

The Lord's Prayer

Rev. Hoyte Wilhelm

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For Thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

Hymn

Silent Night, Holy Night

UMH 239

The Blessing

Rev. Alice Walsh

Leader: The God of strength moves within us;
People: the God of courage hears our distress.
 Leader: The God of hope reveals wholeness to us;
People: the God of healing touches us when we are broken.
 Leader: When our pain overwhelms us, when our burden is too heavy,
People: we turn to our God, who sustains us and redeems us.
 Leader: When there is loneliness, when there is isolation,
People: we turn to our God, who is loving and present.
 Leader: Beloved Children of God, as we go from this place, may the God who created us, redeemed us, and sustains us, be present with us and remind us always that we are not alone.
People: O come, O come, Emmanuel. God is truly with us. Amen.

You are invited to visit with one another as we share in some light refreshments.

Thank you for attending tonight's Blue Christmas Service. We hope you found this service encouraging. We continue to pray that you will find peace and comfort in knowing that you are not alone as you journey. Always remember that God knows your pain and loves you unconditionally. If you would like to speak confidentially with Rev. Alice or Pastor Hoyte, or if you would like to have your own Stephen Minister for personal support and Christian caregiving, please call the church office at 440-779-6634.

Join Us for Worship In-Person and Online

Sundays of Advent, December 11 and 18, 10:30 am

Saturday, December 24, 7 pm

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

Join us as we celebrate the gift of God's presence with us in Jesus Christ.



**North Olmsted
United Methodist Church**

Feeding the Community –
Body, Mind, and Spirit

4600 Dover Center Road,
North Olmsted, Ohio 44070
440-779-6634 + www.noumc.org
Rev. Hoyte Wilhelm, Pastor
Rev. Alice Walsh & Stephen Ministers

Blue Christmas: A Service of Comfort & Hope December 9, 2022 + 7:00 pm
Welcome to this Blue Christmas service, a service of peace, hope, prayer, music, and light. It is a time when we can, in company with each other, acknowledge the many different longings we feel at Christmas time. This is the time of the shortest day and longest night of the year, when memories of past experiences and the pain of present reality can become overwhelming. Recognizing that this is not a season of joy for everyone, in this service we will be invited to reflect on the deep longings of our hearts, and offer them all to our great sign of hope, the Holy Child of Bethlehem. We pray that all of us will find hope and comfort in knowing that we are not alone. Welcome.

Musical Prelude Josh Walsh

Welcome and History of Blue Christmas Rev. Alice Walsh

Call to Worship Michelle Wolter

Leader: Our Savior, Jesus, once said, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." And so we invite each other to this time of peaceful worship. Tonight we come looking for the Christ Child.
People: We come, bringing our hurts, our worries, and our fears.
 Leader: We come seeking relief from pain, anxiety, loneliness, and despair. With the psalmist of Scriptures we say,
People: "O Lord, you are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living."
All: We come tonight to rest with God.

Opening Prayer

Michelle Wolter

God of Mercy, hear our prayer in this Advent season, for ourselves and our families. We pray for those whose hearts are broken and whose voices tremble with uncertainty, grief, or sorrow. Comfort, Comfort, Lord, Your Holy People. We ask for strength for today, courage for tomorrow, and peace for the past. We ask these things in the name of our Savior, Jesus, who shares our life in joy and in sorrow. Amen.

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 9:2; 43:1-5

Claudia Taller

Gospel Reading

Matthew 11:28-29

Claudia Taller

Meditation

“It’s not a silent night...”

Rev. Alice Walsh

Hymn

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus (verse 1)

UMH 196

Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free;
from our fears and sins release us, let us find our rest in thee.
Israel’s strength and consolation, hope of all the earth thou art;
dear desire of every nation, joy of every longing heart.

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus, Words by Charles Wesley, Music by Rowland H. Prichard. Public Domain

Introduction to the Candle Lighting Litany

Rev. Hoyte Wilhelm

Candle One

Michelle Wolter

Leader: ...God in your mercy,
People: **May Christmas come.**

Hymn

Star-Child (verse 1)

TFWS 2095

Star-Child, earth-Child, go-between of God,
love Child, Christ Child, heaven’s lightning rod,
This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Candle Two

Sarah Jackson

Leader: ...God in your mercy,
People: **May Christmas come.**

Hymn

Star-Child (verse 2)

TFWS 2095

Street child, beat child, no place left to go,
hurt child, used child, no one wants to know,
This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Candle Three

Claudia Taller

Leader: ...God in your mercy,
People: **May Christmas come.**

Hymn

Star-Child (verse 3)

TFWS 2095

Grown child, old child, memory full of years,
sad child, lost child, story told in tears,
This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Candle Four

Janis Jarvis

Leader: ...God in your mercy,
People: **May Christmas come.**

Hymn

Star-Child (verse 4)

TFWS 2095

Spared child, spoiled child, having, wanting more,
wise child, faith child, knowing joy in store,
This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!

Candle Five

Rev. Hoyte Wilhelm

Leader: ...God in your mercy,
People: **May Christmas come for everyone. Amen.**

Hymn

Star-Child (verse 5)

TFWS 2095

Hope-for-peace Child, God’s stupendous sign,
down-to-earth Child, Star of stars that shine,
This year, this year, let the day arrive
when Christmas comes for everyone, everyone alive!