



Bethany Presbyterian Church

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

December 31, 2017 – 11:00 am
First Sunday after Christmas



“When King Herod heard this, he was troubled, and everyone in Jerusalem was troubled with him. He gathered all the chief priests and the legal experts and asked them where the Christ was to be born.”
Matthew 2:3-4 (CEB)

GATHERING AS GOD’S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Christmas pageants are a tradition in churches across the land. Every Sunday school Christmas play has three characters: Mary, Joseph and baby Jesus. There might be angels, shepherds and wise men. But there is one person who’s never in the Christmas pageant, and rightly so. Yet, it is important that we keep him in Christmas.

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Bethlehem’s Song*

D. MOORE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AN OFFERING OF PEACE

May the Love of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

(Please take a moment to share the peace of Christ with your neighbor.)

* **GATHERING SONG #29:** *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

GO TELL IT

* CALL TO WORSHIP

O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord!

The Star in the dark sky heralded His coming.

Led by the light of the Star, the Wise Ones came to pay homage.

*We, too, come to the stable, seeking the infant King.
Come, Arise! Shine! The Light has come.
God's Light of love is shining upon us. Let us worship God!.*

* **OPENING HYMN #31:** *Hark! The Herald Angels Sing*

MENDELSSOHN

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

AN OFFERING OF CONFESSION

Loving God, who breaks through the darkness of doubt and despair, be with us this day as we hear of the visit of the Wise Ones, who risked everything to follow a Star. Let us open our hearts and be willing to risk receiving the gift of gracious Love that you have to offer us in the form of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Lord, we confess that we have been wrapped up on our secular celebration of Christmas. We have thoroughly enjoyed the music, the food, the swirl of activities. We have looked happily at the Christmas lights and decorations, and yet we have chosen to ignore the people who are most in need of compassion and assistance during this time.

We often feel overwhelmed by the demands on our resources and so we turn our "deaf ear" and look away. Open our hearts today, and help us hear the cries of those in need. Bring us to an understanding of active discipleship in which we work helping others and thus serving you. Heal us and give us courage and joy in your service.

AN OFFERING OF SILENCE

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

As surely as the Light follows the Darkness, the light of God's love, given to the world so long ago, is given for you, for healing and hope. You are beloved of God. In God's name, receive the Light.

In Jesus Christ, the infant King, we are forgiven! Amen!

* **RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE:** *Glory, Glory, Hallelujah!*

TRADITIONAL

*Glory, glory, hallelujah! Since I laid my burden down. (Repeat)
I feel better, so much better, since I laid my burden down. (Repeat)
Fell like shouting, "Hallelujah!" Since I laid my burden down. (Repeat)*

* **SAYING WHO WE ARE AND WHAT WE BELIEVE**

- EXCERPTED FROM A BRIEF STATEMENT OF FAITH (PCUSA BOOK OF CONFESSIONS)

As the people of God gathered in this place, who are we?

We are a community of believers, called by God to WORSHIP, SERVE, TEACH, and SUPPORT.

To whom do we belong?

In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

In whom do we trust?

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel. Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

Is there anything that can separate us from God?

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

* **HYMN OF THE DAY #66:** *We Three Kings of Orient Are*

THREE KINGS OF ORIENT

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

OFFERTORY: *A Christmas Potpourri*

ARR. J. MANSFIELD

BEACH SPRING

* **A DOXOLOGY:** *God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending*

*God, whose giving knows no ending, from your rich and endless store,
nature's wonder, Jesus' wisdom, costly cross, grave's shattered door:
gifted by you, we turn to you, offering up ourselves in praise;
thankful song shall rise forever, gracious donor of our days.*

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

AN OFFERING OF PRAYERS AND 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.

LISTENING FOR GOD'S VOICE

MESSAGE FOR THE YOUNG (@ HEART) / MOMENT FOR MISSION

* **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION:** *Open Our Eyes, Lord*

ROBERT CULL / DAVID ALLEN

*Open our eyes, Lord; we want to see Jesus,
To reach out and touch him, and say that we love him.
Open our ears, Lord; and help us to listen.
Open our eyes, Lord; we want to see Jesus.*

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *A Little Light is Born*

MICHAEL BARRETT

*O, a little light was born in Bethlehem - Jesus, the light of the world
O, a little song was born in the hush of night - a song of hope and joy for the world
Into our darkness a little light was born.
O, into our empty hearts a little light was born.
Into our darkness came a song of peace and joy.*

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *Let's Keep Herod in Christmas*

REV. JOHNSON

Text: Matthew 2:1-23

PEW BIBLE, PAGE 1170

LEAVING TO SERVE IN GOD'S NAME

* **CLOSING HYMN #68:** *What Star Is This, with Beams So Bright*

PUER NOBIS NASCITUR

* **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

* **POSTLUDE:** *Procession of the Magi*

G. BLAKE

* *Please stand in body or spirit.*



Our Faith Community @ Work

WORSHIP Ministry: (Lead Elders: Nancy Purcell and A. J. Campbell)

WELCOME to this service of worship at Bethany Presbyterian Church. Whether you are a member or a visitor we are so glad that you are worshipping with us this morning and pray that this time of worship will be both renewing and rewarding for you. If you have any

questions about Bethany, please speak to the pastor or call the church at 336.227.4041. You can find us online through our website at www.bethanypreschurch.org; on Facebook at www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian; or on Twitter by following [@bpresbyterian](https://twitter.com/bpresbyterian).

Operating our audio and video systems this morning is **Rick Purcell**. Anyone wishing to join this team of volunteers please contact the church office at any time.

Audio Recordings of each Sunday's sermons are available through a link on our website, on our Facebook page, or at www.buzzsprout.com/9198.

Resources used in this morning's worship:

- Homiletics Online website (www.homileticonline.com)
- Ministry Matters website (www.ministrymatters.com)

Join us for a big Sunday next week, **Sunday January 7th**, as we observe the **Baptism of the Lord Sunday**. Our worship includes the **Ordination and Installation of Elders, the Reaffirmation of our Baptismal Vows, and the Dedication of our New Baptismal Font**.

Do you have a smartphone? Are you on Facebook? If so, take a moment to **"check in" on Facebook**, letting your friends know that you are here at Bethany Presbyterian Church! It may seem like a small thing, but in reality, it is a wonderful message of evangelism and witness, as you let the cyber-world know what is important to you.

To the parents of young children: Relax! God put the wiggle in children; don't feel that you must suppress those wiggles in God's house. **Please note that a professionally staffed nursery is available during the worship hour.** Here are some hints to make worship with your children more rewarding:

- Consider sitting towards the front where it is easier for little ones to engage. On the second pew nearest the choir loft, there are activities for children of all ages to keep busy with during the service.
- Quietly explain the parts of the service and actions of the pastor, musicians, and leaders.
- Sing the hymns, pray and voice the responses. Children learn behavior by mimicking you.
- If you have to leave the sanctuary with your child, feel free to do so, but please come back. As Jesus said, "Let the children come to me!"
- Remember that the way we welcome children in church directly affects the way they respond to church, to God, and to one another. Let them know that they are at home in this house of worship.
- **To adult worshippers:** The presence of children is a gift to the church and they are a reminder that our church is growing! Please welcome our children and give a smile of encouragement to their parents.

SERVE Ministry: (Lead Elder: Jean Payne)

Our ongoing prayer list is below. Please let the church office know if there are any changes.

Bill Faucette
Faye Campbell
Frances Nolan
Layla Benoklen
Ida Whitney

Diane Miller
Jack Cook
Polly & Dick Wilson
Teresa Wilborn
Tiffany Tauchren

John & Ann Sutton
Peter Slater
Joey Leake
Shannon Russell
Mary Moore

Rachel Poteat
Jeremy Harden
Anne McDaniels
Mike Sutton
Steward Dillard
Ben Johnson
Celeste Bayliff Agner

Jean Berry
Christy Lutterloh
Eleanor Thompson
Nancy Sutton
Norma Proctor
Sandy Cook and niece Rachel
Erick Russell
Levi Byrd

Barbara Cousins
Pat Kennedy
Donna Mitchell-Ayers
Pete Campbell
Carolyn Thompson
Shelvia Russell
Ruby Martin

TEACH Ministry: (Lead Elders: Brandon Troxler and Karen Maxwell)

All are invited to take advantage of the several educational opportunities for all ages on Sunday mornings. Sunday school classes begin at 9:45 a.m.

Fellowship Class (Fellowship Classroom – by ramp door)

This class is using our denomination's *Present Word* curriculum and lives up to the class name in all aspects of their life here at Bethany.

Young at Heart Class (Young at Heart Classroom – across from pastor's office)

Using the *Uniform Series*, this class engages in lively discussions pertaining to the biblically based curriculum. The class is taught by a very capable team of teachers.

Seeker's Class (Church Office)

The Seeker's Class is currently using the Wired Word curriculum, looking at current events as they relate to our faith.

Children (Upstairs – the really, really green room!)

This class for younger children is using our denomination's *We Believe* curriculum in introducing our children to the faith.

Youth (Upstairs, across from the choir room)

Using a variety of creative curricula, this class explores topics that relate to faith and adolescence.

SUPPORT Ministry: (Lead Elders: Ron Osborne, Ron Kimrey, and Glenn Patterson)

Elders of the Month for December are **Karen Maxwell** and **Brandon Troxler**

The Bethany family extends warmest appreciation and gratitude to **Ron Kimrey**, who is rotating off of the Session as his term ends.

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- 9:00 - Biscuit Bar Breakfast
- 9:45 – Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 – Worship

Monday, the 1st: CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED

Wednesday, the 3rd:

- 7:00 - Choir practice

Sunday, the 7th:

- **Baptism of the Lord Sunday**
- 9:45 – Sunday School for all ages
- 11:00 – Worship / Reaffirmation of the Baptismal Covenant / Ordination and Installation Officers

Session

Moderator: Rev. John W. Johnson

Clerk: Rick Purcell

Treasurer: Ron Osborne

Class of 2017:

Ron Kimrey

Karen Maxwell

Class of 2018:

Glenn Patterson

Nancy Purcell

Brandon Troxler

Class of 2019:

A. J. Campbell

Ron Osborne

Jean Payne

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love learn serve



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Staff

Pastor: Rev. John W. Johnson – pastor@bethanypreschurch.org

Director of Music: Christopher Bagley – music@bethanypreschurch.org

Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – office@bethanypreschurch.org

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

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Bethany Presbyterian is a Stephen Ministry Congregation

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