



Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

Empowering People in Christ

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

Sunday, March 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 5th Sunday in Lent

10:00am

March 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

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

Arr. Mark Hayes

*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. 39

Great Is Thy Faithfulness

FAITHFULNESS

We Are Renewed in Grace

Invitation to Confession

We come before God, not seeking to be perfect, but seeking to be better. We come before each other, not seeking judgment, but grace. We come together, trusting in God's love for us all.

Prayer of Confession

Isaiah reminds us that our prayer, fasting and pious ritual, must be lived out in compassion and justice: When we forget the fast you desire – To do justice, and stand up for the powerless: Lord, have mercy. When we forget the prayer you love – To show compassion, and care for those in need: Christ, have mercy. When we forget the rituals you require – To create relationships of righteousness and peace: Lord have mercy.

(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

Hear this good news, and let it dwell in your body: with God, there is forgiveness. With God, there is mercy. With God, there is radical acceptance. **We will live as people who know God loves us, and there is nothing we need to do to earn or prove that love. Amen.**

We Receive God's Word

Children's Gathering

Ken Richardson

Prayer for Illumination

Gospel Reading

Matthew 6:16-18, 25-33 (page 882, red Bible)

Anthem

Kyrie

arr. Lloyd Larson

from Behold the Lamb

(Emmanuel Chancel Choir)

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 58 (pages 674-675, red Bible)

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

Sermon Title

Embodied Asceticism

Miriam Bolles

*Hymn (GTG) No. 27

Sacred the Body

TENDERNESS

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 Jesus, What a Wonder You Are Arr. Bruce Greer

*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, we give these gifts in gratitude for your blessings. We give these gifts
with hope, as we hunger and thirst for righteousness. May our offerings of
money, time, and talent be used to comfort those who mourn, to extend mercy,
to make peace, and to help us all more clearly see and live your presence in our
lives and in our world. Amen.

We Leave to Serve

*Hymn (GTG) No. 542 God Be with You Till We Meet Again GOD BE WITH YOU

*Invitation, Charge and Benediction

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

*Postlude To God Be the Glory Arr. Ethel Tench Rogers

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, United Church of Christ, Whitney Wilkinson Arreche, Joanna Harader.

Worship Leaders

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche, Pastor

Miriam Bolles, Preacher

Brittney Axton, Director of Music

Dr. Tak Yan Yeung, Organist

Emmanuel Chancel Choir



Assisting in Today's Service:

Jude Langsdorf, Liturgist

Ken Richardson, Children's Gathering