

What time is it?

Christopher Nolan is one of my favorite movie directors. He is known for his complex, mind-bending use of time in his films. In *Memento* (2000), time is presented nonlinearly, with events unfolding both forward and backward, mimicking the protagonist's suffering from memory loss. *Inception* (2010) deals with the manipulation of time through dreams, where time moves at different speeds depending on the layer of the dream. In *Interstellar* (2014), the characters' journey through space and the experience of time dilation lead to themes of loss and the emotional consequences of time's passage.

For those of us who live in the modern era, time is often viewed as a resource to manage, utilize, and maximize. A quick perusal of time management related apps, self-help books, and seminars shows us our obsession with controlling time. We strive to be efficient and effective in our usage of time. While I do not advocate being disorganized and wasteful in one's management of time, our modern preoccupation with filling up our calendar is often an indication of over-commitment and leaving little space for margin. We wear busyness as a badge of honor, and sometimes as a status symbol of being "spiritual."

In the past 2 years, my pastoral reflections have been centered around time, specifically around the Christian calendar (two on Advent, one on Ascension day, one on Ash Wednesday, and one on Ordinary Times). Unlike other churches that are liturgical, ECC does not place an emphasis on the observance of the Christian calendar. Most of us are only aware of Christmas, Good Friday, and Easter. However, the early church developed the Christian calendar to center around the history of redemption: the birth, life, death, resurrection, ascension, and enthronement of Christ, and the sending of the Spirit. The Church calendar inoculates us against reckoning our time and organizing our "time according to our agendas and worldly patterns. Our time is reckoned in a Christian manner. The Church calendar keeps our focus where it should be: on Jesus Christ. It reminds us that the triune God is the main character of history, and we are called into His eternal Kingdom (1 Peter 1:10-15).

So, what time is it? This is the Advent season—a time when we look back at the nativity of Christ and forward in anticipation of His return. Last Sunday, the third Sunday of Advent known as Gaudete Sunday, is marked by the theme of joy. Let us rejoice in His first coming, through which He brought salvation to all, and anticipate the future joyful celebration when Christ will renew all creation.

EDMONDS CAMPUS WORSHIP SERVICE

12/22/2024 AT 11:15 AM

Call to Worship
Worship through Praise
Congregational Prayer & the Lord's Prayer
Worship through the Word

Pastor Solomon Liu

“Surprised by Grace”

Luke 1:26-38

Worship in Response
Doxology & Benediction
Welcome and Announcements

Offering is a part of our worship to God.
Online Offering: <https://eccseattle.org/en/give/>

SERVANT TEAM	TODAY	NEXT WEEK
SPEAKER	Pastor Solomon Liu	Minister Petros Yeung
MODERATOR	Sarah Chu	Minster Ryan Summers
WORSHIP	Youth Worship	Hosanna
PA TECH	Julia Woodbury Dave Woodbury Yuyu Ao	Jonathan Chu, Dean Matsen George Chiu
USHER	Gloria Chiu	Davy Ouk
DOOR ROTATION	Lawrence Tung	

Prayers for Our ECC Community

PRAISES AND PRAYERS

REDMOND MANDARIN CONGREGATION

- Thanksgiving Baptisms: Praise God for the 17 individuals who were baptized on Thanksgiving Sunday. We celebrate their public declaration of faith and the new life they have in Christ!
- Growth of the Second Sunday Service: Thank God for the consistent growth of the second Sunday service, which reflects God's blessing on our congregation and the opportunity to reach more people.
- Missional Engagement: We are grateful for the missional projects undertaken by every small group, demonstrating Christ's love in action and fostering deeper community impact.
- Discipleship for the Newly Baptized: Pray for the spiritual growth and foundation of faith for those newly baptized, that they may be guided in their walk with Christ through discipleship and community.
- Christmas Outreach Initiatives: Pray for the many small groups engaging in Christmas outreach activities. May these efforts effectively share the Gospel and bring hope to those in need.
- Upcoming Christmas and Year-End Services: Pray for the Christmas Sunday services, candlelight services, and the year-end prayer gathering. May these gatherings glorify God, inspire worship, and draw many closer to Him during this season of celebration and reflection.

PRAY FOR OUR MISSIONARIES

Based in Florida, Sean and Mandi Miller are international missionaries and area

directors for the North Caribbean and Bermuda with Child Evangelism Fellowship (CEF). Responsible for eight nations of the CEF region, they work primarily with nationals in these countries to “evangelize, disciple, and establish a local church.” Thank the Lord, Sean’s work trip in November ended successfully. Thanks to God for providing nearly 25% of their annual budget in their organization's largest fundraiser! Pray that the Lord supply all their needs next year so that the gospel can be spread and expanded in their area. Thanks also to the Lord for keeping their recognition by the Ministry of Education of St. Lucia, giving them full access to share the gospel in all 85+ public primary schools across the country.

PRAY FOR THE WORLD

- Please pray for the Christmas celebrations around the world by Christians and churches. May they be lights of God’s glory in a darkened world and provide hope for the world’s billions who suffer from the consequence of sin and death daily.
- Please pray for the millions of travelers this week and their gatherings with friends and family. May the Lord grant everyone traveling mercy and bless their times together with the Holy Spirit’s presence and a deeper sense of God’s gift to the world. May the Lord help those who are alone find a loving community to experience Immanuel during the holiday season.

Announcements

Christmas Luncheon and Testimony Sharing

12/22 (TODAY) | 12:45 PM | Gym

We sincerely invite brothers and sisters to join today's Christmas lunch and testimony sharing session after the Sunday service, as we gather to celebrate and share the Lord's grace together.

Scripture Bookmarks

The Christmas tree in the church lobby is decorated with scripture bookmarks. Brothers and sisters are welcome to take one after the service. Please handle them gently and avoid touching the tree to preserve its integrity and beauty.

2024 Christmas Eve Candlelight Service (Bilingual: Mandarin and English)

12/24 (Tue) | 7:30 PM | ECC Seattle Sanctuary

You are warmly invited to join the Christmas Candlelight Service hosted by the Seattle Mandarin congregation. The program will include a choir performance, Scripture readings, and a short gospel message. All are welcome to attend—feel free to invite your family and friends as we celebrate the joyous news of Jesus' birth, bringing peace and joy to every heart!

Finance Committee Update

- **Guidelines For Expense Reimbursement**

Please submit all expense reimbursement requests within 60 calendar days after expenses are incurred for accurate accounting. The deadline to submit expense reimbursements for the 2024 fiscal year is 12/31.

- **End-of-Year Offering**

Please be mindful that contributions to be counted toward 2024 must be dated 12/31 or earlier. We kindly encourage you to fulfill your pledge for the Edmonds Campus purchase by year-end, if possible. Checks sent through the U.S. Postal Service must have a 2024 postmark for them to count toward the 2024 offering. Online Bill Pay service is also available. Please go to <https://eccseattle.org/en/give/> for instructions.

Mexico Christmas Short-Term Missions Trip Team

From December 26, 2024, to January 1, 2025, six members from the Redmond Campus Mandarin and English congregations, led by Sister Ting Hong, will partner with Casa Dayspring in Mexico to share God's love and the gospel. Please keep them in your prayers.

PRAY FOR OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Please pray for the family of Brother Yungui Zhang (張雲國)—husband of Li Tong (童驪) (EDS-M)—who went to be with the Lord on Dec 6, 2024.

Please register by 12/24 (Tue) if you plan to attend the memorial service and reception. May the grace and peace from the Lord comfort the families.

⇒ **Memorial Service** | 10:30 AM | Friday, Dec 27
Purdy & Walters at Floral Hills Funeral Home & Cemetery
(409 Filbert Rd, Lynnwood, WA, 98036)

⇒ **Registration Link & QR Code:** <http://bit.ly/3ZQqMPg>



2024 — 2025 ECC CALENDAR <i>(For the yearly calendar, please check www.eccseattle.org)</i>	
12/24 (Tue)	Christmas Eve Candlelight Music Service (Bilingual: Mandarin & English) (ECC-SEA Sanctuary)
1/26/2025 (Sun)	40 Days of Prayer Campaign (EDS-English)
2/14/2025 (Fri)	YSF Retreat (Lakeview Retreat)

EDS-ENGLISH MINISTRIES CONTACTS		*COUNCIL CHAIR
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