

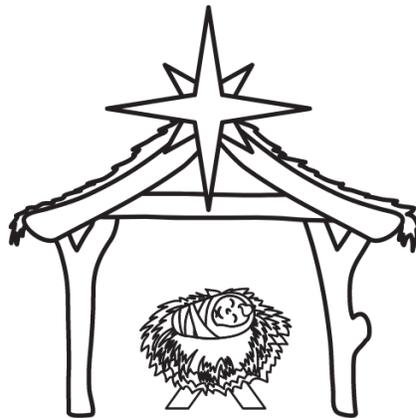
THE LONGEST NIGHT

DECEMBER 21, 2021, 7:30 PM

*Our prayers this night give voice to grief and loss, and to the
struggle to find hope in this season.
Remember with us where God meets us in our long, dark nights.*



St Stephen the Martyr
9887 Cameron Street
Burnaby, BC
www.StStephenBurnaby.ca



St Timothy
4550 Kitchner Street
Burnaby, BC
www.sainttimothy.ca

Meeting on the traditional unceded territories of the xʷməθkʷəyəm (Musqueam), Sḵwx̱wú7mesh (Squamish), and Tsleil Waututh Nations

The service begins with the lighting of the Christ Candle followed by a time of silence.

Introduction

*All are welcome at this service. You may participate as much or as little as you would like. The parts of the service where you are encouraged to speak along with others are printed using **bold** typeface.*

Psalm 13:

Leader: How long, O Lord? Will you forget me forever? How long will you hide your face from me?

All: How long must I bear pain in my soul, and have sorrow in my heart all day long?

Leader: How long shall my enemy be exalted over me?

All: Consider and answer me, O Lord my God!

Leader: Give light to my eyes, or I will sleep the sleep of death,

All: and my enemy will say, “I have prevailed”; my foes will rejoice because I am shaken.

Leader: But I trusted in your steadfast love; my heart shall rejoice in your salvation.

All: I will sing to the Lord, because he has dealt bountifully with me.

Opening Prayer

Leader: God of love and understanding, we gather here this evening to confront our pain in the midst of the world's celebration. Help us to know that you are present with us in all of our moods and feelings and seasons. Grant us a taste of the hope, peace, joy and love that you promise to all of your people through the gift of your son, Jesus.

All: Amen.

Lighting the First Advent Candle – HOPE

Leader: The first candle represents HOPE. We come here tonight recognizing that our hope has not always been fulfilled. We know that some of our dreams—for ourselves, for our families, for those we care about—may never be realized, and our pain is especially real at this time of year.

And yet, we look to the Christ candle, to the Light that is with us, and will return to us. When we feel hopeless in this world, we seek that Light and long for the promised time when every tear will be wiped away.

Scripture

Lamentations 3.1-9, 20-25

Reader: I am one who has seen affliction under the rod of God's wrath; he has driven and brought me into darkness without any light; against me alone he turns his hand, again and again, all day long.

He has made my flesh and my skin waste away, and broken my bones; he has besieged and enveloped me with bitterness and tribulation; he has made me sit in darkness like the dead of long ago.

He has walled me about so that I cannot escape; he has put heavy chains on me; though I call and cry for help, he shuts out my prayer; he has blocked my ways with hewn stones, he has made my paths crooked.

My soul continually thinks of it and is bowed down within me. But this I call to mind, and therefore, I have hope:

The steadfast love of the Lord never ceases, his mercies never come to an end; they are new every morning; great is your faithfulness. “The Lord is my portion,” says my soul, “therefore I will hope in him.” The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him.

Prayer

Leader: Faithful God, help us to wait for you, to trust in you and to place our faith in that foundation which cannot be shaken, Jesus Christ, your son, the cornerstone.

All: Amen.

1. **Abide with me; fast falls the eventide;
the darkness deepens; Lord, with me abide.
When other helpers fail, and comforts flee,
help of the helpless, O abide with me.**
2. **Swift to its close ebbs out life’s little day;
earth’s joys grow dim, its glories pass away;
change and decay in all around I see;
O thou who changest not, abide with me.**
3. **I need thy presence every passing hour;
what but thy grace can foil the tempter’s power?
Who like thyself my guide and stay can be?
Through cloud and sunshine, Lord, abide with me.**
4. **I fear no foe with thee at hand to bless;
ills have no weight, and tears no bitterness.
Where is death’s sting? Where, grave, thy victory?
I triumph still, if thou abide with me.**
5. **Hold thou thy cross before my closing eyes;
shine through the gloom, and point me to the skies;
heaven’s morning breaks, and earth’s vain shadows flee:
in life, in death, O Lord, abide with me.**

~ *Silence* ~

Lighting the Second Advent Candle – PEACE

Leader: The second candle is lit to represent PEACE—and yet many of us are here without true peace in our lives. We don’t have peace in our homes, or peace in our families, or peace in our workplaces, or peace in ourselves. We mourn the peace that has been lost—broken relationships, the loss of job security, or lost direction. We recognize the anxiety we often feel, thinking about the world around us, places and people impacted by violence, this current and future pandemics, isolation, natural disasters, and the uncertainty around climate change.

We look to the return of Jesus as the prince of peace. We yearn for *shalom* in our lives and the peace of God which passes all understanding.

Scripture

Isaiah 9.1-7

Reader: But there will be no gloom for those who were in anguish. In the former time he brought into contempt the land of Zebulun and the land of Naphtali, but in the latter time he will make glorious the way of the sea, the land beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the nations.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness - on them light has shined.

You have multiplied the nation, you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

For the yoke of their burden, and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian. For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders; and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

His authority shall grow continually, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Prayer

Leader: Almighty God, bring peace in our lives—peace from our fears and our hurt and our loss—the true peace which comes from your presence in our lives, as we await the return of the Son who has been given to us, the Prince of Peace, who will reign in a kingdom of endless peace.

All: Amen.

Hymn: “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” CP # 89

1. O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel,
that mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear.

Chorus: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

2. O come, O Wisdom from on high, who orders all things mightily;
to us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go. Chorus
3. O come, O come, great Lord of might, who to your tribes on Sinai's height
in ancient times once gave the law, in cloud and majesty and awe. Chorus
4. O come, O Rod of Jesse's stem, from every foe deliver them
that trust your mighty power to save, and give them victory o'er the grave.

Chorus

~ *Silence* ~

Lighting the Third Advent Candle – JOY

Leader: The third candle in Advent represents JOY. We are surrounded by images of joy all around us, in advertisements, holiday movies, pictures, and even in the songs we hear. But joy is something that often eludes us at this time of year. We lament the joy we once knew, and the people who were part of it and who are there no longer; we long to join others in joy but are unable. We look to the baby in the manger and hear the call to release our expectations and be freed from pressures to find joy as others do, trusting in the deeper joy, long promised and brought into being in the Christ Child.

Scripture

Matthew 11.28-30

Reader: Jesus said, “Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me; for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Prayer

Leader: Lord of Light, help us to follow the urging of your son, and to let go of all that hinders us from your love, that we might experience the joy we desire.

All: Amen.

Hymn: “Comfort, Comfort Ye My People” CP # 100

1. Comfort, comfort ye my people; speak ye peace; thus says your God.
Comfort those who sit in darkness bowed beneath oppression's load.
Speak ye to Jerusalem of the peace that waits for them:
Tell her that her sins I cover, and her warfare now is over.

2. **Hark! The herald's voice is calling in the desert far and near,
Calling us to new repentance since the reign of God is here.
Oh, the warning call obey! Now prepare for Christ a way;
Let the valleys rise to meet him and the hills bow down to greet him.**
3. **Make ye straight what long was crooked; make the rougher places plain.
Let your hearts be true and humble as befits Messiah's reign.
For the glory of the Lord now o'er earth is shed abroad,
And all flesh shall see the token that God's Word is never broken.**

~ *Silence* ~

Lighting the Fourth Advent Candle – LOVE

Leader: The fourth candle symbolizes LOVE. We all need to be loved. At this time of year we cannot always be with the ones that we love as we have experienced in many ways over the last two years. Perhaps the ones we love have been taken from us or haven't returned or acknowledged our love. Instead of love, we often experience loneliness.

And yet the scripture reminds us that God *is* love. The love of our God for us is a fire that can never be extinguished.

Scripture

Rom 8.18-25, 31-35, 37-39

Reader: I consider that the sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory about to be revealed to us. For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the children of God; for the creation was subjected to futility, not of its own will but by the will of the one who subjected it, in hope that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to decay and will obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God.

We know that the whole creation has been groaning in labor pains until now; and not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly while we wait for adoption, the redemption of our bodies. For in hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what is seen? But if we hope for what we do not see, we wait for it with patience.

What then are we to say about these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not withhold his own Son, but gave him up for all of us, will he not with him also give us everything else? Who will bring any charge against God's elect? It is God who justifies. Who is to condemn? It is Christ Jesus, who died, yes, who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who indeed intercedes for us.

Who will separate us from the love of Christ? Will hardship, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? No, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

Prayer

Leader: God of love, be with us in this holiday season. Help us to know that you are always with us, and that nothing in all of creation can separate us from your love.

All: **Amen.**

Hymn: "Day Is Done, But Love Unfailing"

CP # 20

1. Day is done, but love unfailing dwells ever here;
shadows fall, but hope, prevailing, calms every fear.
God, our maker, none forsaking, take our hearts, of love's own making,
watch our sleeping, guard our waking, be always near.
2. Dark descends, but light unending shines through our night;
you are with us, ever lending new strength to sight.
One in love, your truth confessing, one in hope of heaven's blessing,
may we see, in love's possessing, love's endless light!
3. Eyes will close, but you unsleeping watch by our side;
death may come, in love's safekeeping still we abide.
God of love, all evil quelling, sin forgiving, fear dispelling,
stay with us, our hearts indwelling, this eventide.

~ *Silence* ~

Hymn: "La Ténèbre N'est Point Ténèbre"

CP # 549

**Our darkness is never darkness in your sight:
the deepest night is clear as the daylight.**

Repeat as needed

*During the singing of this hymn, you are invited to go to the Advent wreath
and light a candle for your own intentions, placing it with the others.*

*Those joining on Zoom are encouraged to light a candle
and place it where it might be viewed by others.*

Prayers of Intercession

Leader: In the spirit of this season let us now confidently ask our God for all the good things we need: For ourselves as we participate in this Christmas coping with our many different losses.
God, hear our prayer.

All: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For our families and friends, that they too may know your love and grace in this season and that we may be signs and symbols of that love to one another.
God, hear our prayer.

All: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For any person we have loved who has died, for all the losses we know in our lives, that all may be redeemed by your Easter promise.
God, hear our prayer.

All: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For the whole human family, that you may bless them with love, peace, and joy.
God, hear our prayer.

All: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For peace throughout the world as proclaimed by the Christmas angels on that faraway hillside.
God, hear our prayer

All: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: For greater understanding of the lessons of love and acceptance as taught by Jesus, your Christ.
(Additional prayers may be offered.)

God, hear our prayer.

All: And in your mercy, answer.

Leader: God of great compassion and love, listen to the prayers of these your people. Grant to all, especially the bereaved and troubled ones this Christmas, the blessing we ask in the name of Jesus, who taught us to pray,

Lord's Prayer

**All: Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name,
your kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as in heaven.
Give us today our daily bread.
Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us.
Save us from the time of trial, and deliver us from evil.
For the kingdom, the power, and the glory are yours,
now and forever. Amen.**

Hymn: "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel", (Verses 5-7)

CP # 89

**5. O come, O Key of David, come, and open wide our heavenly home;
make safe the way that leads on high, and close the path to misery. Chorus**

Chorus: Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to you, O Israel.

**6. O come, O Dayspring from on high and cheer us by your drawing nigh;
disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadow put to flight.
Chorus**

**7. O come, Desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of humankind;
O bid our bitter conflict cease, and be for us our Prince of Peace. Chorus**

Psalm 121

Leader: I lift up my eyes to the hills - from where will my help come?

All: My help comes from the Lord, who made heaven and earth.

Leader: He will not let your foot be moved; he who keeps you will not slumber.

All: He who keeps Israel will neither slumber nor sleep.

Leader: The Lord is your keeper; the Lord is your shade at your right hand.

All: The sun shall not strike you by day, nor the moon by night.

Leader: The Lord will keep you from all evil; he will keep your life.

All: The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time on and forevermore.

Collect

Leader: Creator of the universe, the light of your glory shines in the darkness of our lives. Make us attentive to your presence, prompt to serve you, and ever eager to follow in the steps of the one who is our true light, Jesus Christ your Son our Lord.

All: Amen.

Blessing

Leader: Be steadfast in faith, joyful in hope, and untiring in love all the days of your life; and the blessing and peace of God almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always.

All: Amen.

Dismissal

Leader: The Lord almighty grant us a quiet night and peace at the last.

All: Thanks be to God. Amen.

Hymn: "In the Bleak Midwinter"

CP # 122

1. In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.
2. Our God, heaven cannot hold him, nor earth sustain;
heaven and earth shall flee away when he comes to reign;
in the bleak midwinter a stable place sufficed
the Lord God Almighty, Jesus Christ.
3. Angels and archangels may have gathered there;
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,
worshipped the beloved with a kiss.
4. What can I give him, poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;
if I were a wise man, I would do my part;
yet what I can give him – give my heart.

The service ends in silence. You are welcome to remain following the service.

This worship is co-hosted by the Anglican Parishes
of St. Timothy (Brentwood) and St. Stephen the Martyr (Loughheed).

DEC. 24	7:00 pm Friday	Christmas Eve Worship <i>In-Person at St. Stephen's & via Zoom</i>
DEC. 24	11:00 pm Friday	Christmas Eve Worship <i>In-Person at St. Timothy's & via Livestream</i>
DEC. 25	10:00 am Saturday	Christmas Day Worship <i>In-Person at St. Stephen's & via Zoom</i> <i>In-Person at St. Timothy's & via Livestream</i>
DEC. 26	10:00 am Sunday	Boxing Day Worship <i>In-Person at St. Stephen's & via Zoom</i> <i>In-Person at St. Timothy's & via Livestream</i>
