

**Trinity Evangelical  
Lutheran Church**



**December 18, 2025  
Longest Night Service**

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**Announcements and Welcome**

Welcome to this “Longest Night” service. “The name comes from the season - during this season in December, we experience the shortest day and the longest night of the year. But the name also applies to the feeling that a number of us have about this season. It is the “long dark night of the soul,” “the winter of our discontent,” in which memories of past experiences and the pain of present experiences can become overwhelming. For some, Christmas Day is the most difficult. For others, Christmas Eve, or New Year’s Eve, or the beginning of another lonely New Year. In this service, we will have some singing appropriate to the season, recognizing that this season of joy can often be tinged with sorrow. We will invite you to meditate on the pain and anguish you may bring, and to offer your pain to the Christ child. We trust that you will find hope and comfort in knowing that you are not alone.

**Silence for Meditation**

**Call to Worship**

L: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**C: The Word became flesh and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth, and we have seen his glory.**

L: In him was life, and that light was the light of all.

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

**Opening Prayer**

God, we come to you on this Christmas season, with the pain growing inside us. As the nights have been growing longer, so has the darkness wrapped itself around our hearts.

In this season of our longest nights, we offer to you the pain in our hearts, the traumas that some of us cannot put into words.

God, we come to you as those who have been abused. We have been hurt, physically and emotionally. As children, as teenagers, as adults, we have had the trust we gave others violated. We have no confidence in ourselves; we cringe away from any threat. God, we are the outsiders. We are the ones who seem to stand on the edges of any group. We find ourselves always looking in

over someone else's shoulders, and when we try to move to the center, we feel as if we are getting elbowed out of the way.

God, we come to you as those who are grieving. A death or a loss has changed this day. Once it was a special day for us too. But someone has died. Someone has moved away. We have lost a job. We have lost a dream, a goal, a cause. We find ourselves adrift, alone, lost in a terrifying new world. This season reminds us of all that used to be, and cannot be any more.

God, we come to you as those who are struggling. From this temporary period of peace, we will go back to situations where we are wrestling with personal, relationship, or financial challenges. Help us to carry the peace of the Christ child with us. Strengthen us and give us the resources we need to face those challenges.

God, we come to you as those who are sick. We struggle with health issues and long-term illnesses in ourselves, our friends, and our families. Grant us healing. Renew us in hope, as we look forward to your New Day, the Day of Resurrection, in which crying and sorrow and pain will be no more. Strengthen us in this hope now, as we walk as yet by faith.

The memories of what was, the fears of what may be, stifle us. All around us we hear the sounds of celebration, the jingle of cash registers, the rustle of wrapping paper. But some of us have nothing we can give, and some of us have no one to give anything to. This is our longest night, Lord. Please be near us tonight. We ask it in Jesus' name. Amen.

## The Great "O Antiphon" Readings and Responses

*O Wisdom*

Reading: Isaiah 65:17-25

**Response: O Wisdom, proceeding from the mouth of the Most High, pervading and permeating all creation, mighty ordering all things: Come and teach us the way of prudence.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*O come, O Wisdom from on high, embracing all things far and nigh: in strength and beauty come and stay; teach us your will and guide our way. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O Adonai*

Reading: Isaiah 35:1-10

**Response: O Adonai and ruler of the house of Israel, Who appeared to Moses in the burning bush and gave him the Law on Sinai: Come with an outstretched arm and redeem us.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*O, come, o, come, our **Lord of Might**, Who to your tribes on Sinai's height  
In ancient times gave holy law, In cloud and majesty and awe.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O Branch of Jesse*

Reading: Isaiah 11:1-9

**Response: O Branch, of Jesse, who stands for an ensign before the people, Before whom kings are mute and to whom the nations will do homage: Come quickly to deliver us.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*O, come **O Branch of Jesse** free, Your own from Satan's tyranny  
From depths of hell you people save and give them vict'ry o'er the grave.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O Key of David*

Reading: Isaiah 40:1-11, 28-31

**Response: O Key of David and scepter of the house of Israel, You open and no one can close, You close and no one can open: Come and rescue the prisoners who are in darkness and in the shadow of death.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*O, come, **O Key of David**, come, And open wide our heav'nly home;  
Make safe the way that leads on high, And close the path to misery.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O Dayspring*

Reading: Isaiah 9:1-7

**Response: O Dayspring, splendor of light everlasting, light which no darkness can overcome: Come and enlighten and encourage those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*O, come, **O Dayspring** come and cheer, O Sun of justice, now draw near  
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, And death's dark shadows put to flight.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O King of Nations*

Reading: Isaiah 55:1-5, 10-13

**Response: O King of the nations, the ruler they long for, the cornerstone uniting all people: Come and save us all, whom You formed out of clay.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*O, come, **O King of Nations**, come, O Cornerstone that binds in one:  
Refresh the hearts that long for you; restore the broken, make us new.  
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel!*

*O Emmanuel*

Reading: Isaiah 7:10-14

**Response: O Emmanuel, our king and our Lord, The anointed for the nations and their Savior: Come and save us, O Lord our God.**

*Antiphon (Sung)*

*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 you, O Israel!*

**Laying on of Hands and Prayer** Hymn WOV #738  
“Healer of Our Every Ill”

People come up for the laying on of hands. They tell the intercessor any specific needs they may have. The intercessor then places a hand on the person’s shoulder or head and says, “I lay my hands upon you in the name of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, beseeching him to uphold you and fill you with grace, that you may know the healing power of his love. Amen.” After receiving the Laying on of Hands, people may light candles and place them in the candle box as a sign of God’s continued presence in our lives, especially in our times of need.

### **Closing Litany**

- L: For the life and healing that we receive,  
C: **We thank you, O God.**  
L: Grant that what we have been given here  
C: **May put its mark upon us and remain in our hearts.**  
L: So that we may mature as followers of Christ,  
C: **and may reveal our faith in our actions.**  
L: Through Christ our Lord, healer of our every ill,  
C: **Amen.**

## **Benediction**

**L:** May the light and life of the Christ child, the peace of God which passes all understanding, and the strength of the Holy Spirit, keep and preserve you through this longest night.

**C:** Amen

**Hymn - LBW #65 "Silent Night"**

**Thank you to the readers for this evening's service.**

**Please join us for light refreshments in the Parish Hall after this evening's service.**

**All are invited to worship with us on Christmas Eve. Candlelight services of Holy Communion will be offered at 3PM and 8PM.**



## **Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church**

The Rev. Dr. Eugene C. Zaiser, DMin.,  
Pastor

Ms. LaRue Sheetz, Director of Music

Mrs. Karen J. Smith, Parish Secretary

Mrs. Catherine M. Yoder, Sexton

The Members of this Congregation are its Min-  
isters

Office Hours: Monday-Thursday  
9:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m.  
(Or by Appointment)

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## Healer of Our Every III

Refrain

Heal - er of our ev - 'ry ill, light of each to -

D Em<sup>7</sup>/D G/D A/D D Bm Bm<sup>7</sup>/A

1 You  
2 In  
3 Give  
4 You

Bm

mor - row, give us peace be - yond our fear, and

G A F<sup>#</sup>m<sup>7</sup> Bm Em<sup>7</sup> F<sup>#</sup>7

grac  
how  
ev  
teac

G

To stanzas End

hope be - yond our sor - row, sor - row,

G Em A D A D

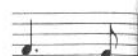
cor  
vi  
kii  
pa  
D/F<sup>#</sup>



## Every Ill



each to -



fear, and

F#7

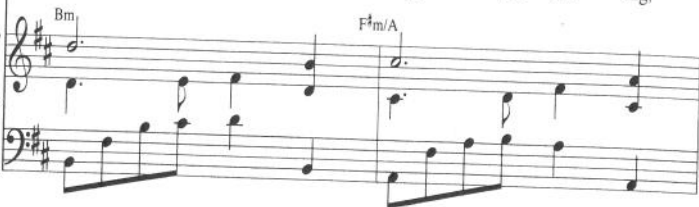


row.

D



1 You who know our fears and sad - ness,  
 2 In the pain and joy be - hold - ing  
 3 Give us strength to love each oth - er,  
 4 You who know each thought and feel - ing,



grace us with your peace and glad - ness; Spir - it of all  
 how your grace is still un - fold - ing, give us all your  
 ev - 'ry sis - ter, ev - 'ry broth - er; Spir - it of all  
 teach us all your way of heal - ing; Spir - it of com -



Refrain

com - fort, fill our hearts.  
 vi - sion, God of love.  
 kind - ness, be our guide.  
 pas - sion, fill each heart.



Vest

5 All glory for this blessed morn  
To God the Father ever be;  
All praise to you, O Virgin-born,  
And Holy Ghost, eternally. Amen

Text: Coelius Sedulius, d. c. 450; tr. John Ellerton, 1826-1893, alt.  
Tune: Sarum plainsong, mode III

A SOLIS ORTUS CARDINE  
L M

# Silent Night, Holy Night!

65

1 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! All is calm, all is bright Round yon  
2 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Shep-herds quake at the sight; Glo - ries  
3 Si - lent night, ho - ly night! Son of God, love's pure light Ra - diant

vir - gin moth - er and child. Ho - ly In - fant, so ten - der and mild,  
stream from heav - en a - far, Heav'n - ly hosts . . . sing, Al - le - lu - ia!  
beams from your ho - ly face, With the dawn of re - deem - ing grace,

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

Text: Joseph Mohr, 1792-1848; tr. John F. Young, 1820-1885  
Tune: Franz Gruber, 1787-1863

STILLE NACHT  
arranged



















