distress.

P. The God of hope reveals wholeness to us;

C. the God of healing touches us when we are broken.

P. When the pain overwhelms us, when the burden is too heavy,

C. we turn to our God, who is sustaining and redeeming.

P. When there is loneliness, when there is isolation,

C. we turn to our God, who is loving and present.

P. For God created us, redeemed us and sustains us,

C. and we are not alone.

Lead us in your ways, O God, and bring us your healing touch.

THE LIGHTING OF THE CANDLES AND HEALING RITUAL WITH OIL

You are invited to come forward and bring your candle to be lighted for yourself or a loved one. If you choose, you may then also be anointed with oil. This anointing on your forehead is a very old gesture used to give strength on the journey of being healed and healing others.

SOLO *Still, Still, Still*

PRAYER

HYMN *Silent Night*

Lighting of Candles and Silent Night

Silent night, holy night! All is calm, all is bright.

Round yon virgin mother and child. Holy infant so tender and mild.

Sleep in Heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night! Son of God, loves pure light

Radiant beams from thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,

Jesus, Lord, at thy birth. Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

BENEDICTION

P. May the power and the mystery go before us, to show us the way, shine above us to lighten our world, lie beneath us to bear us up, walk with us and give us companionship, and glow and flow within us to bring us joy.

POSTLUDE

Love Came Down at Christmas

Brown

Those who would like to join in individual prayer with a Pastor are invited to go to the Welcome Center at the rear of the church. Those who would like a time of silent prayer are invited to remain in their prayers as long as they would like.

As you leave, a member of our prayer chawl ministry will provide a prayer shawl for those who would like to have one.

Thank you to our organist, Joanne Gebhardt, and the pianist, Melanie Altman, for blessing us with music at this service.

WORSHIP WITH HARROLD ZION

Christmas Eve

3:00, 4:30, 7:00 & 10:00 PM

Christmas Day and New Year's Day

No 5:00 PM worship service

Sunday, December 26 and Sunday, January 2

One worship service at 9:30 AM

Regular worship

Saturday at 5:00 PM

Sunday at 8:00 & 10:30 AM

