

PRELUDE

WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor Gina

Leader: Let us kneel in the darkness,

People: Until we see God's light emerge.

Leader: Let us wait with hope filled hearts,

People: As Christ's image grows within us and shows us life.

Leader: Let Jesus speak to us and teach us love,

People: Until we open our hearts to be his home. AMEN.

PRAYER: God of love and understanding, we gather here this afternoon to confront our pain. Help us to know that you are present with us in all of our moods and feelings and seasons. Grant us a taste of the hope, peace, joy and love that you promise to all of your people through the gift of your Son. Amen.

HOPE IN SONG

The Hymn of Promise

UMH 707

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 23

SILENT MEDITATION AND PRAYER

LITANY OF REMEMBERING

We have come today, remembering loved ones who are not here.

We come in spite of our many reasons for wanting not to come.

We remember our lives, the way they were before our loss.

How we yearn for those moments when all was well,

when we looked forward to the future together...

There will always be an empty place in our hearts. Help us believe that our sorrow will lessen as the days, months, and years go by. Help us to accept ourselves as being full of need. Help us to accept and celebrate the gifts of love, peace, and joy.

O God, in whom we long to trust, there is a part of us that has died and a part of us that is coming back to life. We want to have open hearts toward you and toward our lives, but it is such a struggle to do so. Remind us often of the peace which you offer us. Renew us day by day. Encourage us, so that we may be faithful to your call deep within our hearts and open ourselves to the mystery of life and to your love.

Teach us to be patient with the transformation of our lives, and to be open to the changes which we are going through. It is all right for us to let go of our pain, our emptiness, our anger and resentment.

We light a candle to remind us that the memories of our loved ones remain alive. In our darkest hour, it is often the smallest spark that brings us the gift of light and love and hope.

In the summer sun and fields of brightness...

We will remember...

In the autumn haze and blazes of color...

We will remember...

In the winter chill and blankets of whiteness...

We will remember...

And in the warmth of spring and bursts of new life...

We will remember...

With everything that is permanent, and with all that is passing, with everything that is majestic and with all that is common, with everything that carries us in concern and with all that lifts us in joy...

We will remember again, and again, and again. As long as we have life, we will remember. And in the remembering we will discover new life, new hope, and new courage...if not today, then perhaps tomorrow.

SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 121

MINISTRY OF MUSIC

Meditation – A Quiet Heart
Handbell Choir

Beck

CANDLE LIGHTING CEREMONY

Leader: We light four candles today in remembrance of our loved ones.

We light these candles for our own needs.

First Candle: This candle represents our Grief.

We own the pain of losing loved ones, of dreams that go unfulfilled, of hopes that evaporate in despair.

Silence

Second Candle: This candle represents our courage.

It symbolizes the courage to confront our sorrow, to comfort each other, to share our feelings honestly and openly with each other, and to dare to hope in the midst of pain.

Silence

Third Candle: This candle represents our memories.

For the times we laughed together, cried together, were angry at each other or overjoyed with each other. We light this candle for the memories of caring and joy we shared together.

Silence

Fourth Candle: This candle represents our love.

The love we have given, and the love we have received. The love that has gone unacknowledged and unfelt, and the love that has been shared in times of joy and sorrow.

Silence

Lighting Remembrance Candles. These candles are for our loved ones.

You are invited to come and light candles for loved ones. First United Methodist Church Stephen Ministry Servant Leaders and Pastors are available for prayer and anointing with oil at the rail on either side of the candles, after you have placed your candle.

Let us pray together...

Comforting God, wrap us in your presence in this time of remembrance. With these candles, help us find your light, a light that will guide us day-by-day, step-by-step, as we try to live life fully and wholly. We cherish the special ways in which our loved ones have touched us. We thank you for the gift their lives have been to us. Now comfort us. Encourage us. Empower us. AMEN.

BENEDICTION

Benediction

Lutkin

MUSICAL INTERLUDE

Handbell Choir

Quiet Reflection

POSTLUDE

* * * *

Leaders in this Service of Remembrance:

Rev. Dr. Gina Hendrickson & Reverend Jessica Campbell

Donna Banes, Pianist

First United Methodist Church Handbell Choir

First United Methodist Church Stephen Ministers

HOLIDAY REMEMBRANCE SERVICE

COMFORT & PEACE

Sunday, December 12, 2021

3:00 P.M.



First United Methodist Church
446 Camden Avenue
Moorestown, New Jersey 08057