

Waiting: A Longest Night Service Reading

Amanda Udis-Kessler, © 2019

We can't help ourselves,
Our impatience, the aching that refuses to let go.
Of course, we know the light is coming back –
But when?
When will our sadness dissipate?
When will the weight of loss,
Of disappointment, finally fall away?
Some wait with hope this season,
With anticipation
For they can see the slightest trace of light
And in that slightest trace they find the strength
To wait until their waiting can resolve.
But we for whom the light has yet to show
Even the slightest trace, we have to be content
With simply waiting, with complicated waiting,
With waiting that drags on.
For now, we sit in silence, knowing somehow
That the smallest seed of joy is waiting too,
In silence, nurtured by the darkness.
Our task until we see that trace of light
Is only this: to wait and mourn and honor
All that brought us here today, and to refuse
Too-easy answers, and to refuse
The facile claims of gladness
That wreak havoc on our own integrity.
For now, our waiting has no end.
For now, the light shows not the slightest trace.
For now, we do the best we can to simply stay awake
For later may surprise us in the end.