**Grief Remembrance Service – Hales Corners Lutheran Church**

**Friday, December 19, 2014, 6:30 to 8:00 pm**

**Pre-Service Music “O Come Let Us Adore Him”**

**Welcome**

**Announcements**

1. The Names of Your Loved Ones will be read during the service. If you missed the registration at the door, take a slip of paper from the pew, print their name and pass it to the center aisle. The ushers will come forward to collect those names.

**Greeting**

**Leader:** We invite you to stand and greet those around you and share the name of who you are remembering tonight.

**Opening Songs** “**How Great is Our God/How Great Thou Art/Emmanuel”**

**Invocation**

**Prayer**

**Leader:** O Lord God, You are the Light of the faithful, the Strength of those who labor and Peace for those who have passed on to eternal life. We praise and thank You for the life that You gave to our loved ones for the time You provided them to live on this earth. Thank you for the precious memories that we carry with us from the times we shared together with them. Help us, Lord, to keep our eyes fixed on You, for You are the Light of the World. You gave us the gift of Your precious Son, Jesus Christ. You sacrificed Him on our behalf, that we might be forgiven of our sins and experience eternal life with You. In Your holy and precious name, we pray.

**ALL:** **Amen**.

**Litany of Remembering**

**Leader:** This first candle we light to remember those whom we have loved and lost. We pause to remember their names, their faces, their voices, the memory that binds them to us in this season.

**People: May God’s eternal love surround them.** (A Moment of silence.)

**Leader**: This second candle we light to redeem the pain of loss; the loss of relationships, the loss of jobs, the loss of health. We pause to gather up the pain of the past and offer it to God, asking that from God’s hands we receive the gift of peace.

**People: Refresh, restore, renew us O God, and lead us into your future**. (A Moment of silence.)

**Leader:** This third candle we light is to remember ourselves this Christmas time. We pause and remember these past weeks and months; the disbelief, the anger, the down times, the poignancy ofreminiscing, the hugs and handshakes of family and friends, all those who stood with us. We give thanks for all the support we have known.

**People: Let us remember that dawn defeats darkness.** (A Moment of silence.)

**Leader:** This fourth candle is lit to remember our faith and the gift of hope which the Christmas story offers to us. We remember that God, who shares our life promises, has for us a place and time of no more pain and suffering**.**

**People: Let us remember the One who shows the way, Who brings the truth and Who bears the life.** (A moment of silence.)

**Leader:** We invite you to be seated as Sarah Burbey comes forward to read the Scripture readings.

**Sarah:** Our first **Scripture Reading** is from the book of Psalm chapter 46 beginning with verse 1.

“God is our refuge and strength, an ever-present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth give way and the mountains fall into the heart of the sea, though its waters roar and foam and the mountains quake with their surging . . . the Lord Almighty is with us; the God of Jacob is our fortress.”

**Sarah**: Our second **Scripture Reading is from**  the book of Revelation chapter 22 beginning with verse 3.

“The throne of God and of the Lamb will be in the city, and his servants will serve him. They will see his face, and his name will be on their foreheads. There will be no more night. They will not need the light of a lamp or the light of the sun, for the Lord God will give them light. And they will reign for ever and ever . . . Behold, I am coming soon! My reward is with me, and I will give to everyone according to what he has done. I am the Alpha and the Omega, the First and the last, the Beginning and the End. Blessed are those who wash their robes, that they may have the right to the tree of life and may go through the gates into the city.

This is the word of the Lord.

**Solo “Heirlooms” LuAnn Roberts Sanders (Rick Sanders on piano)**

**Message Pastor Keith Johnson**

**Poem “Christmas in Heaven” Mary Steinbrenner**

**Remembrance Candles**

**Leader:** Tonight we will light a candle in memory of each loved one. Death may end a life, but the memories remain as we continue to live and celebrate the life that God has given us. The lighting of a candle represents the memory of the person and reminds us they are not forgotten by God.

A candle will be lit to represent each person who has passed on to glory. We come tonight to pay tribute to those persons who lived with us, who were an influence in their community and loved by their family. We offer praise to God for all the blessings offered us in the presence and person of the one whom we have learned to know and to love . . . individuals who have touched our lives.

As we read the name of your loved one and light the candle, you may stand in memory of them and then sit down again.

**Reading of Names** – Jim Gorichanaz, Cheri Minor

**Song “Silent Night”**

**Announcements Mary Steinbrenner**

1. Thank you for joining us in our Remembrance Service. We invite you to worship with us for Christmas Eve at 11 am, 2, 4, 6, 9 and 11 pm and on Christmas Day at 9:15 am.
2. Thank you to those who brought a gift in memory of their loved one. Each gift will be wrapped and given to those in need at an inner city church at Ebenezer. Our free will offering baskets at the doors will also be given to the inner city church.
3. We thank our Grief Share Ministry Team for planning and organizing this worship service, for Sean Radecki and Luann and Rick Sanders for sharing their musical gifts, and for all the volunteers who assisted with the worship service.
4. Prayer Ministers are available to pray with you after this service in front of the altar.
5. Please remember to pick up your picture and take a candle after the service.
6. A reception is being held for everyone in the Atrium. We invite you to join us for some refreshment following this service.

**Closing Prayer**

**Leader:** Please rise for the closing prayer.

**ALL: Almighty God, we pray that we may be comforted in our suffering and made whole. When we feel afraid, give us courage; when we feel afflicted, give us patience; when we are lost, offer us hope; when we are alone, move us to Your side. In the name of Jesus Christ, we pray. Amen.**

**Benediction**

**Closing Song “Joy to the World”**

**(Volunteers at doors to hand out poem scrolls. Free will offering at doors - ushers to stand next to each basket. Candles extinguished after service. Prayer ministers available in the front of the sanctuary.)**