

Order of Worship

Fifth Sunday of Advent

February 22, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.

Gathering Music *Hymn Melodies* arr. Adam O'Boyle

Welcome

Prelude *Here's One* arr. Philip Keveren

Word and Wonder – A Time for Children

*Call to Worship (Responsive)

Jesus says: I am the resurrection and the life.

And so we come to seeking possibilities we don't yet know how to name.

Jesus says: You will see the glory of God.

And so we look, though all around seems bleak.

Jesus says: Unbind him and let him go.

And so we take our part in a new future. Let us worship God!

*Hymn 15 *All Creatures of Our God and King* Lasst uns Erfreuen
(verses 1, 4, and 6)

Call to Prayer

Prayer for Forgiveness (Unison)

You hold the power of life, O God, and we confess that we don't know what to do with that. We are so used to a system that controls by fear of punishment or death, we hardly even realize we use it as much as it uses us. You come bringing light and life to all, revealing that death is not the last word, and so setting us free from the fear that keeps us bound.

Forgive us when we struggle to let go of the grave-clothes, preferring the bindings we know to the freedom of unknown. Forgive us when we use your word to inspire fear of punishment and death, believing you operate on the same system we do. Forgive us when we try to control you, demanding you shrink to fit our need for safety and security within the ways of the world.

Call us out of shadows into the light of new life, and unbind us and let us go. We ask in the name of Jesus who is the resurrection and the life...

Assurance of God's Grace

Scripture Lessons John 11 (selected verses) NT, p. 104

Sermon If Only Rev. Christie Ashton

*Hymn 684

Faith Begins by Letting Go

Lux Prima

Affirmation of Faith (Unison)

A Brief Statement of Faith
In life and in death we belong to God. Through the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, we trust in the one triune God, the Holy One of Israel, whom alone we worship and serve.

We trust in Jesus Christ, fully human, fully God. Jesus proclaimed the reign of God: preaching good news to the poor and release to the captives, teaching by word and deed and blessing the children, healing the sick and binding up the brokenhearted, eating with outcasts, forgiving sinners, and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.

Unjustly condemned for blasphemy and sedition, Jesus was crucified, suffering the depths of human pain and giving his life for the sins of the world. God raised this Jesus from the dead, vindicating his sinless life, breaking the power of sin and evil, delivering us from death to life eternal.

With believers in every time and place, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord. Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Prayers of the People & the Lord's Prayer

As we pray together the prayer Christ taught us:

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name. Thy kingdom come, thy 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 lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom and the power and the glory, forever. Amen.

*Hymn 312

Take Us As We Are, o God

Shine, Jesus, Shine

*Charge and Benediction

*Postlude Praise the Father, Praise the Son, Praise the Spirit Gregorian

Prayer Family of the Week:

Our prayer family of the week is Lewis and Marjorie Agnew. This week, we ask the congregation to remember Lewis, Marjorie and their family, asking God to strengthen and bless them.

The Elder on Call for February is Angie Wester. She may be contacted at any time for information, emergencies, or concerns at 256-684-7691.

What's Happening at Hope?

Annual Congregational Meeting: the annual meeting of the congregation will be Sunday, February 22, immediately following worship. The agenda includes proposed changes to the bylaws, electing Session and Nominating Committee members, and presentation of the budget. The proposed changes to the bylaws will be available next Sunday for review prior to the meeting. The Nominating Committee presents Travis Williams for the Session class of 2028 and Peter Loveman for the 2026 Nominating Committee. Nominations will be accepted from the floor. Please plan to stay for a few minutes following worship for this important meeting.

Worship Leader this week: Lareeta Ashton

Worship Leader next week: Travis Williams

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Prayer Concerns

Members:

Holly Lowe
Luanne Biles
Traci Loveman
Andy Young
Shelby Albert

Friends:

Luke & Crystal Allen (Joanna Sterling-Clutts)
Margaret Bibb (Christie Ashton)
Barbara Dennis
Emily Loeb (Debbie Adsit)
Suzanne Minga (Traci Loveman)
Dr. Jon Wongsurawat (Traci Loveman)

Family:

Kelly Waldron (Christie Ashton)
Lys Howdle (Susan Terry)
Parker Lord (Candy & Bob Lord)
Marcia Loveman (Peter Loveman)
Fred Jones (Bill Jones)

Those serving in our military

Those affected by natural disasters and war around the world.

Church Calendar at a Glance

February 22	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Worship
	11:30 a.m.	Annual Congregational Meeting
	11:45 a.m.	Choir Practice
March 1	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School
	10:30 a.m.	Worship
	11:30 a.m.	Choir Practice

Our Mission Statement

Called by God's grace, we celebrate life with Hope by creating a loving Christian community, serving and worshipping God, and proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ.

We provide an open environment to explore God's will, to grow in commitment to Christ, and to be a refuge of healing.

A Community of Hope