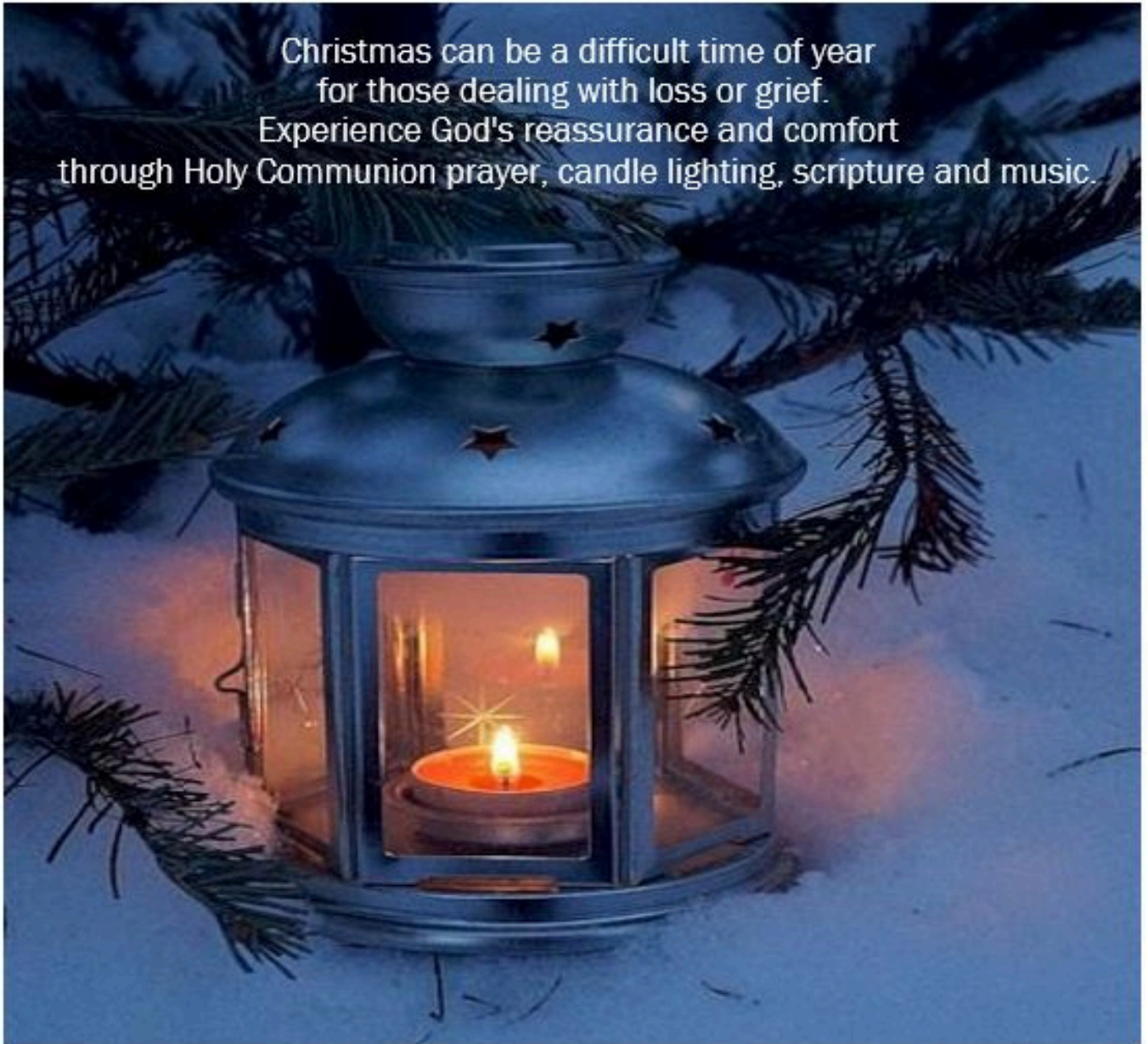




FRANCONIA
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

6037 Franconia Rd. Alexandria, VA 22310 | 703-971-5151 | www.franconiaumc.org

Christmas can be a difficult time of year
for those dealing with loss or grief.
Experience God's reassurance and comfort
through Holy Communion prayer, candle lighting, scripture and music.



December 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Christmas Comfort Service

December 14, 2025 at 7:00 PM
Christmas Comfort Service
UMH – United Methodist Hymnal

AS A COURTESY FOR ALL GATHERED TONIGHT,
PLEASE USE THE GATHERING TIME FOR MOMENTS OF QUIET REFLECTION.

**Stand in body or in spirit. Bold indicates Congregational Response.*

Gathering Music Emmanuel, Emmanuel (UMH 204) Praise Band

Time of Reflection When the World Was Dark Alexander and Yolanda Girouard

Song Come Darkness, Come Light Praise Band

* Greeting Rev. Melissa Porter-Miller

Pastor: The God who speaks comfort to us calls us here.

People: The God who addresses us with tenderness meets us here.

Pastor: The God who guides us with gentleness cares for us here.

People: The God who offers peace and healing is here for us.

* Singing Together Love Came Down Praise Band

* Opening Prayer

Pastor: Let us pray.

People: We come before You, Lord, with open and honest hearts.

The season around us glitters with lights and songs,
and yet many of us carry quiet losses, heavy memories,
and feelings that do not fit the cheer and merriment.

In this sacred moment, we bring the truth that we often hide– “I am not ok”--
and we lay it before You, not to be fixed by words but to be met by Your presence.

You who chose a lowly stable to enter our world, come now to the low places of our lives.

Be near to the brokenhearted; sit with the lonely, hold the frightened,
and breathe Your gentle courage into those who cannot yet imagine hope.

Let this be a place where grief is welcomed, tears are honored, and silence is holy.

We remember tonight the Christ-child who came to be with us,
especially in our “not-OK” moments.

For He is indeed Emmanuel, God-with-us. AMEN.

Lighting of the Christmas Comfort Tree

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING
FINDING GOD IN HONEST PLACES

Sing O Come, O Come Emmanuel (verse 1) UMH 211

First Candle The Candle of Honesty- Permission to Feel Kathy Henry

Response

Leader: In this season when so much feels heavy, we come as we are.

People: God is near to the broken hearted and gentle with our sorrow.

Amen.

Sing	<i>O Come, O Come <u>Emmanuel</u> (verse 2)</i>	<u> </u>	UMH 211
Second Candle	<u>The</u> <i>Candle of Grief- Permission to Mourn</i>		Jess Posey
	Response		
	Leader: For all we grieve and all that is missing, we pray to the Lord.		
	People: God is near to the broken-hearted, and gentle with our sorrow.		
	Amen.		
Sing	<i>O Come, O Come <u>Emmanuel</u> (verse 3)</i>	<u> </u>	UMH 211
Third Candle	<u>The</u> <i>Candle of Weariness- Permission to Rest</i>		Lisa Dickinson
	Response		
	Leader: When we are tired in body or in spirit, God invites us to rest.		
	People: We lay down our burdens and trust that God sustains us.		
	Amen.		
Sing	<i>O Come, O Come <u>Emmanuel</u> (verse 4)</i>	<u> </u>	UMH 211
Fourth Candle	<u>The</u> <i>Candle of Anger and Confusion</i>		Sam Patricola
	Response		
	Leader: When the world feels uncertain and our hearts are unsettled-		
	People: God receives our questions and stays with us in the wrestling.		
Sing	<i>O Come, O Come <u>Emmanuel</u> (verse 1)</i>	<u> </u>	UMH 211
Lighting Of <u>The</u> Christ Candle	<i>A Candle of Hope- permission to believe again</i>		
	Response		
	Leader: Into every shadow, Christ brings the light of presence and peace.		
	People: We are not alone. God is with us, now and always.		
Scripture Reading	Psalm 34: 17-18; Matthew 1:23		Jess Posey
Song of Reflection	<i>I am Not Okay</i>		
Message	<i>A Manger for the Broken: I'm Not Ok, Not Alone</i>	Rev. Melissa Porter-Miller	
Holy Communion			
Invitation			Sarah Chambers
Silent Confession			
Assurance and Pardon			<u> </u> (See Screen)
*Prayer of Great Thanksgiving			<u> </u> (See Screen)

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Breaking of the Bread

Experiencing God's Comfort

(You are invited to come forward to receive Holy Communion, to light one of the votive candles, come for prayer and anointing at the altar rail. Or may just sit, pray, or meditate as the music plays.)

Special Music	Peace	Praise Band
Prayer of Comfort		<u>(See Screen)</u>
*Song with the Passing of the Light	<u>In the Bleak <i>Midwinter</i></u>	UMH 221
Blessing		<u>(See Screen)</u>
Sending Forth Music	Be Still My Soul	Praise Band

*****Please join us in Cokesbury Hall for a time of comfort with food and fellowship*****

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Zach Chambers
Caroline Coltrin
Andrew Hamilton
Leah Hamilton
Jess Posey
Henry McCarthy
Grace Stahl
Liam Upp

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Sarah Chambers
Yolanda Girouard
Andrew Hamilton
Peggy Owusu-Ansah
Dan Upp

Staff:

Reverend: Melissa Porter-Miller
Church Office: Jade Miller
Children's Ministry: Andrea Reid
Music Ministry: Amy McCarthy
Praise & Worship Leader: Sarah Chambers
Youth & Young Adult Ministries: Sarah Chambers
Organist: June Shuffett
Handbells: Linda Biscardo
All God's Children Preschool: Jessica Copes
Nursery: Marie Bonhomme and Susann Ferrell

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