



**POPLAR SPRINGS BAPTIST CHURCH**  
est. 1794

**The Lord's Day, December 11th, 2022**  
**The Third Sunday of Advent**

**Rev. Danny Settle, Interim Pastor**  
**Phone: 864-770-5514**

**6000 Poplar Springs Road**  
**Ware Shoals, SC 29692**  
**Office: (864) 861-2196**

**[www.poplarspringsws.org](http://www.poplarspringsws.org)**

## CALL TO WORSHIP

*THE STRIKING OF THE HOUR*

*MEDITATION AND PREPARATION*

Prelude

*CALL TO WORSHIP*

Psalm 99:1-3

"The LORD reigns; Let the peoples tremble! He dwells between the cherubim; Let the earth be moved! The LORD is great in Zion, and He is high above all the peoples. Let them praise Your great and awesome name— He is holy."

*Minister:* Lift up your hearts unto the Lord!

*Congregation:* **We lift them up!**

*HYMN*

O Come All Ye Faithful  
Celebration Hymnal #249

## CONFESSION OF SIN

*THE LAW OF GOD*

Matthew 7:21-23

"For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man."

*Private Confession*

*Corporate Confession*

*Minister:* We make this, our corporate confession, unto God:

**All: Almighty God, eternal Father, we acknowledge and confess to you that we were born in unrighteousness. Our life is full of sin and transgression; we have not gladly believed your Word nor followed your holy commandments. For your goodness' sake and for your name's sake, be gracious unto us, we pray, and forgive us all our sin, which is very great. Amen.  
(John Knox)**

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON*

John 6:47-51

"Most assuredly, I say to you, he who believes in Me has everlasting life. I am the bread of life. Your fathers ate the manna in the wilderness, and are dead. This is the bread which comes down from heaven, that one may eat of it and not die. I am the living bread which came down from heaven. If anyone eats of this bread, he will live forever; and the bread that I shall give is My flesh, which I shall give for the life of the world."

*Minister:* Your sins are forgiven through Christ.

*Congregation:* **Thanks be to God!**

*DOXOLOGY*

Doxology  
Celebration Hymnal #815

**CONSECRATION**

*PRAYER OF ILLUMINATION*

*SCRIPTURE READING*

*Minister:* The Word of the Lord.

*Micah 5:1-5*

*Luke 2:1-7*

*Titus 2:11-14*

*Minister:* May God bless the reading of His Word.

*Congregation:* **Amen.**

*LIGHTING OF THE BETHLEHEM CANDLE*

*PASTORAL PRAYER*

*Minister:* We make these petitions, ending with the prayer our Lord taught us to pray:

*All:*           **"Our Father in heaven,  
Hallowed be Your name.  
Your kingdom come,  
Your 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 do not lead us into temptation,  
But deliver us from the evil one.  
For Yours is the kingdom and the  
power and the glory forever.  
Amen."** (Matthew 6:9-13)

*HYMN*

O Little Town of Bethlehem  
Celebration Hymnal #250

*SERMON*

The Light That Pierced Eternal Darkness  
Luke 2:8-20

*HYMN*

Thou Didst Leave Thy Throne  
Celebration Hymnal #292

## COMMISSIONING

### *BENEDICTION*

*Minister:* "Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and to present you faultless Before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy, To God our Savior, who alone is wise, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and forever. Amen." (Jude 1:24-25)

*Congregation:* **Amen.**

Postlude

## EVENING SERMON

Making Plans for Christmas  
Matthew 1:18-25

## **Bethlehem Ephrathah**

Micah 5:2

*"You, O Bethlehem Ephrathah, who are too little to be among the clans of Judah, from you shall come forth for me one who is to be ruler in Israel, whose coming forth is from of old, from ancient days."*

God acted in space and in time to save His people, giving many specific predictions regarding where and when He would send His Messiah. When it comes to the place where the Messiah would arrive, no text is more important than Micah 5:2, which explains that the promised ruler of Israel would be born in one of the humblest towns in the nation: Bethlehem (see Matt. 2:6).

Micah spoke these words during the eighth century BC when the northern kingdom of Israel was about to fall and the southern kingdom of Judah was in the midst of a long decline. The prophet gave his oracles to warn the people of the consequences of their sexual immorality and their failure to show kindness and justice to the impoverished. The people of God were buying and selling justice, showing favor to the rich and ignoring the poor in the legal setting. All of these things are forbidden in the law of God, and Micah said they would lead to the greatest and final covenant curse of exile from the promised land, just as the law promised (Mic. 4:10; see Lev. 26:27–33; Deut. 28).

That promise of judgment, however, was not the last revelation of God through Micah to His people Israel. The Lord said that a new king would come and would be born in Bethlehem. This king would save the Israelites from their enemies (Mic. 5:2, 7–9). The birthplace of Bethlehem is notable because that is the town where David was born. Thus, the promised king and Messiah would be a Davidic ruler. The hopes for David's line would be restored in the same place where David was born and raised, the little town of Bethlehem.

Compared to other cities and towns in Israel, Bethlehem was insignificant in size and influence (v. 2). This made it a perfect place of origin for David's line and the birthplace of the Messiah. God often chooses what is small and lowly in order to reveal His glory and power, so Matthew 2:6 gives an interpretative gloss of Micah 5:2 that reveals how its "leastness" was only apparent. Despite Bethlehem's humble state, it was not "least among the rulers of Judah," for it was the birthplace of both David and the Messiah. By sending His Son to be born in a manger in Bethlehem, God exalted that town before the world. It was there that God Himself would arrive, being made incarnate in the womb of the Virgin Mary, for the sake of our salvation. The child of Mary was from "ancient days," eternal according to His divine nature.

CORAM DEO Living before the face of God

God does not often choose what is exalted and honored in the eyes of the world. Instead, He loves to choose what is lowly and apparently insignificant in order to accomplish His purposes, just as He did when He chose Bethlehem as the birthplace of the Messiah. None of us, therefore, should think that God cannot use us. Even if we are not well known or important in the world's eyes, God can still do great things in and through us. Jesus tells us, "There is joy before the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Luke 15:10).

## **SERVICES**

## THE LORD'S DAY

Morning Worship 10:00 AM

Evening Worship 7:00 PM

Children's Ministry 7:00 PM

Deacons Meeting 8:00 PM

## WEDNESDAY

BIBLE STUDY 7:00 PM

# LEADERSHIP

## ELDER

Rev. Travis Gosnell

Phone: 864-554-4458

Email: [travis.gosnell@lonza.com](mailto:travis.gosnell@lonza.com)

## DEACONS

Deck Balentine, Chairman

Phone: 864-871-4411

Tommy Bryant

Phone: Home: 864-861-2255

Cell: 864-554-1811

Jerry Crawford

Phone: 864-992-2179

Mike Posey, Jr.

Phone: 864-980-7387

Larry Powell

Phone: 864-993-5265

Michael Madden

Phone: 864-377-4373

## SECRETARY

Nancy Balentine

Phone: 864-871-2051

Email: [balentine@poplarspringsws.org](mailto:balentine@poplarspringsws.org)

## PIANIST

Jean Powell