

First Reading: **Isaiah 35:1-10**

¹The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad; the desert shall rejoice and blossom like the crocus; ²it shall blossom abundantly and rejoice with joy and singing. The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it, the majesty of Carmel and Sharon. They shall see the glory of the Lord, the majesty of our God. ³Strengthen the weak hands, and make firm the feeble knees. ⁴Say to those who have an anxious heart, “Be strong; fear not! Behold, your God will come with vengeance, with the recompense of God. He will come and save you.” ⁵Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened, and the ears of the deaf unstopped; ⁶then shall the lame man leap like a deer, and the tongue of the mute sing for joy. For waters break forth in the wilderness, and streams in the desert; ⁷the burning sand shall become a pool, and the thirsty ground springs of water; in the haunt of jackals, where they lie down, the grass shall become reeds and rushes. ⁸And a highway shall be there, and it shall be called the Way of Holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it. It shall belong to those who walk on the way; even if they are fools, they shall not go astray. ⁹No lion shall be there, nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it; they shall not be found there, but the redeemed shall walk there. ¹⁰And the ransomed of the Lord shall return and come to Zion with singing; everlasting joy shall be upon their heads; they shall obtain gladness and joy, and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Psalm 146

¹Hallelujah! Praise the Lord, O my soul! I will praise the Lord as long as I live; I will sing praises to my God while I have my being.

²**Put not your trust in rulers, nor in any child of earth, for there is no help in them.**

³When they breathe their last, they return to earth, and in that day their thoughts perish.

⁴**Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help, whose hope is in the Lord their God;**

⁵Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them; who keeps his promise forever;

⁶**Who gives justice to those who are oppressed, and food to those who hunger.**

⁷The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind; the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

⁸**The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger; he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.**

⁹The Lord shall reign forever, your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

Second Reading: **James 5:7-11**

⁷Be patient, therefore, brothers, until the coming of the Lord. See how the farmer waits for the precious fruit of the earth, being patient about it, until it receives the early and the late rains. ⁸You also, be patient. Establish your hearts, for the coming of the Lord is at hand. ⁹Do not grumble against one another, brothers, so that you may not be judged; behold, the Judge is standing at the door. ¹⁰As an example of suffering and patience, brothers, take the prophets who spoke in the name of the Lord. ¹¹Behold, we consider those blessed who remained steadfast. You have heard of the steadfastness of Job, and you have seen the purpose of the Lord, how the Lord is compassionate and merciful.

Gospel: **Matthew 11:2-15**

²When John heard in prison about the deeds of the Christ, he sent word by his disciples ³and said to him, “Are you the one who is to come, or shall we look for another?” ⁴And Jesus answered them, “Go and tell John what you hear and see: ⁵the blind receive their sight and the lame walk, lepers are cleansed and the deaf hear, and the dead are raised up, and the poor have good news preached to them. ⁶And blessed is the one who is not offended by me.” ⁷As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds concerning John: “What did you go out into the wilderness to see? A reed shaken by the wind? ⁸What then did you go out to see? A man dressed in soft clothing? Behold, those who wear soft clothing are in kings’ houses. ⁹What then did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. ¹⁰This is he of whom it is written, ‘Behold, I send my messenger before your face, who will prepare your way before you.’ ¹¹Truly, I say to you, among those born of women there has arisen no one greater than John the Baptist. Yet the one who is least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he. ¹²From the days of John the Baptist until now the kingdom of heaven has suffered violence, and the violent take it by force. ¹³For all the Prophets and the Law prophesied until John, ¹⁴and if you are willing to accept it, he is Elijah who is to come. ¹⁵He who has ears to hear, let him hear.”

Mount Tabor

Lutheran Church



816 Mt. Tabor Road
Little Mountain, SC 29075
Office: (803) 945-2333

Email: mttaborlutheran@gmail.com
Website: <https://mttaborlutheran.com/>



MT. TABOR LUTHERAN CHURCH
Little Mountain, South Carolina

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT

Prelude

The Welcome and Announcements

The Confession and Forgiveness

P: In the Name of the Father, and of the Son (†), and of the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

P: Almighty God, to whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hid: cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of your Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love you and worthily magnify your holy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord.

C: Amen.

P: Let us confess our sin in the presence of God and of one another.

P: Most merciful God,

C: we confess that we are captive to sin and cannot free ourselves. We have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. For the sake of your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us. Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.

P: In the mercy of almighty God, Jesus Christ was given to die for us, and for his sake God forgives us all our sins. To those who believe in Jesus Christ He gives the power to become the children of God and bestows on them the Holy Spirit.

C: Amen.

The Hymn: #436

Wake, Awake, for Night is Flying

The Greeting

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

The Dialog

P: In a world of shadows,

C: we seek illumination.

P: As we wait in night,

C: we look for sunrise.

P: Surrounded by fear,

C: we hold fast to God's promise.

P: We wait with hope for Christ's return,
C: for the dawn of peace and justice.

The Prayer

P: Gracious God, you came to us in human flesh and you abide with us in the Holy Spirit. Fill us with your joy and help us shine our light before others that they may see our good works and glorify your holy name, through Jesus Christ, who makes our joy complete. Amen.

The Hymn: #257 (vs1-3)

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

The Prayer of the Day:

P: Lord Jesus Christ, give ear to our prayers, and lighten the darkness of our hearts by your gracious visitation; for you live and reign with the Father and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. **Amen.**

The First Lesson

Isaiah 35:1-10

Psalm 146

James 5:7-11

The Second Lesson

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The Gospel Acclamation (*Alleluia...*)

Matthew 11:2-15

The Holy Gospel

'An Animal's Tale'

The Sunday School Children's Christmas Program

The Apostles' Creed

I believe in God, the Father almighty, creator of heaven and earth.

I believe in Jesus Christ, God's only Son, our Lord, who was conceived by the Holy Spirit, born of the virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, died, and was buried; he descended to the dead. On the third day he rose again; he ascended into heaven, he is seated at the right hand of the Father, and he will come to judge the living and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit, the holy catholic church, the communion of Saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body, and the life everlasting.

Amen

The Offertory: #884

The Doxology

The Offertory Prayer

The Prayers of the Church

*(Each petition ends with "Lord, in your mercy,
We respond "Hear our prayer. ")*

The Lord's Prayer

The Benediction

The Hymn: #267

The Dismissal

Joy to the World

SERVING OUR LORD TODAY

Organist – Gloria Danielowski

Choir Director – Kayleigh Eargle

Lector – Emma Wicker

Acolyte – Avery Long

Ushers – Doug Bowers, Paul Shealy, Ronnie Boland

We **welcome** visitors who are worshiping with us today. We invite you to sign one of the Visitor cards in the pew rack and place it in the plate in the narthex as you leave or give it to an usher.

The **Altar Flowers** are given to the Glory of God and In Loving Memory of Linda Swygert & Bubba Hayes by Lindsey, Kerry, Colin, and Maddy Stribble. Next Sunday's flowers will be given by Daniel and Amy Wicker.

Our **Attendance last Sunday** was 113 (112 inside and 1 outside). Offering was \$4,457.00. Sunday School attendance was 57.

Today's **Loose Offering** will go to the Love Fund. The loose offering for next Sunday will go to the Backpack Ministry. The loose offering for the month of January will go to Nick and Amanda Childs to help with medical bills.

Remember in your prayers:

Mt. Tabor Members: Scott Frick, Melvin Bowers, Ann Bowers, Troy Shealy, Jane Speight, Dick Shealy, Shane Stroud, Micheal Torrence, Linda Dowd, Todd Frick, Carter Dominick, Debbie Rister, Derek Bowers, and Henry Childs.

Family and Friends: Celeste Bowers, Will Nobles, Dean Stribble, Beckham Waters, Alston Slater, Larry Danford, Andy Wessinger, Susan Wicker, Cindy Mace, Charles Shealy, and Catherine Elaine Hamm.

There is a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board for members who wish to serve as **lectors and/or communion assistants** in 2026. Please consider signing up.

The CIA will go **Christmas Caroling** next Sunday, Dec. 21st. We will meet at the church at 2 PM. We invite all members of the church to join us caroling as we bring Christmas Joy to our members.

Anyone who would like the CIA to come and **Christmas Carol** to them are asked to sign the sheet in the narthex or contact Daniel Wicker (803-924-3828) to get your name on the list. You do not have to be a shut-in to sign up, just let us know if you want us to stop by and sing. A leader of the CIA will contact you with an estimated time of arrival. We look forward to singing to you! Please sign up by December the 16th.

Members are reminded to consider using their **Thrivent Choice Dollars** to support our church. Our church is now listed as "Mount Tabor Lutheran Church of Little Mountain." When you make donations through Thrivent, please let our treasurer, Meredith Achelpohl, or our church secretary, Marsha Meetze, know so that the funds can be designated to the fund or area that you wish to support. Thank you for your consideration and support!

If you have any additions or changes to make to your contact information in the **Church Yearbook**, please contact the church secretary at 803-945-2333 or mttaborlutheran@gmail.com.

All church members ages 65 and up are invited to join us for our annual **Senior Christmas Luncheon** on December 17th at 12pm. We will have entertainment by the Soggy Bottom Boys from St. Lukes Lutheran Church. Please sign the sign up sheet on the bulletin board by **today, December 14th** so that we will know how many to expect.

We still have some open dates on the **2026 Flower Chart** including January 4th. Please remember to sign up if you haven't already. If you would like an additional Sunday, you may sign up again as well. **B&B Florist** and **The Lake Murray Flower Shoppe** are now able to deliver to the church. If anyone knows another florist interested in delivery, please let the office know. We will contact them and discuss. We now have a lock box with a key we can give them the combination to. We plan to change the combination every couple of months.

Our **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service** will be Wednesday night, December 24th, at 6pm. Pastor Gary Blobaum will lead the service. All are welcome.

The church secretary, Marsha Meetze, will be **out of the office** this week. Ms. Carolyn Torrence will be filling in some this week to answer calls. Marsha will be back next week. Please contact Ms. Carolyn Torrence or Karen Davis if you need to add announcements to the bulletin or names to the prayer list.

Our **sincere condolences** are extended to Madison Fulmer on the death of her Grandmother, Patsy Sligh. Her funeral was held December 9th at Bachman Chapel Lutheran Church.

Congratulations to Danielle Ballentine upon her graduation from Newberry College on December 6, 2025 with a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing.

Choir Practice will be Wednesday at 6:30 p.m.

Congratulations to the following Congregational Officers for 2026:

President	Brad Shealy
Vice President	Mark Gosnell
Secretary	Daniel Wicker

Christmas gift bags and other gifts will be delivered to the residents at **Palmetto Gardens** on Tuesday afternoon, December 23rd. If you have not already brought your gift bag or gift, please do so no later than Wednesday morning, December 17th. You may leave it under the tree or in front of the church office. We invite anyone from the congregation who would like to go to please join us. We plan to leave the church at 3:00. If anyone has any questions, contact Lynn Shealy.

Please remember to pick up your **2026 Offering Envelopes**. They are available on the table in the cry room.