

# THE LONGEST NIGHT

## *a service of remembrance and grief*

Sunday, December 20, 2020

### COMING TOGETHER

#### **The Uses of Sorrow**

*(In my sleep I dreamed this poem)*

Someone I loved once gave me  
a box full of darkness.

It took me years to understand  
that this, too, was a gift.

- Mary Oliver

#### **Prelude** "O Come, O Come Emmanuel"

#### **Welcome & Call to Worship**

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

All things were made by God, and without God nothing came to be.

What came to be through God was life, and this life was the light of the world.

The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

#### **Hymn** "O Little Town of Bethlehem"

O little town of Bethlehem,  
how still we see thee lie!  
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep  
the silent stars go by.  
Yet in thy dark streets shineth  
the everlasting light;  
the hopes and fears of all the years  
are met in thee tonight.

O holy child of Bethlehem,  
descend to us, we pray;  
cast out our sin and enter in;  
be born in us today.  
We hear the Christmas angels  
the great glad tidings tell;  
O come to us; abide with us,  
our Lord Emmanuel!

## FIRST LESSON & LIGHTING | *Psalm 102*

### Sung Response

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel  
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the son of God appear  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

### Prayer

*A time for contemplation and prayer.*

### Hymn "In the Bleak Midwinter":

In the bleak mid-winter, frosty wind made moan,  
Earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone.  
Snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
In the bleak mid-winter long ago.

Our God, heaven cannot hold him Nor earth sustain:  
Heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign:  
In the bleak mid-winter a stable place sufficed  
The Lord God Almighty Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels may have gathered there;  
Cherubim and seraphim throng'd the air.  
But His mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
Yet worshipped the Beloved with a kiss.

What can I give him, Poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd I would bring a lamb;  
If I were a wise man I would do my part;  
Yet what I can I give him - Give my heart.

## SECOND LESSON & LIGHTING | *Psalm 13*

How long, O Lord? Will you utterly forget me?  
How long will you hide your face from me?  
How long shall I harbor sorrow in my soul,  
grief in my heart day after day?

### Sung Response

O come thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily  
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

### Prayer

*A time for contemplation and prayer.*

## Hymn "O Day of Peace that Dimly Shines"

O day of peace that dimly shines  
Through all our hopes and prayers and dreams,  
Guide us to justice, truth, and love,  
Delivered from our selfish schemes.

May the swords of hate fall from our hands,  
Our hearts from envy find release,  
Till by God's grace our warring world  
Shall see Christ's promised reign of peace.

Then shall the wolf dwell with the lamb,  
Nor shall the fierce devour the small;  
As beasts and cattle calmly graze,  
A little child shall lead them all.

Then enemies shall learn to love,  
All creatures find their true accord;  
The hope of peace shall be fulfilled,  
For all the earth shall know the Lord.

## THIRD LESSON & LIGHTING | *Jeremiah 8*

No healing, only grief; my heart is broken.  
Listen to the weeping of my people all across the land.

### Sung Response

O come thou day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by thy advent here  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight  
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel..

### Prayer

*A time for contemplation and prayer.*

## Hymn "Advent Hymn"

Christ whose glory fills the skies, Christ the everlasting light  
Their some of righteousness arise and triumph o'er these shades of night

And come thou long awaited one in the fullness of your love  
And lose this heat bound up by shame and I will never be the same

*Refrain:*

So here I wait in hope of you all my soul's longing through and through  
And dayspring from on high be near and daystar in my heart appear

Dark and cheerless is the morn and 'til your love in me is born  
And joyless is the evening sun and 'til emmanuel has come

*Refrain:*

## FOURTH LESSON & LIGHTING | *Psalm 121*

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,  
from whence cometh my help.  
My help cometh from the Lord,  
who hath made heaven and earth.  
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved;  
he that keepeth thee will not slumber;  
behold, the God that keepeth Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.  
The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy right hand.  
The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon at night.  
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil and shall sustain thy soul.  
He shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in,  
from this time forth and even forevermore...

### Sung Response

O come, Desire of nations, bind; all peoples in one heart and mind;  
bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace.  
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

### Prayer

*A time for contemplation and prayer.*

### Hymn "Silent Night (Stille Nacht)"

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!  
Shepherds quake at the sight!  
Glories stream from heaven afar;  
Heavenly hosts sing Al-le-lu-ia!  
Christ the Savior is born!  
Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night  
Son of God, oh, love's pure light  
Radiant beams from Thy holy face  
With the dawn of redeeming grace  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth  
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth

# THE PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE.

## SENDING

### **Hymn** "Come Thou Long Expected Jesus"

Come Thou long expected Jesus  
Born to set Thy people free  
From our fears and sins release us  
Let us find our rest in Thee  
Israel's strength and consolation  
Hope of all the earth Thou art  
Dear desire of every nation  
Joy of every longing heart

Born Thy people to deliver  
Born a child and yet a King  
Born to reign in us forever  
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring  
By Thine own eternal spirit  
Rule in all our hearts alone  
By Thine all sufficient merit  
Raise us to Thy glorious throne

## BLESSING

## POSTLUDE



## CONNECT WITH IPC'S PASTORAL & PROGRAM STAFF

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Piano/Vocals

**Billy Gant**

Guitar/Vocals

**Jeanette Hightower**

Violin

**Beth Middleton**

Vocals

**Fred Rogan**

Steel Guitar

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Cello



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