



Open Minds and Faithful Hearts
Emmanuel Presbyterian Church
December 13, 2023

Worship:

READINGS FOR THE COMING WEEK

[Third Sunday of Advent \(December 17, 2023\)](#)

- First reading
 - Isaiah 61:1-4, 8-11
- Psalm
 - Psalm 126 *or* Luke 1:46b-55
- Second reading
 - 1 Thessalonians 5:16-24
- Gospel
 - John 1:6-8, 19-28



The advent season –



The season of Advent continues on Sundays in December, when last Sunday we celebrated by lighting the second Advent Wreath candle representing PEACE. We will light the third candle next as we continue our waiting for the coming of the new king.

Please check the calendar in the Communication section for the complete December/Advent schedule.

Liturgist's Schedule:

12.17 ... Diana

12.24 ... Darrell

12.31..... Sandra



If you are available to serve as liturgist in January, Barb has the open schedule and can help you pick the date most suitable for you. Email EPCbusiness9770@gmail.com or call 615-473-3510.

The Blue Christmas Service of Hope and Healing



Prayer and Praise:

Psalm 145:17-19

17 The LORD is righteous in all his ways and faithful in all he does.

18 The LORD is near to all who call on him, to all who call on him in truth.

19 He fulfills the desires of those who fear him; he hears their cry and saves them.

Prayer is nothing else than being on terms of friendship with God. -Teresa of Avila

You are invited...



The EPC prayer group is a small but dedicated group that meets on Wednesday evenings from roughly 6-7pm. It is a time to open your heart to offer God the praise and prayers of our congregation and those of your own. Barb sends out email requests for any prayers you would like lifted up in the belief that all prayers matter, all prayers are important and all prayers will be heard.

All prayers are kept confidential unless you specify otherwise.

If your request is private or sensitive, you may request that your prayer be limited to Pastor Jane and Barbara. Confirmation emails will be sent affirming that your request was lifted.

As a small church, offering praise and prayers for those who are struggling, no matter the reason, sends a powerful message about the love we share and express for each other. If you feel called to do so, come **join us on Wednesday night at 6.**

It is our fervent prayer that this ministry is a blessing to the rest of our EPC family and beyond.

EPC prayer group

Missions:

¹Oasis:

- The assembly of the goody bags will be done as part of the regular service on **Dec 17**. Delivery will be **Dec 20th**.
- If you wish to contribute financially to this mission, submit your contribution with "Oasis Project" in the memo line.

²Maple Village:

- We will be delivering Christmas cookies on **Dec 17**. This is the day of the “Carols and Cookies” celebration after service so bring cookies to eat and cookies to share with our friends at Maple Village.
- Cookie delivery will take place when the fellowship time has ended.



³Red Cross:

Partners needed – believe it or not, it takes a small village to host a successful Blood Drive. We are already planning for our 3rd annual Blood Donation Drive to be held in May 2024. We have had two very successful blood drives and we want to build on that momentum. We need your ideas, we need your creativity, we need your networks. We are seeking collaborators for a variety of tasks in the months leading up to and on the day of the Blood drive, including:

- People with social media savvy to help make a plan for getting the word out;
- People with creative skills to help develop flyers, messaging, and thank you tokens;
- People with extensive networks that can help recruit donors;
- People willing to help on the day of the drive to check in donors, make sure donors are offered thank you tokens, help place signage and help with clean up.

If you are willing to be a partner in this meaningful mission work, please contact Barb Halverstadt at 615-473-3510 or via email at epcbusiness9770@gmail.com

⁴Joy offering:

Samual Polanco is no stranger to the power of walls.

Especially their potential to exclude.



Polanco, a 2022 graduate of the [Menaul School](#) — a PC(USA)-related, grades 6-12 college preparatory school located in Albuquerque, New Mexico — has faced walls his entire life.

Throughout his 19 years, Polanco has known and seen walls, both literal and figurative, that separated him and others from being their best selves.

He credits his experience at Menaul, which he entered as a sixth grader, as being instrumental in breaking down life’s many barriers.

Polanco’s Menaul education was made possible, in part, by gifts to the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)’s [Christmas Joy Offering](#), which helps Menaul provide scholarships to exceptional students. A cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s, the annual offering distributes gifts equally to the [Assistance Program](#) of the [Board of Pensions](#) and to [Presbyterian-related schools and colleges equipping communities of color](#).

“When I first came to Menaul, I felt like the school was made for me because I’d been bullied a lot in elementary school, not only by the students but also by their parents,” he said. “When I came here, I felt free of that — able to explore the ideas I wanted to explore, learn what I wanted to learn and just be myself for once in my life. And that’s what Menaul has done for all of us. We can just be ourselves here.”

And although Polanco’s observation applies to Menaul more broadly, he also intended it as a special nod to his friends and classmates, Abigail Nyase and Michael Hedenberg, with whom he spent five days on the U.S.-Mexico border for the school’s traditional “mission week.”

This past April, the 35 members of the class of 2022 became students and volunteers through [Frontera de Cristo](#), whose mission is to build relationships and understanding across borders.

As Polanco headed into the mission week experience with some fears about Covid — which he had the previous November — he was also understandably concerned about confronting the racist legacy and behaviors evoked by the border wall and the ongoing immigration crisis.

“I knew that this was going to be a difficult trip for me personally because my dad is originally from Mexico,” he said. “And the day we were waiting to get on the vans, there were some jokes being made about the border by some other students in the lower grades. That upset me very much, and I told them to knock it off.”

John Sitler, who teaches Upper School religious studies at Menaul and was a senior adviser to the Class of 2022, praised his three former students, Polanco, Nyase and Hedenberg, as among the top leaders in their class. They — and he — were profoundly moved by what they saw and heard during mission week, especially walking the Migrant Trail to the wall.

“It may sound like a cliché, but one thing that the students got out of the experience of seeing this ‘scar’ on the earth, which seems obvious, is that the most dangerous walls are the walls in our minds,” Sitler said.

Then, citing the school’s relatively new motto, “World Smart Education — Educating Students in Mind, Body and Spirit,” he added, “Menaul being ‘World Smart’ means to break down the walls toward our common humanity.”

Wherever the students saw hate and division, Sitler said they were glad to have an opportunity to connect with others “in person,” especially during mission week.

“Jesus is the model for that,” Sitler said.

- **Joy offering to date: \$250.00**
- If you are donating with a check, please put “Joy Offering” in the memo line.

Finance:

If you are planning to make a year-end charitable donation, please consider giving to one of EPC’s ongoing missions:

- The Oasis project – our year-round, multi-faceted mission to assist the Oasis Center with special needs as they arise and goody bags that are distributed to Nashville’s homeless youth ages 18-24;
- The Community Garden
- The Gateway to Higher Education Scholarship Fund

Financial Support:

If you are not able to attend worship service and still wish show your support for Emmanuel Presbyterian Church, you can contribute in the following ways:

- Online—send an electronic payment, your bank can help you set this up if you have questions.
- By Mail – our mailing address is EPC, 9770 Hwy 96, Nashville, TN 37221
- Through EPC’s website www.epcnashville.com or www.epcnashville.org Simply click on the “GIVE” button, then the “Donate” button, to donate via PayPal or debit/credit card. This can be a one-time donation or can be set up as a monthly donation.

****We are currently having a problem with the online donation function.** We hope to have it corrected as soon as possible. Any year-end donations should be made by mailing a check to the church or sending an online payment through your banking payment function.**

Sorry...
**TEMPORARILY
OUT OF
SERVICE**

2024 Generosity/Stewardship Campaign: Lets Grow EPC Together!

On December 3rd the budget will be presented to the congregation with a congregational vote taken to approve any changes to Pastor Jane’s compensation changes f needed.

Fellowship:

- **Saturday December 16:** Advent Workshop with Dean Victor Judge on Claire Keegan’s Small Things Like These, **9-2 (RSVP to Jane for lunch).** Jane still has one book available if anyone is needing a copy.
- **Sunday December 17** we share the holiday spirit with cookies and carols. Bring some to eat and some to share. We will be making our last 2023 visit to the residents of Maple Village as we deliver some Christmas Cookie cheer!



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Communication:

Welcome Visitors! We are excited to call your attention to, and encourage you to visit, our upgraded website! Go to www.epcnashville.com or www.epcnashville.org for all your questions. Cut and paste one of these sites in your browser. If you can't find it there, try the options below.

- Visits with Pastor Jane Herring must be by appointment.
- Reach out to Pastor Jane on her church phone (call/text) 615-818-9727 or email at janemherring@gmail.com about what it means to be baptized, to be confirmed in the church (if you have already been baptized), to join the church or any other questions you might have.
- General EPC email can be sent to epcnashville@gmail.com (be aware that multiple people have access to this email account).
- If you ever have any questions about anything dealing with EPC's finances or other business topics, email your question or request to epcbusiness9770@gmail.com
- Email announcements for the Sunday bulletin to janemherring@gmail.com
- Email Information or corrections for the weekly newsletter to frhanchey@gmail.com

December Calendar:

December 3 – December 24: Joy offering collections

December 16: Saturday Advent Workshop with Dean Victor Judge on Claire Keegan's Small Things Like These, 9-2 (RSVP to Jane for lunch).

December 17: Third Sunday of Advent, Service of Worship and Lighting of the Advent Wreath, 10 am

December 17: Fellowship/Mission/Congregational Care committee meeting, 9:30 am

December 17: Assembly of Goody bags during worship service

December 17: Cookies and Carols after service, bring some to eat and some for Maple Village.

December 17: Cookie delivery to Maple Village

December 18: Session meeting, 6:30 pm

December 20: Wednesday evening contemplative Advent practice, 6-7 pm

December 24: Fourth Sunday of Advent, Service of Worship and Lighting of the Advent Wreath, and Lessons and Carols, 10 am.

December 24: Sunday evening Candlelight Christmas Eve service of Christmas Readings and Song, 4:30 pm

December 25: Christmas morning (Monday) brief, contemplative service and lighting of the Christ candle on the Advent Wreath, 8-8:30am, coffee and breakfast items served at 8:40am

January 1: Happy New Year, 2024

Christian Education:

Inquirers of all ages: Please reach out to Pastor Jane about what it means to be baptized, to be confirmed in the church (if you have already been baptized) or to join the church.

Children's Services:

At Emmanuel we offer a "kid's message" during the early part of the worship service, followed by a "children's church" in the kid's classroom for those up to 10 years old or still in elementary school. The message is a short story that usually has some sort of lesson related to it and in children's church we usually discuss the story in more depth and follow it with a craft or activity that helps the story (and the lesson!) sink in. A nursery is also available for those under 3. We always have two adults with the children and their safety and education is our top priority.

Special Note: There will not be any kids message reading or children's worship service offered on December 24th as both teachers will be out of town.

Celebrating Our Youth:



The band concert and piano recitals were a huge success. Congratulations to all 5 (2 not pictured) of these aspiring musical artists!

Building and Grounds:



Presenting Your Slate of Elders

Class of 2023

Theresa Denton, Worship and Polity & Procedure
Jan Russell,

Class of 2024

Ginia Wood, Fellowship and Mission
John Denton, Building and Grounds

Class of 2025

Greg Burlison, Personnel
John Sevier, Director of Music

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EMMANUEL PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

We are located on Highway 96, near the intersection of Highway 100. We are close to Bellevue, Fairview, Franklin, Leiper's Fork, Pasquo, Westhaven and West Nashville. We look forward to seeing you!

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FB and you tube at epcnashville