Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina
www.bethanypreschurch.org
www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

November 30, 2025 – 11:00 am
First Sunday of Advent

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Welcome to our service of worship. Although we are worshipping in a variety of locations, we still affirm that God is present in our worship, whether in-person or virtually. Our prayer is that all who worship with us this day will truly feel the presence of God in this time. Know that you are loved and we are so glad you are here!

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE:

WELCOME

***OPENING HYMN #13:** *Prepare the Way* FRANS MIKAEL FRANZEN

Prepare the way, O Zion,
Your Christ is drawing near!
Let every hill and valley
A level way appear.
Greet One who comes in glory,
foretold in sacred story.

Refrain:
O blest is Christ who came in God's most holy name.

Christ brings God's rule, O Zion;
he comes from heaven above.
His rule is peace and freedom,
and justice, truth, and love.
Lift high your praise resounding,
for grace and joy abounding. **[Refrain]**

Fling wide your gates, O Zion;
your Savior's rule embrace,
and tidings of salvation
proclaim in every place.
All lands will bow rejoicing,
their adoration voicing. **[Refrain]**

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SENTENCES (BASED ON MATTHEW 24:36-44)

Keep awake. Be ready. For the Son of Man is coming.
Thanks be to God! We will worship and prepare.

OPENING RESPONSE: *While We Are Waiting, Come (Choir 1st time; Congregation 2nd time)*

While we are waiting, come.
While we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel
While we are waiting, come.

GATHERING PRAYER (ISAIAH 2, ROMANS 13)

Everlasting God, we begin our journey toward Christmas with hope stirring within.
Teach us how to get ready.
Show how to prepare our hearts for Jesus.
Help us walk in your ways, as we put on your Son, Jesus Christ.
Guide us on your paths of peace and understanding, as we prepare our hearts anew for the road ahead.
Amen.

LIGHTING THE FIRST ADVENT CANDLE ELSA PETERS

Today we begin the Advent journey in search for hope. We search for hope in the trees and the branches of our own lives. We look for that moment where we might proclaim as the prophet Jeremiah did:

the sounds of joy and laughter and the voices of the bride and groom will again be heard.
So will the voices of those who say, as thank offerings are brought to the LORD's temple,
"Give thanks to the LORD of heavenly forces, for the LORD is good and his kindness lasts forever."

O God, we light the first candle of Advent.
We light the candle of hope.

The first candle is lit

We light this candle to illuminate those moments we've already heard the sounds of joy and laughter, as we have in those places in our lives where we see hope.

Let us pray together:
Light of our World, we hope for change in our own lives and in your world. We wait for war to end. We wait for violence to cease. We wait for your people to live with more love. In the warmth of your Light, we wait for hope to be revealed more fully. We wait together by the light of this candle. Amen.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (BOOK OF COMMON WORSHIP)

We believe there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus;
for we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to God's purpose.
We are convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Amen.

***HYMN OF THE DAY #12:** *People, Look East* ELEANOR FARJEON

People, look east. The time is near
Of the crowning of the year.
Make your house fair as you are able,
Trim the hearth and set the table.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the guest, is on the way.

Furrows, be glad. Though earth is bare,
One more seed is planted there:
Give up your strength the seed to nourish,
That in course the flower may flourish.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the rose, is on the way.

Birds, though you long have ceased to build,
Guard the nest that must be filled.
Even the hour when wings are frozen
God for fledging time has chosen.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the bird, is on the way.

Stars, keep the watch. When night is dim
One more light the bowl shall brim,
Shining beyond the frosty weather,
Bright as sun and moon together.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the star, is on the way.

Angels, announce with shouts of mirth
Christ who brings new life to earth.
Set every peak and valley humming
With the word, the Lord is coming.
People, look east and sing today:
Love, the Lord, is on the way.

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

Prince of Peace, the wars and rumors of wars betray our addiction to violence, our destructive and dehumanizing ways. We deserve your judgement and condemnation. Yet, you remain faithful, a steadfast source of peace amid our warring madness. Holy God, turn us from evil. Return us to Christ and his path of peace. Forgive us our sins as we forgive those who sin against us. Amen.

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE (2 CORINTHIANS 5:17; BOOK OF COMMON WORSHIP)

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Savior God, guide us by your Word and Spirit that we might hear your truth, heed your call and be prepared for Christ's coming this Christmas. Amen.

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

PSALM 122 PEW BIBLE, 766

MATTHEW 24:36-44 PEW BIBLE, 1205

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel*

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: ***"Hope"*** RICK PURCELL, CRE

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

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 debts as we forgive our debtors.
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 OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS

OFFERTORY

***DOXOLOGY:** *Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow* THOMAS KEN

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.

***BLESSING OUR GIFTS**

***ADVENT PRAYER**

***CLOSING HYMN #1:** *Come, Thou Long Expected Jesus* CHARLES WESLEY

Come, Thou long-expected Jesus,
Born to set Thy people free;
From our fears and sins release us;
Let us find our rest in Thee.

Israel's strength and consolation,
Hope of all the earth Thou art;
Dear desire of every nation,
Joy of every longing heart.

Born Thy people to deliver,
Born a child and yet a King,
Born to reign in us forever,
Now Thy gracious kingdom bring.

By Thine own eternal Spirit
Rule in all our hearts alone;
By Thine all sufficient merit
Raise us to Thy glorious throne.

***SENDING**

We do not leave this sanctuary and leave God behind.
God's call to prepare our hearts, our minds, our communities and our world for the coming Christ is clear.
May this call be ever before us; guiding us, inspiring us, enabling us to be Christ's body — his hands, his feet, his heart — in this, God's world.
May the grace, hope, peace and love of God our Creator, Redeemer, and Sustainer, be with us all, now and forever. Amen.

***CHORAL BENEDICTION**

"Peace" *Composed by Christopher A. Bagley*

POSTLUDE:

** Please stand in body or spirit.*

Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Sundays, 9:45am Bible Study – Evie C. Marshall Room

Wednesdays, 10:00am Bethany Exercise Class - Evie C. Marshall Room
On Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Evie C. Marshall classroom we will have our exercise classes. Come join us for fun and fellowship.

Sunday, November 30th 11:00am Advent 1: Hope - Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 2nd Alamance Co. Mobile Library
The Alamance County Public Libraries mobile library with be at Bethany on the first Tuesday of each month. The mobile library will be in the church parking lot 10:30 – 11:30.
Please stop by and "check-out" this wonderful service the library has to share.

Tuesday, December 2nd 11:00am The Women of Bethany Church Gathering
The Women of Bethany Church will come together on Tuesday, December 2nd at 11:00am at the home of Pat Flythe. Lunch will be served.

Sunday, December 7th 11:00am Advent 2: Peace - Sanctuary

Sunday, December 14th 11:00am Advent 3: Joy - Sanctuary
Our choir will bless us with a Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 21st 11:00am Advent 4: Love – Sanctuary

S.A.F.E. (Southern Alamance Family Empowerment)
How can we help S.A.F.E. for during the **Fall months**? They are asking for **Canned Chicken, Canned Tuna, 1 lb. bags of Rice and Spaghetti. Breakfast items (Cereals, Granola Bars, Oatmeal, Breakfast Bars), Children and Adult diapers and Feminine products.**
S.A.F.E. will be closed the 1st and 5th Saturday of the Month.
Consider donating your paper bags.

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, November 30th - 1st Sunday of Advent

9:45 – Bible Study - Evie C. Marshall classroom

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream). Stewardship Lunch after service

Tuesday, December 2nd 11:00am The Women of Bethany Church Gathering

Wednesday, December 3rd

10:00 – Exercise class

6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, December 7th - 2nd Sunday of Advent – Communion & Pennies for Hunger

9:45 – Bible Study - Evie C. Marshall classroom

11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream).

bethany presbyterian

worship serve teach support

Session
Moderator: Rick Purcell, CRE
Clerk: Randy Cousins
Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2025:
Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Tina Patterson
Nancy Purcell

Class of 2026:
Chip Allen
Jean Payne
Ben Russell

Class of 2027:
Karen Maxwell
Kim Snyder
Brandon Troxler

1500 S. Main Street
Graham, NC 27253
www.bethanypreschurch.org
336.227.4041

Staff
Pastor/CRE: Rick Purcell – *pastor4bethany@gmail.com*
Director of Music: Christopher Bagley – *bethanypresmusic@gmail.com*
Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – *office@bethanypreschurch.org*
Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – *finance@bethanypreschurch.org*

Scan this QR code for fast, safe, and reliable online giving:

Bethany Presbyterian is a Stephen Ministry Congregation

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS BULLETIN IN THE BASKETS PROVIDED AT THE DOORS.