

Longest Night Service
December 21, 2025
7pm

Prelude William Zurkey

Welcome

Call to Worship
Pastor: On this longest night of the year, we come as people who carry sorrows that are heavy, memories that ache, and hopes that feel fragile.
People: We come seeking the Light the darkness cannot overcome.
Pastor: God meets us here—in our longing, our questions, our emptiness, and our courage.
People: We wait for the Lord, and in His Word we find hope.

Hymn O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (Vs 1–3) UMH #211

Opening Prayer

The Promise of Light

Isaiah 9: 2-7

Candle Lighting: The Candle of Lament

Hymn: Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus UMH #196

The Weeping God

Psalm 34:17–18

Candle Lighting: The Candle of Presence

Hymn: It Came Upon the Midnight Clear UMH#218

The Coming Light

John 1:1–5, 9–14

Candle Lighting: The Candle of Hope

Hymn: “Silent Night” UMH #239

The Steadfast Light

Psalm 130: 1-6

Candle Lighting: The Candle of Peace

Pastor:: We light this candle for Peace not the peace of easy answers or the peace that comes from forgetting, but the deep, steady peace that Christ breathes into troubled hearts.
People: Lord Jesus, Prince of Peace, be near to us.
Pastor:: In our restless nights, in our anxious waiting, in our longing for wholeness shine Your peace into our spirits.

Hymn: Lo, How a Rose E’er Blooming (vs 1–2) UMH #216

Our Refuge

Psalm 46: 1-7

Candle Lighting: The Candle of Courage

Hymn: O Little Town of Bethlehem UMH #281

Ceaseless Love

Lamentations 3: 21-24

Candle Lighting: The Candle of Remembrance

Pastor: We light this candle to remember those we love and miss, and the moments that shaped us. We remember seasons of joy and seasons of sorrow.
People: God, hold our memories in Your gentleness.
Pastor: And we light it also for Promise. The promise that Christ, the Light of the world, has come, is with us now, and will come again in glory and healing.
People: We rest in the promise of Your unfailing love.

Hymn: “What Child Is This” (verses 1–2) UMH #219

Litany of Loss

Pastor: Holy God, we bring before You the many kinds of loss that weigh upon Your people tonight. For losses that are recent, sharp, and disorienting...
People: Lord, hear our prayer.
Pastor: For losses long past, yet still felt in deep places...
People: Lord, hear our prayer.
Pastor: For the death of loved ones, parents, children, spouses, siblings, friends whose absence is felt especially in this season...
People: Lord, hold us in Your mercy.
Pastor: For broken relationships friendships that ended, marriages that dissolved, family estrangements that feel impossible to mend...
People: Lord, hold us in Your mercy.
Pastor: For losses of health diagnoses that have changed our lives, the slow fade of strength or memory, pain that limits and discourages...
People: Lord, be our healer.
Pastor: For losses of stability jobs lost, finances strained, futures uncertain...
People: Lord, be our provider.
Pastor: For losses of dreams hopes deferred, prayers unanswered, doors closed, and paths no longer possible...
People: Lord, be our companion in the wilderness.
Pastor: For losses that have no name the quiet sorrow, the unspoken disappointment, the heaviness we carry without words...
People: Lord, be our gentle comfort.
Pastor: O God who weeps with us and for us, receive our grief as an offering.
People: Hold it, and hold us, in Your unfailing love.

Ritual of Light

Prayer of Intercession
God of compassion, hold every person gathered here in Your tender care.
Where there is fear, give peace.
Where there is sorrow, give rest.
Where there is emptiness, give Your presence.
Where there is despair, give the first spark of hope.
Carry us through this longest night, and lead us toward the dawn where Christ already waits. Amen.

Hymn “In the Bleak Midwinter” (verses 1–2) UMH #221

Benediction
Go now in the peace of Christ, the One who knows your sorrow, the One who carries your burdens, the One whose light shines in the night. May the quiet strength of God hold you, the deep love of Christ enfold you, and the gentle presence of the Spirit comfort you this night and always. Amen.



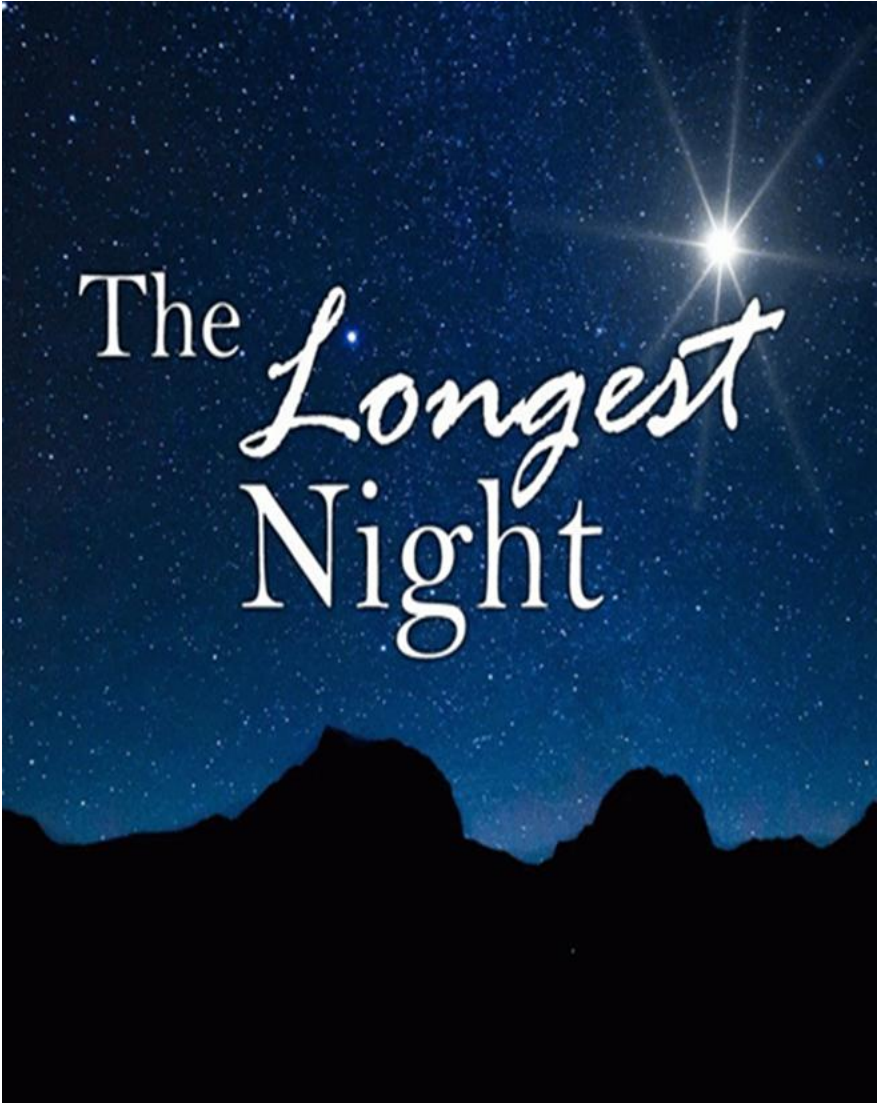
Christmas Eve & Christmas Day Services

Bethesda on the Bay Christmas Eve services are:
5:30 pm – Family oriented worship
9:30 pm – Choral candlelight worship

Bay UMC Christmas Eve Service is: 7:00pm

Good Soil Lutheran Christmas Eve Service is: 6:30pm

St. Barnabas Episcopal Church Services:
Christmas Eve:
5:00 pm – Holy Communion with Children’s Pageant
9:00 pm – Holy Communion with Incense
Christmas Day:
10:00 am – Holy Communion



An Ecumenical Service
December 21, 2025
7:00 pm

The Rev. Lisa Kropinak	Bay United Methodist Church
The Rev. Jim Kulma	Good Soil Lutheran Church
The Rev. Alex Martin	St. Barnabas Episcopal Church
William Zurkey	Organist
Donna Dresing	Usher
Fred Westbrook	Usher