

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE *Of the Father's Love* Joel Raney

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

SILENT MEDITATION

ADVENT CANDLE PROCESSIONAL

The third Advent candle is lit while the first and second verses of hymn 85 are sung by two soloists:

Soloist: Light one candle to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He shall bring salvation to Israel,
God fulfills the promise.

Soloist: Light two candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
He shall feed the flock like a shepherd,
gently lead them homeward.

Choir: Light three candles to watch for Messiah:
let the light banish darkness.
Lift your heads and lift high the gateway
for the king of glory.

Leader and people then share in the following spoken call and response:

Leader: The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad,
the desert shall rejoice and blossom.

**People: Like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly,
and rejoice with joy and singing.**

* **HYMN 93** "Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates"

* PRAYER OF CONFESSION

In preparation for confession, the congregation sings verse one of hymn 82:

**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.**

Prayer of Confession

**Delivering God, you have promised us everlasting joy.
Yet, all around us, we see the world in a wilderness state—
people are broken and thirsty for life,
and the earth itself groans under our abuse of it.
We confess that our vision of your power gets eclipsed by
our weaknesses, our frailties, and our fears.
Forgive us, O God.
By your Spirit, strengthen our faith and sustain our bodies,
that we might wait with expectant hope for the
fulfillment of your healing in our lives and world.**

Silent Prayers & Assurance of Pardon

*In response to the assurance of pardon spoken by the liturgist,
the congregation sings verse two of hymn 82:*

**Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king,
born to reign in us forever, now they 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.**

* SHARING CHRIST'S PEACE

Hymn 92 "While We Are Waiting, Come"

**While we are waiting, come; while we are waiting, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.**

**With power and glory, come; with power and glory, come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.**

**Come, Savior, quickly come; come, Savior, quickly come.
Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel, while we are waiting, come.**

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON James 5:7-10, p. 982 (NT)

ANTHEM *An Advent Prayer* Allen Pote

Come holy Jesus, come to free us from our sin.
Come holy Jesus, and make us pure within.
Inspire each heart with illumined surprise, enkindle a flame anew.
Increase our faith and strengthen our lives,
Show us the joy of living life in you. *Repeat*

Come holy Jesus, come to free us from our sin.
Come holy Jesus, and make us pure within. Amen, amen.

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 35:1-10, p. 578 (OT)

SERMON "Blossoms in the Desert"
Glimpses of Hope

RESPONDING TO GOD'S WORD

* **HYMN 89** "For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits"

* **AFFIRMATION OF FAITH** from *A Brief Statement of Faith* (10.3)

**We trust in God, whom Jesus called Abba, Father.
In sovereign love God created the world good and makes
everyone equally in God's image male and female, of every
race and people, to live as one community. But we rebel
against God; we hide from our Creator. Ignoring God's
commandments, we violate the image of God in others
and ourselves, accept lies as truth, exploit neighbor and
nature, and threaten death to the planet entrusted to our
care. We deserve God's condemnation. Yet God acts with
justice and mercy to redeem creation. In everlasting love,
the God of Abraham and Sarah chose a covenant people to
bless all families of the earth. Hearing their cry, God
delivered the children of Israel from the house of bondage.
Loving us still, God makes us heirs with Christ of the
covenant. Like a mother who will not forsake her nursing
child, like a father who runs to welcome the prodigal
home, God is faithful still.**

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Glimpse of Hope from Guatemala Virginia Hebert

Offertory *We Are Lights* Stephen Schwartz

* *Doxology* (Hymnal, back page)

* *Prayer of Dedication*

CELEBRATIONS AND CONCERNS

The Lord's Prayer

**Our Father in heaven, hallowed be your name, your
kingdom come, your will be done, on earth as it is in
heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our sins
as we forgive those who sin against us. Save us from the
time of trial and deliver us from evil. For the kingdom, the
power, and the glory are yours now and forever. Amen.**

Bold font indicates congregational participation.

* You are invited to stand in body or in spirit.

GOING OUT TO SERVE

- * **HYMN 105** "People, Look East"
- * **CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**
- POSTLUDE** *The Holly and The Ivy* Traditional

END OF WORSHIP ... BEGINNING OF SERVICE



We light two candles in worship. The white candle reminds us of the presence of Christ's spirit in worship. The smaller candle is in a candle holder made by a member of our partner church, Iglesia El Divino Salvador in Guatemala, and it reminds us of our covenant with them.

- Today's liturgist:** Madelyn Clow
- Today's greeters:** Richard and Judy Green
- Today's ushers:** Bill Higgins and Glenn Limbird

Today is Our Christmas Fellowship Luncheon!

Please join us after worship today, for the last fellowship luncheon of the year. We will hear a special report from the Guatemalan team about their recent visit there. Everyone is welcome!

Deep Blue for Advent

Deep blue is the color of the clear, predawn sky—the color that covers us in the dark, cold hours before the sun rises. Thus, many churches use blue for Advent as a sign of our hope-filled anticipation of the promised light of Christ breaking over the horizon at the dawn of a new day.

Advent Series on Isaiah: *Glimpses of Hope*

This Advent, our lectionary sermon scriptures come from the prophet Isaiah, and each passage speaks to things we deeply hope for: peace between nations, reconciliation of enemies, renewal of life, and God's presence with us. Join us in worship as we catch these glimpses of hope.

Narthex Banners: **Catching Glimpses of Hope**

Look closely at the large, paper lace banners in the Narthex to find the following "glimpses of hope": plowshares and pruning hooks, the wolf and the lamb, blooming crocuses, the stump of Jesse, the wise men, the shepherds, the angels, and Mary, Joseph, and Jesus.

Habitat Workday December 19

The Outreach Ministry encourages you to join us for our next Habitat workday on December 19 from 2 to 4 PM at the Habitat Restore at 31 Meadow Road. We will be working in the training room sorting CDs for resale. Questions? Contact Susan Maveety at (828) 768-5475.

Alternative Christmas Giving Table in the Narthex

This season, Outreach Ministry is sponsoring alternative Christmas giving to three agencies: (1) ABCCM Medical Ministry, (2) Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, and (3) scholarships for Guatemalan children. You are invited to make a minimum donation of \$10 to receive an "honor card" to send to a loved one, telling them that you have made a donation in their honor. We also have some fair trade items for sale.

Special Offering: Christmas Joy on December 22

Next Sunday, December 22, we will be receiving our denomination's Christmas Joy Offering. This offering supports pastors and retired pastors in need and racial-ethnic education at Presbyterian-related schools and colleges (see insert). Please make checks out to New Hope Presbyterian Church with Christmas Joy in the memo line. Thank you.

Christmas Eve Worship Service

Join us at 6 PM on Tuesday, December 24, for a Christmas Eve service of lessons and carols. The whole family is welcome! Come sing all your favorite Christmas carols, listen to Scripture's Christmas story, and take in the still wonder of candlelight as we sing "Silent Night."

Men's Brunch Bunch will meet at 10:30 AM this Saturday, December 21 at J.K's on Long Shoals. Contact John Riley at (828) 575-2894.

Worship bulletin announcements for Sunday, December 22 are due to Administrator, Erin May, by noon on Wednesday, December 18.

Calendar

Sun	15	12:30 PM	Fellowship Luncheon
Mon	16	5:30 PM	Session
Tue	17	9:30 AM	Soul of Aging
Wed	18	7:00 PM	Choir Practice
Sat	21	10:30 AM	Men's Brunch Bunch
Sun	22	9:30 AM	Sunday Morning Class
		11:00 AM	Worship
		12:45 PM	Out-to-Lunch Bunch (see Marlene)

New Hope Presbyterian Church

We are a welcoming, inclusive faith community, seeking to respond to Christ's call to love and serve, through ministries of compassion and social justice.

3070 Sweeten Creek Road, Asheville, NC 28803 | (828) 274-0191
 Kim Wells, Pastor | Erin May, Church Administrator
 Rob Blackwell, Director of Music Ministry/Pianist
 Ken Meeks, Parish Associate | www.newhopepcusaasheville.org

New Hope Presbyterian Church

"Including, Renewing, Serving"

Third Sunday of Advent
 December 15, 2019
 11 o'clock



"Blossoms in the Desert"

Third in the Series: *Glimpses of Hope*



"The wilderness and dry land shall be glad, the desert shall rejoice and blossom; like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly, and rejoice with joy and singing."
 (Isaiah 35:1-2)