

A Service of Remembrance and Thanksgiving



A Liturgy for Those Hurting during Christmas

Wednesday December 03, 2025

6:30 pm

Pohick Episcopal Church

Please enter the Church in silence before the service.

The Hymns and Service Music are in The Hymnal 1982 and from Wonder, Love, and Praise

For many people—perhaps for everyone—Christmas awakens memories of someone or something that has been lost. For some we find ourselves alone and sad during a season of joy.

The one who is to come from God, according to Isaiah, does not smooth over but soothes the broken-hearted. The difference is this: when we smooth over someone's pain we often try to cover it up. This is like sweeping dirt under the rug where it can't be seen. But to truly soothe a broken heart is to enter into that person's pain. When we share another person's brokenness, we help to carry the burden.

In Jesus Christ, God demonstrates how far He is willing to go to share our brokenness. Settle in, open your heart and know that your presence here is a comfort to others.

(Hopefully, this service will be a comfort to you.)

Processional *O come, O come Emmanuel (vss. 1-3)*

Hymn 56

O come, O come, Em - man - u - el, and ran - som
O come, thou Wis - dom from on high, who or - derest
O come, O come, thou Lord of might, who to thy

1 cap - tive Is - ra - el, that mourns in lone - ly ex - ile
2 all things might - i - ly; to us the path of know - ledge
3 tribes on Si - nai's height in an - cient times didst give the

1 here un - til the Son of God ap - pear.
2 show, and teach us in her ways to go.
3 law, in cloud, and ma - jes - ty, and awe.

Re - joice! Re - joice!

Em - man - u - el shall come to thee, O Is - ra - el!

The stanzas may be used as antiphons with "The Song of Mary" on the dates given.

Words: Latin, ca. 9th cent.; ver *Hymnal 1940*, alt. Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *Veni, Veni, Emmanuel*, plainsong, Mode 1, *Processionale*, 15th cent.; adpt. Thomas Helmore (1811-1890); acc. Richard Proulx (b. 1937) Copyright ©1975, G.I.A. Publications, Inc. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

Please stand

Celebrant: The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow a light has shone. For the yoke that was upon them, and the burden upon their shoulders, you have broken in pieces, O God, our redeemer.

People: *God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves and for our families who live with painful memories or suffer this day. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of Christ who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise.*

THE WORD OF GOD *Please be seated*

First Lesson Isaiah 40:1, 25-31 (Pew Bible— pg. 581)

Psalm 121

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 evermore.*

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.*

Bless the Lord, my soul, and bless God's ho - ly name.

Bless the Lord, my soul, who leads me in - to life.

Gospel: Matthew 11:25-30

(Pew Bible-pg. 792)

Homily:

The Reverend Ted Renaud

A LITURGY OF REMEMBRANCE

The First Candle: To Remember . . .

Celebrant: This first candle we light is to remember those persons whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their voices, their faces, the memories that bind them to us in this season. We hold them before God, giving thanks for their lives in ours.

Please take a moment to remember those who have died. I invite you to name them, aloud or in the silence of your hearts.

Let us pray.

Thank you for the gift each of these people has been in our lives. We believe that we will celebrate the treasure of love with them again, when we are all in your presence forever. May

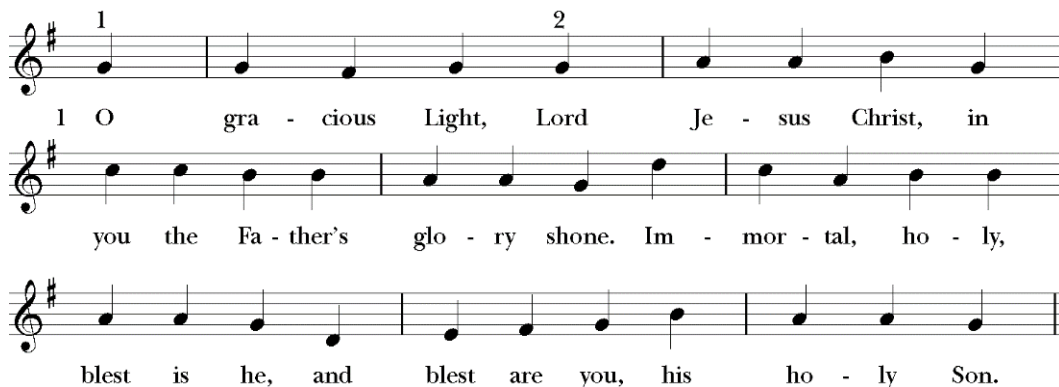
this truth sustain us in the days to come. Take our sad and aching hearts and comfort us. Comfort us, for we only feel hollowness and emptiness. God of sorrowing, draw near!

All: *May God's eternal love surround them. AMEN.*

As reader lights the first candle, sung response:

O Gracious Light

Hymn 25



The Second Candle: To Redeem . . .

Celebrant: This second candle we light is to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs with the security they bring, the loss of health in ourselves or in family members, the loss and we experience when our loved ones do not share our faith. As we gather up the pain of the loss we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands you will place the gift of peace.

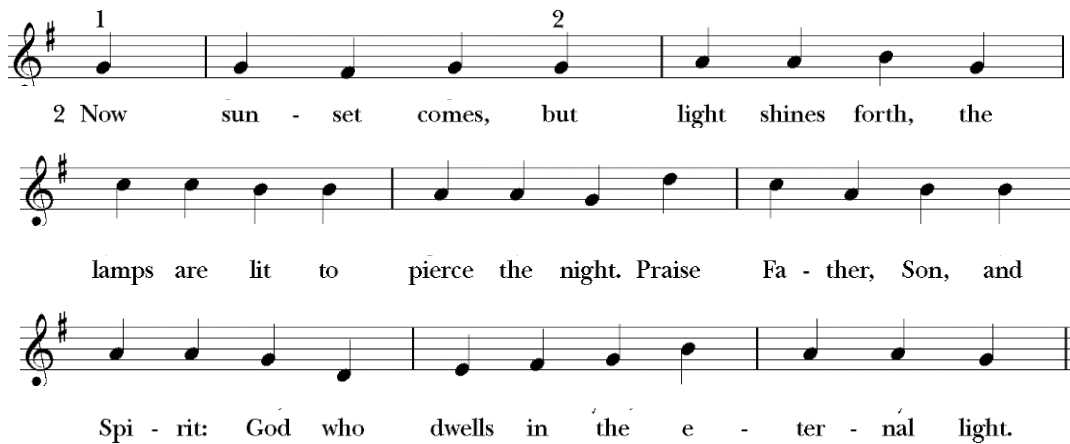
Please take a moment to remember your losses. I invite you to name them, aloud or in the silence of your hearts.

Let us pray.

God of mystery, we turn our hearts to you. We come before you in need of peace, grateful for the mystery of life and ever keenly aware of your promises of guidance and protection. We want to place our trust in you, but our hearts grow fearful and anxious. We forget so easily that you will be with us in all that we experience. Teach us to be patient with the transformation of our lives and to be open to the changes which we are now going through.

All: *Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into the future. AMEN.*

As reader lights the second candle, sung response:



2 Now sun - set comes, but light shines forth, the
lamps are lit to pierce the night. Praise Fa - ther, Son, and
Spi - rit: God who dwells in the e - ter - nal light.

The Third Candle: For our Lives. . .

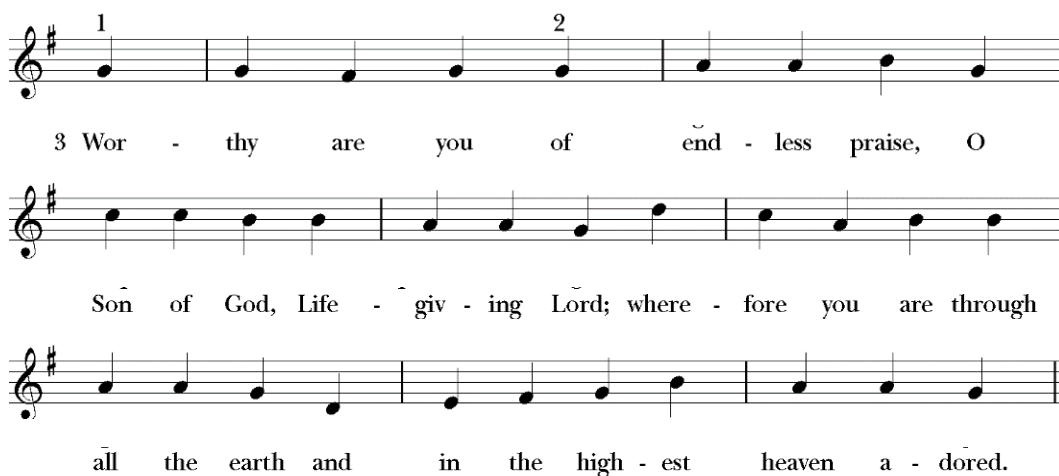
Celebrant: This third candle we light is to remember ourselves this Christmas. We pause and remember these past and month; the disbelief, the anger, the down times, the happy times, the poignancy of reminiscing, the hugs and handshakes of family and friends, all those who stood with us. We give thanks for all the support we have known.

Let us pray.

God of the Exodus, you led Moses and your people through the wilderness to a new land. We want so much to have a sense of direction, to know where we are and where we ought to be headed. But the darkness and the questions stay. You ask us to be full of faith, to believe deep within that you are our signpost, that you are our wisdom and our guide, and to trust in your presence. Your words to us are clear: "Do not fear, I go before you." God of our depths, we cry out to you to be our guide. We thank you for those who surround us and love us. Take our lives and use them according to your will. Take all that is lost in us and bring it home to you.

All: *We remember that dawn defeats darkness. AMEN.*

As reader lights the third candle, sung response:



1 2

3 Wor - thy are you of end - less praise, O

Son of God, Life - giv - ing Lord; where - fore you are through

all the earth and in the high - est heaven a - dored.

The Fourth Candle: For Hope . . .

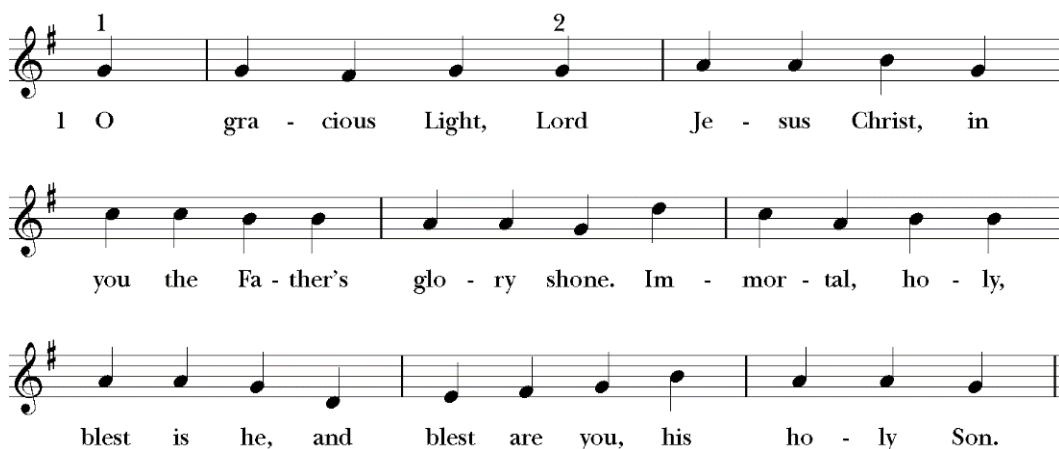
Celebrant: This fourth candle we light as a sign of hope, the hope that the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

Let us pray.

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. Where there is love in life, teach us to find it; help us to trust it and enable us to grow in it. So may our lives bring comfort and encouragement to others.

All: We thank you Lord for showing us the way, bringing the truth and bearing the light. AMEN.

As reader lights the fourth candle, sung response:



This hymn may be sung unaccompanied as a four-part canon at a distance of one measure.

Words: Greek, 3rd cent.; tr. F. Bland Tucker (1895-1984); para. of *O Gracious Light* Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. Music: *The Eighth Tune*, Thomas Tallis (1505?-1585); adapt. *Hymnal 1982* Copyright © The Church Pension Fund. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

LITANY OF HEALING

Celebrant Let us name before God those for whom we offer our prayers.

People audibly name those for whom they are interceding.

Celebrant God the Father, your will for all people is health and salvation;

People We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

Celebrant God the Son, you came that we might have life, and might have it more abundantly;

People We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

Celebrant God the Holy Spirit, you make our bodies the temple of your presence;

People We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

Celebrant Holy Trinity, one God, in you we live and move and have our being;

People We praise you and thank you, O Lord.

Celebrant Lord, grant your healing grace to all who are sick, injured, or disabled, that they may be made whole;

People Hear us, O Lord of life.

Celebrant Lord, put an end to the mounting violence and an end to deep divisions in our country and the world;

People Hear us, O Lord of life.

Celebrant Lord, heal all our many and varied losses that we have suffered, as individuals and as a community of faith during these trouble times;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrant Grant to all who seek your guidance, and to all who are lonely, anxious, or mourning, a knowledge of your will and an awareness of your presence;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrant Uphold by the grace and consolation of your Holy Spirit those who have lost a loved one and are bereaved, and help them find new meaning and hope;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrant Grant to the dying peace and a holy death;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrants Bless physicians, nurses, caregivers, and all others who minister to the suffering, granting them wisdom and skill, sympathy and patience;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrant Restore to wholeness whatever is broken by human sin, in our lives, in our nation, and in the world;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrant Mend broken relationships, and restore those in emotional distress to soundness of mind and serenity of spirit;

People *Hear us, O Lord of life.*

Celebrant You are the Lord who does wonders:

People *You have declared your power among the peoples.*

Celebrant With you, O Lord, is the well of life:

People *And in your light we see light.*

Celebrant Hear us, O Lord of life:

People *Heal our hearts, minds, bodies, and souls, and make us whole.*

Celebrant Let us pray.

A period of silence follows.

OFFERING OF OUR HEARTS' BURDEN

Celebrant: Each of us comes bearing our own hurts, sorrows, places. I invite you to offer your personal wound to the God who loves each of us deeply and wants to carry our pain. God can only carry our burdens if we will allow it. God is a gentle God and waits patiently, gently calling out: "Give me your pain, come to me...all who labor and are heavy laden...I will refresh you!"

While the table is prepared, as your offering tonight you are invited to write your burdens and cares on the paper in your pew. Feel free to drop it in the basin at the altar rail as a sign of your willingness to let go of some of the concerns you carry.

A Moment of Quiet Reflection

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Great Thanksgiving (Prayer A)

BCP 361

Celebrant: The Lord be with you.

People: *And also with you.*

Celebrant: Lift up your hearts.

People: *We lift them to the Lord.*

Celebrant: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

People: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Then, facing the Holy Table, the Celebrant proceeds

It is right, and a good and joyful thing, always and everywhere to give thanks to you, Father Almighty, Creator of heaven and earth. Therefore we praise you, joining our voices with Angels and Archangels and with all the company of heaven, who for ever sing this hymn to proclaim the glory of your Name:

Celebrant and People

***Holy, Holy, Holy Lord, God of power and might,
heaven and earth are full of your glory.***

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord.

Hosanna in the highest.

The people stand or kneel.

Then the Celebrant continues

Holy and gracious Father: In your infinite love you made us for yourself, and, when we had fallen into sin and become subject to evil and death, you, in your mercy, sent Jesus Christ, your only and eternal Son, to share our human nature, to live and die as one of us, to reconcile us to you, the God and Father of all.

He stretched out his arms upon the cross, and offered himself, in obedience to your will, a perfect sacrifice for the whole world.

On the night he was handed over to suffering and death, our Lord Jesus Christ took bread; and when he had given thanks to you, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, and said, "Take, eat: This is my Body, which is given for you. Do this for the remembrance of me."

After supper he took the cup of wine; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, and said, "Drink this, all of you: This is my Blood of the new Covenant, which is shed for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Whenever you drink it, do this for the remembrance of me."

Therefore we proclaim the mystery of faith:

Celebrant and People

Christ has died.

Christ is risen.

Christ will come again.

The Celebrant continues

We celebrate the memorial of our redemption, O Father, in this sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving. Recalling his death, resurrection, and ascension, we offer you these gifts.

Sanctify them by your Holy Spirit to be for your people the Body and Blood of your Son, the holy food and drink of new and unending life in him. Sanctify us also that we may faithfully receive this holy Sacrament, and serve you in unity, constancy, and peace; and at the last day bring us with all your saints into the joy of your eternal kingdom.

All this we ask through your Son Jesus Christ:

By him, and with him, and in him, in the unity of the Holy Spirit all honor and glory is yours, Almighty Father, now and for ever. **AMEN.**

And now, as our Savior Christ has taught us, we are bold to say,

***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,
for ever and ever. Amen.***

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread.

A period of silence is kept.

People: *Therefore let us keep the feast.*

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Stay with me

Stay with me; re - main here with me; watch and

pray. Watch and pray.

Oh Lord, hear my prayer

Taize

♩ = 72

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass staff. The key signature has one sharp (F#) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked as ♩ = 72. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first two lines of the song, and the second system contains the next two lines. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. The score ends with a 'fine' marking.

Chords: Em, C⁶, D, G, C, Am⁶, B

O Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. When I call an - swer me. O
The Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: All my hope comes from God. The

Chords: Em, C⁶, D, G⁶, Am, B, Em *fine*

Lord, hear my prayer, O Lord, hear my prayer. Come and lis - ten to me. O
Lord is my song, the Lord is my praise: God, the well - spring of life. The

Ubi Caritas

Taize

The musical score is written for voice and piano. It features a treble and bass staff. The key signature has two flats (Bb and Eb) and the time signature is 2/4. The score is divided into two systems. The first system contains the first two lines of the song, and the second system contains the next two lines. The lyrics are written below the vocal line. The piano accompaniment consists of chords and moving lines in both hands. The score ends with a 'fine' marking.

Chords: F, C, Dm, Bb, D, G, C

U - bi ca - ri - tas et a - mor,
Live in char - i - ty and stead - fast love,

Chords: F, C, Dm, Gm, C, F

u - bi ca - ri - tas De - us i - bi est.
live in char - i - ty; God us will dwell with you.

Closing Prayer

BCP 836

Celebrant: Let us pray.

Celebrant and People:

Accept, O Lord, our thanks and praise for all that you have done for us. We thank you for the splendor of the whole creation, for the beauty of this world, for the wonder of life, and for the mystery of love.

We thank you for the blessing of family and friends, and for the loving care which surrounds us on every side.

We thank you for setting us at tasks which demand our best efforts, and for leading us to accomplishments which satisfy and delight us.

We thank you also for those disappointments and failures that lead us to acknowledge our dependence on you alone.

Above all, we thank you for your Son Jesus Christ; for the truth of his Word and the example of his life; for his steadfast obedience, by which he overcame temptation; for his dying, through which he overcame death; and for his rising to life again, in which we are raised to the life of your kingdom.

Grant us the gift of your Spirit, that we may know him and make him known; and through him, at all times and in all places, may give thanks to you in all things. Amen.

The Blessing

May the Son of Righteousness shine upon you and scatter the darkness from before your path; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you, and remain with you always. ***Amen.***

Celebrant: Go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

People: ***Thanks be to God!***

***You are welcome to remain in silence, or quietly visit
with a Community of Hope lay chaplain
and select a prayer shawl if you wish.***

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❧ *SERVING TODAY* ❧

| | |
|----------------------------|-------------------------------------|
| Celebrant | The Reverend Daniel M. Cenci |
| Preacher | Ted Renaud, <i>Assistant Rector</i> |
| Minister of Music | Ronald Butts Boehmer |
| Piano | Carolyn Cockcroft |
| Ushers and Prayer Partners | Community of Hope |
| Altar Guild | Marsico Team |

Special thanks to:

*Those who pray as they knit and crochet prayer shawls,
volunteers from the Pohick Choir who assist our singing,
and to all the Lay Ministers of the Community of Hope*

Pohick Episcopal Church

The Reverend Daniel M. Cenci, *Priest-In-Charge*

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Home Church of George Washington and George Mason

Embracing the Past, Welcoming in the Present, Transforming for the Future