

# **The Longest Night**

**Parkminster United Church  
December 21, 2018  
7:00 pm**





**PARKMINSTER UNITED CHURCH**  
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**Friday, December 21, 2018**

**THE LONGEST NIGHT**

**Rev. Fred Monteith & Rev. Joe Gaspar**

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**GATHERING**

Prelude

*by Celtic Crossing*

**Welcome**

**Opening Prayer**

One: Loving and Gracious God, in the quiet of the evening,

**All: we come to you, trusting that you hear our prayer.**

One: We gather in this place with family, friends and strangers, seeking your peace and comfort.

**All: We come with all kinds of feelings – deep hurt, sadness, anger, relief, and hope.**

One: We know that your love is deep enough to accept our feelings, our fears, and our longings that go beyond words.

**All: Just as candles break through the darkness of a room, let your light, break through the darkness of our souls.**

One: Be a light in our darkness,

**All: we pray in the name of your holy child, our brother, the One we call Jesus. Amen.**

★Hymn:

“O Ancient Love”

♪ VU #17

## EXPLORING & REFLECTING

**Scripture Reading:** Matthew 2: 16-18; Psalm 130: 1-2 & 5-6

**Meditation:** *Pain and Loss—The Other Side of Christmas*

### **Presentation of a Symbol:**

A rose, with its beauty guarded by thorns, reminds us that in the midst of the beauty of Christmas, pain and suffering are also part of the story.

★ **Verse:** “*Kindle a Flame to Lighten the Dark*” 🎵 VU #18

***Kindle a flame to lighten the dark  
and take all fear away.***

**Scripture Reading:** Psalm 13 & Romans 8: 35-39

**Meditation:** *Hope in the Dark*

### **Presentation of a Symbol:**

We light a candle in hope, a symbol that the light will return, that darkness does not have the last word.

★ **Verse:** “*Kindle a Flame to Lighten the Dark*” 🎵 VU #18

***Kindle a flame to lighten the dark  
and take all fear away.***

**Scripture Reading:** Isaiah 40: 1-5 & Luke 2: 8-20

**Meditation:** *God With Us*

### **Presentation of a Symbol:**

The butterfly reminds us of God’s silent work—transforming struggle into beauty.

★ Verse: “Kindle a Flame to Lighten the Dark” 🎵 VU #18

***Kindle a flame to lighten the dark  
and take all fear away.***

## RESPONDING

Candle Lighting Music

*by Celtic Crossing*

*You are invited, if it feels right, to come forward and light a candle(s) in memory of a loved one or another loss that is significant to you at this time of year.*

## Prayers of the People

**Call:** Loving God hear our prayer.

**Response:** **And in your love answer.**

★ Hymn: “Silent Night, Holy Night” 🎵 VU #67

★ Blessing

Postlude

*by Celtic Crossing*

## Anointing with Oil

*If you wish, you are invited to come forward to be anointed with (olive) oil as a symbol of God’s healing and receive a personal blessing.*

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**Following the service, please join us in the Upper Hall  
for hot apple cider and cookies.**

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