



# MOUNT PLEASANT PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*A community of faith where all are welcomed and encouraged to  
actively live out God's love with energy, compassion and joy*

December 14, 2025 • 8:30 & 11:00 AM  
Third Sunday in Advent

## CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

### PRELUDE

*O Come All Ye Faithful (8:30)  
Gloria (11:00)*

Arr. J. Eklund • Dr. Shenwei Geng, organist  
Frances Callahan • Bell Choir

### WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Nicole Partin Abdnour

### INTROIT & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Abdnour Family (8:30),  
Tina Garrett, Richard Giffin, and Martha Waters (11:00)  
*Come, Lord Jesus: An Advent Candle Liturgy by Shardaé Henry and Shea Watts. Published by Presbyterian Outlook 2025.*

**Come to earth to taste our sadness, he whose glories knew no end. By his life he brings us gladness, Our redeemer, shepherd, friend. Leaving riches without number, born within a cattle stall; This the everlasting wonder, Christ was born the Lord of all.**

("Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," Glory to God, #82)

ONE: Children of God, what are we waiting for?

**ALL: We wait for joy that cannot be stolen, joy that wells up, even in wilderness places. We wait for laughter to ring out in mourning, for songs of gladness to rise in broken streets. We wait... for joy that is more than happiness, to rejoice in God's unshakable love.**

ONE: Today we light three candles. Hope still shines, peace still glows, and now joy joins the chorus of light.

**ALL: Their glow reminds us that Christ is coming, filling our hearts with a delight no darkness can quench.**

ONE: We call this candle Hope. (Light the first candle.) We call this candle Peace. (Light the second candle.) We call this candle Joy. (Light the third candle.)

**ALL: O Giver of life, you turn mourning into dancing. You surprise us with beauty in unlikely places. Joy is your gift and an invitation to rejoice always, to pray without ceasing, to give thanks in all things. May we carry this joy like a lantern, shining steadily through the waiting.**

ONE: Hear the witness of the apostle Paul: "Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. Let your gentleness be known to everyone. The Lord is near" (Philippians 4:4-5).

**ALL: We delight in the joy of your presence, which no hardship can steal away. Come, Lord Jesus, and make joy our strength.**

### \*HYMN

*Prepare the Way, O Zion*

Hymn #106

### \*LITANY OF CONFESSION AND PARDON

Ellen Creed Branham

ONE: A voice is crying out in the wilderness: Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near. (Matt. 3:2-3)

**ALL: Merciful God, we confess that we have not loved you with our whole heart. We have failed to be an obedient church. We have not done your will, we have broken your law, we have rebelled against your love. We have not loved our neighbors, and we have refused to hear the cry of the needy.**

**Forgive us, we pray. Free us for joyful obedience; through Jesus Christ our Lord.**

ONE: The wilderness will rejoice; the dry land will blossom. The people of God will return with joy and singing (Isa. 35:1,10). In the name of Jesus Christ, we are forgiven!

**ALL: Thanks be to God. Amen.**

## **\*SHARING THE PEACE OF CHRIST**

One: The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

All: And also with you.

*(The congregation is invited to share signs of Christ's peace and reconciling love with one another.)*

## **\*GLORIA PATRI #113**

*Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!*

## **PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION & FIRST 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.*

## **SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM (11:00)**

*Elowen Paige Garabato, child of Austin & Logan Garabato*

## **BAPTISM HYMN (11:00)**

*Child of Blessing, Child of Promise (Hymn #486)*

*Child of blessing, child of promise, baptized with the Spirit's sign,  
with this water God has sealed you unto love and grace divine.*

## **CONGREGATION WELCOMES THE CHILDREN**

Please sing "What Does the Lord Require of You?" What does the Lord require of you? What does the Lord require of you? To seek justice and love kindness and walk humbly with your God.

## **CHILDREN'S MESSAGE**

Following the children's message at 11, PreK-K age children can go to Kids Praise. Parents, please walk children to Grace Hall to sign them in and pick up after worship.

## **ANTHEM**

*Carol of the Bells (11:00)*

*Arr. Cathy Moglebust • Bell Choir*

## **SECOND READING & SERMON**

*Matthew 11:2-11 • Rev. Dr. Nicole Partin Abdnour*

*When John heard in prison what the Messiah was doing, he sent word by his disciples and said to him, "Are you the one who is to come, or are we to wait for another?" Jesus answered them, "Go and tell John what you hear and see: the blind receive their sight, the lame walk, those with a skin disease are cleansed, the deaf hear, the dead are raised, and the poor have good news brought to them. And blessed is anyone who takes no offense at me." As they went away, Jesus began to speak to the crowds about John: "What did you go out into the wilderness to look at? A reed shaken by the wind? What, then, did you go out to see? Someone dressed in soft robes? Look, those who wear soft robes are in royal palaces. What, then, did you go out to see? A prophet? Yes, I tell you, and more than a prophet. This is the one about whom it is written, 'See, I am sending my messenger ahead of you, who will prepare your way before you.' "Truly I tell you, among those born of women no one has arisen greater than John the Baptist, yet the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he.*

## **\*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

*The Apostles' Creed*

**I believe in God the Father Almighty, Maker of heaven and earth, and in Jesus Christ his only Son our Lord; who was conceived by the Holy Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; he descended into hell; the third day he rose again from the dead; he ascended into heaven, and sitteth on the right hand of God the Father Almighty; from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead. I believe in the Holy Ghost; the holy catholic Church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.**

## **PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE/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. Lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil for thine is the kingdom, the power and the glory forever. Amen.**

## OUR PASTORS

**Rev. Dr. Nicole Partin  
Abdnour**  
*Senior Pastor & Head of Staff*

## OUR STAFF

**Jill Adams**  
*Children's Ministry Assistant*

**Ellen Creed Branham**  
*Commissioned Pastor for  
Adult Education*

**Jill Chapin**  
*Executive Assistant to the Pastor*

**Glenna Durbin**  
*Director of Youth Ministry*

**Suzu Edwards**  
*Director of Christian Education*

**Logan Prochaska Garabato**  
*Director of Communications*

**Dr. Shenwei Geng**  
*Organist*

**Glenn Hair**  
*Director of Finance*

**Stacy Hanling**  
*Director of Daily Operations*

**Lauren Houston**  
*Children's Music & Vol. Coord.*

**Beth Moore**  
*Director of Hope House*

**Tony Sane**  
*Director of Music Ministries*

**Lindsey Skinner**  
*Director of the Learning Center*

**Trish Snead**  
*Administrative Assistant*

**Wayne Stewart**  
*Sexton*

**Joann Westberry**  
*Finance Assistant*

**Alexis Wright-Singleton**  
*Receptionist*

## SESSION & DIACONATE

A list of our session members and deacons can be found at [mppc.net/about](http://mppc.net/about). Find session documents and more at [mppc.net/our-session](http://mppc.net/our-session).

## OFFERING

*We are grateful for your gifts!*  
Please visit: [onrealm.org/mppc/give/now](http://onrealm.org/mppc/give/now) to give online  
or scan the QR.



## OFFERTORY

*Sweet Little Jesus Boy*

Arr. Robert MacGimsey  
Karen Troost, soloist

## \*DOXOLOGY

*Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow*  
**Praise God from whom all blessings flow. Praise God, all creatures here below. Praise God above ye heavenly host. Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel!**

## \*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

## \*HYMN

*Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates*

Hymn #93

## \*BENEDICTION

## \*BENEDICTION RESPONSE (11:00)

*While We Are Waiting, Come*  
Don Carson, Clair Cloniger

## POSTLUDE

*Go Tell It on the Mountain*

Arr. M. Hayes

## FAITH FORMATION SUNDAYS 9:45-10:45

### Children & Nursery

Children's Sunday School is in the Seabrook Building every Sunday: 3K-4K (GH 122), K-1st (207), 2nd-3rd (204) and 4-5th (205). Childcare for children (infant through Pre-K) is available for all worship and education times in the Nursery.

Kids Praise takes place every Sunday of the month (**except the first Sunday**)! It is a worship experience for children preschool - kindergarten. Pick up is in GH 122.

Children's activities, Bibles and Bible story books are provided for children at the back of the Sanctuary on both sides and in the balcony.

### Youth

Middle School meets in the Basement.  
High School meets in SB 210.

### Adults

Academy of St. John (SB 206)  
Connect 3 (Parlor)  
The Middle (GH 226)  
Youngish Adults (GH 221/23/225)  
Bible 4 Everyone (GH 123)

## POINSETTIAS:

Honor or remember a loved one this Christmas season with a poinsettia (\$15 each). Orders may be on Realm or by calling the office at 843-884-4612. Dedications will be printed in the Dec. 21 bulletins and be available online. Deadline to make the printed bulletin is Monday, Dec. 15. We kindly ask you to allow your poinsettia to beautify our worship spaces through Jan. 4.

## FIRST AID

In case of an emergency, please call 911. AEDs (defibrillators) are located around MPPC in the narthex, in the front office, outside Fellowship Hall 2, and in the lobby of Grace Hall.

## HEARING DEVICES

Available in the narthex

## ADOPT A DAY AT HOPE HOUSE

**DECEMBER 8**  
In Honor and  
Support of Hope  
House given by Jim  
and Paula Custer

**DECEMBER 17**  
In Memory of  
Doug and Kathryn  
Duncan, given by  
Linda King

**DECEMBER 18**  
In Honor and  
support of Hope  
House given by  
MPPC Women

**DECEMBER 19**  
In Honor of Elton  
and Kathy Carrier  
given by Lynn  
and Stephanie  
McCants

You can Adopt a Day at [mppc.net/hope-house](http://mppc.net/hope-house).

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun., Dec. 14, 4:30

**Carols on Tap**  
(Crafty Draught)

Sun., Dec. 14

**Angel Tree Gifts Due**  
(Fellowship Hall)

Sun., Dec. 14 or 21, 9:45 a.m.

**Milestone Ministry**  
(GH 122)

Sun., Dec. 21, 8:30 & 11 a.m.

**Lessons & Carols**  
(Sanctuary)

Sun., Dec. 21, 4:30 p.m.

**Caroling**  
(Old Village)

Wed., Dec. 24

**Christmas Eve**  
(11 a.m., 4, 6, 8 & 11 p.m.)

Sun., Dec. 28, 10 a.m.

**One Worship Service**  
(Sanctuary)

Sun., Jan. 11, 9:45 a.m.

**Inquirers Class**  
(SB 208)

See more details and register  
at [mppc.net/events](http://mppc.net/events)!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

- The MPPC Music Ministry invites you to Crafty Draught at 4:30 p.m. today, Sunday, Dec. 14 for **Carols on Tap**, a special Christmas edition of “Hymns on Tap.” Come and sing your favorite Christmas Carols with your church family while you enjoy a beverage... and please make sure you wear your ugliest holiday sweater!
- Preschool families, join us for our **Milestone Ministry** preschool gathering: “God Loves You and We Do Too!” led by Mrs. Suzy. We still have one more Sunday opportunity (Dec. 21) at 9:45 a.m. in GH 122. Your child will receive their Preschool Milestone as we explore God’s love in fun, simple, family-friendly ways. We will still have our regular Sunday School class, the Milestone event will just be at the beginning. All are welcome! Please register on Realm.
- Join us on Sun., Dec. 21 at 8:30 and 11:00 a.m. for a special Advent service of **Lessons and Carols** led by the MPPC Chancel Choir, guest orchestra and liturgists! The nine scripture lessons are those traditionally used at the festival on Christmas Eve, while the carols and choral anthems are provided to accompany each passage of scripture.
- Help us make joyful noise and join us for **Christmas Caroling** on Sunday, Dec. 21! We will meet on the Fellowship Hall Porch at 4:30 p.m. and sing carols around the Old Village. This is open to all ages.
- **Worship with us on Christmas Eve!**
  - **11 a.m. & 4 p.m.** – Children & Family Services;
  - **6 & 8 p.m.** – Candlelight & Communion Services with Brass & Full Choir (6 p.m. will be livestreamed);
  - **11 p.m.** – Contemplative Candlelight & Communion Service
- We will only have one worship service on Sunday, Dec. 28 at 10 a.m. in the Sanctuary. This will also be College Sunday! Faith formation classes will not be meeting.
- Our next **Inquirers Class** will be held on Sunday, Jan 11. Participants will meet in person at 9:45 a.m. in SB 208. This class is open to anyone in the community who is interested in learning more about MPPC. There is no pressure to join the church, although we would love to have you! Pastors, Elders and other church leaders will talk about life at MPPC and answer any questions you may have. Please spread the word and ask any friends and neighbors who may be considering our church home to contact Dale Conrad with questions. Register at [mppc.net/events](http://mppc.net/events).
- **The Big Dill, Youngish Adults Pickleball Night:** All skill levels welcome, and if you’ve never played, we’ll have a one hour beginners clinic with a Crush Yard pro! If there’s enough interest, we’ll have a doubles tournament bracket and crown the “Biggest Dill” of the night. We’ll also have plenty of friendly matches, food, and a whole lot of laughter. The \$30/person registration includes pickleball, food and non-alcoholic drinks. Please sign up at [mppc.net/events](http://mppc.net/events).

## I’M NEW!

Thank you for your presence today, worship is such a special time and we are glad you chose to spend that time with us! If you would like to learn more about MPPC, here are a few suggested next steps:

- Join us Sundays during the Education Hour at 9:45 or for breakfast in the Fellowship Hall!
- Visit [mppc.net/new](http://mppc.net/new) to find the answers to your most frequently asked questions. (You can find info about new member classes there as well).
- Read our quarterly newsletter, *The Pelican*, at [mppc.net/newsletter](http://mppc.net/newsletter) or subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter at [mppc.net/sign-up-for-updates](http://mppc.net/sign-up-for-updates).
- Follow our Facebook and Instagram (@mtpleasantpres).
- Check out some of our upcoming events and volunteer opportunities at [mppc.net/events](http://mppc.net/events) or [mppc.net/volunteer](http://mppc.net/volunteer).
- Stop by and say hi! Whether its during the week or after worship, our pastors, staff and members would love to meet you and show you around MPPC. Our office is open Monday-Thursday from 8:30-5 and on Fridays from 8:30-1.
- Call us at **843-884-4612**.