



Accompaniment Play List and Sermon available on YouTube at

<http://bit.ly/OUMC11-30-2025>

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

CALL TO WORSHIP

Isaiah 9: 2-7

² The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light.

The light has shined on those who lived in the land of the shadow of death.

³ You have multiplied the nation.

You have increased their joy.

They rejoice before you according to the joy in harvest, as men rejoice when they divide the plunder. ⁴ For the yoke of his burden, and the staff of his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as in the day of Midian. ⁵ For all the armor of the armed man in the noisy battle,

and the garments rolled in blood, will be for burning, fuel for the fire. ⁶ For a child is born to us. A son is given to us; and the government will be on his shoulders. His name will be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. ⁷ Of the increase of his government and of peace there shall be no end, on David's throne, and on his kingdom, to establish it, and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from that time on, even forever. The zeal of Yahweh of Armies will perform this.

INTROIT "Angels from the Realms of Glory (Refrain)" UMH #220

<https://youtu.be/i4Vo5z2RZVE>

Come and worship, come and worship,

worship Christ, the newborn king.

OPENING PRAYER

Gracious God, we come to you this Advent as people who know darkness. We know the darkness of grief and loss. We know the darkness of fear and anxiety. We know the darkness of sin and shame. But we also come as people who have heard the promise: the Light

shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.

Help us to trust that promise, to walk in that Light, and to be bearers of that Light to others. In the name of Jesus, the Light of the World, we pray. Amen.

AFFIRMATION

"A Statement of Faith"

UMH # 883

We are not alone, we live in God's world.
We believe in God:
who has created and is creating,
who has come in Jesus, the Word made flesh,
to reconcile and make new,
who works in us and others by the Spirit.
We trust in God.
We are called to be the church:
to celebrate God's presence,

to love and serve others,
to seek justice and resist evil,
to proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen,
our judge and our hope.
In life, in death, in life beyond death,
God is with us.
We are not alone.
Thanks be to God. Amen.

GLORIA PATRI

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost; as it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be, world without end. Amen.

1. Come, thou long expected Jesus,
 born to set thy people free;
 from our fears and sins release us,
 let us find our rest in thee.
 Israel's strength and consolation,
 hope of all the earth thou art;
 dear desire of every nation,
 joy of every longing heart.

2. Born thy people to deliver,
 born a child and yet a King,
 born to reign in us forever,
 now thy gracious kingdom bring.
 By thine own eternal spirit
 rule in all our hearts alone;
 by thine all sufficient merit,
 raise us to thy glorious throne.

ANTHEM (Suggested)**"Light of the World"**https://youtu.be/_cLhaZIBSpo

Lauren Daigle

SCRIPTURE LESSON**Titus 2:11-14 WEB**

¹¹ For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, ¹² instructing us to the intent that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we would live soberly, righteously, and godly in this present age; ¹³ looking for the

blessed hope and appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ, ¹⁴ who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity and purify for himself a people for his own possession, zealous for good works.

JOYS & CONCERNS and MORNING PRAYER

Gracious and Everlasting God,
 In this Advent season, we come before You with hearts open to Your light and Your promises. We remember the words of Scripture: "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Lord, we thank You that in a world often shadowed by fear, sorrow, and uncertainty, Your light still breaks through. Your hope is not fragile; it is steadfast, unquenchable, and victorious.

We rejoice in the grace that has appeared to all people—a grace that trains us to live with godliness, self-control, and uprightness as we wait for our blessed hope: the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ. As we await His coming, shape our lives to reflect that hope. Make us people who shine with Your compassion, Your justice, and Your mercy.

Lord, we remember the promise, that "the people walking in darkness have seen a great light; on those living in the land of deep

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

darkness a light has dawned." Today, we pray for all who feel they are walking in darkness: those burdened by grief, weighed down by anxiety, isolated by loneliness, or overwhelmed by the struggles of life. May the light of Christ dawn anew upon them. May His name—Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace—bring comfort, strength, and hope to all who call upon Him.

God of Hope, fill us with expectation as we journey toward the manger and look toward the coming Kingdom. Help us resist despair and bear witness to Your redeeming light in the world. Empower us to be a people who carry Your hope into every conversation, every home, every place of need.

We thank You that in Jesus, Your zeal for justice, peace, and righteousness has taken on flesh and will one day reign without end. Until that day, keep us faithful, hopeful, and watchful.

Through Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, your Light, who taught us to pray...

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.

HYMN UMH #220

"Angels from the Realms of Glory"

<https://youtu.be/7iF80qpbIG>

1. Angels from the realms of glory,
wing your flight o'er all the earth;
ye who sang creation's story
now proclaim Messiah's birth:

Refrain:

**Come and worship, come and worship,
worship Christ, the newborn king.**

2. Shepherds, in the field abiding,
watching o'er your flocks by night,
God with us is now residing;
yonder shines the infant light **(Refrain)**

3. Sages, leave your contemplations,
brighter visions beam afar;
seek the great Desire of nations;
ye have seen his natal star **(Refrain)**

4. Saints, before the altar bending,
watching long in hope and fear;
suddenly the Lord, descending,
in his temple shall appear **(Refrain)**

SCRIPTURE LESSON

John 1: 1-5 WEB

¹ In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. ² The same was in the beginning with God. ³ All things were made through him. Without him, nothing

was made that has been made. ⁴ In him was life, and the life was the light of men. ⁵ The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness hasn't overcome it.

MESSAGE

"Light Breaks Through"

Rev Jim Canody

<https://bit.ly/Sermon11-30-2025>

There's a particular kind of darkness that settles in around 4:30 on a December afternoon. Those of you who commute know what I'm talking about. You leave work, and it feels like midnight. The sun has abandoned its post, and you're driving home in what feels like the middle of the night, even though it's barely dinnertime.

This is the season we find ourselves in – literally and spiritually. Advent begins in the darkest time of the year in the northern hemisphere. The days are short. The nights are long. And if we're honest, many of us feel that darkness in our souls too.

Maybe you're facing a medical diagnosis that feels like a shadow you can't shake. Maybe you're entering your first Christmas without someone you love, and the grief sits heavy on your chest. Maybe you're exhausted from conflict in your family, uncertainty about the future, or just the relentless weight of trying to keep it all together.

Into this darkness, Advent dares to speak a word: **Hope.**

Not the shallow optimism of greeting cards or the forced cheerfulness of holiday music. But the deep, unshakeable hope that declares: "*The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it.*"

Our three passages that together tell the story of God's answer to human darkness.

Our journey begins in Isaiah 9, written about 700 years before Jesus was born. The prophet Isaiah is speaking to a nation that knows darkness intimately. The northern kingdom of Israel has just been destroyed by Assyria. Refugees are streaming south. The Assyrian army is at Judah's doorstep. The people are asking: "Where is God? Has he abandoned us?"

Into this crisis, Isaiah speaks: "*The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light; those who dwelt in a land of deep darkness, on them has light shone.*"

Notice the tense here. Isaiah isn't saying "will see" or "might see someday." He says they *"have seen"* a great light. He's so confident in God's promise that he speaks of the future as if it's already accomplished. This is the audacity of biblical hope—it sees what isn't yet as if it already is, because it trusts the character of the God who promises.

And what does this light bring? Isaiah gives us a cascade of images:

"You have multiplied the nation; you have increased its joy." Not just survival, but JOY. Not just getting by, but flourishing.

"For the yoke of his burden, and the staff for his shoulder, the rod of his oppressor, you have broken as on the day of Midian." Liberation. Freedom from oppression.

And then comes the promise that would echo through the centuries: *"For to us a child is born, to us a son is given; and the government shall be upon his shoulder, and his name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace."*

Let me tell you about a woman a friend of mine visited in the hospital several years ago. Margaret was 82 years old, facing her third round of cancer treatment. When he walked into her room, he expected to find someone defeated, worn down. Instead, he found her reading Isaiah 9. She looked up at him and said, "Pastor, do you notice how Isaiah piles up these names? Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace. It's like he can't find one name big enough to capture who this child will be. That's who's with me in this hospital room. Not a small god who can barely manage my cancer. But a Mighty God who holds my whole life in his hands."

Margaret understood something profound: the hope of Advent isn't that our circumstances will necessarily change. It's that into our darkness comes a Light so bright, so complete, so overwhelming that the darkness simply cannot comprehend it or overcome it.

Isaiah goes on: *"Of the increase of his government and of peace there will be no end, on the throne of*

David and over his kingdom, to establish it and to uphold it with justice and with righteousness from this time forth and forevermore."

No end. That's the nature of this hope. It doesn't flicker. It doesn't fade. It increases. Forever.

Fast forward 700 years. The apostle John is writing his Gospel, and he opens with these majestic words: *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."* He's telling us that Jesus isn't **just** a good teacher or a moral example. He's the eternal Word through whom all things were made.

And then John makes this stunning declaration: *"In him was life, and the life was the light of men. The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."*

The Greek word John uses for "overcome" is fascinating. It can mean "overcome," "comprehend," or "seize." The darkness hasn't overcome the light. The darkness can't comprehend the light. The darkness can't get a grip on the light.

Picture a completely dark room. Now strike a match. What happens? The darkness doesn't put out the match. The match pushes back the darkness. That's the nature of light and darkness—they can't coexist. Where light is, darkness must retreat.

I think of a friend of mine, who spent 15 years in addiction. He describes those years as living in a fog so thick he couldn't see his hand in front of his face. He lost his marriage, his job, his dignity. He ended up homeless, sleeping under a bridge. He told me, "I was convinced that darkness was all there was. That I was beyond hope, beyond help, beyond God's reach."

One night, a pastor from a local church doing outreach under that bridge sat down next to him and said, "I don't care what you've done or where you've been. Jesus says he's the light of the world, and there's no darkness so thick that his light can't penetrate it."

My friend said those words haunted him for weeks. The idea that light could reach even

into his darkness seemed impossible. But impossible is exactly what God specializes in.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it." Not could not. Not might not. *Has not.* Present perfect tense. It's an accomplished reality. The light has won, is winning, and will continue to win.

This is the **HOPE** of Advent: not that we might find a way out of our darkness, but that the Light has already come into it.

But here's where it gets personal. Paul, writing to his young protégé Titus, connects God's grace — this light breaking into darkness — to how we actually live our lives.

"For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people, training us to renounce ungodliness and worldly passions, and to live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives in the present age."

Notice that word: *"training."* The grace of God doesn't **just** save us; it trains us. It teaches us. It apprentices us into a new way of living.

When you bring a plant that's been sitting in a dark closet out into the sunlight, it doesn't immediately flourish. At first, it might even look worse. The light exposes withered leaves, reveals disease, shows problems that were hidden in the darkness. But over time, that same light begins to heal, to strengthen, to transform.

That's what God's grace does. It exposes things in us that were hidden in darkness — pride, resentment, fear, selfishness. But it doesn't expose them to shame us. It exposes them to heal them.

I remember a conversation I had with a man in a former church who had just become a Christian. He said, "Pastor, I thought becoming a Christian would make life easier, but honestly, I'm more aware of my failures now than I ever was before. Is something wrong?"

I told him, "My Friend, nothing's wrong. Something's right. You're living in the light now, and light reveals. But here's the good

news: the same light that reveals our darkness also has the power to transform it."

Paul continues: *"waiting for our blessed hope, the appearing of the glory of our great God and Savior Jesus Christ."*

There it is again: **HOPE**.

But notice it's a waiting hope. We live between the first Advent and the second Advent. Between the light breaking into the world in a Bethlehem manger and the light filling all creation when Christ returns.

And in this in-between time, we're being trained. Trained to *"renounce ungodliness and worldly passions."* Trained to *"live self-controlled, upright, and godly lives."* Not through gritting our teeth and trying harder, but by walking in the light, letting it expose our darkness, and experiencing its transforming power.

Paul ends with the purpose of it all: *"[Jesus] gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to purify for himself a people for his own possession who are zealous for good works."*

The goal isn't just personal transformation. It's communal. Jesus is creating a people — a community of light-walkers who reflect his glory to a world still sitting in darkness.

So what does this mean for us practically as we enter this Advent season?

First, it means we can be honest about our darkness. You don't have to pretend everything is fine. You don't have to paste on a happy face and act like the darkness isn't real. Isaiah spoke to people walking in darkness. Jesus came into the darkness. The gospel doesn't deny darkness; it defeats it.

Second, it means we can be confident in the Light. Whatever darkness you're facing — grief, fear, addiction, doubt, depression — the light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it. *Has not.* The victory is already won.

Third, it means we can be patient with the process. God's grace is training you, which means you're in process. You're not done yet.

And that's okay. The same light that exposed your darkness is the light that's transforming you.

Finally, it means we can be a community of hope for each other. We're called to be light-bearers in a dark world. When someone in our church family is walking through darkness, we don't abandon them to it. We sit with them. We remind them of the Light. We reflect Christ's light into their darkness.

Every Advent, we light candles. We start with one, then two, then three, then four, and finally the Christ candle on Christmas Eve. It's a simple ritual, but it's profoundly theological.

We're acting out Isaiah's prophecy. We're dramatizing John's declaration. We're living into Paul's hope. Week by week, the light increases. The darkness doesn't disappear

instantly — but it steadily, surely, inevitably gives way to light.

"The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light."

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness has not overcome it."

"The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation for all people."

This is the hope of Advent: not wishful thinking, not crossed fingers, not vague optimism. But the certain, solid, unshakeable reality that the Light has come, the Light is here, and the Light will have the final word.

Whatever darkness you're walking through today, know this: you are not alone in it. *The Light* has entered it with you. *And the darkness* has not, cannot, *will not overcome it*. In the name of Jesus, the Light of the World, we pray.

Amen.✠

HYMN UMH #230

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

<https://youtu.be/kMih36CvZPo>

1. O little town of Bethlehem,
how still we see thee lie;
above thy deep and dreamless sleep
the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shineth
the everlasting light;
the hopes and fears of all the years
are met in thee tonight.

2. For Christ is born of Mary,
and gathered all above,
while mortals sleep, the angels keep
their watch of wondering love.
O morning stars together,
proclaim the holy birth,
and praises sing to God the king,
and peace to all on earth!

3. How silently, how silently,
the wondrous gift is given;
so God imparts to human hearts
the blessings of his heaven.
No ear may hear his coming,
but in this world of sin,
where meek souls will receive him, still
the dear Christ enters in.

4. O holy Child of Bethlehem,
descend to us, we pray;
cast out our sin, and enter in,
be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels
the great glad tidings tell;
o come to us, abide with us,
our Lord Emmanuel!

BENEDICTION

Go forth into the waiting world,
for the people who walked in darkness have
seen a great light.
The light shines in the darkness,
and the darkness has not overcome it.

The grace of God has appeared, bringing
salvation to all,
training us to live with hope, with courage,
and with love,

as we await the blessed appearing of our
glorious King.
May the Prince of Peace guide your steps,
may the dawn from on high break upon you,

and may your heart be filled with the hope that
cannot be extinguished.
Go in peace, for the Light has come,
and the Light will come again. Amen.

RESPONSE

“Go, Tell it on the Mountain” (UMH #251)

<https://youtu.be/De4Sm7QQLX4>

Go, tell it on the mountain
Over the hills and everywhere

Go, tell it on the mountain
That Jesus Christ is born

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² **Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus**, UMH #196, Author: Charles Wesley, Composer: Rowland H. Prichard © Public Domain

⁴ **O Little Town of Bethlehem**, UMH #230, Author: Phillips Brooks, Composer: Lewis H. Redner © Public Domain

⁵ **Go, Tell it on the Mountain**, UMH #251, Author: John W. Work, Jr., Adapter and Arranger: William Farley Smith © Words: Public Domain; Music: 1989 The United Methodist Publishing House, Administrators: Music Services, Inc., Public Domain CCLI#3063235

OUR PRAYER JOYS & CONCERNS from November 23, 2025

- The United States of America, other countries around the world, and our leaders
- War-torn areas including Ukraine, Israel & the Middle East
- Americans serving in the armed forces and in dangerous foreign diplomatic posts.
- Our missionary in Cambodia, Clara Mridula Biswas.
- Persecuted Christians
- The United Methodist Church and The Virginia Annual Conference

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|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tyler Nickel • Drew Edwards • Brandon Pruitt • Jimmy Fitchett • Those affected by Hurricane Melissa • Susan Taylor • Our Youth Sunday School • Connie Norton • Garnett Kellam • Linda Beasley • Rolland Elliot • Randall Bowling • Don Bowling • Phyllis Edwards | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Denis Curtis • Bobby Wood • Faith Parks • Alice Denny • Roy Ballard • Linda Beloke • Pig Denston • Jean Harris • Terry Johnson • Ron McCabe • Susan Beasley • Alma Reid • Rose Dryfus • Norman Bowling • Nancy Bisker | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ken Spain • Susan Fletcher • Camp Occohannock • Mary Paul Harmon • Crystal Foti • Peggy Byrd • Tom and Claudia Webb • E. A. McMath • T.K. Fitchett • Betty Turlington • George McMath • Rosilee Lewis • Dianne Nickel • Travel Mercies • Unspokens |
|---|---|--|

✠ *Special prayers for the family and friends of:*

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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Linda Custis • Nicky Kellam • Rita Leadbitter • Ginny Reynolds • Dottie Milliner • Reed Annis | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Henry Custis • Forrest McDowell • Rev David Denny • Nelda LoFaso • Mapp Cullen • Linda Lee Belote | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Daniel Pruitt • Roy Ballard • Dick Jenkins • Victims of gun violence |
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Please share your joys and concerns with Pastor Jim at : jimcanody@vaumc.org or call 703-861-2023

Website: <https://www.onleyumc.org/>
 Google Review: <https://g.page/r/CW9SLu50qxK6EBU/review>
 Facebook Page: <https://www.facebook.com/OnleyUMC/>.

YouTube Channel: <http://bit.ly/OUMC-YouTube>
 Join our email chain: onleymethodist@gmail.com

ANNOUNCEMENTS



Elsie Mackie (Dec. 11)
Ginny Powell (Dec. 15)
David Annis (Dec. 17)

Skye Lewis (Dec. 29)



Tom & Kim Hedge (Dec 2)



**United
Women
in Faith**

**United Women in Faith
Christmas Dinner @Bizotto's
5:30 PM – DECEMBER 27**



**Volunteers Needed
for Evening Christmas Music
If interested please call Al McMath
757-787-3106(h) or 757-710-3772 (c)**

NOTE: NEW DAY!

**BIBLE
STUDY
Tuesdays
@ 1pm**



Thank you for your dedication to the ministries of Onley UMC! We greatly appreciate your gifts, tithes, and prayers. Your contributions are important to the life and mission of OUMC. **Checks, made payable to OUMC** should be mailed to: **Onley UMC, P. O. Box 216, Onley, VA 23418**



**Youth Group
Nov 30: NO MEETING
December 7th 4-6 pm
Epworth UMC Exmore**

COAT CLOSET MISSION!



We continue to accept cash donations as well as coats, hats, scarves, jackets, and gloves during the year. Please either email us at jre11@verizon.net or call 757.710.1524 - leave a message to arrange pickup or drop off.

Monetary donations may be sent to Onley UMC, P O Box 216, Onley, VA 23418; please note "coat closet" in the memo section of the check.

2024-2025 Dates:

**December 6, January 10, and February 7
from 9am-11am.**

Plan now for the Saturday January 17, 2026
**2026 CAMP OOTB ANNUAL
FUNDRAISER
THE POLAR DUCK DIP**



Do you know someone who might donate an item to the auction? Now would be a great time to ask.

Island House fund raiser: Dec



Camp Occohannock on the Bay is one of OUR ministries- thank you for your support! WISH LIST:

You can help by supporting the camp with donations to their wishlist year round (craft items, snacks, tools, furnishings, activities, etc) found on Amazon at <https://amzn.to/4kKI8qG>