



Bethany Presbyterian Church

Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

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December 22, 2019 – 11:00 am

Fourth Sunday of Advent



*"But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart."
Luke 2:19 (NRSV)*

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Some Christmas carols lend themselves to the backdrop of special moments in the Christmas story in unique ways. When the shepherds humbly and curiously approached the Christ child, the chorus of "O come let us adore Him. O come let us adore Him. O come let us adore Him, Christ the Lord" is as fitting as any lyrics ever penned.

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *Bethlehem's Song*

D. L. MOORE

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

AN OFFERING OF PEACE

May the Peace of Christ be with you.

And also with you.

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

* LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES AND CALL TO WORSHIP

[The Candle of Hope is lit.]

We light again the Candle of Hope!

We light again the Candle of Peace!

[The Candle of Peace is lit.]

We light again the Candle of Joy.

[The Candle of Joy is lit.]

But why are we lighting a fourth candle?

We light a fourth candle for love!

Love came down to earth at Bethlehem. Joy to the world, the Lord is come!

Light One Candle to Watch 85 for Messiah

1 Light one can - dle to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the
 2 Light two can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the
 3 Light three can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the
 4 Light four can - dles to watch for Mes - si - ah: let the

light ban - ish dark - ness. He shall bring sal -
 light ban - ish dark - ness. He shall feed the
 light ban - ish dark - ness. Lift your heads and
 light ban - ish dark - ness. He is com - ing;

va - tion to Is - rael, God ful - fills the prom - ise.
 flock like a shep - herd, gent - ly lead them home - ward.
 lift high the gate - way for the King of glo - ry.
 tell the glad ti - dings. Let your light be shin - ing.

We come to glorify God, to rejoice in the One who saves us.

God comes, so we might believe, so we might be blessed.

Our hearts leap for joy! For God is coming to us in a child.

God comes for those who hunger for hope, for those who thirst for grace.

Holy is the One who comes in God's name, who fulfills every promise of God.

God comes to walk with those who follow in faith, to bring peace to a shattered world.

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

AN OFFERING OF SCRIPTURE

LUKE 2:15-20

This is the Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

PEW BIBLE, PAGE 1245

AN OFFERING OF PRAYERS

You watched in silence, until you spoke in dreams, sang through angels, and cried a newborn's lusty wails.

You were born for us, not to sit in power, but next to the bullied on school buses; not with a silver spoon in your mouth, but with words of justice, with songs for hope for the grieving.

You come, like the cold wind of winter, or a warm breeze in the spring, to feed hungry souls with the bread of heaven; to share peace with those filled with bitterness and fear. How easy we lost our way on the road to Bethlehem! How quick we are to dismiss the dreams and hopes our God has for us in this holy season! Let us come to the One who approaches, ready to swaddle us in forgiveness and grace.

Come now, Reconciler of the nations, for our world, our lives, need your peace more than ever before. Come, Caller to discipleship, for we long to let go of our self-interest and narcissism. Come, Word Gifter, for we hunger to hear your voice once again, ever always. Come, Servant of the poor, so we notice you in all those we push past in this hectic season.

Come, Silence of our nights and Holiness of our hearts, and forgive us for turning your compassion into commercials, your joy into jingles, your hope into hollow words, your love into lust for the short-lasting offerings

of the world. May we find our way to the One born simply, born gracefully, for us – Jesus, the Child of wonder and life.

AN OFFERING OF SILENCE

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

The messenger has been sent to us, proclaiming that there is One who is coming who will heal and lead us.

Know that this is a great gift from God, who has always and will always love you. Amen.

* RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE #23: *Go, Tell It on the Mountain*

AFRICAN-AMERICAN SPIRITUAL

Go, tell it on the mountain, over the hills and everywhere;

Go, tell it on the mountain that Jesus Christ is born!

*Down in a lowly manger the humble Christ was born,
And God sent us salvation that blessed Christmas morn.*

(Repeat chorus)

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

OFFERTORY: *In the Bleak Midwinter*

J. RASLEY

*** A DOXOLOGY:** *A Christmas Doxology*

W ZLOBIE LEZY

Christmas Doxology

(tune: *United Methodist Hymnal* no. 229)

G D G C D7 G
Glo - ry be to God the Fa - ther, glo - ry be to Christ the Son, glo - ry
D G C D7 G C Am
to the Ho - ly Spir - it, glo - ry to the Three - in - One. Here we of - fer to you
D Bm Em Am D C
glad - ly all the gifts that you im - part, as we
G C D7 Em C G C D7 G
glo - ry in your Pre - sence, giv - ing from a grate - ful heart.

WORDS: Brenda J. Heard
MUSIC: Traditional Polish melody

W ZLOBIE LEZY
8.7.8.7.8.8.7.

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* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

HYMN OF THE DAY #44: *O Little Town of Bethlehem*

ST. LOUIS

LISTENING FOR GOD'S VOICE IN WORD AND MUSIC

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Meditation: **Love**

REV. JOHNSON

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *The Love of God at Christmas*

JOEL LINDSEN, SUE SMITH, RUSSELL MAULDIN

BETHANY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH CHOIR
CHRISTOPHER BAGLEY, MUSIC DIRECTOR
SETH SMITH, NARRATOR

CHRISTMAS IS THE LOVE OF GOD

*O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, the saints' and angels' song.*

*Christmas is the love of God sent down to you and me.
This tiny Baby in the hay has come to set us free.
And each December we remember how this season came to be.
Christmas is the love of God sent down to you and me.*

*Some say it's a time for giving, a time for friends and family,
When we all pray for peace on earth. On these things we all agree.
But more than any other reason that this season means so much . . .
So if anybody wonders why we rejoice this way we do.
Remind them of that night divine where they'll find the simple truth.
It's so much more than just a try, there is glory when you see:*

GOD'S LOVE MEDLEY

*The love of God is greater far than tongue or pen can tell.
It goes beyond the highest star and to the lowest hell.
God's love so sure endures, all measureless and strong.
Redeeming grace to Adam's race, the saints' and angels' song.
O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie!
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep the silent stars go by.
Yet in thy dark streets shiners the everlasting Light.
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight.
Love has been born in Bethlehem, though no one knows the cost.
For heaven has ordained this precious little Child must someday bear the cross.
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 sin, and heaven, and heaven and nature sing.
Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria in excelsis Deo. Gloria! Gloria! Gloria!*

KING OF LOVE

*He has been surrounded by gold and ivory.
He's known gates of pear and looked upon a crystal sea.
And if He dreams of heaven as He sleeps upon the hay,
I imagine that its glory sure seems far away.
Now the stable is His palace, and a manger is His throne.
There are no jewels to crown Him to make His greatness known.
Instead of royal tapestries, a blazing star above
Shines its light to show the world this precious King of Love.
Little heart now beating and flesh so newly His.
Wisdom old as time cannot escape His tiny lips.
In a world that He created, He's a helpless babe for now.
Yet a crown's prepared in heaven for His royal brow.
And His Kingdom will never end. His Kingdom will never end.
He will reign as He has reigned forever.
O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure, the saints' and angels' song.
O love of God. He is the King of Love.*

THE SAINTS' AND ANGELS' SONG

*It was a night just like others they'd seen: above them the sky was so clear;
And the hillside was quiet, the flocks were asleep when all of a sudden an angel appeared.*

*"There's good news to tell you, so don't be afraid. Tonight your Messiah has come"
Then a heavenly host began lifting their praise, singing saints' and angels' song.*

*Glory to God in the highest! Glory to God, it went on and on!
Glory to God in the highest! This is the saints' and angels' song!*

*Angels have sung it surrounding His throne. His power and greatness tell.
Oh, but saints who are saved by the grace they have known sing of His glory like no one else.*

MORE THAN WONDERFUL

*He promised us that He would be a Counselor, a Mighty God and the Prince of Peace.
He promised us He would be a Father, and He would love us with a love that would not cease.
Well, I tried Him and I found His promises are true, He's everything He said that He would be.
The finest words I know could not begin to tell just how much Jesus really means to me.*

*For He's more than wonderful than my mind can conceive.
He's more than wonderful than my heart can believe.
He goes beyond my highest hopes and fondest dreams.
He's everything that my soul ever longed for, everything He's promised and so much more;
More than amazing, more than marvelous, more than miraculous could ever be.
He's more than wonderful, that's what Jesus is to me.*

*I stand amazed to think the King of glory would come to live within the heart of man.
I marvel just to know He really loves me, when I think of who He is and who I am.*

YOU MAKE THIS NIGHT DIVINE

*You made the stable sacred with You coming.
You made the manger precious when it became Your bed.
With Your touch, the common becomes holy.
Bethlehem is honored, and all the world is blessed.*

*And You make this night divine.
Each moment is a miracle Your love defines.
Your first breath recreated it. Now till the end of time.
You make this night divine.*

*Lord, when You came into the ordinary,
It only takes Your presence to fill it with Your light.
And so I pray that it will be in my heart.
Change me by Your coming here, the way you changed this night,
Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light
Radiant beams from Thy holy face, with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord at Thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at Thy birth.*

THE LOVE OF GOD

*Could we with ink the ocean fill and were the skies of parchment made,
Were every stalk on earth a quill, and every man a scribe by trade,
To write the love of God above would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, though stretched from sky to sky.
O love of God, how rich and pure! How measureless and strong!
It shall forevermore endure the saints' and angels' song.*

*O holy night! The stars are brightly shining.
It is the night of the dear Savior's birth.
Long lay the world in sin and error pining,
Till He appeared and the soul felt its worth.
A thrill of hope the weary world rejoices,
For yonder breaks a new and glorious morn.
Fall on your knees, O hear the angel voices!
O night divine, O night when Christ was born!
O night, O holy night, O night divine!*

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.

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AS WE LEAVE TO SERVE

* CLOSING HYMN: *Love Has Come* (to the tune of "Bring a Torch.")

BRING A TORCH

Love has come: a light in the darkness! Love shines forth in the Bethlehem skies.

See, all heaven has come to proclaim it; hear how their song of joy arises:

Love! Love! Born unto you, a Savior! Love! Love! Glory to God on high.

Love is born! Come, share in the wonder. Love is God now asleep in the hay.

See the glow in the eyes of his mother; what is the name her heart is saying?

Love! Love! Love is the name she whispers. Love! Love! Jesus, Emmanuel.

Love has come and never will leave us! Love is life everlasting and free.

Love is Jesus within and among us. Love is the peace our hearts are seeking.

Love! Love! Love is the gift of Christmas. Love! Love! Praise to you, God on high!

* SENDING

Come, let us go with God to bring healing to the world.

Come, let us bring family to the lonely, comfort to those who grieve.

Come, let us go with Jesus to all who are forgotten.

Come, let us carry justice to the oppressed, to feed those who hunger in body and soul.

Come, let us go with the faithful Spirit.

Come, let us speak the gospel with our lips, let us share grace with our lives.

* CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

* POSTLUDE: *Lift Up Your Heads*

D. PAXTON

* *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 (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](https://twitter.com/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.**

For our children: Childcare is available during the entire worship hour for infants and preschool children. Children are invited and welcome to stay in the service, in whatever manner befits their person: they should feel free to squirm,

whine, dance, sing, cry, pray, or otherwise make themselves known. Activities for children can be found at several locations throughout the sanctuary. See an usher if you can't find one.

Audio and Visual Assistance: A hearing enhancement system is available for those who have a need. An usher will be happy to provide you with a receiver this morning. Large print bulletins are also available.

Please take a moment – members and guests – to sign the **Fellowship Pads** that are located on each row. If you are a guest, please share any contact information you wish to, so that we may be in touch.

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 today's worship:

- The Skit Guys *Away in the Manger* Advent Series resources
- *The Text this Week* website (www.textweek.com)
- *Feasting on the Word* worship resources.

Today we continue our special Advent Series: **Away in a Manger**. The themes for each Sunday are listed below.

- December 22nd - Advent IV: *Mary . . . Love* / Choir musical presentation
- December 24th - Christmas Eve: *O Come, All Ye Faithful* / Candlelighting and Communion

Our worship today continues our Advent series, but will center around a special program of Christmas music presented by our wonderful choir, under the direction of Christopher Bagley.

Mark your calendars for our annual **Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service**, to be held on this **Tuesday, December 24th at 5:00 pm**. This is a service of carols, candles, communion, and the glorious proclamation of our Savior's birth! Come, and be blessed.

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.

SERVE Ministry: (Lead Elders: Jean Payne and Randy Cousins)

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

Bill Faucette	Diane Miller	John & Ann Sutton
Jack Cook	Peter Slater	Ruby Martin
Joan Richardson	Joey Leake	Shirley Lane
Teresa Wilborn	Shannon Russell	Ida Whitney
Tiffany Tauchren	Mary Moore	Katherine Turner
Jean Berry	Barbara Cousins	Jeremy Harden
Christy Lutterloh	Pat Kennedy	Anne McDaniels
Eleanor Thompson	Donna Mitchell-Ayers	Mike Sutton
Nancy Sutton	Pete Campbell	Steward Dillard
Norma Proctor	Ben Johnson	Shelvia Russell
Katherine Bayliff	Alex Thomas	Foy Bayliff
Randy Thompson	Glenn Thompson	Ritchie Fishburne
Frederica Beatty	Carol Brooks	Janie Holt Clapp
	Robert Sykes	

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: Ron Osborne, Chip Allen, and Ben Russell)

Elders of the Month for December are **A. J. Campbell** and **Ben Russell**.

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- **ADVENT IV**
- 9:45 - Sunday school for all ages
- 11:00 – Worship / with special Christmas program by our choir

Tuesday, the 24th:

- 5:00 - **Christmas Eve Candlelight Communion Service**

Sunday, the 29th:

- 9:45 - Sunday school for all ages
- 11:00 - Worship

Session

Moderator: Rev. John W. Johnson

Clerk: Rick Purcell

Treasurer: Ron Osborne

Class of 2019:

A. J. Campbell
Ron Osborne
Jean Payne

Class of 2020:

Chip Allen
Randy Cousins
Karen Maxwell

Class of 2021:

Nancy Purcell
Ben Russell
Tracey Troxler

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love learn serve



1500 S. Main Street
Graham, NC 27215
www.bethanypreschurch.org
336.227.4041

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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