



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 7, 2025 • 8:30 & 11:00 AM
Second Sunday in Advent

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

PRELUDE

Prelude on "The First Noel"

Arr. P. Fey • Dr. Shenwei Geng, organist

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Nicole Partin Abdnour

Stephen Ministry: Margaret Agee (8:30), Donna Thigpen (11:00)

INTROIT & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Fred & Mary Jane Crawford (8:30), Cann Family (11:00)

Come, Lord Jesus: An Advent Candle Liturgy by Shardaé Henry and Shea Watts. Published by Presbyterian Outlook 2025.

Joy to those who long to see thee Day-spring from on high, appear. Come, thou promised Rod of Jesse, of thy birth, we long to hear! O'er the hills the angels singing news, glad tidings of a birth; "Go to him your praises bringing Christ the Lord has come to earth!" ("Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus," Glory to God, #82, vs. 2)

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

ALL: We wait for peace where conflict rages, for gentleness where harshness prevails.

We wait for swords to be reshaped into plows, for walls to crumble and bridges to rise.

We wait, longing for the Prince of Peace, who stills our storms and guides our feet.

ONE: Today we light two candles, their light steady and sure against the dark. Hope burns beside peace, witnessing to God's enduring promises.

ALL: The glow spreads wider each week, reminding us that peace is possible, and God's kin-dom is drawing near.

ONE: We call this candle Hope. (Light the first candle.) We call this candle Peace. (Light the second candle.) Together they shine as signs of God's faithfulness.

OPENING PRAYER

*HYMN

On Jordan's Bank the Baptist's Cry

Hymn #96

*CALL TO CONFESSION

*PRAYER OF CONFESSION

God of Grace, we confess that we are not ready for you to come into our world — not quite yet. We cling to the known and familiar, afraid of the transformation your grace will bring. Yet you are always a step ahead of us, a voice crying out in the wilderness, inviting us into bold new ways of being disciples. Humble us, O God, and teach us to do the work of repentance so that, fully reliant on your grace, we may know the richness of restored relationship with you and one another. Amen.

*ASSURANCE OF PARDON

*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 11:1-10

A shoot shall come out from the stump of Jesse, and a branch shall grow out of his roots. The spirit of the LORD shall rest on him, the spirit of wisdom and understanding, the spirit of counsel and might, the spirit of knowledge and the fear of the LORD. His delight shall be in the fear of the LORD. He shall not judge by what his eyes see, or decide by what his ears hear; but with righteousness he shall judge the poor, and decide with equity for the meek of the earth; he shall strike the earth with the rod of his mouth, and with the breath of his lips he shall kill the wicked. Righteousness shall be the belt around his waist, and faithfulness the belt around his loins. The wolf shall live with the lamb, the leopard shall lie down with the kid, the calf and the lion and the fatling together, and a little child shall lead them. The cow and the bear shall graze, their young shall lie down together; and the lion shall eat straw like the ox. The nursing child shall play over the hole of the asp, and the weaned child shall put its hand on the adder's den. They will not hurt or destroy on all my holy mountain; for the earth will be full of the knowledge of the LORD as the waters cover the sea. On that day the root of Jesse shall stand as a signal to the peoples; the nations shall inquire of him, and his dwelling shall be glorious.

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

No Kids Praise today. The nursery is available in Grace Hall for children birth through age three.

SECOND READING & SERMON

Matthew 3:1-12 • Ellen Creed Branham

In those days John the Baptist appeared in the wilderness of Judea, proclaiming, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near." This is the one of whom the prophet Isaiah spoke when he said, "The voice of one crying out in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make his paths straight.'" Now John wore clothing of camel's hair with a leather belt around his waist, and his food was locusts and wild honey. Then the people of Jerusalem and all Judea were going out to him, and all the region along the Jordan, and they were baptized by him in the river Jordan, confessing their sins. But when he saw many Pharisees and Sadducees coming for baptism, he said to them, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bear fruit worthy of repentance. Do not presume to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our ancestor'; for I tell you, God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham. Even now the ax is lying at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. "I baptize you with [or in] water for repentance, but one who is more powerful than I is coming after me; I am not worthy to carry his sandals. He will baptize you with [or in] the Holy Spirit and fire. 12His winnowing fork is in his hand, and he will clear his threshing floor and will gather his wheat into the granary; but the chaff he will burn with unquenchable fire."

***AFFIRMATION OF FAITH**

Adapted from The Confession of 1967

God's redeeming work in Jesus Christ embraces the whole of human life: social and cultural, economic and political, scientific and technological, individual and corporate. God wills that God's purpose for human life shall be fulfilled under the rule of Christ, and all evil be banished from God's creation. Already God's reign is present as a ferment in the world, stirring hope in all people and preparing the world to receive its ultimate judgment and redemption. With an urgency born of this hope, the church applies itself to present tasks and strives for a better world. It does not identify limited progress with the kingdom of God on earth, nor does it despair in the face of disappointment and defeat. In steadfast hope, the church looks beyond all partial achievement to the final triumph of God.

OFFERING

We are grateful for your gifts! Please visit: onrealm.org/mppc/give/now to give online or scan the QR.



OFFERTORY

Sarabande (8:30)

J.S. Bach

Walk in the Light (11:00)

Arr. Andre Thomas • Chancel Choir

***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**

SACRAMENT OF COMMUNION

The Sacrament is open to all who desire to draw close to Jesus Christ and who seek to share in this meal as a sign of that commitment and desire. Gluten-free wafers are available, they are located in the center cup of the juice tray.

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. Find session documents and more at mppc.net/our-session.

INVITATION TO THE LORD'S TABLE

THE GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING & THE LORD'S PRAYER

One: The Lord be with you.

All: And also with you.

One: Lift up your hearts.

All: We lift them to the Lord.

One: Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

All: It is right to give our thanks and praise...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.

BREAKING OF THE BREAD AND THE WORDS OF INSTITUTION

COMMUNION OF THE PEOPLE

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

*HYMN

Wild and Lone the Prophet's Voice

Hymn #163

*BENEDICTION

*BENEDICTION RESPONSE (11:00)

While We Are Waiting, Come
Don Carson, Clair Clonger

POSTLUDE

Coventry Carol

Arr. J. Eklund

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. When ordering, please include the name of the person you are honoring or remembering. Dedications will be printed in the Dec. 21 worship bulletins and will also be available online. Deadline to make the printed bulletin is Monday, Dec. 15th.

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 4
In Memory of
Shelley Ivey
Williams given by
Blair and David
Brown

DECEMBER 5
In Honor of my
sister, Dean Rowell
who celebrated
her birthday
11/11/25 given by
her brother, John
Ingram

DECEMBER 6
In Honor and
support of Hope
House given by
The Charleston
Rotary Fund

DECEMBER 7
In Memory and
Honor of our
Veterans that
served in WWII,
given by Bill and
Pamela Marsh

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun., Dec. 7, 11 a.m.-1 p.m.

Gingerbread Houses
(Fellowship Hall)

Sun., Dec. 7, 4:30 p.m.

Village Concert Series
(Sanctuary)

Sun., Dec. 14, 4:30

Carols on Tap
(Crafty Draught)

Sun., Dec. 14

Angel Tree Gifts Due
(Fellowship Hall)

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)

See more details and register
at mppc.net/events!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Gingerbread Houses for Hope House:** For 11 a.m. worshippers, come join the fun after worship today, the event runs until 1 p.m. Light lunch provided.

- Interested in becoming a Stephen Minister? Register at mppc.net/stephen-ministry for the 2026 training. Training starts Jan. 8, and will run every Thurs. until May 7, from 6-8 p.m. in GH 123.

- **Village Concert Series:** Celebrate the holiday season with the sounds of Christmas performed on the piano and organ by Harant Bagrazyan and Shenwei Geng. Their performance "Christmas on Four Hands" will take place in the Sanctuary at 4:30 p.m. today.

- Experience Advent with the Scriptures that inspire Christmas! Throughout December, **Advent Small Groups** are exploring *Voices of Advent: The Bible's Insights to a Season of Hope* by Matt Skinner. Couldn't we all — and God's world — use meaningful hope? Please contact ecreedbranham@mppc.net for more info. If your schedule doesn't allow committing to a small group, or you're visiting with us today, you're invited to join the Bible 4 Everyone "Voices of Advent" study on Sunday mornings at 9:45 in Grace 123. Drop in when you are able; all are welcome!

- This year, the **Angel Tree** serves nine area elementary and Windwood Farms. The Angel Tree is displayed in the Fellowship Hall. Simply visit the tree to select an angel. Each child has one angel on the tree, complete with a wish list for clothes and toys. You're welcome to purchase any or all of the suggested items—choose what feels right for you. Please bring your wrapped gifts (or gifts in gift bags) to the church by Dec. 14

and place them in the FH. Thank you for your generosity and for being a blessing to our neighbors this Christmas season.

- Preschool families, join us for our **Milestone Ministry** preschool gathering: "God Loves You and We Do Too!" Led by Mrs. Suzy Choose either Sunday, Dec. 14 or 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 have our regular Sunday School class on both Sundays. The Milestone event will be at the beginning of class. All are welcome! Please register on Realm.
- The MPPC Music Ministry invites you to Crafty Draught at 4:30 p.m. on Sunday, Dec. 14 for **Carols on Tap**, special Christmas edition of "Hymns on Tap." Come and sing your favorite Christmas Carols with your church family while you enjoy your favorite beverage...and please make sure you wear your ugliest holiday sweater!
- 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, December 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.

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 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 or subscribe to our weekly e-newsletter at 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 or 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**.