

## THE GATHERING OF THE COMMUNITY

### Welcome

#### Call to Worship

Leader: In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

**Everyone: The Word became flesh and lived among us, full of grace and truth.**

Leader: In him was life, and that life was the light for humanity.

**Everyone: The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has never been able to overcome it.**

#### Opening Prayer

Leader: Please pray with me.

**Everyone: Holy God, whose creation includes darkness and light, be with us, in each one of our situations; live among us, live with us and in us; fill the distances that divide and separate us; reconcile us with You and with one another.**

**Open our hearts to the mystery of Your love and the invitation of Your grace. Let our complacency give way to compassion. Let our judgments give way to compassionate acceptance of others. Turn oppression to justice and transform conflict to peace.**

**You who are the light of the world, be light in our darkness. Amen.**

### A Moment for Quiet Reflection and a Musical Gift

## SCRIPTURES FOR OUR MINDS AND HEARTS

### GOOD NEWS FOR THE EXCLUDED

Luke 14:15-24

*This story offers hope for those who have no one to invite them. It reminds us that in God's divine order, no one is excluded. ALL are invited; ALL are included; ALL are welcome.*

**Everyone: Lord our God, may Your fellowship be known by ALL, including those who feel excluded. Amen.**

### A Moment for Quiet Reflection and Candle Lighting/Hang a Star

### GOOD NEWS FOR THE GRIEVING

Luke 6:17-23

*This passage reveals that Jesus was well aware of people's sorrows, yearnings, and suffering—and that he offered a promise of something different.*

**Everyone: Lord Jesus, light of the world, bring some warmth and light to those who mourn, who hunger and thirst, and who weep. Amen.**

### A Moment for Quiet Reflection and Candle Lighting/Write a Name

### GOOD NEWS FOR THE WEARY

Matthew 11:28-29

### AND THE HEAVY-LADEN

*When burdens get piled on top of other burdens, the load can crush us. In his promise, Jesus says that there is another way to carry our burdens—by being yoked in labor with him.*

**Everyone: Jesus the light of the world, Jesus our brother and friend, we don't ask you to shoulder our burdens for us – just that you help us to carry them, so that we may carry on. Amen.**

### A Moment for Quiet Reflection and Candle Lighting/Gift Wrap Writing

### GOOD NEWS FOR THE RESENTFUL

Hebrews 12:14-15

*The writer of Hebrews reminds us that, despite our resentfulness, despite our resistance to forgive, we can act in ways that move us and those around us to peace and wholeness.*

**Everyone: Lord our God, may healing come. Bless us with Your wholeness and reconciliation. Amen.**

### A Moment for Quiet Reflection and Candle Lighting/Oil

### GOOD NEWS FOR THE DEPRESSED AND ANXIOUS

Psalms 46

*When anxiety overwhelms, when depression weighs us down, it can seem as if there is not sure footing. This psalm reminds us that God is good and is faithfully with us no matter what troubles us.*

**Everyone: Help us to be still, Holy One, and to know that You are God. Ease the burdens of our anxieties and depressions. Help us to know with our whole being that You are our refuge. Amen.**

A Moment for Quiet Reflection and Candle Lighting/Shared Star

GOOD NEWS FOR EVERYONE

Psalm 121

*No matter what life throws at us, God is there, surrounding us with love.*

**Everyone: Loving God, our help comes from You. Continue to love us as You have promised. Amen.**

A Moment for Quiet Reflection and Candle Lighting/Ornament

AS CHRISTMAS COMES REMEMBER...

Isaiah 9

Blessing our Way

Leader: May the road rise up to meet you. May the wind be always at your back. May the sun shine warm upon your face, and the rains fall soft upon your fields.

**Everyone: And until we meet again, may we ALL be held in the warmth of God's embrace. Amen.**

### GOING FORTH

*Please take a glow stick outside, as you go, and hang it in the pine tree that shelters the Advent Candles. The Christ Light from our service today will remain lit throughout the season set out in the pine tree and remaining there with your lights through the New Year offering hope out into the world for ALL who pass by.*

*Today's Service Resource: "Personal Jottings" by the Rev. Jeffrey Spencer*

**The Christmas Eve service of worship is open to everyone!  
We begin with caroling on Friday December 24, 2021, at 6:30 p.m.  
This service will be live-streamed on Our Lord's Facebook page  
and posted on our website: <https://www.ourlordsumc.org>**

**Sunday, December 26 celebration of worship: 9:30 a.m. and  
welcomes ALL!**

# BLUE CHRISTMAS

*A Time for Hurting Hearts to Gather During the  
Holiday Season*

*Saturday, December 11, 2021*

*11:00 a.m.*

*Fellowship Hall*

*Worship Leader: Rev. Kelly Fowler*

*Guest Musician: Tabitha Manning*

