

A photograph of three lit candles in a dark setting. One candle is in the foreground, slightly out of focus, with a bright flame. Behind it are two more candles, one in the middle ground and one in the background, both with flames. The lighting is warm and focused on the flames, creating a solemn atmosphere.

Service of Remembrance

Sunday, Dec. 13, 2020

4pm



*As we gather this afternoon, we step aside from our hurried pace
and many distractions, making space for God's presence in our lives.
We especially remember dear people who are no longer with us.*

*God comes to us and says, "Do not be afraid. I am with you."
We turn to God for comfort in the midst of our losses.
We ask God for a sense of peace in dark and uncertain times.
We pray for courage to continue the journey
and entrust our future to God's good care.*

GATHERING MUSIC

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP Songleader:

THY HOLY WINGS

Thy holy wings, O Savior, spread gently over me,
and let me rest securely through good and ill in thee.
Oh, be my strength and portion, my rock and hiding place,
and let my ev'ry moment be lived within thy grace.

HYMN

COMFORT, COMFORT NOW MY PEOPLE

**"Comfort, comfort now my people;
tell of peace!" So says our God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness
mourning under sorrow's load.
To God's people now proclaim
that God's pardon waits for them!
Tell them that their war is over;
God will reign in peace forever.**

**For the herald's voice is crying
in the desert far and near,
calling us to true repentance,
since the kingdom now is here.
Oh, that warning cry obey!
Now prepare for God a way!
Let the valleys rise to meet him,
and the hills bow down to greet him!**

PRAYER

L: O God of grace and glory, we remember before you this day our brothers and sisters and who have died. We thank you for giving them to us, to know and to love as companions on our earthly pilgrimage. In your boundless compassion console us who mourn. Give us faith to see in death the gate of eternal life, so that in quiet confidence we may continue our course on earth, until by your call, we are reunited with those who have gone before; through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

BIBLE READING

SELECTIONS FROM PSALM 27 NRSV

¹The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear? The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid? ⁴One thing I asked of the Lord, that will I seek after: to live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple. ⁵For he will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble; he will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock. ⁶Now my head is lifted up above my enemies all around me, and I will offer in his tent sacrifices with shouts of joy; I will sing and make melody to the Lord. ⁷Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me! ⁸"Come," my heart says, "seek his face!" Your face, Lord, do I seek. ⁹Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off, do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

REFLECTIONS ON LOSS AND GRIEF

MARK LARSON

BIBLE READING

LUKE 2:1-7 NRSV

In those days a decree went out from Emperor Augustus that all the world should be registered. ²This was the first registration and was taken while Quirinius was governor of Syria. ³All went to their own towns to be registered. ⁴Joseph also went from the town of Nazareth in Galilee to Judea, to the city of David called Bethlehem, because he was descended from the house and family of David. ⁵He went to be registered with Mary, to whom he was engaged and who was expecting a child. ⁶While they were there, the time came for her to deliver her child. ⁷And she gave birth to her firstborn son and wrapped him in bands of cloth, and laid him in a manger, because there was no place for them in the inn.

HYMN

AWAY IN A MANGER

**Away in a manger, no crib for his bed,
the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head;
the stars in the bright sky looked down where he lay,
the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.**

continued on next page

**The cattle are lowing; the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus, no crying he makes.
I love you, Lord Jesus; look down from the sky
and stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.**

**Be near me, Lord Jesus; I ask you to stay
close by me forever and love me, I pray.
Bless all the dear children in your tender care
and fit us for heaven, to live with you there.**

MESSAGE

GRIEF MUST BE WITNESSED

PASTOR VERN CHRISTOPHERSON

HYMN

O LITTLE TOWN OF BETHLEHEM

**O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by;
yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.**

**How silently, how silently the wondrous gift is giv'n!
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heav'n.
No ear may hear his coming; but, in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.**

PRAYER OF TEARS

L: Beloved God, since all communion with you is prayer, may even my tears be psalms of petition and canticles of praise. This is a prayer that you value greatly: the prayer of my tears. It is a prayer that you always hear for you are a compassionate and kind God. And, Lord, I know you understand that when I am overcome by my tears—unable to speak or form a prayer—these very tears speak volumes.

Refrain



Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to - mor - row,
give us peace be - yond our fear, and hope be - yond our sor - row.

L: All truly great prayer rises from deep inside and springs spontaneously to the surface. It would then seem that from among the many beautiful prayers, the sacred songs, and canticles of praise, my tears may be the best worship of all. *Refrain*

continued on next page

L: Help me not to be ashamed of them; show me how I can let go of control and let this prayer of my heart, my tears, flow naturally and freely to you, my Blessed Lord and Divine Lover. In times of joy or sorrow, blessed be my tears, the holy prayers of my heart. *Refrain on page 4*

LORD'S PRAYER

L: Lord, remember us when we come into your kingdom and teach us to pray.

C: Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever and ever. Amen.

CANDLE LIGHTING

You are invited to light a candle in memory of your loved one.

LITANY

WE WILL REMEMBER YOU

from "Gates of Prayer"
The Reform Judaism Prayer Book

L: In the rising of the sun and its going down,

C: We will remember you.

L: In the blowing of the wind, and the calm of its stillness,

C: We will remember you.

L: in the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,

C: We will remember you.

L: When we are weary, and in need of strength,

C: We will remember you.

L: When we are lost and sick at heart,

C: We will remember you.

L: When we have joys we yearn to share,

C: We will remember you.

L: So long as we live, you too shall live, for you will always be a part of us.

C: We will remember you.

**Silent night, holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin mother and child.
Holy Infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace,
sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, alleluia!
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**Silent night, holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from your holy face,
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth,
Jesus, Lord, at your birth.**

PRAYER

L: Almighty God, you have made this holy night shine with the brightness of the true Light. Grant that here on earth we may walk in the light of Jesus' presence, and in the last day wake to the brightness of his glory; through your only son, Jesus Christ our Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever.

C: Amen.

BENEDICTION

THY HOLY WINGS

Songleader: Oh, wash me in the waters of
Noah's cleansing flood.
Give me a willing spirit,
a heart both clean and good.
Oh, take into thy keeping
thy children great and small,
and while we sweetly slumber,
enfold us one and all.

SENDING MUSIC



These are the saints
shining like stars
a constellation of memory
burning in the night sky
burning in the hearts
of those who remember
precious
beloved
each life precious
whether lived under an overpass
or in a farmhouse
each person beloved
whether by the warmth of family
or by the universe and God alone
precious
beloved
walking the journey of life
they lived ordinary days
celebration
laughter
tears
and now they shine like stars
a constellation of memory
burning in in the night sky
burning in the hearts
of those who remember
ordinary people
each an extraordinary gift
walking the journey of life
of ordinary days
and now they shine
like stars

Roger Stevens

WORSHIP LEADERS TODAY

PROCLAIMER-Pastor Vern Christopherson; **WORSHIP ASSISTANT**-Pastor Shelley Cunningham; **PIANO**-Ralph Schornack; **SONGLEADER**-Janette Reeves

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Our journey of faith leads us to build bridges of understanding and peace, to reach out with compassion, and to share the hope of Jesus.

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