



# Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

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

[www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian](https://www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian)

December 1, 2024 – 11:00 am

*First Sunday of Advent*

*Hope*

*Communion*



"Hope," Lee Hutchinson

The time is coming, declares the LORD, when I will fulfill my gracious promise with the people of Israel and Judah. In those days and at that time, I will raise up a righteous branch from David's line, who will do what is just and right in the land.  
Jeremiah 33:14-15(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!*

### TRINITY CHIMES

**PRELUDE:** *Seeking the Savior*

GREGG SEWELL

**\*PROCESSIONAL 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]**

**WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**\*OPENING SENTENCES**

BASED ON LUKE 21:25-28

Christ is coming!

**We see the signs!**

Christ is coming!

**We will be ready!**

Christ is coming! Raise your heads because your redemption is drawing near!

**Praise be to God! We will worship and prepare.**

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

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

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.***

**\*HYMN OF THE DAY #5:** *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*

PICARDY

Let all mortal flesh keep silence,  
And with fear and trembling stand;  
Ponder nothing earthly minded,  
For with blessing in His hand,  
Christ our God to earth descendeth,  
Our full homage to demand.

King of kings, yet born of Mary,  
As of old on earth He stood,  
Lord of lords, in human vesture,  
In the body and the blood;  
He will give to all the faithful  
His own self for heavenly food.

Rank on rank the host of heaven  
Spreads its vanguard on the way,  
As the Light of Light descendeth  
From the realms of endless day,  
That the powers of hell may vanish  
As the darkness clears away.

At His feet the six-winged seraph;  
Cherubim, with sleepless eye,  
Veil their faces to the presence,  
As with ceaseless voice they cry,  
Alleluia, Alleluia,  
Alleluia, Lord Most High!

# OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

## TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

"TODAY'S CAPTIVITIES," BRIAN WREN

Friends, let us come together to tell the truth about ourselves.

Christ our Savior, save us from today's captivities:

From the need to have more; and from having our identity and self-worth defined by what we possess – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From the need to be satisfied without waiting; and from anxiety when material longings are deferred – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From paralysis and confusion, in the face of so many needs, so much information – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From hyperactivism that denies our limitations, and from apathy that denies our God-given powers – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From trying to replace you as Savior, by taking the world on our shoulders – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From ignorance or denial of what drives us; and from captivity to personal drives and needs – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From embarrassment in speaking about your love; from not knowing what to say; and from the shame of being misunderstood, scorned, or ignored – *Savior Christ, set us free.*

From captivity to anger, bitterness, and disappointment; and from captivities we cannot speak about, or name – *Savior Christ, set us free. Amen.*

## AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

I proclaim to you in the name of our Savior who brings hope:

You are enough.

You are forgiven.

You are loved.

*Alleluia! Thanks be to God!*

## RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

### A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

"EITHER WAY," SCOTT CERVAS

God of newness,  
we want to be ready...  
we want to make room for you...  
we want our lives to be changed by your advent.  
So speak to us in our busy-ness and our quietness...  
our uneven-ness and our level-ness...  
our roughness and our smoothness...  
so that, either way, your glory might be revealed to us. *Amen.*

## ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

**LUKE 21:25-26**

PEW BIBLE, 1281

**JEREMIAH 33:14-18**

PEW BIBLE, 965

The Word of the Lord.  
*Thanks be to God.*

**THE WORD IN MUSIC:** *Every Valley*

JOHN NESS BECK

**THE WORD PROCLAIMED**  
*"Hope"*

RICK PURCELL, CRE

## THE LORD'S SUPPER

*We will celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper today by inviting everyone who wants to participate up front to receive the bread and cup (we use gluten free bread and grape juice). If you are more comfortable remaining seated but would like to participate, raise your hand and we will come to your seat to serve you. We believe that Jesus invites everyone forward to his table to "taste and see," and so we proclaim that all are welcome to participate.*

**INVITATION TO THE TABLE**

**PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING**

**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.*

**WORDS OF INSTITUTION**

**COMMUNION BY THE PEOPLE**

The gifts of God for the people of God.

*Thanks be to God.*

**PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION**

**AN OFFERING OF OUR GIFTS**

**OFFERTORY**

**\*DOXOLOGY**

THOMAS KEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow.  
Praise God, all creatures here below.  
Praise God above, ye heavenly host.  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.

**\*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**

May you leave this place, waiting with Hope  
for the coming of our Savior,  
and may the God of all Hope  
be with you until we gather again.

**POSTLUDE:** *Rejoice! Emmanuel Shall Come*

JAMES DENTON

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*\* Please stand in body or spirit.*



# Our Faith Community @ Work

## WHAT'S HAPPENING

**Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup> 11:00am Advent 1: Hope - Sanctuary**

**Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> The Women of Bethany Church Gathering**

The Women of Bethany Church will come together on Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup> at 10:30am in the Fellowship hall. Lunch will be served.

**Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup> 11:00am Advent 2: Peace - Sanctuary**

**Tuesday, December 10<sup>th</sup> Alamance Co. Mobile Library**

The Alamance County Public Libraries 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

**Sunday, December 15<sup>th</sup> 11:00am Advent 3: Joy - Sanctuary**

Our choir will bless us with a Christmas Cantata

**Sunday, December 22<sup>nd</sup> 11:00am Advent 4: Love – Sanctuary**

**Saturday, January 11, 2025 4:00pm Organ Concert - Sanctuary**

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

How we can help S.A.F.E. for the month of **December**? They are asking for **shelf stable sides for Christmas meals.**

S.A.F.E. will be closed the 1<sup>st</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> Saturday of the Month.  
Consider donating your plastic and paper bags.

## This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, December 1<sup>st</sup>      First Sunday of Advent, Communion & Pennies for Hunger  
11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

Tuesday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>    Women of Bethany Church Gathering – 10:30 Fellowship Hall

Wednesday, December 4<sup>th</sup>  
6:30 - Choir Practice

Sunday, December 8<sup>th</sup>      Second Sunday of Advent,  
11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)



### Session

**Moderator:** Rick Purcell, CRE

**Clerk:** Randy Cousins

**Treasurer:** Glenn Patterson

### Class of 2024:

Karen Maxwell

Kim Snyder

Tracey Troxler

### Class of 2025:

Donna Mitchell-Ayers

Tina Patterson

Nancy Purcell

### Class of 2026:

Chip Allen

Jean Payne

Ben Russell

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### Staff

**Pastor/CRE:** Rick Purcell – [pastor4bethany@gmail.com](mailto:pastor4bethany@gmail.com)

**Director of Music:** Christopher Bagley – [music@bethanypreschurch.org](mailto:music@bethanypreschurch.org)

**Office Administrator:** Joy Saleeby – [admin@bethanypreschurch.org](mailto:admin@bethanypreschurch.org)

**Bookkeeper:** Pam Hurt – [finance@bethanypreschurch.org](mailto:finance@bethanypreschurch.org)

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