



Bits from Blayne

Advent Wreath, Our Traditions, and the Character of the Season

The Advent Wreath is one of those church customs that feels ancient, but its regular use in worship is actually only about three centuries old. It began among Lutherans in northern Europe and eventually made its way into congregations across the world. Over time, different traditions developed for naming the candles, and no single set of names has ever been universal. As the Augsburg Confession reminds us, human ceremonies need not be identical everywhere, so long as the Gospel remains central.

Growing up, the banners in our sanctuary carried four words that marked each Sunday of Advent:

Prepare. Watch. Behold. Rejoice.

Those words still echo in my memory, and they fit remarkably well with the broader patterns Christians use today. They follow the shape of the season:

- Prepare – as the prophets call us to readiness and repentance.
- Watch – as God’s people wait in hope for His promises to be fulfilled.
- Behold – as the joy of God’s revelation draws near.
- Rejoice – as heaven and earth celebrate the coming of Christ.

These themes reflect an important truth: Advent is a penitential season, much like Lent – but it is not the same kind of penitence. Both seasons call us to reflection, humility, and a return to the Lord. You’ll notice the visual cues: the purple (or blue) colors, the simpler liturgy, and the emphasis on God’s promises. But here is the difference:

Lent is penitence shaped by the cross.

It drives us toward Good Friday and the weight of Christ’s suffering for our sin. Its tone is deeper and heavier because it leads us to the cost of our redemption.

Advent is penitence shaped by hope.

It looks toward Christ’s coming – past, present, and future.

It invites us to repent not out of fear, but with expectant joy.

It reminds us that the darkness we acknowledge is already being chased away by the Light.

Advent’s call to repentance is not, “Look how far you’ve fallen,” but rather, “The Lord is near – be turned toward Him.” It is a season of awakened hearts, lifted heads, and renewed hope in the promises of God.

So as we light each candle this month, whether we call them Prophets, Bethlehem, Shepherds, and Angels – or Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love – or simply reflect on the words *Prepare, Watch, Behold, Rejoice* – the purpose is the same:

To help us see the coming of Christ more clearly.

To remind us that His light shines in our darkness.

And to lead us in a hope-filled repentance as we prepare to celebrate His birth and anticipate His return.

May the Lord bless your Advent waiting, and may His coming again find us ready in faith, joyful in hope, and steadfast in His peace.


+In Christ,
Pr. Blayne

Worship Schedule

Date	Time	Minister	Lector	Readings
December 7 Sunday School Food Bank Sunday	9AM 10 AM	Pastor Blayne	Frank Wright	Isaiah 11:1-10 Psalm 72: 1-7 Romans 15: 4-13 Matthew 3: 1-12
December 14 Communion NALC Constitution Ratification Meeting Potluck to follow	4PM	Pastor Blayne	Denise Haynie	Isaiah 35: 1-10 Psalm 146 James 5: 7-11 Matthew 11: 18-25
December 21	9AM	Pastor Blayne	Thomas Fritz	Isaiah 7: 10-17 Psalm 24 Romans 1: 1-7 Matthew 1: 18-25
December 24	5PM	Pastor Blayne	Congregation	Isaiah 7: 10-14 Psalm 110: 1-4 1 John 4: 7-16 Matthew 1: 18-25
December 28 Communion	9AM	Pastor Blayne	Duane Nelson	Isaiah 63: 7-14 Psalm 111 Galatians 4: 4-7 Matthew 2: 13-23



Join us for Christmas Eve
Candlelight Service
at 5PM

 Please submit information for the monthly newsletter by the 24th of the month. Send it to NewHopeLutheranNewsletter@gmail.com ready to cut and paste into the newsletter.
Thank you! ~Cheryl

Contacts

Mailing Address

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Email

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Church Council

Duane Nelson, President - 406-485-2423
Kim Murphy, Vice President - 406-974-2445
Denise Haynie, Secretary - 406-939-3856
Wanda Robinette, Treasurer - 406-939-3404
Ron McFarland - 406-853-3348
Frank Wright - 406-974-2042
Kim Murphy - 406-974-2445
Thomas Fritz - 406-974-3336

Event Contacts

Baptisms - June Nelson - 406-485-2423
Weddings - Wanda Robinette - 406-939-3404
Funerals - Frank Wright - 406-974-2042

Facebook Group

New Hope Lutheran Church

Location

1400 B Ave, Circle

Cash Flow - Nov 2025

11/1/2025 through 11/30/2025

Category	11/1/2025- 11/30/2025
INFLOWS	
Offering	6,345.00
TOTAL INFLOWS	6,345.00
OUTFLOWS	
Donation	
Worship Building	750.00
TOTAL Donation	750.00
Insurance	
General Liability	455.00
TOTAL Insurance	455.00
Internet Expense	20.75
Pastoral	
Contract Pastor	1,500.00
TOTAL Pastoral	1,500.00
TOTAL OUTFLOWS	2,725.75
OVERALL TOTAL	3,619.25

Financial Report submitted by Wanda Robinette.

Sunday School

December 7th for all

Next

Council Meeting

Monday, Dec. 8

7 PM

Bible Studies

- **Tuesdays - Revelations Bible Study at Church at 7PM**
- **Wednesdays at the Sr. Center at 6:30PM with Mabel**



Find information,
resources, online small
group study sessions,
Daily Prayer and Readings,
and more!
www.theNALC.org



Find information,
resources, and more!
www.lcmc.net

Council Meeting Minutes

October 13th, 2025

The council meeting of New Hope Lutheran Church was called to order at 7:35 p.m. by President Duane Nelson. The council members attending were Frank Wright, Ron McFarland, Wanda Robinette, Duane Nelson, Thomas Fritz and Denise Haynie. Blayne joined us via Zoom.

Correspondence: Fall update letter from NALC.

The minutes from the previous meeting were reviewed. Frank made a motion to approve the minutes with corrections, Ron seconded.

Wanda gave the **treasurer's report**. Blayne presented his receipts from LCMC conference in MN for a total of \$1194.75 (travel & education) and the cameras and cable for the sound system of \$503.51 (building). Denise presented a hardware bill for \$21.25 (maintenance). Wanda will get the bills paid.

Wanda reported we received \$57 in Thrivent choice dollars. Denise made a motion to approve the treasurer's report; Thomas seconded the motion.

Committee reports:

Worship: Blayne will be available for all Sundays in November. On the second Sunday, November 9th we will have our 5th anniversary potluck following worship. Worship will be at 4:00 p.m., now for the winter season, each second Sunday of the month. Our communion Sundays for November will be the 9th and 23rd. Reformation Sunday is October 26th, All Saints Sunday is November 2nd with catechesis following worship in the basement. On November 26th, we will need a piano player and someone to set up communion. Any volunteers are welcome.

Finance: None

Education: Sunday School will continue once a month through May. Mabel Haynie is teaching a Bible study at the Senior Center on Wednesday nights.

Building: Ron reported the TV and sound system worked excellent for the wedding. The irrigation equipment has been taken out for the winter. Ron mentioned a wheelchair lift he saw at another church. It was a CPL commercial vertical platform lift. We discussed it and we will decide if it is feasible.

Old Business:

Pew cushions were discussed. We will do a fundraiser; Thomas made a motion to have a fundraiser to sponsor pew cushions at \$140/each, Ron seconded. We will announce this in church and place it in the newsletter.

New Business:

November 9th will be our 5th anniversary with potluck and worship. We will have our Harvest Festival starting with worship at 4:00 p.m., with communion and potluck to follow (Thanksgiving style). Becky will make a cake! Thomas will make the turkey, Denise will make a ham, and we will start a sign-up sheet on the table in the entryway for sides.

Pastor's Report:

- LCMC has a link for the individual sessions at the LCMC conference so we can watch them. Pastor Baer attended the LCMC conference for the first time. The High Plains district met while they were there.

- LCMC started their own podcast called "Table Cast". Rev Dr. Julie Smith was interviewed on the first podcast.

- Blayne will be taking his dad to Denver, CO, on Wednesday, for a doctor's visit. He should be back by Sunday, unless something changes. We will all be on standby, just in case.

Next meeting, November 10th at 7:00 p.m. with Zoom offered for those who can't make it to the church.

Newsletter items are due by the 20th of each month!

The meeting was adjourned at 9:10 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Denise Haynie



Luke 1:35: "And the angel answered her, "The Holy Spirit will come upon you, and the power of the Most High will overshadow you; therefore the child to be born will be called holy—the Son of God."



New Hope Lutheran Church
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