

# COMING UP...

## FEBRUARY 22 - March 01

### Sunday, February 22

9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Worship In-person & Online & Children's Church  
\*T-Shirt Sunday

### Monday, February 23

11:30 a.m. Monday Ministry Zumba

### Tuesday, February 24

1:00 p.m. Grief/Caregiver Support Meeting  
3:30 p.m. Casserole "Party" in the Fellowship Hall

### Wednesday, February 25

Noon Bible Study  
6:30 p.m. Zoom (EPEC) Bible Study

### Thursday, February 26

Noon Prayer Team

### Saturday, February 28

Noon - 2:00 p.m. Central Time Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site

### Sunday, March 01

9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School  
10:30 a.m. Worship In-person & Online & Children's Church



*-The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in memory of Matilda Milner Smith by Bobby Smith.  
- The flowers are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Rev. Earnie's birthday by the Epworth Church Family.*

## CONTACT US

2400 Devonshire Drive  
Columbus, GA 31904

Church Office (706) 322-6973  
Pastor's Cell (706) 992-9147  
[www.epworthumc.com](http://www.epworthumc.com)

[toni@epworthumc.com](mailto:toni@epworthumc.com)  
(example: [earnestine@epworthumc.com](mailto:earnestine@epworthumc.com))

Facebook - [EpworthUMC.com](https://www.facebook.com/EpworthUMC.com)  
Instagram - [EpworthUMC.com](https://www.instagram.com/EpworthUMC.com)  
Youtube - [epworthumccolumbus1430](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCepworthumccolumbus1430)

## CONTACTING YOU

Most of the church's communication is through e-mail. We send three e-mails each week—a newsletter on Monday, an email from the pastor and an email reminder of Sunday worship. We also use e-mail to send important meeting reminders and other information. Help us contact you by ensuring the church office has your current e-mail address.

## OUR CHURCH STAFF

*Epworth's members are our ministers.  
The professional staff who assist us are:*

Administrator Assistant.....Toni Thomas  
Children's Ministry Director.....Jas'min Vontoure  
Children's Ministry Assistant .....Whitney Mennifee  
Custodians.....Martha Conklin  
Barbie Webb  
Media Tech .....Tristan Campbell  
Music Director.....Bob Lee  
Nursery Worker .....Martha Conklin  
Pastor .....Rev. Earnestine Campbell  
Praise & Worship Director.....Mandi Battle



February 22, 2026

## MERCY ON THE WILDERNESS ROAD

RENEWED IN MERCY  
FIRST SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A

Where is mercy in the wilderness? This is a driving question behind the first Sunday in Lent. Every year, we begin Lent by joining Jesus in the wilderness, witnessing the temptation, and examining what Jesus' temptation means for us. This year, we come to the wilderness afresh, ready to pay attention and encounter mercy at work in the midst of temptation, distress, and the help that comes along the way. As worship planners, this requires a delicate balancing act. We need to resist the urge to allegorize Jesus' temptation in the wilderness. It is not a tale of morality disconnected from reality. At the same time, our goal is not to overwhelm congregants with reminders of hardships and shame about past failings. We must find a way to tell the truth about our wilderness experiences that emphasizes God's persistent mercy that does not leave us alone in our frailty.

We encourage you to incorporate a prayer of confession throughout the season of Lent, but perhaps especially this first Sunday. Consider how you might approach confession anew as an act of trust in God's mercy and grace. We can tell the truth and be honest about our struggles and failings because we know God—and through God, the body of Christ—empowers us to turn away from sin and toward life abundant.

This is also an excellent week to begin introducing a song to weave into worship throughout Lent. You might want to choose a Wesleyan standard like "Depth of Mercy" (United Methodist Hymnal 355) or "Come, O Thou Traveler Unknown" (United Methodist Hymnal 386). Or you might want to incorporate a more contemporary hymn like "Amazing Grace (My Chains Are Gone)" [Worship & Song 3104] or "Have Mercy on Me" (Porter's Gate, [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wMimZ\\_fU78](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0wMimZ_fU78)). Consider how one of these hymns might be a musical companion through Lent by using it in different parts of worship or as a centering song before a regular part of worship, such as the prayer of confession, or as a response to the sermon.

The First Sunday in Lent invites us to consider how to set the space for the journey ahead. What natural elements represent wilderness in your context? What symbols draw your people into communal prayer and contemplation? What signs of mercy are meaningful in your community? Consider how these elements might make their way to the altar, the slides, the narthex or foyer, and throughout the worship space. Whether they set the space for this Sunday or for the whole season of Lent, these visual cues help prepare the congregation to enter into the journey ahead with intention and attention to mercy at work in your community.

<https://www.umcdiscipleship.org/worship-planning/renewed-in-mercy/first-sunday-in-lent-year-a-lectionary-planning-notes>

In Christ,

*Pastor Earnie*



Epworth connects and equips all kinds of people to SEEK, SERVE, and SHARE Christ.

## SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 9:00 AM

### **The Nathan Patterson Class**

Study: Job 22-24  
Teacher: Bobby Smith

### **The New Connections Class**

Study: Life Lessons From ACTS  
Teacher: Glenn Griffin

### **The Seekers Class**

Study: Wired Word  
Teacher: Donny Davis

## **THOSE WHO SERVE**

February 22, 2026

Ushers: Donny Davis  
Financial Secretary: Steve Sawyer  
Acolytes: Children/Youth Ministry/Ushers

## **OUR STEWARDSHIP**

February 15, 2026

Tithes & Offerings:	\$5,145.00
Received To Date:	\$41,321.59
Needed To Date:	\$32,061.62

Attendance:	
Sunday School	10
In-person Sunday Worship	45
Online Viewers	133
<b>Total</b>	<b>178</b>

## **2026 STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN PLEDGE**

Ephesians 6:17-18: "Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests." Commitment to Tithing- As we embark on our stewardship journey, we recognize the importance of our giving and how it connects us to God and our church community. You are still invited to complete a Pledge card if you have not done so. God Bless you!

## **LIKES, SHARES & REVIEWS MATTER**

Take time to like the Epworth Facebook and Youtube pages to become a follower of these social media platforms, like the posts and/or videos, share, or comment. It only takes a few seconds and only a few minutes to write a review of your experience at Epworth through Facebook, Google, or Yelp. This is a way to let our community know about us.

## **STAY CONNECTED**

**In-Person & Livestreaming Worship** - Join us each Sunday at 10:30 a.m. Options for worshipping by livestream are: Put the name [epworthumc](https://www.facebook.com/epworthcolumbus) first: [facebook.com/epworthcolumbus](https://www.facebook.com/epworthcolumbus) or [youtube.com/channel/UCZJhDYHDeeE-dnv5a5nQKjA](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZJhDYHDeeE-dnv5a5nQKjA) as close to 10:30 a.m. as possible or as close to the time of other livestream services.

## **CHRISTIAN SYMPATHY**

Christian sympathy is extended to the family of Linda Smith (member), who passed away on Tuesday, February 17, 2026. She will be funeralized on Saturday, February 28, 2026, at 11:00 a.m. with visitation at 10:00 a.m. at Epworth UMC. Please be in prayer for Linda's family and our church family.  
*- Lord in your mercy, hear our prayers.*

## **IN MEMORIAM**

Gifts to the General Fund were given in memory of Trevor Whittington by the following people:

Buddy & Susan Dunn

Jeanne Guilbeault

Lee Rogers

Bobby Smith

*-To God be the Glory!*

## **MANY THANKS**

Thank you to the UMM for assisting the Worship Committee in preparation for Lent services. Your diligence and hard work are greatly appreciated!

*Jeanne Guilbeault*

## **FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS**

4 Leah Flynn Steward	22 Alison Bullock Melonie Phillips
6 James Johnson	23 Earnestine Campbell
10 Cheryl Jandreau	26 Emma Davis Mason Friend
14 Virginia Etter	27 J. C. DiSimone Mike Morris
16 Billy Bickerstaff	
17 Kyndel Clark Niggemann	

## **MISSIONS & UPCOMING EVENTS FEBRUARY MISSION**

**February Mission Opportunity** - Our February Mission is "Casseroles for a Cause." Our casseroles serve the Fellowship at Rose Hill as well as needs of church members. The following items are requested: 50 pull top cans of Cream of Chicken soup. Cash donations are appreciated and will be used to purchase perishable casserole ingredients. Mark your donation "Casseroles" on your offertory envelope. Thanks!

**Calling all Cooks!** Epworth is set to have its second "Casserole Party" of 2026! Our first "Party" yielded 24 large casseroles and 3 small casseroles. The casseroles will be used for meals with the Fellowship at Rose Hill, as well as meeting the needs of our church family. Come on down and join in the fun! We'll meet in the Fellowship Hall on **Tuesday, February 24 at 3:30 p. m.** See you then!

## **BIBLE STUDIES**

Wednesday, February 25

-- Noon Bible Study, in Questors Classroom. The book of Daniel, Sessions 8 & 9, Chapter 8.

-- 6:30 p.m. Online Zoom, EPEC, Bible Study class. The book of Exodus, lessons 9 & 10. If you are interested in participating, indicate on the back of the Connection Card in the appropriate section or email [earnestine@epworthumc.com](mailto:earnestine@epworthumc.com).

## **CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

Confirmation classes will begin in March 2026 for youth ages 12 to 17! Confirmation is a journey where young people deepen their understanding of faith, learn about the teachings of UMC, and become professing members of our church through their baptized faith and baptism preparation. Parents are encouraged to bring their children to this spiritually enriching experience, developing their growth and commitment to God and the church. Don't miss this opportunity to support your child's faith journey!

## **CHILDREN & YOUTH GAME NIGHT**

Children & Youth Game Night - Our next Game Night is Friday, March 13, from 6:00 p.m. - 8:00 p.m. All Epworth children/youth are encouraged to invite friends to come out for the Word, snacks, fun, and fellowship!

## **UPCOMING EVENTS & OPPORTUNITIES**

### **JOURNEY TO THE CROSS**

**Mark Your Calendar! Join us this Lenten Season as we engage in the Journey of Christ to the Cross.**

**Lenten Season** - Wednesday, February 18 through Saturday, April 04, 2026. For fasting disciplines, see the color insert located in the Welcome Center.

**Palm Sunday Service** - March 29 at 10:30 a.m.

**Holy Thursday Service** - April 02 at 6:00 p.m.

**Good Friday** - April 03

**Easter Sunday Service** - April 05: Breakfast- 8:45 a.m.; Easter Play - 9:30 a.m.; Worship Service - 10:30 a.m.; Easter Egg Hunt - immediately following Worship Service.

*- Candy Needed for Easter - The Children's Ministry is asking for individually-wrapped candy and plastic eggs for our Easter Egg Hunt. You can place your donations in the green tote found in the Welcome Center no later than Thursday, April 02.*

### **UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH (UWF) BOOK STUDY**

The UWF is hosting a book study on The Color of Compromise by Jemar Tisby, an insightful look at the American Church's history, race, and practices. All women are invited to join. The next book study is Monday, March 16 at 7 p.m. and will continue monthly through May. To register, use the following link: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/110Qt5rwiRVW3hheplbyeyzn5trzXdeF6q48hyd2STeA/edit>. Book link: [amazon.com/Color-Compromise-American-Churchs-Complicity/dp/0310113601/ref](https://www.amazon.com/Color-Compromise-American-Churchs-Complicity/dp/0310113601/ref).

### **FAMILY & CHILDREN'S MINISTRY**

On Saturday, February, 28, 2026, the youth will be attending The Tuskegee Airmen National Historic Site located at 1616 Chappie James Ave, Tuskegee, AL 36083. The hours are noon to 2:00 p.m. central time. To attend or for more information, please contact Patricia Bronson at 706-442-4187 or Jas'Min Vontoure at 706-536-0221.

### **FELLOWSHIP HALL RESERVED**

-Friday, February 20, from 5 p.m. - 10 p.m.  
-Saturday, February 21, from 8 a.m. - 7 p.m.

## EPWORTH PRAYER LIST

### Church Family

Deborah Cooper  
Buddy Dunn  
Susan Dunn  
John Grandon  
Jeanne Guilbeault  
Cheryl Jandreau  
Natalie Kernodle

Bob Lee  
Linda Lee  
Mildred Rodgers  
Ann Smith  
Susan Stark  
Annette Taff  
Michael Taff

Marjean Waters  
Lillian Wooldridge

Mary Lee Crews & Family  
James and Donna Faircloth & Family  
Frank Karastury & Family  
Earl & Melonie Phillips & Family

Ron Sawyer & Family  
Ann Smith & Family  
Barre' and Steve Whittington and Family  
Family of Myra Tucker

### Extended Church Family

Martha Bone  
George Bowen  
Lloyd Britton  
Rebecca Britton  
Sarah Browder  
Stephanie Bryan  
Marilyn Buck  
Roger Buterbaugh  
Hattie Campbell  
Bruce Chapman  
Danny Chidester  
Hazel Dullin  
James & Sue Flowers  
David Garner  
Beth Goodwin

Robin Grantham  
Steve Guilbeault  
Billy Hill  
Charles Holmes  
Patricia Jefferson  
Carol Hall  
Kim Jordan  
Mary Kennedy  
Susan Land  
Cristina Mattocks  
Ann Mitchell  
Kathy McClintock  
Ralph & Sandy McGough  
Judy Patterson  
Rev. Tim Paulk

Cassie Prochaska  
Diane Propst  
Bertha Robinson  
Nona Robinson  
Willie Ryles  
MichelleSlappy  
Aundre Smith  
Maggie Smith  
Dora Spires  
Dana Thurston  
Amanda Kinsman Vines  
Robert Wagers  
Patricia Waldo  
Tammy White  
Diane Wiggins

Sam Wilson

Adams Family  
Family of Neil Gergun  
Grier Family Robbins Family

Janna Family  
Kuester Family  
McDaniel Family

Davis/Osborne Family  
Danny Snider & Family

### Independent/Assisted Living/Nursing Home

Oaks @ Maple Ridge - Helen Pharris  
Kings Bridge (Atlanta, GA) - Blount King  
River Place - Anne Wilson  
Oaks @ Grove Park - Ron Sawyer

The Lodge (Bessemer, AL) - Lorene Carlisle  
Wesley Glen (Byron, GA) - Nancy Hiller

*Please continue to pray for our homebound people. They would love a call or text!  
If the prayer list needs to be updated, please call, email, or leave a  
note with updates at the church office. Thank you for your help!*

## **Tree of Life Memorial** for Epworth UMC and Hamp Stevens UMC

**Given by The Friendship Class in memory of Jean F. Morris  
whose generosity and caring spirit made this world a better place.**

You may remember a family member or friend, now deceased, on the lasting Tree of Life Memorial that graces the entrance of our Sanctuary. Consider commemorating their life with a leaf placed on this handcrafted piece of art.

Memorials can be made for members of the Epworth United Methodist or Hamp Stevens United Methodist churches. Initiated by the Friendship Sunday School to honor Jean's life, it is carried forward by Epworth's Board of Trustees.

Complete the section below and return it with your gift made out to Epworth UMC. With limited space, we will only be able to include names on the leaf-no other messages. The minimum donation for an engraved leaf is \$50.

Name of Donor: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone Number: \_\_\_\_\_  
Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
Donation Amount: \_\_\_\_\_

Names to be Engraved: *5 rows of up to approximately 12 characters on each row*

### SAMPLE

**Sebastian  
Williamson**

Jim & Jean  
Williamson  
& Family

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# ORDER OF WORSHIP

February 22, 2026 • 10:30 a.m.

First Sunday in Lent

*The \* Denotes to please stand if able.*

## PRELUDE

Bob Lee, Music Director

## ENTER THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

Children/Youth Ministry/Ushers

## WELCOME & OPENING PRAYER

Marguerite Hay, Worship Leader

## \*AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Apostles' Creed UMH No. 881

I believe in God, the Father Almighty,  
maker of heaven and earth;

And in Jesus Christ his only Son, our Lord;

who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

born of the Virgin Mary,

suffered under Pontius Pilate,

was crucified, dead, and buried;

the third day he rose from the dead;

he ascended into heaven,

and sitteth at the right hand of God the Father Almighty;

from thence he shall come to judge the quick and the dead.

I believe in the Holy Spirit,

the holy catholic church,

the communion of saints,

the forgiveness of sins,

the resurrection of the body,

and the life everlasting. *Amen.*

## \*PRAISE SONG

"Great is Thy Faithfulness"

UMH 140 vv 1-3

Led by Susan Dunn, Song Leader

## OFFERTORY APPEAL/PRAYER

Worship Leader

*During the offering, please place your offering in the collection plates as they are passed or text the word "GIVE" to (706) 655-6768. For our Online Worshipers, text or go to [epworthumc.com](http://epworthumc.com) and select "Donate." On Communion Sunday, please place your Communion Offering in the basket near the altar.*

## \*RESPONSE

Doxology

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.

## SHARING OF CONCERNS & CELEBRATIONS

Worship Leader

*Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.*

## \*LECTIONARY SCRIPTURE

PSALM 32:1-5

Becky Britton

Leader: This is the Word of God for the People of God.

**People: Thanks be to God.**

## INTRODUCTION OF GUEST PREACHER

Worship Leader

## SPECIAL MUSIC

"How Great is Our God"

Mandi Battle

Praise & Worship Director  
CCLI # 2967303, Song #7195920

## SERMON

"One Matters"  
*Sermon Scripture Luke 15:1-7*

Rev. Meadows-White

## \*INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP

Rev. Meadows-White

*You can become a member of Epworth by either professing your Christian faith for the first time or by transferring your existing membership from another Christian church.*

## \*CLOSING SONG

"It Is Well with My Soul"

UMH 377 vv 1, 3

## \*LIGHT OF CHRIST BROUGHT OUT INTO THE WORLD

Acolytes

## \*BENEDICTION

Rev. Meadows-White

## \*POSTLUDE

Music Director

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### COFFEE BAR ON SUNDAYS

**Coffee Bar in the Welcome Center:** Enjoy coffee and refreshments for the Sunday School and Worship Service hours every Sunday. Donations are appreciated.

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*As we navigate through this season, we want to express our heartfelt concern for everyone's well-being, especially with the rise of COVID, RSV, and the flu. We kindly encourage everyone to refrain from hugging and to practice good hand hygiene as we care for one another. You are always invited to wear a mask.*

## **Rev. Lynn Meadows-White**

*Rev. Lynn Meadows-White is an ordained Elder in the South GA Conference and serves as Vice-President of Church Relations and Chaplain for The Methodist Home for Children & Youth. She also serves as Donor Relations Officer for The Methodist Home in the west Georgia area.*

*Lynn has lived in Columbus since 1991 and served for 31 years as a co-pastor of the Pierce Chapel UMC in north Columbus, alongside her husband, Rev. Howard White. They are the proud parents of two adult children, Elizabeth and John Howard, and they have a beloved daughter-in-law, Claudia.*