



Sunday, December 10, 2023

Culmore
United Methodist Church

Welcome and
Good Morning!

Welcome and Announcements



Advent at Culmore



Photos by Rose Lucas

Happy Birthday

Once again it's your birthday. Once again the time is here.
What a loving gift from Jesus, He has given you one more year.
Happy time is your birthday, happy time this year.
What a loving gift from Jesus, He has given you one more year.
Oh happy birthday to you, oh happy birthday to you.
For you have Jesus Christ everyday of your life.
Oh happy birthday to you, oh happy birthday to you.
The Lord bless and keep you.
Happy birthday to you. And to Jesus with you.
God bless you and keep you. Happy birthday to you.



Peace



SHALOM

Wholeness

שלום

Well-being

Completeness

Peace

Shalom is a blessing,
a manifestation of divine grace.



We Light the Candle of Peace

Advent calls us to prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ, the Prince of Peace. Today we light the second candle, the candle of peace.

May this candle shine forth in brightness, lighting up what truly matters. May we let the distractions go.

We choose to be a peaceful presence in the midst of frantic times. We choose to pursue peace within ourselves and with one another.

We choose the Peace of Christ to be the guiding light in our lives.



A Candle is Burning

A candle is burning,
a candle of PEACE,
A candle to show us
That fighting must cease.
For Jesus is coming to show us the way
A message of peace humbly laid on the hay.





Opening Prayer

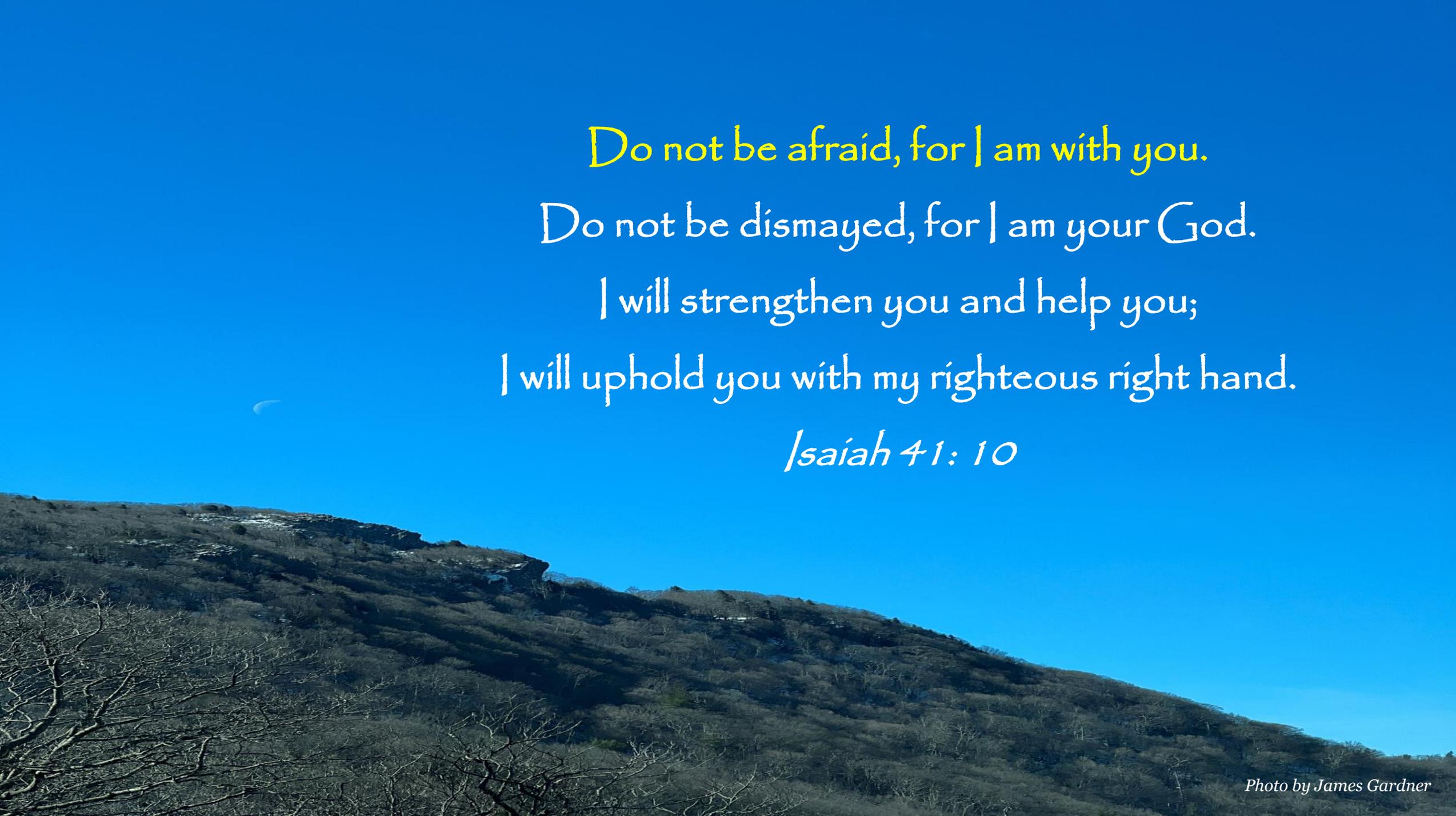
Loving God,

At this season of advent, help us to slow down and embrace the peace that can only be found in you. You know how much our fractured world needs your peace.

At this season of advent, help us find peace within ourselves, as well. You know how often we get stuck in worry and discontent, and are grievously in need of your peace that passes all understanding.

May we then carry this peace, this hope, this light that Christ has brought throughout the year and not just at advent. May these gifts of love abide in our hearts forever. *Amen*



A landscape photograph of a hillside with sparse vegetation under a clear blue sky with a crescent moon. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

Do not be afraid, for I am with you.
Do not be dismayed, for I am your God.
I will strengthen you and help you;
I will uphold you with my righteous right hand.

Isaiah 41: 10

不要害怕，因为我与你同在。

No temáis, porque yo estoy
con ustedes.

Jangan takut, karena aku bersamamu.

두려워하지 마라. 내가 너와 함께 있기 때문이다.

Do not be afraid, for I am with you.

- Isaiah 41:10.

Huwag kang matakot, dahil kasama mo ako.

恐れなくてください、私があなたと一
緒にいるからです。

N'ayez pas peur,
car je suis avec vous.



During the Christmas story, how many people, or groups of people are told, “do not be afraid?”

- **Two?**
- **Three?**
- **Four**
- **five**



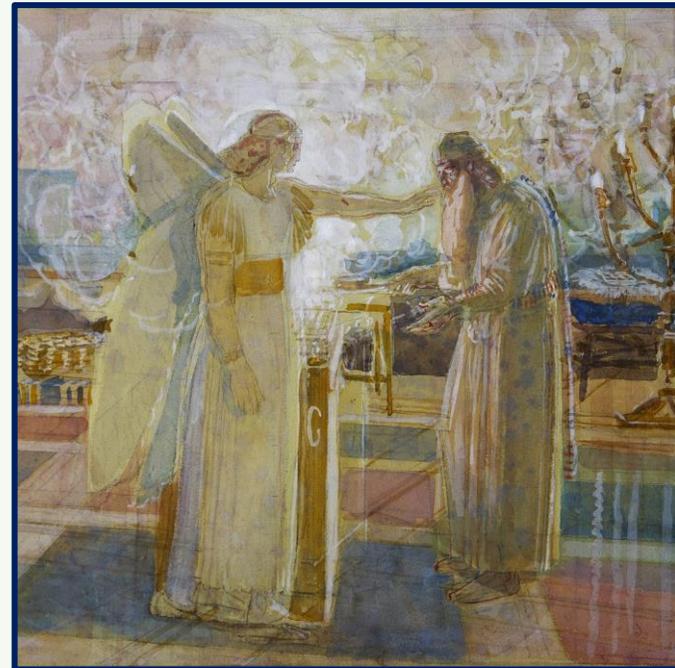
WHO were the four people, or groups of people who were told,

“Do not be afraid:”

- a) The wise men, Joseph, the Shepherds, Elizabeth (Mary’s cousin)?**
- b) The Shepherds, Zechariah (Elizabeth’s husband), Joseph, the Wise Men?**
- c) Joseph, Mary, Zechariah, and the Shepherds**

Luke 1: 13-15

“Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. I bring you good news. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth.



Do Not Be Afraid - Luke 1:30-31



The angel said to her, "**Do not be afraid**, Mary; you have found favor with God. You will conceive and give birth to a son, and you are to call him Jesus. He will be great and will be called the Son of the Most High.

Do Not Be Afraid - Matthew 1:20

...An angel of the Lord appeared to him in a dream and said, "Joseph, son of David, **do not be afraid** to take Mary home as your wife, because what is conceived in her is from the Holy Spirit.



Luke 2: 8-20



And there were shepherds living out in the fields nearby, keeping watch over their flocks at night. An angel of the Lord appeared to them, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, and they were terrified.



But the angel said to them:

“Do not be afraid. I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you; he is Christ the Lord. This will be a sign to you: You will find a baby wrapped in cloths and lying in a manger.”



Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying,

*"Glory to God in the highest,
and on earth peace, goodwill to all."*



When the angels had left them and gone into heaven, the shepherds said to one another, "Let us go to Bethlehem and see this thing that has happened, which the Lord has told us about."

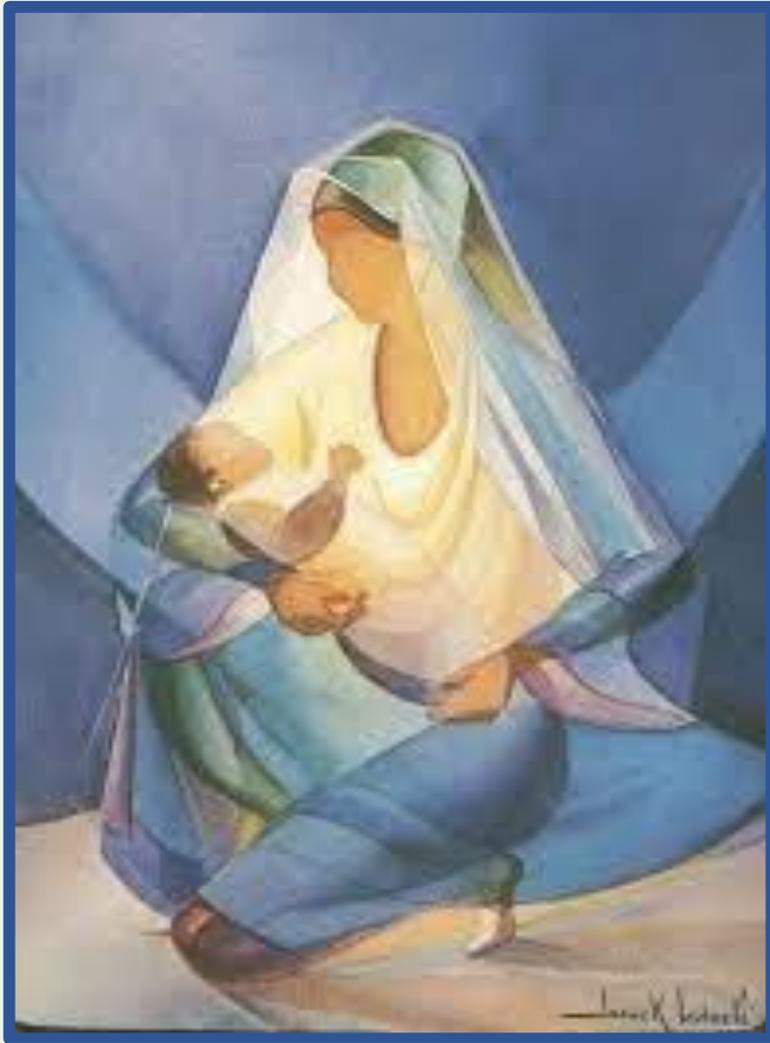
So, they hurried off ...



... and found Mary and Joseph, and the baby, who was lying in the manger.

When they had seen him, they spread the word concerning what had been told them about this child, and all who heard it were amazed at what the shepherds said to them.





But Mary treasured up all these things and pondered them in her heart. The shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things they had heard and seen, which were just as they had been told.



What Child Is This - UMH 219



What Child is this, who, laid to rest,
On Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear: for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come, peasant, king to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him.

This, this is Christ, the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing:
Haste, haste to bring Him laud,
the Babe, the Son of Mary!



John 14:27 (NIV)

Jesus said, "Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled, and **do not be afraid.**"



Wholeness and well-being, I leave with you; my *shalom*
I give you. Completeness I leave with you; my *peace*
I give you.

I do not give to you as the world gives.

Do not let your hearts be troubled and do not be afraid.



Offering and Doxology



What can I give him, poor as I am?

If I were a shepherd, I would bring a lamb,

If I were a wise man, I would do my part,

Yet what can I give Him — Give my heart.

Community Prayer

LORD Jesus, in the Christmas story, there were several times when angels visited people as messengers of God to make important announcements. They always seemed to start with “*Do not be afraid,*” to reassure their listeners that they had no reason to fear. We don’t face angels like that, but we do come face-to-face with large and scary problems at times. Our problems can bring fear, because we don’t understand what is happening, and worry about what might happen to us.

We would love to have someone say to us that we don't need to be afraid, that God is in what is happening. But we can't count on that, or can we? Give us the ability to listen carefully, and wait on God to speak quietly to us, and unfold our lives before us in every situation. Remind us that there is never any need for us to be afraid, that we can always depend on God's peace! *Amen.*



Silent Night - UMH 239

Silent night! Holy night!
All is calm, all is bright
'round yon virgin mother and child!
Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night! Holy night!
Shepherds quake at the sight.
Glories stream from heaven afar,
heav'nly hosts sing, "Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born!"

Silent night! Holy night!
Son of God, love's pure light
radiant beams from Thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth!

Silent night! Holy night!
Wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing
"Alleluia" to our King:
"Christ the Savior is born!"



Photo by James Gardner

Benediction