



Blue Christmas Service



*Welcome to Court Street United Methodist Church
Chapel*

December 24, 2014

4:00 p.m.

Blue Christmas Service

Centering Music

Call to Worship

Leader: In the midst of festivities, shouts, and bright lights, we feel the darkness of our souls.

***People:* Come, God of power and Light, help us.**

Leader: In the midst of gatherings, we feel alone and alienated.

***People:* Come, God of peace and Hope, hear our cries.**

Leader: In the midst of celebration, our hearts cry out.

***People:* Lord, hear us and come to us. Bring us peace. AMEN.**

Bringing in of the Light

Hymn

“Love Came Down at Christmas”

UMH #242

Opening Prayer

God of love and understanding, we gather here this evening to confront our pain in the midst of the world’s celebration. Help us to know that you are present with us in all of our moods and feelings and seasons. Grant us a taste of the hope, peace, joy and love that you promise to all of your people through the gift of your son Jesus. AMEN.

Scripture Readings

Leader: In this scripture Jesus shares the parable of the feast to which many are invited but choose not to come, and others who have felt alienated are invited to the feast. In God’s divine order, all are invited; no one is excluded. Luke 14:15-24

Leader: When burdens get piled on top of other burdens, the load can crush us. In his promise, Jesus offers us help to carry our burdens and responsibilities. We do not have to bear them alone, he will always help us. Matthew 11:28-29

Leader: Our world, with its hurts and hatred, is not the way God would have us live. God’s kingdom promises something so startlingly new that it takes our breath away. Those who weep now will not weep later. There will be no need of tears.

Revelation 21:1-7

Candlelighting

Leader: We light four candles tonight in remembrance of our loved ones. We light these candles for our own needs. We light one for our grief, one for our courage, one for our memories and one for our love.

Reader 1: This candle represents our Grief. We own the pain of losing loved ones, of dreams that go unfulfilled, of hopes that evaporate in despair.

Reader 2: This candle represents our courage. It symbolizes the courage to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to share our feelings honestly and openly with each other, and to dare to hope in the midst of pain.

Reader 3: This candle represents our memories. For the times we laughed together, cried together, were angry at each other or overjoyed with each other. We light this candle for the memories of caring and joy we shared together.

Reader 4: This candle represents our love. The love we have given, and the love we have received. The love that has gone unacknowledged and unfelt, and the love that has been shared in times of joy and sorrow.

Leader: You are invited to come forward to light one of the votive candles which represents your burdens, griefs, sorrows, all those things which make Christmas a "blue" time for you. You may speak the name or the event if you wish to do so as you light the candle. Then you may return to your seat.

Leader: In the center of this circle (or table) we light the Christ candle, remembering that Jesus Christ is always in the center of our lives. He hears our cries, he knows our hearts and, in the midst of all our thoughts and emotions, he offers us hope and healing.

Leader: Let us pray...

All: Comforting God, wrap us in your presence in this time of remembrance. With these candles, help us find your light, a light that will guide us day-by-day, step-by-step, as we try to live life fully and wholly. We cherish the special ways in which our loved ones have touched us. We thank you for the gift their lives have been to us. Now comfort us. Encourage us. Empower us. AMEN.

The SACRAMENT of HOLY COMMUNION
THE GREAT THANKSGIVING (Please stand)

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

COMMUNION: SHARING of the BREAD and the CUP

The communion bread served is gluten-free so that all may partake of the Holy Sacrament.

Hymn

“Silent Night, Holy Night”

UMH #239

Blessing

Leader: Go in peace, knowing that the God, whose love created this world, sent Jesus into the same world to be our friend, companion, and Savior. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never put it out.

***People:* Thanks be to God. AMEN.**

Hymn of Sending Forth

“In the Bleak Midwinter”

UMH #221



May you have a Blessed Christmas!

Court Street United Methodist Church

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