

BLUE CHRISTMAS

Winter Solstice - Longest Night

Welcome to this "Longest Night" service. The name comes from the day in December when we experience the shortest day and the longest night of the year – the Winter Solstice. But the name also applies to the feeling many people have during the Christmas season. It is the "long dark night of the soul," or "the winter of our discontent" in which the memories of the past and the pain of the present darken our lives.

And so we bring our pain and our anguish, our doubts and our fears to this service, acknowledging the reality of sorrow and suffering amidst the lights and glitter of holiday cheer. But we do not come as those who have no hope, for we trust that the baby born in Bethlehem is the light of the world, the light no darkness can overcome.

We do not walk alone this long dark night.

We walk with each other and with Jesus the Christ who was and who is and who is to come.

Time of silence and meditation

PRELUDE *How Long, O Lord? A Song of Lament*
Viktor Andersson
Melissa Herring, Soprano

How long, O Lord? How long?
Will you forget me forever?
How long will you hide your face from me?
How long must I bear pain in my soul?
Have sorrow in my heart?
Consider me and answer me Lord God
For I trust your steadfast love.
My heart rejoices in your salvation.
I will sing, sing to the Lord.

P Jesus said, "Come to me all who are heavy laden and I will give you rest." We come bearing burdens. Let us rest in Jesus.

C Search me and know my anxious thoughts, O Lord.

P We come bearing pain. Let us rest in Jesus.

C Heal me, O Lord, and I will be healed.

P We come bearing sorrow. Let us rest in Jesus.

C May your unfailing love be my comfort.

P Jesus said, "Come to me all who are heavy laden and I will give you rest."

C Let us rest in Jesus.

Lost in the night do the peo- ple yet lan- guish,
 Must we be vain- ly a- wait- ing the mor- row?
 Sor- row - ing wan- d'rers, in dark- ness yet dwell - ing
 Light o'er the land of the need- y is beam- ing

long- ing for mom- ing the dark- ness to van- quish,
 Shall those who have light no light let us bor- row,
 dawned has the day of a ra- dian- ce ex- cel- ling
 riv- ers of life through its des- erts are stream- ing

plain- tive- sigh- ing with hearts full of an- guish
 Giv - ing no heed to our bur- den of sor- row?
 death's deep - est shad- ows for- ev- er dis- pel - ling.
 bring- ing all peo- ples a Sav- ior re- deem- ing.

Will not day come soon?
 Will you help us soon?
 Christ is com- ing soon!
 Come and save us soon!

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 Will you help us soon?
 Christ is com- ing soon!
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Music: LOST IN THE NIGHT. Finnish folk tune. Text: Nordic hymn; tr. Olav Lee, 1859-1943, alt.

LITANY OF REMEMBERING LIGHTING ADVENT CANDLES

P In the light of the first candle we remember those we have loved and lost; their names, their faces, their voices and the memories that bind them to us.

C The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Silence is observed

P In the light of the second candle we offer up to God the pain of our loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, the loss of life, the loss of joy and peace.

C The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

*Naming of the servants of the church who died this year
and have received their reward.*

P In the light of the third candle we remember our journey through this season; the feelings of disconnect; the anger, the heartbreak, the longing, the loneliness.

C The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Silence is observed

P In the light of the fourth candle we remember our faith and the gift of hope that is the Christmas story, for God has come to earth to dwell with us as Immanuel.

C The light shines in the darkness and the darkness has not overcome it.

Silence is observed

WORD

Psalm 42

P Let us pray

C Why are you cast down, O my soul, and why are you disquieted within me? Hope in God; for I shall again praise him, my help and my God.

2 Corinthians 4:6-10, 16-18

P Let us pray

C Prepare us, O Lord, for an eternal glory beyond all measure that with eyes focused on what is unseen and eternal we might not lose heart.

Revelation 21:1-7

P Let us pray

C Come, Lord Jesus, wipe away the tears from our eyes and hasten the day when death will be no more.

HOMILY

In Deepest Night



In deep - est night, in dark - est days, when harps are
 When friend was lost, when love de - ceived, dear Je - sus
 When through the wa - ters winds our path, a - round us



hung, no songs we raise, when si - lence
 wept, God was be - reaved; so with us
 pain, a - round us death: deep calls to



must suf - fice as praise, yet sound - ing
 in our grief God grieves, and round a -
 deep, a sav - ing breath, and found be -



in us qui - et - ly there is the
 bout us mourn - ful - ly there are the
 side us faith - ful - ly there is the



song of God.
 tears of God.
 love of God.

PRAYERS

P Walking in the light of the coming Savior, let us pray for the church, the world, and all who await the dawn of God's justice.

Brief silence

P That the peace of the Christ child would dwell within us. Lord in your mercy.

C Hear our prayer.

P That the love of the Christ Child would inspire us with hope. Lord in your mercy.

C Hear our prayer.

P That the joy of the Christ Child would lighten heavy hearts. Lord in your mercy.

C Hear our prayer.

P Show us your light, O God, and bring us to the day of our redemption, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C Amen

P The peace of the Lord be with you always.

C And also with you.

MEAL

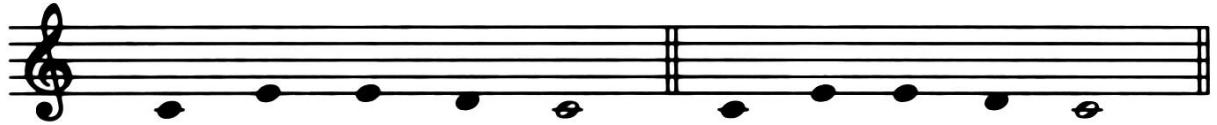
P "In Him was life, and the life was the light of all.

C The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

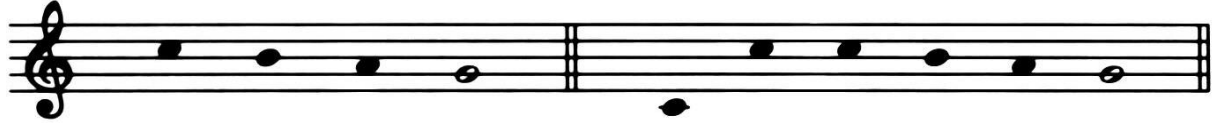
P Beloved, this is the feast of victory for the people of God. Men and women, youth and children, come from the east and the west, from the north and the south, and gather at the table of the Lord. Come, not because you must, but because you may, not because you are worthy, but because you are forgiven.

C From his fullness have we all received, grace upon grace.

THE GREAT THANKSGIVING



P The Lord be with you. **C** And al - so with you.



P Lift up your hearts. **C** We lift them to the Lord.



P Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.



C It is right to give our thanks and praise.

P It is indeed right and good that we should everywhere and always offer thanks and praise to you, Holy God mighty and immortal through Jesus Christ our Lord.

You so loved the world that you sent your only Son, your Word made flesh, to live among us and to open to us the way of your abundant life.

And so with the church on earth and the hosts of heaven, we praise your name and join their unending hymn:

SANCTUS + BENEDICTUS [*Latin* HOLY + BLESSED]

Ho - ly ho - ly ho - ly Lord, God of pow'r and might,
 heav - en and earth are full of your glo - ry Ho -
 san - na in the high - est.
 Bless - ed is the One who comes in the name of the
 Lord. Ho - san - na in the high - est, ho -
 san - na in the high - est.

Chords: C, G7, Am, F, G7, C, F, G7, Am, C, G7, Am, F, C, G7, Am, F, C, G7, C, F, G7, C.

"Sanctus" & "Eucharistic Acclamation" from *SANTO, A Bilingual Mass*
 music adapted from an Argentinian folk melody by Marty Haugen © 2001 GIA Publications, Inc.

EUCHARISTIC PRAYER

Eucharistic Acclamation

We pro-claim your death, Lord; we cel - e-brate your ris - ing; we
 break this bread and share this_ cup un - til you come a - gain.

Chords: C, G7, Am, F, G7, C, F, G7, Am, F, G7, C.

P Remember us in your kingdom, O Lord, 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

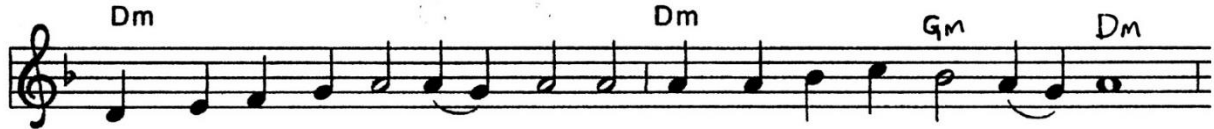
AGNUS DEI [Latin LAMB OF GOD]

Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the world; have
mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the sin of the
world; have mer-cy on us. Lamb of God, you take a - way the
sin of the world; grant us peace, grant us peace.

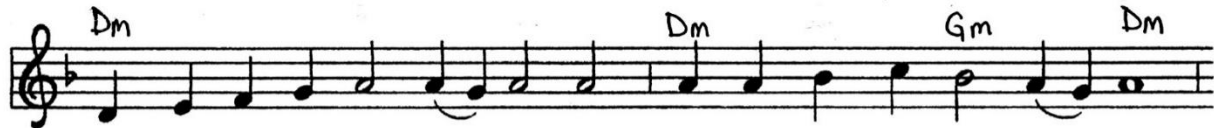
"Agnus Dei" from *Bread of Life Mass & Songs for the Assembly* © 2000 Augsburg Fortress

The following songs may be sung during distribution of the sacrament.

Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence



1 Let all mor - tal flesh keep si - lence, and with fear and trem - bling stand;
 2 King of kings, yet born of Mar - y, as of old on earth he stood,
 3 Rank on rank the host of heav - en spreads its van - guard on the way;
 4 At his feet the six - winged ser - aph, cher - u - bim with sleep - less eye,



pon - der noth - ing earth - ly mind - ed, for with bless - ing in his hand
 Lord of lords in hu - man ves - ture, in the bod - y and the blood,
 as the Light of light, de - scend - ing from the realms of end - less day,
 veil their fac - es to the pres - ence, as with cease - less voice they cry:



Christ our God to earth de - scend - ing comes full hom - age to de - mand.
 he will give to all the faith - ful his own self for heav'n - ly food.
 comes, the pow'rs of hell to van - quish, as the dark - ness clears a - way.
 "Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia! Al - le - lu - ia, Lord Most High!"

Text: Liturgy of St. James: tr. Gerard Moultrie Music: 17th century French folk tune,

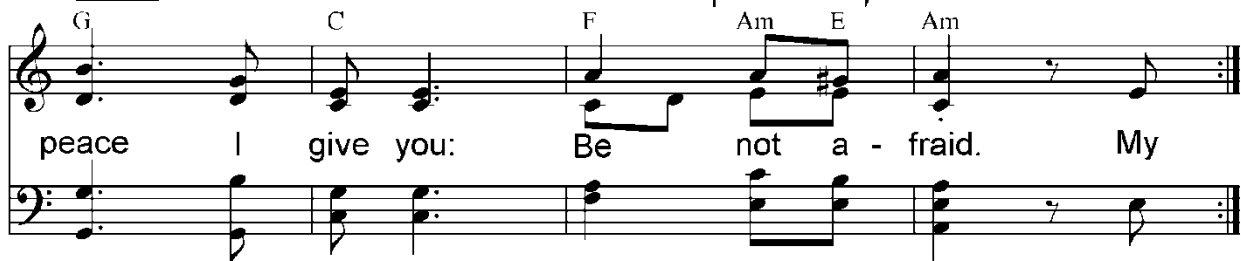
My Peace



My peace I leave you, my peace I give you:



trou - ble not your hearts. My peace I leave you, my



peace I give you: Be not a - fraid. My

Text & Music © 1981 Les Presses de Taizé, GIA Publications, Inc.

P The body and blood of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ strengthen you and keep you in his grace unto life everlasting.

P God did not wait until the world was ready, until nations were at peace.

C God came when the prisoners cried out for release.

P God did not wait for the perfect time.

C God came when the need was deep and great.

P God did not wait until hearts were pure.

C God came to a world of sin and doubt.

P God did not wait to love a world held captive by sin.

C In the mystery of the Word made Flesh, the maker of the stars was born. We cannot wait until the world is sane to raise our songs with joyful voice; God is love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm,
 2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep - herds quake
 3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God,

all is bright round yon vir - gin moth - er and child.
 at the sight; glo - ries stream from heav - en a - far,
 love's pure light ra - diant beams from your ho - ly face,

Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild, sleep in heav - en - ly
 heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, al - le - lu - ia! Christ, the Sav - ior, is
 with the dawn of re - deem - ing grace, Je - sus, Lord, at your

peace, sleep in heav - en - ly peace.
 born! Christ, the Sav - ior, is born!
 birth, Je - sus, Lord, at your birth.

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1849; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885. Music: STILLE NACHT, Franz Gruber, 1787-1863.

P Go in peace. Christ is with you.
C **Thanks be to God.**

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The Reverend Phillip Heinze
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Intern Pastor Thomas Johnston
Viktor Andersson, Director of Worship & Music
Melissa Herring, Soprano
Karen Moxley, Violin, vocals

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Sunday, December 24th

10 am Advent IV

4, 6, 8 pm Lessons Carols Eucharist

15 minute carol sing prior to each of these services

4 – Children's Choir, soloists, ensembles

6 – Harp Ensemble, Handbell Choir

8 – Orchestra, Sanctuary Choir and soloists

11 pm Midnight Mass

The full liturgy with Orchestra, Sanctuary Choir and soloists