



Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

1st Sunday of Advent

November 30, 2025

WHAT DO YOU FEAR?

IN THE TIME OF HEROD

I didn't live during Herod's time—that brutal, murderous king, God save his soul.
But even hundreds of years later, I know the prayers of his people.
I know the prayers of the mothers and the children under his rule.
I know the prayers of the young men under his angry arm.
I know their prayers, because anyone who has ever lived in this soft world for
more than two days
knows how to pray for a miracle.
We rub our hands together.
We fold weary shoulders in,
a cage of bone to protect our bleeding hearts.
We sing, *we shall overcome and bind my wandering heart to thee.*
We walk across bridges and in front of powerful buildings.
We cover our cars in stickers that scream, *we will not give up!*
We allow a hungry cry to slip from our lips,
giving our lament a life of its own (with room to dance!).
And when all of that is said and done, we whisper to our creator,
*God, break through the yelling and the fear. Break through the violence and
the oppression.*
Get past the Herods of this world, and come be here.
Like every bleeding heart before, we pray for a miracle.

Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed
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PRELUDE

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Arr. by T. Helmore

BRINGING THE LIGHT

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

*CALL TO WORSHIP

On Sundays and Mondays,

on good days and bad days,

early in the morning and very late at night,

here in this room, and out in the world,

God, we long for you to break in.

Meet us in this space.

Surprise us with your presence.

Fill this room with your good news.

With hope, we sing, we worship, we pray. Amen!

*SONG OF PRAISE

Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus

Hymnal, No. 82

*CONFESSION AND PARDON

Ever-present God,

we long to feel you close.

We long to feel your presence in our lives.

We long for you to break through the chaos and suffering of this world.

However, if we're honest, we rarely stand still long enough to feel you in our midst.

Forgive our rushing and distractions.

Forgive our wandering hearts, and center us in this space.

Remind us that even in the time of Herod,

even on the longest nights, you are always there. Amen.

(Time for silent reflection)

Family of faith,

even when we doubt God's presence,

even when we fail to notice God's fingerprints in this world,

God is always moving closer to us.

Hear and believe the good news this Advent season:

Nothing can keep God's love away.

We are seen. We are forgiven. We are not alone. Amen.

*THE PEACE

Since God has forgiven us in Christ, let us forgive one another.

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all.

And also with you.

*SONG OF RESPONSE

Angels We Have Heard on High (refrain) Hymnal, No. 113

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

Gloria in excelsis Deo!

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

TIME FOR YOUNG DISCIPLES

MOMENT FOR MISSION

Karen Girdner

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Charlotte Lovett

SCRIPTURE READING

Page No. 670

Lamentations 3:55-57

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

O Come, Emmanuel

Don Besig

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:5-13

Page No. 831

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

In the Time of Herod

Tracy L. Evans

*SONG OF FAITH

In the Time of Herod

Bulletin p. 7

*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

We have seen the valley.

We have seen a sky without stars.

**We have seen the longest night,
and still we believe.**

We believe in a with-us God.

We believe in the hope of tomorrow.

We believe that good news is louder than fear.

We believe this good news is for all people.

**So even when our knees shake,
even when our voice trembles,
even when fear is all around us,
we will hold onto that good news.**

We will reach for each other.

We will look for God in our midst.

We will sing songs of joy.

We will proclaim:

Unto us, love is born.

**We have seen the longest night,
and we have seen unimaginable love.**

So still, we believe.

Amen.

SHARING OF JOYS AND CONCERNS/PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

Hymnal, p. 35

*Please pray the Lord's Prayer
in the language and wording most familiar to you.*

THE OFFERING

*DOXOLOGY Creator of the Stars of Night (verse 1) Hymnal, No. 84
Creator of the stars of night,
Your people's ever-lasting light,
O Christ, redeemer of us all,
We pray you, hear us when we call.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING SONG Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates Hymnal, No. 93

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*POSTLUDE The Wexford Carol Arr. by M. Hayes

*Please rise in body or spirit.

We invite anyone who wishes to consider membership in this church to contact the pastor or a member of the session. Membership in this church is a step made by profession of faith, reaffirmation of faith or transfer of church letter.

Lectionary Readings for December 7: Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19; Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12.

The Food & Shelter items of the month for November are canned goods and non-perishable items. Please place your donations in the box by the church information table.

"Zechariah and the Angel" by Hannah Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

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In the Time of Herod

CRANHAM 11.11.11.11

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Music by Gustav Holst, 1906



In the time of Her - od, fear had ta - ken hold
Thick as fog the fear grew, slow - ly creep - ing in
Pierc - ing through the stra - tus comes the an - gels' song
In the time of Her - od, fear has ta - ken hold



Hope was bur - ied deep and hid - den, rare as gold
Day by day the peo - ple bent and drew with - in
"Do not fear!" rings hol - low when we've feared so long
Still we share a long - ing for a glimpse of hope



Or - di - na - ry peo - ple dared not speak a - loud
With the clouds so hea - vy, who could see the stars?
Still in the re - cess - es of our wea - ry souls
Or - di - na - ry peo - ple shout the truth we trust:



Dreams of the Mes - si - ah break - ing through the clouds
Hope - less - ness had trapped them, strong as pris - on bars
Some - thing is a - wak - ened— could it be our hope?
God will stop at no - thing to be here with us