



December 2, 2022

Join us for worship online or in-person.
Sunday morning worship begins @ 10: 20 a.m.



Pastor Wesley George

From Our Pastor

Brothers & Sisters,

I'm sitting in my office putting together a Christmas playlist and thinking about how Methodists used to be known for their singing and music. We were built on the hymns of Charles Wesley, these were our primary way of teaching our beliefs and sharing our vision with others. This came to my mind because I often find it difficult to find truly great Christmas music. I frequently hear that music is an expression of our "soul"; it is an avenue where people can understand what we think and feel. If this is the case then to me it shows how hollow Christmas is in our society and frankly even the Christian music is not much better. Every year I remark to Sue that it sounds like the same ten songs sung over and over in slightly different styles by different people. To me this is another symptom of people going through the motions at Christmas, they do not sit and meditate on the season and the coming of Jesus, the music, like so much else in the season, has not touched them deeply.

I do not want to disparage your favorite Christmas albums because there are good ones (I am always up to hear about good Christmas music if you have some). But like our symbols and traditions our music points to what we think and believe about Christmas. Christmas should be a time saturated in sacred tradition and reminders of Jesus' birth and reign in this world. I hope this comes out in the Advent devotional we are offering, our traditions are about weaving Jesus' birth into the daily routine of our lives. Our choice of music during this time likewise is meant to help us focus on Jesus and his reign, it is meant to work on our subconscious drilling deep into our hearts, filling our minds with concepts like peace, love, joy, and hope.

I want to encourage each of you to make music a large part of your Christmas celebration because it does work deeply in us teaching and changing us. You might not be someone who typically listens to music or you might have difficulty feeling festive during Christmas, but you can still find music to comfort you during this season. Yes, I started by lamenting the lack of quality Christmas songs, but there are still several good ones and they are not that hard to find, what is important is that when you find them to allow them to work deeply on you, learning them and meditating on their meaning.

Have a Blessed Advent season,

Pastor Wesley

After Worship

Reflections

LifeGroup

***Reflections* LifeGroup**

Take a deeper look at the scriptures and message after the worship service.

Sundays from 11:30 a.m. until noon

Please sign up in the lobby.

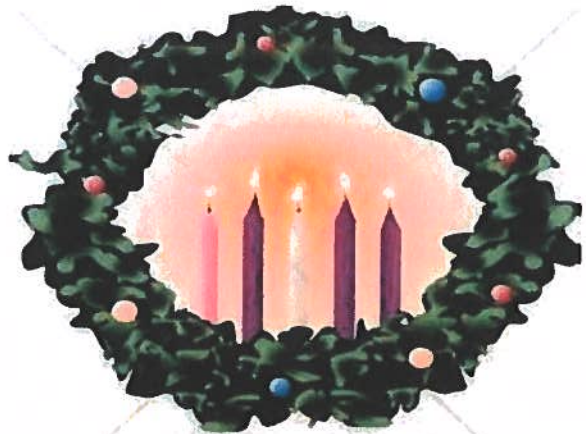
Why We Decorate:

An Advent Devotional by Pastor Wesley George

Available on our website at doverfirst.org

For an emailed copy,
contact the church office
at doverfirst@gmail.com

Not online?
Printed copies are
available in the lobby.



Advent



**Dover First UMC is Collecting
New Toys, Coloring Books and Crayons
for T4C's Share-A-Christmas!**

Choose a tag from the Share-A-Christmas
Tree coming to the lobby on Nov. 20th

Please place your unwrapped gifts
under the Share a Christmas Tree
TODAY!

Please Note:

**Due to covid limitations clothing, outerwear and books
(other than coloring books) cannot be accepted this year.**



Church Family Christmas Breakfast

Sunday, December 18th at 9 a.m.

Please Sign Up in the Lobby

**Enjoy a delicious breakfast and fellowship time
with the church family and guests.**

**Menu: Ham, Hash Browns,
Scrambled Eggs, Fruit, Juice and Rolls**

Love offering baskets will be available.

**Helping hands are needed for clean up after breakfast.
Please sign up in the lobby if you can help.**



Confirmation Class Breakfast Break

Let's make confirmation extra-special by providing a dozen donuts or other baked treats for our Sunday morning Confirmation Class!

Sign up in the lobby to choose a date

Bring your treats to classroom #7 before 9 a.m.

Our confirmands would love to meet you.

You can also drop off in the church kitchen on Friday.

Youth Group Christmas Ornament Fundraiser

Ornaments will arrive during the second week of December and can be picked up in the lobby on Sundays or weekdays in the office from 8 a.m. to 4 p.m.

Just \$10



Created by Warther Woodworking

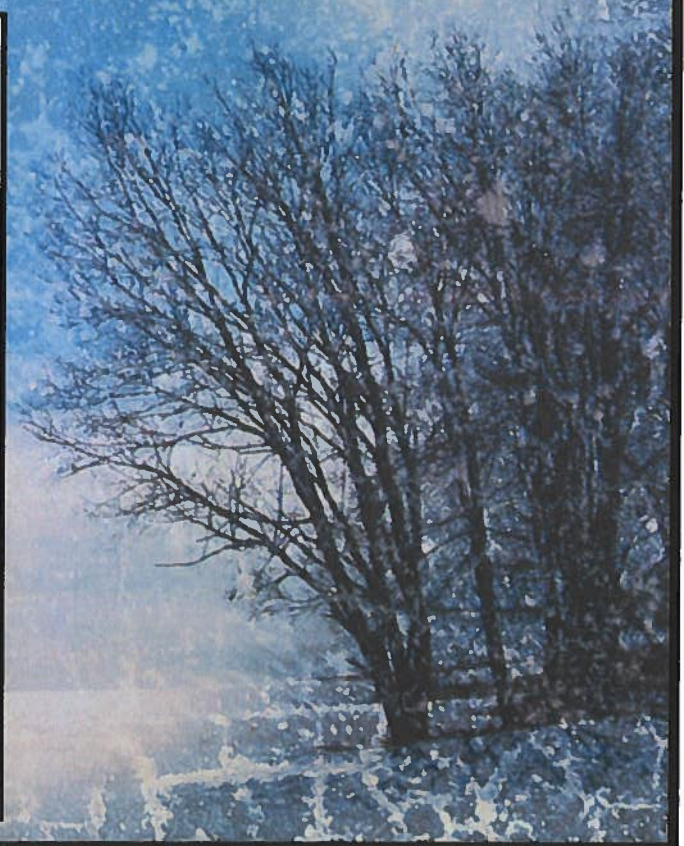
Blue Christmas

**A Service of
Remembrance and Hope**

**Dover First United
Methodist Church
Sanctuary
and Online
doverfirst.org**

**December 20th
at 6:30 p.m.**

**1725 N. Wooster Ave.
Dover, Ohio**





Dover First UMC Is Reaching Out at the Dover-New Phila Food Panty

**Volunteers are Needed on the 4th Thursday
of Each Month from 4:30 and 8 p.m.**

**Sign up in the lobby or by contacting the church office:
doverfirst@gmail.com or (330) 343-1322**

***Let's work together to end food insecurity
and hunger in our community!***

greaterdover-newphiladelphiafoodpantry.com

Invite your family, friends, small group, class or team.

Face coverings are optional and available if needed.

Kidz Min

Enjoy fun, friendship and a special time of worship just for you!

Children grades K thru 5th are invited. Meet at the back of the sanctuary on Sunday mornings during the second hymn and a teacher will walk to class with you.

Kidz Min will not meet on the 1st Sunday of each month.



Kidz Min ^{Plus}

Explore the Worship Arts With Us!
Children grades K and Up are Invited!

Dive into skits, music, movement,
dance and instruments on
Sunday mornings from 11:30 to noon



**Enjoy Food, Fellowship
and a Different Program Each Month**

For Adults of All Ages

Glowing Embers

**Monday, December 19th
Beginning at 5:30 p.m.**

Menu

Lasagna, Salad, Bread and Dessert

Program

A Special Christmas Guest!

**Please sign up in the lobby by Dec. 12th.
The cost is \$13 per person.**



Worship Service Outline

Second Sunday in Advent

December 4, 2022

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude "O Come, Little Children"
arr. Robert Thygerson

Lighting of the Advent Candles
Lynne Bassetti and Carol Fox

Call to Worship Psalm 72:1-2

L: Give the king your justice, O God,

ALL: And your righteousness to the royal son!

L: May he judge your people with righteousness,

ALL: And your poor with justice!

*Hymn #213 "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

First Scripture Isaiah 11:1-10

*Prayer

Children's Message by Pastor Wes

*Hymn #244 "'Twas in the Moon of the Wintertime"

Second Scripture Luke 1:68-79

Choir Anthem "Immanuel" arr. John Purify
Words and Music by Michael Card

Offering Introduction/Doxology #95/Prayer/Lord's Prayer

Message The Promise of Peace
 Pastor Wesley George

Communion

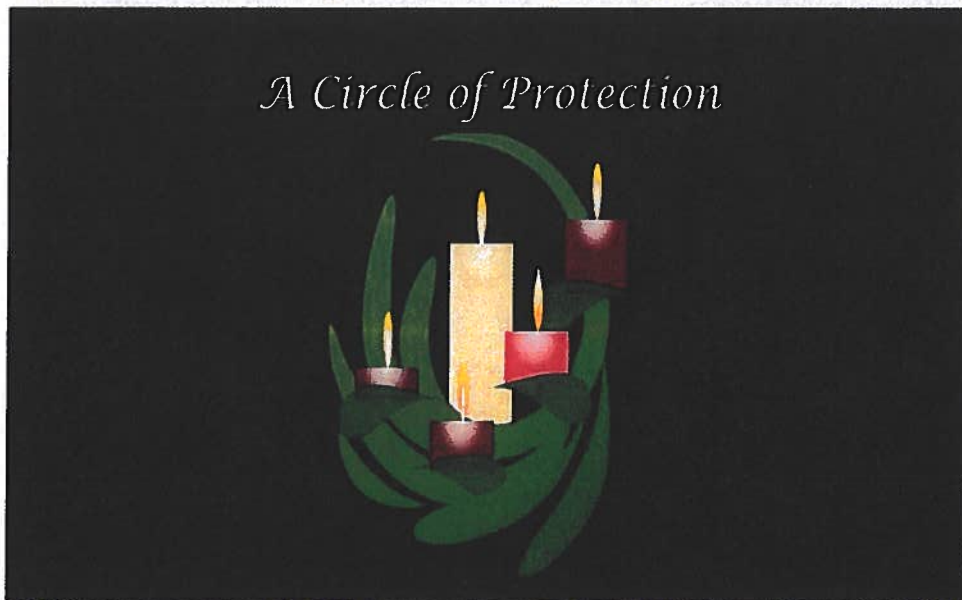
*Hymn #240 "Hark! the Herald Angels Sing"

*Benediction

*Postlude "Rejoice, Rejoice Believers"
 arr. David Lasky

Joining Us for the First Time or Have Questions?

We invite you to visit the Welcome Center in the lobby
or speak with one of our greeting team members
wearing a blue lanyard and name tag.



The Promise of Peace

Scripture: Luke 1:68-79

⁶⁸ “Bless the Lord God of Israel
because he has come to help and has delivered his people.
⁶⁹ He has raised up a mighty savior for us in his servant David’s house,
⁷⁰ just as he said through the mouths of his holy prophets long ago.
⁷¹ He has brought salvation from our enemies
and from the power of all those who hate us.
⁷² He has shown the mercy promised to our ancestors,
and remembered his holy covenant,
⁷³ the solemn pledge he made to our ancestor Abraham.
He has granted ⁷⁴ that we would be rescued
from the power of our enemies
so that we could serve him without fear,
⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness in God’s eyes,
for as long as we live.
⁷⁶ You, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.
⁷⁷ You will tell his people how to be saved
through the forgiveness of their sins.
⁷⁸ Because of our God’s deep compassion,
the dawn from heaven will break upon us,
⁷⁹ to give light to those who are sitting in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide us on the path of peace.”

Theme- We follow Jesus down the path of Peace

Questions

1. Why is this passage in a past tense (“has” represents a past perfect) when from Zachariah’s perspective Jesus’ birth is a future event?
2. What is the “path of peace” and what does it mean to walk it?
3. How is the path of peace related to ideas in this passage like “salvation” and “righteousness”?

Helpful Information

Related texts: Ps. 132:17, Zech. 8:16-19, Mt. 26:52, Jn. 14:27, Rom. 12:18

Peace (Shalom) in the Bible means to be whole, healthy, and/or complete. When applied to relationships peace is a state where the relationship is friendly and working to the benefit of all parties.

The word *eirene* (peace) appears in almost every writing of the NT. It describes an international calm and a relationship of goodwill between God and humans. Most frequently it describes a social reality, a state of reconciliation and wholeness among a group of people.¹

¹ William Klassen, “Peace: New Testament,” *The Anchor Yale Bible Dictionary* (New York: Doubleday, 1992) 207.

The Promise of Peace

Reflection

Over the next month we will repeatedly encounter the phrase “Peace on Earth”, as people seek a respite from the normal chaos of life. Our culture promotes the concept that Christmas is a day of tranquil rest and relaxation with family. But that is not how the Bible presents the peace of Christmas, Christians speak of Jesus as the Prince of Peace (Isaiah 2:9) and Zechariah speaks of a Messiah who will lead us down the “path of peace”. Why is it we promote a day of peace when the Scriptures want us to focus on a culture of peace? It is, in part, because our desire is different from what the Bible offers us and so we attempt to accommodate Jesus to our own aims. We desire time free of the stress caused by conflict and so we look forward to a time where we attempt to gather only with the people who cause us the least conflict? This is also why holidays can be stressful for those who do not get along with family, they desire freedom from stress but are forced into situations of stress. But this escape from conflict is only a byproduct of what Jesus has come to offer in terms of peace. Imagine a garden, Americans are taught to imagine peace as a garden without weeds, but the Bible recognizes this is not enough because a bare rock meets that definition. The Bible does not seek a garden without weeds but a garden full of beautiful and productive plants.

The Hebrew word translated “peace” is “shalom” and it means to be whole, complete, or healthy that is functioning correctly. When we talk of peace at Christmas we are talking about relationships between people, and so a peaceful relationship, is a healthy relationship, one that is functioning well for all parties. Peace is incompatible with simmering hostility and anger where people might not be in open conflict but still do not care for one another. Nor is peace compatible with power dynamics where one person dominates another. Yet, these are precisely the dominant relational models in our society. The kneejerk reaction of many will be to disagree with this statement, but think about how much of our society is built on “getting ahead”, how much of society is about profiting at another person’s expense, or making my life easy and convenient. Our society is built on a system that promotes self-ambition over community achievement, cutting corners over quality work, and pragmatic economics over the needs of people. We tend to think of violence in terms of physical abuse and killing, but much of our society falls under the Biblical definition of violence—seeking to put our neighbor in a disadvantageous relationship. The fact that these relational models are so dominant in our society is part of the reason our society has such issues with violence.

When the prophet Zechariah discusses peace (Zech8:-16-19) he connects it to justice and truth within an economic framework of society. Zechariah, speaking in Luke, makes similar connections and unites peace with salvation. Creating peace in society is about creating a just society where everyone is cared for to the level of their need. The Biblical picture of peace is one of people working together to build everyone up and help everyone maximize their potential. Peace is what happens when justice and truth govern a society, this is why Zechariah talks of “the path of peace”. Peace is the ultimate goal, a society where everything works together the way it should, as God intended creation in the Garden of Eden. This is also why so many only want a day of relaxation rather than true peace. To achieve true peace we must do the hard work of creating a society where goodwill outweighs profits. Achieving peace means laying aside our grudges and working on restoring relationships. None of this is easy and it does not come about with a true change of heart, and commitment to be vulnerable. But this is also the beauty of the Prince of Peace, the Messiah that Zechariah lauds. We call Jesus the Prince of Peace not simply because he ends violence and war but because following his example we are brought toward peaceful relationships with those around us. He is the light that walks ahead of us in the path of peace and shows us how to restore our communities to the idyllic state of Eden.