

1st Reader: We light a candle in remembrance of those who have lost jobs this past year...those who grieve the loss of broken relationships...those who are weary of prolonged isolation...those who grieve the loss of freedom due to Covid 19 restrictions...who feel the stress of Christmas preparations and activities

*CAROL: "There's A Song In the Air" # 249 vs 1 & 4

*CLOSING BLESSING

POSTLUDE

**Congregation, please stand*



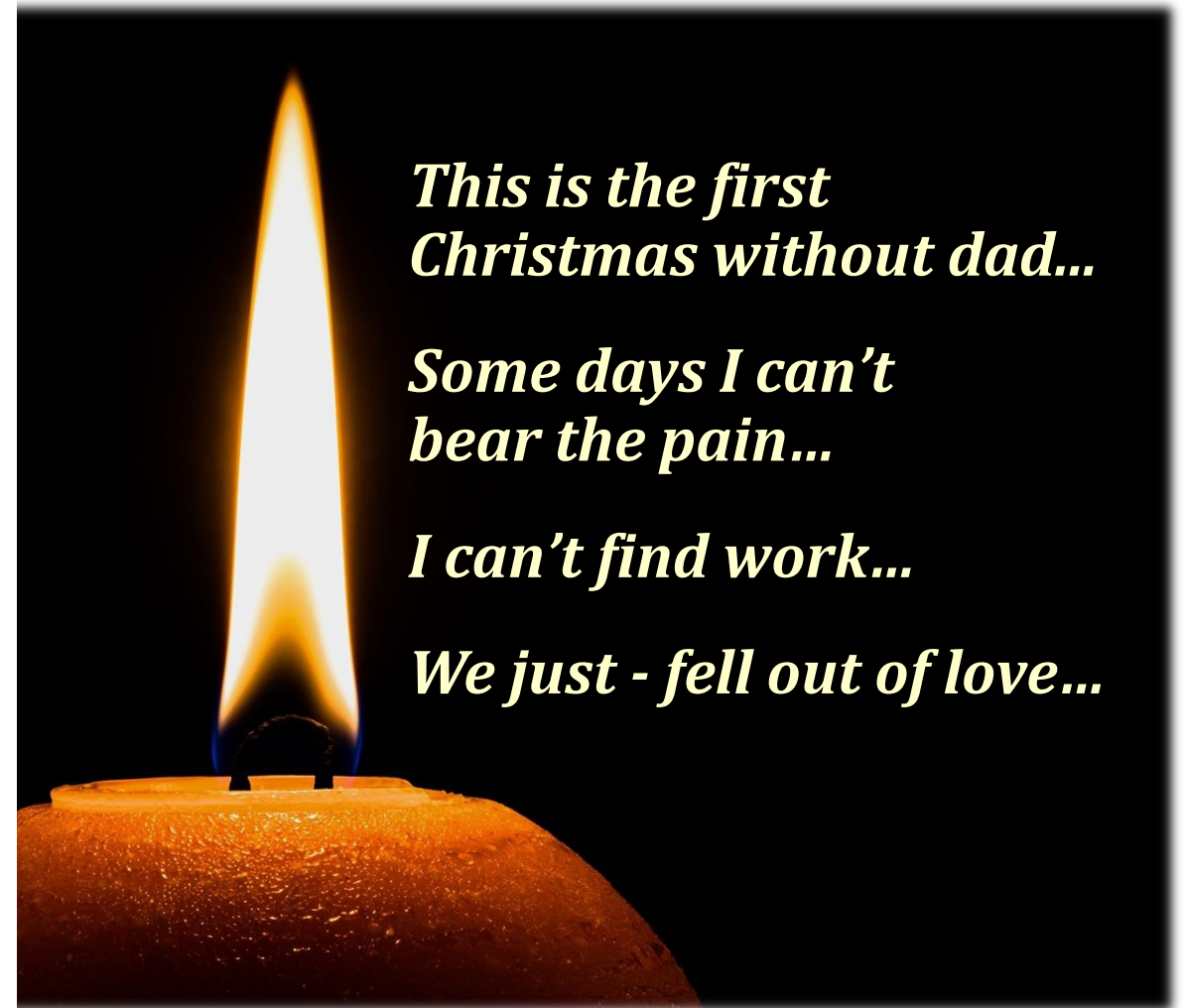
Saturday, December 24

- Family Christmas Eve Service - **5:00pm**
- Holy Communion -
5:45-6:45pm & 8:15-9:00pm
- Christmas Music - **9:30pm**
- Classic Candlelight Service
with Chancel Choir - **10:00pm**

Sunday, December 25
One Service - **10:00am**
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL, NURSERY or AWE

Sunday, January 1, 2023
One Service - **10:00am**
NO SUNDAY SCHOOL, NURSERY or AWE

FIRST UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
113 w central ave. van wert, oh



Hope Rekindled

CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Sunday, December 18, 2022

December 18, 2022 7:00 PM

Hope Rekindled Service

First UMC Purpose Statement:

To embrace, equip, and empower persons to know and follow Jesus Christ.

PRELUDE:

“The prelude is a curtain drawn between our worldly and our spiritual lives. Please join in using this time to prepare in a spirit of meditation and worship.”

***GREETINGS AND WELCOME:** Welcome to this time of worship. We come together tonight, seeking God’s comfort. May the readings, the songs and the candles bring us the hope, the peace, the joy and the love that we seek. Remember, *“The Lord does not see as man sees; for man looks at the outward appearance, but the LORD looks at the heart.”* - Samuel 16:7 *“The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you; he will never leave you nor forsake you. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged.”* - Deuteronomy 31:8

***CAROL:** *“Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus”* # 196

***CALL TO WORSHIP:**

1st Reader: In the beginning, when it was very dark, God said, “Let there be light”

All: And there was light.

1st Reader: In the beginning, when it was very quiet, the word was with God.

All: And what God was, the word was

1st Reader: When the time was right, God sent his Son.

All: He came among us, He was one of us.

1st Reader: But the world did not receive him.

All: But to those who receive Him and believe, God calls his children.

OPENING PRAYER

CAROL: *“In the Bleak Midwinter”* # 221 vs 1, 2, & 4

OLD TESTAMENT LESSON: Habakkuk 3:17-18; Isaiah 43:1-3a

CAROL: *“O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”* # 211 vs 1, 6, 7

NEW TESTAMENT LESSON: 2 Corinthians 1:3-7

THE MEDITATION: Pastor Chris Farmer

LIGHTING THE CANDLES:

1st Reader: We light this first candle to remember those people who have been loved and lost. We pause to remember their name, their face, and their voice. We give thanks for the memory that binds them to us this season.

All: God’s eternal love surrounds them.

1st Reader: We light this second candle to redeem the pain of loss: the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, and the loss of health. As we gather up the pain of the past, we offer it to you, O God, asking that into our open hands, you will place the gift of peace.

All: Refresh, restore, renew us, O God, and lead us through the tough days.

1st Reader: 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. We remember the poignancy of memories, the grief, the sadness, the hurts, and the pain.

All: Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness, and that Christ has come to bring light into our dark world.

1st Reader: We light this fourth candle to remember our world where pain and sorrow, homelessness and disease, conflict and war occur in the lives of millions of people. We remember the countless acts of terrorism and the repercussions in their aftermath. We know that injustice and poverty, oppression and hunger are all too common.

All: May God help us to have compassion for others as we work towards peace and justice for people everywhere.

1st Reader: As we light the Christ candle, we remember our faith and the gift of hope, which God offers to us in the Christmas story. We remember that Jesus was born to bring us abundant life, forgiveness, and healing. We know that the angels declared peace and joy to all with the birth in Bethlehem. God shares our life, and promises to be with us at all times; good and bad.

All: Let us remember the one who shows the way and who goes with us into our tomorrows.

Lighting our Candles:

1st Reader: Jesus said, “I am the light of the world. Anyone who follows me will not walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.”

We light these candles in memory of those who entered their eternal rest in the heavenly kingdom:

Mike Arn	Marylyn Rose Bair	Dick Dunn	Betty Foust
Annabel Holland	Nikki Massillo	Carolyn Miller	Ruth Poe
Jack Spry	Kathy Stanley	Thomas Sunderland	Betty Lou Tomlinson