



Bethany Presbyterian Church

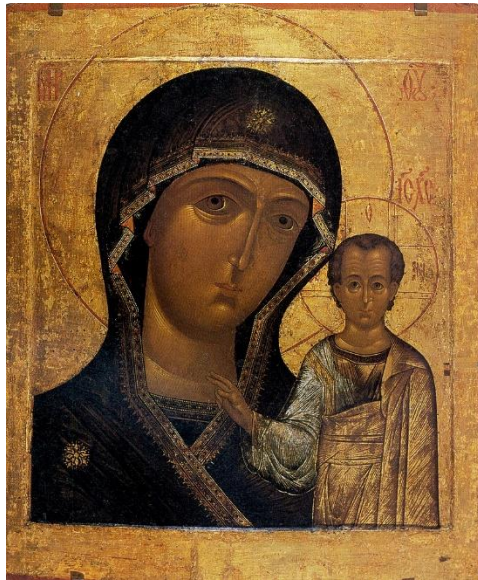
Graham, North Carolina

www.bethanypreschurch.org

www.facebook.com/bethanypresbyterian

December 26, 2021 – 11:00 am

First Sunday of Christmas



"Who Is That?"

"John answered, "I baptize with water. Someone greater stands among you, whom you don't recognize. He comes after me, but I'm not worthy to untie his sandal straps."

John 1:26-27 (CEB)

GATHERING AS GOD'S PEOPLE

PREPARATION FOR WORSHIP

Merry Christmas! 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. Portions of today's liturgy are taken from Ruth Burgess, Winter: Resources for November, December and January (Glasgow: Wild Goose Publications, 2016).

TRINITY CHIMES

PRELUDE: *God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*

ARR. CHRIS OWENBY

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

*** CALL TO WORSHIP**

God in a manger, God of surprises,
help us to unwrap your present to us
this Christmas:

*show us how to celebrate your birth simply,
with justice and with holy joy. Amen.*

RUTH BURGESS, "GOD IN A MANGER"

Let us worship our God.

O come, all ye faithful,
Joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem!
Come, and behold Him,
Born the King of angels!

Refrain:

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

Yea, Lord, we greet Thee,
Born this happy morning,
Jesus, to Thee be all glory given;
Word of the Father,
Now in flesh appearing! **[Refrain]**

Sing, choirs of angels,
Sing in exultation!
Sing, all ye citizens of heaven above!
Glory to God, all
Glory in the highest! **[Refrain]**

OFFERING OURSELVES FOR RENEWAL

A PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

Gracious God,
by the gift of the Holy Spirit
*show us the Word made flesh –
good news of great joy for all –
so that we may sing with the angels:
glory in the highest and peace on earth;*
through Jesus Christ our Lord.
Amen.

ENCOUNTERING SCRIPTURE

PSALM 32:1-2
JOHN 1:19-34

PEW BIBLE, PAGE 686
PEW BIBLE, PAGES 1290

The Word of the Lord.
Thanks be to God.

TELLING THE TRUTH ABOUT OURSELVES

The grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all and teaching us to renounce what is evil in this world. Let us tell the truth about ourselves.
God of grace and truth, in Jesus Christ you came among us as light shining in the night. We confess that we have not welcomed the light, or trusted good news to be good. We have closed our eyes to glory in our midst, expecting little, and hoping for less.
Forgive our doubt, and renew our hope, so that we may receive the fullness of your grace, and live in the truth of Christ the Lord.

A MOMENT OF SILENT REFLECTION

AN OFFERING OF GOD'S GRACE

Hear the promise of the Lord: See, your salvation has come! You are a holy people, redeemed by God; sought out and not forsaken.

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven! Thanks be to God.

* RESPONDING TO GOD'S GRACE #28: *Good Christian Friends, Rejoice* (Verse 1 only)

Good Christian friends, rejoice
With heart, and soul, and voice;
Give ye heed to what we say:
Jesus Christ is born today;
Ox and ass before Him bow,
And He is in the manger now.
Christ is born today!
Christ is born today!

AN OFFERING OF OUR RESOURCES

* A Doxology

(Tune: *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*)

(Choir will sing through once and then congregation join in)

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

* PRAYER OF DEDICATION

* CAROL OF THE DAY #49: *Once in Royal David's City*

CECIL F. ALEXANDER

Once in royal David's city
Stood a lowly cattle shed,
Where a mother laid her baby
In a manger for His bed.
Mary was that mother mild,
Jesus Christ her little child.

He came down to earth from heaven
Who is God and Lord of all,
And His shelter was a stable,
And His cradle was a stall.
With the poor, oppressed, and lowly,
Lived on earth our Savior holy.

Jesus is our childhood's pattern;
Day by day, like us He grew;
He was little, weak and helpless,
Tears and smiles like us He knew;
And He feels for all our sadness,
And He shares in all our gladness.

And our eyes at last shall see Him,
Through His own redeeming love,
For that Child so dear and gentle
Is our Lord in heaven above;
And He leads His children on
To the place where He is gone.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE AND 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.*

LISTENING FOR GOD'S VOICE

THE WORD IN MUSIC: *JESUS, WHAT A WONDERFUL CHILD*

TRADITIONAL SPIRITUAL ARRANGED BY ROLLO DILWORTH

THE WORD PROCLAIMED

Sermon: *"Who Is That?"*

REV. PHILLIPS

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD AS WE LEAVE TO SERVE

CHRISTMAS LITANY

RODDY HAMILTON, "WE BELIEVE IN CHRISTMAS"

We believe in Christmas,
We believe that the words of the prophet that speak of justice to the oppressed
and care for the widow are God's Word that sets the world free.
For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.
We believe that the light of the world that crushes all darkness
and exposes all lies is God's light that shines through every darkness.
For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.
We believe that Mary's poem Magnificat, where God turns everything upside down,
where the poor are lifted up and the powerful are brought down,
is God's poem that changes the balance of the world.
For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

We believe the Word becomes flesh,
the promise is fulfilled, the light breaks through,
the oppressed are set free, the lowly are lifted up
and the baby cries.

For love came down at Christmas.

We believe in Christmas.

*** CLOSING CAROL #40:** *Joy to the World*

ISSAC WATTS

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 sing,
And heaven, and heaven, and nature sing.

Joy to the world, the Savior reigns:
Let us our songs employ;
While fields and floods, rocks, hills and plains
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat the sounding joy,
Repeat, repeat, the sounding joy.

No more let sins and sorrows grow,
Nor thorns infest the ground;
He comes to make His blessings flow
Far as the curse is found,
Far as the curse is found,
Far as, far as, the curse is found.

He rules the world with truth and grace,
And makes the nations prove
The glories of His righteousness,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders of His love,
And wonders, wonders, of His love.

*** CLOSING RESPONSES**

Arise and shine, for your light has come!

The glory of the Lord is risen upon you. *Alleluia!*

Go now and bear witness
to the light of Christ. *Amen.*

*** POSTLUDE:** *Celebrate Christmas*

ROBERT HUGHES

** Please stand in body or spirit.*



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](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.**

A Note About the Offering: As we have returned to worship as the pandemic has been becoming less and less a threat, we have continued the practice of not passing the offering plates at the time of the offering during our service, thus decreasing the threat of spreading germs. Instead, you are invited to make your contribution in one of four ways: drop it in the offering plate that is located at the narthex door (before worship) and in the narthex (following worship); mail it in to the church; drop it off at the church in person; or, use our quick and secure online giving platform. This can be accessed through our website, or by scanning the QR code on the last page of this bulletin. Thanks for your generosity and cooperation.

As the threat of the pandemic does ease somewhat, we are still not completely out of the woods. Recently the CDC adjusted the guidelines for wearing masks, suggesting that all persons - vaccinated or not - wear masks indoors in areas that are experiencing more infections. After Session met, we are now asking our congregation to wear a mask in worship, always remembering our hope to keep all worshippers healthy and free from infection.

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.

Bethany Members

Linda Abplanalp
Barbara Cousins
Pat Kennedy
Shelvia Russell

Christopher Bagley
Sylvia Donley
Ruby Martin
Mike Sutton
Ida Whitney

Katherine Bayliff
Henry Flythe
Joyce & Norman Mize
Nancy Sutton

Friends of Bethany

Carol Brooks
Bill Faucette
Christy Lutterloh
Diane Miller
Peter Slater
Alex Thomas
Deborah & Larry

Janie Holt Clapp
Ben Johnson
Gaynell McCollum
Norma Proctor
John & Ann Sutton
Randy Thompson
Cindy Uzzo
Don Burenhiede

Jack Cook
Grace Johnson
Anne McDaniels
Shannon Russell
Tiffany Tauchren
Teresa Wilborn
Frank Wrenn

TEACH Ministry: (Lead Elders: Tracey Troxler and Shelby Smith)

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) - NOT CURRENTLY MEETING DUE TO COVID

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 **Tracey Troxler**.

Anniversaries & Birthdays

- Carolyn & Glenn Thompson – December 14th
- Anna Osborne – December 5th
- Henry Flythe – December 12th
- Brent Dampier – December 14th
- Erick Russell – December 23rd
- Pam Hurt – December 31st
-

This Week's Calendar:

Today:

- 9:45 – Sunday School for all ages (as scheduled)
- 11:00 – Worship (In-person and Live Stream)

Wednesday, December 29th

- 6:30 – Choir Practice

Sunday, January 2nd

- 9:45 – Sunday School for all ages (as scheduled)
- 11:00 – Worship (In-person and Live Stream)

bethany presbyterian

love learn serve



Session

Moderator: Rev. Jon Phillips

Clerk: Randy Cousins

Treasurer: Glenn Patterson

Class of 2021:

Nancy Purcell

Ben Russell

Tracey Troxler

Class of 2022:

Bill Abplanalp

Helen Brown

Tina Patterson

Class of 2023:

Chip Allen

Randy Cousins

Shelby Smith

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Graham, NC 27215

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Staff

Transitional Pastor: Rev. Jon Phillips – pastor@bethanypreschurch.org

Chaplain: Rick Purcell – chaplain@bethanypreschurch.org

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

Office Administrator: Joy Saleeby – admin@bethanypreschurch.org

Bookkeeper: Pam Hurt – finance@bethanypreschurch.org

Scan this QR code for fast, safe, and reliable online giving:



Bethany Presbyterian is a Stephen Ministry Congregation

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