

PALMER MEMORIAL EPISCOPAL CHURCH ——HOUSTON, TEXAS——

Bringing the peace of Jesus to the whole world

THE THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT CHORAL EUCHARIST, RITE I 10:00 AM
DECEMBER 14, 2025

6221 Main Street | Houston, Texas 77030 | 713.529.6196
PalmerChurch.org

Free parking is available every Sunday across Cambridge Street from the church in the Memorial Hermann Medical Plaza parking garage (6400 Fannin Street), with entrances on both Fannin Street and Main Street. Palmer has purchased this convenient parking and absorbed the cost to provide it to parishioners and guests. Simply bring the ticket you receive when entering the parking garage to the Welcome Table by the front entrance of the church. Then validate your parking ticket by using a machine located on that table. If you do not receive a parking ticket, or happen to misplace your ticket, please notify a parking attendant by pressing the button on the ticket machine as you exit. Upon exiting the parking garage, if the ticket machine indicates that you owe a fee, press the cancel button, and then insert your validated parking ticket into the machine. The gate will go up right away. Again, if you need assistance, please notify a parking attendant by pressing the button on the ticket machine.

Our Mission

To know and boldly share the love of Jesus Christ through deep understanding of our relationship with God, ourselves, and our neighbors, in a joyfully engaged and welcoming community, dedicated to thoughtful and focused service, and inspired by worship that renews curiosity about all of creation.

Our Values And Guiding Principles

Liturgical Excellence

We believe in sharing God's unconditional love in Jesus, which we call grace, with all who come through our church doors. The beauty and power of our liturgy drawn from the Book of Common Prayer and our music drawn from the Anglican choral tradition are the beginning, not the end, of our weekly Christian journey. Like a flourishing tree, they root us in the past, shelter us in the present, and reach out to the future with the strength and confidence of God's promises to all.

Joyful Companionship

We believe spending time together and connecting across the generations fosters our spiritual growth. Palmers accompany each other on our pilgrimage with God, toward God. We are an ever-growing household, for the youngest child and each of us through the end of life, built with grace, love, acceptance, laughter, tears, service, singing, and Jesus as our cornerstone.

Bold Curiosity

We believe the gift of inquiry, curiosity, and profound conversation leads to a greater understanding of our place in God's creation and our relationship with God, ourselves, and our neighbors. Knowing and sharing the love of Jesus is experienced in our worship and also through artistic expression, intellectual generosity, and spiritual teaching.

Spiritual Sanctuary

We believe God loves each of us, no exceptions. As human beings created in God's image, we should have a place where the love of Jesus is made real, a place where we can experience the celebration of who we are and an acceptance of where we are on life's journey. We aspire to be an inclusive community of faith and a beacon of hope for those seeking spiritual refuge.

Loving Service

We believe following Jesus, as we are called to do, involves caring for our neighbors as we care for ourselves, joining in God's mission to connect with and work alongside an extraordinary array of people, institutions, and communities, and bearing witness to the work of the Holy Spirit in the world around us.



Welcome to Palmer in this season of Advent!

We are a community of Christians worshiping in the Episcopal tradition, which has its roots in the practices of the ancient Church. We are a congregation that values not only eternal answers but also important questions. You are surrounded by the love of Jesus here this morning. Scan the QR code to the left or visit palmerchurch.org/connect to fill out a welcome card or a request for prayer.

Receiving Holy Communion

If you are a baptized Christian of any tradition, you are invited to receive communion with us after the Breaking of the Bread. The consecrated bread will be placed in your outstretched hands. Those who require either grape juice or gluten-free bread and wine should join in the line on the left side of the church and let the minister of communion know. When the chalice of consecrated wine comes to you, you may sip from the chalice, or carefully dip part of the consecrated bread into the wine, or decline it. Rest assured that you will have made a full communion if you choose to receive the consecrated bread only, with nothing lacking in your experience of God's grace today.

RECEIVING A BLESSING

If you are not a baptized Christian, or your Christian tradition does not allow you to receive communion with us, we encourage you to come forward at the time of communion to receive a blessing. Simply cross your arms over your chest as someone approaches with the bread, and that person will know to give you a blessing instead of communion. In this way, everyone can participate in this part of the service.

RECEIVING PRAYER

If you would like someone to pray for you, members of the Order of St. Luke will be available for that in the narthex (i.e., the entryway near the front doors of the church) during the administration of communion.

SEEKING BAPTISM

If you have never been baptized and desire to be immersed in grace and forgiveness as a follower of Jesus, please speak with a member of the clergy listed below or someone at the Welcome Table after this hour of worship. It would be a joy to baptize you as a Christian here at Palmer Memorial Episcopal Church.

Medical Center Guests

If you or a family member are here for care at the Texas Medical Center, please let us know how we can support you while you are in Houston by stopping at the Welcome Table by the front doors of the church or contacting Suzie Dennis at sdennis@palmerchurch.org.

Caring for the Wellness of our Parish and Community

We strongly encourage everyone to be up to date on vaccinations and boosters. Masking is optional.

CLERGY AND LITURGICAL CHURCH STAFF

The Rev'd Neil Alan Willard, Rector

The Rev'd Allen M. Junek, Associate Rector

The Rev'd Katherine Tuttle, Director of Parish Life

and Membership

The Rev'd Mary Reddick, Deacon

The Rev'd Beth Anne Nelson, The Diocese of Texas

Missioner to Rice University

Roger Hutchison, Director of Children's and

Youth Ministries

Dr. Brady Knapp, *Director of Music*

Ken Cowan, Organist and Artist-in-Residence

Laura Smith, Associate Organist

David Ashley White, Composer-in-Residence

Courtney Daniell-Knapp, Children's Choirs

THE WORD OF GOD

Processional Hymn 76 "On Jordan's bank the Baptist's cry"

Winchester New



Celebrant Blessed be God: Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

People And blessed be God's kingdom, now and forever. Amen.

The Celebrant says

Seeing that we have a great high priest, that is passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.

Hebrews 4:14, 16

Confession of Sin

The Deacon then says

Let us humbly confess our sins unto Almighty God.

The People kneel or stand, and silence is kept.

Celebrant Almighty and most merciful Father,

People we have erred and strayed from thy ways like lost sheep,

we have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts,

we have offended against thy holy laws,

we have left undone those things which we ought to have done,

and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.

But thou, O Lord, have mercy upon us,

spare thou those who confess their faults,

restore thou those who are penitent,

according to thy promises declared unto us

in Christ Jesus our Lord;

and grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,

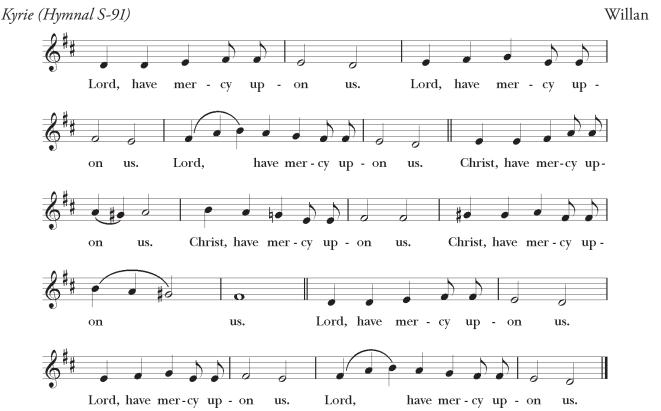
that we may hereafter live a godly, righteous, and sober life,

to the glory of thy holy Name. Amen.

The Priest stands and says

The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolution of the Holy Spirit. **Amen**.

The Celebrant invites the congregation to stand.



The Collect of the Day

Celebrant The Lord be with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Celebrant Let us pray.

Stir up thy power, O Lord, and with great might come among us; and, because we are sorely hindered by our sins, let thy bountiful grace and mercy speedily help and deliver us; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom, with thee and the Holy Ghost, be honor and glory, world without end. **Amen**.

The Lessons

First Reading Isaiah 35:1-10

Reader A reading from the Book Isaiah.

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 singing. 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 unstopped; 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.

Reader The Word of the Lord.
People Thanks be to God.

Psalm 146:4-9 Plainchant

Happy are they who have the God of Jacob for their help!

whose hope is in the Lord their God;

Who made heaven and earth, the seas, and all that is in them;

who keeps his promise for ever;

Who gives justice to those who are oppressed,

and food to those who hunger.

The Lord sets the prisoners free; the Lord opens the eyes of the blind;

the Lord lifts up those who are bowed down;

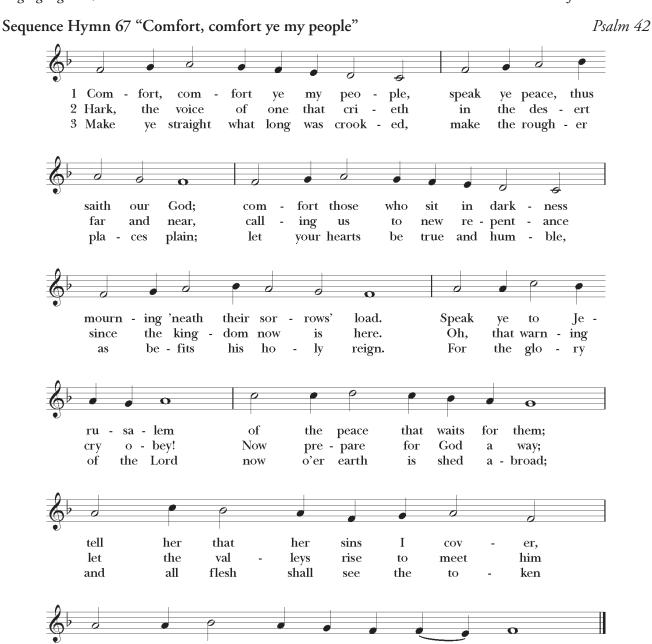
The Lord loves the righteous; the Lord cares for the stranger;

he sustains the orphan and widow, but frustrates the way of the wicked.

The Lord shall reign for ever,

your God, O Zion, throughout all generations. Hallelujah!

During the 10:00 AM liturgy, children of all ages are invited at the beginning of the Sequence Hymn to follow the children's cross to the Holy Cross Children's Room for Liturgy Preparation. After learning, praying, and singing together, the children return to the Church at the Peace to receive communion with their families.



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Gospel Reading Matthew 11:2-11

Deacon The Holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ according to Matthew.

People Glory be to thee, O Lord.

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, the lepers 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."

Deacon The Gospel of the Lord.
People Praise be to thee, O Christ.

The Sermon

The Rev'd Katherine Tuttle, Director of Parish Life and Membership

The Nicene Creed

Celebrant We believe in one God,

People the Father, the Almighty, maker of heaven and earth, of all that is, seen and unseen.

> We believe in one Lord, Jesus Christ, the only Son of God,

eternally begotten of the Father, God from God, Light from Light,

true God from true God,

begotten, not made,

of one Being with the Father;

through him all things were made.

For us and for our salvation

he came down from heaven, was incarnate of the Holy Spirit and the Virgin Mary and became truly human.

For our sake he was crucified under Pontius Pilate;

he suffered death and was buried.

On the third day he rose again

in accordance with the Scriptures;

he ascended into heaven

and is seated at the right hand of the Father.

He will come again in glory to judge the living and the dead, and his kingdom will have no end.

We believe in the Holy Spirit, the Lord, the giver of life,

who proceeds from the Father,

who with the Father and the Son is worshiped and glorified,

who has spoken through the prophets.

We believe in one holy catholic and apostolic Church.

We acknowledge one baptism for the forgiveness of sins.

We look for the resurrection of the dead,

and the life of the world to come. Amen.

Prayers of the People

The Leader and People pray responsively

Let us pray for the Church and for the world.

Grant, Almighty God, that all who confess thy Name may be united in thy truth, live together in thy love, and reveal thy glory in the world.

Silence

Lord, in thy mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Guide the people of this land, and of all the nations in the ways of justice and peace; that we may honor one another and serve the common good.

Silence

Lord, in thy mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Give us all a reverence for the earth as thine own creation, that we may use its resources rightly in the service of others and to thine honor and glory.

Silence

Lord, in thy mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Bless all whose lives are closely linked with ours, and grant that we may serve Christ in them, and love one another as he loves us.

Silence

Lord, in thy mercy,

Hear our prayer.

Comfort and heal all those who suffer in body, mind, or spirit, especially patients across the street in the Texas Medical Center; give them courage and hope in their troubles, and bring them the joy of thy salvation.

Silence

Lord, in thy mercy,

Hear our prayer.

We commend to thy mercy all who have died, that thy will for them may be fulfilled; and we pray that we may share with all thy saints in thy eternal kingdom.

Silence

Lord, in thy mercy,

Hear our prayer.

The Celebrant then says

Hasten, O Father, the coming of thy kingdom; and grant that we thy servants, who now live by faith, may with joy behold thy Son at his coming in glorious majesty; even Jesus Christ, our only Mediator and Advocate. Amen.

The Peace

Celebrant The peace of the Lord be always with you.

People And with thy spirit.

Then the Ministers and People greet one another in the name of the Lord.

THE HOLY COMMUNION

The Celebrant says this or another sentence of Scripture to begin the Offertory.

Worthy art thou, O Lord our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for thou hast created all things, and by thy will they were created and have their being. *Revelation 4:11*

Those who have brought with them an offering are invited to place it in the offering plate that will be passed in the pews. Others are invited to make their financial contributions online at palmerchurch.org/give or by using this QR code.



Offertory Anthem: Adam lay in bondage

Conrad Susa

Adam Lay in bondage Bounden in a bond; Four thousand winter Thought he not too long. And all was for an apple An apple that he took As holy men find

Written in their book.

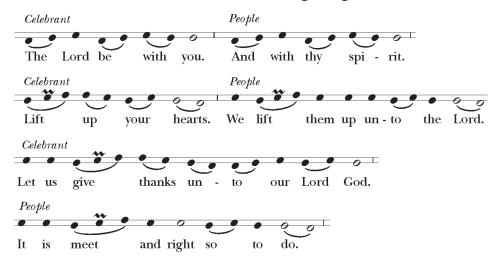
Had not the apple taken been,
The apple taken been,
Then never would our Lady
Been heaven's queen.
Blessed be the time
That apple taken was
Therefore may we sing it,
Deo gratias.

The Doxology (Hymn 380, verse 3)

Old 100th

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; Praise him, all creatures here below; Praise him above, ye heavenly host: Praise Father, Son and Holy Ghost. Amen.

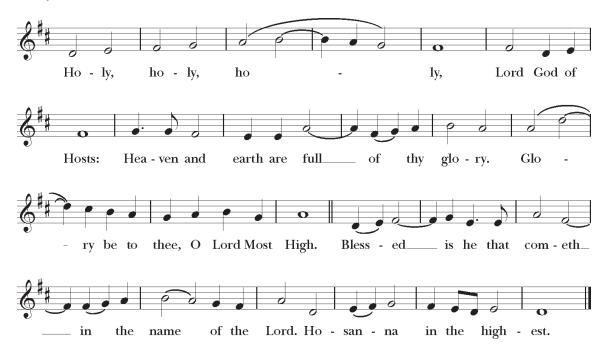
The Great Thanksgiving



It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty, that we should at all times, and in all places, give thanks unto thee, O Lord, holy Father, almighty, everlasting God, because thou didst send thy beloved Son to redeem us from sin and death, and to make us heirs in him of everlasting life; that when he shall come again in power and great triumph to judge the world, we may without shame or fear rejoice to behold his appearing.

Therefore with Angels and Archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify thy glorious Name; evermore praising thee, and saying,





All glory be to thee, O Lord our God, for that thou didst create heaven and earth, and didst make us in thine own image; and, of thy tender mercy, didst give thine only Son Jesus Christ to take our nature upon him, and to suffer death upon the cross for our redemption. He made there a full and perfect sacrifice for the whole world; and did institute, and in his holy Gospel command us to continue, a perpetual memory of that his precious death and sacrifice, until his coming again.

For in the night in which he was betrayed, he took bread; and when he had given thanks to thee, he broke it, and gave it to his disciples, saying, "Take, eat, this is my Body, which is given for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

Likewise, after supper, he took the cup; and when he had given thanks, he gave it to them, saying, "Drink this, all of you; for this is my Blood of the New Covenant, which is shed for you, and for many, for the remission of sins. Do this, as oft as ye shall drink it, in remembrance of me."

Wherefore, O Lord and heavenly Father, we thy people do celebrate and make, with these thy holy gifts which we now offer unto thee, the memorial thy Son hath commanded us to make; having in remembrance his blessed passion and precious death, his mighty resurrection and glorious ascension; and looking for his coming again with power and great glory.

And we most humbly beseech thee, O merciful Father, to hear us, and, with thy Word and Holy Spirit, to bless and sanctify these gifts of bread and wine, that they may be unto us the Body and Blood of thy dearly-beloved Son Jesus Christ.

And we earnestly desire thy fatherly goodness to accept this our sacrifice of praise and thanksgiving, whereby we offer and present unto thee, O Lord, our selves, our souls and bodies. Grant, we beseech thee, that all who partake of this Holy Communion may worthily receive the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son Jesus Christ, and be filled with thy grace and heavenly benediction; and also that we and all thy whole Church may be made one body with him, that he may dwell in us, and we in him; through the same Jesus Christ our Lord;

By whom, and with whom, and in whom, in the unity of the Holy Ghost all honor and glory be unto thee, O Father Almighty, world without end. **AMEN**.

And now, as our Savior Christ hath taught us, we are bold to say,

Celebrant Our Father, who art in heaven, People 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 trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory,

for ever and ever. Amen.

The Breaking of the Bread

The Celebrant breaks the consecrated Bread. A period of silence is kept.



The Celebrant says the following Invitation

The Gifts of God for the People of God. Take them in remembrance that Christ died for you, and feed on him in your hearts by faith, with thanksgiving.

Solo: Ave Maria Franz Schubert

Nidia Guevara-Nolasco, mezzo-soprano

He shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather the lambs with his arm, and carry them in his bosom, and shall gently lead those that are with young.

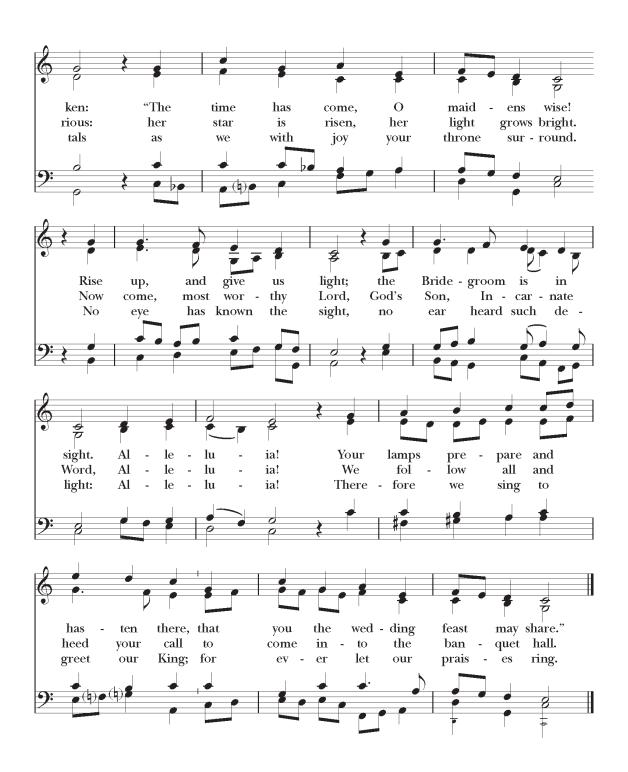
Anthem: Thou shalt know him David Ashley White

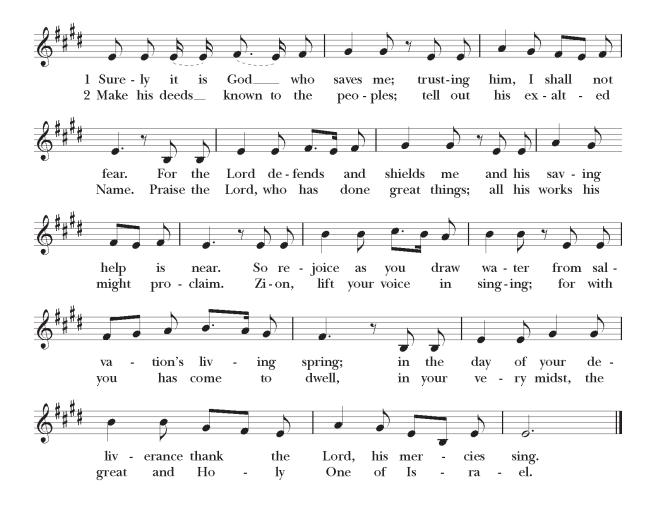
Thou shalt know him when he comes, Not by any din of drums, Nor his manners, nor his airs, Nor by any thing he wears. Thou shalt know him when he comes, Not by a crown nor by a gown, But his coming known shall be, By the holy harmony Which his coming makes in thee. Thou shalt know him when he comes.

Hymn 61 ""Sleepers, wake!" A voice astounds us"

Wachet auf







When Eucharistic Visitors take communion to the shut-in and infirm:

Celebrant In the name of this congregation, I send you forth bearing these holy gifts, that those to whom you go may share with us in the communion of Christ's body and blood.

People We, who are many, are one body, because we all share one bread, one cup.

After communion, the Celebrant says

Let us pray.

Celebrant Almighty and everliving God,

We most heartily thank thee for that thou dost feed us, in these holy mysteries, with the spiritual food of the most precious Body and Blood of thy Son our Savior Jesus Christ; and dost assure us thereby of thy favor and goodness towards us; and that we are very members incorporate in the mystical body of thy Son, the blessed company of all faithful people; and are also heirs, through hope, of thy everlasting kingdom. And we humbly beseech thee, O heavenly Father, so to assist us with thy grace, that we may continue in that holy fellowship, and do all such good works as thou hast prepared for us to walk in; through Jesus Christ our Lord, to whom with thee and the Holy Ghost, be all honor and glory, world without end. Amen.

The Priest gives the blessing

The peace of God, which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord; and the blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghost, be amongst you, and remain with you always. **Amen.**

The Deacon dismisses the people with these words

Let us go forth in the name of Christ.

People Thanks be to God.



Postlude: Toccata on Veni Emmanuel

Adolphus Hailstork

TOGETHER, WE PRAY

Please pray for these people:

Polly Allen Patricia Hinojosa The Ross Family Courtney, Peter, & Graham Holcomb Roxane Short James Armstrong The Smith Family Georgia Barton Holman Family Kim Bavousett Steve Howard Stephanie Roger Beebe Connie Hulin Linda Sylvan Viola Cleo Bradshaw **James Hunter** The Thomas Family **Brown Family** Linda Ittner Bill Tilney

Leigh Anderson Burdette Jacob Isbell The Toranzo Family Cynthia Candler and family Roy Knapp, Jr. Eleanor Viebig The Landry Family Fran Wallis Carlos Jim Lober **Jeff Carowitz** Shannon Westin Katie Courtney Jo Lyday Daniel Allen White Shirley Matthews David Ashley White Mike Collins Dan Cromack Don May Randy William Graham Norwood Lewis Williams Carlo Del Frate

Arnold Willis Maria De Nazare The Rev'd Liz Parker Dan and Cathy Dodge Patricia Lynn Paxton Ruth Wilkes Scott Follmar Marie Woodward Philip Jane Richardson David Furr **Audrey Worthing** Michael Gamboa Bill Robertson Donna Yacoe Brandon Hertz Don Robinson

Names remain on the list for two Sundays unless the request is renewed by contacting one of the coordinators of our Pastoral Care Ministry: Ruth Davies at rmmdavies@cebridge.net for Palmers or Suzie Dennis at sdennis@ palmerchurch.org for non-Palmers.

Please pray for expectant households or families with newborns:

Grant Ramirez, Born December 8 to Riley Hutchison and David Ramirez Ashley Elizabeth Condrey and Cory Condrey

Those expecting a child by birth or adoption are encouraged to contact Roger Hutchison at rwhutchison@palmerchurch.org.

Please pray for those in the armed forces:

Evan Adams Adam Salvati Jarrett Johnson Nathan Adam Christopher Kent Alex Swartz Michael Anderson James King Matthew Van Arsdale Mike Martinez Ashley Waddle Gaston Baza Travis Chambers Alex Walker Nate Miller Owen Green Andrew Nesom Taylor Wilby John Harrison Harrison Power Connor Hurt Jim Rosenbach

Please pray for our congregation's five-year strategic plan called Come. Be. Palmer.

God of grace and glory, you are faithful from one generation to another: Grant to us, as Palmers, the courage to know and boldly share the love of Jesus Christ, that our own hearts and the world around us may be changed and reflect more and more your great mercy and compassion; through our Savior Jesus Christ. Amen.

If you would like to make a special flower dedication please visit palmerchurch.org/give/flowerfund or fill out a flower envelope located in the narthex or bell tower entrance.