

GATHERING FOR WORSHIP

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

PRELUDE *Softly as in a Morning Sunrise* Romberg/Hammerstein

*** CALL TO WORSHIP** based on Isaiah 43:1-7

God is with us always and knows us deeply.

**When we pass through the rising waters and the rivers,
God is with us in the flood and calls us by name.**

When we see the scorching flames and choke on their smoke,
God walks alongside us, even through the firestorm.

**When we feel lost and alone, God says to us, “You are
precious in my sight, and honored, and I love you.”**

Our world sends so many painful things our way,
but God is healing us and redeeming us.

Let us worship God!

*** HYMN 482** “Baptized in Water”

*** CONFESSION AND PARDON**

Call to Confession

Prayer of Confession

Living Christ, you baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire.

**Yet, we confess our fear that the kings, presidents, and
princes of this world have more power than you.**

Forgive us our faltering trust.

Lord, we believe; help our unbelief.

Our faith may waver, but our identity is unwavering:

**in you we are God’s Beloved,
filled with the Spirit to live your way,
while you usher creation from groaning to healing.**

**By your Spirit, may we live this hope in word and action,
so that others who are bound by fear might be set free.**

Silent Prayers & Assurance of Pardon

*** SHARING CHRIST’S PEACE**

Hymn 698 (3 times) “Take, O Take Me as I Am”

Bold font indicates congregational participation.

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

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

FIRST SCRIPTURE LESSON Isaiah 43:1-7

SECOND SCRIPTURE LESSON Luke 3:15-22

SERMON “The Day When Heaven Was Opened”

RESPONDING TO GOD’S WORD

HYMN 490 “Wash, O God, Your Sons and Daughters”

AFFIRMATION OF FAITH from *A Brief Statement of Faith*

**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 Self Offering

Offertory *Kumbayah* Rev. Marvin V. Frey

* *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.**

GOING OUT TO SERVE

*** HYMN 485** “We Know That Christ Is Raised”

*** CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

POSTLUDE *God Bless The Child* Holiday/Herzog

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: Anne Justice
Today’s greeters: Jean and Russ Moxley
Today’s ushers: Kim Presley and Laura Brown
Today’s guest pianist Chuck Lichtenberger

MANNA Food Bank Volunteering

MANNA’s location on Swannanoa River Road was destroyed in the storm, but they have a new location in Mills River! We will be heading down to volunteer there as a group on Thursday, January 16. Our shift is currently 1-4 PM on the third Thursday of the month. Contact Linda Lewis at (828) 483-6296 to sign up.

January Sunday Morning Class Begins Next Sunday

“Israel and the Nations: Relating to People Not Like Us”

Join Rev. Jim Chatham at 9:30 AM on Sunday mornings, January 19 & 26, as he leads our next Faith Formation class downstairs in Room 104. “Immigrants and Refugees Welcome,” says the sign on our church’s front lawn. As much as an invitation to newcomers, this sign is a statement of faith—faith that the living God dwells among us, creating colleagues and friends from strangers. This, of course, is a hot topic in our nation right now: shall we look at foreign people as assets or as dangers? What wisdom, what insight, does the Bible impart? The Bible presents three images of our relation to “the nations.” We are to discern as wisely as we can amid all three.

Book Study of *Knitting the Fog*—Take Two!

Sundays, February 2, 9, 16, & 23, 12 PM with Lunch Provided

Join Virginia Hebert as she leads a “take two” study of *Knitting the Fog*, previously interrupted by Helene. Guatemalan author Claudia D. Hernández leads readers through a heartrending account of her childhood and family life in Guatemala, her journey to the U.S., her immigrant experience in Los Angeles, and her return to Guatemala. Her story underscores the complexity of the immigrant experience and the ache for belonging. In addition to reading the book together, we will also be talking about our partnership with our Guatemalan sister church, El Divino Salvador, and about our support of local refugees here in our own area. Lunch will be provided. For our first meeting, bring your book in hand (can be purchased through Amazon) and be ready to discuss Part I, “Life in Paradise, Also Known as Hell.” Please sign up on the sheet in the Narthex or by contacting Lynne Petty at (828) 274-0191 or officenewhope@gmail.com.

Alternative Inauguration of Justice and Peace

Join us in the sanctuary on Monday, January 20, from 12 to 1 PM as our next president is sworn into office. The Justice & Reconciliation Committee will be hosting a time of prayer as we lift up to God our lamentation, hope, and commitment to action in an “alternative inauguration.” This past Advent, we practiced Alternative Giving by resisting the commercialism of Christmas and remembering friends and family with alternative gifts. In 2025, let’s consider an Alternative Inauguration, where we choose to seek a future of justice and compassion, not of division and fear. During the hour, we will have readings, poetry, music, quiet time for reflection, and a time to develop personal action plans. Since it will also be Martin Luther King Jr. Day, we will remember how he reminded us of the words of the prophet Amos: “Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.” For more information about this event, call Betsy Finger at (828) 712-3367 or Rich Vanderveen at (828) 606-5429.

Cover Art: “Baptism of Jesus” by Scott Lorenzo, 1987, Smithsonian American Art Museum.

Worship bulletin announcements for Sunday, January 19 are due to Administrator Lynne Petty by noon on Wednesday, January 15.

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.

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Kim Wells, Pastor | Lynne Petty, Church Administrator

Rob Blackwell, Director of Music Ministry/Pianist

New Hope

Presbyterian Church

“Including, Renewing, Serving”

Baptism of the Lord

January 12, 2025

11 o’clock



“The Day When Heaven Was Opened”



“Now when all the people were baptized, and when Jesus also had been baptized and was praying, the heaven was opened ...”

(Luke 3:21)