

Blue Christmas

A service of hope and healing



Tuesday, December 21, 2021

7:00 pm

***“BLUE CHRISTMAS”* WORSHIP SERVICE**

hosted by

Rev. Vicki Flippin, FIRST AND SUMMERFIELD UMC

425 College Street, New Haven, CT, United States, 06511 www.fsumc.org

Rev. Jeremiah J. Paul, HAMDEN PLAINS UMC

15 Church Street, Hamden, Connecticut, 064514 www.hamdenplainsumc.com

Rev. Dr. YangHee Christine Stopka, Dir. of Spiritual Care

Middlesex Health, Middletown

December 21, 2021

Order of Worship

7:00 p.m.

GATHERING

OPENING WORDS

**“Advent Anticipations: A Waiting Time”
Rev. Dr. Christine Stopka**

by Wil Gafney

WELCOME

Rev. Dr. Christine Stopka

SILENT MEDITATION AND CENTERING

Rev. Jeremiah J. Paul

OPENING SONG

**"Somewhere in your silent night"
Rev Jeremiah Paul, Marty Hartog and Sheldon Campbell**

OPENING PRAYER

Frank Sarpong

BECAUSE THEY ARE NO MORE: LOSS AND STRUGGLE

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 2:13-18

Perjah Delgado

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF NAMES

Bill Kovacski

Silent Prayers for Those We Have Lost

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF BROKEN HEARTEDNESS

Perjah Delgado

Silent Prayers for Our Sadness and Struggles

SONG OF MEDITATION

**"The Trees do Morn"
Sheldon Campbell**

BLESSED: COURAGE AND SUPPORT

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:26-45

Frank Sarpong

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF COURAGE

Perjah Delgado

Silent prayers of courage

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF COMFORT

Bill Kovacsik

Silent Prayers for Our Sources of Comfort and Support

SONG OF MEDITATION

**"How Great Thou Art"
Rev. Jeremiah J. Paul**

LISTENING FOR GOD

READING

**From "Rilke's Book of Hours: Love Poems to God"
translated by Anita Barrows**

Rev. Vicki Flippin

SILENCE

We will sit for several minutes in silence, in the presence of God.

LIGHTING OUR CANDLES

FINAL BLESSING

**Edited from "Lead Us to the Rock"
by Stacey Cole Wilson in Africana Worship**

Rev. Jeremiah J. Paul



Pastoral Leadership:
Rev. Jeremiah J. Paul
Rev. Vicki Flippin
Rev. Dr. Christine Stopka

*(Much of this service is adapted from:
[A Blue Christmas Service: If You're Hurting at Christmas.](#))*

WORDS OF WELCOME

A “Blue Christmas” service is a modern Christian worship experience designed to temper the struggle with darkness and grief faced by those living with loss. Also known as a “Longest Night Service,” it is held on or around the eve of the winter solstice in the Northern Hemisphere. On this day with the shortest amount of light, the losses we face can feel insurmountable: death of a loved one, divorce or separation, separation related to military service or employment, job loss, family violence or serious illness.

Yet even on this longest night, we dare to recall God’s promise: *“The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it.”* St. John 1:5

In that spirit, if you do not have a church home or pastor, the pastors of the host congregations are available for on-going spiritual support and care:

The Rev. Jeremiah Paul, pastorjj.hpumc@gmail.com, 475.331.1122
Hamden Plains United Methodist Church, 15 Church Street, Hamden, CT
www.hamdenplainsumc.com

Christmas Eve worship: Zoom or In-person, 6:30 p.m.

The Rev. Vicki Flippin, vicki.flippin@gmail.com 203.624.2521
First and Summerfield United Methodist Church, 425 College Street, New Haven, CT
www.fsumc.org

Christmas Eve, In-Person, 4:30pm. A brief service of lessons, carols and candle-lighting. We’ll sing Christmas carols together with our masks on! On the front portico of the church. **Zoom Service, 7:00pm.** A service of Lessons and Carols. Have a candle with you if you are able!

Rev. Dr. YangHee Christine Stopka, Christine.kim-stopka@nyac-umc.com
Dir. of Spiritual Care, Middlesex Health, Middletown

ABOUT THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The United Methodist Church is a world-wide church of 12 million members in the United States, Europe, Africa and Asia. It, and other Methodist churches, are part of the Protestant family of churches and trace their roots to religious revival in 18th century England led by the Reverends John and Charles Wesley.

Spiritual emphases on “grace” (*God’s love, freely given*) and an inclusive welcome to all people are essential parts of our identity. If you’d like to know more, speak with the pastors or visit www.umc.org.