



Memorial Presbyterian Church

SERVICE FOR THE LORD'S DAY

3rd Sunday of Advent

December 14, 2025

Even In Our Fear, We Are Called Forward

The First Step

Watch any parent. It starts with the first step.
They kneel down. They smile with anticipation.
They reach for their baby, calling and cooing them forward.
And then before they know it, they're running behind a bike. They're yelling,
"Keep pedaling! You got it! I'm right here!" And they're jumping up and down,
because that little red helmet passed the mailbox.
And then, just like that, they're driving circles in the church parking lot.
They're giving instructions about easing on and off the pedal.
They're having conversations about curfew and heartbreak.
And then, before they know it, they're standing in a hospital room.
Their heart is bursting. And they say, "Put her head right here.
Rock her gently. Do you remember the nursery rhymes?
You were born for this."
The first step is always the hardest,
but you, beloved, were born for this.

Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed

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PRELUDE

Lo, How a Rose E'er Blooming

Arr. by J. Smith

BRINGING THE LIGHT

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTING

*CALL TO WORSHIP

Jeremiah said, "I am only a boy."

Moses said, "Who am I to do this work?"

Mary said, "How can this be?"

We often say, "But God, I am afraid."

Even when we are afraid, God invites us closer.

So may we trust the Inviter.

May we heed God's invitation.

May we summon our courage and sing God's praise.

Let us worship our courageous, inviting, calling God. Amen!

*SONG OF PRAISE

Comfort, Comfort Now My People

Hymnal, No. 87

*CONFESSION AND PARDON

Courageous God,

you invite us to live into our call.

You invite us to act, to serve, and to trust.

Instead of responding with a resounding "yes,"

we often hide our face.

We dig our heels in.

We look for someone else to volunteer.

Spark courage in us.

Remind us that every person is capable of making a difference.

Remind us that even when we're scared, we are not alone.

You invite us forward.

With baby steps we hope,

we pray,

amen.

(Time for silent reflection)

Family of faith,

no matter where your path has led you in the past, today is a new day. So join

me in declaring this good news:

We are known. We are forgiven! We are sent to serve.

May we step forward in faith, always moving closer to God's call. 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

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

PRAYER FOR UNDERSTANDING

Lucy Lanning

SCRIPTURE READING

Page No. 609

Jeremiah 1:4-10

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

Walk in the Light

Don Besig

SCRIPTURE READING

Luke 1:26-39

Page No. 831

The Word of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

MESSAGE

Even in our Fear, We are Called Forward

Tracy L. Evans

*SONG OF FAITH

O Come, Take Heart

Bulletin p. 10

*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 3)

Hymnal, No. 84

At your great name, O Jesus, now
all knees must bend, All hearts must bow:
all things on earth with one accord,
like those in heaven, shall call you Lord.

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

FOLLOWING THE WORD INTO THE WORLD

*SENDING SONG

My Soul Cries Out with a Joyful Shout

Hymnal, No. 100

*BLESSING AND CHARGE

*POSTLUDE

In the Bleak Midwinter

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 21: Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25.

The Food & Shelter items of the month for December are gloves and socks. Please place your donations in the box by the church information table.

"Mary's Yes" by Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

Graphic design by Rev. Lauren Wright Pittman | Photography by Rev. Lisle Gwynn Garrity | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

O Come, Take Heart

VENI IMMANUEL 8.8.8.8 with refrain

Words by Anna Strickland, 2025

Plainsong adapted by Thomas Helmore, 1854



O come, O come though tim - id and un - sure And
O come, O come though you feel un - pre - pared When
O come and join God's kin _____ dom work And



trust that God de - clares your worth Re - mem -
cour - age fails you, do it scared Don't let
be God's hands and feet on earth You're called



ber when you're feel - ing small That ev - ery child of
the fear of ma - king mis - takes Im - pede you from the
ex - act - ly as _____ you are To love the world with



God _____ is called
path you're called to take Take heart, take heart! The One
ev - ery bro - ken part



who calls to you Will give you strength and see you through