



Dover First UMC's Weekly Newsletter
November 28, 2025

Let's Worship Together

Sundays at 10:20 a.m.
in the Sanctuary

Recharge Service

Live Contemporary Music
Last Sunday of the Month
Fellowship Hall at 6 p.m.

Nursery Care

Sunday mornings
for children 1 to 3
in rooms 1 and 3

Preschool

Sunday mornings
for children 4 to 6

Children's Ministry

Kidz Min Church
during Sunday Worship

Youth Ministry

Youth Group for grades
middle and high school
Sundays at 6 p.m.

Our Website

Visit **doverfirst.org**
for online services,
special studies,
announcements,
opportunities to serve,
and the church calendar



Our annual Christmas Card Exchange Boxes
are setup in the lobby and ready for sharing
greetings with members of our church family.

Simply place your cards or notes under
the correct letter of the alphabetical tabs
and file by the recipient's last name.

Please do not leave cards to be mailed and be sure
to check the boxes each week for your greetings.

**Special thanks to Nedra Trautman for sharing
this fun and convenient annual tradition.**



**Let's Help T4C to Share a Brighter
Christmas for Area Children and Families**
All gifts and donations are needed by Nov. 30th

To Give Toys and Other Gifts for Children

Pick up a tag from the tree in the lobby.

After shopping, place your gift under
the tree no later than November 30.

Please note: All gifts should be new and not used.

To Donate Funds to Help T4C with Clothing Gifts

Please write 'Share a Christmas'
on your check memo line or cash envelope.

Checks should be made to Dover First UMC.

Please note: We are not collecting clothing this year.

First Sunday OF ADVENT



But now thus says the Lord, he who created you, O Jacob, he who formed you, O Israel: Do not fear, for I have redeemed you; I have called you by name; you are mine. 2 When you pass through the waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overwhelm you; when you walk through fire you shall not be burned, and the flame shall not consume you. (Isaiah 43:1-2)

“Do not fear, for I have redeemed you”, these words ring with me as I think about the fear and anxiety that must have been present in Israel when they were spoken. From the 8th century BC, when Isaiah began writing, through the time of Jesus, Israel was in a place of constant anxiety. The threats to God’s people from outside forces were constant. And yet God says, “I have redeemed you.” God is saying to the people that they are already under God’s protection. Yet, I am sure the people from Isaiah’s time on down had difficulty understanding this given the political anxiety that swirled around them. I am sure they wondered if God had redeemed them and what that looked like in the real world.

I think these are still issues we wrestle with because we want everything now. But Advent is a season of anticipation, it is meant to help us look forward to a time of fulfillment. Advent is meant to help us slow down and say, “God is still getting everything ready”. The time is not yet come and I am glad because I am not ready for it myself- not fully. Just like I haven’t fully prepared for Christmas and so am glad it is still a month away, I have not fully prepared myself for God’s kingdom. Even though I want my redemption to be complete I need to recognize it takes time and if I am patient the reward will be sweet.



Welcome to Worship

First Sunday in Advent

November 30, 2025

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude **“Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying”**
 arr. Edward Broughton

Lighting the Advent Wreath – Hope

Teresa MacEachen, Pianist and Organist
Ron Barkett, Choir Director

***Hymn #240** **Hark! The Herald Angels Sing**

Scripture **Isaiah 2:1-5**

Hymn #232 **When Christmas Morn Is Dawning**

All children who would like to go to Kidz Min in the Education Zone are asked to meet at the back of the sanctuary during the hymn.

Prayer

***Hymn #229** **Infant Holy, Infant Lowly**

Scripture	Romans 13:11–14
Choir Anthem	“Will We Know Him?” Words and Music by Don Mesig and Nancy Price
*Offering Introduction/Doxology/Prayer/Lord’s Prayer	
Message	Dawn on the Mountain Pastor Wesley George
*Hymn #213	Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates
*Benediction	
*Postlude	“And the Glory of the Lord” arr. Lani Smith from “Messiah”

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Dawn on the Mountain

Scripture: Romans 13:11–14

¹¹ Besides this, you know what time it is, how it is now the moment for you to wake from sleep. For salvation is nearer to us now than when we became believers; ¹² the night is far gone, the day is near. Let us then lay aside the works of darkness and put on the armor of light; ¹³ let us live honorably as in the day, not in reveling and drunkenness, not in debauchery and licentiousness, not in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to gratify its desires.

Questions

1. Why does Paul refer to the Romans as being asleep?
2. Why does Paul say salvation is nearer now than when we became believers?
3. What is the armor of light and how do we put it on?

Background

Related Scriptures: Isaiah 2:1-5; Matthew 24:36–44; 1 Thessalonians 4:9–10

Theodore of Mopsuestia: Every law either forbids evil or tells us to do good. Legislators pass the first kind of law in order that we should not harm one another and the second kind in order that we should help one another as far as possible. But they are all summed up in the one command that we should love our neighbor.¹

Chrysostom: Paul is not trying to frighten his hearers but to encourage them, so as to detach them from their love of the things of this world. It was not unlikely that at the beginning of their endeavors they would be more dedicated and slacken off as time went on. But Paul wants them to do the opposite—not to slacken as time goes on but to become even more dedicated. For the nearer the King is, the more they ought to be ready to receive him. *Homilies on Romans 23*

Origen: This may be understood in both a universal and in a particular sense. In the first instance, the light is dawning everywhere, and the reign of darkness over the world is rapidly coming to an end.... In the second instance, if we have Christ in our hearts he gives us light. Therefore if the reason of knowledge drives away our ignorance and if we turn away from unworthy deeds and do what is right, we are in the light and are walking honestly as if in the day. *Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans*.

“Besides this” refers back to verses 8-10 where Paul tells us we owe love to one another.

We often think of salvation as the moment of accepting Jesus, but Paul also uses the term to mean the time when we are united with Jesus and his reign on earth is instituted fully. It is like how we can say it's day when sunlight starts appearing over the horizon but the Sun is not fully visible and complexly lighting the world.

The armor of light is the protection of living like Jesus; the contrast of light and darkness is meant to show a divide between loving others and not loving others.

¹ Gerald Bray, ed., *Romans (Revised)*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 320.

Dawn on the Mountain

Reflection

Have you ever noticed that Jesus instructed his followers to pray “your kingdom come” when he himself was bringing that kingdom? This might seem like a strange contradiction but it highlights how God’s kingdom works. Jesus did indeed bring God’s kingdom with him but not completely. We have entered the kingdom but we have not fully realized God’s kingdom. This is what we celebrate during Advent, we recognize that we have had a taste of the kingdom and now want the rest. It is like smelling the coming feast and salivating waiting to enjoy it. Or as Paul says anticipating the day and seeing the first cracks of daylight in the sky. Advent is a time where we get ready for the day of Jesus’ arrival. Paul wants us to wake up shake the sleep off, get dressed and be ready for the day. Continuing his analogy there are two ways to approach the day, to consistently see the light and try to bring light into your world or to focus on the darkness. Bringing light brings positivity and joy, while focusing on the darkness only admits gloom. Our calling is to be people clothed (armored) with light. We are people who see the dawn and recognize that Jesus is bringing the new and with it we are going to anticipate that day by bringing light ourselves.

What does this mean in our daily lives? It means focusing on Jesus and not on sine. Paul wants us to focus on the “law of love” that is on loving others. The focus of Romans 13 is about doing good, it is about being positive. The focus is that why would a government that is concerned with correcting injustice be concerned with people focused on loving others. He recognizes that laws are necessary because of a failure to love others. Thus, if the Christian’s focus is on loving others then that person will never be worried about a good and just law. But he goes beyond simply the “legal” or “political” and brings this conversation into the private sphere. If we are always concerned with putting on the light of Jesus, that is loving others, then we will always be working in the daylight and never concerned with or participating in the darkness.

Paul does not worry himself with being “anti” anyone, he focuses on anticipating Christ. He does not worry about whether or not the Roman government lives up to the kind of justice he says government is meant to promote, he focuses on loving others. He does not focus on the sins of others, he focuses on doing good. He does not focus on whether the Roman church fails he focuses on pushing them to live to their potential. Too often we worry about standing against people instead of focusing on doing what is right. Too often we worry about being “anti” our political or theological opponents, instead of focusing on anticipating Jesus. And Paul wants us to say I am for Jesus.

I realize Paul brings up “vices” but it isn’t because he is concerned about people outside the Church it is because he recognizes those behaviors take our focus off Jesus. He wants us to keep our focus on Jesus. And since we know It is always easier to sin a second time we want to keep ourselves from it the first time. Sin is looking at the darkness rather than the light. Sin is rejecting the coming day and walking back into the shadows. So for us the focus is not about what others are or are not doing, the focus is on Jesus. The trouble is that when we set ourselves up based on being against a person or group we focus on that person or group and outflanking them. Anticipating Jesus is about focusing on Jesus, not culture, and bringing Jesus into my life for the benefit of my section of the world. My focus needs to be on clothing myself in Jesus and inspiring those around me to do the same. Paul’s warning to the churches in Rome was that when they focused on others they caused conflict and so were threatened with punishment from the authorities. However, there is no law against loving. And further, when we put our energy into loving others we lay aside the vices that hold us back and clothe ourselves in Jesus’ light. This is how we anticipate the day and help others to see that it is time to wake up and prepare themselves for dawn and Jesus’ arrival.

This Week at Dover First UMC



Sunday

First Sunday in Advent

10:20 a.m. Worship Service

Next Sunday

Second Sunday in Advent

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
Communion

Monday

No Events

Tuesday

7 p.m.

WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m.

Boy Scouts
Scout Room

Wednesday

5:30 p.m.

Girl Scouts

6 p.m.

Friends in
Fellowship

6:30 p.m.

Cub Scouts
Education Zone

7 p.m.

Choir Rehearsal

Thursday

7 p.m.

WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m.

Scouting Leader

Friday

No Events

Saturday

8 a.m.-8 p.m.

Salvation Army
Bell Ringing

9 a.m.

Philharmonic
Rehearsal
Sanctuary
Choir Room

10 a.m.

Craft and Chat
Lounge