



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 21, 2025 • 8:30 & 11:00 AM
Fourth Sunday in Advent • Lessons & Carols

CHIMING OF THE TRINITY

PRELUDE

Trumpet Tune in G

Jeremy Bankson, Brass Ensemble, Dr. Shenwei Geng, organ

WELCOME & ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Dr. Nicole Partin Abdnour

Caroline Spach and Madison Terrell, Young Adults Sunday School (11:00)

INTROIT & LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE

Gary and Lois Canady and Ashley Canady Slane (8:30), Murrell Family (11:00)

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

Born thy people to deliver, born a child and yet a king, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring. By thine own eternal Spirit rule in all our hearts alone; by thine all sufficient merit raise us to thy glorious throne. (“Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus,” Glory to God, #82)

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

ALL: We wait for love that casts out fear, love that heals what hatred has torn, love that binds neighbor to neighbor and stranger to friend. We wait for love embodied in Christ, a love fierce, tender and eternal.

ONE: Today we light four candles, their brightness stretches across shadows. Hope, peace and joy blaze together, and now love joins the dance of light.

ALL: This love is not shallow or fleeting, but deep enough to embrace all creation.

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.) We call this candle Love. (Light the fourth candle.)

ALL: O God of steadfast love, you came to us in a manger, not with force but in vulnerability. You call us to love as you love... boldly, sacrificially, without condition. Teach us to embody your love in word and deed, until the world knows we belong to you.

ONE: Hear the testimony of Scripture: “Beloved, let us love one another, because love is from God; everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love” (1 John 4:7-8).

ALL: We thank you for your endless, boundless love. Make us vessels of compassion, bearers of mercy, protectors of grace. Come, Lord Jesus, and make love our witness.

HYMN

Once in Royal David's City

Arr. David Willcox Hymn #140

Rebecca Belk, Harris Eargle, Anna Stewart Judy (8:30), Sally Magill (11:00)

1. (SOLO) Once in royal David's city stood a lowly cattle shed, Where a mother laid her baby in a manger for His bed. Mary was that mother mild, Jesus Christ her little Child.
2. (CHOIR) He came down to earth from heaven who is God and Lord of all, And His shelter was a stable, and His cradle was a stall. With the poor and mean and lowly, lived on earth our Savior holy.
- *3. (ALL) **And our eyes at last shall see Him, through His own redeeming love, For that Child so dear and gentle is our Lord in heav'n above; And He leads His children on to the place where He is gone.**
4. (ALL) **Not in that poor lowly stable, with the oxen standing by, We shall see Him; but in heaven set at God's right hand on high; Where like stars His children crowned all in white shall wait around.**

FIRST LESSON

Genesis 3:8-15, 17-19

God tells sinful Adam that he has lost the life of Paradise and that his seed will bruise the serpent's head.

ANTHEM*Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence*Arr. Gustav Holst
Soloist: Haley Sane, David Nagelkirk**SECOND LESSON**

Genesis 22:15-18

*God promises to faithful Abraham that in his seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.***CONGREGATIONAL CAROL***Of the Father's Love Begotten*

Hymn #108, v. 1, 2 and 6

THIRD LESSON

Isaiah 9:2; 6-7

*The prophet tells of the coming Messiah.***ANTHEM***Walk in the Light*

André Thomas

FOURTH LESSON

Isaiah 11: 1-9

*The peace that Christ will bring is foreshown.***ANTHEM***The Dream Isaiah Saw*

Glenn Rudolph

FIFTH LESSON

Luke 1: 26-35; 38

*The angel Gabriel visits Mary.***ANTHEM***The Canticle of the Turning*

Arr. John Furguson

SIXTH LESSON

Luke 2:1-7

*Luke tells of the birth of Jesus.***ANTHEM***The Huron Carol*

Arr. Dan Forrest, Soloist: Taryn Phelan

SEVENTH LESSON

Luke 2:8-16

*The shepherds go to the manger.****CONGREGATIONAL CAROL***God Rest Ye Merry Gentlemen*

Arr. David Willcox

1 God rest you merry,
gentlemen, let nothing
you dismay, remember
Christ our Savior was
born on Christmas
Day to save us all from
Satan's power when we
were gone astray.

Refrain:
O tidings of comfort
and joy,
comfort and joy;
O tidings of comfort
and joy.

2 From God our
heavenly Father
a blessed angel came
and unto certain
shepherds brought
tidings of the same;
how that in Bethlehem
was born the Son of God
by name.
[Refrain]

3 Now to the Lord sing
praises all you within
this place, and with true
love and brotherhood
each other now
embrace;
this holy tide of
Christmas all other
doth deface.
[Refrain]

EIGHTH LESSON

Matthew 2:1-12

*The wise men are led by the star to Jesus.***OFFERING***We are grateful for your gifts! Please visit: onrealm.org/mppc/give/now to give online or scan the QR.***OFFERTORY ANTHEM***Festival First Nowell*

Dan Forrest

NINTH LESSON

John 1:1-14

*St. John unfolds the great mystery of the Incarnation.****CONGREGATIONAL CAROL***O Come, All Ye Faithful*

Arr. David Willcox, Hymn #133

BENEDICTION**BENEDICTION RESPONSE***The Lord Bless You and Keep You*

Lutkin

POSTLUDE*Hark! The Herold Angels Sing*

Arr. M. Gaspard

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

Suzy 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.

Brass Ensemble:

Kevin Eason, trumpet
Justin Henke, trumpet
Nina Riley, trombone
Michael Robinson, trombone
Joshua Bohl, percussion

Worship Participants:

Rev. Nicole Partin Abdnour, Pastor
Jim Deavor, Liturgist
Tony Sane, Director of Music Ministries
Dr. Shenwei Geng, Organist

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

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

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)

HEARING DEVICES

Available in the narthex

ADOPT A DAY AT HOPE HOUSE

DECEMBER 20

In Honor of Harry and Allyson Smith given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

DECEMBER 22

In Memory of Doris Benke given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

DECEMBER 23

In Honor of our son, Dr. Doug Feller, we wish you a Merry Christmas from Emory and Wendy Johnson

DECEMBER 25

In honor of Betsy and Sam Clawson, given by Ann and Rob Crowder

DECEMBER 21

In Honor of MPPC choirs, given by Bill and Pamela Marsh

DECEMBER 23

In Memory of Grace Crawford given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

DECEMBER 24

In Memory of Sharon A McCullough given by Lynn and Stephanie McCants

DECEMBER 30

In appreciation of the support from the MPPC Local Missions Team; given by the Hope House Ministry Team

UPCOMING EVENTS

Sun., Dec. 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)

Thur., Jan. 15, 5:30 p.m.
The Big Dill
(Crush Yard)

Wed., Jan. 21, 5:30 p.m.
Chili Cookoff
(Fellowship Hall)

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

- Help us make joyful noise **Christmas Caroling** this evening! We will meet on the Fellowship Hall Porch at 4:30 p.m. and sing carols around the Old Village. This event is for 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
- As we approach Christmas, we encourage you to consider **alternative gifts that will support MPPC's missions partners**. Instead of buying your colleague or loved one another thing they may or may not need, make an impact by donating in honor or in memory of someone. This year we ask you to make these gifts directly to the organizations. Visit mppc.net/missions for a full list of MPPC's missions partners, with links to their websites.
- 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.
- Coming Soon: **A Young Adult Sunday School Class!** (Not to be confused with the Youngish Adults class). This class will begin on Sunday, Jan. 11 during the 9:45 education hour for young adults ages 25-35, single or married in GH 224. In addition to the morning class, the group will meet once a month off campus for a fun fellowship activity!
- For your **Year-End Giving** to be included on your 2025 tax statement, gifts must:
 - Be received at the church by midnight, 12/31/25, or
 - Be postmarked by 12/31/25 (IRS regulations require strict compliance.)
- 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.
- **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 on Thur., Jan. 15 from 5:30-8:30 p.m. Please sign up at mppc.net/events.
- Please join the Congregational Life Committee for the **2026 Chili Cookoff** on Wed., Jan. 21 at 5:30 p.m. This will be the Wonderful Wednesday dinner. Bring your best chili to share!

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**.