

New Castle Presbyterian Church



AND HEAVEN AND NATURE SING

Longest Night Service

December 17, 2025

7:00 pm

GATHER IN GOD'S NAME

Prelude

Jesus, Jesus Rest Your Head arr. by Michael Larkin
Eileen Larkin - Piano

Call to Worship

Tonight, we come looking for the Christ Child.

We come, bringing our hurts, our worries, our fears.

We hear God's voice through the prophet Isaiah: "Comfort, comfort, now my people."

God comforts all who sit in darkness, mourning under sorrow's load.

Let us lift up our heavy hearts to our Savior,

For the Christ Child brings God's promise of peace.

Hymn #88

O Come, O Come Emmanuel
verses 1, 2, 6, and 7

Prayer for Light

O merciful God, we praise you for your generous faithfulness for all creation. You are the God of hope, peace, joy, and love. On the days when we feel far from your promises, be patient with us. Gather us into your light of salvation this night; be a comforting darkness in which we can rest and lay down our burdens. Amen.

Lighting the Advent Candles

We light the candles in silence.

PROCLAIM GOD'S WORD

Prayer for Illumination

God of mercy, hear our prayers in this Advent season for ourselves and for our loved ones who live with the isolation of illness, the pain of separation, and the crushing weight of grief. We ask for strength for today, peace for the past, and courage for tomorrow. Speak your truth to us this night, that we may welcome your child, Emmanuel, God-with-us, who shares in our joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

Psalm 27: 1, 4-5, 13-14

¹ The Lord is my light and my salvation; whom shall I fear?

The Lord is the stronghold of my life; of whom shall I be afraid?

⁴ One thing I asked of the Lord; this I seek:

To live in the house of the Lord all the days of my life, to behold the beauty of the Lord, and to inquire in his temple.

⁵ For God will hide me in his shelter in the day of trouble;

God will conceal me under the cover of his tent; he will set me high on a rock.

¹³ I believe that I shall see the goodness of the LORD in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait for the LORD; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the LORD!

**Hymn #92 While We Are Waiting, Come
verse 1 – soloist, verses 2 & 3 – congregation**

Matthew 11:28-30 (The Message, adapted)

[And Jesus said:] “Are you tired? Worn out? Weighed down by heaviness? Come to me. Get away with me and you will recover your life. I will show you how to take a real rest. Walk with me and work with me – watch how I do it. Learn the unforced rhythms of grace. I won’t lay anything heavy or ill-fitting on you. Keep company with me and you will learn to live freely and lightly.”

Intercession for Healing & The Lighting of the Candles

The God of strength moves within us;
The God of courage hears our distress.
The God of hope reveals wholeness to us;
The God of healing touches us when we are broken.
When the pain overwhelms us, when the burden is too heavy,
We turn to our God, who is sustaining and redeeming.
When there is loneliness, when there is isolation,
We turn to our God, who is loving and present.
For God created us, redeemed us and sustains us,
And we are not alone. Lead us in your ways, O God, and bring us your healing touch.

(In this quiet, holy space, you are invited to come forward and light a candle for yourself and your loved ones.)

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.**

GO IN GOD'S NAME

Hymn #109

**Blest Be the God of Israel
Verses 1 and 3**

Benediction

May God keep your going out and your coming in,
May God go before you, to show you the way,
May God shine above you to lighten your world,
May God be your help all along your journey.
Come, Lord Jesus, come. Amen.

*You are welcome to remain in peaceful contemplation
and invited to leave in quiet when ready.*

Worship Leadership: Rev. Miriam Foltz and Eileen Larkin

