



Longest Night

Hope Mennonite Church
Longest Night Service
December 21, 2024
6:30 pm

Gathering Music

Welcome

*Call to worship

In the beginning when it was very quiet, the Word was with God,
and the Word was God.

In the beginning when it was very dark,
God said, "Let there be light,"
and there was light.

When the time was right, God sent the Son;
Christ came among us and was one of us.

*"We Come"

#225

Scripture

Psalm 88:1-6, 11-12

Silence

Prayer

Lord, it is night.

The night is for the stillness.

Let us be still in the presence of God.

It is night after a long day.

What has been done has been done;

what has not been done has not been done; let it be.

The night is dark.

**Let our fears of the darkness of the world
and of our own lives rest in you.**

The night is quiet,

**Let the quietness of your peace enfold us,
all dear to us,
and all who have no peace.**

The night heralds the dawn.

**Let us look expectantly to a new day,
new joys, new possibilities.**

In your name is pray. AMEN

Scripture	Psalm 139:1-18
Silence	
Scripture	Psalm 104:1-4, 19-23
Silence	
Candle Lighting	
Reading together	#1006
Lighting in hope	
“Hope Is a Candle”	#211
Prayer	
Psalm 23	#725
Silence	
*“Longing for Light”	#715
*Benediction	

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Welcome to our Longest Night service; a service designed to offer a place to honor the sense of loss many people feel at this time of the year. Taking place on the evening of the winter solstice, we use the imagery of the long cold night and provide a place to ponder and reflect with others who are experiencing their own grief. May this service touch your heart and soul.

Worship Participants

Worship leader: Sara Dick
 Musician: Leon Greaser
 Song leader: Lowell Birkey
 Scripture reader: Joanna Pinkerton
 Worship tech: Scott Luty



Mennonite Action, a grassroots organization, is calling for Mennonites "to take bold, public action to force our elected representatives to stop supporting and funding the unjust war in Gaza, end the occupation of Palestine, and advocate for a political solution that honors the lives of both Palestinians and Israelis."

On this longest night, Mennonite Action invites us to remember Palestinians:

As we grieve and grow together and sit in silence during this endless evening, perhaps we will begin to comprehend how long the night can feel for those living under the weight of oppression. Can we more clearly imagine the fatigue — and the faith — required to remain awake for family, neighbors, and strangers, uncertain if the sun will rise this time?

What is the true meaning of Christmas, if not waiting for God's light to come into the world? May we learn to wait and watch as the sacred Spirit of peace sustains us till sunrise, transforming our very lives into rekindled light in the darkness.

Will you remain awake with us?

Wherever you gather, we ask that you do the following at night:

- Grieve your loved ones and all those for whom you mourn and remember this year
- Grieve and hold vigil for the people of Gaza
- Grieve and hold vigil for our most vulnerable neighbors in the US
- Sing, pray, hold silence, hold one another
- Find joy, love, strength in community
- Imagine a world based on liberation, justice, peace and community.
- Use this night as a spiritual cleansing, an opportunity for recommitment

Mennonite Action will host a Longest Night Service & Vigil online on December 21 starting at 11PM CDT. You can find information about joining that vigil on their website: mennoniteaction.org.