Thomas A. Edison

Congregational Church

NOVEMBER 29, 2026



Order of Worship
First Sunday of Advent - Hope
10:00 AM

** You are invited to stand
(Please remember to silence your cell phone during the service.)

When the prelude begins, let us quiet our hearts and conversation.

Church Bell Calls Us to Worship

The Light of the World is Acknowledged in our Worship

"Jesus said: "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). The presence of the light reminds us of Jesus' coming into our world and into our lives. The light is carried into the worship service as a symbol of Jesus' coming into the presence of the worshiping community. During most of the time of our church year our congregation uses two candles on the altar to point out that Jesus was both a human being and God. The light of the world is among us today.

— adapted from https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-why-do-we-light-and-extinguish-candles-during-worship

Prelude

Sarabande From French Suite #4 in E Major
by J. S. Bach

Call to Worship (responsively)

One: O that You would tear open the heavens and come down, O God!
All: We gather on this first Sunday of Advent, longing for Your presence.
One: As fire kindles brushwood and causes water to boil, make Your name known among us today.
All: In a world that feels shaken and uncertain, we anchor our souls in Your promise of Hope.
One: Even when we feel the weight of our own shortcomings, we remember that we are the clay, and You are our potter.

All: We are all the work of Your hand.

One: Do not remember our misdeeds forever, O Lord; look upon us, for we are Your people, waiting for Your light to break into the darkness.

All: Come, Lord Jesus, be our hope and our salvation. Let us worship God!

~Slightly adapted from a prayer written for Advent One, Hope; 2026

***Hymn of Faith**

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel

Words by: John Mason Neale
Music by: Thomas Helmore

O come, O come, Em-man-u-el,
and ran-som cap-tive Is-ra-el
that mourns in lone-ly ex-ile here,
un-til the Son of God ap-pear.

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
shall come to thee, O Is-ra-el!

O come, Thou Wis-dom from on high,
Who or-d'rest all things might-i-ly;
to us the path of knowl-edge show,
and teach us in her ways to go.

Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
shall come to thee, O Is-ra-el!

Passing of the Peace

May the Peace of Christ be with you!
And, also with you!

Gift of Music **Katy Sumrow, Alto**

A Voice Cries Out, " Prepare the Way of the Lord"

By Lloyd Larson

A voice cries out, "Prepare the way of the Lord,
Make straight in the desert a highway for our God.
Every valley shall be lifted up,
And every mountain made low."

Lighting the Candle of Hope

One: Today we begin a new church year on the first Sunday of Advent. Along our Gulf coast, the air is shifting, neighbors are gathering, and the season of preparation begins. Yet even in warm sunlight, we know the ache of waiting, the weight of unfinished healing, and the longing for God to draw near.

All: We come honest about our need. We come looking for a hope that holds.

One: The prophet Isaiah voices our deepest longing: "O that you would tear open the heavens and come down... to work for those who wait for you" (Isaiah 64:1, 4). Sometimes we pray for God to step in and set things right—in our families, in our community, and in a weary world. At other times, we admit we have drifted, grown tired, or lost our way.

All: Lord, you know where we have fallen short. You see the places where we feel fragile and worn.

One: Still, Isaiah reminds us who holds us: "Yet, O Lord, you are our Father; we are the clay, and you are our potter; we are all the work of your hand" (Isaiah 64:8). Hope is not pretending everything is easy. Hope is trusting that the God who shaped us is still shaping us with grace.

All: Do not hold our missteps against us forever. Look upon us with mercy, for we are your people. See us today as we see the first candle – the Candle of Hope is lit among us.

One: We light this candle of Hope today as a sign of steady light in shifting times. May it steady our hearts as we watch and wait for Christ.

All: In waiting and in watching, we trust in God's promise. Come, Lord Jesus, and renew our hope. Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer written for Advent One, Hope; 2026

Advent Carol

Hope, Hope, Hope

Tune: Still, Still, Still
Words By: Ken Bible
Music: Traditional Austrian Melody
Arr. By: Ken Bible

Hope, hope, hope The light of Christ is hope.
In all our dark-ness Christ is shin-ing.
Lead-ing up-ward, faith re-fin-ing.
Hope, hope, hope The light of Christ is hope.

Litany of Discipleship for the First Sunday of Advent

One: On this first Sunday of Advent, we see the Candle of Hope lit and step into a new church year with honest hearts. Like Isaiah, we cry out for God to tear open the heavens and meet us where we are.

All: Come near, O God, and renew our hope.

One: You have acted on behalf of those who wait for You. Yet we confess how easily we grow impatient, weary, or divided along our coastal communities and busy streets.

All: Shape us into faithful disciples who watch with patience and love.

One: We acknowledge our frailty—how quickly our best efforts fall short, and how easily our strength fades like leaves before a storm.

All: Steady our steps, O God, and teach us to rely on Your grace.

One: Yet you remain our Father and our Potter, and we are the clay, the work of Your hands.

All: Mold us into a people of grace, humility, and steady courage.

One: Make us attentive neighbors across Southwest Florida—quick to listen, generous in service, and committed to seeking the common good in every season.

All: Send us out as instruments of your quiet, enduring hope.

One: Even when the world feels uncertain, you remind us that we belong to you.

All: Look upon us, for we are all your people. Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer written for Advent One, Hope; 2026

Our 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.

Song of Prayer Response

Emmanuel, Emmanuel

By Bob McGee

Em-man-u-el, Em-man-u-el,
His name is called Em-man-u-el.
God with us, re-vealed in us,
His name is called Em-man-u-el.

Today's Scripture — Isaiah 64:1-9

If only You would tear open the heavens and come down!
Mountains would quake before You
2 like fire igniting brushwood or making water boil.
If You would make Your name known to Your enemies,
the nations would tremble in Your presence.
3 When You accomplished wonders beyond all our expectations;
when You came down, mountains quaked before You.
4 From ancient times,

no one has heard,
no ear has perceived,
no eye has seen any God but You
who acts on behalf of those who wait for Him!
5You look after those who gladly do right;
they will praise You for Your ways.
But You were angry when we sinned;
You hid Yourself when we did wrong.
6We have all become like the unclean'
all our righteous deeds are like a menstrual rag.
All of us wither like a leaf;
our sins, like the wind, carry us away.
7No one calls on Your name;
no one bothers to hold on to You,
for You have hidden Yourself from us,
and have handed us over to our sin.
8But now, LORD, You are our father.
We are the clay, and You are our potter.
All of us are the work of Your hand.
9Don't rage so fiercely, LORD;
don't hold our sins against us forever,
but gaze now on Your people, all of us:

~Common English Bible

Response to the Sharing of God's Story

The Story of God for the People of God!
Thanks Be to God!

Pastoral Words

Invitation to the Offering

What we give and the spirit with which we give it, enables this church to make a difference in the lives of all whom we touch.

Offertory **Katy Sumrow, Alto**

Breath of Heaven (Mary's Song)
by Amy Grant and Chris Eaton

**** Doxology**

Doxology - For Advent
Words by: Thomas Ken
Music: 15th Century French
Veni Emmanuel

Praise God from whom all bless-ings flow.
Praise God, all crea-tures here – be-low.
Praise God a-bove, ye heaven-ly host.
Praise Fa-ther, Son, and Ho-ly Ghost.
Re-joice! Re-joice! Em-man-u-el
Shall come to thee. O Is-ra-el.

Life of Our Church

Quilting on Wednesday at noon

Faith Development
JOIN US WEDNESDAY @ CHURCH @ 11 AM & 6:30 PM;
AS WELL AS ONLINE THURSDAY 11 AM

Looking at the birth of Christ through the lenes of scholarship and the inspirational devotion

December 2 --

1. **The Birth Story Is a Direct Political Parody of Caesar Augustus (Read Luke 1 & 2 and Matthew 1&2)**

December 9 --

2. **Mary's Song (The Magnificat) Is a Manifesto for Economic and Social Reversal (Read Luke 1:46–55)**

December 16 --

3. **The Birth Narratives Function as Theology and Mythic Parable, Not Objective Journalism (Reading to be announced)**

This Sunday, November 30th, right after the service, we will be celebrating November's birthdays. Please join us to celebrate:

Preston Perry
Beverly Becton
Andrea Perisho
Susie Niemela
Tommy McIntyre
Tom Smoot III
Fred Kizer
John Seebock
Shirley Keller
James Vergin
Carol Krohse
Carol Marc-Aurele
Ned Downing
Karen Doyle
Rowen Delaney
Buddy Conyers

For next week's God's word:
Isaiah 40:1-11; Psalms 85:1-2, 8-13; 2 Peter 3:8-15; Mark 1:1-8

Parking for Sunday Service or Faith Development

Please Park on church side on Llewellyn Dr. and Menlo Rd. If able we are allowed to park in the back of Covenant Presbyterian Church parking lot. Enter Off of Marlyn. This is to make room for emergency vehicles if needed to come into the neighborhood.

CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS AT THE CHURCH

November 27th thru January 3rd
Holiday Nights 5:30 PM – 9:00 PM nightly at the Edison and Ford Winter Estates (closed 12/24 & 12/25)

Sunday November 29th
First Sunday of Advent – Hope



Friday December 4th
Alena Michel presents
"Keys to Christmas Magic"
Student's Piano Recital starting
at 6:00 PM here at the church.

December 5th – 6th - Bromeliad Sale
at the Edison and Ford Winter Estates

Sunday, December 6th
Second Sunday of Advent - Peace



Wednesday, December 9th
Women's Fellowship Christmas Party.
All are welcome. The gathering will be at the church
at noon with a Potluck Party and Gift Exchange.
Please RSVP to Gail Courtwright -
gailcourtwright26@gmail.com for more details.

Sunday, December 13th
Third Sunday of Advent - Joy



December 20th
Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love



Thursday, December 24th
Christmas Eve – Music starts at 4:30 PM



Women's Fellowship

The Women's Fellowship is collecting gently used jewelry and accessories (loose or broken pieces are okay) for their Jewelry Sale in January.

We are looking for Volunteers for Greeters and for Ushers. Sign-up sheets are on the bulletin board, or you can go to the website "Signup Genius" if interested.

Free magazines are available behind the kitchen door next to the library shelves. Donations are welcome.

Benediction (responsively**)**

One: People of God, as we step out from this sanctuary into the light of a Southwest Florida Advent, go with the assurance that Christ is coming into our world and our lives.

All: We go in the light of Christ.

One: May the **Hope** of Advent anchor you—not as wishful thinking, but as the steady confidence that God is making all things new, even when the seasons here do not change with snow and ice.

All: We go as bearers of Hope.

One: Go now in the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Spirit, this Advent season and always.

All: Amen.

~Slightly adapted from a prayer written for Advent One, Hope; 2026

The Light of the World is Shared with the World at the end of our Worship

At the end of the service, the light is carried out into the world to show that Jesus Christ is for all people everywhere; this symbolizes the light of Jesus Christ going out into the world where believers are to serve."

— adapted from https://www.umc.org/en/content/ask-the-umc-why-do-we-light-and-extinguish-candles-during-worship

Postlude

Lo How a Rose E'er Blooming

arr. by Mark Hayes

Time with our Children

The Potter — Isaiah 64:1-9

By Lois Parker Edstrom

Objects suggested: Modeling clay, potter's clay, a potter's wheel. Small packages of modeling clay would be a fun gift for the children. A potter in your congregation who would be willing to talk about and demonstrate the process of making pottery would greatly enhance the lesson.

Do you like to play with clay? It is fun to roll the clay around to form little people or animals. Shaping a snake is especially easy by twirling the clay between your hands.

Another type of clay, often found along the banks of a river, is used by potters to make beautiful and useful items for the home. They may roll the clay into long coils, like making a snake and fashion it into a bowl or use a potter's wheel and spin the clay around as they shape it with their hands. (Show images of a potter's wheel.)

When the potter has formed a pitcher, plate, mug, or vase, it is heated to a high temperature to harden it. These objects are often painted in lovely colors and become beautiful works of art. (Show images of pottery.)

Artists, whether a potter, painter, writer, or musician, feel much joy when creating something of beauty.

The Bible compares God to being like a potter. We read: "… we are the clay, and You, our potter; and we all are the work of Your hand" (64:8).

What a wonderful image to think of being shaped by God's hand. Not only are we created by God, but as we study and pray, we continue to be shaped by God's wisdom and love.

You are created by God. You are beautiful! Just by being Yourself You bring joy to others and to God.

Scripture quotations from the World English Bible
Copyright 2014, Richard Niell Donovan

November Newsletter

"Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things and be in health, just as your soul prospers."
3 John 1:2

November is American Diabetes Month

American Diabetes Month is a time to care for our bodies, encourage one another, and replace fear with faithful action. The CDC's 2026 National Diabetes Statistics Report estimates that in 2023 about **40.1 million Americans had diabetes** — and more than 1 in 4 of them (11 million) did not know it. Another **115.2 million adults have prediabetes**, and 8 in 10 of them do not know it either. In Florida, about **2.3 million adults** have diagnosed diabetes. Yet there is real hope: type 2 diabetes, which accounts for 90–95% of cases, can often be delayed or prevented — and prediabetes is a warning, not a verdict. Awareness is more than wearing blue on World Diabetes Day (Saturday, Nov. 14). It means knowing your number, keeping recommended appointments, and helping every person in our community receive timely, high-quality care.

5 ways to turn awareness into action

1. Know your number. A simple A1C blood test tells the story. The American Diabetes Association says everyone age 35 and older should be screened — earlier if you carry extra weight or have a family history, high blood pressure, or other risk factors.
2. Prediabetes can be turned around. Losing just 5–7% of body weight through healthy eating and 150 minutes of activity a week can cut the risk of type 2 diabetes by more than half. If your results are normal, retest at least every 3 years; if you have prediabetes, test yearly.
3. Learn the warning signs. Extreme thirst, urinating often, unusual tiredness, blurry vision, weight loss without trying, or sores that heal slowly — see a doctor and ask for a blood sugar test. A change does not always mean diabetes, but it deserves a prompt conversation with a health care professional.
4. Protect the whole body. Uncontrolled blood sugar raises the risk of heart disease, stroke, kidney failure, blindness, and amputation. Managing blood sugar protects your heart, kidneys, and eyes alike — and regular checkups catch problems early, when they are most treatable.

5. Do not let cost stop the first step. Lee Health offers ADA-recognized diabetes education and a free year-long prevention program, and the Florida Department of Health in Lee County helps income-eligible residents with insulin prescription costs (see resources below).

To every person facing testing, diagnosis, treatment, or recovery — and to every caregiver walking beside them — you are not alone. May our church be a place of prayer, practical help, patient listening, and steady hope. God's healing presence can meet us in the exam room, the waiting room, and every day in between.

Lee County diabetes resources: Lee Health Diabetes Education & Support (239) 424-3127 · Lee Health Diabetes Prevention Program (239) 468-0051 · Free chronic-disease self-management workshops 239-424-3121 · Florida DOH-Lee insulin prescription assistance 239-332-9565 · American Diabetes Association 1-800-342-2383

See the checklist posted on the bulletin board for diabetes reminders and screening resources.

Health information is general; speak with your healthcare professional about your individual risk. Sources: CDC · ADA · FL DOH-Lee · Lee Health

Dear Worshipers,

We invite your child to join us for Faith Formation learning in Cathy's Place at Thomas Edison Congregational Church. Your children will learn about Jesus through age-appropriate faith activities, songs, prayers, Bible stories, games, and arts & crafts.

November class curriculum Faith Formation

November 29th Genesis 18

Lori



These donations for Mision Peniel due by Wednesday, December 9th

Community Christmas Compassion





Help us make the holidays brighter for immigrant families in Ft. Myers

Donations accepted through December 14

- Select 1 or more tags from the tree
- Buy 1 or more items listed on the tag trying to fairly balance the gifts for kids in the same family (each family has a unique color)
- Wrap the gifts and put the tree tag on the gift, marking which gift it is, so we know who to deliver them to
- Bring the tagged gifts in and place under the tree by Dec. 14

Thank you for your generosity as you bring joy to these families who will know they are not forgotten and feel God's love. They are relying on us to make their Christmas merry and bright.

Questions? Contact Ronni at 617-549-9250

Wishing you peace, joy, and love this Christmas!

Thank you for visiting Thomas A. Edison Congregational Church

To learn more about our church and to make a donation, please scan the QR code below.



Scan me!

Place your phone camera over the QR code to scan. Then scroll down to where it says donate and follow the instructions. You can use either your credit/debit card or your bank account. There is a way to communicate with the staff through the website. Send us a message.

Thank you.

Cards can be sent to the following:

General Dozier
Barrington Terrace, of Ft. Myers
9731 Commerce Center Ct., Room #326
Fort Myers, Fl. 33908

Mr. Bill Persons
Calusa Harbour Assisted Living – 2525 First St
Ft Myers, Fl. 33901
Room 233

PRAYER LIST

Our Church Members:

Jean Lindenlaub; Liz Lloyd; General Dozier; Phyllis Contino; Barbara Buch; Jean Long, Patti Seebock; Prayers for the family of Lana Zeigler passing last Friday; Prayers for the family of Sharlene Dozier passing Monday.

Friends & Family:

Betty Denson; Jim Martin (Teri Martin's husband); Michele Baron (friends of Rod Schaffter and Carol Skaza); Fred & Natalie Johnson (friend of Rod Schaffter & Carol Skaza); Bob Mesce (brother of Patti Seebock); Tom Simpson (brother of Kathy Bolen); Dwight Brzinski (friend of Pat Jessie); Christopher Smith and Darwin Solorzono – missing at sea (friends of Mark Rosandich); Edward Yergeau (brother of Roger Yergeau); Ben Collens - stationed in Quatar (friend of Martha Jean Long); Jennifer McMullen & family (Lori McMullen extended family); Renee Imm (friend of Sandy Cole); Cara (Jean Long's daughter); Tasha (friend of Jackie Sellers); Andrea (friend of Pat Jessie); Larry (friend of Pat Jessie); Patty & family (Jean Long's friends); Phil Denmark (friend of Tom & Jan Sherman).

No matter who you are, or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome here at Edison Congregational Church. Welcome home!

Website:	www.edisonchurch.com
Facebook:	Facebook.com/EdisonChurch
Email Pastor:	Pastorjim@taecc.com
Email Office:	Admin@taecc.com
Office Phone:	239-334-4978
Office Hours:	Monday-Friday 9 AM – 2 PM
Mailing:	1619 Llewellyn Dr., Ft. Myers 33901

Pastor Jim can be reached at the office
or on his cell phone at 502-494-6649 (voice & text).

Our Church Staff
Senior Minister – Rev. Jim Harper, III
Associate Minister – Rev. Anton Pierce
Administrative Assistant – Cindy Wilson
Distinguished Director of Sacred Arts – Alena Michel
Faith Community Nurse – Lori McMullen
Pianist - Stephen Brittain

Your gifts are deeply appreciated and enable this ministry to continue. Our church retains the right to redirect donations to the area of greatest need.

National Association of Congregational Christian Churches

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