

**Pastoral Prayer, Prayers of the People, and  
The Lord's Prayer.....**.....Rev. Giffone

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.

**Old Testament Reading:**

Daniel 9:20-27.....Matthew Steinkirchner

Reader: This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation: Thanks be to God!**

**Sermon:** "God With Us, God For Us" .....Rev. Giffone

**Sermon Text:** 2 Chronicles 36:14-23

## The Sacrament of Holy Communion

*Remembrance · Communion · Hope*

**Invitation to the Lord's Table.....**.....Rev. Giffone

**Offering:** *Thou Who Wast Rich*.....arr. Manz

Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor,  
All for love's sake becamest poor;  
Thrones for a manger didst surrender,  
Sapphire-paved courts for stable floor.  
Thou who wast rich beyond all splendor,  
All for love's sake becamest poor.

*Note: We welcome the families with children sitting in the rear of the sanctuary to come forward and find seating in the front of the church, so that the children may observe the Celebration of Holy Communion.*

**\*Offertory Hymn: Doxology.....**.....*OLD HUNDREDTH*

Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Him, all creatures here below;  
Praise Him above, ye heav'nly host;  
Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

**\*Offertory Prayer.....**.....Rev. Giffone

**Communion Opening Prayer  
and Words of Institution .....**.....Rev. Giffone

**Distribution of the Bread:** *The body of Christ, broken for you.*

(Please note that for Communion we use both  
gluten-free and dairy-free bread or crackers.)

As you pass the bread/crackers, please say to the next person:  
**"The body of Christ, broken for you."**

Upon receipt of the bread, please hold it until all have been served,  
so that we can partake of the bread together, as a sign of our oneness  
in Christ and membership in His corporate body—the Christian Church.

**Distribution of the Cup:** *The blood of Christ, shed for you.*

(Please note that for Communion the juice  
we use is non-alcoholic grape juice.)

As you pass the cup, please say to the next person:  
**"The blood of Christ, shed for you."**

Upon receipt of the cup, please hold it until all have been served,  
so that we can partake of the cup together, as a sign of our oneness  
in Christ and membership in His corporate body—the Christian Church.

Please use the baskets we have provided in alternate  
rows for disposal of the used communion cups

**Prayer following Communion .....**.....Rev. Giffone

**\*Hymn No. 195: Joy to the World! The Lord Is Come...**.....*ANTIOCH*

**\*Benediction .....**.....Rev. Giffone

**Postlude: O, How Joyfully!**.....arr. Berry

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**Pastor:** .....Rev. Benjamin D. Giffone, PhD  
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**Minister of Music and Worship:** .....Thomas Brooks

**Accompanist:** .....Shirley Wilson

**Ruling Elders:** .....Robert LeSuer, Amy Stearns, Zachary Harvey

**Ways to Give to Redeemer:**

- Offering Plate
- Mail: RPC Treasurer, c/o 115 W Lakeview Blvd., Erie, PA 16508
- Online: <https://www.rpcerie.org/give.html>

**To contact the church:** [info@rpcerie.org](mailto:info@rpcerie.org)



# REDEEMER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

*An Evangelical Presbyterian Church*



<https://www.rpcerie.org>

## Sunday Morning Worship Fourth Sunday of Advent

December 21, 2025

Worship Theme: "God's human creatures have rejected  
the blessing of God's own presence with us. But  
nothing in all of creation—not kings or kingdoms,  
not the hearts of ungodly rulers, not our rebellious  
hearts—is able to thwart His plan to draw near."

\* The Congregation should please stand, if you are able to do so

**Welcome, Announcements, and  
Introduction to Worship .....**.....Thomas Brooks

**Prelude:** *Prepare the Royal Highway*.....arr. Keesecker

Prepare the royal highway; the King of kings is near!  
Let ev'ry hill and valley a level road appear!  
Then greet the King of glory, foretold in sacred story:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's Word!

Then fling the gates wide open to greet your promised king!  
Your king, yet ev'ry nation its tribute too may bring.  
All lands will bow before him; their voices join your singing:  
Hosanna to the Lord, for he fulfills God's Word!

(...continued over...)

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(please tear off here)

## Connection/Request for Prayer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone/Email: \_\_\_\_\_

I'd like:  Call from the pastor  Prayer for:  Confidential

(...continued on other side...)

**Call to Worship:** (*responsively*) ..... Thomas Brooks

**Liturgist:** Let us prepare our hearts

**Congregation:** as we await the coming of our Lord.

**Liturgist:** Let us watch for the one who heard our cries

**Congregation:** and shouldered the suffering of our world.

**Liturgist:** Let us anticipate the coming of Christ's eternal world

**Congregation:** with wholeness, reconciliation and plenty for all.

**Liturgist:** Let us wait in expectation for the day

**Congregation:** when God's glory is revealed in all its fullness.

**\*Hymn No. 193:** *Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence..... PICARDY*

**Lighting of the Advent Wreath Candle ....** Thomas Brooks and Dean Wilson

Lighting the Advent wreath originated in Germany, based on a Roman custom of the ceremonial entrance of a ruler to a province or city as his "advent" (from the Latin *adventus*, meaning "arrival"). One candle is lit the first Sunday of Advent, two are lit the second Sunday, etc. Each of the candles has special significance. The final candle, the Christ Candle, is lit on Christmas Eve.

**Liturgist:** In the previous three Sundays of Advent, we have lit the Candles for Hope, Peace, and Joy. Today we light the fourth Candle for Love. In lighting this candle, let us be reminded of the love God has shown to us by sending His precious Son, Jesus, to be our Savior and Redeemer.

*(...continued over...)*

*(please tear off here)*

*(...continued from other side...)*

**Liturgist:**

John 3:16 tells us that: "God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that whoever believes in Him should not perish, but have eternal life." Jesus is God's perfect Love in human form.

**Liturgist:**

Once we have accepted His divine Love, we must share His God-breathed love, which is now within us, with one another. Jesus teaches us in John 13:34-35: "I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another."

**Liturgist:**

Let us remember that God's perfect Love is found in Jesus, the Christ.

**Congregation:**

**Let us remember this truth and live each day in the knowledge and understanding of what God and His divine Love has done for us.**

**\*Gospel Reading:** John 1:1-18 ..... Matthew Steinkirchner

**Reader:** This is the Word of the Lord.

**Congregation:** **Thanks be to God!**

*Note: We will have A Moment for Children only if two or more children are present in the Worship Service.*

**A Moment for Children .....** Shirley Wilson

**Hymn of Reflection:** *Make Way .....* Graham Kendrick

Make way, make way, for Christ the King in splendor arrives.

Fling wide the gates and welcome him into your lives.

Make way, make way, for the King of Kings,

Make way, make way and let his kingdom in.

We call you now to worship him as Lord of all,  
To have no gods before him their thrones must fall.

Make way, make way, for the King of Kings,

Make way, make way and let his kingdom in.

**Prayers of Confession.....** Thomas Brooks

We will begin by praying a unison prayer of corporate confession.  
Then, we will join in silently, confessing our personal sins.

*(...continued over...)*

**Lord Jesus Christ, we humbly confess our sins to You. We confess our willingness to be loved, but also our reluctance to love. We confess our readiness to accept Your forgiving love, but also our refusal to forgive. We confess our eagerness to grasp Your offer of redeeming love, but also our resistance to follow You without question.**

**In this Season of Advent, please forgive our failure to respond as we should. Please come to us anew, and by Your grace assist us to receive You with joy, as the shepherds did; with gratitude, as Simeon did; with obedience, as Mary did; and with love, even as You have loved us. We pray: "Even so, come, Lord Jesus." Amen.**

*Note: The Congregation should please silently confess their sins.*

**Assurance of Pardon** (*responsively*) ..... Thomas Brooks

**Liturgist:** The Lord is compassionate and gracious, slow to anger, abounding in love. He will not always accuse, nor will he harbor his anger forever;

**Congregation:** he does not treat us as our sins deserve or repay us according to our iniquities.

**Liturgist:** For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his love for those who fear him;

**Congregation:** as far as the east is from the west, so far has he removed our transgressions from us.

*—Psalm 103: 8-12*

**Thanks be to our God!**

**\*Response Hymn:** *Gloria Patri.....* *GREATOREX*

Glory be to the Father,  
and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost.  
As it was in the beginning, is now, and ever shall be:  
World without end, Amen, Amen!

**\*Passing of the Peace.....** Thomas Brooks

*Note: The Congregation will please turn to each other and speak these words of common greeting: "May the peace of Christ be with you."  
And the reply: "And, also with you."*

## **After the Worship Service**

We invite you to join us for a time of fellowship with coffee and cookies after the Worship Service in the rear of the sanctuary.

If you wish to have a time of personal prayer, please speak to Pastor Benj or to one of our Ruling Elders—Zachary Harvey, Robert LeSuer, or Amy Stearns.

## **Monthly Prayer Focus for December**

The Season of Advent is a time to reflect on the idea of “Immanuel, God with us.” The December Prayer Focus gives us an opportunity to put away the hustle and bustle of this season and reflect on God’s gift to humanity. As you pray, please consider:

- What love did it take for Jesus to set aside His divinity and to humble Himself by taking on human form as a baby and then grow to adulthood and sacrifice Himself for us?
- The shepherds in the field tending their flocks. They were poor in a material sense and low on the social scale, but God chose them to receive the announcement of the birth of Jesus Christ. Be sure to spread the Good News to people with whom you interact that “God is with us.”
- At this time of gift giving, be sure to follow Christ’s example and share your bounty with those who are less fortunate.
- To ask God to continue to bring “Peace on earth and good will to all men.” It is a huge ask, but pray that you can have the courage to do your part. Maybe you will have an opportunity to exhibit God’s love in a situation that could end up very differently without your example and witness to that God-breathed love.



## **Christmas Eve Service**

We invite you to join with your fellow members and friends of Redeemer Presbyterian Church at 5:00 p.m. on Christmas Eve—Wednesday, December 24th. We will have a very special Christmas Eve Service of “Lessons and Carols” filled with music and readings that honor the birth of our Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ. Please mark your calendar today and plan to attend this family celebration.