



Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

Empowering People in Christ

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

Sunday, September 28, 2025

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

26th Sunday in Ordinary Time

10:00am

September 28, 2025

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

If you suddenly and unexpectedly feel joy, don't hesitate. Give in to it. We are not wise, and not very often kind. And much can never be redeemed. Still, life has some possibility left. Perhaps this is its way of fighting back, that sometimes something happens better than all the riches or power in the world. It could be anything, but very likely you notice it in the instant when love begins. Anyway, that's often the case. Anyway, whatever it is, don't be afraid of its plenty. Joy is not made to be a crumb.

Prelude

Make Me a Servant

Arr. Laura Bergquist

*Call to Worship *adapted from Psalm 104*

O Lord, our God, how great you are;

all the world depends on you:

Praise the Lord our God!

You make trees and grasses grow;

you provide the food we need:

Praise the Lord our God!

Seed to harvest, wheat to bread,

all our gladness comes from you:

Praise the Lord our God!

We will sing to the Lord all our days;

may our worship bring you joy:

Praise the Lord our God!

*Hymn (GTG) No. 401

Here in This Place

GATHER US IN

We Are Renewed in Grace

Invitation to Confession

Before we can truly laugh, we must first let go of what weighs us down.

Before joy can rise in us, grace must clear some space. So let's be honest –

not because God doesn't know, but because we forget that mercy is already leaning in, smiling, waiting for us to fess up and fall into arms wide with forgiveness.

Prayer of Confession

God of grace and playful delight, we confess that sometimes we take ourselves too seriously. We walk through life stiff with worry, grim with guilt, and frowning with fear. We forget that you created laughter, and that joy is a fruit of your Spirit. Forgive us for putting a lid on your joy, for muting your music, and for walking around like the resurrection never happened. Remind us that Easter is the world's biggest surprise party, and we're all invited. Tickle our hearts with your grace, nudge us with your mercy, and teach us to live with eyes wide open for holy joy. In the name of the Risen One who laughed in the face of death.

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

Sung Response (GTG) No. 851 Come, Bring Your Burdens to God (*sung twice*)

Come, bring your burdens to God.

WOZA NOMTHWALO WAKHO

Come, bring your burdens to God.

*Come, bring your burdens to God,
for Jesus will never say no.*

Assurance of Pardon

Here's the good news: God doesn't hold a grudge – God holds us.
Christ didn't come to scold us – he came to save us, to shake us out of our sorrow, and to set loose joy in our hearts like confetti in the wind.
So we will laugh, dance, rejoice –
for in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!
Thanks be to God!

We Receive God's Word

Children's Gathering

Katie Phillips

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading

Ecclesiastes 3:9-22 (page 604-605, red Bible)

Anthem

The Lord Began a Good Work in You Mark Patterson
(Emmanuel Chancel Choir)

Gospel Reading

1 Timothy 6:6-19 (page 1083 red Bible)

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

Sermon Title

Seizing Life

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

*Hymn (GTG) No. 250

In the Bulb There Is a Flower

PROMISE

We Experience God's Grace

*Affirmation of Faith *Henri Nouwen*

Joy does not simply happen to us. We have to choose joy and keep choosing it every day. It is a choice based on the knowledge that we belong to God and have found in God our refuge and our safety and that nothing, not even death, can take God away from us. Joy is the experience of knowing that you are unconditionally loved and that nothing – sickness, failure, emotional distress, oppression, war, or even death – can take that love away.

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

Interlude

Mark Hayes

*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

We may not feel like we have much, Giving God, but we do have enough to look out for our neighbor. We do have enough to help a life in need. We do have enough to make our days count. Use all we offer this day, to bring a bit more joy to this weary world, amen.

We Leave to Serve

*Hymn (GTG) No. 157

I Danced in the Morning

LORD OF THE DANCE

*Invitation, Charge and Benediction

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

*Postlude

March of the Faithful

Robert J. Hughes

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 Mary Oliver, Simon Taylor, Thom Shuman, Henri Nouwen, Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

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:

Katie Phillips, Liturgist
Katie Phillips, Children's Gathering

