

⁵ For all the boots of the tramping warriors and all the garments rolled in blood shall be burned as fuel for the fire.

⁶ For a child has been born for us, a son given to us; authority rests upon his shoulders, and he is named Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace.

⁷ Great will be his authority, and there shall be endless peace for the throne of David and his kingdom. He will establish and uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time onward and forevermore. The zeal of the Lord of hosts will do this.

Hymn #292: Love Has Come

Blessing

P: May God bless you with comfort, hope, and enduring joy this season. And may the peace of Christ, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

C: Amen.

Dismissal and Peace

P: Go in peace. Christ the Savior is with you. Merry Christmas.

C: Thanks be to God.

*All are invited to share signs of peace with one another.
Please stick around for snacks in the lobby.*



Christmas Eve at Spirit of Hope: December 24, 2025

5:00pm – In person and online

7:00pm – In person service



Spirit of Hope Lutheran Church

5801 NW 1st St. Lincoln, NE 68521

spiritofhopelincn.org

December 21, 2025 * 5pm

Longest Night

This is meant to be a quiet, meditative service. There will be spaces of silence for contemplation all throughout, especially following readings and songs. Let yourself rest and sink into the peace of God's presence; let your heart be open to hear God's words of comfort and love for you.

Gathering

The season of Advent is a season of hope... On this darkest day of the year, we come before God with our honest yearnings, seeking the return of light and hope.

Hymn #715: Christ Be Our Light (all hymns are in red hymnal)

Greeting and Prayer

P: From the one who was, who is, and who is to come: Grace and peace be with you all.

C: And also with you.

P: Let us pray. Holy God, our light and our hope, the night is long and our hearts are weary. We trust in your presence; help us to find you as we reach for you in the darkness. We cry out for your dawn to illumine our lives, to lift the shadows of our sin and struggle and sorrow – those long shadows cast by sickness, division, loss, loneliness, and death. May the light of your love shine on this community, our nation, our world, and your whole

creation. Hear our prayers, O God, and heal our hearts, through the one for whom we wait, Jesus Christ.

C: Amen.

Reading: Psalm 61:1-4

¹ Hear my cry, O God; listen to my prayer.

² From the end of the earth I call to you, when my heart is faint.

Lead me to the rock that is higher than I,

³ for you are my refuge, a strong tower against the enemy.

⁴ Let me abide in your tent forever, find refuge under the shelter of your wings.

Reading: Psalm 27:7-14

⁷ Hear, O Lord, when I cry aloud; be gracious to me and answer me!

⁸ “Come,” my heart says, “seek his face!” Your face, Lord, do I seek.

⁹ Do not hide your face from me. Do not turn your servant away in anger, you who have been my help. Do not cast me off; do not forsake me, O God of my salvation!

¹⁰ If my father and mother forsake me, the Lord will take me up.

¹¹ Teach me your way, O Lord, and lead me on a level path because of my enemies.

¹² Do not give me up to the will of my adversaries, for false witnesses have risen against me, and they are breathing out violence.

¹³ I believe that I shall see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living.

¹⁴ Wait for the Lord; be strong, and let your heart take courage; wait for the Lord!

Hymn #243: Lost in the Night

Reading: “Wild Geese” – a poem by Mary Oliver

Reading: Matthew 11:28-30

²⁸ “Come to me, all you who are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. ²⁹ Take my yoke upon you, and learn from me, for I am gentle and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. ³⁰ For my yoke is easy, and my burden is light.”

Hymn #780: Shepherd Me, O God

Confession / Grief offering

Whatever you come here tonight carrying on your heart, you are invited to offer it up to God at this time. As you are ready, come forward and light one of the votive candles provided. Feel God lifting the weight of your burdens from your spirit. Open your heart to let the light of Christ shine – a light that the darkness will never overcome.

***Following the service, please take a candle home with you; you are encouraged to light it and set it in a (safe) place where it can burn all night – in remembrance of loved ones who are now with God, and as a reminder that Christ’s light shines even through the longest, darkest night. ***

Reading: Isaiah 9:2-7

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who lived in a land of deep darkness — on them light has shined.

³ You have multiplied exultation; you have increased its joy; they rejoice before you as with joy at the harvest, as people exult when dividing plunder.

⁴ For the yoke of their burden and the bar across their shoulders, the rod of their oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian.