



December 21, 2023



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

2601 Cages Bend Road • Gallatin, TN 37066 • (615) 757-3262
churchum@gmail.com • www.welcometorehoboth.com

PRELUDE

Gayle Graening

WELCOME

Rev. Felicia Kumar

CALL TO WORSHIP

Bob Green

Leader: Today we come looking for the Christ Child!

All: We come, bringing our hurts, our worries, our fears.

Leader: We come seeking relief from pain. With the Psalmist of old we say,

All: "O Lord, you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Give heed to my cry, for I am brought very low." Amen!

***HYMN OF HOPE**

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

UMH 196

OLD TESTAMENT READING

Psalm 27:1-14

Tim Smith

MUSICAL SELECTION

Wonderful, Merciful Savior Danny Tucker & the Praise Team

PSALM 23

Bob Green

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Karen Shrode

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

(Light the First Candle)

Alicia Mason

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)

Jack and 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)

Raymond and Lisa Wesley

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)

Hans and Ginger Vooyo

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.

All: 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.

HYMN

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel (v 7 & refrain)

**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.**

MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

INTERCESSION FOR HEALING

Rev. Felicia Kumar

Leader: The God of strength moves with us!

All: The God of courage hears our distress.

Leader: The God of hope reveals wholeness to us!

All: The God of healing touches us when we are broken.

Leader: When the pain overwhelms us, when the burden is too heavy,

All: We turn to God, who is loving and patient.

Leader: For God created us, redeemed us, and sustains us,

All: And we are not alone. Lead us in your ways, O God, and bring us your healing touch. Amen!

MEMORY TREE and MUSICAL REFLECTION

Breath of Heaven

Robin Stanfield

At this time you are invited to write the name of your loved one or any other prayer concern on an ornament and hang the ornament on the Blue Tree. If you choose, you may also be anointed with oil. The anointing on the forehead is a very old gesture used to give strength on the journey of being healed and healing others.

SCRIPTURE READING

Isaiah 41:10; Matthew 11:28

Rev. Felicia Kumar

MOMENT OF REFLECTION - "Our God Cares!"

HOLY COMMUNION

Communion Servers: Rose and Jack Plause

Rev. Felicia Kumar

*HYMN OF HEALING & WHOLENESS *Away in a Manger*

UMH 217

DISMISSAL PRAYER

Rev. Felicia Kumar

Leader: O God, support us all the day long in this troubled life, until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed, and the fever of life is over, and our work is done. Then Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen.

All: **Watch now, dear Lord, with those who wake or watch or weep tonight, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend to the sick ones, O Lord Christ, rest the weary ones, bless the dying ones, soothe the suffering ones, pity the afflicted ones, shield the joyous ones, and all for your love's sake. Amen. And now may the God of hope fill us with all joy and peace in believing, that we may abound in hope in the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.**

BENEDICTION

Rev. Felicia Kumar

POSTLUDE

Gayle Graening