

The Longest Night

December 21, 2022



**FIRST
PRESBYTERIAN
CHURCH**
COVINGTON, GA



The Longest Night

Gathering Music

Nowell

Michael Cox

Based on the Traditional English Carol

Welcome and Announcements

Call to Worship

Merciful God,

In this season of rejoicing, **we come to you weary and grieving**

In this season of feasting, **we hunger for healing and relief**

In this season of light, **our hearts are veiled in sorrow and shadow**

Will this season ever end?

"Yes." **We hear your "yes."**

Those who are weary will find rest

Those who mourn will be comforted

Those who hunger will be filled

**The Light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness will not overcome it.**

✠ Hymn 144

In the Bleak Midwinter

CRANHAM

Lighting of Advent Candles

Doug and Sherri Bolton

We welcome you, O Christ, Light of the World.

In the midst of our suffering, help us to worship you in spirit and in truth.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 40

Jake McCarthy
Pew Bible page 667

Scripture Reading

Psalms 121

Angelic Bellinger
Pew Bible page 571

✠Response 121

O Little Town of Bethlehem

ST. LOUIS

***O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin and enter in; be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell;
O come to us; abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel!***

✠Prayers of the People and The Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread; and forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors; and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

✠Refrain 88

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

Candle Lighting

Written by Lisa Ann Moss Degrenia

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.

In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of truth.

There is no need to hide or deny. God welcomes us as we are.

Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy.

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.

In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of lament.

We recognize our wounds and cry out to God.

We accept God's invitation to express every feeling and question.

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest.

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.

In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of courage.
Courage to be honest, to seek help, to comfort one another.
Courage to dare to love and dream again.

The Lord is my strength and my shield; in God my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to God.

This candle represents our suffering and the suffering of the world.

In the light of God's love, we claim God's gift of hope.

God is good. God is strong. God is near,

leading us to a day without tears and pain, without sin and death.

Healing and deliverance are coming; if not now, then on that day.

By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas.

Prayers of Lament and Hope

People are invited to write their prayers on a blue strip of paper and bring them to the Lord's table at this time.

Solo

Light of the World

Lauren Daigle

Adriane Ivey

✦ **Closing Hymn 676**

Day is Done

AR HYD Y NOS

✦ **Benediction**



Worship Notes

"This service is designed to provide a space for prayer, reflection, and remembrance amidst the holiday hustle and bustle. We hope that this service can be a gift to you providing a space of calm, quiet, and healing." A Sanctified Art LLC | Rev. Sarah (Are) Speed | sanctifiedart.org

Music printed in our bulletin and streamed online is covered by One License #A-728738 authorizing their use.

Serving Today

Tech Team | Dan Walden, Jonny Atkins, Brad Hawley

Acolyte | Jon Paschal