

The background of the image is a deep blue night sky filled with numerous small, white stars. The stars are more densely packed in some areas, creating a sense of depth. At the bottom of the image, there is a dark silhouette of a forest of evergreen trees, which appears to be looking up at the sky. The overall mood is serene and quiet.

The Longest Night

Welcome to WEST LAWN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Our vision is to Invite, Embrace, and Empower all to be the family of God in Christ

*The Longest Night Service
December 19, 2024, 7:00 p.m.*

PRELUDE

"Carol Selections"

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

HYMN

"Light of the World"

TFWS #2204

BRINGING OF THE LIGHT

OPENING PRAYER

FIRST READING

Matthew 11:28-29 (NLT)

Meditation

HYMN

"Amazing Grace"

UMH #378

SECOND READING

Psalms 34:17-18 (NLT)

Meditation

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Come and Find the Quiet Center"
Marnell McCarthy, soloist; Judith Alvarez, piano

Murray, White

CANDLE LIGHTING

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

LIGHTING OF THE CHRIST CANDLE

VIDEO

"Just Be Held"

Casting Crown

THIRD READING

Meditation

Psalms 46 (NLT)

HYMN

"Spirit Song"

UMH #347

HOLY COMMUNION

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

RESPONSIVE READING

Psalms 27:1, 5-8, 13-14 (CEB)

PRAYER

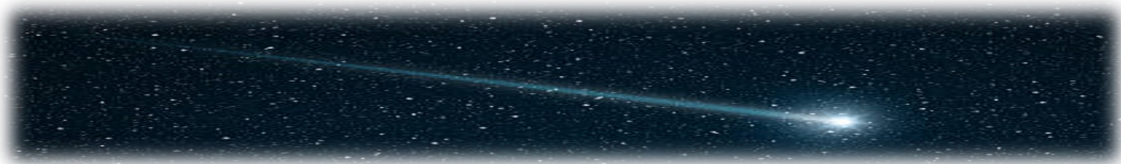
CLOSING HYMN

"Silent Night"

UMH #239

CONGREGATIONAL PRAYER

BLESSING/DISMISSAL



Thank you to all who made this service possible:

Pastor Pat Goshert
Griefshare Team
Prayer Ministry Team
Stephen Ministers
Marnell McCarthy, soloist
Judith Alvarez, piano
David Haas, A/V technician



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Blessing for the Longest Night

by Jan Richardson

“All throughout these months as the shadows have lengthened, this blessing has been gathering itself, making ready, preparing for this night. It has practiced walking in the dark, traveling with its eyes closed, feeling its way by memory by touch by the pull of the moon even as it wanes.

So, believe me when I tell you this blessing will reach you even if you have not light enough to read it; it will find you even though you cannot see it coming. You will know the moment of its arriving by your release of the breath you have held so long; a loosening of the clenching in your hands, of the clutch around your heart; a thinning of the darkness that had drawn itself around you.

This blessing does not mean to take the night away, but it knows its hidden roads, knows the resting spots along the path, knows what it means to travel in the company of a friend.

So, when this blessing comes, take its hand. Get up. Set out on the road you cannot see. This is the night when you can trust that any direction you go, you will be walking toward the dawn.”