

COMING UP...

APRIL 05 - APRIL 12

Sunday, April 05

9:00 a.m. Easter Breakfast (No Sunday School)

9:30 a.m. Children's & Youth Easter Presentation

10:30 a.m. Worship In-person & Online & Children's Church
Easter Egg Hunt immediately following
Worship Service

Monday, April 06

11:30 a.m. Monday Ministry Zumba

Wednesday, April 08

Noon Bible Study

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

Thursday, April 09

Noon Prayer Team

Sunday, April 12

9:00 a.m. Adult Sunday School

10:30 a.m. Worship In-person & Online & Children's Church



-The sanctuary flowers are given to the Glory of God and in honor of Mary Bass' birthday by her children, grandchildren, and great-grandchildren.

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

 **epworth**
united methodist church

April 05, 2026

"OPEN THOSE GATES!"

PSALM 118:1-2, 19-29

EASTER SUNDAY

Sunday's Sermon, March 29, led us into Passion Week, Holy Week, and Passover, times when old stories end, and new ones begin. Sunday's message, "Open Those Gates," is based on Psalm 118 and speaks to the heart of Palm Sunday. It's not only about ancient city gates or old rituals, but about every door God invites us to walk through—doors of righteousness and gratitude, rejection, joy, and praise. We are also called to close the doors that need to stay shut, so we can be protected and move forward in every season. The real question isn't just whether the gates are open, but whether we are ready to step in.

Pilgrims and worshipers used to sing Psalm 118. They knew what it meant to go from trouble to deliverance, gathering at the city gates to thank God for a new beginning. Today, those gates are still open to us, inviting us to leave behind fear or regret and step into the wide space of God's love and purpose. This psalm is a song that calls us to move from repentance to rejoicing, from what holds us back to the freedom God gives.

Lent can feel heavy, can't it? We're honest about our shortcomings and spend time reflecting. But even in the middle of that seriousness, Psalm 118 brings joy. It reminds us that repentance is not just about feeling sorry for the past, but about having hope for what God is doing now. The passage begins with the words, His love "endures forever." No matter what we face, God is with us. The psalmist says, "Open to me the gates of righteousness, that I may enter and give thanks to the Lord." God's invitation is always open, and gratitude is always the right response.

"Open those gates" means opening, unlocking, or loosening what is hindering us from moving forward in our praise to God and our confidence in the Lord. Righteousness isn't about being perfect, but about our heart to accept and turn to God. It is about having a heart and life shaped by God's justice and goodness. What habits in your life open the gates to God's presence? Which ones keep you shut out? Sometimes we close ourselves off because of fear, bad habits, or by following the crowd or our own humanism rather than God's Spirit. But God invites us to let Him do the unlocking and to let Him shape us from the inside out, rather than patterns that don't align with Him.

Point I: The Gate Is Open—Gratitude and Righteousness

"Open for me the gates of the righteous; I will enter and give thanks to the Lord." The psalmist's prayer reminds us: the gate isn't opened by our own goodness, but by God's grace. "Open" is about a spiritual unlocking. "Righteousness" isn't about perfection, but about God shaping our hearts and lives with His justice and love and gratitude unto Him for all He has done in our lives. He's been better to us than we've been to ourselves, if we are truthful. His mercy and grace are always available for us.

Let's talk about patterns—those routines and mindsets that can either open us up to God or keep us gated in. Some patterns are negative, and they can run deep. They may be born in the womb, woven into our family DNA, shaped by our environment, or picked up from those around us. Sometimes, it's our own inner thinking—the enemy whispering that we're not good enough, that we're failures, or that we'll never become anything. The enemy will use these patterns to close us in, to make us believe that perfection is the only way to be thankful to God. Don't listen to that negativity. Don't let it build gates around your heart and keep the goodness that God has for you closed out.

(See Insert for Continuation)

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: Classes will resume April 12, 2026.

Teacher: Bobby Smith

The New Connections Class

Study: Classes will resume April 12, 2026.

Teacher: Glenn Griffin

The Seekers Class

Study: Classes will resume April 12, 2026.

Teacher: Donny Davis

THOSE WHO SERVE

April 05, 2026

Usher(s): David Hay

Financial Secretary: Donny Davis

Acolytes: Children/Youth Ministry/Ushers

OUR STEWARDSHIP

March 29, 2026

Tithes & Offerings:	\$3,819.00
Received To Date:	\$78,456.59
Needed To Date:	\$59,541.85

Attendance:	
Sunday School	11
In-person Sunday Worship	53
Online Viewers	133
Total	186

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

3 Alan Krout
4 Mary Bass
5 Cordelia DiSimone
8 Christi Chase
10 Merritt Friend
15 Chelsea Chase
Judson Patten
18 Elin McManus
20 Jamie Spencer
21 Helen Howard
23 Janet Cheraisi
24 Jason DiSimone
Julie Jackson
Carter McManus
Davis McManus
Reese Phillips
25 Donny Davis
29 Bret Vinson
30 Mike Friend

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 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.

BIBLE STUDIES

Wednesday, April 08

-- Noon Bible Study, in Questors Classroom. The book of Daniel, Sessions 10 & 11, Chapters 9, 10 -11.

-- 6:30 p.m. Online Zoom, EPEC, Bible Study class. The book of Exodus, lessons 13 & 14.

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!

IN MEMORIAM

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

Nancy Bryant

Randy & Doris Bryant

Tony & Angie Cheal

-To God be the Glory!

IN HONOR

A gift to the General Fund was given in honor of Mary Bass' birthday by Sandi Hortman.

~All Glory to God!

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.

MISSIONS & UPCOMING EVENTS

APRIL MISSION

April Mission Opportunity - Our April mission is Wynnton Neighborhood Network (WNN). In its 41st year, WNN provides food items, utility assistance, diapers, and pet food. A new list of needed items is located in the Welcome Center. Our goal is 300 items. Monetary donations are always appreciated.

~Thanks for your support of this worthy cause!

CONFIRMATION CLASSES

Confirmation classes will begin in April 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, April 20 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).

ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The annual South Georgia Conference of the United Methodist Church will be held May 31 - June 02, 2026.

CHILDREN & YOUTH GAME NIGHT

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

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 flyer in the Welcome Center for details and the QR code to register. Join us for uplifting messages and an inspiring weekend!

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://epworthumc.com/welcome/lenten-living-disciplines>

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

(Copies are available in the Welcome Center)

Easter Sunday Service - April 05: Breakfast - 9:00 a.m.; Easter Presentation - 9:30 a.m.; Worship Service & Communion - 10:30 a.m.; Easter Egg Hunt - immediately following Worship Service.



FELLOWSHIP HALL RESERVED

-Saturday, April 18, from 10 a.m. - 1 p.m.

-Saturday, April 25, from 10 a.m. - 7 p.m.

-Tuesday, May 19, All day

“Open Those Gates” Continuation...

Let’s talk about patterns—those routines and mindsets that can either open us up to God or keep us gated in. Some patterns are negative, and they can run deep. They may be born in the womb, woven into our family DNA, shaped by our environment, or picked up from those around us. Sometimes, it’s our own inner thinking—the enemy whispering that we’re not good enough, that we’re failures, or that we’ll never become anything. The enemy will use these patterns to close us in, to make us believe that perfection is the only way to be thankful to God. Don’t listen to that negativity. Don’t let it build gates around your heart and keep the goodness that God has for you closed out.

Instead, open the gates with gratitude! Thank God for waking you up in the morning, for having a mind that works, for strength in your body, for every good thing He has done. Praise God even when things aren’t going your way. This isn’t about ignoring your struggles, but about refusing to let negative patterns keep you locked out of joy. Examine yourself, make the changes God calls you to make, and step into a new pattern of rejoicing and gratitude. This is the season for gratitude—let God help you close the gates to those old patterns, so you can open yourself to His goodness.

How do we know what righteousness is? We work the Word of God into our lives—through devotion, prayer, and listening for His voice. Surround yourself with godly counsel—people who are called and anointed to walk with you, encourage you, and hold you accountable. I’m thankful for leaders, mentors, and friends who help me stay on course. Every leadership, friendship, and relationship should have people who journey with us in accountability.

Point II: From Rejection to Cornerstone—God’s Power to Transform

The psalmist says, “The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone.” In ancient times, the cornerstone was the most important stone in a building—it set the direction, strength, and stability for everything else. What seems unimportant or cast aside by people can be essential to God.

We all know what rejection feels like. Maybe you’ve experienced it in relationships, in work, or even in church. Maybe you’ve felt overlooked, underestimated, or tossed aside. But God specializes in lifting up the rejected. He takes what the world has written off and says, “This is exactly what I want to use.”

The cornerstone is the foundation. If it’s not set right, the whole building is off. In the New Testament, Jesus Himself is called the rejected cornerstone. He was rejected by many, but God raised Him up as the foundation of our faith. In the same way, God can redeem the broken areas of our lives and make them the place where His glory shines through His transforming work in us.

The psalmist continues, “This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.” When God takes what’s been rejected—our mistakes, our wounds, our failures—and turns it into something beautiful, it leaves us astounded.

The passage ends with a prayer for salvation and success: “Save us, we pray, O Lord! O Lord, we pray, give us success!” God’s idea of success isn’t measured by wealth, power, or popularity—by others’ opinions or propaganda that align with God’s—but by living in step with Him, building our lives on Christ, the cornerstone.

What does this mean for us today? It means rejection is not the end of your story. If you feel discarded or unworthy, remember: God can use you as a cornerstone in His kingdom. Like Jesus, who was rejected and lifted up, your pain and disappointment can become the foundation for a new purpose and blessing. God calls us to embrace our identity in Christ, to build our lives on Him, and to trust Him with our broken places. True success is not about having it all together—it’s about letting God use every part of your story, even the parts we wish we could hide.

So, as we enter through God’s open gates, let’s ask Him to transform every rejection into a testimony, every weakness into strength, and every setback into a setup for His glory. Let’s pray for the courage to embrace rejection, the wisdom to build our lives on Jesus, and the faith to rejoice in all that God is doing—because “this is the day the Lord has made; let us rejoice and be glad in it!”

We’ve seen how God can take what the world rejects and make it the very foundation of His plan. We’ve learned that when we step through the gates—when we embrace Christ as our cornerstone—God begins a marvelous, transforming work in us. But our journey doesn’t end there. Once we’re inside those gates, standing on the solid foundation God has provided, we’re invited into an even deeper response: a life overflowing with praise and thanksgiving.

Point III: A Heart of Praise, Joy, and Thanksgiving

When the gates open, our response is worship. “You are my God, and I will give thanks to you... Give thanks to the Lord, for He is good; his steadfast love endures forever!” Praise and thanksgiving are more than Sunday routines—they’re the habits that keep the gates open every day and bring joy to our lives. Practice daily gratitude, fill your life with worship, and share your story so others can be encouraged to open the gates, too.

As we move into Holy Week, let’s move from distress to deliverance, from rejection to blessing, from plea to praise. The gates are open. God’s love endures forever. Will you step through?

As we close, let’s remember our points:

~The Gate Is Open—Righteousness and Gratitude

~From Rejection to Cornerstone—God’s Transformation

~A Heart of Praise, Joy, and Thanksgiving—Enter His courts with praise and thanksgiving.

Let’s take a moment to look at the patterns shaping our lives and help us to understand these points:

Some patterns hold us back:

~Neglecting worship and turning from God’s presence

~Not preparing ourselves—spiritually or practically—for what God is calling us to do

~Entering relationships, making decisions, or pursuing careers without asking God’s guidance

~An unrepentant heart

But other patterns help us grow:

~Daily prayer and Bible study

~Patterns of worship

~A Heart that’s turned to God

~Honest self-examination

~Spiritual and practical accountability

~Seeking wise counsel

~Encouraging others in the Lord

These are the habits that open the gates to God’s blessing, transformation, and peace and gratitude. As we move forward, let’s choose the patterns that bring us closer to God’s presence and His purpose for our lives.

~*Amen!*

WYNNTON NEIGHBORHOOD NETWORK NEEDS

Food Items:

Canned Soup (Including Ramen)

Canned Fruit (Any Type)

Canned Vegetables (Green, Pinto, Baked Beans, Corn, Carrots, Mixed Veggies)

Canned Meat

Canned Tomato Products

Mac & Cheese

Spaghetti Sauce and Noodles

Rice (Boxes or Bags; any kind)

Jelly

Peanut Butter

Breakfast Cereal

Other Items:

Toilet Paper

Laundry Detergent (Pods)

Bar Soap

Pet Food

Diapers (Any size)

Monetary donations are always appreciated.
Donations are used for utility assistance or fresh food products.

(List Revised 4-2026)

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(List Revised 4-2026)

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 and Melonie Phillips & Family

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

Extended Church Family

Martha Bone
Sam Wilson
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

Robin Grantham
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

Cassie Prochaska
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
Diane Wiggins

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!*



In Memory Of:

*Austin Kernodle by Natalie & Philip Kernodle
Dr. Bill Hortman by Sandi Hortman
Family by Anne Wilson
Parents by Vickey Griffin
Hugh & Mary Nell Oliver by Marguerite Hay
Epworth Family & Friends by Buddy & Susan Dunn*

In Honor Of:

*Nieces - Tarver, Lauren, Rebeca, & Rachel by Becky Britton
The Nursery by Martha Conklin
Sister Easter Lily by Jeanne Guilbeault
Mary Bass by her Children
Mary Bass by her Grandchildren
Mary Bass by her Great-grandchildren*

ORDER OF WORSHIP

April 05, 2026 • 10:30 a.m.

Easter Sunday

*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.

People: In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

*PRAISE SONG

"Up From the Grave He Arose"

UMH 322 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.

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

(See Screen)

Rev. Earnestine W. Campbell, Pastor

Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.

*SCRIPTURE

MATTHEW 28: 1-10

DeKara Berry

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

People: Thanks be to God.

SPECIAL MUSIC

"Holy Forever"

Mandi Battle
Praise & Worship Director
CCLI # 2967303

SERMON

"Three Messages: One Tomb"

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

"Because He Lives"

Song Leader
UMH 364 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.