

"Hope begins before we see it.
It begins in the dark.
In the silence.
In the waiting."

— Jan Richardson

"In the everyday,
the miraculous hides—
until we pay attention "

— Kathleen Norris

"Hope is not naive. Hope is
prophetic defiance."

— Sarah Bessey

"God does not restore us to what we were;
He recreates us into
what we were meant to be."

— Makoto Fujimura

Advent November 30 – December 21

FORETOLD: ANCIENT HOPES, COMING LIGHT

Before there was a manger, there were whispers of hope in the dark. These Old Testament prophecies embody deep longing, resistance, and wild visions of peace that crash through despair and eventually find their way to the manger.



If you have a prayer request, please forward the request to the church office.
We will include it on the prayer request list for a month,
unless you request for us to leave it on longer.

Thanks to Alyssa Melchers for leading music today!



How to reach us:

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Office hours:

Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday:
10:30 AM to 1:30 PM
Sunday:
9:30 AM to 12:30 PM

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Mission Partners and Liaisons

Local: HUNGER & HOMELESSNESS

ForKids
Chuck Monroe
St. Columba
Alice Allen-Grimes
LAUNCH Ministry
Joe Morgan
The Norfolk Street Choir Project
Rich Voter

Local: OUTREACH & INCLUSION

YOURS
Larry Hull
**Tidewater Pastoral
Counseling Services**
Catherine Hart Monroe

INTERNATIONAL

Ben Seidl in Germany
Craig Wansink
The Jungs in Singapore
Roz Klein and Larry Hull
Our Partners in M.E.
Jonathan Doyle

2025 Session and Ministry Teams

Larry Hull, Clerk of Session

DISCIPLESHIP

Emily Byrd
Lisa Dubey
Peggy Haile McPhillips, Chair
Linda Parks
Sandy Simmermon

MISSION

Jonathan Doyle
Alice Allen-Grimes, Chair
Wendy Horner

ADMINISTRATION

Lori Crouch
Chris Siemering
Sam Stearns
Rich Voter, Chair

ADVENT

11 A.M. WORSHIP
NOVEMBER 30, 2025



DEAD WOOD,
LIVING HOPE



WE GATHER IN NEED OF THE RISEN CHRIST

Chiming

As the bells ring, we quiet our voices and focus our hearts.

Welcome

Preparing Our Hearts for Worship

Lighting the Advent Candle

We light this candle for hope—hope that sprouts even from stumps, hope that imagines a world where peace and justice embrace.

*"A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse,
and a branch shall grow out of his roots." – Isaiah 11:1*

*"The wolf shall live with the lamb...
and a little child shall lead them." – Isaiah 11:6*

Let us pray:

God of all hope, kindle within us the courage to believe in your new beginnings. Let your promised future shape our present living. Amen.

*Call to Worship

In a world of stumps and ruins—

We look for signs of life.

God promises what we do not expect.

A shoot.

A branch.

A Messiah.

Come, Lord Jesus. Surprise us again.

*Passing the Peace

*Singing Our Faith Together

No. 61 “O Come, O Come, Emmanuel”
Verses 1, 2, and 4

*Confessing Our Sin

**God of the stump and shoot, we confess we often stop looking for life where
we’ve seen only death.**

We give up too soon. We abandon your promises when hope feels ridiculous.

Forgive our shallow sight.

Grow trust in us.

In Jesus’ name, Amen.

*Receiving Grace

Dead wood doesn’t scare God. From what looks finished, he begins again.

In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

We are not done. Hope lives.

Thanks be to God.

WE HEAR THE WORD

Time of Discovery

Message

Dr. Craig Wansink

Dead Wood, Living Hope

Isaiah 11:1–10

WE RESPOND IN HUMILITY

*Singing Our Faith Together

No. 63 “My Soul in Stillness Waits”
Verses 1 and 3

Mission and Ministry of the Church

Welcoming New Members

Offering Gratitude

*Where in your life have you declared something "dead"
that God might still want to resurrect?*

Please write your response on a piece paper, put it—and any offering
or visitation card—in the black basket in your pew,
and then the person on the aisle in your pew will
bring those baskets forward as an offering.

Thank you for all of the ways you share your time, life, and finances
on behalf of the mission of this church family.

Prayers of the People and The Lord’s Prayer

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.

*Singing Our Faith Together

No. 67 “Blessed Be the God of Israel”

WE DEPART IN JOY

*Benediction

Go now into a world full of stumps and look for shoots.

Watch where no one else is watching. Hope where it feels foolish.

May God make you resilient, rooted, and ready for new life.

Amen.