



Longest Night

Wednesday, December 17, 2025

7:00 p.m., Sanctuary



Gathering of God's People

Please note that online worshipers join the livestream at 6:50 p.m.

PRELUDE Zion Hears the Watchmen Singing
Kara Goodrich, soprano; Nicholas Provenzale, baritone

J. S. Bach

WELCOME

Melanie Hardison

Please stand, if able.

CALL TO WORSHIP

John Willingham

One Night has come, and nighttime is for stillness.

All Let us be still in the presence of God.

One It is night after a long day.

All We offer to God all that has been done; we offer to God all that is left undone.

One The night is dark.

All We bring before God our fear of the darkness in the world and in our lives.

One The night is quiet.

All May the quiet of God's peace enfold us, all who are dear to us, and all who have no peace.

One The night heralds the dawn.

All We look expectantly to the dawn of a new day.

HYMN 84 Creator of the Stars of Night

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

One By the tender mercy of our God, dawn will break upon us, to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death, to guide our feet into the way of peace

All Let us walk in the ways of peace.

SOLO "The Call" from Five Mystical Songs

Ralph Vaughan Williams

Nicholas Provenzale, baritone

Come, my way, my truth, my life: Such a way as gives us breath: Such a truth as ends all strife; Such a life as killeth death. Come, my light, my feast, my strength: Such a light as shows a feast; Such a feast as mends in length; Such a strength as makes his guest. Come, my joy, my love, my heart: Such a joy as none can move; Such a love as none can part; Such a heart as joys in love.

Proclamation of the Word

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

John Willingham

FIRST LESSON Psalm 30:1-5

(pg. 503 in pew Bible)

SECOND LESSON Matthew 11:28-30

Melanie Hardison

(pg. 58 in pew Bible)

One The Word of the Lord.

All Thanks be to God.

MEDITATION *Hope for the Weary*

Melanie Hardison

Response to the Word

SOLO Gesù Bambino

Pietro Yon

Kara Goodrich, soprano

When blossoms flowered 'mid the snows upon a winter night was born the Child, the Christmas Rose the King of Love and Light. The angels sang, the shepherds sang the grateful earth rejoiced and at His blessed birth the stars their exultation voiced. Again the heart with rapture glows to greet the holy night that gave the world its Christmas Rose its King of Love and Light. Let ev'ry voice acclaim His name the grateful chorus swell from paradise to earth He came that we with Him might dwell. O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him, O come let us adore Him Christ the Lord.

One During Advent, we light the candles of hope, peace, joy and love.
Tonight, we light the candle of hope for all who feel hopeless.
This light shines bright for prisoners, for patients with chronic illness,
for individuals fighting to get out of debt, for refugees waiting for a
safe place to rest, and for relationships that have no clear way forward.

All **May God's hope find them now.**

One Tonight, we light the candle of peace for all who need peace.
This light shines bright for the anxious and unsettled—for those in
seasons of transition and discernment, for all who struggle with
mental health, and for people navigating rocky, new beginnings.

All **May God's peace find them now.**

One Tonight, we light the candle of joy for all who need it. May this light
shine for those who are overburdened, overstretched, worn out, and
worn down. May this candle shine for those who need a good laugh,
even in seasons of grief.

All **May God's joy find them now.**

One Tonight, we light the candle of love for all who need it. May this light
shine for loved ones lost, for love that has been betrayed, for love that
has been neglected or forgotten, and for all who long for love and
find themselves lonely.

All **May God's love find them now.**

DUET Come All Who Are Weary

Leslie Jordan

Kara Goodrich, soprano and Nicholas Provenzale, baritone

Come, all who are weary: I will give you rest. Come, all who are striving: lean
up on My breast. For My yoke is easy and my burden light. O come, all who
are weary, come. Come, all who are wounded, crying out, "How long?" Come,
all who are waiting for the break of dawn. Darkness will not hide you forever

from my sight. O come, all who are wounded, come. Come, all who are weeping, all whose hope is gone. Come, all who are silent, all who've lost their song. Your ev'ry tear is numbered, your ev'ry sorrow known. O come, all who are weeping, come. O come, all who are weary, wounded and weeping, all of God's children, come.

CANDLE LIGHTING

Individuals who desire are invited forward to light a candle on the Communion Table as an act of prayer while the congregation sings the following hymns.

HYMN 121 ○ 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.

For Christ is born of Mary and, gathered all above, while mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love. O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth, and praises sing to God the king, and peace to all on earth.

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is given! So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven. No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin, where meek souls will receive him, still the dear Christ enters in.

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!

**What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping? Whom
angels greet with anthems sweet while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**Why lies he in such mean estate where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here the silent Word is pleading.
Nails, spear, shall pierce him through; the cross be borne for me, for you.
Hail, hail, the Word made flesh, the babe, the son of Mary!**

**So bring him incense, gold, and myrrh; come, one and all, to own him.
The King of kings salvation brings; let loving hearts enthrone him.
Raise, raise the song on high. The virgin sings her lullaby.
Joy, joy, for Christ is born, the babe, the son of Mary!**

PRAYER OF PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS

John Willingham

**God of our joy and God of our weariness, we have brought our worn-
down hearts to you this night— hearts full of grief, hearts carrying fear,
hearts tender to the touch. We have brought our weariness to you this
night because we know that you are present with us in the valleys. We
know that you were born into a quiet night like this one, so surely our
tears from the night are not unfamiliar to you. Therefore, as we prepare
to leave the safe protection of this sanctuary, as we prepare to return to
the fullness of our lives, as we prepare for the birth of Jesus, we ask that
you continue to walk with us. Stay by our side through the valley. Stay
by our side as we climb our way out. Just stay close. For we cannot move
from weariness to joy without you. With honesty and gratitude, we give
you these prayers of our hearts— those named and left unnamed. We
give them all to you. Amen.**

Please stand, if able.

HYMN 123 It Came Upon a Midnight Clear

CAROL

BENEDICTION

Melanie Hardison

POSTLUDE Improvisation

Jeffrey Brillhart

Worship Notes

CALL TO WORSHIP

Adapted from Rev. John Williamson's "Night Prayer," from *A New Zealand Prayer Book / He Karakia Mihinare o Aotearoa*

LITANY OF REMEMBERING AND PRAYER FOR PREPARATION FOR CHRISTMAS

Adapted from liturgy by the Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES

Christmas Eve Family Service. Wed., Dec. 24, 4:30 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestreamed. Family Service with Nativity Tableau and musical leadership by BMPC's Choristers, and the Bryn Mawr Festival Brass. Prelude and Carol Sing begins at 4:15 p.m.

Christmas Eve Worship With Communion. Wed., Dec. 24, 8:30 p.m., Sanctuary and Livestreamed. Carols and anthems led by BMPC's Sanctuary Choir. The Rev. Dr. John M. Willingham will preach. Prelude begins at 8:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve Lessons and Carols. Wed., Dec. 24, 11:00 p.m., Sanctuary. After several years of not gathering for worship late in the evening on Christmas Eve, the church will once again offer a candlelit service of Lessons and Carols at 11:00 p.m. This service will move us through scripture readings that tell the broad story of God's love for the world and the incarnation of the Christ Child. While this service will begin at 11:00 p.m., pre-service music will start at 10:30 p.m.

Giving

Your generosity can make a profound difference at Bryn Mawr Presbyterian Church. Join us in spreading love and hope by giving at bit.ly/BMPCGiveOnline or simply scan the QR code to the right. Every donation, no matter the size, fuels our mission to create a more faithful, just, and compassionate community. Together, let's make a lasting impact!



CONNECT WITH US



BrynMawrPres



BrynMawrPres



user/brynmawrpres

Worship Staff

John M. Willingham, Interim Senior Pastor

Andy Greenhow, Associate Pastor for Youth & Their Families

Melanie Hardison, Associate Pastor for Congregational Care

Rebecca Kirkpatrick, Associate Pastor for Adult Education & Mission

Rachel Pedersen, Associate Pastor for Children & Family Ministry

Jeffrey Brillhart, Director of Music & Fine Arts

James Kealey, Co-Director of Music & Fine Arts

Daniel Carroll, Organ Scholar