



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

December 13, 2020 – 11:00 am

Third Sunday of Advent



*“Now all of this took place so that what the Lord had spoken through the prophet would be fulfilled:
Look! A virgin will become pregnant and give birth to a son, And they will call him, Emmanuel.*

(Emmanuel means ‘God with us.’)”

Matthew 1:22-23 (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.

PRELUDE: *Lo! He Comes with Clouds Descending*

THOMAS OLIVERS

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AN OFFERING OF PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

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

* LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE AND CALL TO WORSHIP

Jesus said, “I am the Light of the World.”

Therefore, we light again the Candle of Hope.

[The Candle of Hope is lit.]

We re-light the Candle of Peace.

[The Candle of Peace is lit.]

But why are we lighting a third candle?

We light a third candle for joy!

[The Candle of Joy is lit.]

The pink candle helps us remember Mary and the joyous good news that the angel brought to her.

God so loved the world that God gave his only Son. Joy to the World!

Sung to the tune of "The First Nowell"

We gather 'round in hope and faith
Looking for the savior for whom we pray.

We pray that we will see him near
Bringing forth life and justice for all in fear.

The candles glow, showing us God's light / Calling us forward, united in Christ.

We gather 'round so weary for peace
Hearing anger and distrust that will not cease –
Not cease 'til the day we reach out with grace
And see each as God's child for us to embrace.

The candles glow, showing us God's light / Calling us forward, united in Christ.

We gather 'round celebrating our joy
Thanking God for the mercies You daily employ.
We may sin and fall away – from the path we may roam,
but you tenderly guide us and welcome us home.

The candles glow, showing us God's light / Calling us forward, united in Christ.

* **OPENING HYMN #8:** *Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

TRURO

*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.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

AN OFFERING OF SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 1:22-25

HEBREWS 1:1-4; 4:14-16

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God.

AN OFFERING OF PRAYERS

Lord of Love and Light, shine through our darkness, bringing us hope. Open our hearts for the journey, our eyes for the light, our spirits for the peace which you bring. Fill our mouths with laughter and speech with shouts of joy that we shall reveal the love with which you surround us.

God of mercy, light and love, we confess that we have not been people who are quick to pray. When an emergency befalls us, we turn to pleas and prayers which usually begin with the heart-wrenching cry, "Why?".

Help us to remember that you are always ready to hear and respond to all our prayers. Remind us that even though we have often failed to witness to your love and live as people of compassion and faith, you love us unconditionally.

Forgive our stubbornness and willfulness. Cleanse our souls and spirits and make us truly ready to receive your light.

AN OFFERING OF SILENCE

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

Rejoice! We who once lived in darkness – on us a new light is shining and the light of God's glory shall brighten our path. We are healed, loved and forgiven. Be at peace! Live in God's love, and bring hope and justice to all God's people.

Amen.

* **RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE #23:** *Angels We Have Heard on High* (refrain only)

GLORIA

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

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

ADAPTED FROM CONFESSION OF 1967

As the people of God gathered in these places, who are we?

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

With the whole church, let us say what we believe.

Out of Israel, God in due time raised up Jesus. His faith and obedience were the response of the perfect child of God. He was the fulfillment of God's promise to Israel, the beginning of the new creation, and the pioneer of the new humanity. He gave history its meaning and direction and called the church to be his servant for the reconciliation of the world. Amen.

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

* **A DOXOLOGY:** *What Child Is This*

GREENSLEEVES

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.

This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;

Haste, haste to bring Him laud, the Babe, the Son of Mary!

* **PRAYER OF DEDICATION**

HYMN OF THE DAY #11: *O Lord, How Shall I Meet You?*

VALET WILL ICE DIR GEBEN

O Lord, how shall I meet you, how welcome you aright?

Your people long to greet you, my hope, my heart's delight!

O kindle, Lord most holy, a lamp within my breast,

to do in spirit lowly all that may please you best.

Love caused your incarnation; love brought you down to me;

your thirst for my salvation procured my liberty.

O love beyond all telling, that led you to embrace

in love, all loves excelling, our lost and fallen race.

You come, O Lord, with gladness, in mercy and goodwill,

to bring an end to sadness and bid our fears be still.

In patient expectation we live for that great day

when your renewed creation your glory shall display.

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

THE WORD IN MUSIC:

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: ***Emmanuel in the Midst of a Pandemic***

REV. JOHNSON

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AS WE LEAVE TO SERVE

* **CLOSING HYMN #53:** *What Child Is This*

GREENSLEEVES

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?

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.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!*

*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.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the babe, the son of Mary!*

*** SENDING**

The God who makes everything whole,

sends us forth to bring healing to the broken-hearted and to comfort the mourners in our midst.

The Christ who comes to be with us,

sends us forth to stand with the oppressed, to release those held captive by sin, to invite the lonely into our lives.

The Spirit who calls us to faithfulness,

sends us forth to proclaim the gospel that today is God's moment, the day when all people will be blessed.

*** CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

*** POSTLUDE:** *Arise, Your Light is Come*

WILLIAM H. WALTER



Our Faith Community @ Work

WORSHIP Ministry: (Lead Elders: Nancy Purcell and Helen Brown)

WELCOME to this service of worship at Bethany Presbyterian Church (PCUSA). 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.

“I will show love to those who were called unloved and, to those who were called ‘not-my-people’, I will say ‘you are my people’ and they will answer, ‘you are our God.’” (Hosea 2:23) Bethany Presbyterian Church is a place where the mind is nourished as well as the spirit, and where we affirm the dignity and worth of every person. As we are all created in the image of God, we believe discrimination is incompatible with Christ’s Gospel of unconditional love. While we celebrate our Presbyterian identity, we acknowledge that we are not alone on the path to understanding God. We invite conversations that move us to seek a deeper understanding of life in the Spirit. **Be who you are and be welcome here.**

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. A **Video Recording** of our Zoom Worship and our Facebook Live stream will be available on our Facebook page and on our website.

Resources used in today’s worship:

- *Glory to God* Presbyterian Hymnal
- *The Text This Week* website (www.textweek.com)
- *Ministry Matters* website (www.ministrymatters.com)

We welcome as a guest musician this morning **Michael Bayless**, who joins Chris in providing our music for this morning’s worship. Michael is familiar to us as he filled in for Chris when he was out sick.

Please note that even though our Stewardship Season culminated with our wonderful Consecration Sunday worship recently, **Pledge Cards** are still being received in the church office. If you have not had an opportunity to submit your card, please do so as soon as possible so that plans for the coming year can proceed. You may mail your card in to the office (care of Pam Hurt), bring it by in person, or submit a secure pledge card online through our website. Thanks to all for your continued support for the ministry and mission of Bethany Presbyterian.

Today marks the Third Sunday of Advent: As we make our way through the season on our way to the manger, let us pause to “rediscover the significance of Christmas.”

Using the themes outlined in Adam Hamilton’s outstanding study, John is guiding us through the season with a Sermon Series based on these themes, as well as a time of conversation and study during the Sunday school our prior to worship.

Here are the themes and schedule:

- November 29th: Luke 1:26-38 - *Presidents and Kings*
- December 6th: Matthew 1:18-21, Luke 2:8-14, Genesis 3:1-13, Romans 7:18-25 - *The Savior and Our Need for Saving*
- **December 13th: Matthew 1:22-25, Hebrews 1:1-4; 4:14-16 - *Emmanuel in the Midst of a Pandemic***
- December 20th: John 1:1-5, 9-14, Isaiah 58:1-10 - *Light of the World, Word of God, and Lord*

SERVE Ministry: (Lead Elders: Randy Cousins and Tina Patterson)

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

Bill Faucette
Jack Cook
Joan Richardson
Teresa Wilborn
Tiffany Tauchren

Diane Miller
Peter Slater
Joey Leake
Shannon Russell
Family of Mary Moore

John & Ann Sutton
Ruby Martin
Family of Shirley Lane
Ida Whitney
Katherine Turner

Jean Berry
Christy Lutterloh
Eleanor Thompson
Nancy Sutton
Norma Proctor
Christopher Bagley
Randy Thompson
Frederica Beatty
Bill Abplanalp

Barbara Cousins
Pat Kennedy
Mike Sutton
Pete Campbell
Ben Johnson
Grace Johnson
Frank Wrenn
Sylvia Donley
Karen Maxwell

Jeremy Harden
Anne McDaniels
Alex Thomas
Stewart Dillard
Shelvia Russell
Carol Brooks
Ritchie Fishburne
Janie Holt Clapp
Family of Norman Whitney

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

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.

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: Chip Allen, Ben Russell, and Bill Abplanalp)

Elders of the Month for December are **Chip Allen** and **Tina Patterson**.

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- **Third Sunday of Advent**
- 9:45 - *Incarnation* Study Series (online only)
- 11:00 - Worship (online only)

Wednesday, the 9th :

- 7:00 - Choir Rehearsal (not meeting)

Sunday, the 20th:

- **Fourth Sunday of Advent**
- 9:45 - *Incarnation* Study Series (online only)
- 11:00 - Worship (online only)

Session

Moderator: Rev. John W. Johnson

Clerk: Karen Maxwell

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2020:

Chip Allen
Randy Cousins
Karen Maxwell

Class of 2021:

Nancy Purcell
Ben Russell
Tracey Troxler

Class of 2022:

Bill Abplanalp
Helen Brown
Tina Patterson

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love learn serve



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Staff

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

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Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – office@bethanypreschurch.org

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

Elder Emeritus: Bobby Peele

Elder Emeritus: Don Boggs

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Bethany Presbyterian is a Stephen Ministry Congregation

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