

COMING UP THIS WEEK...

Sunday, December 23

9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship Service

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship Service

Monday, December 24

Office Closed

4:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Service

Tuesday, December 25

Christmas Day/Office Closed

6:30 p.m. AA Group Meeting

Thursday, December 27

12:00 noon Prayer Team Meeting

Sunday, December 30

10:00 a.m. Sunday School

11:00 a.m. Combined Worship Service

Tuesday, January 1

New Years Day/Office Closed

6:30 p.m. AA Group Meeting

2019 FLOWER CALENDAR

Sign up to purchase flowers for the sanctuary in 2019. The 2019 flower calendar is located on the office window. The flower arrangements are \$50 each. Questions or to request a date, call the church office.

PASTORAL COUNSELING

Our church partners with The Pastoral Institute to offer counseling for individuals and families at deep discounts. Call the church for more information or give our church name when scheduling an appointment at 706-649-6500. Hours are Monday-Thursday, 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., Friday, 8 a.m. - 5 p.m. The Pastoral Institute is located at 2022 15th Ave., Columbus.

OUR CHURCH STAFF

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

Children's Ministry Director Lindsey Fossa
Choir Director Lyn Pharris
Church Administrator..... Susan Snider
Contemporary Music Director..... Kayla Moss
Custodians..... Martha Conklin & Barbie Webb
Media & Communications Dawn Wilson
Music Director..... Bob Lee
Nursery Worker Martha Conklin
Pastor Tony G. Crosby

CONTACT US

2400 Devonshire Drive
Columbus, GA 31904

Pastor's Cell (706) 329-2484
Church Office (706) 322-6973

www.epworthumc.com
staff's first name@epworthumc.com
(example: tony@epworthumc.com)

Facebook - EpworthUMC.com
Instagram - EpworthUMC.com
Twitter - @EpworthColumbus

CONTACTING YOU

Most of the church's communication now is through e-mail. We send two e-mails each week—a newsletter on Monday and a sermon preview on Friday. We also use e-mail to send important meeting reminders and other information. Help us contact you by making sure the church office has your current e-mail address.



December 23, 2018

Far As the Curse is Found

*No more let Sins and Sorrows grow,
Nor Thorns infest the Ground:
He comes to make his Blessings flow
Far as the Curse is found.*

—Isaac Watts

This week, we find ourselves on the verse of the hymn that some hymnals don't even publish. It is almost certainly left out of the children's versions of the song. I suppose nobody wants to talk about sin.

The avoidance of negative talk during the holidays when everything is supposed to be joyful and positive is understandable. We have enough darkness in our lives, why should we sing about sins and sorrows and thorns and curses during Christmas? Well, maybe this is EXACTLY what we need to focus on right before Christmas. A gift isn't properly appreciated unless the need is felt.

Even though I no longer have it (story for another day), last year, one of the most tremendous things anyone has ever done for me overwhelmed me. I was given a car. Granted, it wasn't the latest model and it wasn't the top of the line trim level for its model. But it was low mileage and well cared for. I had totaled out my own car in an accident and was sort of biding time waiting for insurance payments and such to come through as I started to look at replacing it. In a surprise move that overwhelmed me more than I even still have words for, a friend of mine gave me a new car. Now I KNOW I didn't deserve that new car. Someone else surely needed it far more than I did. But because my friend knew I needed a car, he gave me a gift of a car...exactly when I needed it. If he had given me that car the month before, I wouldn't have appreciated it nearly as much because I didn't NEED a car a month earlier.

In order for us to fully appreciate the gift of a savior, we must remember again how terribly we need one. Paul says that the entire creation is groaning as in the pains of childbirth. All have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God. There is none righteous before the Lord—NOT ONE. And it is PRECISELY this reason that Christ came into the world—to save sinners like you and me.

So, unlike the many unneeded gifts that all of us will open this Christmas, the one gift that we surely need to deal with the sins, sorrows, thorns, and ultimately the curse of sin on all the creation, is a savior. When the angels told the shepherds that they had good news of great joy for all people, it wasn't that they were getting a new iPad. "For unto you is born this day in the city of David a savior, which is Christ the Lord."

Now that is EXACTLY what we need. The whole world comes under the lordship of Jesus Christ...far as the curse is found!

In Christ,



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

Poinsettias given in honor and memory of loved ones.

SUNDAY SCHOOL AT 10:00 AM

The Children's Class (K-5)
Teacher: Rosemary DiSimone

The Friendship Class
Study: Jesus, God's Loving Promise
Teacher: Class

The Genesis Class
Study: If You Are Going the Wrong Way...
Teacher: Leslie Morris

The Joy Class
Study: Class Discussion
Teacher: Class

The Nathan Patterson/Wesley Class
Study: Genesis 50
Teacher: Bobby Smith

The New Connections Class
Study: The Messenger
Teacher: Doug Franks

The Questors Class
Study: Class Discussion
Teacher: Glenn Griffin

The Seekers Class
Study: Class Discussion
Teacher: Class

The Young Adult Class
Study: Jesus & the Beanstalk
Teacher: Becky Britton

SERVANTS NEEDED

9 a.m. Ushers: 1st - 3rd Sundays

11 a.m. Ushers: 2nd, 4th Sundays

Children's Sunday School Helper: 2nd - 5th Sundays

Children's Church: 9 a.m. - 2nd - 5th Sundays
11 a.m. - 4th Sundays

Greeter 9 a.m.: 2nd Sundays

Turn Key: 1st and 5th Sundays

If you feel led to volunteer or would like more information, please contact the church office. There are other ministries within and outside the church where you may feel led to volunteer. For more info on these ministries, contact someone from the Missions Committee.

THOSE WHO SERVE

December 23, 2018

9:00 a.m. Worship Service

Greeter: Mary Lee Crews, Charles & Faith Newton
Usher: Shawn Jandreau, Steve Sawyer
Acolyte: Ushers
Children's Church: Whitney Weyeneth

11:00 a.m. Worship Service

Greeter: Suzy Revell, John & Jane Grandon
Ushers: Brenda Karastury, Janie Nellums
Acolyte: Ema Cheraisi
Children's Church: Lindsey Fossa
Nursery Volunteer: Allison Jandreau
Financial Secretary: Bryan Pruet
Turn Key: Baron Conklin

OUR STEWARDSHIP

December 16, 2018

| | |
|---------------------|--------------|
| Tithes & Offerings: | \$15,900.00 |
| Received To Date: | \$290,581.00 |
| Needed To Date: | \$323,639.88 |
| Building Fund: | \$0.00 |

| | |
|------------------|-----|
| ATTENDANCE: | |
| Sunday School | 59 |
| Worship: 9 a.m. | 53 |
| Worship: 11 a.m. | 93 |
| | 146 |

YOUTH & CHILDREN

Youth Meeting Date Change - The youth will begin meeting on Sundays. Tentative start date is January 13, at 5 p.m. Look for more information to follow.

Wacky Wednesdays - begin again on January 16, at 6:30 p.m. The children's program includes lessons, crafts, and songs. For children Pre-K to 5th grade. Don't forget we have Wednesday Night supper at 6 p.m.

Youth & Children Sunday School Classes - are Safe Sanctuaries approved environment, classes are by age/grade beginning at 10 a.m.

MISSIONS

December Mission Focus - Helping Our Neighbors at Christmas Offering - Our Missions Committee has set goals to support Open Door (\$1,000), Rose Hill UMC (\$1,000) and Brown Bag of Columbus (\$1,000). To date, we have only received about \$700. The total received will be shared among them. If you feel led to give beyond your regular contribution to Epworth, consider supporting this opportunity. Donations can be made in honor or memory of loved ones or you can receive a certificate through the church office to give as a gift now until December 31.

Vintage Shirt Sale - Some shirts are still available and sweatshirts can be ordered individually. See the sign-up sheet on the information board.

A Taste of Epworth Cookbooks - Purchase your copy(s) from the welcome center for \$5 each. Proceeds support missions. Cookbooks make great Christmas gifts!

Bench Project from Recycled Plastic - Collect clean and free-of-metal caps and lids to obtain a bench for the playground. We are now collecting to make a second park bench. Place the caps in the container beside the Mission Cart or in the container in the kitchen.

Epworth to Receive Donations from AmazonSmile - You can donate a portion of your purchase amount by going to *smile.amazon.com* to make your purchases and by choosing "Epworth United Methodist Church of Columbus, GA" as your charity to support. Especially remember us when making large purchases. 0.5% of the purchase price of most items will be donated. Every dollar counts!

WHAT'S HAPPENING

Christmas Eve Worship - Monday, December 24, we will have candlelight communion services at 4 p.m. and 6 p.m.

Poinsettias for Christmas - You are encouraged to pick up your poinsettias after one of the Christmas eve services.

Christmas Post Office - is in the foyer. Please check to see if you have cards from your church family.

Church Office Closed - Monday and Tuesday, December 24 and 25 and Tuesday, January 1. Merry Christmas & Happy New Year!

Prayer Team Meeting - Thursdays at noon, at Margaret Gosden's home. Contact Margaret if you are interested in joining in this important ministry.

One Worship Service on Sunday, December 30 - Join us at 11 a.m. for a combined worship service.

Dinner & Show - Saturday, January 12, at 6 p.m., in the Fellowship Hall. Your donation of \$15 will go to augment our budget. The United Methodist Men want to give you an evening of good food and great music with pianist, Tony Crosby, and the king of Rock & Roll, Elvis.

Epworth Text Messaging Service - Epworth has a free text messaging solution hosted by Remind. Sign up now by texting '@epworth1' to 81010. After that, enter your name and disregard other questions about parent/teacher/student/etc. Contact Tony with questions.

Upper Room Devotionals - January/February issue is available in the welcome center. Price as noted.

EPWORTH PRAYER LIST

Church Family

| | | | |
|------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|--------------------|
| Fred & Emilie Carswell | Blount King | Gladys Plant | Trudy Harris |
| Vanessa Desoto | Ron & Betty Sawyer | Thrower Family | Kittye Crockett |
| Sibyl Wells | Keri McElvey | Barbara Stubbs | Kernodle Family |
| Fred Scanling | Barbara Watson | Helen Batastini | Lillian Wooldridge |
| Elsie & Jim Spanogians | Andrea Carbaugh | Glenn Griffin | Daniel Family |
| Anne Wilson | Jimmy Bridges | Annette Taff | |

Extended Church Family

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------|-----------------|---------------------|
| Steve & Carol Guilbeault | Michael Taff | David Olson | Doyle Adams |
| Dotty Baker | Ricky Clark | Robbins Family | Andrew Wade |
| Laurie Osteen | Preston Silvernail | Dora Spires | Willie Ryles |
| Judy Patterson | Cassie Prochaska | Billy Hill | Kim Jordan |
| Dorothy Ogg | Bruce Chapman | Charles Holmes | Marilyn Buck |
| Danny Chidester | Beth Goodwin | Luby Family | Garnett Shackelford |
| Adams Family | Ellen Pilgreen | Jessica Kelley | Dana Thurston |
| Ralph & Sandy McGough | Diane Wiggins | Stephanie Bryan | Robin Grantham |
| McDaniel Family | Hattie Campbell | Mark Oliver | |

Assisted Living/Nursing Homes/Homebound

| | |
|--|--|
| Covenant Woods - Linda Coleman, Carol Osteen | River Place - Betty Cummings, Elizabeth |
| Magnolia Manor - Doris Halouska, | Harbert, Jane Sanders |
| Cammie Van Over | River Towne Center - Jerry Williams |
| Phenix City Health Care - Anne Whitehurst | The Lodge (Bessemer, AL) - Lorene Carlisle |
| | Wesley Glen (Byron, GA) - Nancy Hiller |

(Please continue to pray for our homebound people. They would love a visit!)

If the prayer list needs to be updated, please call, email the church office or leave a note with updates. Help us minister effectively by calling the church office about yourself or a family member. 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


