





# Sunset United Church

## Longest Night/Blue Christmas Service



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Sunset United, located on Treaty 4 Territory,  
is an Affirming community of faith. All are welcome here.

### Welcome

#### Call to Worship

All around us, we see the lights of Christmas...  
... And not as joyful as it seems to be for others.

**As the nights have grown longer,  
Sadness, grief, loneliness and pain  
Linger in the hearts of some.  
In this season of longest nights,  
Some struggle to put into words  
What causes them to feel blue.**

For some, a loved one has died...  
... worried, insecure, adrift, or alone:

**We might be grieving what might have been  
but will not be,  
Or grieving over what used to be  
but cannot be anymore.**

We may simply need a place of quiet and calm  
in an otherwise busy season.

Whatever may have brought us here,  
we offer it all to the One born in Bethlehem,  
knowing that there is no pain that does not echo in God's  
heart.

Ecclesiastes 3: 1-11

Psalm 23

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.

## Isaiah 40

### Star Prayers & Music

#### Litany of Remembrance

We light this first candle...

...seasons of our lives.

**May God's eternal love surround them.**

The second candle we light...

...we do not hurt alone.

**May we know the continued presence of the Holy.**

The third candle...

...we have known.

**May we know that no matter how lost we feel,  
we are never truly alone.**

The fourth candle...

...in all we do.

**Let us remember the One who shows the way, who nurtures  
hope and love within us, now and always.**

#### Prayer:

Out of the depths we cry to you, O God...

...Hold us in your tender love.

**God of hope,**

**Give us this day a glimpse of trust and assurance,**

**A sense of purpose and possibility.**

**Come into our hearts and our minds,**

**Bringing comfort, health and peace.**

**Re-create in us a sense of thanksgiving,**

**In the joy of your love. Amen**

Memory Stars and Candle Lighting

Music

Blessing for the Longest Night















Prelude

Welcome & Announcements

Centering Time

Choir: "Mighty Good News!"

Centering Words



Lighting the Advent Candles

In this season of Advent, we celebrate with joyful hearts

**Christ is our light and the source of our joy.**

We count our blessings and give thanks for God's goodness and grace.

**Christ is our light and the source of our joy.**

We strive to search for the good in neighbours near and far.

**Christ is our light and the source of our joy.**

We remember that God has promised us full and joyful lives.

**Christ is our light and the source of our joy.**

This morning we light three candles - the candles of hope, peace and today, Joy. This candle reminds us that we have reason to be joyful even in the midst of strife. We remember that the angel proclaimed Jesus' birth as "Good news of great joy, to all people!" We

celebrate today with joyful hearts and commit ourselves to spreading that joy to the world around us.

**Sung Response (remain seated):**

O Come, O come, Emmanuel  
And end this gloom of night.  
Bring hope to the world,  
Bring peace to the earth,  
And fill us with love's pure light.

**Call to Worship & Opening Prayer (inspired by Isaiah 35)**

Listen – all creation rejoices, can you hear it?

**There is so much noise and chatter, are you sure there is music?**

Listen – the wilderness and desert are breaking out in song, can you hear it?

**It's been so long since we've heard a melody of praise.**

Listen – the crocus blooms with joyful singing, the very mountains join the refrain. Can you hear it?

**We join our voices in joy, worshipping our Creator who brings forth a new song in the world.**

**Life giving God, we are a blessed people.**

**In this moment of worship we pray that you might bless us anew.**

**Give us ears to hear the melodies of praise that fill the world around us.**

**And as we hear the songs, teach us to sing,**

**To dance with abandon,**

**To rejoice in the wonders of your grace.**

**Open our eyes to the places where Joy is springing up**

And lead us by your Spirit in the pathways of hope,  
peace and joy.  
Amen.

Story

Choir: “Breath of Heaven”  
“Christmas Adoramus”  
“Rise up Shepherds and Follow”



Passing the Peace

Children’s Time

Hymn: VU#56 Jesus, Our Brother (verses 1-4) \*

## WE LISTEN

Scripture                      Zephaniah 3: 14-20  
  Philippians 4: 4-7

Reflection Reading

Choir: “Ave Maria”  
“Child in the Manger”  
“Emmanuel”

## WE RESPOND

Offering Dedication

\*Hymn: MV#191 What Can I Do?                      \*\*

Prayer

**Prayer:** “My Christmas Prayer”

**Choir:** “Good News, Great Joy!”

## Commissioning and Benediction

## Postlude



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