



# Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

[www.bethanypreschurch.org](http://www.bethanypreschurch.org)

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December 18, 2022 – 11:00 am

*Advent 4: Love*



"The Annunciation" - Jon Phillips, using images from Ajay Surey, "Baby Nursery," and Simon de Vos, "Mary and Joseph Seeking Refuge in Bethlehem" (1664)

"Joseph son of David, don't be afraid to take Mary as your wife, because the child she carries was conceived by the Holy Spirit. <sup>21</sup> She will give birth to a son, and you will call him Jesus, because he will save his people from their sins."  
Matthew 1:20b-21 (CEB)

## 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! Parts of today's liturgy are from Ruth Burgess, *Winter: Liturgical Resources for November, December and January* (Glasgow: Wild Goose Productions, 2016).*

*During Advent we will be working on art together! You are invited to come forward at any point in the service and participate in the collage we are creating. We will be tearing pieces from holiday ads and catalogues and adhering them to the base in the areas that are prepared (painted) for today. After the fourth Sunday of Advent, our work will be complete and our artist will touch things up and finalize the image, which we will display in the sanctuary throughout the Christmas season.*

### TRINITY CHIMES

**PRELUDE:** *How Beautiful are the Feet of Them*

G.F. HANDEL (FROM "THE MESSIAH"-ARRANGED BY JOHN SCRIVEYNER)

### WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

**\*CALL TO WORSHIP**

"AS WE WAIT," JOAN REPPERT

As we wait for the gift of the Christ child,  
as we pray for the ways we can give,  
let us light this candle of love,  
and live as God wants us to live.

**\*LIGHTING THE ADVENT CANDLE**

"ADVENT WREATH CEREMONY," TERI CAROL PETERSON

In the beginning was the Word –  
spoken and breathed,  
a promise made and kept.

***Persevere in hope, keep the faith –  
God's promise is true!***

The Word was in the beginning,  
and through him all things came into being.

***Eternal and near at hand,  
already and not yet,***

***God's promise is the foundation of all life.***

Keep going!

Persevere in joy, giving voice to God's presence yet again.

*Three candles are lit*

**\*OPENING HYMN #100 (Glory to God): *Canticle of the Turning***

RORY COONEY

My soul cries out with a joyful shout that the  
God of my heart is great, And my spirit sings of the  
wondrous things that you bring to the ones who wait. You  
fixed your sight on your servant's plight, and my  
weakness you did not spurn, So from east to west shall my  
name be blest. Could the world be about to turn?  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the  
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the  
dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn!

Though I am small, my God, my all, you  
work great things in me, And your mercy will last from the  
depths of the past to the end of the age to be. Your  
very name puts the proud to shame, and to  
those who would for you yearn, You will show your might, put the  
strong to flight, for the world is about to turn.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the  
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the  
dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn!

**Refrain**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the  
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn!

From the halls of power to the fortress tower, not a  
stone will be left on stone. Let the king beware for your  
justice tears ev'ry tyrant from his throne. The  
hungry poor shall weep no more, for the  
food they can never earn; There are tables spread, ev'ry

mouth be fed, for the world is about to turn.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the  
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the  
dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn!

Though the nations rage from age to age, we remember  
who holds us fast: God's mercy must deliver  
us from the conqueror's crushing grasp. This  
saving word that our forebears heard is the  
promise which holds us bound, 'Til the spear and rod can be  
crushed by God, who is turning the world around.  
My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the  
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the  
dawn draws near, and the world is about to turn!

#### **Refrain**

My heart shall sing of the day you bring. Let the  
fires of your justice burn. Wipe away all tears, for the dawn draws near,  
and the world is about to turn!

## **OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL**

### **A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION**

Holy God, our hope and strength, by the power of your Spirit prepare the way in our hearts for the coming of your Word, so that we may see the glorious signs of your promise fulfilled; through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen.**

### **ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE**

**PSALM 27: 11-14:**     *Wait for the Lord*

TAIZE COMMUNITY

**Refrain:** *(sung 2x)*  
Wait for the Lord,  
whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord;  
be strong; take heart!

Show me your way, O LORD;  
lead me on a level path, because of my enemies.  
***Deliver me not into the hand of my adversaries,  
for false witnesses have risen up against me,  
and also those who speak malice.***  
What if I had not believed  
that I should see the goodness of the LORD  
in the land of the living!  
***O tarry and wait the LORD's pleasure;  
be strong, and the LORD shall comfort your heart;  
wait patiently for the LORD.***

**Refrain:** *(sung 2x)*  
Wait for the Lord,  
whose day is near.  
Wait for the Lord;  
be strong; take heart!

**MATTHEW 1:18-25**

PEW BIBLE, PAGES 1170

The Word of the Lord.

***Thanks be to God.***

## TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

**RESPONSE:** *Prepare the Way of the Lord (All, sing 1x)*

"BE WITH US, GOD," RUTH BURGESS

TAIZE COMMUNITY

Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Prepare the way of the Lord,  
And all people will see the salvation of our God.

Be with us, God,  
in stone stillness  
and quiet corners.

***Help us to be lights in the night,  
lights that burn bravely  
in the circle of your love.***

Hear our prayers, God,  
our yearnings, our carings,  
our concerns, our questions.

***Help us to be lights in the night,  
lights that burn bravely  
in the circle of your love.***

Be in us, God,  
in our work, our calling,  
our journeys, our wondering.

***Help us to be lights in the night,  
lights that burn bravely  
in the circle of your love.***

## A MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

**RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE:** *Prepare the Way of the Lord (All, sung 2x)*

TAIZE COMMUNITY

Prepare the way of the Lord.  
Prepare the way of the Lord,  
And all people will see the salvation of our God.

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

**THE WORD IN MUSIC:** *Let Earth Receive Her King*

CREATED & ARRANGED BY CRAIG ADAMS

- Joyful Adoration Medley
- Receive Our King – Jared Anderson and Meredith Andrews
- A Strange Way to Save the World – Dave Clark, Mark Harris, Don Koch
- O Come, Lord Jesus, Come – Williams, Anderman
- Heaven and Nature Sing Finale

Narration by Alex McClain

## CALL TO DISCIPLESHIP

We are called by God to be the church of Jesus Christ,  
a sign in the world today of what God intends for all humankind.

*The great ends of the Church are  
the proclamation of the gospel  
the salvation of humankind;  
the shelter, nurture, and spiritual fellowship  
of the children of God;  
the maintenance of divine worship;  
the preservation of the truth;  
the promotion of social righteousness;  
and the exhibition of the Kingdom of Heaven  
to the world.*

Book of Order, F-1.0304

## COMMISSIONING

## PRAYER

*Almighty God, in Jesus Christ you called disciples and, by the Holy Spirit,  
made them one church to serve you. Let your Spirit rule your church,  
so that we may be joined in love and service to Jesus Christ,  
who, having gone before us, is coming to meet us in the promise of your kingdom. Amen.*

## ADVENT PRAYER

"RESPONSES AND PRAYERS FOR THE SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS," RUTH BURGESS

**RESPONSE:** *Comfort, Comfort Now My People (verse 1)*

*"Comfort, comfort now my people;  
tell of peace!" So says our God.  
"Comfort those who sit in darkness  
mourning under sorrow's load.  
To my people now proclaim  
that my pardon waits for them!  
Tell them that their sins I cover,  
and their warfare now is over."*

It's nearly Christmas, God,  
the shops and streets are buzzing.  
Thank you for this time and space to think and pray.

Be with children everywhere, God, and with their parents:  
those who are in danger, those who are hungry,  
those who are happy and well-fed.  
Loving God, ***be their hope and strength.***

Be with those for whom Christmas is a hard time, a sad time...  
Bless them with who and what they need,  
and prompt us to be loving and caring.  
Loving God, ***be their hope and strength.***

**RESPONSE:** *Comfort, Comfort Now My People (verse 2)*

For the herald's voice is crying  
in the desert far and near,  
calling us to true repentance,  
since the reign of God is here.  
O, that warning cry obey!  
Now prepare for God a way.  
Let the valleys rise in meeting  
and the hills bow down in greeting.

We pray for those who are sick,  
for those who are dying  
and those who are being born,  
and for all who care for them.  
We pray for those who are longing for good news.  
Loving God, ***be their hope and strength.***

We pray for ourselves, our hopes, our needs, our dreams.  
Let your face shine on us, God, on us and on all your world.

**RESPONSE:** *Comfort, Comfort Now My People (verse 3)*

Straight shall be what long was crooked,  
and the rougher places plain.  
Let your hearts be true and humble,  
as befits God's holy reign.  
For the glory of the Lord  
now on earth is shed abroad,  
and all flesh shall see the token  
that God's word is never broken.

***Amen.***

**\*CLOSING HYMN #18:** *The Desert Shall Rejoice*

GRACIA GRINDAL

The desert shall rejoice  
And blossom as a rose:  
It shall blossom abundantly  
And rejoice with praise and singing.

The desert shall rejoice  
And blossom as a rose:  
For the ears of the deaf shall hear  
And the blind, their eyes be opened.

The desert shall rejoice  
And blossom as a rose:  
For the tongue of the mute shall sing  
And the lame will dance with gladness.

The desert shall rejoice  
And blossom as a rose:  
For the ground will become a pool  
And the dry land springs of water.

The desert shall rejoice  
And blossom as a rose:  
As the ransomed return to God  
And come singing back to Zion,

The desert shall rejoice  
And blossom as a rose:  
Unto Zion we come with joy,  
For our God has come to save us.

**\*SPOKEN CHARGE**

"RESPONSES AND PRAYERS FOR THE SUNDAY BEFORE CHRISTMAS," RUTH BURGESS

In cities and villages,  
in tents and tower-blocks,  
***Jesus is waiting to be born.***

In private hospitals,  
in refugee camps,  
***Jesus is waiting to be born.***

In us, in our neighbors,  
In the world we live in,  
***Jesus is waiting to be born.***

**\*CHORAL BENEDICTION**

*While We are Waiting, Come*

**POSTLUDE:** *Fling Wide the Door*

HENRY BALCOMBE/TUNE: MACHT HOCH DIE TUR, BY J.A. FREYLINGHAUSEN GEISTREICHES GASANG-BUCH

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*\* Please stand in body or spirit.*



# *Our Faith Community @ Work*

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

### **December 18<sup>th</sup> - Bethany Angel Tree 2022**

Today is the final day to return your gifts from the Angel Tree. All gifts must be returned no later than noon today. **MONDAY, DECEMBER 19<sup>TH</sup> – at 6:00 pm.** Join us in the Fellowship Hall to SORT the gifts, and wrap any gifts that were shopped for with monetary donations

### **November 27<sup>th</sup> – December 18<sup>th</sup> Advent Book Study**

Join us for our 2022 Advent Study with *Holy Disruption: Discovering Advent in the Gospel of Mark* by Tracy S. Daub. We will meet every Sunday in Advent during the Sunday School hour beginning on November 27th (Advent 1).

Please come prepared to discuss the fourth and fifth chapters on December 18th. They are pretty short and our discussions will be based on the reading. We will meet at 9:45 in the Fellowship Hall.

### **December 24<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Eve**

We're coming together at 5pm on that Saturday evening for an evening filled with stories and carols. We will close with the traditional candlelight "Silent Night."

### **December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas Day**

Christmas is on a Sunday morning this year! Merry Christmas to us! We will hold a shorter, casual service at 11 to celebrate the birth of our Savior.

### **January 1<sup>st</sup> – New Years Day/First Sunday of Christmas**

The first Sunday of Christmas happens to be New Years Day this year. We'll have another more informal service with a carol sing.

### **January 8<sup>th</sup> – Baptism of the Lord/Epiphany Sunday**

We will celebrate the new year with a service that will include the Sacrament of Communion and once again we'll chalk the doors, just like we did last year. We will also hold a brief Congregational Meeting to elect a Nominating Committee for this year's class of Elders.

### **January 29<sup>th</sup> - Brunch Church**

It's our first Fifth Sunday of the year. We will celebrate with a Brunch Church service at 11. Invite your friends!

### **Scouts Looking for Storage Space**

Pack and Troop 9 Scouts are looking for a Donor to provide a 1,000 Sq foot storage type building, or warehouse, to store the following Scout Equipment:

2 camping trailers , 1 sailboat (Sailing Merit Badge), 1 demo car (Automotive Merit Badge).

Space needed for security and protection from the weather.

Feel free to contact:

Jeff Benes - Committee Chair Cub Pack 9 & Troops 9

(336) 675-9086 cell

[benes.nc@att.net](mailto:benes.nc@att.net)

## This Week's Calendar:

Today:

Sunday, December 18<sup>th</sup> – Advent 4: Love

9:45 – Advent Book Study (Final class) in Fellowship Hall

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

3:00-5:00pm – Caroling (meet at the church)

Wednesday, December 21<sup>st</sup>

6:30 – No Choir Practice

Saturday, December 24<sup>th</sup>

5:00 – Christmas Eve Service

Sunday, December 25<sup>th</sup> – Christmas

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

# bethany presbyterian

love learn serve



### Session

**Moderator:** Rev. Jon Phillips

**Clerk:** Randy Cousins

**Treasurer:** Glenn Patterson

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336.227.4041

### Class of 2022:

Bill Abplanalp

Helen Brown

Tina Patterson

### Class of 2023:

Chip Allen

Randy Cousins

Shelby Smith

### Class of 2024:

Karen Maxwell

Kim Snyder

Tracey Troxler

### Staff

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