



## **Emmanuel Presbyterian Church**

2701 Harwood Road, Bedford, Texas

**Sunday, December 21, 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 Fourth Sunday of Advent – Cantata Sunday

10:00am

December 21, 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

Pastoral Symphony, from Messiah

Handel

Lighting of the Advent Wreath

Scripture Reading: Isaiah 7:10-16

Linda Greenwell and Linda Villarreal

Litany

The Love of God-With-Us does not come as mere feeling, or sentimental fluff.

Love cannot be imposed from on high.

**Love is our greatest commandment —  
tending tenderly to God, to other, and to self.**

The Love of God-With-Us is love in action, in radical love practices:  
redistribution of resources and risks, solidarity with the threatened,  
hospitality to caravans, refugees, migrants, and sojourners;  
caring for those we've been taught to despise, or fear.

**This love is fierce, and tender.**

**It defies unjust rules and flattens hierarchies of value.**

**The Love of God-With-Us is collective,  
liberating us from alienation.**

Love waits in darkness; it comes unexpectedly.

Love invites our expectation, and demands our participation.

Prepare the way, for Love enfleshed.

**May Love 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 Fourth Advent Candle (Love)

Today we light the fourth Advent candle, the love candle.

We celebrate the promise that God was birthed into the world not out of obligation, not out of anger, and not out of power. God was birthed into the world in Jesus Christ out of pure love. Love births new life in us even now.

\*Hymn (GTG) No. 88 (*verses 1, 2, 7*)

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

VENI EMMANUEL

## We Are Renewed in Grace

Prayer of Confession and Trust

**God who draws near, for all the ways you continue to make a home among us, we give you thanks. Forgive us when we clutter our lives with too many things, believing ourselves to be the source of our own wellbeing. Stir in us a reliance upon your Spirit guiding us, that we may be a people who dare to risk trust in you and one another. Loosen our grip on control. Deepen our dependence upon each other and you, as we walk this road to Bethlehem, together. Amen.**

Cantata Part 1

*The Road to Bethlehem  
A Journey to the Newborn King  
(Emmanuel Chancel Choir)*

arr. Lloyd Larson

## We Receive God's Word

Prayer for Illumination

Old Testament Reading Hosea 11:1-11 (pages 827-828, red Bible)

Gospel Reading Matthew 1:18-25, 2:13-15 (pages 877, 878, red Bible)

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

Sermon Title The Risk of Home Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche

Cantata Part 2

*The Road to Bethlehem  
A Journey to the Newborn King  
(Emmanuel Chancel Choir)*

Lloyd Larson

## We Experience God's Grace

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

The First Noel

Arr. Lee Evans

\*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 who makes a home with us, use these gifts for the safety of all children and  
for the support of struggling parents. Open wide our doors and our hearts to  
receive all you bring in your coming, especially the blessing of the stranger, the  
seeker, and the surprising newness of life. 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 Hark! The Herald Angels Sing Mendelssohn/arr. Robert 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: Anna Blaedel, Jan Richardson, Margarita Ouwerkerk, Whitney Wilkinson Arreche.*

## **Worship Leaders**

Rev. Dr. Whitney Wilkinson Arreche,

Pastor and Liturgist

Brittney Axton, Director of Music

Dr. Tak Yan Yeung, Organist

Emmanuel Chancel Choir

