



FIRST PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH OF
KIRKWOOD

WELCOME TO WORSHIP
December 14, 2025, at 11:00 a.m.
The Third Sunday of Advent

Mission: We are called to be a welcoming and supportive community whose inspiring worship of God encourages everyone to deepen their faith and to respond to the needs of the world with the compassion of Christ.



ORDER OF WORSHIP

_____ ***Please rise in body or in spirit.** _____

Chiming of the Hour

We encourage you to quiet your minds and hearts for worship at this time.

Welcome and Announcements

Sign the Friendship Register at the end of your pew and pass it to your neighbor.

Organ Voluntary

Comfort, Comfort, Now My People

Egil Hovland/Gerald Near

WE ADDRESS OURSELVES TO GOD

***Call to Worship**

Leader: What if joy were to break out unrestrained in our world? What would we notice?

People: The wilderness and dry land would be glad; the desert would rejoice and blossom.

Leader: The blind would see and the lame would walk. Lepers would be cleansed, and the deaf would hear.

People: The dead would rise and the poor would receive good news.

Leader: May joy break out in our worship today as we anticipate the One who comes into our world!

People: Come thou long expected Jesus!

***Proclamation Hymn**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
stanzas 1 - 4

Hymn #88

***Lighting of the Advent Wreath**

The Strickler Family

***Congregational Response (unison)**

God of joy, be born again in our hearts this day. Help us to discover joy in ordinary moments, to share joy with those who need it most, and to live as people who know that your presence changes everything. Amen.

***Choral Response**

Christmas is Coming!

John Bell

'Christmas is coming!'; the Church is glad to sing, and let the Advent candles brightly burn in a ring. The third is for the Baptist, who cried, 'Prepare the way. Be ready for Jesus, today and every day!'

***The Passing of the Peace**

Leader: The peace of Christ be with you.

People: And also with you.

Leader: Let us share that peace with one another.

A Conversation with Young Disciples

All children are invited to come forward for the children's message.

WE HEAR GOD'S WORD

Scripture Reading

Isaiah 35:1-10; Pew Bible, O.T., pg. 663

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Canticle

My Soul Cries Out With a Joyful Shout

Hymn #100

Please remain seated and join in singing

stanza 1 high voices; stanza 2 all voices; stanza 3 low voices, stanza 4 all voices

Scripture Reading

Matthew 11:2-11; Pew Bible, N.T., pg. 11

Leader: This is the Word of the Lord.

People: Thanks be to God.

Sermon

Jail Cell Joy

Rev. Rachel Finken

WE RESPOND TO GOD'S WORD

***Hymn**

Prepare the Way, O Zion

Hymn #106

Pastoral Prayer

The Lord's Prayer (Unison)

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.

Offertory Sentences

Offertory Anthem

Comfort, My People

Ian Callanan

*Comfort, my people, and calm all your fear; the day of salvation is
quickly drawing near. The One you long to see will soon set you free.
O come, Lord Jesus, come. Silence the thunder, silence sounds of war.
End all destruction and comfort those who mourn. Your dream draws
near, your vision is here. O come, Lord Jesus, come.
Be light in the darkness; be truth for our lives. Be strength for the helpless,
the poor and lost who cry. O saving voice, O living choice, O come,
Lord Jesus, come!*

Prayer of Dedication

Sam Strickler

WE DEPART TO SERVE THE LORD

*Closing Hymn

Lift Up Your Heads, Ye Mighty Gates

Hymn #93

*Benediction

Choral Response

Prepare the Way of the Lord

Jacques Berthier

Prepare the way of the Lord, and all people will see the salvation of our God!

Organ Voluntary

Fling Wide The Door!

Klaus Uwe Ludwig

Worship Leaders:

Rev'd. Gary Noonan, *Senior Pastor*
Rev. Rachel Finken, *Associate Pastor*

Music Ministry:

Bill Stein, *Director of Music Ministries*; Kevin Chunko, *Music Associate*;
Chancel Choir

Cross Bearer: Charlie Strickler **Acolyte:** Sam Strickler

Ushers: Pam Cooper, Jim Cooper, Georgia Hepp, Gary Hepp

Usher Captains: Bob Schneider, Larry Erwin

Livestream Host: Gerald DeWulf