



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

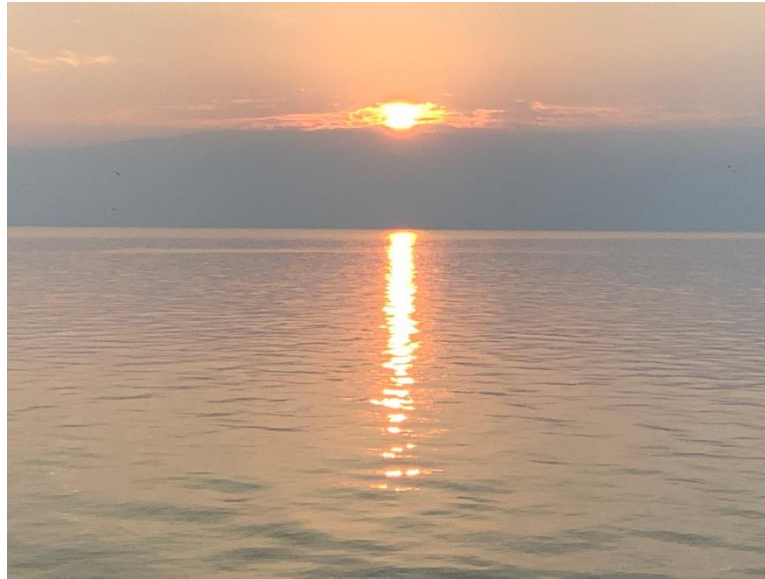
www.bethanypreschurch.org

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December 8, 2024 – 11:00 am

Second Sunday of Advent

Peace



Because of our God's deep compassion,
the dawn from heaven will break upon us,
to give light to those who are sitting in darkness
and in the shadow of death,
to guide us on the path of peace." Luke 1:78-79

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: *Be Comforted, My People*

LANI SMITH

WELCOME

***PROCESSIONAL HYMN #8:** *Lift Up Your Head, Ye Mighty Gates*

GEORG WEISSEL

Lift up your heads, ye mighty gates,
Behold, the King of glory waits;
The King of kings is drawing near;
The Savior of the world is here!

Fling wide the portals of your heart;
Make it a temple, set apart
From earthly use for heaven's employ,
Adorned with prayer and love and joy.

Redeemer, come! I open wide
My heart to Thee: here, Lord, abide.
Let me Thy inner presence feel;
Thy grace and love in me reveal.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPENING SENTENCES

LUKE 1:76-79

Zechariah sang to his newborn son:

**“You, child, will be called a prophet of the Most High,
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his way.**

You will tell his people how to be saved
through the forgiveness of their sins.

**Because of our God’s deep compassion,
the dawn from heaven will break upon us,**

to give light to those who are sitting in darkness
and in the shadow of death,

to guide us on the path of peace.”

OPENING RESPONSE: *While We Are Waiting, Come*

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

LIGHTING THE SECOND ADVENT CANDLE

ELSA PETERS

Today we continue our Advent search. We look for comfort in a broken world. We cry out for the peace we have not yet found. We find comfort as the prophet Isaiah did, when he remembered:

The grass dries up; the flower withers, but our God’s word will exist forever.

O God, we light the second candle of Advent.
We light the candle of peace.

The second candle is lit

We light this candle to shine like the sun on the buds of peace, which we long for in places like Ukraine, Gaza and Israel.

Let us pray together:

Light of our World, we hope for change in our own lives and in our world. We wait for relationships to heal. We wait for peace to come. 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.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

*HYMN OF THE DAY #36: *In the Bleak Midwinter*

CHRISTINA G. ROSSETTI

In the bleak midwinter,
Frosty wind made moan,
Earth stood hard as iron,
Water like a stone;
Snow had fallen, snow on snow,
Snow on snow,
In the bleak midwinter,
Long ago.

Our God, Heaven cannot hold Him,
Nor earth sustain;
Heaven and earth shall flee away
When He comes to reign:
In the bleak midwinter
A stable place sufficed
The Lord God incarnate,
Jesus Christ.

Angels and archangels
May have gathered there,
Cherubim and seraphim
Thronged the air;
But His mother only,
In her maiden bliss,
Worshipped the beloved
With a kiss.

What can I give Him,
Poor as I am?
If I were a shepherd,
I would bring a lamb;
If I were a wise man,
I would do my part;
Yet what I can I give Him:
Give my heart.

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

Scripture reminds us that repentance is part of our preparation to meet Christ.
Let us therefore confess our sins together, trusting in his mercy and love.

*Holy God, we confess we prefer the crooked paths
where we think we can hide from you.
We'd rather you didn't examine us too closely,
all we do and fail to do.
Yet you are coming not to judge,
but to save us from our sins and our love of sinning.
So come, Lord, by crooked path or straight,
to enter our aching hearts.
In the certainty of your grace
we make our prayer. Amen.*
Silence

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

Hear the good news! Christ is our peace. Through him we have forgiveness and new hope.
He comes to break the power of sin and set us free again. Alleluia!
Amen.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Jesus Christ, Word of God,
dwell in us as we turn to these pages,
holy ancient stories that proclaim your truth.
In the Spirit, give us ears to hear and hearts to believe. **Amen.**

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

LUKE 1:67-79

PEW BIBLE, 1244

LUKE 3:1-6

PEW BIBLE, 1247

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *O Come, Lord Jesus, Come*

J. PAUL WILLIAMS, DAVID ANGERMAN

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"Peace"*

RICK PURCELL, CRE

ADVENT PRAYER

"ADVENT 2," STEPHEN M. FEARING

THE LORD'S PRAYER

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by 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

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

***CLOSING HYMN #20:** *Watchman, Tell Us of the Night*

JOHN BOWRING

Watchman, tell us of the night,
What its signs of promise are.
Traveler, o'er yon mountain's height,
See that glory-beaming star.
Watchman, does its beauteous ray
Aught of joy or hope foretell?
Traveler, yes; it brings the day,
Promised day of Israel.

Watchman, tell us of the night;
Higher yet that star ascends.
Traveler, blessedness and light,
Peace and truth its course portends.
Watchman, will its beams alone
Gild the spot that gave them birth?
Traveler, ages are its own;
See, it bursts o'er all the earth.

Watchman, tell us of the night,
For the morning seems to dawn.
Traveler, darkness takes its flight,
Doubt and terror are withdrawn.
Watchman, let thy wanderings cease;
Hasten to your quiet home.
Traveler, lo! the Prince of Peace,
Lo! the Son of God is come!

***SENDING**

Go out in peace.
Not a storebought peace, or an ignorant peace or an easy peace.

But go out in the peace that comes from God, who has begun good work in you,
who has scrubbed you clean until you shine, who has straightened every crooked place,
who is a light in shadowed places.

Go out with a peace to change the world.
And as you go, may the love of God who made you,
the strength of Christ you saved you, and the wisdom of the Spirit who enlivens you,
go with you now and forevermore.

***CHORAL BENEDICTION:** *My Peace*

BAGLEY

POSTLUDE: *Fling Wide the Door*

HENRY BALCOMBE

** Please stand in body or spirit.*



Our Faith Community @ Work

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Sunday, December 8th 11:00am Advent 2: Peace - Sanctuary

Sunday, December 15th 11:00am Advent 3: Joy - Sanctuary
Our choir will bless us with a Christmas Cantata

Sunday, December 22nd 11:00am Advent 4: Love – Sanctuary

Tuesday, December 24th 6:00pm Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, January 7th The Women of Bethany Church Gathering
The Women of Bethany Church will come together on Tuesday, January 7th at 10:30am in the Fellowship hall.

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

Tuesday, January 14th 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

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 1st and 5th Saturday of the Month.
Consider donating your plastic and paper bags.

This Week's Calendar:

Sunday, December 8th – Second Sunday of Advent – Peace
9:45 – Bible Study – The Chosen - Evie C. Marshall classroom
11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

Tuesday, December 10th
7:00 – Session Meeting

Wednesday, December 11th
6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, December 15th – Third Sunday of Advent – Joy Christmas Cantata
9:45 – Bible Study – The Chosen - Evie C. Marshall classroom
11:00 – Worship (In-Person & Live Stream)

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love learn serve



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

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Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – admin@bethanypreschurch.org

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

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