



Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

Empowering People in Christ

Emmanuel Presbyterian Church

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

Sunday, December 7, 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

The Second Sunday of Advent

10:00am

December 7, 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

We come to know you, Holy One, as Wisdom Incarnate, as Flickering Flame, as Spirit of Life, as hope, peace, joy, and love, enfleshed. You come to us as the stranger, and the strange. Often we do not recognize you. Often we turn away from your gifts and your demands. Yet you come to us in wilderness, in the impossible made possible, in silence and singing and sighs too deep for words. You abhor dominance, mastery, fear, and control. You are made known to us in vulnerability, and courage, and divesting from the powers of empire. We come to you this Advent in need, with longing, in pain, captive to fear, desiring a more just world, a more livable life for all of us, for the earth, for every living thing caught and held in this inescapable network of mutual interdependence. We long for you. We long for healing. We long for liberation. We long for different systems and patterns of relating. And so, this Advent, we pause. We breathe. We pray. We dig deep. We reach out. We rise up. We remember. We vision. We sit with the pain. We stay with the trouble. We wait, expectant. We light candles. We labor. We open to You, and to one another, and to the Sacred Mystery that is Emmanuel, God-With-Us, Love Incarnate, Divinity Enfleshed.

Prelude

Waiting for Messiah

Robert W. Thygerson

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Scripture Reading: Matthew 3:1-6, 11

Joyce and Neal Morris

Litany

The Peace of God-With-Us does not come as law and order,
or enforcement and control.

Peace cannot be imposed from on high. Peace cannot be commanded.

The Peace of God-With-Us is chaotic, wild, unruly, unpredictable.

The Peace of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from complicity.

Peace waits in darkness; it comes unexpectedly.

Peace invites our expectation, and demands our participation.

Prepare the way for peace with justice.

May Peace be birthed among, within, and through us, this Advent.

Sung Response (GTG) No. 92 (verse 1) While We Are Waiting, Come

WAITING

While we are waiting, come;

while we are waiting, come.

*Jesus, our Lord, Emmanuel,
while we are waiting, come.*

Lighting the Second Advent Candle (Peace)

As we light this candle of peace, we pray this light of peace will shine in all the shadowed places of war, of want, and of violence. We pray that the peace of the coming Christ child will shine in hearts shadowed by grief, or loss, or bitterness. Come, Prince of Peace.

*Hymn (GTG) No. 89 (*verses 1-4*) For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits

MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAITS

We Are Renewed in Grace

Invitation to Confession

Come, weary traveler, whether your weariness lies in not knowing a home of safety and comfort, or in your own internal restlessness. Draw near to the God who comes as one of us, as a weary traveler making a home with us, and within us.

Prayer of Confession

Forgive us, God, when we live our lives within the lines; when we say that the shape of our work is the boundary of our habitation. That these are the limits to our love. That these are the lines of our vision and our welcome; these, and none other. At the edges of our borders, you wait. And at our territorial lines, you linger. Because the place where we touch beyond our boundaries is where you take your delight. And when we learn to read the landscape of our fears, and when we come to know the terrain of every sorrow, then we will turn our fences into bridges, and our borders into paths of peace.

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

Sung Response (GTG) No. 89 (*verse 4*) For You, O Lord, My Soul in Stillness Waits

For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits; truly my hope is in you.

MY SOUL IN STILLNESS WAIT

O Key of Knowledge, guide us in our pilgrimage;

we ever seek, yet unfulfilled remain;

open to us the pathway of your peace.

For you, O Lord, my soul in stillness waits; truly my hope is in you.

Assurance of Pardon

God of making and unmaking, of tearing down and re-creating, you are our home and habitation, our refuge and place of dwelling. **In your hollows, we are re-formed, given welcome and benediction, beckoned to rest and rise again, made ready, and sent forth.**

We Receive God's Word

Children's Gathering

Barbara Edwards

Prayer for Illumination

New Testament Reading

Romans 15:4-13 (pages 1035-1036, red Bible)

Anthem

Holy Child of Bethlehem

arr. Lloyd Larson

from *The Road to Bethlehem*

(*Emmanuel Chancel Choir*)

Old Testament Reading

Ezekiel 47:1-23 (pages 801-802, red Bible)

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

Sermon Title Blessing Within and Beyond Borders Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

*Hymn (GTG) No. 84

Creator of the Stars of Night

CONDITOR ALME SIDERUM

We Experience God's Grace

*Affirmation of Faith *The Creed of the Pilgrim God*, Margarita Ouwerkerk, Argentina

We believe in a pilgrim God,

who crosses frontiers, boundaries and barriers,

who leaves greatness behind and meets us on the way

and comes to us holding out their hand.

'I am the Lord, your God, I care for you, I am coming with you.'

We believe in Jesus Christ, who walked on our earth,

who was born homeless, who found no place to lay his head,

wandering, journeying, even when a child, pursued.

He revealed justice, brought people peace,

and played out his life even unto death itself.

We believe in the Spirit, who shapes and polishes us,

with blasts of wind and sand,

who gives us courage to witness

to the boundless grace of God.

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

Once, Long Ago

Gary Davidson

*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 us all, we offer these gifts in trust of your abundance, and in our common calling to care for those most on the edge: the stranger, the wanderer, the forgotten, the lonely. Stir in us a gratitude from which springs all manner of good works, that your world may know peace. Amen.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Invitation to the Lord's Table

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

(Minister continues praying)

Prayer of Thanksgiving 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.

Words of Institution and Breaking of the Bread

*Communion of the People

(Please come forward using the center aisle and return to your seats using the side aisle. If you are not able to come forward, remain in your seat and you will be served. Gluten free bread and cup are available on the small table in the center aisle.)

We Leave to Serve

*Hymn (GTG) No. 95 Prepare the Way of the Lord (*sung in a round*) PREPARE THE WAY

*Invitation, Charge and Benediction

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

*Postlude Voluntary on "Forest Green" Patricia Lou Harris

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: Anna Blaedel, Jan Richardson, Margarita Ouwerkerk, 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:

Joyce Morris, Liturgist

Barbara Edwards, Children's Gathering

