

Longest Night Service

6:00pm

December 21, 2024

GATHERING MUSIC

Magdalena Wenger

WELCOME & PASSING THE PEACE

Pastor Tonya Ramer Wenger

OPENING MEDITATION & CANDLE LIGHTING

The first three Advent candles are lit during this litany.

Even in our endings,

fill us with hope for new beginnings.

Even as our minds race with anxiety,

fill us with peace that surpasses understanding.

Even in our deepest grief,

fill us with joy and laughter.

Even in a world of hate and fear,

fill us with your love, O God.

Come, let us worship Emmanuel, God with us.

OPENING HYMN/SONG *Hope is a Candle* (verses 1-3) VT 211

SCRIPTURE READING | ECCLESIASTES 3:1-8

Andrea Nisly

TIME OF REFLECTION & SILENT PRAYER

In the silence, we'll spend some time reflecting on the seasons of our life. What seasons feel like they are coming to a close, and what seasons are just beginning? Let us offer the grief and anxiety that comes with the changing seasons of our lives to the God who is with us through it all.

SUNG RESPONSE *Wait for the Lord* VT 228

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Bringing our prayers ...

The slips of paper you received with your bulletin are for any prayers you would like to put in words. You are invited now to write and then bring your prayers and place them in the basket on the table. I will collect these prayers at the end of our service and pray for them this week.

For prayers that are too deep for words, or for prayers that you prefer to keep in your heart alone, we invite you to light a candle. You may also light a candle to reflect your written prayer. We will hold all of these prayers tonight, trusting that God knows the depths of our hearts.

SUNG RESPONSE *Wait for the Lord* VT 228

SCRIPTURE READING | ISAIAH 43:16-21

Joel Iwashige

WORDS OF COMFORT / AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

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

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

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

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

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.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

CLOSING HYMN *We Come* VT 225

BENEDICTION *This benediction is by Rev. Sarah Speed from the [Words for the Beginning Words for Worship](#).*

As you leave this place,
may you have the wisdom to lean on one other.
May you have the courage to hold onto hope,
the compassion to do the good that is yours to do,
and the confidence to trust that God sees you as a blessing.
For in a world full of dead ends,
Advent invites us to begin again.
So start here.
Start now.
Start with love and begin again.
In the name of Christ,
our new beginning,
go in peace.

Everyone is invited to stay for a soup & bread in the basement fellowship hall. After the meal, those who wish will go Christmas Caroling in the church neighborhood, followed by refreshments.
