



Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

Empowering People in Christ

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

Sunday, February 22, 2026

10:00am

Welcome to this service of worship. We are glad you are here whether it is in person or online. Children are welcome for all aspects of our worship service and church life. To aid people of all ages, including children, in worship participation, a Liturgical Library is available in the narthex to the right of the sanctuary door with tools for engaging the senses in worship, including drawing and movement tools. A "Fidgety Friends" room is available upstairs behind the sanctuary if children become restless and parents would like a comfortable place to continue to participate in worship.

Mission Statement

L- Loving

I- Inclusive

F- Family of Faith

E- Empowering People in Christ

-seeking justice

-loving kindness

-walking humbly (Micah 6:8)

We are a certified PCUSA Earth Care Congregation:

- Our worship and discipleship will celebrate God's grace and glory in creation.
- Our education will encourage and support each other in keeping and healing creation.
- Our facilities will be managed, maintained, and upgraded to respect and cherish all of creation.
- Our outreach will encourage community involvement and public policy to protect and restore the earth.

Celebration of Worship

The First Sunday in Lent

10:00am

February 22, 2026

We Gather in Worship

Greeting and Announcements

[Please note your nearest exit. Silence your cell phones. Restrooms are available behind the sanctuary in the narthex. Remember to add your prayer requests on the sheets provided for inclusion in the Prayers of the People or online by scanning the QR code here.]



Centering Words

For centuries, those who were hungry for God ventured into wilderness places – geographical and spiritual deserts – to quiet the noise of the world and draw near to God. Long before our culture’s obsession with productivity, there were women and men who withdrew from the noise of empire and ego to listen deeply to God. They were called the Desert Mothers and Fathers—early Christian mystics who chose obscurity over acclaim, simplicity over striving, and presence over performance. And that’s exactly why we need their wisdom now. Their rhythms were slow. Their prayers were embodied. Their spirituality was rooted not in productivity, but in presence. They remind us: You are not what you produce. The body is sacred ground. Silence is not empty—it is full of God. Rest is resistance, and it is holy. Their lives challenge us to practice The Way of Jesus not as a theology only, but as a rhythm – a lived experience in the nervous system, the breath, the bone. Their desert wasn’t barren; it was alive with sacred encounter. It still is.

Prelude

Near the Cross

Becky Waters

*Call to Worship

The dust that shapes the journey,
the cross that guides it,
the color that surrounds it,
the light that fades through it,
the Word that foretells it,
the wilderness that invites it.
This is Lent,
and into its wilderness
God calls us.

*Hymn (GTG) No. 410

God Is Calling through the Whisper

W ŻŁOBIE LEŻY

We Are Renewed in Grace

Invitation to Confession

Come, draw near to the God who knows you. Do not be afraid. We become our truest selves when we lay aside distraction and disguise. We see our real faces, and together, we see the face of God.

Prayer of Confession

God, we confess all of the ways we have participated in our own vanishing. We are desperate for a place to hide, even from ourselves. We have fled from our own interior worlds, afraid of what we might suffer if we become honest. We have resented our own faces, our mannerisms, our desires, and instead have chosen a mask. We believed this mask to be necessary for our survival. But we know now, it was erasure. Rescue us from those illusions that are not for our protection, and forgive us for all the ways we demand that others hide in our presence. Have mercy on us, that we may stay near to our own souls.

(Worshippers are invited to offer silent prayers of confession) Amen.

Sung Response (GTG) No. 183 (*verses 1 and 2*) Come to Me, O Weary Traveler CALM SEAS

*Come to me, o weary traveler; come to me in your distress;
come to me, you heavy burdened; come to me and find your rest.
Do not fear, my yoke is easy; do not fear my burden's light;
do not fear the path before you; do not run from me in fright.*

Assurance of Pardon

Let your soul receive this rest: Take heart. You, who are fighting the current of self-neglect and self-loathing, are doing the best you can. **As the forgiveness of God comes awake in us, may we have mercy on our complicated interior worlds, and liberate them daily. We don't have to run from ourselves. God is here.**

We Receive God's Word

Children's Gathering

Tonia Thompson

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading

Psalm 51:1-12 (pages 509-510, red Bible)

Anthem

What Does the Lord Require?

arr. Allen Pote

(Emmanuel Chancel Choir)

New Testament Reading

2 Corinthians 13:5-13 (pages 1058-1059, red Bible)

The Word of God for the people of God. **Thanks be to God.**

Sermon Title Solitude and the World of Ourselves Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

*Hymn (GTG) No. 422 (*sung twice*)

Create in Me a Clean Heart

CREATE IN ME

We Experience God's Grace

*Affirmation of Faith *The Order of St. Columba*

We believe that our lives are held within the encircling love of God,
who knows our names and recognizes our deepest needs.
We believe that Christ is the divine Child of the living God,
and that his grace is like living waters that can never be exhausted.
We believe in the birthing, renewing, enabling Spirit of God
who yearns over our welfare as a mother yearns for her child.
We believe that God is in the arid desert as well as in green pastures,
and that hard times and disciplines are also loving gifts.
We believe that in the church we are fellow pilgrims on the road,
and that we are called to love one another as God loves us.
This is our faith, and we are humbled to profess it in Jesus the Christ. Amen

Prayers of the People and the Lord's Prayer

When the minister says "we pray . . ." you respond: Transform our hearts so we might repair the world.

Offering our Gifts to God

*[Note: if you wish to contribute online, you may do so
at emmanuelpc.org or using the QR code here.]*



Offertory Abide with Me Timothy Matthews

*Doxology Glory to God Hymnal, page 607

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all people here below;
praise Holy Spirit evermore; praise Triune God, whom we adore. Amen.**

*Prayer of Dedication

**Giver of all good things, we thank you: for the air that gives the breath of life,
the sun that warms us, and the good food that makes us strong; for happy
dwellings and for the friends we love, for all that makes it good to live. Make
us thankful and eager to repay, by cheerfulness and kindness, and by a
readiness to help others. Freely we have received; let us freely give, in the name
of Jesus Christ. Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

*Hymn (GTG) No. 726 Will You Come and Follow Me KELVINGROVE

*Invitation, Charge and Benediction

You are encouraged to remain and enjoy the postlude as a moment of prayer and worship before departing today.

*Postlude Toccata in E minor Pachelbel

All are welcome to share the Peace of Christ with one another over refreshments in the narthex following this service.

*please stand, if able

(GTG) – Glory to God Hymnal

Words in **bold print** are said in unison by the congregation.

Liturgy by Jennifer Axcell, Roddy Hamilton, Cole Arthur Riley, Whitney Wilkinson Arreche, Thomas Ken.

Worship Leaders

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche, Pastor
Brittney Axton, Director of Music
Dr. Tak Yan Yeung, Organist
Emmanuel Chancel Choir



Assisting in Today's Service:
Sheryl Taylor, Liturgist
Tonia Thompson, Children's Gathering

