

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

PRELUDE *Coventry Carol* Traditional
Jean Moxley, Harpist

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLES

The third Advent candle is lit while the first through third verses of hymn 88 are sung by three 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.

Soloist: 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 88, vv. 1-4 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

CONFESSION AND PARDON

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Silent Prayers

Assurance of Pardon

* SHARING CHRIST’S PEACE

Hymn 92 “While We Are Waiting, Come”

Bold font indicates congregational participation.

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

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON Zephaniah 3:14-20, *p. 767 (OT)*

ANTHEM *I’ll Walk with God* Nicholas Brodsky
Johnnie Zorn, Soloist

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 3:7-18, *p. 834 (NT)*

SERMON “Near to Our Outward Lives”
Third in the Series: Drawing Near

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from *A Brief Affirmation of Faith* (11.4)

We trust in God the Holy Spirit, everywhere the giver and renewer of life. The Spirit justifies us by grace through faith, sets us free to accept ourselves and to love God and neighbor, and binds us together with all believers in the one body of Christ, the Church. The same Spirit who inspired the prophets and apostles rules our faith and life in Christ through Scripture, engages us through the Word proclaimed, claims us in the waters of baptism, feeds us with the bread of life and the cup of salvation, and calls women and men to all ministries of the Church. In a broken and fearful world the Spirit gives us courage to pray without ceasing, to witness among all peoples to Christ as Lord and Savior, to unmask idolatries in Church and culture, to hear the voices of peoples long silenced, and to work with others for justice, freedom, and peace. In gratitude to God, empowered by the Spirit, we strive to serve Christ in our daily tasks and to live holy and joyful lives, even as we watch for God’s new heaven and new earth, praying, “Come, Lord Jesus!”

GIVING OF OUR TITHES AND OFFERINGS

Invitation to Offering

Offertory *In the Bleak Midwinter* Gustav Holst

Doxology Hymn 82

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.

GOING OUT TO SERVE

HYMN 88, vv. 5-7 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”

CHARGE AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE *March* P. Tchaikovsky

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: Karen Ward

Today’s greeters: Herschel and Linda Lewis

Today’s ushers: Jay and Susan Maveety

Gingerbread House Making

Today is the last day to sign up! Join in the fun and fellowship! On Tuesday, December 14 from 10 AM to 12 PM, we are going to be making gingerbread houses. Kits and supplies will be provided. There will be no charge to participate, but donations will be welcomed. We will work in teams of two or three and be spaced appropriately to follow our current guidelines. If you are interested and want to share your creative skills, please sign up in the Narthex. When houses are finished, they will be displayed in the Narthex.

MANNA Food Bank

We are so happy to be volunteering at MANNA again! Our next date is Tuesday, December 14, from 4:00 to 5:30 PM. We meet directly at MANNA and do a variety of service activities getting food ready for those who need it. Questions? Contact team leader Bill Carpenter at (704) 219-1893. Thank you for your support.

Alternative Christmas Giving

In lieu of giving a traditional gift, make a charitable donation in honor of a loved one. In return for your donation (minimum \$10), you will receive a card to give to your loved one describing where your donation in their honor is going. Look for the Alternative Giving table in the Narthex on Sunday mornings during Advent! Unable to come to church? Send your donation to New Hope and indicate in the memo line which fund you wish to support (or, if you would like to support both funds, indicate the amount you wish to donate for each fund). We will mail or deliver your card(s) to you.

This year, you are invited to make a donation to one or both of two funds: (1) *educational scholarships for Guatemalan children and youth* in our sister church, and (2) *resettlement support for Afghan refugees* in Asheville through Catholic Charities.

Christmas Eve Services

This year we are having two Christmas Eve services at 5 PM and 7 PM! We want to be able to accommodate our larger attendance numbers on Christmas Eve while also maintaining our socially-distanced seating in the sanctuary. Please register for either the 5 PM or the 7 PM service by contacting Erin May at (828) 274-0191 or by email at officenewhope@gmail.com. Thank you.

Equal Exchange Products

Buying fair trade products through the Presbyterian Coffee Project ensures that more of the money you spend on coffee (or tea) reaches the hardworking farmers who actually grow it. Visit the table in the Narthex. We are offering coffee, tea, and chocolate bars at a special reduced price through Advent.

Worship bulletin announcements for Sunday, December 19 are due to Administrator, Erin May, by noon on Wednesday, December 15.

New Hope COVID Policy

Mask Up! Whether you are vaccinated or not vaccinated you need to wear a mask while inside the church.

New Air Purifier in the Sanctuary

In order to increase our safety in the sanctuary, we have purchased a new air purifier, a Medify MA-112, which has a medical-grade HEPA filter and ionizer. It is able to filter particles as small as 0.1 microns (the coronavirus is slightly larger at 0.125 microns). It also provides about two complete air exchanges per worship service.

Please sanitize your hands upon entry. Hand sanitizer is available at all entry points and in various other locations around the building. Remember to keep your hands washed as needed.

Please stay away from church IF you are sick, have COVID symptoms, have been exposed to someone with COVID.

Please do not move any of the chairs in the sanctuary. Our new seating layout took a lot of exact measuring and effort to set up, so we would appreciate it if you would refrain from moving seats.

Please observe a “touchless” Passing of the Peace of Christ. While individuals may use their own discretion about accepting hugs and handshakes outside of the sanctuary, during the passing of the peace we will refrain from touching so that those who aren’t comfortable with that yet aren’t put on the spot. (And, when you’re outside the sanctuary, please ask before you hug someone to make sure they’re comfortable.)

Please do not let the Narthex get crowded. We will not be serving coffee or food after worship for now. As you leave the sanctuary, please make a conscious effort to help the Narthex not get too crowded by spreading into outdoor spaces to socialize if a lot of people are present.

Communion: Communion servers are vaccinated and will wear masks and sanitize hands. Juice will be served in individual glass cups, and pieces of bread will be served with tongs. Please follow the ushers’ directions in coming forward and return to your seats with your elements in hand. Please wait until the pastor indicates that it is time to partake, and we will all partake together.

Please know that the Session may change this policy, either by loosening or tightening these restrictions, as circumstances change.

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

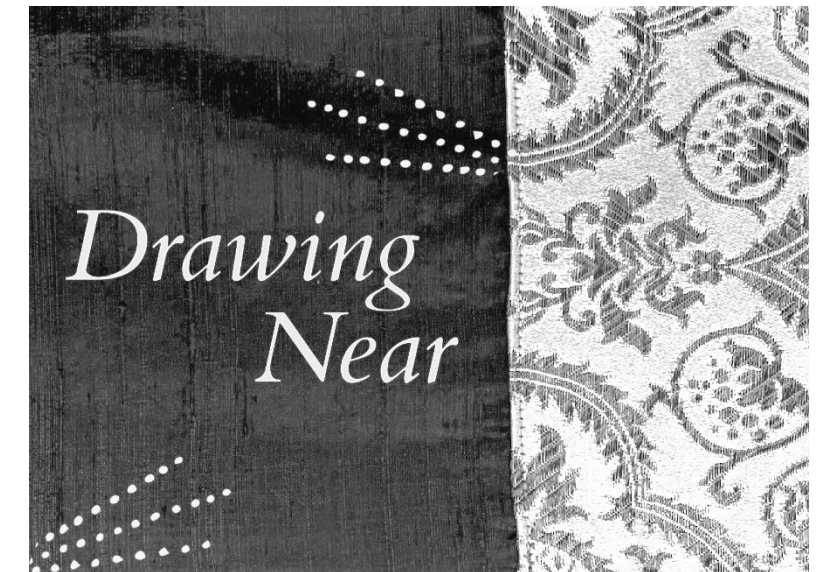
New Hope Presbyterian Church

“Including, Renewing, Serving”

Third Sunday of Advent
December 12, 2021
11 o’clock



“Near to Our Outward Lives”



“Bear fruits worthy of repentance.”
(Luke 3:8)