

Blue Christmas: A Service of Hope and Healing

Lake Highlands United Methodist Church Chapel

December 13, 2023

6:30pm

Prelude

Welcome and Greeting

Pastor Silvia Wang

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God the Father, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all.

And also with you.

The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; on those who live in a land of deep shadow, a light has shone. For the yoke that was weighing upon them, and the burden upon their shoulders, you have broken in pieces, O God, our Redeemer.

Let us pray:

Pastor Silvia Wang

God of mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season for ourselves and for our families who live with painful thoughts and memories. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of your Christ, who shares our life in joy and sorrow, death and new birth, despair and promise. Amen.

O Come O Come Emmanuel

UM Hymnal #211 (Verses 1,2,4)

The Lighting of the Advent Candles

GriefShare Leaders

Reader 1:

The first candle we light is to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their face, their voice, the memory that binds them to us in this season.

May God's eternal love surround them.

Reader 2:

The second candle we light is to redeem the pain of loss, the loss of someone who was very important to us, part of our lives, part of our own selves. We pause to gather up the pain of the past and offer it to God, asking that from God's hands we receive the gift of peace.

Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future.

Reader 3:

The third candle we light is to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember these past weeks and months, the disbelief, the anger, the down times, the poignancy of reminiscing, the hugs and handshakes of family and friends, all those who stood with us. We give thanks for all the support we have known.

Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness, life overcomes death.

Reader 4:

The fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope which the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life, promises us a place and time of no more pain and suffering.

Let us remember the One who shows the way, Who brings the truth and who bears the light.

O Little Town of Bethlehem

UM Hymnal #230 (Verses 1-4)

John 1:1-4; 14-18

Pastor Andy Roberts

Message

Pastor Andy Roberts

An Ornament Placed... Prayers for Healing

At this time all of you wishing to remember someone please come forward to write their name on the ornament and place it on the tree as a symbol of their presence with us this Advent season. Then you are invited to be anointed with oil and have a pastor pray with you. As you return to your seat, you are invited to be in silent prayer and meditation.

Away in a Manger

UM Hymnal #217 (Verses 1-3)

Benediction

May the hope of the Christ Child sustain us through this darkness.

That together we may shine again. Amen.

You are invited to join us in the Narthex for refreshments or to remain in prayer.

If you are grieving the loss of a loved one, please consider being a part of GriefShare at LHUMC. The next session will begin on January 17th at 6:30pm in the Church Library. To sign up go to griefshare.org or contact Pastor Andy Roberts at andyr@lhumc.com

If you need grief counseling please contact The Center at www.thecentercounseling.org

If you need to speak with a pastor please contact:

Pastor Andy Roberts, Senior Pastor, andyr@lhumc.com

Pastor Silvia Wang, Associate Pastor, silvia@lhumc.com