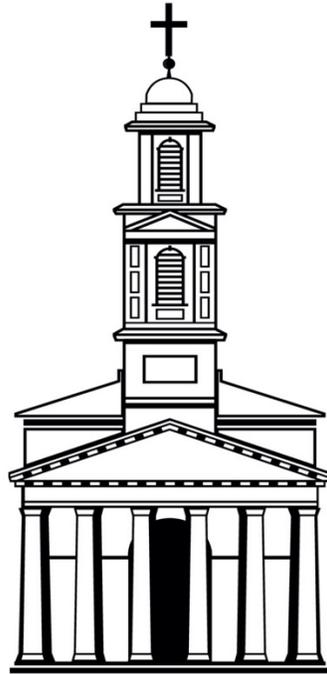


LITURGY OF THE LONGEST NIGHT | SPECIAL SERVICE OF COMPLINE



SAINT
JOHN'S
CHURCH

LAFAYETTE SQUARE
WASHINGTON, DC

DECEMBER 22, 2020
8:00 PM

THE ORDER OF SERVICE

RECTOR'S WELCOME

Officiant: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. All things were made by God, and without God nothing came to be. What came to be through God was life, and this life was the light of the world.

People: **The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

Officiant: Let us confess our sins to God.

Officiant and People:

Almighty God, our heavenly Father: We have sinned against you, through our own fault, in thought, and word, and deed, and in what we have left undone. For the sake of your Son our Lord Jesus Christ, forgive us all our offenses; and grant that we may serve you in newness of life, to the glory of your Name. Amen.

Officiant: May the Almighty God grant you forgiveness of all your sins, and the grace and comfort of the Holy Spirit.

Officiant and People:

Amen.

Officiant: O God, make speed to save us.

People: **O Lord, make haste to help us.**

Officiant and People:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

PSALM 22:1-10

Said in unison.

- 1 My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from saving me,
so far from my cries of anguish?
- 2 My God, I cry out by day, but you do not answer,
by night, but I find no rest.
- 3 Yet you are enthroned as the Holy One;
you are the one Israel praises.
- 4 In you our ancestors put their trust;
they trusted and you delivered them.
- 5 To you they cried out and were saved;
in you they trusted and were not put to shame.
- 6 But I am a worm and not a man,
scorned by everyone, despised by the people.
- 7 All who see me mock me;
they hurl insults, shaking their heads.
- 8 “He trusts in the Lord,” they say,
“let the Lord rescue him.
Let him deliver him,
since he delights in him.”
- 9 Yet you brought me out of the womb;
you made me trust in you, even at my mother’s breast.
- 10 From birth I was cast on you;
from my mother’s womb you have been my God.

Officiant and People:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen.

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

(The first candle is lighted.)

Officiant: We light this first candle to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We remember especially those who have died from the covid-19 pandemic and those killed by racialized violence. We embrace them in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

Music: O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the son of God appear
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

(The second candle is lighted.)

Officiant: We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss: loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy. We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands You will place the gift of peace.

Music: **O come thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

(The third candle is lighted.)

Officiant: We light this third candle to remember ourselves this season. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens. We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory, the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain. We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you, for all that we have suffered. We accept and lay before you the time we have walked alone, in darkness; and in knowledge of our own mortality.

Music: **O come thou day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by thy advent here
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

(The fourth candle is lighted.)

Officiant: We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light and hope that God offers to us at the birth of the Christchild, which also began in abandonment, insecurity, and humbleness, in a time of war and in a poor stable. We remember that the loving God who kept the light shining in the temple and who came to share this life with us promises to be with us, come what may.

Music: **O come desire of nations, come, bind in one the hearts of all mankind
Bid then our sad, divisions cease, and be thyself our King of Peace
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

THE PRAYERS

Leader: God of grace, grant us all that we need to comfort us as we journey through this season. We ask that you shelter and sustain those of us, both here and throughout the world, who wander or want or weep or are heavy laden, that you would place Your courage in our hearts to journey on in Your peace.

Officiant: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Leader: God of love, we embrace and offer up to you all that used to be which is now lost to us, and cannot be again. We offer the memories of what once was, and fears of what may be, and all that weighs heavy on our hearts. Hold us close in your embrace, be near to us this night, until the light returns and morning comes.

Officiant: Lord, in Your mercy,

People: **Hear our prayer.**

Officiant: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give Your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for Your love's sake. Amen.

Silence may be kept, and free intercessions and thanksgivings may be offered either silently or aloud.

Officiant: Lighten our darkness, we beseech you, O God; give us light in the night season; and by your great mercy defend us from all perils and dangers of this night. Amen.

Officiant: Let us bless the Lord.

People: **Thanks be to God.**

Officiant: The almighty and merciful Lord, Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, bless you and keep you.

Officiant and People:

Amen.

The Liturgy of the Longest Night service has been crafted using the order for Compline in the Book of Common Prayer as well as an order for "Blue Christmas: A Service of Reflection for the Longest Night" developed and used at The Cathedral Church of Saint Andrew, Honolulu Hawaii.