



December 21, 2021



**We exist to welcome ALL people by sharing the Love of Christ!**

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**PRELUDE**

Melody Draper

**WELCOME**

**CALL TO WORSHIP**

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.**

**\*HYMN**

*In the Bleak Midwinter (v 1, 3, 4)*

UMH 221

Leader:

*In the bleak midwinter, frosty wind made moan,  
earth stood hard as iron, water like a stone;  
snow had fallen, snow on snow, snow on snow,  
in the bleak midwinter, long ago.*

**All:**

***Angels and archangels may have gathered there,  
cherubim and seraphim thronged the air;  
but his mother only, in her maiden bliss,  
worshiped the beloved with a kiss.***

***What can I give him, poor as I am?  
If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb;  
if I were a Wise Man, I would do my part;  
yet what I can I give him: give my heart.***

**OLD TESTAMENT READING**

Psalm 126

Tim Smith

**MUSICAL SELECTION**

*Even When it Hurts*

Danny Tucker & the Praise Team

**PSALM 23**

Rev. Sean Stanfield

**PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER**

Tim Smith

**LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE**

**Light the First Candle**

Robin Stanfield

Leader: 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.

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

**HYMN**

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v 1 & refrain)*

***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.***

## MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

### (Light the Second Candle)

Jan Miller

Leader: 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.

**All: 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 (v 2 & refrain)*

**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.**

## MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

### (Light the Third Candle)

Robin Stanfield

Leader: 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.

**All: 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 (v 6 & refrain)*

**O come thou dayspring, 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.**

## MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

### (Light the Fourth Candle)

Jan Miller

Leader: 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.

