

Leader: O God, support us all the day long in this troubled life,
until the shadows lengthen and the evening comes, and the busy world is hushed,
and the fever of life is over, and our work is done.
Then Lord, in thy mercy, grant us safe lodging, and a holy rest, and peace at the last. Amen.

BLESSING AND DISMISSAL

Leader: The peace of the Lord be always with you.
All: And also with you.

People may greet one another in the name of the Lord.

Gobin Memorial United Methodist Church

Office Hours: Monday - Friday: 8:30am - 2:30pm

Address: PO Box 66, 307 Simpson St., Greencastle, IN 46135

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Our Worship Schedule:

December 23, Sunday Morning Service: 10:30am

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: 7:00pm

Sunday School: 9:30am

Sunday Morning Worship: 10:30am

Wednesday Morning Prayer: 8:30am



BLUE CHRISTMAS

DECEMBER 21
7PM



Gobin Memorial

THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

connect. grow. serve.

307 SIMPSON STREET • 765-658-6010
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CALL TO WORSHIP

Rev. Bryan Langdoc

Leader: 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.

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

WELCOME

Rev. Bryan Langdoc

HYMN

“O Little Town of Bethlehem”
UMH# 230

THE FIRST READING

Anjali Cohen

Ecclesiastes 3:1-11
Pew Bible Page #659

Psalm 22

Alisa Isaacs-Bailey

(All read the boldface verses together.)

My God, my God, why have you forsaken me?
Why are you so far from helping me, so far from the words
of my groaning?

O my God, I cry by day but you do not answer, and by
night, but I find no rest.

Help us to remember you and to listen for your voice in
the words of family, friends, and strangers.
Kindle our hearts and awaken hope, that we may know
you as you reveal yourself in the world and in our lives.

Let the light of your holy Spirit shine like these candles
in the darkness,
lighting the way for all who feel despairing, lost, or
forgotten,
and grant that it may come to dwell so deeply in our
hearts
that when we leave this place it may shine on, for us and
for those we meet along the way. Amen.

HYMN

“Silent Night” (verses 1 -3)
UMH# 239

CONCLUDING PRAYERS

Rev. Bryan Langdoc

(Remain standing.)

All: Another day will come, O God.
I know not what it may bring forth, but
make me ready, God, for whatever it may
be.
If I am to stand up, help me to stand
bravely.
If I am to sit still, help me to sit quietly.
If I am to lie low, help me to do it patiently.
And if I am to do nothing, help me do it
gallantly.
Make these words more than words, and
give me the Spirit of thy Peace. Amen.

Lisa: Lighten our darkness, we beseech you, O God;
give us light in the night season;
and by your great mercy defend us from all
perils and dangers of this night. Amen.

SONG OF REFLECTION

“Hallelujah”

Bobbie Lancaster

Psalm 121

Dick Shuck

(All read together.)

I will lift up mine eyes unto the hills,
from whence cometh my help.
My help cometh from the Lord,
who hath made heaven and earth.
He will not suffer thy foot to be moved;
he that keepeth thee will not slumber;
behold, the God that keepeth Israel shall neither
slumber nor sleep.
The Lord is thy keeper; the Lord is thy shade upon thy
right hand.
The sun shall not smite thee by day nor the moon at
night.
The Lord shall preserve thee from all evil and shall
sustain thy soul.
He shall preserve thy going out and thy coming in,
from this time forth and even forevermore.

PRAYER

All: Almighty God, we thank you for your constant love
and for the blessings of this day.
We know that even when we cannot see or feel you, still
you are there.

In you, our ancestors trusted. They trusted and you
delivered them.

It was you who brought me from the womb,
you who kept me safe on my mother's breast.
Since my mother bore me, you have been my God.

Do not be far from me, for trouble is near and there is no
one to help.

God does not despise the affliction of the afflicted.
God does not hide from me.

When I cry to God, God hears me.

Thanks be to God.

Psalm 23

Alisa Isaacs-Bailey

(All read together.)

The LORD is my shepherd;
I shall not want.
He maketh me to lie down in green pastures;
he leadeth me beside the still waters.
He restoreth my soul;
he leadeth me in the paths of righteousness for his
Name's sake.
Yea, though I walk through the valley of the shadow of
death,
I will fear no evil;
for thou art with me;
thy rod and thy staff, they comfort me.
Thou preparest a table before me in the presence of
mine enemies;
thou annointest my head with oil;
my cup runneth over.
Surely goodness and mercy shall follow me all the days
of my life,
and I will dwell in the house of the LORD for ever.

THE SECOND READING

Eleanor Howard

Isaiah 40:1-8, 28-31

Pew Bible Page #714

MEMORY STARS

Following the second reading from Isaiah 40, you are invited to write on each star your concerns for others or your own concerns.

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Steve Snyder

LITANY OF REMEMBRANCE

*Ross Davies, Sheila Holloway,
Bobbie Lancaster & Teddy Shuck*

Ross: 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.

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

(all sing)

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.

Tend the sick, Lord; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for thy love's sake. Amen.

HYMN

“Away in a Manger”

UMH# 217

THIRD READING

Luke 2:1-7

OFFERING OF LIGHT

Lisa Trigg

Lisa: One legend we celebrate in this season tells how a few brave fighters, defending their temple, had only enough oil to light the sacred lamp for one day, but it burned eight days until relief arrived.
Another legend tells how in a little hill town a homeless couple with tax problems took shelter in a stable among the animals and gave birth to a light that would change the world.

Lisa: Let us pray.

All: Gentle God of love, help us reach out together for the light of faith, for renewal and recovery and a new day coming.
Grant that hope may come to rest in our hearts,
and let it go forth with us into the darkness, this night and in the nights to come, until we see the dawn.

We are weary from the journey, and we have found no room at the inn.
We come to you seeking rest, and peace, and shelter from the storm.

Leader: Lord, hear our prayer.
All: **And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: God of grace, in the spirit of the season, grant us all that we need to comfort us as we journey through this Christmas season. We ask that you shelter and sustain all those of us, both here and throughout the world, who wander or want or weep or are heavy laden, that we may be lifted up in courage and journey on in Thy peace.

Leader: Lord, hear our prayer.
All: **And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: God of love, in this Christmas Season we embrace and offer up to you all that used to be which is now lost to us, and cannot be again. With celebration all around us, memories of what was, and fears of what may be, weigh heavy on our hearts. Please hold us close in your embrace, be near to us this night, until the light returns and morning comes.

Leader: Lord, hear our prayer,
All: **And in Your merciful love, answer.**

Leader: Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work, or watch, or weep this night, and give thine angels charge over those who sleep.

A period of silent reflection

Sheila: 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, the 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.

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

(all sing)

**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

Bobbie: 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.

All: 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.

(all sing)

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

Teddy: 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.

All: 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.

(all sing)

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

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Rev. Beth Newton Watson

Leader: God of wisdom, we come to you this Christmas Season tired, in turmoil, and in pain. As the nights have grown longer, so has darkness grown and wrapped itself around our hearts. In this season of longest night, we ask your healing blessings upon all that we carry in our hearts -- sorrow we fear may never end, wounds we cannot even put into words.

Leader: Lord, hear our prayer,
All: And in Your merciful love, answer.

Leader: God of mercy and compassion, there are those among us who are grieving over what might have been. Death or loss or terrible hurt has changed our experience of Christmas. We remember that once it was a special day for us, too, but someone or something precious has gone away from us in this life. We have lost a beloved, a job, a goal, a cause, a dream. We find ourselves adrift and alone.