

# *Silent Night*



*December 16, 2021*

*At Wesley, we foster a sanctuary culture by creating a safe environment where all feel welcomed, loved, accepted, valued, and affirmed for who they are, through intentional practices such as empathy, compassion, generosity, hospitality, and inclusion.*

**WESLEY UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

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## AN ORDER OF WORSHIP FOR SILENT NIGHT

*Into this silent night as we make our weary way we know not where,  
just when the night becomes its darkest and we cannot see our path,  
just then is when the angels rush in, their hands full of stars. ~ Ann Weems*

### WE GATHER

#### Greeting and Welcome

#### Introduction to the Service

#### Opening Time of Meditation

Creator of the Stars of Night

William Ness, organ

Richard Lind b. 1949

#### Call to Worship

One: In the beginning was the Word. And the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**Many: The Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth.**

One: In him was life, and that life was the light for humanity.

**Many: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to overcome it.**

#### Opening Hymn

Come and Find the Quiet Center

Come and find the quiet center  
in the crowded life we lead,  
find the room for hope to enter,  
find the frame where we are freed:  
clear the chaos and the clutter,  
clear our eyes, that we can see  
all the things that really matter,  
be at peace, and simply be.

Silence is a friend who claims us,  
cools the heat and slows the pace,  
God it is who speaks and names us,  
knows our being, touches base,  
making space within our thinking,  
lifting shades to show the sun,  
raising courage when we're shrinking,  
finding scope for faith begun.

In the Spirit let us travel,  
 open to each other's pain,  
 let our loves and fears unravel,  
 celebrate the space we gain:  
 there's a place for deepest dreaming,  
 there's a time for heart to care,  
 in the Spirit's lively scheming  
 there is always room to spare.

**Opening Prayer** (in unison)

**Holy God, whose creation includes darkness and light, be with us, in each one of our situations; live among us, live with us and in us; fill the distances that divide and separate us; reconcile us with You and with one another. Open our hearts to the mystery of your love and the invitation of your grace. Let our complacency give way to conversion. Let our judgments give way to compassionate acceptance of others. Turn oppression to justice and transform conflict to peace. You who are the light of the world, be light in our darkness. Amen.**

**Music for Reflection**

I Believe

Mark Miller  
 Wesley Combined Choirs

I believe in the sun even when it's not shining  
 I believe in love even when I don't feel it

**WE LISTEN FOR GOD**

**Candlelighting with Prayers of Hope and Healing**

Musical Response:

When the night be - comes dark, your love, O Lord is a fire; your love, O Lord, is a fire

**Good News for the Excluded**

Luke 14:15-23

**Good News for the Grieving**

Luke 6:17-23

**Good News for the Weary and Heavy-Laden**

Matthew 11:28-29

**Music for Reflection**

E'en So, Lord Jesus

Paul Manz  
Wesley Choir

Peace be to you and grace from him who freed us from our sin  
Who loved us all, and shed his blood that we might saved be.

Sing holy, holy to our Lord  
The Lord Almighty God  
Who was and is, and is to come  
Sing holy, holy Lord.

Rejoice in heaven, all ye that dwell therein  
Rejoice on earth, ye saints below  
For Christ is coming, is coming soon; for Christ is coming soon.

E'en so Lord Jesus quickly come  
And night shall be no more  
They need no light, no lamp, nor sun, for Christ will be their All!

**Good News for the Resentful**

Hebrews 12:14-15

**Good News for the Depressed and Anxious**

Psalm 46

**Good News for the Everyone**

Psalm 121

**Hymn**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

O come, O come, Emmanuel,  
and ransom captive Israel,  
that mourns in lonely exile here  
until the Son of God appear.

[Refrain]

Rejoice! Rejoice!

Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.

O come, thou Wisdom from on high,  
and order all things far and nigh;  
to us the path of knowledge show  
and cause us in her ways to go. [Refrain]

O come, thou Root of Jesse's tree,  
an ensign of thy people be;  
before thee rulers silent fall;  
all peoples of thy mercy call. [Refrain]

O come, thou Dayspring, come and cheer  
our spirits by thy justice here;  
disperse the gloomy clouds of night,  
and death's dark shadows put to flight. [Refrain]

O come Desire of nations bind  
all peoples in one heart and mind;  
from dust thou brought us forth to life,  
deliver us from earthly strife. [Refrain]

### **Scriptural Words of Hope from Isaiah 9**

## **RESPONDING AND GOING FORTH**

### **Hymn**

### Silent Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright  
Round yon virgin mother and child,  
Holy infant so tender and mild,  
Sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;  
Radiant beams from thy holy face  
with the dawn of redeeming grace,  
Jesus, Lord at thy birth; Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;  
with the angels let us sing,  
Alleluia to our King!  
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born.

### **Dismissal with Blessing**

***Blessed are you***  
who bear the light  
in unbearable times,  
who testify  
to its endurance  
amid the unendurable,  
who bear witness  
to its persistence  
when everything seems  
in shadow  
and grief.

***Blessed are you***  
in whom  
the light lives,  
in whom  
the brightness blazes—  
your heart  
a chapel,  
an altar where  
in the deepest night  
can be seen  
the fire that  
shines forth in you  
in unaccountable faith,  
in stubborn hope,  
in love that illumines  
every broken thing it finds

**Closing Time of Meditation**

Silent Night

William Ness, organ  
Wilbur Held 1914-2015

*As gentle music is played you are invited to sit in the quiet for further reflection.*

**WORSHIP NOTES**

**Tonight's Worship Team:** Rev. Byungmoo Lee, Nan Gibbons, William Ness, Deborah O'Driscoll,

**This evening's liturgy:** portions adapted from a Longest Night Service by Rev. Jeffrey Spencer

<https://jeffsjottings.wordpress.com/about/longest-night-service/>

Accessed November 5, 2021.

**Sending Liturgy:** Susan Briehl and Tom Witt. *Holden Prayer around the Cross: Handbook to the Liturgy*. 3rd ed.

Minneapolis, MN: Augsburg Fortress, 2009.

**Blessed Are You Who Bear the Light:** © Jan Richardson from *Circle of Grace: A Book of Blessings*

Tonight's Music:

William Ness, Director of Music

Combined Wesley Choirs Parking Lot Sessions, and virtual choir recordings.

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