

The Prayers of the People

**Response: And in Your merciful love, answer.**

\*Hymn *In the Bleak Midwinter* Hymnal No. 221

\*Gospel Lesson Luke 2:1-7 Pew Bible NT Pg. 58

Response:

Pastor: The Word of God for the People of God.

**People: Thanks be to God!**

Homily "Light in the Darkness" Rev. Will Montgomery

Lighting Candles

\*Hymn *Love Came Down at Christmas* Hymnal No. 242

\*Benediction

Postlude *Cantilena* Biery  
Laura Hesse, organ



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The order of worship is adapted from "Blue Christmas" service used at The Cathedral Church of Saint Andrew, Honolulu, Hawaii.

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SERVICE OF

# Light



December 18, 2022

7:00 PM

Service of Light

CENTREVILLE  
United Methodist Church



## The Service of Worship

(Please silence electronic devices)

Welcome Rev. Will Montgomery

Prelude *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel* arr. Lau  
Laura Hesse, organ

\*Call to Worship Rev. Phil Mohr

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

\*Opening Carol *O Little Town of Bethlehem* Hymnal No. 230

Opening Prayer  
**Eternal God of power and grace, Who comes to us in surprising ways—in angel appearances, in defeat of enemies, and in resurrection from the dead—show us the face of Emmanuel in our time. Bring us from fear to awe, we pray; in the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.**

First Lesson Ecclesiastes 3:1-11 Pew Bible OT Pg. 616

Psalter Reading Psalm 22 (selected verses) and Psalm 23 Hymnal Pg. 752-754

Song *Fighting My Battles* Philpot  
Elizabeth Philpot, solo

Litany of Remembrance

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

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.  
(A period of silent reflection)

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, 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.

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

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.  
(A period of silent reflection)

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.

**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.**

O come thou day-spring, 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.  
(A period of silent reflection.)

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.

**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.**

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.  
(A period of silent reflection)

\* Please stand as you are able for this act of worship.