



Sunset United Church

Longest Night/Blue Christmas Service



Minister: Rev. Tricia Gerhard
Children & Youth Minister: Michelle McConkey
Choir Director: Nancy Edwards
Pianists: Shirley Hill/Kevin Petrychyn

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.

Hymn: VU#55 In the Bleak Midwinter (v.1&2) *

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

Hymn: MV#90 Don't be Afraid **

Don't be afraid, my love is stronger
My love is stronger than your fear.
Don't be afraid, my love is stronger
And I have promised,
Promised to be always near.

Star Prayers

Hymn: VU#19 Kindle a Flame ***

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.**

Hymn: VU#19 Kindle a Flame

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



**Words: Christina Georgina Rossette ca. 1872. Music: Gustav Theodor Holst 1906*

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