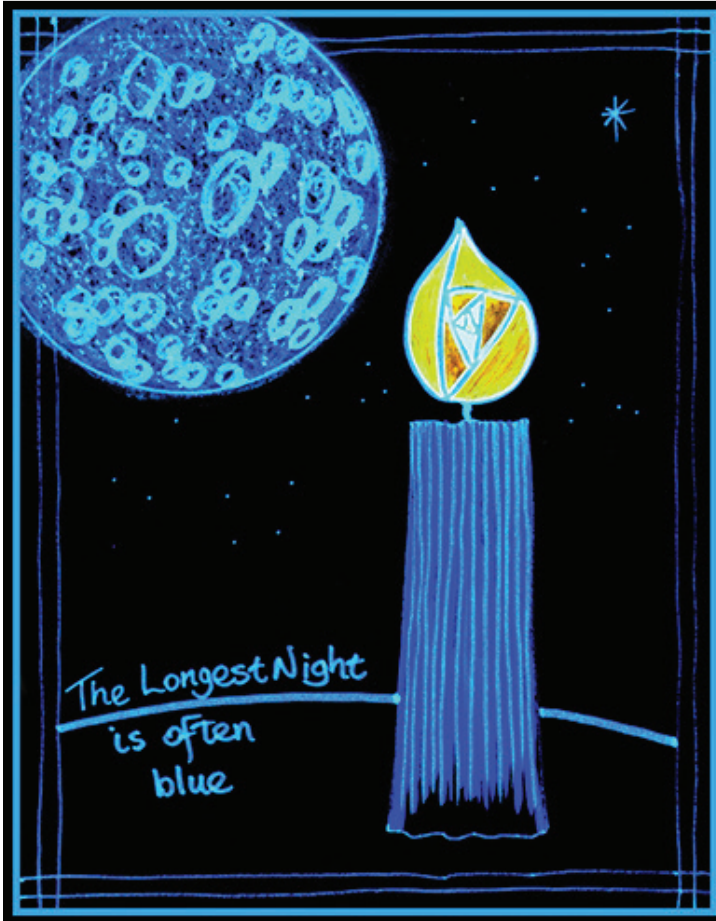




FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
Ann Arbor | Michigan



The Longest Night © 2016 John Stuart

Longest Night: A Service of Comfort and Hope

December 18, 2016
5:00 & 7:00 p.m.

GATHERING MUSIC

The Wexford Carol
(*Good people all*)

Trad. Irish carol
arr. Alexandra Molnar-Suhajda

Tàladh Chrìosda
(*Christ Child's Lullaby*)

Trad. Gaelic carol
arr. Alexandra Molnar-Suhajda

The Cherry Tree Carol
(*As Joseph was a-walking*)

Trad. English carol
arr. Ralph L. Lehman

WELCOME

Rev. Melissa Anne Rogers

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Tonight, we gather here in this place of refuge,

All: for we are lost, we are lonely, we are afraid.

One: Tonight, we gather daring to wonder if God has indeed come in Jesus,

**All: discerning the rejection we have known,
intimate with our failed relationships,
holding our heartache in hands of tenderness.**

One: Tonight, we gather with neighbors and strangers,
a family made one by our brokenness,

All: coming with our hearts full of hope, and our pockets filled with doubts.

One: Tonight, we gather just as we are,

All: for God has promised to meet us here and to welcome us for who we are.

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT WREATH

The candles will be lighted by Julie Corey, Trish DeBoer, Ben Helmke, and Kate Skinner at 5:00 p.m. and Ken and Jeanette Brock at 7:00 p.m.

One: We light this first candle in memory of those persons we have lost through death.

All: We remember them by name in our hearts. We give thanks for them and for their lives. We treasure the memories in this difficult season.

One: We light this second candle to ask for deliverance from the pain of loss – the loss of relationships, the loss of health, the loss of jobs, the loss of financial security.

All: We ask that God bring us comfort. We know the pain of loss is brought near at this time of year and we ask for peace and renewal.

One: We light this third candle for each of us. We offer up to God our pasts, the times of regret and sorrow, the times of mourning, and of loneliness and pain.

All: We ask that God take away the darkness.

One: We light this fourth candle as a symbol of hope and promise.

**All: We invite and celebrate the coming of the One who promises us light.
Come, Lord Jesus.**

* HYMN 36

In the Bleak Midwinter

CRANHAM

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Rev. Angela Ryo (5:00)

Rev. Daniel Ervin (7:00)

Tender and powerful God, you have given birth to our world, bringing to life all that breathes. Yet always in the midst of this creation-glory, we see sin's shadow and feel death's darkness: around us in the earth, sea and sky, the abuse of matter; beside us in the broken, the hungry and the poor, the betrayal of one another; and often, deep within us, a striving against your Spirit. We know the pain of loss, the confusion of uncertainty, and the fear of the future. Come to us, Emmanuel. Forgive us that we may forgive one another and heal us that we may be people of healing. Grant us your light for the world's darkness, and for any darkness that holds captive our hearts this night.

SILENT CONFESSION

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

RESPONSE

It Came Upon A Midnight Clear (stanza 3)

**And ye, beneath life's crushing load, whose forms are bending low,
Who toil along the climbing way with painful steps and slow,
Look now for glad and golden hours come swiftly on the wing:
O rest beside the weary road, and hear the angels sing.**

PASSING OF THE PEACE

OLD TESTAMENT READINGS

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Evonne Plantinga (5:00)

Michele Derr (7:00)

Psalm 22 (selected verses)

Jeanette Kibler (5:00)
Linda Lampman (7:00)

One: The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?
All: The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?
 One: God will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;
All: The Lord will conceal me under the cover of his tent;
The Lord will set me high on a rock.
 One: Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud, be gracious to me and answer me!
All: "Come," my heart says, "seek his face!" Your face, Lord, do I seek.
 One: I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.
All: Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage;
wait for the Lord!

NEW TESTAMENT READING Luke 24:13-35

Marita Servais (5:00)
Kathy Wirstrom (7:00)

MEDITATION

* HYMN

Stay with Us



1. Stay with us,	till night has come:	Our praise to
2. Walk with us,	our spir - its sigh:	Hear when our
3. Walk with us,	the road will bend:	Make all our
4. Talk with us,	till we be - hold	a joy - ful
5. Stay with us,	till day is done:	No tears nor



you this day be sung.	Bless our bread,	o - pen our
wea - ry spir - its cry,	feel a - gain	our loss, our
weep - ing, wail - ing end.	Wipe our tears,	for - give our
life you will un - fold:	Heal our eyes	to see the
dark shall dim the sun.	Cheer the heart,	your grace im -



eyes:	Je - sus, be our great	sur - prise.
pain:	Je - sus, take us to	your side.
fears:	Je - sus, lift the heav - y	cross.
prize:	Je - sus, take us to	the light.
part:	Je - sus, bring e - ter -	nal life.

REMEMBERING OUR LOVED ONES

All are invited to take the flame from the candle of love - which cannot be extinguished by death - and light a votive for the person/persons they mourn.

Music of Remembrance *Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming*

arr. John Purlfoy

GIVING OUR GIFTS

Offering Music

THE SACRAMENT OF HOLY COMMUNION

Invitation to the Lord's Table

Rev. Rogers

Great Prayer of Thanksgiving

The Lord's Prayer

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 debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

Words of Institution

Communion of the People

All communion chalices and cups for pew communion contain only non-alcoholic grape juice. Communion will be served by intinction. Beginning with the front rows, worshipers are invited to come forward by the center aisle, receive bread and dip it in the chalice, partake, and return to their seats by a side aisle. Those unable to come forward will be served where they are seated.

Communion Music

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

French carol

Unison Prayer After Communion

On this long, dark night we await the coming of Christ. We long for the light of his presence with us and in us. May our grief be seasoned with love, and our sorrow be buoyed by hope. May we gaze on the innocent One, made perfect through suffering, and see in him our vulnerable God, who had fed us at this table, holds us in all sorrow, and walks with us as we seek comfort and joy. Amen.

* HYMN 30

Born in the Night, Mary's Child

MARY'S CHILD

* CLOSING RESPONSES

Martha Kershaw (5:00)

Linda Koopman (7:00)

In the spirit of those we have remembered today,

We carry the light out into the world.

In the confidence of faith in our Creator,

We carry the light out into the world.

In remembering God's promises kept in baby Jesus,

We carry the light out into the world.

In the strength of a Christ who robbed death of its power,

We carry the light out into the world.

In the presence of the life-giving Spirit,

We carry the light out into the world.

Sharing faith that the darkness will end,

We carry the light out into the world.

* BENEDICTION

In our silence, may the Word dwell in our hearts.

In our brokenness, may the Bread of Life heal us.

In our pain, may the One who can heal us touch our soul.

Amen.

* POSTLUDE

The Besancon Carol
(People Look East)

Trad. French carol
arr. Alexandra Molnar-Suhajda

* Please stand in body or spirit.

Those parts of the service of worship in which the congregation participates in word or song are noted in bold type.

Prayer is available with a Stephen Minister at the communion table after the service.

Please stay and join us in the vestibule for hot cider and cookies provided by our Stephen Ministers.

Greeters are Dan Mitas and Deanne Woodruff (5:00) and Cyndy Colton and Kathy Wirstrom (7:00). **Communion Servers** are Evonne Plantinga, Martha Kershaw, Marita Servais, Dan Mitas, and Deanne Woodruff (5:00) and Nancy Fox, Michele Derr, Linda Koopman, and Linda Lampman (7:00). **Cookie bakers** are Nancy Fox, Sharon Sheldon, Linda Koopman, and Kathy Wirstrom.

Musical leadership is provided by Carol Muehlig, Associate Music Director and Organist; Deborah Gabrion, harp; and Deborah Rebeck Ash, flute.

The Advent Candlelighting liturgy comes from Bonnie Kinschner's Blue Christmas Service, <http://www.onemindmentalillnessministry.com/resources.html>. *Stay with Us* is reprinted under OneLicense.net # A-720542.



Into This Silent Night

Into this silent night
As we make our weary way
We know not where;
Just when the night becomes its darkest
And we cannot see our path;
Just then is when the angels rush in,
Their hands full of stars.

– Ann Weems

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Christmas Eve Worship:

Family Worship and Christmas Pageant, 3:00 p.m.

Candlelight Service of Lessons & Carols, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m.; Rutter *Gloria*, 4:30 and 6:30 p.m.

Candlelight Communion Service, 11:00 p.m.

Childcare will be provided at the 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00 p.m. Christmas Eve services by reservation only. If you need childcare for any of these services, please contact Debbie MacVey or the Church Office. If you are able to give the young families of this church the wonderful gift of providing childcare during one of these services, please contact Debbie MacVey.

It is tradition for children to bring a gift of new socks and underwear in any size to the 3:00 p.m. Christmas Pageant. These gifts are given to the House-by-the-Side-of-the-Road for distribution to families in need.

Christmas Eve Parking – Note an important change:

Please be considerate in parking choices as many visitors join us for worship on Christmas Eve.

Overflow parking is available only at the Forest Street parking structure, a short walk down Forest Court. Parking is not available this year at nearby sorority houses.

The 2016 Christmas Eve offering will provide clean water and safe, sturdy housing to Haitians after Hurricane Matthew devastated Haiti last October. Gifts will be divided equally between Living Waters for the World, a Presbyterian mission project that helps small communities build water systems to supply clean water for families, and The Building Goodness Foundation's Rapid Re-Housing Project for families who lost their homes. Please mark your check or envelope "Haiti" to support this effort. If you wish to direct your offering toward your tithe or pledge, indicate "church" on your check or envelope.

The Church building will be closed December 26 and January 2.

Year-End Finance Information: Please support the ministries of First Presbyterian Church with your year-end gifts. The IRS requires that books for 2016 be closed on December 31. Make sure your donation is postmarked by December 31 for your contribution to be applied to your 2016 financial statement. When paying your financial commitment with a credit/debit card, the commitment is for one calendar year. A new authorization form, available on our website and in the Finance Office, must be filled out annually.

Struggling with mental illness in your family? First Pres staff and members facilitate a support group for family members who have loved ones coping with mental illness. The group meets twice per month. We have parents, siblings, children, and extended family members of those with mental illness attending for mutual support, encouragement, and a safe place to talk. For more information, contact Rev. Rogers.