Bethany Presbyterian Church

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

December 28, 2025 – 11:00 am
1st Sunday of Christmas

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 #40:** *Joy to the World* — ISAAC WATTS

Joy to the world, the Lord is come:
Let earth receive her King;
Let every heart prepare Him room,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven and nature sing,
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns:
Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains

Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.
No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SENTENCES

Wise men from the East came to Jerusalem, asking, "Where is the child who has been born king of the Jews?
For we observed his star at its rising, and have come to pay him homage."
On this first Sunday of Christmas, we, too, have come to worship Jesus the Messiah: the son of David, the son of Abraham.
When the wise men saw the child with Mary his mother, they knelt down, paid him homage,
and offered him gifts of gold, frankincense and myrrh.
On this first Sunday of Christmas, we offer ourselves as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to you, O God.
For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all.
Glory to God in the highest heaven!

GATHERING PRAYER (ISAIAH 63, HEBREWS 2, MATTHEW 2, CHRISTMAS)

Loving God, we come into your presence with joy in this holiday season.
But we also come with sorrow for a world struggling in pain.
Bring hope to our weary world. Bring love to our hearts. Bring joy to our lives.
And help us bring hope, love, and joy, as we follow your Son, Christ Jesus. Amen.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** (FROM THE CONFESSION OF 1967)

In Jesus of Nazareth, true humanity was realized once for all. Jesus, a Palestinian Jew, lived among his own people and shared their needs, temptations, joys, and sorrows.
He expressed the love of God in word and deed and became a brother to all kinds of sinful men and women.
But his complete obedience led him into conflict with his people.
His life and teaching judged their goodness, religious aspirations, and national hopes.
Many rejected him and demanded his death.
In giving himself freely for them, he took upon himself the judgment under which everyone stands convicted.
God raised him from the dead, vindicating him as Messiah and Lord.
The victim of sin became victor, and won the victory over sin and death for all.

***HYMN OF THE DAY #53:** *What Child is This?* WILLIAM C. DIX

What Child is this who, laid to rest
On Mary's lap is sleeping?

Whom angels greet with anthems sweet
While shepherds watch are keeping?

Refrain:
This, this is Christ the King,
Whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
Haste, haste, to bring Him laud,
The Babe, the Son of Mary!
Why lies He in such mean estate,
Where ox and ass are feeding?
Good Christian, fear; for sinners here
The silent Word is pleading. **Refrain**

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
Come one and all, to own Him.
The King of kings salvation brings;
Let loving hearts enthrone Him. **Refrain**

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES (ACTS 3:19-20)

God of Christmas, we would never have thought to find your Savior in an innocent baby. We confess we would have expected a warrior with a great army. We would not have thought to find your kingdom to be one of service, obedience and humility. We confess we would have expected, maybe even wanted, a kingdom that reflected our own values and self-interests.
Lord, forgive us when we quickly leave Christmas behind and neglect to live lives worthy of our calling as followers of our Lord, the Prince of Peace. By your Holy Spirit, help us turn to you and live according to the values of your kingdom; through Jesus Christ our Lord and Savior. Amen.

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Almighty God, the gospel writer John tells us, "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. And the Word became flesh and lived among us." As we hear your Word read and proclaimed today, may we hear and see the glory of Jesus Christ and receive grace upon grace. Amen

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

PSALM 148 PEW BIBLE, 780

MATTHEW 2:13-23 PEW BIBLE, 1170

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

THE WORD IN MUSIC:

THE WORD PROCLAIMED
Sermon: ***"Who Were the Magi?"*** 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 #592:** *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.

***BLESSING OUR GIFTS**

***CLOSING HYMN #23:** *Angels We Have Heard on High* JAMES CHADWICK

Angels we have heard on high
Sweetly singing o'er the plains,
And the mountains in reply
Echoing their joyous strains.

Refrain:
Gloria, in excelsis Deo;
Gloria, in excelsis Deo.

Shepherds, why this jubilee?
Why your joyous strains prolong?
What the gladsome tidings be
Which inspire your heavenly song? **Refrain**

Come to Bethlehem and see
Him whose birth the angels sing;
Come, adore on bended knee
Christ the Lord, the newborn King. **Refrain**

***SENDING**

Go out with the joy and promise of Christmas. Know that we are not alone in this world.
Jesus, Emmanuel, God is with us, goes with us.
The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with all of you.
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

Exercise classes will start back after the first of the year on Wednesdays at 10:00am in the Evie C. Marshall classroom. Come join us for fun and fellowship.

Tuesday, January 6th 10:30am The Women of Bethany Church Gathering

The Women of Bethany Church will come together on Tuesday, January 6th at 10:30am. in the Evie C. Marshall classroom.

Tuesday, January 6th 2026 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.

S.A.F.E. (Southern Alamance Family Empowerment)

How can we help S.A.F.E. for during the **Winter 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, December 28th - 1st Sunday of Christmas

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

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

Thursday, January 1st

New Year Day - Church Office closed

Sunday, January 4th - 2nd Sunday of Christmas – Communion & Pennies for Hunger

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

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

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

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Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – *finance@bethanypreschurch.org*

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