

Edgebrook Lutheran Church

Saturday, December 19, 2020

5:00 p.m.

Longest Night Service



Tonight, we gather, creating a safe and sacred space to share prayers and laments, to mourn the losses and griefs, to plead with God to remember us, to pray for justice and restoration, even to hope against hope, allowing our tears to flow for the hurting places in our own lives.

During worship, you are invited to pray in many ways, with words or in your hearts, writing, drawing, coloring, or lighting candles. You may wish to sing or you may wish to be silent. All are invited to experience God's real presence during communion, and receive God's healing, mercy and forgiveness.

You may wish to prepare your worship space with bread and wine, candles (some with flame and some to light during the time of remembrance), and any tools for prayer.

PRELUDE

Away in a Manger

ELC Handbell Choir

We prepare for worship with a time of reflection:

May God help each of us to participate tonight and throughout the season as we are able.

GATHERING

WELCOME

HYMN: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel v. 1, 5, 7, 8

1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som cap - tive
Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile here
un - til the Son of God ap - pear. Re-joice! Re-joice!
Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el.

The musical notation consists of four staves of music in G major (one sharp) and 4/4 time. The melody is written in treble clef. The lyrics are placed below the notes. The word 'Refrain' is written above the notes for the phrase 'Re-joice! Re-joice!'.

- 5 O come, O Key of David, come,
and open wide our heav'nly home;
make safe the way that leads on high,
and close the path to misery. *Refrain*
- 7 O come, O King of nations, come,
O Cornerstone that binds in one:
refresh the hearts that long for you;
restore the broken, make us new. *Refrain*
- 8 O come, O come, Emmanuel,
and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here
until the Son of God appear. *Refrain*

REETING

Leader: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: And also with you.

PRAYER OF THE DAY

Let us pray... God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves and for our families who live with painful thoughts and memories.

We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the past.

We ask these things in the name of your Christ,

who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise.

Amen.

WORD

SCRIPTURE – Isaiah 7:14

Therefore the Lord himself will give you a sign. Look, the young woman is with child and shall bear a son, and shall name him Immanuel.

SCRIPTURE – Matthew 11:28-30

[Jesus said:] ‘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.’

Reader: The Word of the Lord

People: Thanks be to God.

HOMILY

Rev. Michael Stadie



HYMN OF THE DAY *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*



1 In - fant ho - ly, in - fant low - ly, for his bed a cat - tle stall;
2 Flocks were sleep - ing, shep - herds keep - ing vig - il till the morn - ing new



ox - en low - ing, lit - tle know - ing Christ the child is Lord of all.
saw the glo - ry, heard the sto - ry, tid - ings of a gos - pel true.



Swift - ly wing - ing, an - gels sing - ing, bells are ring - ing, tid - ings bring - ing:
Thus re - joic - ing, free from sor - row, prais - es voic - ing, greet the mor - row:



Christ the child is Lord of all! Christ the child is Lord of all!
Christ the child was born for you! Christ the child was born for you!

A LITURGY OF REMEMBRANCE & LIGHTING OF CANDLES

Tonight, we participate in the long-standing biblical tradition of lament, the practice of mourning for all that's wrong and crying out – to God and with God – to make things right. Our questions, cries and prayers to God don't have to be neat; they don't have to be nice, and we don't have to hold anything back. During this time, you may wish to pray silently, aloud, or using a pen for writing or drawing. One of the things we learn from scripture is that God also laments, so we know that we do not lament alone. As we lament this evening, we light candles, remembering those who have died, remembering our loss, and acknowledging that hope comes from God.

Lighting the First Candle:

Remembering Those Who Have Died

The first candle we light to remember those persons whom we have loved and lost, especially during this pandemic...

We take a moment to remember those who have died, praying for them silently, aloud, or in our writing. We pray...

(Time for silence and prayer)

O God, you dream of a world where comfort is given to those who mourn and where we can celebrate being reunited with our loved ones. Comfort us when our sad and aching hearts and draw near to us in our times of sorry. Make your presence known to us, and help us rejoice that our loved ones are with you, entrusted to your loving care.

God, listen!

Listen to my prayer. Listen to my cry.

Lighting the Second Candle:

Remembering What We Have Lost Personally

The second candle we light is to redeem the pain of loss that we have felt personally...

We take a moment to remember the losses, praying for them silently, aloud, or in our writing. We pray...

(Time for silence and prayer)

O God, you dream of a world where we can all be together in body and spirit, to share meals and laughter and embraces. With fearful and anxious hearts, we turn to you for peace. Teach us to be patient with the transformation of our lives and to be open to the changes which we have been going through.

God, listen!

Listen to my prayer. Listen to my cry.

Lighting the Third Candle:

Remembering What We Have Lost As A Community

Leader: The third candle we light for all that we have lost as a community together...

We take a moment to remember the losses, praying for them silently, aloud, or in our writing. We pray...

(Time for silence and prayer)

O God, you dream of a world where wrongs are acknowledged and righted and restoration is possible. Hear our prayers and forgive us. O God, you dream of a world where there's mercy and kindness, justice and joy, and enough to go around. Take all that is lost in us and bring it home with you.

God, listen!

Listen to my prayer. Listen to my cry.

Lighting the Fourth Candle & Lighting Individual Candles at home:

Remembering Hope – We Do Not Lament Alone

The fourth candle we light as a sign of hope, the hope that the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

I invite each of you to offer whatever feels crippling to you, whatever feels broken; and offer it up to the God who loves each of us deeply and wants to carry our pain. We do this as we light your own candles in your homes, trusting that God's presence is with us in the darkness and in the light. We pray...

We offer this song while you pray silently, aloud, or write your prayers.

Hungry (Falling on My Knees)

*Hungry, I come to you
For I know You satisfy
I am empty but I know
Your love does not run dry*

So I wait for You... So I wait for You

(Chorus)

*I'm falling on my knees
Offering all of me
Jesus, You're all this heart
Is living for*

*Broken, I run to You
For Your arms are open wide
I am weary but I know
Your touch restores my life*

So I wait for You... So I wait for You

(Chorus)

Let us pray: O God of big dreams, O God of big love, we look for you in this time of our despair, of our denial, of our disappointments. Even as we weep, we wait. And hope. And look toward Bethlehem. Help us to follow you and to live your dreams – your fierce, brave, life- and joy-giving dreams – tonight and always.

Amen.

MEAL

THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

***THE LORD'S PRAYER**

**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, forever and ever. Amen.**



POST-COMMUNION BLESSING

The body and blood of our Lord Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace.
Amen.

SENDING

BENEDICTION

Go trusting that in this darkness, even now, seeds are growing,
hope is being born, and new dreams are being dreamed.

Go in the embrace of the God of powerful love,
the Christ of humanness and vulnerability,
and the Spirit that is always, always with us and for us. **Amen.**

***SENDING HYMN**

The Advent Song

An Original Song by David Bugher

**As I lay my weary head
at your feet in the light of the cross
I see the hope that lies ahead,
the child who'll bring light to the lost
Our living God, the Son of man
as the prophet Isaiah foretold
The coming of the sacred lamb,
with a promise of grace for the young and the old**

**Chorus: And you lay me down
In my dreams, you keep awake hope
You lay me down
In the warmth of your light 'gainst the cold
You lay me down
And we try and we try but we need not try anymore
For soon, Immanuel shall be born**

**Finding rest within the Lord,
my hope and my spirit restored
Angels waking by my bed,
singing magnify the Lord
The living God, thy kingdom love,
Jesus is coming soon... Come!**

Chorus

And you lay me down... (3x)

Soon Jesus Christ is born

***DISMISSAL**

Go in peace. Emmanuel is with you.

Thanks be to God.

Thank you for joining us today. Be safe, be well, and may God's peace with you.

POSTLUDE

Amazing Grace

ELC Handbell Choir

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