

~ Welcome ~

Blue Christmas: A Service of Reflection
Sharon Center United Methodist Church
December 3, 2023, 3:00 PM

Prelude “Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence”
Arr. By: Cindy Berry

Welcome

Opening Prayer

Merciful God, in this season of rejoicing, we come to you weary and grieving in this season of feasting, we hunger for healing and relief. In this season of light, our hearts are veiled in sorrow and shadow. Will this season ever end? “Yes.” We hear your, “Yes.” Those who are weary will find rest. Those who mourn will be comforted. Those who hunger will be filled. The Light shines in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it.

Lighting the Christ Candle

Song “A Different Kind of Christmas” Solo by: Millie Frambaugh

Scripture Isaiah 11:1-5 p. 641 Pastor Jane Piehl

Message “Coping with Loss Through the Holidays” John Weiss

Liturgy of Remembrance

First Candle is lit

Pastor:

People: *Incline your ear, O Lord, and answer me, for I am poor and needy. ~Psalm 86:1*

Second Candle is lit

Pastor:

People: *My God, my God, why have you forsaken me? Why are you so far from helping me, from the words of my groaning? O my God, I cry by day, but you do not answer; and by night, but find no rest. ~ Psalm 22:1-2*

Third Candle is lit

Pastor:

People: *The Lord is my strength and my shield; in him my heart trusts; so I am helped, and my heart exults, and with my song I give thanks to him. ~ Psalm 28:7*

Fourth Candle is lit

Pastor:

People: *By awesome deeds you answer us with deliverance, O God of our salvation; you are the hope of all the ends of the earth and of the farthest seas. ~Psalm 65:5*

Song “In the Bleak Midwinter” UMH No. 221

Prayers of the People

Instructions for Prayer Time

- You are encouraged to write your burdens and sorrows on the blue strips of paper and then place them in the basket with the candles
- Light a tea candle in memory of someone you are thinking of today
- Persons are available to pray with you as you stand or kneel
- Please take an evergreen clipping with you as you return to your seat as a reminder of God’s steadfast love and faithfulness

Lord’s Prayer

Our Father who art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name,
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread, And forgive us our trespasses,
as we forgive those who trespass against us.
Lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.
For Thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever. Amen

Song “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel” Vs. 1, 5, 6 and 7 UMH No. 211

Affirmation of Faith for Christmas

Adapted from the poem First Coming by Madeleine L’Engle.

Pastor: *Christians, what do you believe?*

People: **God did not wait till the world was ready, till nations were at peace. God came when the Heavens were unsteady and prisoners cried out for release. God did not wait for the perfect time. God came when the need was deep and great. God dined with sinners in all their grime, turned water into wine. God did not wait till hearts were pure. In joy God came to a tarnished world of sin and doubt. To a world like ours, of anguished shame, God came and God’s Light would not go out. God came to a world which did not mesh; to heal its tangles, shield its scorn. In the mystery of the Word**

made Flesh, the Maker of the stars was born. We cannot wait till the world is sane to raise our songs with joyful voice, For to share our grief, to touch our pain, God came with Love: Rejoice! Rejoice!

Passing the Peace

Song "Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee" vs. 1, 3, 4 UMH No. 89

Blessing and Dismissal

Postlude "I Wonder As I Wander"
Arr. By: Cindy Berry

*Indicates Congregation to Stand

Pastor Jane Piehl	Pastor
Millie Frambaugh	Music Director
John Weiss	Message

Please join us in the Gathering Place on this floor behind the Sanctuary for a time of refreshments and fellowship following the service. All are welcome.

Candlelight Christmas Eve Service at 7pm.
Join us for worship on Sunday Mornings at 10:30am

Welcome to Sharon Center United Methodist Church

Caretenders Hospice provides compassionate care and support to individuals and caregivers who are living with terminal illness, no matter where they call home. Our hospice associates can provide on-call support, clinical and skilled care as well as spiritual and emotional counseling. We provide bereavement support for families including Blue Christmas Gatherings, Coping Through the Holidays and monthly bereavement support groups. Pastor Jane is a Chaplain/Bereavement Coordinator for Caretenders and can be reached at (440) 892-6212.

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 3, 2023

Pastor Jane Piehl

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