

# **An Advent Longest Night Service**

## **Order of Worship**

December 21<sup>st</sup>, 2020

### **MUSIC FOR MEDITATION**

### **WELCOME AND CALL TO WORSHIP**

**HYMN** no. 88 *O Come, O Come Emmanuel*

### **PRAYER**

Holy God of Advent,  
you became vulnerable  
so we would find strength in moments of heartbreak;  
you left the safety of heaven  
to wander the wilderness of the world,  
holding our hands when we feel hopeless;  
you set aside your glory  
to hold our pain so we might be healed,  
even when there seems to be no hope;  
you became one of us,  
so we would never be alone in any moment,  
in any circumstance.

So come now,  
Child of Bethlehem,  
to strengthen us in these days.  
May we feel your presence  
in a way we have never known,  
not just as one born in a stable  
long ago and far away  
but as the One born in our hearts.

You have promised to go before us:  
into our brokenness, into hospital rooms,  
into empty houses, into graveyards,  
into our future held by God,  
and you are here, even now,  
waiting for each of us:  
to serve us,  
to hold us,  
to comfort us,  
to heal us,  
to live in us, now and forever. Amen

## A LITANY FOR LOSSES

### **Loss of Life**

*We light the first candle*

Silence

We mourn this loss of life.

**We mourn this loss of life.**

We honor and remember these beloveds.

**We honor and remember these beloveds.**

We pray for comfort and peace.

**We pray for comfort and peace.**

Amen. **Amen.**

### **Loss of Livelihood**

*We light the second candle*

Silence

We mourn this loss of livelihood.

**We mourn this loss of livelihood.**

We honor and remember the dreams now deferred.

**We honor and remember the dreams now deferred.**

We pray for sustenance and resilience.

**We pray for sustenance and resilience.**

Amen. **Amen.**

### **Loss of Love**

*We light the third candle*

Silence

We mourn this loss of love.

**We mourn this loss of love.**

We honor and remember the work of prophets who proclaim justice.

**We honor and remember the work of prophets who proclaim justice.**

We pray for compassion, change, and courage.

**We pray for compassion, change, and courage.**

Amen. **Amen.**

### **Loss of Liveliness**

*We light the fourth candle*

Silence

We mourn this loss of liveliness.

**We mourn this loss of liveliness.**

We honor and remember that each person is precious and whole.

**We honor and remember that each person is precious and whole.**

We pray for recovery and renewed vigor.

**We pray for recovery and renewed vigor.**

Amen. **Amen.**

## MUSIC FOR MEDITATION

SCRIPTURE READING     Isaiah 9:2,6-7

REFLECTION: A Blessing for the Longest Night by Jan Richardson

HYMN no. 94    *Now the Heavens Start to Whisper*

## The Lord's Supper

Invitation

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

**And also with you.**

Lift up your hearts.

**We lift them up to the Lord.**

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

**It is right to give God thanks and praise.**

The Lord's Prayer

Words of Institution and Sharing of the Bread and Cup

Prayer After Communion

HYMN no.121 *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

## CLOSING PRAYER AND BLESSING

*O God of big dreams, O God of big love, we look for you in the darkness of our despair, of*

*our denial, of our disappointments, and of our grief. Even as we weep, we wait. And hope. And look toward Bethlehem. Help us, whether we can see you clearly or not, to follow you and to live your dreams—your fierce, brave, life-and joy-giving dreams—tonight and always. Amen*

## **POSTLUDE**

Tonight's liturgy has been adapted from: The Iona Community, Thom Shuman, Jan Richardson, A Sanctified Art, and Worship Design Studio by Marcia McFee.