



PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
of MADISON



December 14, 2025
Third Sunday of Advent

ORDER of WORSHIP

THE GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE

Prelude

Welcome and Announcements

*Advent Candle Lighting

Haedrich Family

Reader: We light the third candle of Advent.

Reader: We see the faith of Mary, who heard God's voice and opened her life to God's blessing.

Reader: We long for the days when the lowly will be lifted and the hungry will be filled. We hope for the time when God's mercy will be poured out from generation to generation.

*O Come, O Come, Emmanuel,
And ransom captive Israel,
That mourns in lonely exile here
Until the Son of God appear.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel
shall come to thee, O Israel.*

People: Let us walk in the light of the Lord!

(Music for the hymns is in the back of the bulletin.)

*Opening Hymn

Prepare the Way, O Zion

Prayer of Confession

Loving God, we admit that we have cluttered our lives with so many things. We confess that we have not made space for you. Our hope has grown thin, and our patience has worn out. Forgive us for not living as people who trust in your promises. Clear the way in us, O Lord, that Christ may be born anew in our lives. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Leader: Friends, believe the good news!

People: In Jesus Christ, we are forgiven.

***Congregational Response #95**

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Prepare the way of the Lord.

Prepare the way of the Lord.

And all people will see

The salvation of our God.

***Passing of the Peace**

Leader: May the peace of Christ be with you all.

People: And also with you.

(You may pass the peace to one another.)

PROCLAMATION OF THE WORD

Children's Message

Prayer for Illumination

God, we pray that in this place, the weary might find rest, the hungry might be filled, and the thirsty might be satisfied, through your word and your Spirit. Amen.

First Scripture Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10

The wilderness and the dry land shall be glad;
the desert shall rejoice and blossom;
like the crocus it shall blossom abundantly
and rejoice with joy and shouting.
The glory of Lebanon shall be given to it,
the majesty of Carmel and Sharon.
They shall see the glory of the Lord,
the majesty of our God.

Strengthen the weak hands
and make firm the feeble knees.
Say to those who are of a fearful heart,
“Be strong, do not fear!
Here is your God.
He will come with vengeance,
with terrible recompense.
He will come and save you.”

Then the eyes of the blind shall be opened,
and the ears of the deaf shall be opened;
then the lame shall leap like a deer,
and the tongue of the speechless sing for joy.
For waters shall break forth in the wilderness
and streams in the desert;
the burning sand shall become a pool
and the thirsty ground springs of water;
the haunt of jackals shall become a swamp;
the grass shall become reeds and rushes.

A highway shall be there,
and it shall be called the Holy Way;
the unclean shall not travel on it,
but it shall be for God’s people;
no traveler, not even fools, shall go astray.
No lion shall be there,
nor shall any ravenous beast come up on it;
they shall not be found there,
but the redeemed shall walk there.

And the ransomed of the Lord shall return
and come to Zion with singing;
everlasting joy shall be upon their heads;
they shall obtain joy and gladness,
and sorrow and sighing shall flee away.

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

And Mary said,

“My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.
He has shown strength with his arm;
he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their
hearts.
He has brought down the powerful from their thrones
and lifted up the lowly;
he has filled the hungry with good things
and sent the rich away empty.
He has come to the aid of his child Israel,
in remembrance of his mercy,
according to the promise he made to our ancestors,
to Abraham and to his descendants forever.”

Leader: This is the word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Opening Yourself

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

Welcoming New Member

Robert Landrigan

***Affirmation of Faith**

from Philippians 2

**Christ Jesus, being in very nature God,
did not consider equality with God something to be used to
his own advantage;
rather, he made himself nothing
by taking the very nature of a servant,
being made in human likeness.**

**And being found in appearance as a man,
he humbled himself
by becoming obedient to death—
even death on a cross!**

**Therefore God exalted him to the highest place
and gave him the name that is above every name,
that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow,
in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.**

The Gifts of Our Tithes and Offering

Invitation to Offering

Offertory

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise Christ all people here below;

Alleluia, Alleluia!

Praise Holy Spirit evermore;

Praise Triune God whom we adore.

Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

Amen!

***Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving**

Prayers of the People

Joys and Concerns

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.**

GOING FORTH TO LOVE AND SERVE THE LORD

*Closing Hymn

Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn
(v1, v3,and v4)

*Benediction

*Postlude

As our time of worship comes to an end, our time of service begins.

We are the church, sent out in Jesus' name,

to be Christ's body in the world.

WORSHIP LEADER

Kathleen Underwood

ANNOUNCEMENTS

OPERATION HOLIDAY

There are a few ornaments left on the tree in the Narthex for a child in the Homeless Solutions Transitional Housing Program. If you are able to participate, please choose an ornament and provide your contact details on the sheet. All gifts are due back to the church by December 14 (or to Becky directly by December 15), wrapped with the ornament tag attached. For questions, contact Becky at rmooddy9856@gmail.com.

MADISON EAGLE CHRISTMAS FUND BRIGHTENS THE HOLIDAYS

The Presbyterian Church of Madison has a longstanding tradition of supporting the Madison Eagle Christmas Fund. This year we as a congregation have an opportunity again to help our neighbors in need. The MECF will support more than 500 residents, including more than 240 children. The rise in numbers is driven by seniors living on fixed incomes and families dealing with higher costs of living. The changes in state SNAP income thresholds are closely tied to the 15% rise in families applying for assistance.

The MECF raises more than \$75,000 each year, mostly from small donations from residents. Those funds are used to purchase grocery, clothing, and local merchant gift cards. The recipients have the dignity of choice rather than receiving pre-selected donated items. The gift cards are purchased from Madison merchants, helping the business neighbors as well.

Take a paper ornament from the Christmas tree in the narthex to remind you to make a donation to the MECF. *Checks should be made out to the Presbyterian Church of Madison with MECF in the memo line. Donations are accepted through December 31.*

CHRISTMAS JOY OFFERING

Through the Christmas Joy Offering, one of the four Special Offerings of the PC(USA), we reflect God's perfect gift to us, with generous support of church leaders among us – past, present, and future – who point us to God. 50% of our gifts are used to honor the faithfulness of current and retired church workers and their families in need. The remaining 50% are used to provide much-needed assistance to future church leaders of color at one of three Presbyterian-related schools and colleges in Alabama, New Mexico, and Texas. Envelopes will be available on December 21 and December 24. You may also give online at pcusa.org/give/Christmasjoy or by texting CHRISTMASJOY to 91999.

SOUND HEALING - DECEMBER 16

Give yourself the best gift - a whole hour of peace and rest just for you. Join us in the sanctuary on December 16 (Tuesday) from 7-8 pm as Nichole Maldonado-Gorsak leads us through gentle stretching suitable for all levels and then a soothing, restful sound bath. Bring a non-perishable food donation for the Interfaith Food Pantry. For more information, write Kathleen Underwood at kathleenunderwood@verizon.net.

COOKIES, COCOA, AND CAROLS - DECEMBER 20

Please join us for a fun afternoon of refreshments and carols in downtown Madison (in front of 62 Main Street) on Saturday, December 20, at 3:30 pm. Invite your friends!

OUTDOOR SERVICE AND NATIVITY STORY - DECEMBER 21

There will be a Nativity story with live animals on Sunday, December 21 at 10:15 am. Our children will lead the worship and retell the Christmas story complete with carols, angels, manger, goats, sheep and a donkey! The service will be held outside on the front lawn so dress accordingly. Please invite friends. There will be time after the service to get your photo taken in the manger with the animals! Go tell it on the mountain! All are welcome!

CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE - DECEMBER 24

Please join us at 4:30 pm on December 24 for Christmas Eve Candlelight Lessons and Carols.

WHITE DRIVE 2025: DECEMBER 7 - DECEMBER 24

Diaper & Incontinence Product Collection

For many years, the PCM mission team has organized a holiday drive to collect diapers for babies and children, supporting families in need through donations to the Interfaith Food Pantry. In recent years, we've expanded our efforts to include adult incontinence products, recognizing the growing need among seniors in our community.

Why Donate Diapers for Babies & Young Children?

Diaper need is a widespread issue in the United States. According to the National Diaper Bank Network nearly half of all families with young children struggle to afford enough diapers. This challenge has grown in recent years, forcing parents to make difficult choices between essentials like diapers, food, and rent. The consequences are serious: lack of diapers can lead to increased illness in children, sleep disruptions for infants, and even maternal depression.

Why Donate Adult Incontinence Products?

Products such as Depends are medically necessary for individuals managing bladder and bowel incontinence. Many seniors live on fixed incomes, and with rising inflation, it's increasingly difficult for them to afford these essential products. Providing adult incontinence supplies helps older adults maintain dignity and independence.

Collection Dates: Donations will be accepted from **December 7 to December 24, 2025**. You may leave your contributions under the tree in the sanctuary and they will be delivered to the food pantry after Christmas.

PRAYER LIST

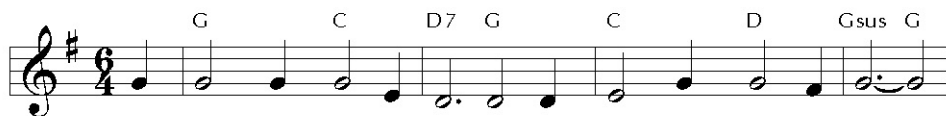
During the week, each one of us can make it a part of our daily spiritual practice to pray. You are invited to participate, as you are able, offering prayer in light of God's healing love.

If you have an update for the prayer list, please email Rev. Carol Howard at carolhoward@pcmadison.org or call the church office at 973-377-1600. Thank you for helping us maintain a more current prayer list.

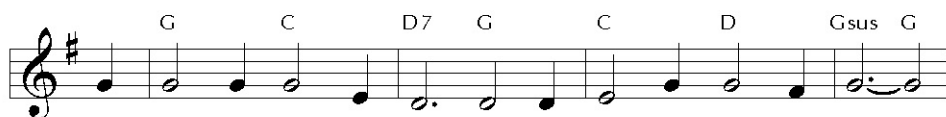
- Greg, a missionary in Uganda but back in North Carolina for treatment and rehabilitation
- Ryan, a friend of the Burnets, who had major surgery on December 10th
- Jackie and her children, as they grieve their husband and father
- Mike for healing and return to good health
- Joe for healing and return to good health
- Doug, a friend of the Burnet family, who was recently diagnosed with a serious illness
- Unity and peace in our country
- Anonymous
- Phil and Nancy as they manage her very serious health issues
- Thomas, as he recovers following hospitalization
- Debby & Graham who lost their home in the Texas flash flood
- Immigrants
- Kathleen, caregiver for her parents
- Joe and his family for comfort and support during a very stressful time
- Cristin for strength, rest, and peace as her father's caregiver
- Susan, sister of Bob Landrigan, as she battles Parkinson's disease
- Jeanne, to regain strength after a stroke, and for Mari, her caregiver
- John, who is in a clinical study for treatment of a rare disease, that he received the treatment (not the placebo), and his wife and caregiver, Cathy

Prepare the Way, O Zion

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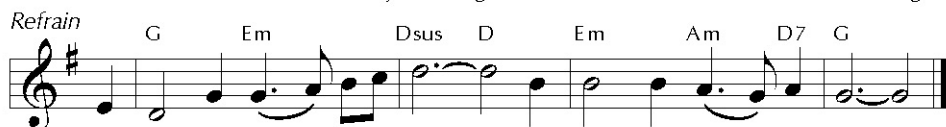
- 1 Pre - pare the way, O Zi - on, your Christ is draw-ing near!
 2 He brings God's rule, O Zi - on; he comes from heaven a - bove.
 3 Fling wide your gates, O Zi - on; your Sav - ior's rule em - brace,



Let ev - ery hill and val - ley a lev - el way ap - pear.
 His rule is peace and free - dom, and jus - tice, truth, and love.
 and ti - dings of sal - va - tion pro-claim in ev - ery place.



Greet One who comes in glo - ry, fore-told in sa - cred sto - ry.
 Lift high your praise re-sound-ing, for grace and joy a - bound-ing.
 All lands will bow re - joic - ing, their ad - o - ra - tion voic - ing.



O blest is Christ who came in God's most ho - ly name.

Guitar chords do not correspond with keyboard harmony.

Prepare the Way of the Lord

95

Capo 1: (D) (G) (D)
E^b A^b E^b (chords continue)

The musical score is written on two staves in 6/8 time. The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The first staff contains the melody for the first line of the song, with lyrics 'Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. Pre-prepare the way of the Lord,'. The second staff contains the melody for the second line, with lyrics 'and all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God.'.

Pre-prepare the way of the Lord. Pre-prepare the way of the Lord,
and all peo-ple will see the sal - va - tion of our God.

**May be sung as a canon.*

107 Awake! Awake, and Greet the New Morn



1 A - wake! A - wake, and greet the new morn, for an - gels
2 To us, to all in sor - row and fear, Em - man - u -
3 In dark - est night his com - ing shall be, when all the
4 Re - joice, re - joice, take heart in the night. Though dark the



her - ald its dawn-ing. Sing out your joy, for soon he is
el comes a - sing - ing; his hum - ble song is qui - et and
world is de - spair - ing, as morn - ing light so qui - et and
win - ter and cheer - less, the ris - ing sun shall crown you with



born, be - hold! the Child of our long - ing. Come as a ba - by
near, yet fills the earth with its ring - ing; mu - sic to heal the
free, so warm and gen - tle and car - ing. Then shall the mute break
light; be strong and lov - ing and fear - less. Love be our song and



weak and poor, to bring all hearts to - geth - er, he o - pens
bro - ken soul and hymns of lov - ing - kind - ness. The thun - der
forth in song, the lame shall leap in won - der, the weak be
love our prayer and love our end - less sto - ry; may God fill



wide the heaven - ly door and lives now in - side us for - ev - er.
of his an - thems rolls to shat - ter all ha - tred and vio - lence.
raised a - bove the strong, and weap - ons be bro - ken a - sun - der.
ev - ery day we share and bring us at last in - to glo - ry.



ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVENTS

DEC
16

SOUND HEALING
7:00 Sanctuary

DEC
20

COOKIES & CAROLING
3:30 Downtown

DEC
21

NATIVITY STORY
Animals on the Lawn

DEC
24

CHRISTMAS EVE
4:30 Lessons & Carols

WELCOMING ALL
AS A LOVING COMMUNITY
CENTERED IN CHRIST,
GROWING IN FAITH,
SERVING IN JOY, AND
LIVING IN GRATITUDE

STAFF

Reverend Carol Howard
Pastor

Christine Antico
Bookkeeper

Eileen Koppi
Administrative Assistant

Michael Callahan
Student Ministries & Outreach

Anna D'Achille
Director of Music

WORSHIP
Sunday Service 10:15 am

SESSION

Jim Burnet
Becky Moody, Clerk

Stephanie Haedrich
Giorgios Vlamis

The Presbyterian Church of Madison is part of the PC(USA) Denomination
pcusa.org



ThePresbyterianChurchofMadison

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