

COSSO SPIRITUAL FORMATION

October 25, 2019

Friday Gathering

Gathering Music

Welcome & Community Announcements



A HEALING MOMENT DURING ADVENT

Blue Christmas or Longest Night Service

Introduction

Welcome to this Blue Christmas or Longest Night service. The name comes from this season in December when we experience both sadness and joy in the celebrations of Christmas. This service also includes moments for us to hear our Graduates' Voices before our Graduation Celebration Saturday at 11:00 AM.

OPENING PRAYER

**God of everlasting Peace, you hold us in the embrace of this holy time:
Grant us comfort carried across the centuries in the cries of a baby,
so that we may experience the joy of this season, and share your holy gift with
friends and family, through Jesus Christ that Star Child. Amen**

HYMN *"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

#218 UMH

****CALL TO WORSHIP***

Leader: Jesus said, "Come unto me all you who labor and are heavy laden and I will give you rest." We invite each other to this time of peaceful worship, a place to escape for a while from our heartache.

People: We come, bringing our hurts, our worries, and our fears.

Leader: We come seeking relief from the pain of loneliness and despair. With the Psalmist we say,

People: "O Lord, You are my refuge, my portion in the land of the living. Listen to my cry, for I am in desperate need."

Leader: We come tonight to rest in God.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Merciful God, you know us inside and out, you search our hearts and know how difficult it is for many of us to celebrate the joy of this Christmas season. We cannot listen to the angels' songs and the shepherd's call to "come and see." We bundle up our sorrows, pain and hurt in the emptiness of our soul, and we hold on so tightly that we miss the starlight that leads to peace.

All: So we confess to you, O God, not the pain that we feel, but our unwillingness to embrace your gift of grace and hope. Forgive us, dear God, and continue to love us and strengthen us; help us to once again feel your presence, as you walk with us and carry our hurt. In the name of the Christ Child, who came as our Friend, our Brother, and our Savior. Amen

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

We feel we are alone and so, we cry out, "The Lord has forsaken me, the Lord has forgotten me." But, God says to us, "I will not forget you! See, I have written your name on the palms of my hands." By the grace of Christ, who came to us as a Child, we are accepted and loved by God just as we are.

All: Thanks be to God, Amen

LIGHT SHINES IN THE DARKNESS

with words of Hope from Our Graduates (2 Minutes each!)

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.1)

The first candle we light is to recall the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss in aging, the loss of jobs, the loss of health, the loss of dreams, even the loss of hope. We reflect on our losses and offer them to you, O Lord, asking that you grant us your peace.

(a candle is lit)

GRADUATE VOICES: Cheryl Arnold/ Carl Black

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.2)

The second candle we light is to remember the pain of grief and those whom we have loved and lost. We recall their names, their faces, their voices and the life we shared. We bring our memories and our sadness to you, O Lord, asking that you comfort those who grieve.

(a candle is lit)

GRADUATE VOICES: Bob Greene/ Chris Nelson

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.3)

The third candle we light is to express the heaviness of our burdens, our hurts, our fears, our memories, our disbelief, our struggles that we carry in our day-to-day lives. We come to you with our burdens, O Lord, asking that you give us rest.

(a candle is lit)

GRADUATE VOICES: John Pajak/ Mike Ramsey

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.4)

The fourth candle we light is to remember the pain of lives touched by sadness - those who live in poverty, those who are homeless, those who struggle with addiction, those who are imprisoned, those who live with fear, violence and war. We bring this sadness to you, O Lord, asking for wisdom and courage to act, and strength and hope for those who suffer.

(a candle is lit)

GRADUATE VOICES: Phil Rode/ Linda Slutz

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.5)

The fifth candle we light is the Christ candle. We light this candle to remember our faith and the gift of hope that is the essence of Christmas. We remember that God came to be with us, and promised the Holy Spirit, a faithful presence even in the deepest hour of our despair. We bring you thanks, O Lord, for the glimmers of your hope and your love that shine in our lives through those who care and walk with us, reminding us of your presence.

(a candle is lit)

GRADUATE VOICES: Mark Walus/ Frank Zugaro, Jr.

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.6)

PRAYER FOR OUR GRADUATES

Gracious God, give these your servants the grace and power they need to serve you in their ministry, so that your people may be strengthened and your name glorified in all the world. Make them faithful pastors, patient teachers, and wise learners in the ministry of your Church, through Jesus Christ our Savior. Amen.

HYMN "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel" #211 UMH (v.7)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE... (ending with responsive prayer)

Leader: We believe you care, O God. You have been with with us through all our suffering, and you will not leave us now.

All: In the initial shock of loss, you were with us.

In those moments when we feel blazing anger, you are with us.

In those moments when we feel nothing at all, you are with us.

In those days and weeks when we long for life and to feel good again, you are

with us. And today, when we remember our loss and our sadness in the midst of

Christmas joy, this evening in this service, you are with us.

Leader: We dare to hope; we dare to believe:

All: Your love will never leave us. No, your love will never leave us. Amen.

Scripture: John 1:1-5,9-14

In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. He was with God in the beginning. Through him all things were made; without him nothing was made that has been made. In him was life, and that life was the light of all mankind. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

The true light that gives light to everyone was coming into the world. He was in the world, and though the world was made through him, the world did not recognize him. He came to that which was his own, but his own did not receive him. Yet to all who did receive him, to those who believed in his name, he gave the right to become children of God— children born not of natural descent, nor of human decision, but born of God. The Word became flesh and made his dwelling among us. We have seen his glory, the glory of the one and only Son, who came from God, full of grace and truth.

Meditation "How the light gets in"

(Lights may be dimmed after the reading)

***HYMN**

"Like a Child"

#2092 TFWS

Tears of Remembrance (or candles of remembrance):

As music is played, you are invited to come forward and add salt to the bowl of water, symbolizing your tears; then touch the water, remembering that God's tears are mixed with ours, reminding us of God's healing presence. You may take a blue ribbon to tie with your Christmas decorations to honor your sadness and as a reminder that God is with you.

Prayer

(Lights are turned up)

***HYMN**

"Star-Child"

#2095 TFWS

***Blessing**

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Note:

As music plays softly, people are invited to leave or remain in the sanctuary following the service. Pastor will be available as needed. Instead of using water, you might invite people to light a candle in memory or in recognition of the cause of their pain; or you might offer people strips of cloth on which they can write the cause of their pain and come forward to lay them in a manger, giving them to the Christ Child.

Sources:

This order of service is adapted from a Blue Christmas service designed by Vera Welker, elder in West Ohio Conference;

Prayers and readings are adapted from services by Jan Richardson @ janrichardson.com

(<http://adventdoor.com/2011/12/21/christmas-day-how-the-light-comes>)

(<http://adventdoor.com/2011/12/19/winter-solstice-blessing-for-the-longest-night>)

Nativity Scene illustration (free download):

(<http://www.vecteezy.com/vector-art/85953-nativity-scene-illustration>)

***AN ORDER FOR MORNING PRAISE & PRAYER
(UMH 876)***

RESPONSIVE READING: PSALTER 814 (without sung response)

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

MORNING HYMN Give Me Jesus

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=N1SXTqnSiSw.mp4>

BLESSING

COSSO SPIRITUAL FORMATION
Saturday, October 26, 2019

A CELEBRATION OF GRADUATION AND EUCHARIST

Gathering
WELCOME



***PROCESSIONAL HYMN**

"O God Our Help in Ages Past"

UMH 117

***CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: Come! Rejoice! For the Holy One is here.

All: We stand on holy ground.

Leader: Come, children of God! Just as you are. Receive God's grace, hope, and love.

All: We come to be fed by God's Word.

Leader: Come! Listen! For God is still speaking.

All: We come to hear the Spirit's call.

Leader: Come, meet Jesus with open hands and open hearts.

All: We come with rejoicing, to love and serve wherever God calls us.

Leader: Come! Let us sing our praises.

(adapted, worshipwords.co.uk)

***PRAYER**

God of celebrations and quiet moments, in this confused and fragile world, strengthen our faith, increase our love, and let your peace flow through us, that we might spread your Word in a restless sea. Amen.

(adapted, faithandworship.com)

PROCLAMATION & RESPONSE

SCRIPTURE Luke 4:14-21

MESSAGE "Claiming the Power of the Spirit"

Rev. Dr. Fulgence Nyengele, M.A., M.Div. and PhD from Claremont School of Theology, an elder in the UMC North Katanga Annual Conference; Professor of Pastoral Care and Counseling in the Chryst Chair in Pastoral Theology, and Director of Master of Arts in Counseling Ministries Program at MTSO.

CHOIR ANTHEM "When Words Alone Cannot Express"

Lori Douglas Weaver, MMed, Music Director

WS 3012

(UMC Worship & Song)

CELEBRATION OF GRADUATION

Greeting

Rev. Dr. Joon-Sik Park, COSSO Director

Responsive Reading

Director: The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

Let us pray together:

Eternal God, by your grace you have brought us together in your Church, which is the body of Christ. Grant your continuing grace, we pray, to all who are called to leadership in your Church, that they may with diligence and faithfulness fulfill their ministries; and grant that we your people may follow where you lead and serve you faithfully in the world; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Presentation of Graduates

Director: Who are presented for graduation from the Course of Study?

COS Coordinator:

Grace Wallace

I present these candidates for graduation. They have completed all requirements for the Course of Study, as set by the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry:

<i>Cheryl Arnold</i>	<i>(West Ohio Conference)</i>
<i>Carleton 'Carl' Black</i>	<i>(Michigan Conference)</i>
<i>Robert 'Bob' Greene</i>	<i>(West Ohio Conference)</i>
<i>Christopher 'Chris' Nelson</i>	<i>(Indiana Conference)</i>
<i>John Pajak</i>	<i>(Michigan Conference)</i>
<i>Michael 'Mike' Ramsey</i>	<i>(Michigan Conference)</i>
<i>Philip 'Phil' Rode</i>	<i>(West Ohio Conference)</i>
<i>Linda Slutz</i>	<i>(East Ohio Conference)</i>
<i>Mark Walus</i>	<i>(Indiana Conference)</i>
<i>Frank Zugaro, Jr.</i>	<i>(East Ohio Conference)</i>

Blessing & Anointing *(candidates kneel or stand for the blessing)*

Director: In the name of Almighty God, our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, we celebrate your graduation from the Course of Study. We commend you to your ministry as a Local Pastor in The United Methodist Church and pledge our continued prayers.

Spiritual Director:

Rev. Dr. Rebeka Maples

May the Holy Spirit strengthen and guide you, that in all things you may do God's will in service to the church, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

COS Coordinator: Receive this certificate and gift for your graduation.

Laying on of Hands and Welcome

(all are invited forward to lay hands on the graduates or touch the person near you as a sign of our connection in the body of Christ)

COS Coordinator: Gracious God, we thank you for calling these faithful servants to be Local Pastors in your Church. We humbly place them in your hands. Give them courage, patience, and vision, and bless them with caring communities; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

Director: And now, remember your call. Preach the Good News. Shepherd the flock of Christ. And in all things, give God the glory, now and always. In the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, I declare that you have graduated from the Course of Study.

***GRADUATION SONG**

"Here I Am, Lord"

UMH 593

HOLY COMMUNION

(The Great Thanksgiving for Thanksgiving Day, BOW 76)

The Great Thanksgiving *(with responses UMH p 9)*

The Lord's Prayer

Breaking the Bread

Giving the Bread & Cup

Prayer

Eternal God, we give you thanks for this holy mystery, in which you have given yourself to us. Grant that we may go into the world in the strength of your Spirit, to give ourselves for others, in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, Amen.

***CLOSING HYMN** *"Now Let Us from This Table Rise"*

UMH 634

***BLESSING**

*(Graduation gifts are chalice and plate made by
Gail Russell, Peachblow Pottery, Sunbury, Ohio)*