



Welcome to Worship!

Sunday, December 7, 2025

Second Sunday of Advent: Lighting the Candle of Peace

Worship Theme: Building Community

***Please stand as you are able.**

PRELUDE

What Star Is This? arr. by Lani Smith
Piano/Organ Duet; Lisa Hamilton and Marilyn Tice

WELCOME

Pastor Karen Evenson

*CALL TO WORSHIP

One: We gather together in this place: prophets and dreamers, singers and poets,

All: we who dare to imagine a world renewed; we who dare to dream God's dream.

One: We watch with Malachi and John. God's peace will soon appear. The hills and valleys will meet, and all things will be at rest.

All: We long for a world restored, renewed. The fire of God's justice burns in our hearts.

One: Come and worship, all you who dream and wait.

All: We have come to wonder and praise.

*HYMN

Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus (UMH 196 v 1)

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES Missy Christie, Craig, Jocelyn, and Cassidy Tanner

KIDS MESSAGE *(Kids of all ages are invited to come up front for a kid-friendly message)*

SPECIAL MUSIC

The Majesty and Glory by Tom Fettke
UMCA Chancel Choir

MOMENT TO SHARE THE STORY

PASTORAL PRAYER AND PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

*HYMN

Let There Be Peace on Earth (UMH 431)

SCRIPTURE READING

Matthew 3:1-12 (NRSVUE)

MESSAGE

“Prophetic Peace”
Pastor Karen Evenson

*COMMUNION HYMN

O, Come O Come Emmanuel (UMH 211, v 1)

INVITATION TO COMMUNION

One: God be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your fears, your hopes, your dreams.

All: We lift them up to God.

One: Let us give thanks to our generous, imaginative God.

All: We joyfully give our thanks and praise.

BLESSING OF THE BREAD & CUP

BREAKING OF THE BREAD & SHARING OF THE CUP

COMMUNION and OFFERING MUSIC

Surely, He Hath Borne Our Grievs by G.F.

Handel

UMCA Chancel Choir

*PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Creator of all good things, you have fed us with the bread of life and cup of blessing, small in their presentation, yet magnificent in our holy imagination. May the peace of the Lord's table accompany us on our journeys from here. Amen.

*DOXOLOGY

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow (UMH 94)

*THE LORD'S PRAYER

*HYMN

O, Come O Come Emmanuel (UMH 211, v 1 & 2)

PASSING PEACE TO ALL OF GOD'S PEOPLE

From one to another, “May God's peace be with you (and also with you).”

*BLESSING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

Go, Tell It On the Mountain arr. by Robert D. Vandall

Piano Duet; Lisa Hamilton and Marilyn Tice

December 14, 2025

Third Sunday of Advent

Luke 1:39-55

“Unexpected Joy”

Message by Pastor Karen Evenson

Worship Hospitality Team

Building Opener and Closer ~ Pastor Karen and Scott Evenson and Dave Panter

Choral Conductor ~ George Chu

Coffee/Donut Steward ~ Candy and Dave Gislason

Communion Servers ~ Angela and Dave Panter, Chrisana Tripodi,
Elaine and Tom Collison, and Sue Buckland

Communion Steward ~ Jim January

Congregational Care Coordinator ~ Sue Buckland

Greeters ~ June Fairley and Phyllis Rither

Liturgist ~ Bridgett Ansong

Music Ensembles ~ *To be prayerfully determined*

Nursery Coordinator and Volunteer ~ Amanda Harris and Sarah Dhein

Organist ~ Marilyn Tice

Pastor ~ Rev. Karen Evenson

Praise Team Coordinator ~ Kelvin Paye

Scripture Reader ~ Chrisana Tripodi

Sunday School Leader and Assistant ~ Bridgett Ansong and Ian Wallin

Ushers ~ David Blincow, Gail Sanstad, Ian Wallin,

Joyce Buffington, Roxy Crane, and Mark Worst

Welcome Center ~ Sheila Benson

Worship Tech ~ Dallas Berry

WEEKLY SCHEDULE:

UMCA Office Hours: 9:00am - 3:00pm ~ Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday

Or by appointment, please contact us at:

Phone: 763-421-2378 | Email: umcanoka@gmail.com

Tuesday, December 9, 2025

1:00pm Card Games in the Community Room

Wednesday, December 10, 2025

6:00pm Youth Group

7:00pm Chancel Choir Rehearsal

Thursday, December 11, 2025

8:00am Thursday Book Group at Bakers Square

9:30am Bring Your Bible ~ In-Person & Zoom

Saturday, December 13, 2025

11:00am Ken Jensen Service

10:00am Visitation, 12:00pm Luncheon

Sunday, December 14, 2025

SUNDAY SERVICE

9:30am Worship (In-Person & Online)

9:45am Sunday School

12:30pm Confirmation

DECEMBER

Ministry Highlight of the Month



United For The Community: EASTER “Resurrection & New Life”

**We will be inviting our neighbors to an
Easter Community Event in March/April of 2026.**

Easter is April 5, 2026

WORSHIP NOTES:

**Scan QR Code to connect to our website for more information on
the church, to donate, or view our weekly bulletin:**



Scripture: *Matthew 3:1–12 & Malachi 3:1–6a*

Character Spotlight: *John the Baptist*

THEOLOGICAL SUMMARY

On the second Sunday of Advent, the call to peace takes us beyond sentimentality and into the wilderness with John the Baptist. His voice, echoing through the desert, is not calm—it is disruptive. His call to repentance doesn't seek personal guilt but communal transformation. He confronts systems and identities that have grown comfortable with power. And in doing so, he exposes the thin peace of empire—a peace dependent on domination, silence, and stability for the few.

The Gospel of Matthew, shaped in the wake of the Roman destruction of the temple, understands this all too well. Empire offers peace that pacifies, not peace that liberates. In contrast, John proclaims that real peace demands preparation: a reorientation of hearts, systems, and society. His imagery is fiery and raw—a winnowing fork, an axe at the root—because the kind of change he calls for is costly. It disturbs complacency, reveals complicity, and refuses performative religion.

Alongside John's disruptive peace stands the prophet Malachi, whose imagery of a refiner's fire illuminates what divine justice truly looks like. It is not simply punitive—it is purifying. In Malachi's vision, God's justice confronts economic exploitation, false promises, and the marginalization of the vulnerable. The refining process, like repentance, is about clearing away what obscures and returning to integrity. Peace, then, is not a product of avoidance, but the result of deep transformation—of individuals and systems alike.

This Advent, we reclaim peace as prophetic. It is not passive or polite, but forged in the fire of truth-telling, refined by the Spirit, and rooted in a kin(g)dom vision of restored relationship. It asks of us more than comfort—it asks for courage to speak truth, to confront injustice masked as civility, and to prepare our communities for a peace that dismantles and rebuilds.



CHARACTER SPOTLIGHT

John the Baptist does not fit our holiday aesthetic. He doesn't wear soft robes, light candles, or offer quiet reflections. Instead, he shouts from the wilderness with words of fire and images of axes and trees. He baptizes with urgency and speaks truth to religious leaders, warning them that peace without justice is falsehood.

But John's wildness is not reckless—it is sacred disruption. He prepares the way, not with decorations or sentiment, but with fierce honesty and deep integrity. His life bears witness to what it means to make room for God—not by building walls, but by clearing paths. He teaches us that true peace is not found in hiding from conflict, but in confronting it with clarity, love, and the will to change. John calls us to examine our offerings, to refine what we bring, and to turn toward the kin(g)dom that is near—not in comfort, but in courage.

The Candle of Peace

Person A: The birth of Jesus has been told and retold a thousand times and in a thousand ways.

Person B: Its impact cannot be contained in any one perspective. But who is telling the story changes how we hear it, how we imagine it, how we experience it.

All: We light the candle of HOPE because hope creates a path for a new, unknown story to unfold.

Light the first candle...for hope.

Person A: Close your eyes for a moment. What we often see this side of history in paintings or nativities is a peaceful still life of the blessed family, Mary, Joseph, and the baby Jesus. Imagine visiting the newborn infant. (wait a full ten seconds before speaking resumes)

Person B: Open your eyes. Babies are not always quiet. If something is wrong or they need attention, they cry out regardless of what anyone else is saying or doing. Those around the baby must choose to respond to their cries.

Person A: The same is true for injustice. When needs go unmet or injustice occurs, the cries of those affected rise in hopes of being heard by those nearby. A cry is a call for peace. Peace for a belly to be filled, peace for safety and security, peace to be clean and have dignity. The infant Jesus broke the silence, crying out to bring peace to the world.

Person B: Jesus, like Malachi, John, and other prophets before him, calls us in the loudest of cries to peace.

All: Today, we light the candle of PEACE because peace requires us to pay attention to the needs of those around us.

Light the second candle...for peace.