

# ~ Welcome ~

## Blue Christmas: A Service of Reflection for the Longest Night December 22, 2019, 3:00 PM

**Prelude** "Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silent"  
*Cindy Berry*

**Call to Worship**  
*Pastor: 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.*

**People: The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.**

**Welcome** *Pastor Jane Piehl*

**\*Hymn** "In The Bleak Mid Winter" UMH #221

**The First Reading** Ecclesiastes 3:1-11

**Psalm 22**  
*Pastor: My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words of my groaning?*

**All: O my God, I cry by day but you do not answer, and by night, but I find no rest.**

*Pastor: In you, our ancestors trusted. They trusted and you delivered them.*

**All: It was you who brought me from the womb, you who kept me safe on my mother's breast. Since my mother bore me, you have been my God.**

*Pastor: Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no one to help.*

**All: God does not despise the affliction of the afflicted. God does not hide from me.**

**When I cry to God, God hears me. Thanks be to God.**

**Psalm 23 (all read together)** *Pew Bible Page 510*

**Memory Strips of Cloth**  
*You are invited to write on each strip of cloth you received. Your concerns for others or your own concerns*

**Music Interlude** "The Ashokan Farewell"  
*by: Jay Ungar*  
Duet by: Teresa Whetstone, violin and Millie Frambaugh, piano

**The Second Reading** Isaiah 40, selected verses

### Litany of Remembrance

*The first candle is lit*

*Pastor: 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.*

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

**Hymn** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 1) UMH #211

*The second candle is lit.*

*Pastor: 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.*

**People: We remember that through You all things are possible. Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us into Your future.**

**Hymn** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 2) UMH #211

*The third candle is lit*

*Pastor: 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.*

**People: 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.**

**Hymn** "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" (vs. 6) UMH #211

*The fourth candle is lit*

*Pastor: 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*



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Pastor Jane Piehl  
Millie Frambaugh  
Bill Baldwin, Ann Passmore

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Pastor  
Music Director  
Greeters

*Please join us for refreshments in the Gathering Place immediately following the service. You are welcome to take home a Blue Christmas candle and use it to remember a loved one or a loss that has impacted your life this year.*

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 7pm.

Join us for worship on Sunday Mornings at 10:30am

### Welcome to Sharon Center United Methodist Church!

If you are visiting with us for the first time, we are glad you are here! Please make sure to sign the attendance pad as it is passed during the service and let us know your contact information. We welcome all to our Worship Service and our Communion Table is open to everyone. Please join us in our activities and gatherings and if you have a question, just ask, and come back again soon! At Sharon Center UMC we are committed to building relationships with Jesus Christ. For families of all ages, this is a great community to join as you grow in your relationship with God and with others.

[www.sharoncenterumc.org](http://www.sharoncenterumc.org)

### SHARON CENTER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Worship Service: 10:30am

Church Office: (330) 239-1616

SharonCenterUMCSecretary@gmail.com

Church hours: Mon, Weds 11a-1p, Fri 11a-3p

December 22, 2019

Pastor Jane Piehl

JanePiehl@gmail.com

