

**Longest Night Service
McCune Chapel
December 19th, 4 p.m.**



**Rev. Dr. Shawnthea Monroe, Senior Pastor
Rev Dr. Devon Herrell, Associate Pastor
Judy Kabodian, Pianist**



The Peoples Church
200 W. Grand River Ave.
East Lansing, MI 48823

Gathering Music

Words of Welcome

Opening Prayer

God of Mercy, draw near and hear our prayers in this Advent Season. You see us as we are. You know our disappointments and our fears, our hopes and our dreams. You know our deepest sorrows and our secret longings. Calm our anxious hearts and clear our minds. Tonight, we pray for the healing of old wounds, the courage to meet the needs of each day, and the light of Christ that conquers the darkness. We ask all these things in the name of your son, Jesus, who walks with us in every moment of this season.

Hymn

O Come, O Come Emmanuel (v. 1 & 6)

no. 88

O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel, that mourns in lonely exile here until the Son of God appear. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind; bid envy, strife, and discord cease; fill the whole world with heaven's peace. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 61:1-4

Responsive Reading

Psalm 46:1-5

One: God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.

All: Therefore we will not fear if the earth should change, though the mountains shake in the middle of the sea;

One: Though its waves roar and foam, though the mountains tremble with its chaos.

All: There is a river whose streams make glad the city of God, the Holy home of the Most High.

One: God is in the middle of her, she shall not be moved;

All: God will help her quickly.

Hymn

I Will Come (v. 1-2)

no. 177

"I will come to you in the silence; I will lift you from all your fear. You will hear my voice; I claim you as my choice. Be still and know I am here.

Refrain: *Do not be afraid, I am with you. I have called you each by name. Come and follow me, I will bring you home; I love you and you are mine.*

I am hope for all who are hopeless; I am eyes for all who long to see. In the shadows of the night, I will be your light. Come and rest in me. Refrain

Scripture Reading

John 1:1-14

Meditation

"God With Us"

Rev. Dr. Devon Herrell

A Liturgy of Remembering

One: We light the first candle to remember those we have loved and lost, and those who are estranged from us. In silence, we remember their names, their faces, their voices—all the memories that bind them to us in this season.

All: May God's eternal love surround them.

One: We light the second candle to redeem the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, the loss of security. In silence, we offer our pain to God in expectation that God will give us the gift us peace.

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

One: We light this third candle as a reminder to be gentle with ourselves. In silence, we note the challenges of this season: the aches of memory, the anger of disappointment, the frantic pace, as well as the down times. We also call to mind the love given to us by family and friends, and we give thanks for those who have supported us.

All: Let us remember the light of Christ that overcomes darkness.

One: We light this fourth candle to remind us of the gifts of faith and hope the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that Jesus is Emmanuel, God with us, and God will wipe every tear from our eyes.

All: Let us remember the One, who shows the way, who brings the truth, and who bears the light.

Hymn

Creator of the Stars of Night (v. 1-3)

no. 84

Creator of the stars of night, your people's everlasting light, O Christ, redeemer of us all, we pray you, hear us when we call.

When this old world drew on toward night, you came; but not in splendor bright, not as a monarch, but the child of Mary, blameless mother mild.

At your great name, O Jesus, now all knees must bend, all hearts must bow: all things on earth with one accord, like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.

Prayers of the People

One: In the spirit of this season, let us boldly ask God for all the things we need for ourselves as we make our way through this holiday season. God, hear our prayer...

All: And in your mercy answer.

One: For our families and friends who continue to help and support us. God hear our prayer...

All: And in your mercy answer.

One: For those we have loved and lost, for all the losses that we have known, may it all be redeemed by your resurrection promise. God, hear our prayer...

All: And in your mercy answer.

One: For all our loved ones: that they may know love, peace and joy in you. God hear our prayer...

All: And in your mercy answer.

One: For this broken, fractured world: may the peace proclaimed by the Christmas angels come to all. God hear our prayer...

All: And in your mercy answer.

One: In this season of short days and long nights, of grey skies and cold wind, teach us the power of patience and longing. In all our endings may we find new beginnings. Just as the flower must die to set the seeds for the next summer, may we find new life in the midst of death, new hope in the midst of despair, and new possibilities in the midst of disappointment. May we emerge from this holy season with a deeper faith and closer relationship with you. We pray—and hope—in Jesus' name. Amen.

Hymn

Abide With Me (v. 1 & 3)

no. 836

Abide with me: fast falls the eventide. The darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide! When other helpers fail and comforts flee, help of the helpless, O abide with me.

I need thy presence every passing hour; what but thy grace can foil the tempter's power? Who, like thyself, my guide and stay can be? Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.

Time of Reflection and Response**Hymn**

Day is Done (v. 1-2)

no. 676

Day is done, but love unfailing dwells ever here; shadows fall, but hope, prevailing, calms every fear. God, our Maker, none forsaking, take our hearts, of love's own making; watch our sleeping; guard our waking; be always near.

Dark descends, but light unending shines through our night; you are with us, ever lending new strength to sight: one in love, your truth confessing, one in hope of heaven's blessing, may we see, in love's possessing, love's endless light!

Blessing

Announcements

The Peoples Church Christmas Eve Service will be held **December 24th at 7 p.m. in the Sanctuary**. This service will be held in person and livestreamed. **Those who join us in person must wear a mask!**
