

## Longest Night Liturgy

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*Tonight we come to God with hearts, minds, bodies and souls open with questions, yearning, and hurt. In this time, we approach the Holy One with spoken word, with song, and with silence. May you find solace and strength in a time set aside for stillness, for quiet, and for tears.*

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**Prelude**      Moonlight Sonata      L. Beethoven

*Please stand as able when officiant stands.*

Officiant:      Oh God, make speed to save us.

People:      **Oh Lord, make haste to help us.**

Officiant:      Gracious and abiding God, in the midst of the busy world of light and color we feel distant and dull; in the midst of excitement and preparation we feel uncertain and sorrowful. Bring us into your nearer presence, oh God, as we walk through times of trial and grief. Let us know solace and comfort as we bear what seems unbearable. We pray this in the name of your son, Jesus, the Good Shepherd who seeks the lost and heals the wounded. **Amen.**

**Taizé chant: La ténèbre (The darkness)**

*Cantor will begin, singing through two times.*

*All then join and sing together.*

**Our darkness is never darkness in your sight;  
The deepest night is as clear as the daylight.**

Canticle A Song of Christ's Goodness, Anselm of Canterbury

*Said in unison*

Jesus, as a mother you gather your people to you; \*  
you are gentle with us as a mother with her children.

Often you weep over our sins and our pride, \*  
tenderly you draw us from hatred and judgment.

You comfort us in sorrow and bind up our wounds, \*  
in sickness you nurse us and with pure milk you feed us.

Jesus, by your dying, we are born to new life; \*  
by your anguish and labor we come forth in joy.

Despair turns to hope through your sweet goodness; \*  
through your gentleness, we find comfort in fear.

Your warmth gives life to the dead, \*  
your touch makes sinners righteous.

Lord Jesus, in your mercy, heal us; \*  
in your love and tenderness, remake us.

In your compassion, bring grace and forgiveness, \*  
for the beauty of heaven, may your love prepare us.

## The Ministry of the Word

*The Bible reminds us that through the ages God's people have cried out from loss, absence, disappointment, and tragedy, and that God has promised to stay close and to grieve with us.*

### Psalm 69: 1-3

Save me, O God,

For the waters have risen up to my neck.

I am sinking in deep mire,

And there is no firm ground for my feet.

I have come into deep waters,

And the torrent washes over me.

**Isaiah 49:14-16**

But Zion said, “The Lord has forsaken me.

My Lord has forgotten me.”

Can a woman forget her nursing child,

Or show no compassion for the child of her womb?

Even these my forget you,

Yet I will not forget you.

See, I have inscribed you on the palms of my hands;

Your walls are continually before me.

**Psalms 22:1**

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?

And are so far from my cry

And from the words of my distress?

**Matthew 11:28-30**

Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.

**Psalms 139: 1-12**

*Said in unison*

**1 LORD, you have searched me out and known me; \***

**you know my sitting down and my rising up;**

**you discern my thoughts from afar.**

- 2 You trace my journeys and my resting-places \*  
and are acquainted with all my ways.
- 3 Indeed, there is not a word on my lips, \*  
but you, O LORD, know it altogether.
- 4 You press upon me behind and before \*  
and lay your hand upon me.
- 5 Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; \*  
it is so high that I cannot attain to it.
- 6 Where can I go then from your Spirit? \*  
where can I flee from your presence?
- 7 If I climb up to heaven, you are there; \*  
if I make the grave my bed, you are there also.
- 8 If I take the wings of the morning \*  
and dwell in the uttermost parts of the sea,
- 9 Even there your hand will lead me \*  
and your right hand hold me fast.
- 10 If I say, "Surely the darkness will cover me, \*  
and the light around me turn to night,"
- 11 Darkness is not dark to you;  
the night is as bright as the day; \*  
darkness and light to you are both alike.
- 12 For you yourself created my inmost parts; \*  
you knit me together in my mother's womb.

Reflection

Rev. Dr. Jennifer Oldstone-Moore

### Time of Quiet

Victor's Piano Solo

D. Elfman

Improvised music

S. Hudson

*During the musical offering, you may come forward to the front of the nave for anointing and healing prayer for your concerns and*

thanksgivings. You may ask prayers for yourself and for those for whom you care.

## Litany of Healing and Hope

Congregation reads *bolded* words.

Weeping may spend the night, but joy comes with the morning.

For the losses we have endured,

*Hear our cry, O God.*

For miscarried babies and unborn hopes,

*Hear our cry, O God.*

For those children we will never know,

*Hear our cries, O God.*

For those we love and see no longer,

*Hear our cries, O God.*

For broken hearts and broken lives,

*Hear our cries, O God.*

For wounded innocence and shattered dreams,

*Hear our cries, O God.*

*During a brief silence, the congregation is invited to say aloud their own hurts, losses, and needs, either silently or aloud.*

When we are weary or lost,

*O Christ, lead us home.*

When we are hopeless and sad,

*O Christ, lead us home.*

When we are angry and tears become our food,

*O Christ, lead us home.*

When we are faithless and fearful,

*O Christ, lead us home.*

When we grieve and despair,

*O Christ, lead us home.*

Because you have been our companion in sorrow,

*Holy Spirit, give us peace.*

Because every child you have made lives forever,

*Holy Spirit, give us peace.*

Because suffering can make us kinder and more courageous,

*Holy Spirit, give us peace.*

Because nothing can separate us from your goodness,

*Holy Spirit, give us peace.*

Because you pray within us ceaselessly,

*Holy Spirit, give us peace.*

Weeping may spend the night, but joy comes with the morning;

*Holy God, we bless your name.*

You remove our mourning clothes and dress us in gladness;

*Mighty God, we bless your name.*

You will turn our lament into dancing;

*Loving God, we bless your name.*

You forgive all our sins and heal our infirmities;

*Immortal God, we bless your name.*

You renew us in your loving-kindness;

*We are your people and you are our God.*

Hear our cries, O God. Heal and restore us. Fill us with your peace. In all things remind us of your love, for the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, in the power of the Holy Spirit. **Amen.**

## Passing of the Light and Musical Offering

Musical offerings

Sonata No. 11 in G minor

H. Eccles

Rock of Ages  
The Pines

Toplady and Hastings  
L. Olson

*As the music plays, you are invited to light your candle as a symbol that we are never alone, and that light will overcome even great darkness. You may come to the front of the church to place your candle with others as an offering or prayer; you may also wish to hold the light in vigil at your seat.*

*As the music ends, we will sit together for a moment in God's holy presence amidst the light and silence.*

### **The Lord's Prayer**

**Officiant:** The Lord be with you.

**People:** And also with you.

**Officiant:** Let us pray.

**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.**

**Taizé chant:** Wait for the Lord

*Cantor will begin, singing through two times.*

*All then join and sing together.*

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord, be strong, take heart.

## Closing Collect

*Officiant:* Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. *Amen.*

*Nunc dimittis* (Song of Simeon, Luke 2:29-32)

*Said in unison*

Lord, you now have set your servant free \*  
to go in peace as you have promised;  
For these eyes of mine have seen the Savior, \*  
whom you have prepared for all the world to see:  
A Light to enlighten the nations, \*  
and the glory of your people Israel.

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: \*  
as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever.  
*Amen.*

## Benediction and Blessing

### Dismissal

*Officiant:* Let us bless the Lord, who abides with us always.

*People:* Thanks be to God.

*Postlude* Sonata in A major C. Franck



*Musicians*

Sayre Hudson, piano  
Arielle Johnson, violin  
Chris Oldstone-Moore, cantor

*Officiant*

Rev. Dr. Jennifer Oldstone-Moore, priest-in-charge

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Sunday Worship 9:30 am

**Holiday Service Schedule**

**Sunday, December 22nd**

Fourth Sunday of Advent  
Choral Eucharist  
9.30 am

**Tuesday, December 24<sup>th</sup>**

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service  
5.30 pm: Hymn Sing  
6.00 pm: Festal Eucharist

**Sunday, December 29<sup>th</sup>**

Service of Lessons and Carols  
9.30 am