



# **CHURCH OF THE CROSS**

**DECEMBER 8, 2021 ~ 7 PM**

**A BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE**

PRELUDE

“Intermezzo” by J Brahms

Robert K.

WORDS OF WELCOME

\*CALL TO WORSHIP

*loosely gleaned from Psalm 126*

Pastor Julie

What are your dreams, people of God?

**To be filled with laughter; to cry with joy, not with sorrow.**

What are your hopes, people of God?

**To be free of the chains which bind us;  
to shout with thanksgiving, not with anguish.**

People of God; the Lord has done great things for us.

**So we come before God, once again, trusting God’s goodness and mercy.**

OPENING PRAYER

Pastor Julie

A CAROL

“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (vs 1-2, 7)

*GTG #88*

RESPONSIVE SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 121

Jim B

I will lift up my eyes to the hills, from where is my help to come?

**My help comes from the Lord, the maker of heaven and earth.**

He will not let your foot be moved and he who watches over you will not fall asleep.

**Behold, he who keeps watch over Israel shall neither slumber nor sleep.**

The Lord himself watches over you; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

**So that the sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night**

The Lord shall preserve you from all evil; it is he who shall keep you safe.

**The Lord shall watch over your going out and your coming in,  
from this time forth for ever more.**

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit.

**As it was in the beginning, is now, and will be forever. Amen.**

### **A LITURGY OF REMEMBRANCE - *Lighting the Four Advent Candles***

#### **First Candle:**

***Prayer:* Lord, each of us takes our loved one by the hand and leads them to you, the God of love. Here we present them to you. Accept our love and thanksgiving as we entrust them to your loving care. We want our loved ones to be free at home with you. We ask you save a place for us beside them. We ask you fill us with motivation and energy in the days ahead when we feel like giving up; remind us often of our true homeland when we are caught up in the desolation of the journey. Help us to find joy in the people, events and the beauty of nature which surrounds us. Thank you for the gift each of these people has been in our lives. We want to believe we**

**will celebrate the treasure of love with them again, when we are all in your presence forever. May this truth sustain us in the days to come. Take our aching hearts and comfort us. Comfort us, for we only feel hollowness and emptiness. God of sorrowing, draw near! Amen.**

**“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL” (VS 6)**

**O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer our spirits by thine 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.**

**Second Candle:**

***Prayer:* God of mystery, we turn our hearts to you. We come before you in need of peace, grateful for the mystery of life and ever keenly aware of your promises of guidance and protection. We want to place our trust in you, but our hearts grow fearful and anxious. We forget so easily you will be with us in all we experience. Teach us to be patient with the transformation of our lives and to be open to the changes which we are now going through. Amen.**

**“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL” (VS 5)**

**O come, thou Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home; make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**Third Candle:**

***Prayer:* God of our depths, we cry out to you to be our guide. Help us to have a strong sense of inner direction and grant that we may have the reassurance of knowing that we are on the right path. Take our lives and use them according to your will. Take all that is lost in us and bring it home with you. Amen.**

**“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL” (VS 3)**

**O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to thy tribes on Sinai’s height in ancient times didst give the law in cloud and majesty and awe. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

**Fourth Candle:**

***Prayer:* O God whose spirit is known by those whose hearts are thankful, and who makes cheerfulness a companion of strength, lift up our hearts, we pray, to a joyous confidence in your care. Guide us when we cannot see the way. Teach us to know that a shadow is only a shadow, because the light of eternal goodness shines behind the object of our fears. Where there is love in life, teach us to find it; help us to trust it and enable us to grow in the power of love. So may our lives bring comfort and encouragement to others. We ask this, in the name of Jesus Christ whose life is our light. Amen.**

“O COME, O COME, EMMANUEL” (VS 4)

**O come, thou Root of Jesse, free, thine own from Satan’s tyranny;  
from depths of hell thy people save, and give them victory o’er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 40:1-5, 28-31

Jim B

INTERCESSION FOR HEALING

Jim B.

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.**

A TIME OF SILENCE

ASSURANCE OF GOD’S GRACE

John 1:1-5

Pastor Julie

SUNG RESPONSE

“While We Are Waiting, Come”

GTG #92

PRAYER

Pastor Julie

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 14:25-29

EVENING MEDITATION

Pastor Julie

A CAROL

“Comfort, Comfort Now My People”

GTG #87

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

God, we come to you as Christmas dawns with pain growing inside us. As the nights have been growing longer, so has the darkness wrapped itself around our hearts. In this season of longest nights, we offer to you the pain in our hearts, the traumas which some of us cannot put into words.

Loving God, hear our prayer,

**And in your merciful love, answer.**

Compassionate God, there are those among us who are grieving over what might have been. A death or loss has changed our experience of Christmas. Once it was a special day for us too, but someone has died or moved away. Or we have lost a job, or a cause, or our health. We find ourselves adrift, alone, lost. Lord help us find our way.

Loving God, hear our prayer,  
**And in your merciful love, answer.**

The Christmas season reminds us of all that used to be and cannot, or may not, be anymore. The memories of what was, the fears of what may be, stifle us. All around us we hear the sounds of celebration. But all we experience is a sense of feeling blue. Please be near us this night and all the nights to come.

Loving God, hear our prayer,  
**And in your merciful love, answer.**

In the silence we now lift to the Holy One all our cares and worries and woes, trusting in the healing, cleansing activity of God's power in our lives...

*~ A Time of Silence ~*

Holy One, into the darkness we, the Light of Christ comes, carrying our load, guiding our paths, holding our hearts with compassion and care. Remind us once again of your promised Light. Bring to your hearts the truth that your Light will shine and the darkness will not overcome it. Receive us and our hearts into your arms of comfort as we turn to the prayer of our Lord...

THE LORD'S PRAYER

A CAROL NO. 124

"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 Buchholz

**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 - Pastor Julie

**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

"Allegro Moderato" by J Bernards

Robert K.

# LUNCH WITH PASTOR JULIE

Join us via Zoom every Wednesday at 12 noon for bible study. We discuss scripture passages for our upcoming worship service. Contact Pastor Julie for the Zoom access information to join.

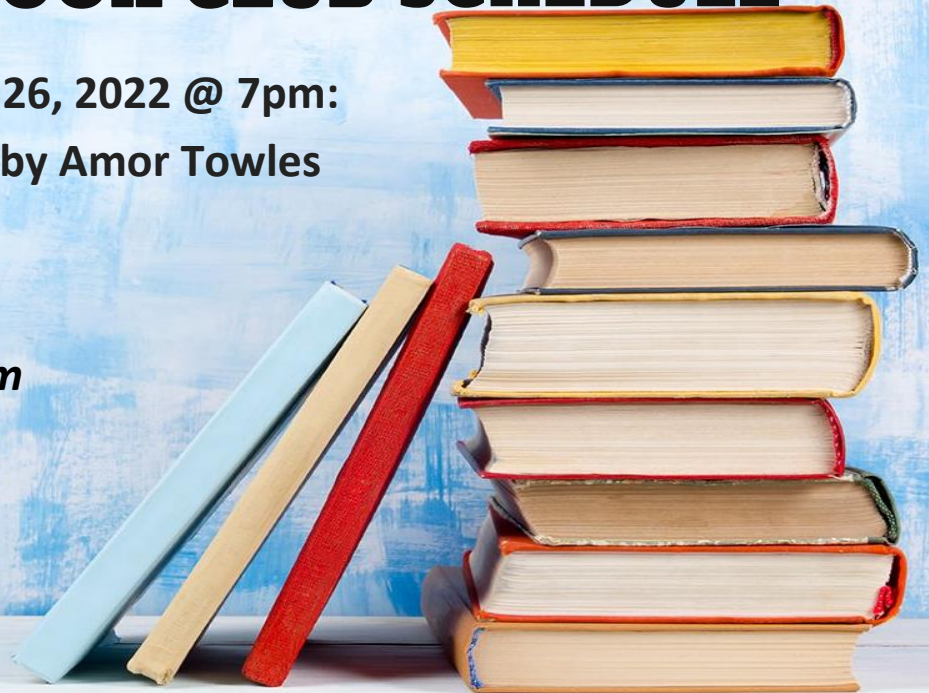


December 8	Luke 3:7-18; Zephaniah 3:14-20
December 15	Luke 1:39-56; Micah 5:2-5a
December 22	Luke 2:1-20; Isaiah 9:2-7; Titus 2:11-14; Psalm 96

# ZOOM BOOK CLUB SCHEDULE

Wednesday, January 26, 2022 @ 7pm:  
The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles

Please email Judie at  
[judietrue@gmail.com](mailto:judietrue@gmail.com)  
for Zoom details

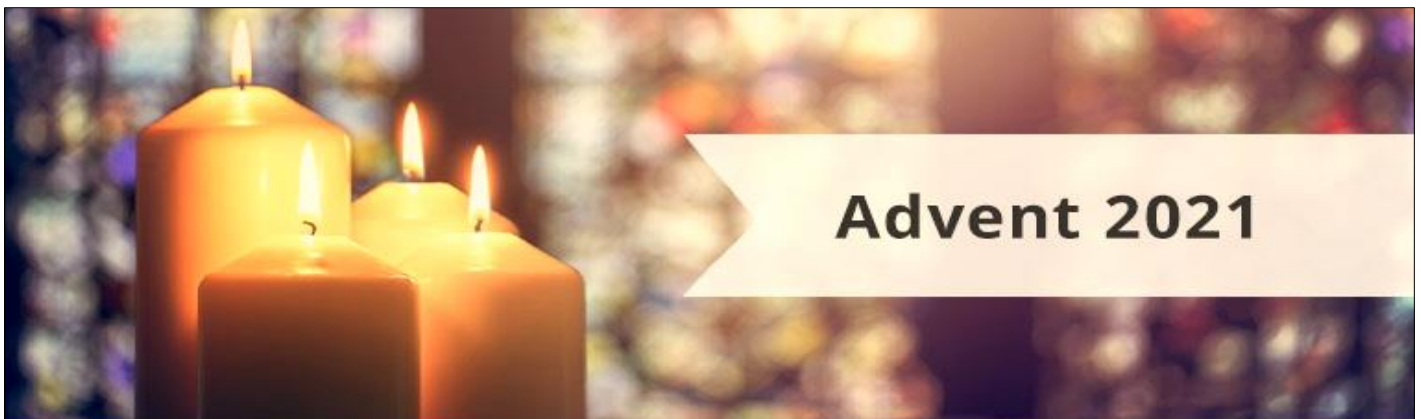
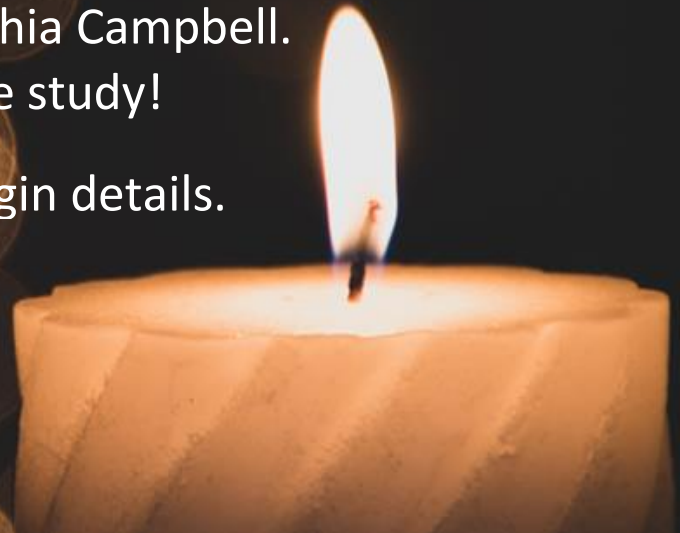


# ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL

The group meets via Zoom on Sundays at 12 noon.  
We are currently studying “Peace, Justice, Joy, and Salvation:  
An Adult Advent Study” by Cynthia Campbell.

Everyone is invited to join the study!

Contact Ken G. for the Zoom login details.



## Join us in-person or online this Advent Season!

Sunday, November 28 - 1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship Service @ 10 am

Sunday, December 5 - 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship Service @ 10 am

Wednesday, December 8 – Blue Christmas Service @ 7 pm

Sunday, December 12 - 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship Service @ 10 am

Sunday, December 19 - 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent Worship Service @ 10 am

Friday, December 24 - Christmas Eve Candlelight Service @ 7 pm

Sunday, December 26 – Lessons and Carols Service @ 10 am



**Church of the Cross**  
**475 West Higgins Road, Hoffman Estates, IL 60169**

**Office: 847-885-1199**

**Website: [www.churchofthecross.online](http://www.churchofthecross.online)**



The Rev. Julie G. Peterson, Pastor  
 Cell phone ~224-828-9761  
 Email ~ [pastor@cotc-pcusa.org](mailto:pastor@cotc-pcusa.org)  
 Clerk of Session ~ Pat Groenewold  
 Deacon Moderator ~ Judie Truelsen

Office Manager ~ Vanessa Brand  
 Office phone ~ 847-885-1199  
 Email ~ [office@cotc-pcusa.org](mailto:office@cotc-pcusa.org)  
 Choir Director ~ Marie Rutter  
 Organist ~ Dr. Robert Kania

### Session

Treasurer ~ Ken Groenewold

#### Elders, Class of 2021

Sue Liautaud  
 Stu Rutter  
 Cheryl Wilkins  
 Pat Groenewold, Clerk

#### Elders, Class of 2022

Jane Lesch  
 Jim Vakoc

#### Elders, Class of 2023

James Buchholz  
 Laura De La Cruz  
 Cathy Walker

### Deacons

#### Deacons, Class of 2021

Karen Franz  
 Ann Moorman  
 Glenna Morgan  
 Judie Truelsen, Moderator

#### Deacons, Class of 2022

Susan Buchholz  
 Chris Lorentz

#### Deacons, Class of 2023

Erica De La Cruz  
 Naana Grant-Acquah  
 Fay Michaelis

### Corporation Officers

Jim Letterer President  
 Jim Vakoc Vice President  
 Ken Groenewold Treasurer  
 Pat Groenewold Secretary  
 Terry Maulding Member at large  
 Stu Truelsen Member at large  
 Hank Morgan Member at large