



## **Emmanuel Presbyterian Church**

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

**Sunday, December 14, 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 Third Sunday of Advent

10:00am

December 14, 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. 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

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming  
(Emmanuel Bell Choir)

arr. Kevin McChesney

### Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Scripture Reading: Luke 1:47-55

The Loy family

Litany

The Joy of God-With-Us does not come as naïve optimism,  
Or surface level feel-good-ness.

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

**The Joy of God-With-Us is mingled with grief, exists side by side  
with mourning, knows that pain and death are all too real,  
but do not have the final word.**

This joy tends tenderly to beauty, and softness, and the gladness that comes  
from paying attention to what matters.

**The Joy of God-With-Us is collective, liberating us from despair.  
Joy waits in darkness; it comes unexpectedly.**

Joy invites our expectation, and demands our participation.

Prepare the way, for hard-won joy.

**May Joy 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 Third Advent Candle (Joy)

As we light this candle of joy, we rejoice that nothing in life or in death can ever separate us from the love of God in our coming Christ Jesus, our Lord. We pray that where we have attempted to hem in God's joy within the borders of our minds and countries, God would burst forth, coloring outside the lines we have drawn, like a child at play.

\*Hymn (GTG) No. 100 My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout STAR OF THE COUNTY DOWN

## 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

Old Testament Reading

Psalms 146:5-10 (page 570, red Bible)

Anthem

The First Noel

arr. Arnold B. Sherman

(Emmanuel Bell Choir)

Old Testament Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10 (pages 649-650, red Bible)

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

Sermon Title

God's Holy Road

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

\*Hymn (GTG) No. 88

O Come, O Come Emmanuel (*verses 1-5*)

VENI EMMANUEL

## 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.**

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](http://emmanuelpc.org) or using the QR code here.]

Offertory

In the Bleak Mid-Winter

arr. Nikki Iles

\*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

Lead us God, on roads known and unknown, using all your gifts for the good of our fellow travelers, and for your glory. Provide provision for the journey, but guard us against greed, reminding us always that you are the source of all life for us, and in you, we have plenty to share. Amen.

## 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 Ding, Dong, Merrily on High arr. Roger Wilson

*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 Ouwwerkerk, Whitney Wilkinson Arreche.*

## 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:  
Jude Langsdorf, Liturgist  
Barbara Edwards, Children's Gathering

