

The round bud of the heart
opens, itself a circle,
the radius expanding.

When I begin to say
that I am you and you are I
then the pain that you wear
must wound me too.

This is the work,
to widen that horizon that lies within
to hold the world, if we must.

This is the burden
we choose
to carry:

To be watchers,
weight-bearers,
to inwardly transmute
these stones we are given to bear
into gems of great value.

To keep soft,
to let the ego
slip down
into a weightless place.

Speak your story.
Let it fall like a stone
into the quiet pool of my heart.

The circles expand out and outward,
not matter but pure energy,
more doors opening.

I see you. I feel you. I know you. I recognize myself in you.
These are the doors we step into.
These are the circles we enter.

Namaste

Sing — “Within Our Darkest Night”

Go ... in the peace of the dark, the hope of the light, your path lit by love.

VT 632

Community
Mennonite
Church of
Lancaster



SOLSTICE

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Day of Longest Darkness

at 7:00, we will make the sanctuary dark

“To Know the Dark”

Wendell Berry

To go in the dark with a light is to know the light.
To know the dark, go dark. Go without sight,
and find that the dark, too, blooms and sings,
and is traveled by dark feet and dark wings.

“Winter: Largo”

Antonin Vivaldi

Welcome, excerpt from “The Sound of Silence”

Paul Simon

“Hello, darkness, my old friend ...”

excerpt from *Winter*

Mark Gopnik

“The romance of winter is possible only when we have a
warm, secure indoors to retreat to, and winter becomes a
season to look at as much as one to live through.”

Sing — “Within Our Darkest Night”

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The Titling Planet Turns

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

The Shortest Day

Susan Cooper

The Days Lengthen & The Light Grows

Jul, jul, strålende jul"

performed by Gunnar Eriksson & Rilke Ensemble

Yule, Yule, radiant Yule,
Gleam over white forests.

The crowns of heaven aglow with light,
Shimmering arches in all of God's houses.
Hymns that are sung through of all our times,
Ceaseless the longing for brightness and peace!

Yule, Yule, radiant Yule,
Gleam over white forests.

Come, come, blessed Yule!
Lower your white wings.
Over the battles' blood and noise,
Over the sorrowful sighs of human hearts.
Over the kin who have gone to their rest (over the families that passed away),
Over the young ones' budding nests.
Come, come, blessed Jule!
Lower your white wings.

"The Light Is Reborn"

In the greatest darkness
Out of winter's cold
From our deepest fears
When we most despair
When all seems lost
When the earth lies waste
When animals hide
When the leaves are gone
When the river is frozen
When the ground is hard
Shadows are fleeing
Light is returning
Warmth will come again
Summer will be here once more
Plants will grow again
Animals will be seen once more
Green will come again ... Life will continue ... **The light is reborn**

performed by Gunnar Eriksson & Rilke Ensemble
English translation

Sing — "Within Our Darkest Night"

"Song for a Change of Heart"

*"If these words can do anything
I say bless this house
with stars.*

Transfix us with love." --Joy Harjo, "The Creation Story"

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Beth Weaver-Kreider

Jeremiah Wolfe

... The light is reborn

And the Third Circle is the Heart

Beth Weaver-Kreider

*"The eye is the first circle, the horizon which it forms is the second: and throughout nature
this primary figure is repeated without end." Ralph Waldo Emerson*

The heart, too, is a circle,
the horizon expanding to infinity
or contracting into a small hole.

The work, you say, is to keep opening,
casting that radius wider
at every turn of the wheel,
to hold everything within its protective arc,
the bright flowers and the white-hot stones.

photo: lights at Lancaster General Hospital

