



Pilgrim Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Service of The Longest Night
December 21, 2020

Music streamed in tonight's service

Each Winter As the Year Grows Older - William Gay

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel - NCH 116

In the Bleak Mid-Winter vs. 1-4

Still, Still, Still - arr. Pam Turner

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming - NCH 127

The Bells of Norwich - Dot Bowe

Meditation on Silent Night - arr. Larry Shackley

Music licensed for streaming/podcast by OneLicense.

Pilgrim Congregational Church
United Church of Christ
The Service of the Longest Night
December 21, 2020

Prelude	Each Winter As the Year Grows Older	William Gay
Greeting		Rev. Reebee Kavich Girash

The Grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all.

If I say, “Surely the darkness will cover me, and the light around me turn to night,” darkness is not dark to you, O Lord; the night is as bright as the day; darkness and light to you are both alike. (*Psalm 139:10-11*)

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shone. For the yoke that was weighing upon them, and the burden upon their shoulders, you have broken in pieces, O God, our Redeemer.

Opening Hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel vs. 1-5

1 O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the child of God appear.

[Refrain:] Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!

2 O come, O Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show, and help us in that way to go.

[Refrain]

3 O come, O come, Adonai, who came to all on Sinai's high,
And from its peak a single law proclaimed in majesty and awe.

[Refrain]

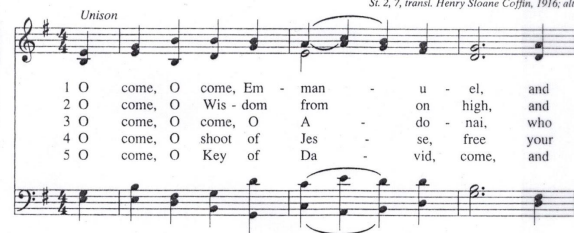
4 O come, O shoot of Jesse, free your own from Satan's tyranny,
From depths of hell your people save, and give them victory o'er the grave.

[Refrain]

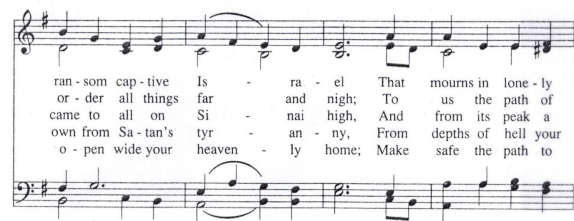
5 O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide your heavenly home;
Make safe the path to endless day, to hell's destruction close the way.

[Refrain]

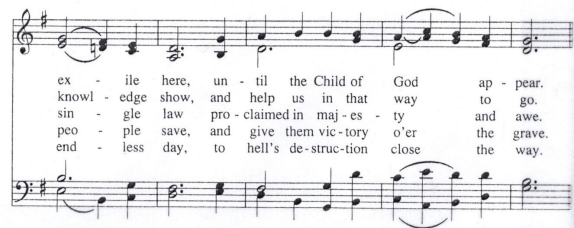
Unison



1 O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and
2 O come, O Wis - dom from on high, and
3 O come, O come, O A - do - nai, who
4 O come, O shoot of Jes - se, free your
5 O come, O Key of Da - vid, come, and

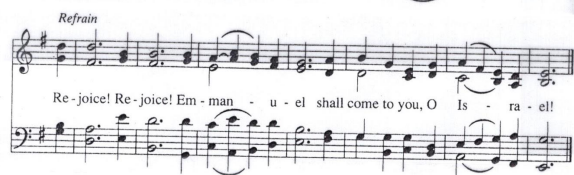


ran - som cap - tive Is - ra - el That mourns in lone - ly
or - der all things far and nigh; To us the path of
came to all on Si - nai high, And from its peak a
own from Sa - tan's tyr - an - ny, From depths of hell your
o - pen wide your heaven - ly home; Make safe the path to



ex - ile here, un - til the Child of God ap - pear.
knowl - edge show, and help us in that way to go.
sin - gle law pro - claimed in maj - es - ty and awe.
peo - ple save, and give them vic - tory o'er the grave.
end - less day, to hell's de - struc - tion close the way.

Refrain



Re - joice! Re - joice! Em - man - u - el shall come to you, O Is - ra - el!

Opening Prayer

God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves and for all who live with grief, fear, anxiety, or painful memories. We gather out of darkness to pray together for your gifts of courage, patience, and peace. We ask these things in the name of your Christ, who shares our life in sorrow and joy, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

Scripture Reading: Psalm 22 (adapted)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

In you, our ancestors trusted. They trusted and you delivered them.

It was you who brought me from the womb,
you who kept me safe on my mother's breast.

Since my mother bore me, you have been my God.

Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

God does not despise the affliction of the afflicted.

God does not hide from me.

When I cry to God, God hears me.

Thanks be to God.

Lighting the Advent Candles

First Candle - Grief

This candle represents our grief. We own the pain of losing loved ones, of dreams that go unfulfilled, of hopes that evaporate in despair.

May God's love surround all who mourn and struggle with grief.

Musical Response

In the Bleak Midwinter (verse 1)

In the bleak midwinter, 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 midwinter, long ago.

Second Candle - Courage

This candle represents our courage. It symbolizes the courage to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to share our feelings honestly and openly with each other, and to dare to hope in the midst of pain.

Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future with great Courage.

Musical Response

In the Bleak Midwinter (verse 2)

Our God transcends all heaven, earth, and its domain; heaven and earth shall flee away when Christ comes to reign; In the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed the sovereign God almighty Jesus Christ.

Third Candle - Memories

This candle represents our memories. For the times we laughed together, cried together, were angry with each other or overjoyed with each other. We light this candle for the memories of caring and joy we shared together. Holy one, help us to remember the light-filled joyful memories, as we struggle with the dark memories.

Musical Response

In the Bleak Midwinter (verse 3)

Angels and archangels may have gathered there,
cherubim and seraphim thronged the midnight air;
But his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.

Fourth Candle - Love

This candle represents our love. The love we have given, and the love we have received. The love that has gone unacknowledged and unfelt, and the love that has been shared in times of joy and sorrow. Guide us, O God, as we remember all that has been given and received in you whom we know as Love.

Musical Response

In the Bleak Midwinter (verse 4)

What can I offer, poor as I am? If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb.
If I were a Wiseman, I would do my part; but what can I offer—all my heart.

Wreath of Lament

A Reading of Names

Special Music

Still, Still, Still

arr. Pam Turner

Prayers of the People

The Lord's Prayer

Our Father (Creator), 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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever. Amen.

Hymn **Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming 127 Black**

127

Es ist ein' Ros entsprungen
(Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming)

Isa. 11:1

German, 15th century; transl. Theodore Baker, 1894; alt.

1 Lo, how a Rose e'er blooming from tender stem has sprung!
Of Jesse's lineage coming as saints of old have sung.
It came, a floweret bright, amid the cold of winter,
when half spent was the night.

2 Isaiah had foretold it, the Rose I have in mind,
With Mary we behold it, the Virgin Mother kind.
To show God's love aright, she bore to us a Savior,
when half spent was the night.

1 Es ist ein' Ros ent-sprun-gen aus ein-er Wur-zel zart,
1 Lo, how a Rose e'er bloom-ing from ten-der stem has sprung!
2 I - sa-iah had fore - told it, the Rose I have in mind,

wie uns die Al-ten sun-gen: von Jes-se kam die
Of Jes-se's lin-eage com-ing as saints of old have sung.
With Mar-y we be-hold it, the Vir-gin Moth-er kind.

und hat ein Blüm-lein bracht mit-ten im kal-ten
It came a flower-et bright, a-mid the cold of
To show God's love a-right, she bore to us a

der... hal-ben
Win-ter wohl zu der hal-ben Nacht.
win-ter, when half spent was the night.
Sav-ior, when half spent was the night.

A Cascade of Hope

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: We give you thanks, comforting God, for wrapping us in your healing presence in this time of remembrance. We praise you for your guiding light, each day, as we try to live life more fully and wholly. Now, by your sacred, healing power: comfort us, encourage us, empower us. Amen.

Special Music

The Bells of Norwich

Dot Bowe

The Peace

Benediction

Postlude

Meditation on Silent Night

arr. Larry Shackley

Liturgy for Lighting the Advent Candles and Reflections adapted from Ministry Matters: *Longest Night* by Nancy C. Townley. Liturgy for the Prayers of the People based off an order of worship used at The Cathedral Church of Saint Andrew, Honolulu Hawaii.

Waiting

By Julia Esquivel

Life is painful
because of the ones who have died.

Joy is painful
because of the ones who are crying.

Love is painful
because of the ones who hate.
And while I am loving, laughing, and crying,
I am waiting for you, my Lord!