



Hollywood

Knowing Jesus and Making Jesus Known

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Blue
Christmas
Service

December 16, 2025

Welcome to Blue Christmas

PRELUDE

Mary Jane Seanor
"Good King Wenceslas"

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

* CALL TO WORSHIP

Cloth for the Cradle, Iona Community

Reader: When the world was dark and the city was quiet, you came. You crept in beside us. And no one knew. Only the few who dared to believe that God might do something different. Will you do the same this Christmas, Lord? Will you come into the darkness of tonight's world; not the friendly darkness as when sleep rescues us from tiredness, but the fearful darkness, in which people have stopped believing that war will end or that food will come or that a government will change or that the Church cares? Will you come into that darkness and do something different to save your people from death and despair? Will you come into the quietness of this town, not the friendly quietness as when lovers hold hands, but the fearful silence when the phone has not rung the letter has not come, the friendly voice no longer speaks, the doctor's face says it all? Will you come into that darkness, and do something different, not to distract, but to embrace your people? And will you come into the dark corners and the quiet places of our lives? We ask this not because we are guilt-ridden or want to be, but because the fullness our lives long for depends upon us being as open and vulnerable to you as you were to us, when you came, wearing no more than diapers, and trusting human hands to hold their maker. Will you come into our lives, if we open them to you and do something different? When the world was dark and the city was quiet you came. You crept in beside us. Do the same this Christmas, Lord. Do the same this Christmas. Amen.

* OPENING HYMN

UMH #211
"O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" v1-2



The **LIGHT**
SHINES
in the darkness,
and
the darkness
has not
overcome it.

NEW TESTAMENT READING

John 1:1-5

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things were made by God, and without God nothing came to be. What came to be through God was life, and this life was the light of the world. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

INVOCATION

Leader: Light looked down and saw darkness.

People: "I will go there," said Light.

Leader: Peace looked down and saw war.

People: "I will go there," said Peace.

Leader: Love looked down and saw hatred.

People: "I will go there," said Love.

Leader: So the Lord of Light, the Prince of Peace, and the King of Love came down and crept in beside us.

PRAYER OF HEALING

People: "I Loving and gracious God, in the quiet of the evening, we come to you, trusting that you hear our prayer. We gather in this place with friends and strangers, seeking your peace and comfort. We come with feelings of deep hurt, sadness, anger, and hope. We know that your love is deep enough and profound enough to accept our feelings, our fears, and our longings that go beyond words. Just as candlelight breaks through the darkness of a room, let your light, dear Christ, break through the darkness of our souls. Give us the courage to open our eyes and hearts to your healing love. We pray in the name of Jesus, our Christ. Amen."

* LITANY OF REMEMBERING AND LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

Leader: We light four candles tonight to remember our loved ones as well as the meaning each Advent Candle represents. This first candle we light is for those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, and their voices. As we give thanks for the memory that binds them to us, we are also reminded the HOPE the Christ Child brings in this season.

People: May God's eternal love surround us and reassure us of His promise of Hope.

* **CAROL** "Silent Night" adapted UMH #239
*Silent Night, holy night, All is calm, all is bright
Round yon virgin, mother and child.
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
Sleep in heavenly peace. Sleep in heavenly peace.*

Leader: This second candle we light is to redeem the pain of our loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of trust, the loss of jobs, the loss of health. We pause to gather up the pain of the past and offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands, you will place the gift of PEACE.

People: Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future. Draw us closer to the Christ Child, from whom we receive the embrace of your Peace.

* **CAROL** "Silent Night" adapted UMH #239
*Silent Night, holy night, griefs abound, ever in sight,
Christ now comes in manger bare,
Holds our loved ones in his holy care.
Joy, at last, to be ours. Joy, at last, to be ours.*

Leader: This third candle we light is to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember these past weeks and months; the disbelief, the anger, the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts and the pain of reflecting on our own mortality. God, we lay before you all that, . . . along with all the ways that we feel we have fallen short . . . and the all of time we have spent blaming ourselves and you for our suffering. We also remember, God, you turn our wailing into singing. You removes our sackcloth and clothe us with JOY.
(Psalm 30:11)

People: Let us remember that dawn defeats the darkness and Joy is rooted deeply in our hearts through our faith in Christ.

* **CAROL** "Silent Night" adapted UMH #239
*Silent Night, holy night, Shepherd quake at the sight,
Glories stream from heaven afar,
Heavenly hosts sing alleluia,
Christ, the Savior, is born! Christ, the Savior, is born!*

Leader: This fourth candle we light is to remember our faith and the gift of LOVE, which God offers us in the Christmas story. We remember that God becomes vulnerable to walk with us and gives His own life for us. Such great love is immeasurable.

People: Let us remember our Savior Jesus Christ, the Prince of Peace, who bears the light and shows us the way, unveiling the truths of Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. Amen!

(The Christ candle will remain unlit as a sign of waiting for a future that is yet unknown to us, from which God beckons us)

A READING FROM PSALMS 6 & 34

Leader: Have pity on me, Lord, for I am weak; heal me, Lord, for my bones are racked. My spirit shakes with terror; how long, O Lord, how long?

People: I grow weary because of my groaning; every night I drench my bed with tears. My eyes are wasted with grief.

Leader: I sought the Lord, and he answered me and delivered me out of all my terror. Look upon him and be radiant, and let not your faces be ashamed.

People: I called in my affliction and the Lord heard me and saved me from all my troubles. The angel of the Lord encompasses those who fear him, and he will deliver them.

Leader: Taste and see that the Lord is good; happy are they who trust in him! The eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry.

People: The righteous cry, and the Lord hears them and delivers them from all their troubles. The Lord is near to the broken-hearted and will save those whose spirits are crushed.

Leader: Many are the troubles of the righteous, but the Lord will deliver him out of them all.

A READING FROM ISAIAH 43

Leader: This is God's Promise to the Israelites in the threatening shadows of Babylon's power - and to all in duress today: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name, you are mine. When you pass through the waters, I will be with you; and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. Because you are precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you, I give people in return for you, nations in exchange for your life. Do not fear, for I am with you. Thus says the Lord, who makes a way in the sea, a path in the mighty waters. Do not remember the former things, or consider the things of old. I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert. For I give water in the wilderness, rivers in the desert, to give drink to my chosen people, the people whom I formed for myself so that they might declare my praise.

A READING FROM LUKE 2

Leader: This is God's Promise embodied for us.
This is how we can see God's way in the manger: The angel said to them, "Do not be afraid; for see—I am bringing you good news of great joy for all the people: to you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is the Messiah, the Lord. This will be a sign for you: you will find a child wrapped in bands of cloth and lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host, praising God and saying, "Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace among those whom he favors!"

SPECIAL MUSIC

Connie Ely

"In the Bleak Midwinter"

A READING FROM MATTHEW 11

Leader: This is how God's promise is lived out with Jesus, then and now:
"Come to me, all you that are weary and are carrying heavy burdens, and I will give you rest. 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."



A READING FROM REVELATION 21

Leader: God's ultimate promise, yet to come:
"Then I saw a new heaven and a new earth; for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more. And I saw the holy city, the new Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "See, the home of God is among mortals. He will dwell with them; they will be his peoples, and God himself will be with them; he will wipe every tear from their eyes. Death will be no more; mourning and crying and pain will be no more, for the first things have passed away."

And the one who was seated on the throne said, "See, I am making all things new." Also he said, "Write this, for these words are trustworthy and true." Then he said to me, "It is done! I am the Alpha and the Omega, the beginning and the end. To the thirsty I will give water as a gift from the spring of the water of life. Those who conquer will inherit these things, and I will be their God and they will be my children."

PRAYER

Leader: Lord God, your vision seems a long way in the future. Bring your promise closer to us, we pray. Amen.

* CAROL

UMH #230

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

*O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie;
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.*

*For Christ is born of Mary, and gathered all above,
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love
O morning stars together, proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King, and peace to men on earth.*

*How silently, how silently, the wondrous Gift is given;
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming, but in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive him still, the dear Christ enters in.*

*O holy Child of Bethlehem, descend to us we pray
Cast out our sin, and enter in, be born in us this day
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell
O come to us, abide with us, our Lord Emmanuel.*

PRAYER

People: Gentle God of love, help us reach out together for the light of faith, for renewal and recovery and a new day coming. Grant that hope may come to rest in our hearts, and let it go forth with us into the darkness, this night and in the nights to come, until we see the dawn.

Leader: Lighten our darkness, we beseech you, O God; give us light in the night season; Lord have mercy on us. Amen.

COMMUNION

“Away in a Manger”

*Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,
the little lord Jesus laid down his sweet head*

*The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,
the little lord Jesus asleep in the hay.*

*The cattle are lowing, the baby awakes,
but little Lord Jesus no crying he makes.*

*I love thee, lord Jesus, look down from the sky
And stay by my cradle till morning is nigh.*

*Be near me lord Jesus, I ask thee to stay
Close by me forever and love me, I pray.*

*Bless all the dear children in thy tender care
And take me to heaven to live with thee there.*

PRAYER

Leader: Let us pray together . . .

People: Almighty God, we thank you for your constant love and for the blessings of this day. We know that even when we cannot see or feel you, still you are there. Help us to remember you and to listen for your voice in the words of family, friends, and strangers. Kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know you as you reveal yourself in the world and in our lives.

Leader: Let the light of your holy Spirit shine like these candles in the darkness, lighting the way for all who feel despairing, lost, or forgotten, and grant that it may come to dwell so deeply in our hearts that when we leave this place it may shine on, for us and for those we meet along the way. Amen.

* **BENEDICTION**

Leader: The Light of Christ is within you! Choose to live in the Light. Choose to allow this light to fill the space within you and around you. Allow the shadows to move to the edges. Feel the hope, peace, joy and love that are yours this day and always. In the name of the Christ Child. Amen.

POSTLUDE

Mary Jane Seanor

“Silent Night”

* We stand in body or in spirit to give glory to God.

UMH = United Methodist Hymnal

TFWS = The Faith We Sing

Glory
to
God
in the
highest
heaven,
and on earth
peace
among
those
whom
he favors!

JOIN US FOR OUR **C**HRISTMAS EVE SERVICES



4:00 PM

Family Service

7:00 PM

Candlelight Service

11:00 PM

Vigil

All are welcome to **all** services!

Invite your friends & family!

**With the Lord
on my side
I do not fear.**

Psalm 118:6 NRSV

We hope you have a

Merry

Christmas

DECEMBER

LUKE THRU

Read one chapter of **LUKE**
each day of December thru
Christmas Eve.

Tune in each day and listen
as Pastor Matthew reads and
discusses that day's chapter.

Epiphany/Star Words SERVICE



Our service on
Sunday, January 4,
will feature star words
for you to focus on
in 2026.

Ways to Support HUMC

✝ Mail a check to us at the address above!

✝ [Click here to give online or scan the QR Code.](#)

We incur a smaller fee when you give directly from your bank account versus a credit card.



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