



# CHURCH OF THE CROSS

## DECEMBER 11, 2019 ~ 7 PM ADVENT PRAYER SERVICE

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME

Pastor Julie

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor Julie

The world says, "All is lost."

**God says, "all is loved."**

The darkness says, "The light is dying."

**The Light says, "The fire is catching."**

Fear says, "Cover your eyes and your ears."

**Hope says, "Wait, watch, and listen."**

OPENING PRAYER

Pastor Julie

A CAROL NO. 88, vs 1, 5-6      "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

ADVENT CANDLES OF REMEMBERING

Jim Letterer

The first candle we light to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices, the memories that bind them to us in this season.

**May God's eternal love surround them.**

George Rogers

The second candle we light to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, the loss of hopes and dreams. We pause to gather up the pain of the past. We offer it to God, asking that from God's hands we receive the gift of peace.

**Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into your future.**

Jim Letterer

The third candle we light to think about ourselves this Christmastide. We pause and remember these past weeks and months; the disbelief, the anger, the down times, the poignancy of reminiscing, the hugs, kisses, and handshakes of family and friends, all those who stood with us. We give thanks for all the support we have known.

**Let us remember that the light of Christ defeats the darkness.**

George Rogers

The fourth candle is lit to give light to the flicker of our faith and the gift of hope which the Christmas story offers to us. Here we remember that God who shares our life promises us a place and time where there will be no more pain and suffering.

**Let us remember our Savior Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, who bears the light and shows us the way, unveiling the truths of eternal life.**

SCRIPTURE READING	Isaiah 40:1-5, 28-31	Jim Letterer
OUR SILENT PRAYERS		Jim Letterer
ASSURANCE OF GOD'S GRACE	John 1:1-5	Pastor Julie
A CAROL NO. 110	"Love Has Come"	
A TIME OF SILENCE		Pastor Julie

The God of strength moves within us;  
**the God of courage hears our distress.**

The God of hope reveals wholeness to us;  
**the God of healing touches us when we are broken.**

When the pain overwhelms us, when the burden is too heavy,  
**we turn to our God, who is sustaining and redeeming.**

When there is loneliness, when there is isolation,  
**we turn to our God, who is loving and present.**

For God created us, redeemed us, sustains us,  
**and we are not alone. Lead us in your ways, O God,  
and bring us your healing touch. Amen.**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 14:25-29

EVENING MEDITATION

Pastor Julie

A CAROL NO. 87      “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People”

RESPONSIVE PRAYER      (*responses-Psalm 121:2, 5 8*)

Pastor Julie

O Lord, we cry to you for ... unfailing sympathy, undying love.

**Our help comes from the LORD, who made heaven and earth.**

Help us... in the comfort of your heart.

**The LORD is our keeper; the LORD is our shade at our right hand.**

In you, we discover... the fullness of faith.

**The LORD will keep our going out and our coming in  
from this time and forevermore.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER

A CAROL No. 122

“Still, Still, Still”

*Scripture will be read between each verse as the music continues*

**Still, still, still, He sleeps this night so chill!  
The virgin’s tender arms enfolding,  
Warm and safe the Child are holding.  
Still, still, still, He sleeps this night so chill**

JOHN 1:1, 10-14 - Jim Letterer

**Sleep, sleep, sleep, He lies in slumber deep  
While angel hosts from heaven come winging,  
Sweetest songs of joy are singing.  
Sleep, sleep, sleep, He lies in slumber deep.**

REVELATION 21:1-4 - George Rogers

**Still, still, still, Christ comes so he might fill,  
Our hearts with love and care enfolding,  
As we embrace the world he is holding.  
Still, Still, Still, may Christ our hearts so fill.**

\*BENEDICTION

\*POSTLUDE

Source (*portions adapted*): Blue Christmas: A Service of Wholeness and Healing By Jean Givens PHN leadership team member, First Presbyterian Church in Kalamazoo, Michigan, Parish Nurses.