

First Sunday of Advent

"The days are coming", says the prophet Isaiah, "when all God's promises will be fulfilled." These promises of hope, peace, joy, and love are for you. Receive the hope that God offers to you today.



GATHERING Words of welcome and announcements

Anticipating the blessings of the one who is coming, let us offer one another signs of Christ's peace.

L: The Lord will fulfill all the promises given to God's people.

L: The days are coming when all shall be revealed.

L: The signs of God's Good News are all around us.

L: God will bring to us a new light for all generations.

P: Open our eyes, Lord, to see your promises fulfilled. Amen.

Greg and Angie Smith, Eleanor Moyer

Reader 1: Today we light one candle--the Candle called HOPE, as a reminder that God's promises are true.

Reader 2: We place our hope in God.

Reader 1: We place our lives in God's care.

Reader 2: Come, all is ready. Let the light of this one candle, called HOPE, bring brightness to your spirits.

The candle of Hope is lit.

***OPENING HYMN** *“O Come, O Come Emmanuel”* vs 1-4 (UMH # 211)

INVOCATION (unison)

We can hardly believe it, Lord. The Advent season is upon us. We usually translate that into the buying season in preparation for THE BIG DAY. But when we place our hope in the tinsel, wrappings, tape and boxes, we forget the most glorious gift of all, the gift of God's absolute love. Open our eyes, our hearts, our spirits today to behold God's gracious love for us in the fulfillment of all God's promises. For we ask this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Let us lift our prayers in thoughts of praise.

SILENT PRAYER

We praise Jesus for His act of salvation.

THE LORD’S PRAYER

FIRST SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 25:4-5 (MSG)

Show me how you work, GOD; School me in your ways. Take me by the hand; Lead me down the path of truth. You are my Savior, aren't you?

PRAYER OF CONFESSION (unison)

It is so easy for us, Lord, to let the anger, frustration, and fear overshadow our lives. We can't seem to escape it . We try to find some way to cover it up, but it remains. And in our anxiety, we act out our fear in ways which are not helpful and, far too often, go against the ways you have taught us to live. We feel the pressure to give, and resentment in giving. We feel the push to be present at every upcoming event, and want to run and hide. Help us, Lord. Heal our wounded spirits. Free us again to look to you for Hope. Let us see the many ways in which you are present to us..... guiding, healing, loving, and encouraging us. Forgive us for our fears and our stubbornness. Bring us again to your light, for we ask this in Jesus' Name. Amen.

SECOND SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 21:25-36 (MSG)

“It will seem like all hell has broken loose — sun, moon, stars, earth, sea, in an uproar and everyone all over the world in a panic, the wind knocked out of them by the threat of doom, the powers-that-be quaking.

“And then—then!—they’ll see the Son of Man welcomed in grand style—a glorious welcome! When all this starts to happen, up on your feet. Stand tall with your heads high. Help is on the way!”

He told them a story. “Look at a fig tree. Any tree for that matter. When the leaves begin to show, one look tells you that summer is right around the corner. The same here—when you see these things happen, you know God’s kingdom is about here. Don’t brush this off: I’m not just saying this for some future generation, but for this one, too—these things will happen. Sky and earth will wear out; my words won’t wear out.

“But be on your guard. Don’t let the sharp edge of your expectation get dulled by parties and drinking and shopping. Otherwise, that Day is going to take you by complete surprise, spring on you suddenly like a trap, for it’s going to come on everyone, everywhere, at once. So, whatever you do, don’t fall asleep at the wheel. Pray constantly that you will have the strength and wits to make it through everything that’s coming and end up on your feet before the Son of Man.”

A MOMENT WITH OUR CHILDREN

MESSAGE

**“The Humanity of HOPE”
Rev. Terry McDorman**

HYMN

“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus”

(UMH # 196)

OFFERTORY

INVITATION TO SHARE

God’s love for us knows no bounds. In grateful response, may our gifts to others abound.

PRESENTATION OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

***DOXOLOGY**

(UMH # 94)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below: Alleluia! Alleluia!

Praise God, the source of all our gifts! Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

***PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

Giver of all good things, as we offer these gifts to you, open our eyes to see more clearly all that we have been given and all that we have to give. Stretch our capacity to give of ourselves: our love, our companionship, and our material resources, wherever they are needed. Amen.

GREAT THANKSGIVING

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

It is right, and a good and joyful thing
always and everywhere to give thanks to you,
Almighty God, creator of heaven and earth.

From before all time to the consummation of time
you are the Lord, living and true, source of life and love
that rings throughout the universe. Angels adore you,
seraphim laud you, martyrs praise you, creatures and people
of every ability, language and land magnify your name,
and we join their eternal chorus:

Holy, Holy, Holy,

Lord God of power and might,

Heaven and earth are full of your glory!

Hosanna in the highest.

Blessed is Christ who comes in your name.

Hosanna in the highest.

Holy are you, Eternal God, and blessed is Christ, the Lamb that was slain,
seated at your right hand. For in him, O God, you have conquered death,
ravaged hell, burst the tomb, broken the chains of evil, and freed all creation
from its captivity to corruption. And through him you continue to make all
things new.

So renew in us by the outpouring of your Spirit upon us and upon these gifts
of bread and wine

that mind which was in Christ Jesus, who, on the night he was betrayed
took on the form of a servant, washed the feet of his disciples, and offered
them himself,

bread as his body, wine as his blood, and commanded them to love one another
as he had loved them, as they and we continue to break the bread and drink the cup,
remembering our Lord until he should come again in glory.
Come, Holy Spirit, on us and on these gifts. Come, Holy Spirit,
make them Christ's body and blood, and renew us as Christ's body as we receive them.
Turn us and keep turning us until we are one with the fullness of God,
one in body, mind, and spirit, one with each other, and one in the mission of Christ,
to conquer death, break every chain, and renew the whole creation now and at last at the day of his coming.
All glory and honor and worship and praise
and thanksgiving be to you,
Holy Triune God,
now and forever. **Amen**

On the night in which he gave himself up for us, he took bread, gave thanks to you, broke the bread, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Take, eat; this is my body which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

When the supper was over, he took the cup, gave thanks to you, gave it to his disciples, and said: "Drink from this, all of you; this is my blood of the new covenant,
poured out for you and for many for the forgiveness of sins. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me."

And so, in remembrance of these your mighty acts in Jesus Christ we offer ourselves in praise and thanksgiving as a holy and living sacrifice, in union with Christ's offering for us as we proclaim the mystery of faith.

Christ has died; Christ is risen; Christ will come again.

The Sacrament of Holy Communion (All are invited to come forward and partake as the Lord's Communion is open to all. Take a piece of bread and then dip it into the grape juice. If you are unable, we shall bring the elements to you.)

(After receiving Communion, you are invited to silently meditate upon the gift of Hope that is Jesus Christ)

SPECIAL MUSIC

Isaac Hunt, Eleanor Moyer, Grace Moyer

CLOSING PRAYER (Responsively)

L: Boxes, tissue paper, tape, ribbons, tags.....is everything all ready now for the season of giving?

P: Wrap us in your love, O God.

L: Lights, wreaths, trees, lawn ornaments, window candles.....is everything all ready now for the season of celebration?

P: Light our way in the darkness, O God.

L: Schedules, Parties, Gatherings, Visits.....is everything all ready now for the time of gathering?

P: Guide and direct our lives and steps, O God.

L: What is there left to do?

P: Place our hope in your presence and love, O God.

L: That's it? Place our hope in God?

P: That's it!

L: But all the stuff we have to do....what happens to all of that?

P: Don't be frantic. Place your hope in God.

L: But.....

P: Place your hope in God. Slow down. Listen. Behold! God is with you!

L: Where is God?

P: Here, right here, right now, beside you, before you, behind you - with you always. You don't have to fear.

All: Thank God.

***CLOSING HYMN** *"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"* **(UMH # 218)**

***BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE

All are invited to sit and reflect during the Postlude

**Please rise as you are able*

Our sincere appreciation to all those that contributed to this worship experience

ATTENDANCE LAST WEEK: 40

ATTENDANCE GOAL: 70

PASTRY WITH THE PASTOR

Every Tuesday morning during Advent (9:30-10:30) in Fellowship Hall as we discuss with Pastor Terry "Heaven and Earth, Advent and the Reincarnation."
All you need to bring in yourself and perhaps a friend.

ANNUAL COOKIE WALK NEXT SUNDAY

Immediately following worship! Come downstairs for a sandwich and bowl of soup and shop for cookies and other treats. It is a good way to nourish the body with food and help the United Women of Faith by supporting their ministry.

ADVENT

Pastor Terry is inviting everyone, either individually or as families, to take time each day to read a chapter from the Gospel of Luke. There are 24 chapters so that on Christmas Eve, you will have read an entire account of the life of Jesus Christ. The gift at the end is hopefully a much more meaningful Christmas day.

Be certain to check the church website, <https://maconilumc.net/> for updated information about the church, events and news. Please use webmaster.maconumc@gmail.com to submit updates or additions to the church website.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PRESENCE AND SERVICE

Sun. Dec 10 9:00 am Sunday School
Sun. Dec 10 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. Dec 10 11:00 am Annual Cookie Walk
Sun. Dec 17 Ugly Christmas Sweater Day
Sun. Dec 17 10:00 am Worship and Zoom Service
Sun. Dec 17 11:00 am Annual Cookie Walk

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

MISSIONS



Items requested by the food pantry are: Any kind of soup, any kind of cereal and/or oatmeal, canned fruit, macaroni and cheese; toilet paper and dish liquid. Cash donations are always welcome. The following items are needed for the holidays: cake mixes, frostings, pie fillings, mandarin oranges, pineapple, cream of chicken soup, cream of mushroom soup, puddings and jello. Donations requested for the Wee Care Fund to purchase Christmas gifts for children.

CHURCH BENCH

We are still in need of **FIVE POUNDS** of plastic caps to purchase a bench for outside the church. This will be made of recycled plastic. Please donate caps whenever possible.