

COMING UP...

MARCH 22 - MARCH 29

Sunday, March 22

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

Monday, March 23

11:30 a.m. Monday Ministry Zumba

Tuesday, March 24

1:00 p.m. Grief/Caregiver Support Meeting
3:30 p.m. Casseroles for a Cause

Wednesday, March 25

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

Thursday, March 26

Noon Prayer Team

Sunday, March 29

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



The mission of the United Methodist Church is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

CONTACT US

2400 Devonshire Drive
Columbus, GA 31904

Church Office (706) 322-6973
Pastor's Cell (706) 992-9147
www.epworthumc.com

toni@epworthumc.com
(example: 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/epworthumccolumbus1430)

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 AssistantWhitney Mennifee
Custodians.....Martha Conklin
Barbie Webb
Media TechTristan Campbell
Music Director..... Bob Lee
Nursery WorkerMartha Conklin
Pastor Rev. Earnestine Campbell
Praise & Worship Director Mandi Battle



March 22, 2026

"SEEN BY GOD," PART I

1 SAMUEL 16:1-13
FIFTH SUNDAY IN LENT, YEAR A

~SEEN AND CHOSEN

Have you ever been left out, passed over, or felt like you just didn't measure up? Maybe you've wondered if anyone notices your efforts or truly sees your heart. The opening verses of 1 Samuel 16 remind us that even when people overlook us, God never does. This week, in Sunday's sermon, we begin a journey through Samuel's struggles and David's anointing—a story that reveals how God looks beyond appearance, status, and comparison. As we follow Samuel, we meet David—a humble shepherd boy, unnoticed by many but chosen by God. Through their story, we see that God not only sees those who feel unseen, but also calls and equips them for His purpose.

~Setting the Scene: Israel in Transition

Samuel, the prophet of Israel, is considered to be the author of the book. While he wrote to the people of Israel in his time, the message ultimately speaks to us today, across the centuries. The lessons and truths found in this story are just as relevant for our own lives and culture. The events of 1 Samuel 16 occur during the early monarchy of Israel, before David becomes king, when Saul is still on the throne (roughly 11th century BCE).

To understand this story, we need to know what was happening with the Israelites. Ancient Israelite society was patriarchal and tribal. Family lineage, birth order, and social status played key roles in daily life—shepherding was a humble, often overlooked occupation. Politically, Israel was shifting from a tribal structure ruled by God to a centralized monarchy. Saul became Israel's first king, but this was not what God truly desired for the people. The monarchy, which the people demanded, ultimately disappointed God because of Saul's disobedience, plunging the nation into instability and prompting a search for new leadership. This was a controversial time: authority was moving from judges and prophets to royal power, and people weren't sure what the future would hold.

Before Saul, the Israelites had begged for a king so they could be "like all the other nations." God, through Samuel, warned them what having a king would cost:

"He will take your sons and make them serve with his chariots and horses, and they will run in front of his chariots... He will take your daughters to be perfumers and cooks and bakers. He will take the best of your fields and vineyards and olive groves and give them to his attendants... You yourselves will become his slaves. When that day comes, you will cry out for relief from the king you have chosen, but the Lord will not answer you in that day." (1 Samuel 8:11-18)

Yet the people insisted on comparing themselves to other nations, seeking what looked impressive rather than trusting God as their true King. Do we see this in leadership today? In many places of power, we witness corruption, human and sexual exploitation, unnecessary risks to lives, financial greed, and self-aggrandizement. Unfortunately, and to God's sorrow (v. 7), the list goes on and on.

In the midst of disappointment and uncertainty, God was already preparing a new beginning. Even as Israel mourned, hope was quietly unfolding—because with God, there is always a way forward.

(See Insert for Continuation and Takeaways)

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 33-34
Teacher: Bobby Smith

The New Connections Class

Study: Joined with Seekers' Class
Teacher: Glenn Griffin

The Seekers Class

Study: Wired Word
Teacher: Donny Davis

THOSE WHO SERVE

March 22, 2026

Usher(s): Donny Davis

Financial Secretary: Steve Sawyer

Acolytes: Children/Youth Ministry/Ushers

OUR STEWARDSHIP

March 15, 2026

| | |
|---------------------|-------------|
| Tithes & Offerings: | \$1,620.00 |
| Received To Date: | \$73,494.59 |
| Needed To Date: | \$50,381.85 |

| | |
|--------------------------|------------|
| Attendance: | |
| Sunday School | 15 |
| In-person Sunday Worship | 56 |
| Online Viewers | 81 |
| Total | 137 |

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- | | |
|----|-------------------|
| 1 | Ellen Hutchinson |
| | Sue Vining |
| 3 | Carrie Borum |
| | Joseph Hutchinson |
| 5 | Taylor Walsh |
| 8 | Marjean Waters |
| 9 | Becky Britton |
| | Sara Rice |
| 14 | Joshua Brown |
| | Joy Shellnut |
| 16 | Shawn Jandreau |
| 18 | Jackson Phillips |
| | Shane Morris |
| 29 | Talecia Wade |
| 31 | TJ Daniel |

STAY CONNECTED

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

BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesday, March 25

-- Noon Bible Study, in Questors Classroom. The book of Daniel, Session 10, Chapter 9.

-- 6:30 p.m. Online Zoom, EPEC, Bible Study class. The book of Exodus, lessons 11 & 12.

A SPECIAL FUNDRAISER OPPORTUNITY FOR OUR CHURCH

- We are excited to announce a special opportunity to support our church through the book, *The Journey of Abraham and Sarah: Faith, Failure, Fulfillment*, authored by Pastor Earnestine Campbell. This inspiring book grew out of our Noonday and Zoom Bible study classes and offers a wonderful opportunity for personal growth and spiritual deepening within our faith.

- With a donation of \$20 or more, you can join this transformative journey through the lives of Abraham and Sarah, exploring their struggles and the grace of God.

Thank you for your continued support!

T-SHIRT SUNDAY

On the fourth Sunday of each month, you are invited to wear a spiritual T-shirt, your favorite team's T-shirt, etc. - a T-shirt that brings you joy in the Lord!

SAVE THE DATE! 2ND ANNUAL WOMEN'S CONFERENCE: BOOTS, BLING, & THE WORD! **Friday - Saturday, April 17 - 18, 2026.** **(Friday at 6 p.m. & Saturday at 9 a.m.)**

Epworth UMC's very own Pastor Earnie will be the Guest Inspirational Speaker for the conference, hosted at Alethia Church. See the insert for details and the QR code to register. Join us for uplifting messages and an inspiring weekend!

CHILDREN & YOUTH GAME NIGHT

Children & Youth Game Night - The date for our next Game Night will be announced soon.

MISSIONS & UPCOMING EVENTS

MARCH MISSION

March Mission Opportunity - For over 90 years, Open Door Community House has been a beacon of hope for encouraging women and children. Transitional housing, a school academy, a culinary training program & incubator, and a family empowerment program are just some of the Christ-centered achievements of Open Door. Please consider making your donation to Open Door Community House. Mark "Open Door" on your envelope. Thank you for your support of this worthy cause!

Calling all Cooks! Epworth is set to have its monthly "Casserole Party"! 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, March 24 at 3:30 p. m.**

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!

UNITED WOMEN IN 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).

CALLING ALL GRADUATES

Attention All Graduates! If you are graduating from high school or college this year, please inform the church office by Monday, May 18 of what school you are graduating from. If graduating from high school, include what college/university you plan to attend.

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, and devotionals, please see links below:

<https://epworthmc.com/welcome/lenten-living-disciplines>

<https://epworthmc.com/welcome/journey-to-the-cross-2025>

(Copies are available 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 - 9:00 a.m.; Easter Presentation - 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.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE MEETING

The Worship Committee will meet Wednesday, March 25 at 11 a.m.

EASTER LILIES AND HYDRANGEAS

Lilies and Hydrangeas for Easter - Order your Easter lilies and hydrangeas in memory or honor of a loved one. See the sign-up sheet on the office window in the Welcome Center. The order deadline is Sunday, March 29. The flowers can be picked up after the Easter service or during regular office hours. Call ahead and the office will have them prepared for pick up.

~Prices to be determined and announced soon.

~Hope Beyond Grief: A Way Forward (vv. 1-2)

God begins by confronting Samuel’s deep grief over Saul’s failure: “How long will you mourn for Saul, since I have rejected him as king?” Samuel is stuck in what used to be, struggling to let go of the past and step into the blessed future God has for His people. We, too, can become settled in our grief—over lost loved ones, positions, relationships, finances, or status—and mourn as if there is no hope. (1 Thessalonians 4:13) But with God, there is always hope. Samuel was torn between his loyalty to Saul and his commitment to God’s plan, especially as Saul’s disobedience, arrogance, and deceit (1 Samuel 13:13-14; 15:23, 26) had sealed his fate. Unlike Saul’s self-serving subterfuge and disobedience, true leaders are marked by submission and obedience to God. Leadership is not about control, power, or pretense—it is about humility and surrender to God’s righteousness.

Samuel was afraid; he knew Saul’s power and temperament, as well as his jealousy, evil intentions, mental health struggles, and instability—all of which Samuel, as God’s prophet, could clearly see would manifest (1 Samuel 16:14-16, 23). Saul had become consumed by fear and envy, knowing that God had chosen another. Yet God gave Samuel a new assignment and the courage to take the next step. Sometimes, God’s call means moving past old disappointments, facing our fears, and trusting Him for what’s next—even when the future feels uncertain — there’s always a way forward with God.

~Obedience Sometimes Requires Subterfuge (vv. 3-4)

Samuel’s fear is real—Saul could kill him for anointing a new king. God responds with a creative, witty solution to “Outwitting the Wicked” (a relevant sermon from December 28): Samuel is to take a heifer to Bethlehem and invite Jesse’s family to a sacrifice. This act of obedience and God’s subterfuge comes with risk and requires wisdom. Following God isn’t always easy or straightforward, but God never asks us to go alone; He provides the guidance and protection we need. Sometimes, faithfulness means taking careful, even uncomfortable, steps to fulfill God’s purpose.

When Samuel arrives in Bethlehem, the elders are nervous; his presence usually signals a crisis. The elders ask, “Do you come in peace?” and Samuel replies, “Yes, in peace; I have come to sacrifice to the Lord” (1 Samuel 16:4-5). To come in peace is to calm the situation, meaning coming with no harm, with goodwill and genuine, altruistic motives—even when the message might be hard to receive. It’s a reminder for us: if you need to approach someone with concerns, strategy, or important news, let them know your intentions. Don’t leave others in stressful anticipation if you can offer reassurance. Samuel puts them at ease and invites them to the sacrifice in holy subterfuge in order to achieve God’s plan to anoint David as king.

~Human Vision vs. God’s Vision (vv. 5-6)

When Jesse’s sons begin to appear, Samuel, like all of us, can be drawn to outward impressiveness. Even those called and chosen by God can sometimes misunderstand the assignment and let human emotions and worldly expectations lead instead of God. He sees Eliab and immediately thinks, “Surely the Lord’s anointed stands here!” Eliab is tall and handsome. But this is where God draws the line: He doesn’t judge by height, background, wealth, or status. It doesn’t matter if you’re too tall, too short, too big, too small, too slender, too heavy, too dark, too light, too poor, or too rich—none of that matters to God. We make false assumptions about God’s call based on comparison, but God’s standard is not pedigree; it’s about the heart and willingness. Comparing ourselves to others only leads to frustration, spiritual annihilation, and emptiness, manifesting as feelings of unworthiness or stuckness.

Instead of moving forward with God’s vision, we remain limited by our own human and others’ expectations and limited vision. Remember: you matter. God’s call is about the heart, not the résumé.

This is the power and hope of our text and sermon, “Seen By God.” In the end, all earthly kings and leaders fall short, but Jesus Christ is the true and final King. His leadership is perfect, His vision is flawless, and His love is unmatched. Jesus sees us fully—past our flaws, failures, and appearances. When we repent and turn to Him, He calls us into His kingdom by grace and love. No one else leads with such wisdom, power, and compassion. When we trust Him, we are truly seen, chosen, and led by the King above all kings—our Savior, Redeemer, and Lord.

Takeaways: Trusting God’s Vision

- God’s acceptance often begins where human rejection ends.
- Grief and disappointment don’t have to define our future.
- Obedience to God sometimes requires wise, careful actions, even when it’s hard.
- Comparing ourselves to others is annihilation and emptiness —God sees beyond the surface.
- God is looking for honest, willing hearts, not the most impressive resumes.
- You are seen by God, even when the world looks the other way.

Join us next week for part two of “Seen By God,” where Samuel will face the test of hearing from God, understanding the assignment, and learning how God’s rejection of one leads to His selection of another. Don’t miss how God’s vision unfolds through the calling of David—and what it means for your own calling and God’s plan for your life!

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
Michelle Slappy
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


ALETHEIA CHURCH



Beauty in **BROKEN**

APRIL 17-18
2026

FRIDAY - 6:00 PM
SATURDAY - 9:00 AM

HOST CHURCH

ALETHEIA CHURCH
 8378 BLACKMON RD
 COLUMBUS, GA 31909

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:
 EARLY REGISTRATION: **\$35**
 LATE REGISTRATION:
 THE WEEK OF **APR 12**
 FOR MORE INFORMATION: 706-580-2511

MEALS SERVED:
 Dinner on Friday
 Breakfast on Saturday
 Refreshments for Lunch

Guest Inspirational Speaker:
REV. EARNESTINE W. CAMPBELL
 "One of the best speakers you will hear."
 Real, encouraging, and authentic.

Featured Biblical Women
Sarah: Waiting. Doubting. Transformed.
Rahab: Risking. Redeemed. Restored.
Esther: Hidden. Called. Courageous.
Mary Magdalene: Bound. Healed. Bold.

Additional Elements:
PRAISE AND WORSHIP
ATTIRE SUGGESTIONS:
 Cowboy hats, bling, boots, and
 T-shirts encouraged!




ALETHEIA CHURCH



Beauty in **BROKEN**

APRIL 17-18
2026

FRIDAY - 6:00 PM
SATURDAY - 9:00 AM

HOST CHURCH

ALETHEIA CHURCH
 8378 BLACKMON RD
 COLUMBUS, GA 31909

REGISTRATION INFORMATION:
 EARLY REGISTRATION: **\$35**
 LATE REGISTRATION:
 THE WEEK OF **APR 12**
 FOR MORE INFORMATION: 706-580-2511

MEALS SERVED:
 Dinner on Friday
 Breakfast on Saturday
 Refreshments for Lunch

Guest Inspirational Speaker:
REV. EARNESTINE W. CAMPBELL
 "One of the best speakers you will hear."
 Real, encouraging, and authentic.

Featured Biblical Women
Sarah: Waiting. Doubting. Transformed.
Rahab: Risking. Redeemed. Restored.
Esther: Hidden. Called. Courageous.
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Additional Elements:
PRAISE AND WORSHIP
ATTIRE SUGGESTIONS:
 Cowboy hats, bling, boots, and
 T-shirts encouraged!



ORDER OF WORSHIP

March 22, 2026 • 10:30 a.m.

Fifth 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

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**

"Love, Mercy and Grace"

See Insert, 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 Worshippers, text or go to epworthumc.com and select "Donate." On Communion Sunday, please place your Communion Offering in the basket near the altar.

OFFERTORY SELECTION

"Via Dolorosa"

David Hay

***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

Rev. Earnestine W. Campbell, Pastor

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

***SCRIPTURE**

1 SAMUEL 16:1-13

Margaret Gosden

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SERMON

"Seen By God," Part II

Pastor

***INVITATION TO CHRISTIAN DISCIPLESHIP**

Pastor

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**

"Spirit of the Living God"

Praise & Worship Director
CH 389 vv. 1 - 3

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

Acolytes

***BENEDICTION**

Pastor

***POSTLUDE**

Music Director

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.