



First United Methodist Church Graham, NC

www.fumcgraham-nc.org

303 North Main Street, Graham, NC 27253

336/226-4343

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025



Our Mission

To make disciples for Jesus Christ through love and service

Our Vision

A loving and diverse community meeting the real needs of our neighbors through spirit-filled worship, intergenerational discipleship, and caring service

Come, Let Us Worship the Lord

Third Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

Gathering

CHIMING OF THE HOUR

WELCOME

PRELUDE

He Shall Feed His Flock

Handel

†CALL TO WORSHIP

Into the world's weary and impatient ways, God will give us a sign.

A miracle is about to break forth, a sign as deep as the grave and as high as heaven.

A young woman will give birth to a son and name him Emmanuel, God with us.

He will learn to do for us what we cannot do for ourselves, to reject evil and choose good.

In this journey of Advent, we wait for love to be born anew.

In love, we wait for God-With-Us.

†OPENING HYMN

Jesus Came, the Heavens Adoring

(Tune: "Angels from the Realms of Glory")

1. Jesus came, the heav'ns adoring,
came with peace from realms on high;
Jesus came for our redemption,
humbly came on earth to die.
Alleluia! Alleluia! came in deep humility.
2. Jesus comes again in mercy
when our hearts are worn with care.
Jesus comes again in answer
to an earnest, heartfelt prayer.
Alleluia! Alleluia! comes to save us from despair.
3. Jesus comes to hearts rejoicing,
bringing news of sins forgiv'n;
Jesus comes with words of gladness,
leading souls redeemed to heav'n.
Alleluia! Alleluia!
Hope to all the world is giv'n.

4. Jesus comes on clouds triumphant
when the heav'ns shall pass away.
Jesus comes again in glory;
let us, then, our homage pay.
Alleluia! ever singing
till the dawn of endless day.

†SHARING THE PEACE

Please greet your neighbor and pass the Connect pads to register your attendance.

LIGHTING OF ADVENT WREATH: JOY

Reader: In the midst of our waiting and longing for God to make the world right again, we cling to the truth that God has saved, God is saving, and God will save. So today, we join our voices with the prophet Isaiah, who calls us to live in the joy of the truth of God's salvation.

ALL: We choose to believe that the day is coming when "the ransomed of the LORD shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain joy and gladness, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away."

Reader: We light this candle of joy as a sign of the Truth that sets us free to live in joy as we wait and work for the day when all creation will flourish together.

Proclamation

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Stir up the wills of all who look to you, Lord God, and strengthen our faith in your coming, that, transformed by your grace, we may walk in your way; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON

[Isaiah 35:1-10](#)

Susan Brink

35 ¹ The desert and the dry land will be glad;
the wilderness will rejoice and blossom like the crocus.

² They will burst into bloom,
and rejoice with joy and singing.
They will receive the glory of Lebanon,
the splendor of Carmel and Sharon.
They will see the Lord's glory,
the splendor of our God.

³ Strengthen the weak hands,
and support the unsteady knees.

⁴ Say to those who are panicking:
"Be strong! Don't fear!
Here's your God,
coming with vengeance;
with divine retribution
God will come to save you."

⁵ Then the eyes of the blind will be opened,
 and the ears of the deaf will be cleared.
⁶ Then the lame will leap like the deer,
 and the tongue of the speechless will sing.
 Waters will spring up in the desert,
 and streams in the wilderness.
⁷ The burning sand will become a pool,
 and the thirsty ground, fountains of water.
 The jackals' habitat, a pasture;
 grass will become reeds and rushes.
⁸ A highway will be there.
 It will be called The Holy Way.
 The unclean won't travel on it,
 but it will be for those walking on that way.
 Even fools won't get lost on it;
⁹ no lion will be there,
 and no predator will go up on it.
 None of these will be there;
 only the redeemed will walk on it.
¹⁰ The Lord's ransomed ones will return and enter Zion with singing,
 with everlasting joy upon their heads.
 Happiness and joy will overwhelm them;
 grief and groaning will flee away.

SHARING FAITH WITH ALL GOD'S CHILDREN

Chris Fulkerson

Childcare is available for children ages 5 and under in Room 121. Red drawstring "Worship Kid Kits" with children's bulletins are available in the entrance area each week for children to use throughout worship.

ANTHEM

Advent Promise

Schram

Brenda Moore, flute

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son.
 Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son,
 and bear a Son; and His name shall be called
 Wonderful Counselor, the Mighty God,
 the Everlasting Father; And His name shall be called
 Wonderful Counselor, the Prince of Peace,
 the Prince of Peace.

For unto us a Child is born, a Son is given;
 For unto us a Child is born, a Son is given,
 a Son is given; And the government shall be
 upon His shoulder, and He shall reign on
 David's throne forever; And His name shall
 be called Wonderful Counselor;
 the Prince of Peace, the Prince of Peace.

Behold, a virgin shall conceive and bear a Son.

†SECOND SCRIPTURE READING [Matthew 11:2-11](#)

² When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples ³ and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?” ⁴ Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵ the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them.

⁶ And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me.”

⁷ As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸ What then did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. ⁹ What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰ This is the one about whom it is written,

‘See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you,
who will prepare your way before you.’

¹¹ “Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist; yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.

SERMON

“Unseen Gifts”

Pastor Duane

Response

OFFERING OUR GIFTS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD’S PRAYER

(UMH #895)*

**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 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.**

†AN ADVENT CREED

Lisa Frenz

**We believe in one God, who is Creator,
maker of all we see and all we don’t see.
Who is Ruler of the universe: Source of all creation!
We believe in one God, who is Jesus Christ,
God from God, Light from Light, true God and true human.
He is one with the Creator; the Word made flesh, our Messiah: Savior of all creation!
We believe in one God, who is Holy Spirit,
Breath of God moving among us;
Who is one with the Creator; one with the Christ;
our Comforter and our Guide: Mentor of all creation!**

†DOXOLOGY (Tune: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*)

Praise God from whom all blessings flow.

Praise Him all creatures, here below.

Praise Him above, ye heavenly host.

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee,

O Israel.

Sending Forth

RESPOND TO THE WORD

The altar is always open if you would like to pray. Feel free to stay as long as you desire. If people remain in prayer after the dismissal, those who must leave are asked to move quietly and reverently toward the back of the sanctuary.

†CLOSING HYMN

"It Came Upon the Midnight Clear"

(UMH #218)*

1. It came upon the midnight clear,
that glorious song of old,
from angels bending near the earth,
to touch their harps of gold:
"Peace on the earth, good will to men,
from heaven's all-gracious King."
The world in solemn stillness lay,
to hear the angels sing.

2. Still through the cloven skies they come
with peaceful wings unfurled,
and still their heavenly music floats
o'er all the weary world;
above its sad and lowly plains,
they bend on hovering wing,
and ever o'er its Babel sounds
the blessed angels sing.

3. And ye, beneath life's crushing load,
whose forms are bending low,
who toil along the climbing way
with painful steps and slow,
look now! for glad and golden hours
come swiftly on the wing.
O rest beside the weary road,
and hear the angels sing!

4. For lo! The days are hastening on,
by prophet seen of old,

when with the ever-circling years
shall come the time foretold
when peace shall over all the earth
its ancient splendors fling,
and the whole world send back the song
which now the angels sing.

†THE BLESSING

†CHORAL RESPONSE (Choir and Congregation)

(UMH #213)*

**Redeemer, come, in us abide;
our hearts to Thee we open wide;
let us Thy inner presence feel;
Thy grace and love in us reveal. Amen.**

†CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

†POSTLUDE

Come Now, Savior of the Gentiles

Vetter

†Please stand if you are able.
*Songbooks are located in pew rack.