

***Longest Night Worship Service***

***December 21, 2020***



[www.riverofhopehutchinson.org](http://www.riverofhopehutchinson.org)

## Gathering Music

Song: O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

## Welcome and Greeting

We gather in the name of our Triune God: Creator, Christ, and Holy Spirit. Our God of hope who is always with you. **And also with you.**

Let us pray together: Holy God, **you draw near to this weary world and to all who long for your presence and peace. As we hold vigil together, naming our longings and laments, our hopes and our dreams, remind us that you are here bringing hope and love to a world in need. Through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord, Amen.**

Song: Of the Father's Love Begotten

## Advent Litany of Remembering and Silent Night

As we light this first candle on our Advent wreath, we pause to remember loved ones who have died. Neighbor and friend, stranger and family, we pause to reflect on the memories we shared and to say aloud their names. This year, we especially remember all those around this world who have died from COVID-19. God of hope, **draw near.**

*Silence*

As we light this second candle on our Advent wreath, we pause to name the sorrow and suffering of all of creation. For lost jobs and lost relationships, for food insecurity and financial instability, for ongoing racism and injustice in our community and around the world. For forests and fields devastated by fire, and communities and countryside upturned by storm. God of hope, **draw near**

*Silence*

As we light this third candle on our Advent wreath, we pause to name the weariness of our world. Around our community and across the globe, healthcare workers, teachers, scientists, food and sanitation workers, and all essential employees are working tirelessly to care for this world and to bring an end to this ongoing pandemic. We are restless thinking about health and safety, we are lonely, hungry, weary, and afraid. God of hope, **draw near**.

*Silence.*

As we light this fourth candle on our Advent wreath, we pause to give space for all that we have not yet named aloud but that which fills our heart this night with longing. God of hope, **draw near**.

*Silence.*

**Song: What Child is This**

**First Reading** Isaiah 40:1-11

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Music: Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming**

**Second Reading** Matthew 11:28-30

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Music: O Little Town of Bethlehem**

**Third Reading** John 1:1-5, 14

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Music: Once in Royal David's City**

**Fourth Reading** Blessing for the Longest Night, Rev. Jan Richardson

The word of the Lord.

**Thanks be to God.**

**Music: In the Bleak Midwinter**

**Prayers of the People**

*Let us pray for the church, the world, and all who are in need.*

I will close each petition with God of Hope, and I invite you to respond: **Hear our Prayer.**

**Holy Communion**

**Lord's Prayer**

**Song: In the Bleak Midwinter**

**Post Communion Blessing and Prayer**

Let us pray. **Almighty God, we give you thanks that you have fed us with your body and blood. In your grace and by your Spirit, help us to be what we celebrate, the body of Christ in the world. Renewed in this meal, send us out to reflect your love. Through Jesus Christ our Savior and Lord. Amen.**

**Blessing**

Dear Friends, on this longest night, may you know that God is near: surrounding you with peace, filling you with hope, holding you in love. **Amen**

## **Sending Music - Lo, How a Rose e'er Blooming**

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Advent Litany of Remembering adapted from Advent Litany from The Cathedral Church of St. Andrew, Honolulu, HI

Blessing for the Longest Night, © Jan Richardson, The Cure for Sorrow: A Book of Blessings for Times of Grief and @ janrichardson.com