

THE LONGEST NIGHT

Worship Leader-Trish Stripling, Elder Ramie Beck, Elder Jayne Bruno,
Music- Regina Kellogg, Minister-Rev. Mark Willis

Prelude Regina Kellogg

Call to Worship Trish Stripling

Prayer of the People Mark Willis

Voices from Scripture Mark Willis and Trish Stripling

HYMN OF HOPE CONGREGATION

“Jesus, the Very Thought of Thee” pg102
Jesus, the very thought of thee
with sweetness fills my breast;
but sweeter far thy face to see,
and in thy presence rest.

No voice can sing, no heart can frame,
nor can the mind recall
a sweeter sound than thy blest name,
O Savior of us all.

O Hope of every contrite heart,
O Joy of all the meek,
to those who ask, how kind thou art!
How good to those who seek!

Jesus, our only joy be thou,
as thou our prize wilt be;
Jesus, be thou our glory now;
and through eternity.

First Scripture Reading: Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

Trish Stripling

A Word of God for the people of God from Ecclesiastes 3:1-11. May God add God's blessing:
For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven:

2 a time to be born, and a time to die;

a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;

3 a time to kill, and a time to heal;

a time to break down, and a time to build up;
4 a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn, and a time to dance;
5 a time to throw away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
6 a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to throw away;
7 a time to tear, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
8 a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace.

9 What gain have the workers from their toil? 10I have seen the business that God has given to everyone to be busy with. 11He has made everything suitable for its time; moreover, he has put a sense of past and future into their minds, yet they cannot find out what God has done from the beginning to the end.

Second Scripture Reading

Mark Willis

A Word of God for the people of God from Psalm 22. May God add God's blessing:

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

Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day but you do not answer,
and by night, but I find no rest.

In you, our ancestors trusted. They trusted and you delivered them.

It was you who brought me from the womb,
you who kept me safe on my mother's breast.

Since my mother bore me, you have been my God.

Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.

God does not despise the affliction of the afflicted.

God does not hide from me.

When I cry to God, God hears me.

Thanks be to God.

Congregational Scriptural Response – Psalm 23

Congregation

The Lord is my shepherd, I shall not want.

He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;

he restores my soul.

He leads me in right paths

for his name's sake.

Even though I walk through the darkest valley,

I fear no evil;
for you are with me;
your rod and your staff—
they comfort me.

You prepare a table before me
in the presence of my enemies;
you anoint my head with oil;
my cup overflows.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me
all the days of my life,
and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord
my whole life long.

HYMN OF PEACE

CONGREGATION

“It is Well” pg561 vs1,2,4

When peace like a river attendeth my way,
when sorrows like sea billows roll,
whatever my lot, thou hast taught me to say,
it is well, it is well with my soul.
It is well (It is well) with my soul (with my soul),
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Though Satan should buffet, though trials should come,
let this blest assurance control:
that Christ has regarded my helpless estate,
and has shed his own blood for my soul.
It is well (It is well) with my soul (with my soul),
it is well, it is well with my soul.

May God haste the day when my faith shall be sight,
the clouds be rolled back as a scroll;
the trump shall resound and the Lord shall descend,
even so, it is well with my soul.
It is well (It is well) with my soul (with my soul),
it is well, it is well with my soul.

Litany of Remembrance

Pastor Mark and Worship Leader and Congregation

During this litany of remembrance, the congregation will be responding and singing “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” (#119 VS 1,3,4).

PASTOR: We light this first candle to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember clearly, their faces, their voices, their bodies. We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

CONGREGATION: We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.

ALL SING:

**O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the son of God appear
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE

WORSHIP LEADER: We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss: loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy. We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands You will place the gift of peace, shalom.

CONGREGATION: We remember that through You all things are possible. Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your future.

ALL SING:

**O come thou Wisdom from on high, and order all things far and nigh;
To us the path of knowledge show, and cause us in her ways to go
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PASTOR: We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens. We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory, the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain. We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you, for all that we have suffered. We accept and lay before you the time we have walked alone, in darkness; and in knowledge of our own mortality.

CONGREGATION: We remember that though we have journeyed far, and that, while lost, we may have turned away from the light, the light itself has not failed. We remember that though winter be upon us and though the nights be dark, with the turning of the Wheel the dawn will come, and dawn defeats the darkness.

ALL SING:

**O come thou Day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by thine advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's deep shadows put to flight
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE

WORSHIP LEADER: We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light and hope that God offers to us in the stories of Hanukkah and of Christmas, which both also began in abandonment, insecurity, and humbleness, in a time of war and in a poor stable. We remember that the loving God who kept the light shining in the temple and who came to share this life with us promises us comfort and peace.

CONGREGATION: We remember the One who shares our burdens, who shows us the way to the Light, and who journeys with us into all our tomorrows.

ALL SING:

**O come Desire of nations, bind all peoples in one heart and mind,
Bid envy, strife, and quarrels cease,
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace.
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

MOMENT OF SILENCE

PASTORAL PRAYER

Mark Willis

The Lord's Prayer

Congregation

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 sins as we forgive those who sin 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, Amen.

The Gloria Patri

Congregation

**Glory be to the Father
And to the Son
And to the Holy Ghost
As it was in the beginning
Is now and ever shall be
World without end, amen. Amen**

Sermon

"Just A Little More Light"

Mark Willis

Special Music

Regina Kellogg

As the music plays, please come forward and light a candle in memory of a loved one you have lost. As you light it, know that their love and memory continue to shine in our hearts.

COMMUNION

We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. As part of the one body of Christ, we welcome all to the Lord's Table as God has welcomed us.

Invitation to the Table/The Words of Institution

Rev. Mark Willis

Communion Hymn:

Congregation

“Here at Thy Table, Lord” pg384

**Here at thy table, Lord,
this sacred hour,
O let us feel thee near,
in loving power;
calling our thoughts away
from self and sin.
as to thy banquet hall
we enter in.**

**Sit at the feast, dear Lord,
break thou the bread;
fill thou the cup that brings
life to the dead;
that we may find in thee
pardon and peace;
and from all bondage win
a full release.**

**Come then, O holy Christ,
feed us, we pray;
touch with thy pierced hand
each common day;
making this earthly life
full of Thy grace,
till in the home of heaven
we find our place.**

Communion Prayer

Elder Ramie Beck

**Partaking of Communion
Music During Communion**

Regina Kellogg

HYMN OF PEACE

CONGREGATION

**Silent Night, Holy Night #145 vs1,2,3
Silent night, holy night,
All is calm, all is bright
Round yon Virgin Mother and Child,
Holy Infant, so tender and mild.
Sleep in heavenly peace.
Sleep in heavenly peace.**

**Silent night, holy night,
Shepherds quake at the sight;
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heav'nly hosts sing alleluia;
Christ, the Savior, is born!
Christ, the Savior, is born!**

**Silent night, holy night,
Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from thy holy face,
With the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.**

Benediction

Mark Willis

Postlude

Regina Kellogg