



**CARMICHAEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**

**December 18, 2022**

**3:00 p.m.**

PRELUDE

Trina Spivack, Piano

WORDS OF WELCOME

Pastor Ivan N. Herman

CALL TO WORSHIP (from John 1:1-5)

Mary Thomas

Leader: In the beginning was the Word,

**People: and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.**

Leader: All things were made by God;

**People: without God nothing came to be.**

Leader: What came to be through God was life,

**People: and this life was the light of the world.**

Leader: The Light shines in the darkness,

**People: and the darkness can never overcome it.**

SONG

**“Abide with Me”**

No. 836  
*Glory to God*

1 A - bide with me: fast falls the e - ven - tide.  
 2 Swift to its close ebbs out life's lit - tle day;  
 3 I need thy pres - ence ev - ery pass - ing hour;  
 4 I fear no foe, with thee at hand to bless;  
 5 Hold thou thy cross be - fore my clos - ing eyes;

The dark - ness deep - ens; Lord, with me a - bide!  
 earth's joys grow dim; its glo - ries pass a - way;  
 what but thy grace can foil the tempt - er's power?  
 ills have no weight, and tears no bit - ter - ness.  
 shine through the gloom and point me to the skies.

When oth - er help - ers fail and com - forts flee,  
 change and de - cay in all a - round I see.  
 Who, like thy - self, my guide and stay can be?  
 Where is death's sting? Where, grave, thy vic - to - ry?  
 Heaven's morn - ing breaks, and earth's vain shad - ows flee;

help of the help - less, O a - bide with me.  
 O thou who chang - est not, a - bide with me.  
 Through cloud and sun - shine, Lord, a - bide with me.  
 I tri - umph still, if thou a - bide with me.  
 in life, in death, O Lord, a - bide with me.

RESPONSIVE PRAYERS

Misty Dunn

Leader: Gracious God, in this season of Advent, we give thanks that you came to be among us: Emmanuel, God with us. You came into the darkness of that time: a time of change and stress, uncertainty and doubt. You did not enter this world surrounded by grand things. You were born in a stable, to parents far from home. O God, we pray for your presence here and now, in the difficulties of our time. We lay before you our offerings of honesty and need, of worry and hope.

For all who are grieving, we pray:

**People: O Lord, you know what it means to lose someone you dearly love.**

Leader: For all who are lonely, we pray:

**People: O Lord, you know how it feels to look around you and feel that there is no one left.**

Leader: For all who are anxious, we pray:

**People: O Lord, you know what it is like to be weary and heavy-laden.**

Leader: For all who are vulnerable, we pray:

**People: O Lord, you know what it means to be unhoused and unsafe.**

Leader: For all who are beset by challenges, physical or emotional, we pray:

**People: O Lord, you know how it feels to be in pain.**

Leader: For all who are longing for light, and for hope, we pray:

**People: O Lord, you know what it is like to wait in the darkness.**

*(Silence)*

Leader: Lord Jesus Christ, we thank you that you came to be among us, full of grace and truth. In you we find our welcome. You are our comfort and our company along the journey of our life. In Jesus' name, we pray. Amen.

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalm 121

Deb Sweetman

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**A LITURGY OF REMEMBRANCE**  
*Lighting of Four Advent Candles*

SONG

**“Come, Come, Emmanuel”**

No. 91

*(Pastor Ivan will sing the first time through. Please join for three repetitions.)* *Glory to God*

The musical score is written for a single voice and piano accompaniment. It is in the key of D major (one sharp) and 3/4 time. The melody is simple and hymn-like, with a clear structure: an initial phrase, a repeat section, and a final ending. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and simple rhythmic patterns that support the vocal line. The lyrics are: "Come, come Emmanuel. Come, Emmanuel. man - u - el. man - u - el." The repeat section is marked "For repeat" and the final ending is marked "Final ending".

**FIRST CANDLE: HOPE**

Kathy Lewin

**Leader:** The first candle we light is the candle of hope. Before we can look forward in hope we honor and remember those persons whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember names, voices, faces, and give thanks for what binds them to us in this season. We hold them before God, giving thanks.

Please take a moment to remember those who have died in the silence of your hearts....

**Leader:** Lord, each of us takes our loved one by the hand and leads them to you, the God of love. Accept our love and thanksgiving as we entrust them to your loving care and ask that you save a place for us beside them. We ask that you fill us with motivation and energy in the days ahead and remind us of your presence when we are caught up in the desolation of the journey. Help us to find hope in the people, events, and the beauty of nature that surrounds us.

**People:** **Thank you for the gift of these people who have been in our lives. We anticipate the day when we are all in your presence forever. May this hope sustain us in the days to come. Hold our sad and aching hearts close to your heart. Comfort us, God of sorrowing, and draw near!**

SONG

**“Come, Come, Emmanuel”**

No. 91

*(Pastor Ivan will sing the first time through. Please join for three repetitions.)* *Glory to God*

SECOND CANDLE: PEACE

John Wallace

Leader: The second candle we light is for peace. We light it to bring peace to the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs with the security they bring, the loss of health for ourselves or for family members, the loss of joy in our lives because of the stresses that surround us. As we gather up the pain of the past we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands you will place the gift of peace.

Please take a moment to remember the losses in the silence of your hearts....

Leader: God of mystery, we turn our hearts to you. We come before you in need of peace, grateful for the mystery of life and keenly aware of your promises of guidance and protection.

**People: Thank you for the gift of the mystery of life and the freedom to choose your way. When the pain of the past is still heavy today, remind us of your constant presence. Comfort us, God of peace, and draw near!**

SONG

**“Come, Come, Emmanuel”**

No. 91

*(Pastor Ivan will sing the first time through. Please join for three repetitions.)* *Glory to God*

THIRD CANDLE: JOY

Mary Thomas

Leader: We light the third candle, the candle of joy, in full awareness that joy is hard to come by for those who experience a loss of direction in their lives.

Please take a moment to consider your wanderings in the silence of your hearts....

Leader: God of the Exodus, you led Moses and your people through the wilderness to a new land. We want so much to have a clear sense of direction, to know where we are and where we ought to be headed. But doubt and questions remain. You are our wisdom and our guide, help trust in your presence. Your words to us are clear: “Do not fear, I go before you.”

**People: Thank you for your guidance even when we feel lost. Strengthen our confidence in your direction and reassure us when we are on the right path. Take all that is lost in us and bring it home with you. Comfort us, God of the wild places, and draw near!**

SONG

**“Come, Come, Emmanuel”**

No. 91

*(Pastor Ivan will sing the first time through. Please join for three repetitions.)* *Glory to God*

FOURTH CANDLE: LOVE

Misty Dunn

Leader: The fourth candle we light as a sign of love, the love that the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

Please take a moment to breathe in this love...

Leader: 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.

**People: Thank you for love. Help us to trust it and enable us to grow in the power of love. May our lives bring comfort and encouragement to others. Comfort us, God of Love, and draw near!**

SONG

**“Come, Come, Emmanuel”**

No. 91

*(Pastor Ivan will sing the first time through. Please join for three repetitions.)* *Glory to God*

Pastor: Each of us comes bearing our own hurts, sorrows, broken places. God loves each of us deeply and wants to carry our pain. God waits patiently, gently calling out: “Give me your pain, come to me... all who labor and are heavy laden, I will refresh you!”

I invite each of you to come forward and light a candle for yourself or for a loved one and leave it on the table so we might all see it and bear witness. As you light the candle, remember that it is God in Christ who is the light. The Gospel of John 1:4-5 says “What came into being through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn’t extinguish the light.” God is our light holds us close until we are able to shine.

Gracious God, as we go from this place, we trust in your company along our way. Wrap your everlasting arms around us; swaddle us in the security of your love; comfort us with the silence of your quiet breath; brighten our path with the light of your presence. Then, send us into the world

HYMN

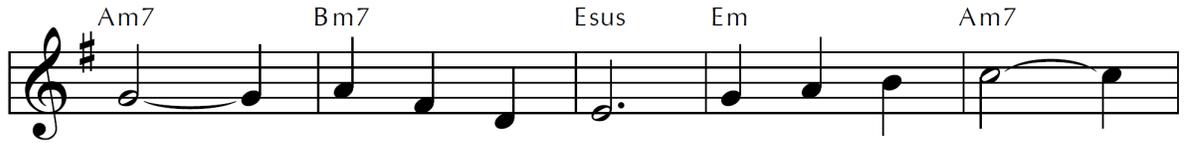
**“Christ, Be Our Light”**

No. 314

*Glory to God*



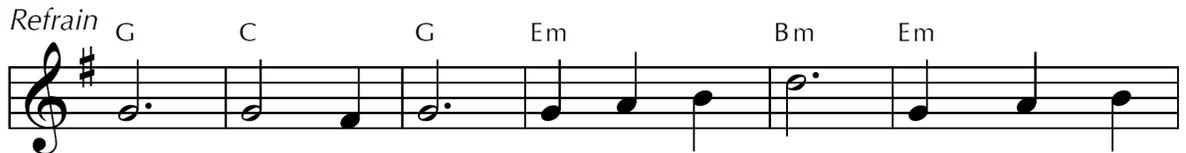
1 Long-ing for light, we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for  
 2 Long-ing for peace, our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for  
 3 Long-ing for food, man - y are hun - gry. Long-ing for  
 4 Long-ing for shel - ter, man - y are home-less. Long-ing for  
 5 Man - y the gifts, man - y the peo - ple, man - y the



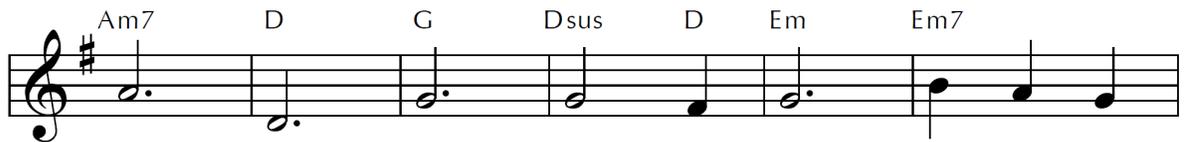
truth, we turn to you. Make us your own,  
 hope, man - y de - spair. Your word a - lone  
 wa - ter, man - y still thirst. Make us your bread,  
 warmth, man - y are cold. Make us your build - ing,  
 hearts that yearn to be - long. Let us be ser - vants



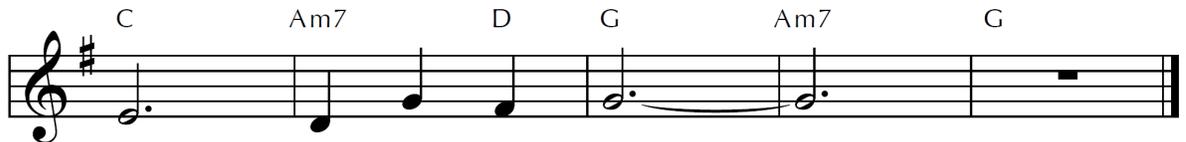
your ho - ly peo - ple, light for the world to see.  
 has power to save us. Make us your liv - ing voice.  
 bro - ken for oth - ers, shared un - til all are fed.  
 shel - ter - ing oth - ers, walls made of liv - ing stone.  
 to one an - oth - er, mak - ing your king - dom come.



Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the



dark - ness. Christ, be our light! Shine in your



church gath - ered to - day.

**BENEDICTION**

Pastor Ivan N. Herman

Pastor: May the power and the mystery go before us, to show us the way, shine above us to lighten our world, lie beneath us to bear us up, walk with us to give us companionship, and glow and flow within us to bring us joy.

This service was adapted from three resources. The first was a service created by Heather Hill, Rector of All Saints Episcopal Church in Parma, Ohio. She has given permission for others to use it. The original service was shared to the Young Clergy Women International Magazine in 2012 and can be found at <https://youngclergywomen.org/blue-christmas-service-when-christmas-hurts/> The second service resource was by shared by Jean Givens, a Presbyterian Health Network leadership team member. The service was held at First Presbyterian Church, Kalamazoo, Michigan and led by a team of parish nurses. The original service can be found at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/blue-christmas-service-wholeness-and-healing/> Some of the liturgy was also provided by *The Presbyterian Outlook* for a Blue Christmas service written by Rev. Christine Chakoian, pastor/head of staff at Westwood Presbyterian Church, Los Angeles, CA in 2022.

Audio/Video: Steve Parker and Noor Bitar

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## **You are Invited to Join Christmas Worship Services**

### **Family Candlelight Christmas Eve Service**

Saturday, December 24

5:00 p.m.

*Children help fill the Bethlehem village with nativity characters while we hear the Christmas story through carols, song, and Scripture. Plus, all children receive a special gift!*

### **Candlelight Communion Service**

Saturday, December 24

11:00 p.m.

*Celebrate Christmas with the Lord's Supper, reading the Christmas Story, and special music from Hannah Ludwig & Zorana Randjelovic-Flores.*

### **Christmas Day Worship**

Sunday, December 25

10:00 a.m.

*Celebrate the birth of our Savior with worship, song, and praise.*

All services will be livestreamed at <https://www.youtube.com/c/carmichaelpres>



5645 Marconi Ave. ■ Carmichael, CA 95608 ■ 916-486-9081 ■ [www.carmichaelpres.org](http://www.carmichaelpres.org)