

December Events

- 17 Children's Choir during Worship
If you are interested in having your child sing in the choir, see Megan Mitchell as soon as possible, as rehearsals begin this week.
- 24 Christmas Eve Sunday!
We will gather at 10:00am, as usual. This will be an intimate gathering, so children are welcome to worship with us. (The cry room will be available for those with smaller children.)

January Events

- 6 Southern New Hampshire Rescue Mission
See Eric Wittenberg to hear more, or sign up in the foyer.
- 20 Ladies' Ministry, 9:15am
If you would like to know more, contact Loni Bragdon, Heather Biron, or one of the other ladies on the ministry team.

Detailed announcements are available via email. Sign up on the website or by sending us a message at info@bedfordroad.org.

If you would like to get involved with ministries at Bedford Road or learn more about covenant membership, we would love to connect. See Pastor Erik after the worship gathering, or ask a greeter to direct you to another elder.

Financial Summary

2023 Budget	\$224,885	Budget to Date	\$207,600
Weekly Budget	\$4,325	Giving to Date	\$213,103

You can give via the offering box in the back of the sanctuary, via mail, or online at bedfordroad.org/giving.

Website: <http://bedfordroad.org> Email: info@bedfordroad.org
Phone: (603) 424-9623 Mail: PO Box 443, Merrimack, NH
Pastor: Dr. Erik K. DiVietro pastor@bedfordroad.org

December 3, 2023



Bedford Road Baptist Church

Creating environments where people encounter Jesus and journey together

Today's Worship

"Comfort Ye, My People"

George Frederic Handel & Charles Jennens

"Messiah" is a 1741 oratorio by George Frederic Handel. While Handel composed the music, the libretto was compiled entirely from the King James Version of the Bible and the 1662 Book of Common Prayer by his friend Charles Jennens. After the Overture, a tenor sings this song, which is drawn from Isaiah 40:1-4.

Comfort ye! Comfort ye my people!
Comfort ye! Comfort ye my people!
Comfort ye! Comfort ye my people!
Comfort ye! Comfort ye my people!
Saith your God. Saith your God.

Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem.
Speak ye comfortably to Jerusalem
And cry unto her that Her warfare,
Her warfare is accomplished!

That her iniquity is pardoned! That her iniquity is pardoned.

The voice of Him that crieth in the wilderness
Prepare ye the way of the Lord
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God

Every valley! Every valley shall be exalted.
Shall be exalted! Shall be exalted!
Shall be exalted. Shall be exalted!
And every mountain and hill made low.
The crooked straight and the rough places plain.
The crooked straight! The crooked straight
and the rough places plain! And the rough places plain.

- Repeat -

* The congregation is NOT expected to accompany the singer on this song. *

Nursery is provided 9:30-11:30am for children ages 0-3.
Most weeks, children ages 4-10 are dismissed right before the message,
but on the first Sunday of the month, we worship together as families.

Exploring the Scriptures

"Joseph and Fear"

(Matthew 1:18-25)

The Big Idea:

The Lord's Table

Our congregation observes the Lord's Table (or communion) every week as the central act of our worship. All followers of Christ are invited to come forward, take the elements back to their seats and partake together.

"O Little Town of Bethlehem"

Public Domain, Phillips Brooks and Lewis Henry Redner

In 1865, Philips Brooks visited Bethlehem. This pilgrimage was popular with Americans at the time, and Mark Twain wrote *The Innocents Abroad* in 1869, his own, less than exuberant record of a similar pilgrimage. Brooks composed an ode to the town of Jesus's birth, which his organist Lewis Henry Redner then set to music.

VERSE 1

O little town of Bethlehem, how still we see thee lie
Above thy deep and dreamless sleep, The silent stars go by
Yet in thy dark streets shineth the everlasting Light
The hopes and fears of all the years are met in thee tonight

VERSE 2

For Christ is born of Mary and gathered all above
While mortals sleep, the angels keep their watch of wondering love
O morning stars, together proclaim the holy birth
And praises sing to God the King and peace to men on earth

VERSE 3

How silently, how silently, the wondrous gift is giv'n
So God imparts to human hearts the blessings of His heaven
No ear may hear His coming, but in this world of sin
Where meek souls will receive Him still, the dear Christ enters in.

VERSE 4

O holy child of Bethlehem, descend to us, we pray
Cast out our sin and enter in. Be born in us today.
We hear the Christmas angels the great glad tidings tell.
O come to us; abide with us,
Our Lord Emmanuel!

"O Come! O Come, Emmanuel!"

Public Domain, Henry Sloane Coffin, Thomas Helmore, and John Mason Neale

First translated into English in 1851 by John Mason Neale, the origins of this song go back to monastic observances in the ninth century AD. The Latin original was song during Advent as part of the seven 'O Antiphons.' On Christmas Eve, it was followed by a recitation of the Magnificat (Luke 1:46-55), fulfilling the expectant lyrics of this song. The tune dates to the twelfth century, making it one of the oldest Christmas carols still in regular use.

CHORUS 1

Rejoice! Rejoice!
Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!

VERSE 1

O come, O come, Emmanuel!
And ransom captive Israel
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear

VERSE 2

O come, Thou Dayspring, come and cheer
Our spirits by Thine advent here.
Disperse the gloomy clouds of night,
And death's dark shadows put to flight.

VERSE 3

O come, Thou Wisdom from on high,
And order all things far and nigh.
To us the path of knowledge show
And cause us in her ways to go.

VERSE 4

O come, Desire of nations, bind
All peoples in one heart and mind.
Bid envy strife and quarrels cease
Fill the whole world with heaven's peace

His Parents in Bethlehem

The Lighting of the Advent Candle

Joseph adopted Jesus into the line of David (Luke 2:4). While it is possible Mary was also of David's family, as a woman, she could never pass on the rights of the house to her son. Joseph, in choosing to obey God and honor his covenant with Mary, realized Nathan's prophecy to David a thousand years before.

*Arise, O Lord, and go to your resting place,
you and the ark of your might.
Let your priests be clothed with righteousness,
and let your saints shout for joy.
For the sake of your servant David,
do not turn away the face of your anointed one.
The Lord swore to David a sure oath
from which he will not turn back:
"One of the sons of your body I will set on your throne.
If your sons keep my covenant
and my testimonies that I shall teach them,
their sons also forever shall sit on your throne."
(Psalm 132:8-12)*

God fulfills his promises in his time and in his way. We light this second candle in thankfulness for his trustworthiness and faithfulness to us in sending Jesus as our Savior.

Let's pray together.

God of Israel and David,
Although we often look for you to do things according to our expectations, we are thankful that in your divine power, you bring all things to fruition at your time. May we rise to the occasion of your purposes and bring glory to you and your Son, Jesus. Amen.

"Go Light Your World"

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VERSE 1

There is a candle in ev'ry soul. Some brightly burning, some dark and cold.
There is a Spirit who brings a fire, ignites a candle and makes His home

CHORUS 1

*So carry your candle run to the darkness
Seek out the hopeless confused and torn
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle and go light your world
(Take your candle and go light your world)*

VERSE 2

Frustrated brother, see how he's tried to light his own candle some other way
See now your sister she's been robbed and lied to
Still holds a candle without a flame

CHORUS 2

*So carry your candle run to the darkness
Seek out the lonely the tired and worn
Hold out your candle for all to see it
Take your candle and go light your world
Take your candle and go light your world*

*Hey now na na na na now! Hey now na na na na now.
Hey now na na na na now! Hey now na na na na now.*

VERSE 3

We are a fam'ly whose hearts are blazing
So let's raise our candles and light up the sky
Praying to our Father in the name of Jesus
Make us a beacon in darkest times

- Repeat Chorus 1 -