

HOPE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

Order of Worship

December 19th, 2021

11:00am

“[Jesus] is a Light for us when all other lights go out.”

Tim Keller, *Hidden Christmas*

“In a land by death o’ershadowed,
Life at last begins to shine.
O’er our wars and losing battles,
Peace spreads out its healing vine.
Bring your weak and bring your wounded;
Lay them at the savior’s feet.
Hearts by sorrows worn and plundered
Find in him their strength complete.”

The Porter’s Gate, “In a Land by Death O’ershadowed”

“In the end, darkness is not explained; it is defeated. Night is not justified or solved; it is endured until light overcomes it and it is no more. In the meantime, we do not stop asking our questions of God. He allows us to ask them when we need to because he loves us. And we bring our perplexity into the prayers and practices of the church so that they can shape and direct our own questions. Through its prayers, practices, and gathered worship, the church tells us over and over again, “This is what God is like. This is his name. This is how you know he loves you.”

Tish Harrison Warren, *Prayer in the Night*

CALL TO WORSHIP

“O come Desire of Nations bind, all peoples in one heart and mind;
Bid envy, strife, and discord cease, fill the whole world with heaven’s peace.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.”

Leader: Prepare the way of the Lord. We light this candle in peace. The peace that Jesus, our Savior, gives to the world.

All: *Prepare the way of the Lord.*

Everlasting God

O Come All Ye Faithful

CALL TO CONFESSION

Confession of Sin

Merciful God, we confess the ways we have not kept watch for you. We have forgotten how to hope in miracles; we have ignored the promise of your kingdom; we get distracted by all the busyness of this season. Forgive us, God. Grant us the simple wonder of the shepherds, the intelligent courage of the Magi, and the patient faith of Mary and Joseph, that we may journey with them to Bethlehem and find the good news of a child born for us. Make us ready for his coming. Amen.

Silent Confession

Assurance of Pardon

“Comfort, comfort my people, says your God.
Speak tenderly to Jerusalem, and cry to her
that her warfare is ended, that her iniquity is pardoned,
that she has received from the Lord’s hand double for all her sins...
you shall call his name Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins.”

Isaiah 40:1-2; Matthew 1:21

O Little Town of Bethlehem

Passing of the Peace of Christ

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you.

All: *And also with you.*

Welcome and Prayers of the People

Anna Otto

Offering & Doxology

Praise God from whom all blessings flow / Praise him all creatures here below
Praise him above ye heavenly hosts / Praise father, son, and holy ghost

Life Together

Ethan Smith

PREACHING OF THE WORD

“A Song for Gospel Amnesiacs”

Ethan Smith

⁵⁷ Now the time came for Elizabeth to give birth, and she bore a son. ⁵⁸ And her neighbors and relatives heard that the Lord had shown great mercy to her, and they rejoiced with her. ⁵⁹ And on the eighth day they came to circumcise the child. And they would have called him Zechariah after his father, ⁶⁰ but his mother answered, “No; he shall be called John.” ⁶¹ And they said to her, “None of your relatives is called by this name.” ⁶² And they made signs to his father, inquiring what he wanted him to be called. ⁶³ And he asked for a writing tablet and wrote, “His name is John.” And they all wondered. ⁶⁴ And immediately his mouth was opened and his tongue loosed, and he spoke, blessing God. ⁶⁵ And fear came on all their neighbors. And all these things were talked about through all the hill country of Judea, ⁶⁶ and all who heard them laid them up in their hearts, saying, “What then will this child be?” For the hand of the Lord was with him.

⁶⁷ And his father Zechariah was filled with the Holy Spirit and prophesied, saying,

⁶⁸ “Blessed be the Lord God of Israel,
for he has visited and redeemed his people
⁶⁹ and has raised up a horn of salvation for us
in the house of his servant David,
⁷⁰ as he spoke by the mouth of his holy prophets from of old,
⁷¹ that we should be saved from our enemies
and from the hand of all who hate us;
⁷² to show the mercy promised to our fathers
and to remember his holy covenant,

⁷³ the oath that he swore to our father Abraham, to grant us
⁷⁴ that we, being delivered from the hand of our enemies,
might serve him without fear,
⁷⁵ in holiness and righteousness before him all our days.
⁷⁶ And you, child, will be called the prophet of the Most High;
for you will go before the Lord to prepare his ways,
⁷⁷ to give knowledge of salvation to his people
in the forgiveness of their sins,
⁷⁸ because of the tender mercy of our God,
whereby the sunrise shall visit us from on high
⁷⁹ to give light to those who sit in darkness and in the shadow of death,
to guide our feet into the way of peace.”

⁸⁰ And the child grew and became strong in spirit, and he was in the wilderness until the day of his public appearance to Israel.

Luke 1:57-80

Leader: This is the Word of God for the people of God.

All: *Thanks be to God*

THE LORD'S SUPPER

Leader: The Lord be with you.

Congregation: *And also with you.*

Leader: Lift up your hearts.

Congregation: *We lift them up to the Lord.*

Leader: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

Congregation: *It is right to give him thanks and praise.*

Leader: Therefore, we proclaim the mystery of faith:

All: *Christ has died. Christ is risen. Christ will come again.*

Wonderful Merciful Savior

BENEDICTION

²⁴ The Lord bless you and keep you;

²⁵ the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

²⁶ the Lord lift up his countenance upon you and give you peace.

Numbers 6:24-26

ADDITIONAL PRAYERS AND MEDITATIONS

Prayer for Those Struggling with Sin

Lord Jesus, grant that I may see in you the fulfillment of all my needs and may turn from every false satisfaction to feed on you, the true and living bread. Enable me to lay aside the sin that clings so closely, and run with perseverance the race set before me, looking to you, the author and perfecter of my faith. Amen.

Prayer for Those Searching for the Truth

Jesus, you claim to be the way, the truth, and the life. Grant that I might be undaunted by the cost of following you as I consider the reasons for doing so. If what you claim is true, please guide me, teach me, and open to me the reality of who you are. Give me an understanding of you that is coherent, convincing, and that leads to the life that you promise. Amen.

Prayer of Belief

Lord Jesus, I admit that I am weaker and more sinful than I ever before believed, but through you I am more loved and accepted than I ever dared hope. I thank you for paying my debt, bearing my punishment on the cross, and offering forgiveness and new life. Knowing that you have been raised from the dead, I turn from my sins and receive you as Savior and Lord. Amen.

LIFE TOGETHER

Christmas Eve Worship Services: Please join us for worship on Christmas Eve!

- 4:00pm - "Wonder of His Love" - an interactive service for all ages. Masks required.
- 9:00pm - "Candlelight" - a service of Lessons and Carols. Masks optional and livestream available.

Worship on December 26th: We will have a single service on December 26th at 11:00am. Masks will be optional. Livestream and childcare will not be available.

Childcare During Indoor Worship Services: Please **reserve** your nursery spot for indoor childcare for infants-36 months. This is the best way to secure your nursery slot. As the church transitions to new schedules, availability will be adjusted according to weekly average attendance numbers and staffing availability. **We may not be able to accommodate those who do not pre-register.** Please be patient with us as we go through this transition process and determine the best way to serve our youngest members. A link to register can be found at hopechurchws.org/worship.

All Youth Christmas Party: Middle and High School students - let's all celebrate Christmas together with a party and gift exchange! We'll meet tonight, December 19th, from 7:30-9:00pm at the church. If the weather is nice we'll be under the tents by the playground, but if it's too cold or rainy we'll mask up and go inside. We'll enjoy some dessert (if outside), play some games, and exchange some gifts "white elephant" style. Please bring a wrapped gift (\$15 and under) for the gift exchange. See you there!

London Mission Trip Interest Meeting - January 9th, 12:30pm: Pastors Ethan and Davis will be leading a mission trip next summer to serve with Serge missionaries in London. The dates are July 3-11, 2022, and the trip is open to both adults and youth (current 9th grade and up). Come hear what God is up to in London and how we'll be joining in that work! Lunch will be provided, but please RSVP at hopechurchws.org/london.

Women's Bible Study: We will be offering two opportunities for women to study the life of Elijah and Elisha (I Kings 17- II Kings 2) together this Spring. You may join us on Tuesday evenings at 7:00pm in the Adult Sunday School Room or on Wednesday mornings at 9:30am in the Worship Center. Childcare will be available on Wednesday mornings so please indicate your need for childcare when you register. Our registration deadline is Wednesday, January 5th. If you already registered for the I Peter study in the Fall, no need to register again. Registration link can be found at hopechurchws.org/women.

Women's Wednesday Evening Study: All women are welcome to join us on January 12th, 2022, 7:30-9:00pm. We will dive into *Gentle and Lowly* by Dane Ortlund. We will meet weekly on Wednesday evenings in various homes. For more information, contact Sue Spainhour, spainhourj13@gmail.com.

Discovering Hope: This is our course on what it means to follow Jesus and participate as a member of a local church, and it is the next step for those who wish to become a member of Hope Church. We have two upcoming offerings:

1. **January 14th-15th**, a weekend version where we will cover everything in a Friday evening (7:30-9pm) and Saturday morning (9-11:30am)
2. **February 6th - March 13th**, a weekly version during the Sunday School hour, 10-10:45am.

Registration for both versions is available on our website (hopechurchws.org/discoveringhope) or the Church Center app.

Prayer Requests: text **hopeprayers** to 94000 if you would like to send us your prayer requests.

Mother's Nursing Room: The indoor nursing room is available. For the safety of everyone, but especially these precious new babies, please use wise judgment concerning social distancing.

MISSIONARY OF THE WEEK

The Barnabas Center is a nonprofit, non-denominational, Christ-centered counseling, training and teaching ministry. The Barnabas name, which means "son of encouragement," communicates our desire to encourage people by coming alongside them, entering into their daily struggles, and walking with them toward freedom.

Prayer Requests: The Barnabas Center Triad is currently growing to meet the high demand for our counseling services. Praise God they were recently able to hire a new full-time male counselor, which will increase their ability to bring their Gospel-Centered counseling to more folks who are struggling. They are hoping to have a Barnabas Basic Training in Winston in the spring of 2022. Please pray for financial provision so they can hire and train another full-time counselor soon. Pray that they would stay connected deeply to Christ when they are experiencing stress in their work. Pray that their team would continue to grow in relationship with one another and with Jesus.

Contact Information: bjones@thebarnabascenter.org