

LONGEST NIGHT / BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE



A SPECIAL SERVICE TO
HOLD SPACE FOR THOSE
STRUGGLING WITH THIS
SEASON

December 21, 2025
7:00PM

**Longest Night/Blue Christmas
December 21, 2025 7pm**

Welcome:

Opening Prayer:

Merciful God,

In this season of rejoicing, we come to you weary and grieving

In this season of feasting, we hunger for healing and relief

In this season of light, our hearts are veiled in sorrow and shadow

Will this season ever end?

"Yes." We hear your, "Yes."

Those who are weary will find rest

Those who mourn will be comforted

Those who hunger will be filled

**The Light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness will not overcome it.**

Lighting the Christmas Candle

light the white candle

We welcome you O Christ, Light of the World.

In the midst of our suffering, help us to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Hymn: *See Amid the Winter's Snow* VU 55

Scripture: *Isaiah 11:1-5, (The Voice Translation)*

On this humbled ground,

a tiny shoot, hopeful and promising, will sprout from Jesse's stump

a branch will emerge from his roots to bear fruit.

And on this child from David's line, the Spirit of the Eternal One will alight and rest.

By the Spirit of wisdom and discernment, He will shine like the dew.

By the Spirit of counsel and strength, He will judge fairly and act courageously.

By the Spirit of knowledge and reverence of the Eternal One,

He will take pleasure in honoring the Eternal.

He will determine fairness and equity;

He will consider more than what meets the eye,

And weigh in more than what he's told.

So that even those who can't afford a good defence
will nevertheless get a fair and equitable judgment.
With just a word, He will end wickedness and abolish oppression.
With nothing more than the breath of His mouth, He will destroy evil.
He will clothe himself with righteousness and truth
The impulse to right wrongs will be in his blood.

Message of Comfort and Hope:

Candle Lighting:

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.
In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of truth.
There is no need to hide or deny. God welcomes us as we are.

Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. (Psalm 86:1)

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.
In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of lament.
We recognize our wounds and cry out to God.
We accept God's invitation to express every feeling and question.

***My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me,
from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and
by night, but find no rest. (Psalm 22:1-2)***

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.
In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of courage.
Courage to be honest, to seek help, to comfort one another.
Courage to dare to love and dream again.

***The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and
my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. (Psalm 28:7)***

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.
In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of hope.
God is good. God is strong. God is near, leading us to a day without tears and pain,
without sin and death.

***Healing and deliverance are coming; if not now, then on that day.
By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the
hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. (Psalm 65:5)***

Responding to the light shining in the darkness:

- You are encouraged to write your burdens and sorrows on the blue strips of paper and then place them on the table with the candles
- Light a small candle to add to the table
- Please take an evergreen clipping with you as you return to your seat as a reminder of God's steadfast love and faithfulness

Prayers of the people:

Jesus, you are full of compassion, you understand our pain.

Our suffering changes our experience of you and the celebration of your birth.

We are caught between remembering happier times and grieving what might have been.

In our loss we feel cut off- disconnected, adrift, alone.

Root us in your steadfast love.

Anchor us in your faithful promises.

Hold us, and all who weep this holy season throughout the world-

those who mourn, those far from home, those looking for work,

the lonely, the addicted, the abused,

the estranged, the oppressed, the enslaved,

the poor, victims of war, the sick and dying.

Shelter and sustain us all with your healing and hope, your peace and light.

We love you, we need you, we trust you,

We ask this in your name Jesus, praying as you taught us...

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.

Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen

Hymn: *Twas in the Moon of Wintertime* TBoP 144

Affirmation of Faith for Christmas

Adapted from the Poem First Coming by Madeleine L'engle

**God did not wait till the world was ready,
till nations were at peace.
God came when the Heavens were unsteady
and prisoners cried out for release.
God did not wait for the perfect time.
God came when the need was deep and great.
God dined with sinners in all their grime,
turned water into wine.
God did not wait till hearts were pure.
In joy God came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt.
To a world like ours, of anguished shame,
God came and God's Light would not go out.
God came to a world which did not mesh;
to heal its tangles, shield its scorn.
In the mystery of the Word made Flesh,
the Maker of the stars was born.
We cannot wait till the world is sane
to raise our songs with joyful voice,
For to share our grief, to touch our pain,
God came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!**

Passing the Peace

Hymn: Silent Night TBoP 154

Blessing:

May we have the grace to bear our sufferings as Christ bore his for us
With Dignity
Humility
Forgiveness

May we have the grace to bear life's sufferings as Christ bore his for us
With Compassion
Truth
and Endurance

May we have the grace to know our sufferings are not like his, nor like others,
yet shared with the universal longings of all humanity where
Real and Painful and Deep wounds
meet compassion and companionship
that brings healing.

So go into this longest night knowing that Christ is born into this world so that we
would never be alone.
All we have suffered, all we will ever suffer, will be made whole through Christ's love
and self-giving.

Go into this night knowing the dawn will break shattering the dark with its light.

Closing: O Come O Come *Emmanuel* VU 1 VS 1, 4, 6