

A Liturgy for Endings & Beginnings

A Longest Night Service

Thursday, December 19, 2024

6:30pm in Hintz Chapel

We gather on the unceded ancestral lands of the Coast Salish people, past and present. With gratitude, we honor the land itself and the legacy of the First People of Seattle, the Duwamish Tribe. May we remember that the oppression of Native peoples is not a relic of the past but continues today. And may we, through God's Spirit, repent and walk forward together, changing systems that discriminate as we live into authentic diversity and healing.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

**If it is comfortable, you are invited to stand.*

Prelude

Christian Broughton

“In the Bleak Midwinter/Away in a Manger”

arr. PHIL PERKINS

Welcome & Passing the Peace

Pastor Anita Peebles

Advent Candle Lighting

Theresa & Emily Pruett

Please read responsively the following communal litany as the Advent candles of hope, peace, joy, and love are lit.

One: Even in our endings,

ALL: fill us with hope for new beginnings.

One: Even as our minds race with anxiety,

ALL: fill us with peace that surpasses understanding.

One: Even in our deepest grief,

ALL: fill us with joy and laughter.

One: Even in a world of hate and fear,

ALL: fill us with your love, O God.

One: Come, let us worship Emmanuel, God with us.

***Opening Hymn 128**

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

CRANHAM

Scripture

ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8 (NRSVUE)

Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove

For everything there is a season and a time for every matter under heaven:

- a time to be born and a time to die;
- a time to plant and a time to pluck up what is planted;
- a time to kill and a time to heal;
- a time to break down and a time to build up;
- a time to weep and a time to laugh;
- a time to mourn and a time to dance;
- a time to throw away stones and a time to gather stones together;
- a time to embrace and a time to refrain from embracing;
- a time to seek and a time to lose;
- a time to keep and a time to throw away;
- a time to tear and a time to sew;
- a time to keep silent and a time to speak;
- a time to love and a time to hate;
- a time for war and a time for peace.

Reader: For the word of God in scripture,
for the word of God among us, and for the word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Silent Prayer and Reflection

Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove

Reflection Music

“Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming”

Christian Broughton

arr. Alex-Zsolt

Wait for the Lord, whose day is near. Wait for the Lord: keep watch, take heart!

Sung Response

“Wait for the Lord”

TAIZÉ

Prayers of the People

Pastor Anita Peebles

Music

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”

Christian Broughton

arr. JOEL RANEY

Sung Response (*see above*)

“Wait for the Lord”

TAIZÉ

Scripture Reading

ISAIAH 43:16-21 (NRSVUE)

Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters, who brings out chariot and horse, army and warrior; they lie down; they cannot rise; they are extinguished, quenched like a wick: Do not remember the former things or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth; do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. The wild animals will honor me, the jackals and the ostriches, for I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

Reader: For the word of God in scripture,
for the word of God among us, and for the word of God within us,

All: Thanks be to God.

Words of Comfort and Affirmation of Faith

Pastor Leigh Curl-Dove

Please read responsively.

One: The first words of Genesis tell us that in the beginning, God was creating.

ALL: We believe in a God who is at work in all our beginnings.

One: In Revelation, we hear Jesus proclaim, “I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the Last, the Beginning and the End.”

**ALL: We believe in a Savior who is with us through it all,
in every beginning, and in every ending that comes before.**

One: And so from beginning to end, from Genesis to Revelation, from the first day to the last, we are held by our God who knows our name.

ALL: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Candle Lighting

When you are ready, come forward and light your candle. On your way back to your seat, take a prayer from the basket.

Music

Meditation on “Silent Night”

Christian Broughton

arr. LARRY SHACKLEY

*Hymn

“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”

VENI EMMANUEL

1. O come, O come, Em - man - u - el And with your peo - ple
 2. O come, Re - deem - er of the slave, The shack - led He - brews
 3. O come, O God's re - veal - ing Word, Your voice the He - brew
 4. O come, O Wis - dom from on high, Who brings the truth of
 5. O come, In - car - nate Word re - vealed, Your peo - ple you both

al - ways dwell Who mourn in mor - tal ex - ile here
 you did save. And then your cov - e - nant was sealed,
 pro - phets heard; They saw that one day war will cease,
 Ad - o - nai, To us the path of know - ledge show,
 taught and healed, You trust - ed Ab - ba's love would save,

Refrain
 Un - til the Lord of Life ap - pear. Re - jice! Re - jice!
 The To - rah on the mount re - vealed.
 And all cre - a - tion be at peace.
 And teach us in your ways to go.
 And so wereraised up from the grave.

Em - man - u - el Shall come a - gain and with us ev - er dwell.

Benediction

Pastor Anita Peebles

Liturgy by Rev. Anna Strickland | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org. Benediction is by Rev. Sarah Speed from the *Words for the Beginning Words for Worship*.
 The revised words to “O Come O Come Emmanuel” are from https://www.bc.edu/content/dam/files/research_sites/cjl/texts/cjrelations/resources/education/OCE_commentary.htm