



## **COB 2025 Christmas Message**

**“Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, goodwill toward all.” (Luke 2:14)**

Beloved in Christ,

This Christmas we gather around the manger in a world weary from conflict, division, and uncertainty. Wars continue to displace families, injustice burdens communities, and fear too often overshadows hope. Yet the birth of Jesus is God’s eternal reminder that light shines in the darkness, and the darkness cannot overcome it.

Christmas is not only a celebration of God’s gift to the world—it is also a call to embody that gift in how we live with one another. In these times, when differences threaten to divide us, Christ invites us to love each other deeply, to listen with compassion, and to extend grace even across boundaries. He invites us to relate to one another as neighbors, not strangers; as siblings in Christ, not adversaries.

We remember the shepherds, who left their flocks to celebrate the good news of Christ’s birth. They came together in joy, proclaiming what they had seen and heard. Their witness reminds us that Christmas is not a private gift but a communal celebration. Just as the shepherds shared the news with others, so too are we called to share Christ’s love—in our homes, our churches, our villages, and our communities—so that peace and goodwill may spread across the earth.

The angels’ song of peace is not a distant dream but a present calling. We are summoned to be peacemakers, reconcilers, and bearers of hope. In our daily lives, may we choose love over fear, unity over division, and kindness over indifference.

As the Council of Bishops, we pray that this holy season renews your faith and strengthens your witness. May the Prince of Peace guide us into a new year where we live with courage, serve with compassion, and love with the boundless grace of Christ.

With gratitude and hope,

Bishop Tracy S. Malone  
President, Council of Bishops  
The United Methodist Church