

Song: *Light of a Clear Blue Morning*

Reading: *The Moment of Magic*

Congregational Singing: *Now the Green Blade Riseth*

Now the green blade riseth from the buried grain,
Wheat that in the dark earth many days has lain;
Love lives again, that with the dead has been,
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

When our hearts are wintry, grieving or in pain,
Jesus' touch can call us back to life again;
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been,
Love is come again like wheat arising green.

Sending: *How Can We Not Try to Save It?*

Only this world—
not some unknown chance
of life somewhere else,
only this here, this life,
this improbable chance
to be steward of meadow
and desert, mountain and cliff,
this chance to inhabit this
acre, this continent, this planet,
to know this frozen pond,
this slender stream, this dried grass,
this herd of mule deer, this darkness
this light that arrives
on darkness's edge.
Only this chance to sing
of this world, this disappearing
world, this world of emergence,
this world with its stars
and its bones, its prickles
and petals, its sweetness
and ache, this world
with its hopelessness
and, oh dare I say it,
its hope.

Postlude: *Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown (American Traditional Melody)* by Charlie Wesley



the Wailin Jennys

Victoria Safford

Rosemerry Wahtola Trommer

SOLSTICE

Community Mennonite Church of Lancaster

PART I:

The Darkness

12.20.2024

You, darkness, embrace everything:
shapes and shadows, creatures and me,
people, nations, just as they are.
You let me imagine
a great presence stirring beside me.
I believe in the night.

Ranier Maria Rilke

Prelude - Keeping Vigil

by Dean Clemmer

Welcome - Opening Meditation

Learning to Honor Our Rhythms and Cycles

adap. Sarah Blondin

Song: *Within Our Darkest Night*

Reading: *Winter's Cloak*

Joyce Rupp

Song: *Solstice Carole*

Kim Baryluk

Reading: *A Blessing for Traveling in the Dark*

Jan Richardson

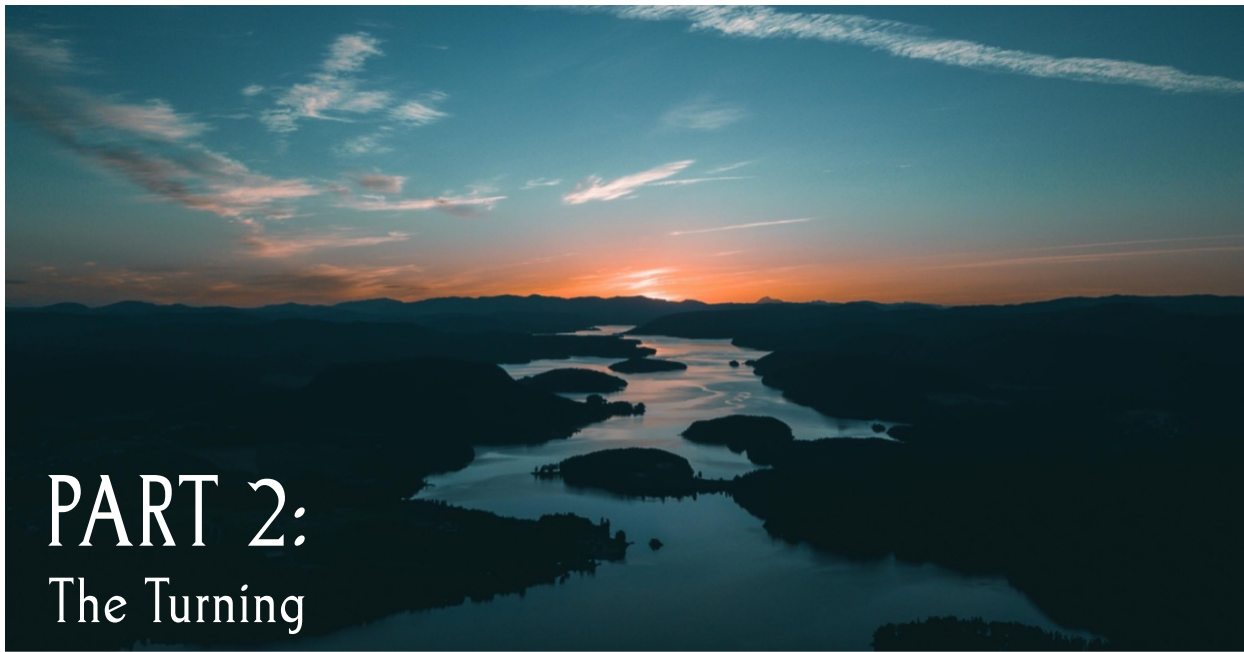
Song: *Between Darkness and Light*

Reading: *For Light*

John O'Donohue

Musical Interlude: *Darkness Beckons*

by Dean Clemmer



PART 2: The Turning

This is the solstice, the still point of the sun, its cusp and midnight, the year's threshold and unlocking, where the past lets go of and becomes the future....

Margaret Atwood

Reading: *In Between*

Kate R Walker

Dance: *Ascension*

by Jhene Aiko, Brandy,
Choreographed by Madeline Garber

Reading: *Winter Solstice*

Rebecca Ann Parker

Candle Lighting with Instrumental Music

Song: *Joyful is the Dark*

Story: *The Shortest Day*

by Ed Kane

Reading: *Come We Now Out of the Darkness*

Annie Foerster

Interlude: *Darkness is Not Dark to You, God*

Sarah Kathleen Johnson/
Leonard Enns



PART 3: The Light

Glory sings here.
Heaven echoes the call:
Repeat the sounding joy.
Make your life an answer:
Bow.
Praise.
Rise.

Rebecca Ann Parker

Reading: *The Shortest Day*

Susan Cooper

Responsive Reading: *Making Room for All That Is*

Lyn Cox

Spirit of Life, ancestor of the stars and the sun, you who embrace the vastness of space and us along with it, be with us today.

Hold us in our worry, our exhaustion, our grief. Keep us close as we sit with our truth, whatever that may be.

Lead us to rest in the quiet, to find solace and renewal in this time of shifting light and dark.

You whose arms open with the spinning galaxies, help us to make room, as you do, for all that is.

Open our hearts to our loved ones, our neighbors, the beings with whom we share this planet.

Lead us to reach out to others in compassion.

Turn us toward one another in mercy, right relationship, and reconciliation.

You who have seen the rising and setting of suns, of seasons, of civilizations, remind us of all that we have learned from the history of the world and from our own histories.

Give us the courage to face our mistakes, and to repair them whenever possible.

Help us understand our interdependence, our gravitational relatedness with all of the other spinning lives around us, and lead us to treat those relationships with care.

In this space, filled with the people among us who shine like stars, this space filled with the sparkle of love and care, we give thanks for this moment to be together.

May our senses be open to the beauty of this day, this season, this world.