

## LITANY OF ASSURANCE

**Leader:** Time after time, the angels break in with a greeting: "Do not fear." So, when our days are heavy and our sleep grows restless, we believe that God is near.

**People:** When fear feels greater than hope, we will look for signs of new life; we will take a step toward God with shaking knees; we will stand together, and we will not let fear stop us.

**Leader:** When we're desperate for Christ, Emmanuel, God-With Us, we'll remember we are the hands and feet of Christ, made in God's own image, called to be light-bearers in a fearful world. For we know that no matter how it may seem, God is here, among us, even now. Amen.

## BENEDICTION

In a fearful world,  
may you look for God's spirit.  
May you reach for each other's hands.  
May you choose courage whenever you can.  
And in all things, may you remember  
that good news is louder than fear.  
In the name of the one who calls,  
the one who sends,  
and the one who journeys with—  
go in peace and be not afraid.  
Amen.

## †SENDING FORTH

†Congregation stand as able.

John 1: 1-5

CCLI #1111630

### Leading in Worship

Rev. Harry Colter, St. Luke's Pastoral Assistant  
Rev. Amy Martin, Minister of Music and Worship  
Wes Kirkpatrick, Pianist

**Christmas Eve Worship Service  
Carols, Communion & Candlelight  
December 24 at 5:00 P.M.**

*Together we will celebrate the arrival of Emmanuel,  
God-with-us, Jesus Christ.*



**Longest Night  
December 21st, 2025**

St. Luke's United Methodist Church  
480 S. Highland St. Memphis, TN 38111  
901.452.6262 | [stlukesumc.org](http://stlukesumc.org)

## Order of Worship

### PRELUDE

### TIME OF SILENT REFLECTION

### WELCOME & PRAYER

Rev. Harry Colter

### HYMN

*"In the Bleak Midwinter"*

UMH 221

### LITANY OF HOPE

**Leader:** Comfort, O comfort my people, says your God. Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her that she has served her term, that her penalty is paid, that she has received from the Lord's hand double for all her sins

**People:** We stand in need of deliverance from grief and troubles. We desire a way to move beyond shame and disgrace.

**Leader:** A voice cries out:

"In the wilderness prepare the way of the Lord, make straight in the desert a highway for our God. Every valley shall be lifted up, and every mountain and hill be made low; the uneven ground shall become level, and the rough places a plain. Then the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all people shall see it together, for the mouth of the Lord has spoken."

**People:** O Lord, our God, make your presence known to us. We put our trust and faith in you, now be with us in our time of need.

**Leader:** A voice says, "Cry out!" And I said, "What shall I cry?" All people are grass, their constancy is like the flower of the field. The grass withers, the flower fades, when the breath of the Lord blows upon it; surely the people are grass. The grass withers, the flower fades; but the word of our God will stand for ever.

**People:** I have shouted and cried, prayed and kept silent. As our lives change moment by moment, God is constant in providing grace and hope.

**Leader:** Get you up to a high mountain, O Zion, herald of good tidings; lift your voice with strength, O Jerusalem, herald of good tidings, lift it up, do not fear; say to the cities of Judah, "Here is your God!"

**People:** I am searching for comfort in the darkness of the night and loneliness of the day. May we hear the Good News, which invites us into new life.

**All:** In my weakness, facing my fears, I look for strength of One who will hold me. God, Almighty, protect me from the storm and hold me close in comfort.

**Leader:** See, the Lord God comes with might, and his arm rules for him; his reward is with him, and his recompense before him. He will feed his flock like a shepherd; he will gather the lambs in his arms, and carry them in his bosom, and gently lead the mother sheep.

### SCRIPTURE READING

*from Isaiah 9*

### SPECIAL MUSIC

*Come, Ye Disconsolate*

arr. Terre Johnson

### PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Response: And in your merciful love, please answer.

Rev. Harry Colter

### PRAYER FOR HEALING AND WHOLENESS

*At this time you are invited to come to the communion rail for prayer. You also have the opportunity to light a candle for a loved one, or as a symbol of release for the pain and burden you are carrying, or the fears in your life.*

**Leader:** I encourage you each to say a prayer for the hopes and fears you carry in your hearts, trusting that God knows the depths of our longing and fills our hearts with a tenacious hope.

### HYMN

*"I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light"*

UMH 206

### PRAYERS

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

**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.**