



Nolensville First United Methodist Church

Our mission is to be a neighborhood church, where people experience a life-changing relationship with Jesus, in a welcoming church family.

BLUE CHRISTMAS

a service of healing and hope

DECEMBER 18, 2025

Blue Christmas: A Service of Remembrance, Healing and Hope

Tonight is a service of scripture, stories, special music, silent reflection, and healing prayer for those not so merry and hurting this time of year.

It is a time to recognize that Christmas can be a bittersweet time of the year. The constant refrain we hear about getting together with family reminds many people of what and who they have lost, or what they never had. The anguish of broken relationships, the insecurity of unemployment, the weariness of ill health, the loss of a loved one, the pain of isolation – all these can make us feel very much alone in the midst of the festive season.

All of this is compounded by the deepening darkness of the year which is the darkest and longest on December 21 and which is why sometimes this service is called the Service of the Longest Night. We need space and time to acknowledge our sadness and fears. We need to know that we are not alone. We need to know God's presence during this season. We need HOPE. And that HOPE has been revealed.

So on the longest night of the year, we invite you to experience a meditative worship service that takes time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and preparing our hearts for the coming of Christ.

Join us to hear scripture, offer prayers for healing and wholeness, and hear songs that acknowledge that God's presence is for those who mourn, for those who grieve, and for those who struggle. God's Word comes to shine light in our darkness.

Blessings in Christ,

Pastor Jeremy

Order of Service

Litany of Light

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was 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.

ALL: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Welcome

Call to Worship

Jesus said, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." And so we invite each other to this time of peaceful worship. Flee for a while from your tasks; hide yourself for a little space from the turmoil of your thoughts. Come, cast aside your burdensome cares and put aside your laborious pursuits. Give your time to God, and rest in God for a little while.

X Opening Hymn

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UMH 230

First Scripture Reading

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

Litany of Remembrance

The first candle is lighted

We light this first candle to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember clearly, their faces, their voices, their bodies. We embrace and give thanks for the memories that bind them to us in this season of expectation, when all Creation waits for the Light.

We remember them with love. May God's eternal love surround them.

*O come, O come, Emmanuel, and ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here, until the Son of God appear
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

A PERIOD OF SILENT REFLECTION

The second candle is lighted.

We light this second candle to remember the pain of loss: loss of relationships, loss of trust, loss of jobs, loss of health, loss of faith, the loss of joy. We acknowledge and embrace the pain of the past, O God, and we offer it to You, asking that into our wounded hearts and open hands You will place the gift of peace, shalom.

We remember that through You all things are possible.

Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your future.

*O come Thou Wisdom from on high, who orderest all things mightily
To us the path of knowledge show, and teach us in her ways to go
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

A PERIOD OF SILENT REFLECTION

The third candle is lighted.

We light this third candle to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember the past weeks, months, and for some of us years, that have been heavy with our burdens. We accept and lay before you, God, the sharpness of memory, the sadness and grief, the hurt and fear, the anger and pain. We accept and lay before you the ways we feel we have fallen short, and the times we have spent blaming ourselves, and you, for all that we have suffered. We accept and lay before You the time we have walked alone, in darkness; and in knowledge of our own mortality.

We remember that though we have journeyed far, and that, while lost, we may have turned away from the light, the light itself has not failed. We remember that though winter be upon us and though the night be dark, with the turning of the Wheel the dawn will come, and dawn defeats the darkness.

*O come Thou day-spring, come and cheer our spirits by Thy advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night, and death's dark shadows put to flight.
Rejoice, rejoice Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

A PERIOD OF SILENT REFLECTION

The fourth candle is lighted.

We light this fourth candle to remember faith, the gift of light and hope that God offers to us in the stories of Hanukkah and of Christmas, which both also began in abandonment, insecurity, and humbleness, in a time of war and in a poor stable. We remember that the loving God who kept the light shining in the temple and who came to share this life with us promises us comfort and peace.

We remember the One who shares our burdens, who shows us the way to the Light, and who journeys with us into all our tomorrows.

*O come desire of nations, bind in one the hearts of all mankind
Bid then our sad, divisions cease, and be Thyself our King of Peace
Rejoice, rejoice, Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.*

A PERIOD OF SILENT REFLECTION

O Lord, You have searched me and known me!

You know when I sit down and when I rise up; You discern my thoughts from afar.

You search out my path and my lying down and are acquainted with all my ways,

Even before a word is on my tongue, O Lord, You know it altogether.

You pursue me behind and before, and lay Your hand upon me

Such knowledge is too wonderful for me; it is high, I cannot attain it.

For it was You who formed my inward parts,

You knit me together in my mother's womb.

I praise You, for You are fearful and wonderful.

Wonderful are Your works!

Responsive Reading

Psalm 139:1-6, 13-14

UMH 854

Gospel Reading

John 3:16

Pew Bible NT p. 88

Hymn

What Child is This?

UMH 219

The Message

Pastor Jeremy Squires

Response to the Word: Anointing with Oil

Prayer

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. AMEN

Hymn

Silent Night

UMH 239

The Lighting of Candles: An Act of Remembrance

Responsive Reading

Psalm 121

UMH 844

I lift up my eyes to the hills
From whence does my help come?

**My help comes from the Lord,
who made heaven and earth.**

The Lord will not let your foot be moved,
the Lord who keeps you will not slumber.

**Behold, the One who keeps Israel
will neither slumber or sleep.**

The Lord is your keeper;
**the Lord is your shade
on your right hand.**

The sun shall not smite you by day,
nor the moon by night

The Lord will keep you from all evil,
and will keep your life.

**The Lord will keep your going out and your coming in from this time forth and
forevermore.**

Prayer

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. 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

Prayer

Another day will come, O God.
I know what it may bring forth, but make me ready, God,
for whatever it may be.
If I am to stand up, help me to stand bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.
And if I am to do nothing, help me do it gallantly.
Make these words more than words,
and give me the Spirit of Thy Peace. AMEN.

Benediction**Depart in Peace**

1 Comfort, comfort my people! says your God.

28 Don't you know? Haven't you heard? The LORD is the everlasting God, the creator of the ends of the earth. He doesn't grow tired or weary.

His understanding is beyond human reach, 29 giving power to the tired and reviving the exhausted.

30 Youths will become tired and weary, young men will certainly stumble; 31 but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength; they will fly up on wings like eagles; they will run and not be tired; they will walk and not be weary.

Isaiah 40:1 + 28-31

Nolensville First United Methodist Church
7316 Nolensville Road | Nolensville, Tennessee 37135
www.NolensvilleUMC.org
Office: 615-776-2815 | Jacob's Ladder: 615-776-7362

Our Staff



Pastor Jeremy Squires
Lead Pastor
pastorjeremy@nolensvilleumc.org
cell: (615) 283-0135



Pastor Shelby Bowles
Pastor of Children, Families, &
Community
pastorshelby@nolensvilleumc.org
cell: (615) 267-3515



David Toledo
Director of Music
music@nolensvilleumc.org



Tonia Bush
Jacob's Ladder Dir. | Youth Dir.
youth@nolensvilleumc.org
cell: (615) 295-8687



Sharon Bowater
Finance Administrator
finance@nolensvilleumc.org
cell: (615) 283-0258



Haley White
Office Administrator
numc@nolensvilleumc.org
cell: (615) 475-8108



Sandi Zimmermann
Accompanist



Isabella Willis
Nursery Assistant
nursery@nolensvilleumc.org

CHRISTMAS *eve*

AT NOLENSVILLE FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5:00 PM

Family Friendly

Childcare for 3+ under available

7:30 PM

Contemporary Carols,
Candlelight, & Communion

Childcare for 3+ under available

11:00 PM

Classic Carols,
Candlelight, & Communion

No childcare available