



Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

Empowering People in Christ

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

Sunday, March 8, 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 Third Sunday in Lent

10:00am

March 8, 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

Be Thou My Vision

Arr. Larry Shackley

*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. 451

Open My Eyes, That I May See

OPEN MY EYES

We Are Renewed in Grace

Invitation to Confession

God is still speaking. But sometimes, in our exhaustion and distraction, we cannot hear God's voice. We need a reset – to start fresh, shedding what is not of God, that we might hear God's true voice, and our own.

Prayer of Confession

God who shows, we need a sign. However sincere our discernment, it seems like clarity continues to evade us. God, how will we know? In the absence of firm assurance, this lack of confidence pulls us here and there like a leash. Remind us that many things can be good at once, but if there is an answer that is most right for us in this season, reveal it. Help us have compassion for ourselves as we name our uncertainty. Show us what it means to be people of both conviction and openness, that we might gain the courage to act and decide even when it feels like a risk. May we find divine affirmation on the path to self-trust.

(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: the divine presence remains near as you locate the path that feels right to you. Receive forgiveness and be guided by into your deepest longings as you decide how to spend your days. **God will steady us toward what is good and true and beautiful, now and forever. Amen.**

We Receive God's Word

Children's Gathering

Barbara Edwards

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Reading

John 14:1-7 (pages 982-983, red Bible)

Anthem

I've Got Peace Like a River

arr. Sandra Eithun

(Emmanuel Bell Choir)

Old Testament Reading

Psalm 25 (page 492, red Bible)

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

Sermon Title

The Art of Discernment

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

*Hymn (GTG) No. 775

I Want Jesus to Walk with Me

WALK WITH 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

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.

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

Open Our Eyes

Arr. Mark Zeeman

*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

**God of the wilderness, we give these offerings in gratitude, rejoicing in the
abundance of your gifts to us. We give these offerings in faith, trusting that you
will provide for our needs. We give these offerings in hope, knowing you can
use them to spread your love in this world. And with these offerings, we give
ourselves; May we live with generous hearts, with open hands. Amen.**

We Leave to Serve

*Hymn (GTG) No. 177

I Will Come to You

YOU ARE MINE

*Invitation, Charge and Benediction

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

*Postlude

Grand Chorus

Chester Nordman

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, Joanna Harader.



Worship Leaders

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche, Pastor

Brittney Axton, Director of Music

Dr. Tak Yan Yeung, Organist

Emmanuel Bell Choir



Assisting in Today's Service:

Tonia Thompson, Liturgist

Barbara Edwards, Children's Gathering