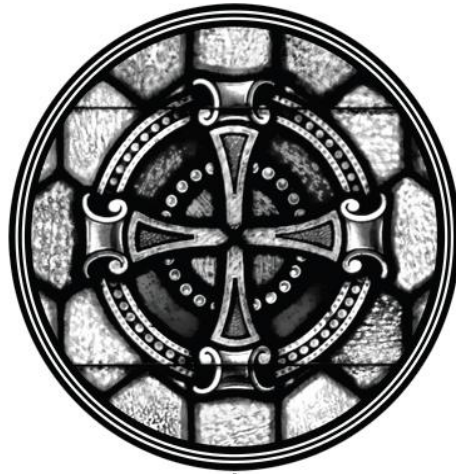


BELMONT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

A community of Christ-followers growing in love of God and neighbor



*somebody coming in blackness
like a star
and the world be a great bush
on his head
and his eyes be fire
in the city
and his mouth be true as time
he be calling the people brother
even in the prison
even in the jail
i'm just only a baptist preacher
somebody bigger than me coming
in blackness like a star*

~ "john" by Lucille Clifton (1936-2010)

FIRST SUNDAY OF ADVENT
NOVEMBER 30, 2025 10:30AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

MUSIC FOR MEDITATION

As the chimes sound, please quietly prepare your heart and mind for worship as the music invites us into this sacred time together.

Veni Emmanuel
Robbie Jones, organ

Goode/Dressler

WELCOME

Emma Bushong

We are delighted that you have chosen to be at Belmont UMC today! Welcome!

Restrooms and a water station are located in the foyer which is out the doors on the left side near the front of the sanctuary.

All gender restrooms are located out the doors to the left of the piano, up a small set of stairs, and to the left.

When you see † in the bulletin, you are invited to stand as you are able.

When you see words printed in bold, you are invited to join in reading them together with everyone.

Please silence all electronic devices before the service begins. Thank you!

†CALL TO WORSHIP

We begin worship by acknowledging that God's Spirit is present with us and by asking God to speak to us today.

Beloved, once again, we embark on the Advent path that points us to the coming of Jesus.

We journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.

We remember the signs and the wonders that heralded the arrival of the baby Jesus, God Incarnate.

We journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.

We tell the stories once again as we learn how to discern the signs and the wonders,
watching for glimpses of God's here-and-not-yet kingdom among us.

We journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.

Come, let us worship God who shines a light to guide us on the path to peace
and flourishing for all creation.

Come, let us worship as we journey together toward the day that all the earth awaits.¹

†HYMN NO. 211

O Come, O Come, Emmanuel
(stanzas 1, 2, 6, 7)

VENI EMMANUEL

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF HOPE

The Carle family

The prophet Isaiah calls to us from the past to imagine the future when God's reign will be fully realized
and recognized throughout creation.

When that time comes, God will discern between the nations and shall arbitrate for many peoples;
they will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation will not lift up sword against nation;

neither will they learn war anymore.

Today, we choose to live in hope,

believing that the time of God's reign has come and is coming among us.

We light this candle of hope as a sign of our promise to follow the Light

as we answer God's call to transform our hope into reality today

and in the days to come.



Text: Latin hymn, 9th c.; trans. John Mason Neale

Music: Sarum plainsong, Mode IV, 9th c.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Paul Purdue

The intent of corporate confession is that we recognize the ways in which we have not chosen to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in our daily lives, and we ask God to help us make choices that more fully reflect God's love and Christ's teachings.

Holy One,

you call us to wake from sleep,

to become aware of our surroundings.

The dawn of a new time of preparation is upon us.

Forgive us when sleepiness takes its toll,

when our discussions become battles,

when our judgment and self-judgement outweigh our faith.

Let us put on the light of Christ and live as you have called us in respect,

in mutual dialogue, and in healthy living.

Help us so that everything we do reflects Christ's light.

Amen.²

SILENT MEDITATION

Silence provides intentional space for us to pause and practice listening.

ASSURANCE OF GRACE

We name God's boundless love for us, believing that "nothing can separate us from the love of God." (Romans 8)

May the light of Christ shine forth in our lives, as a beacon of justice, mercy, and goodness.

Friends, hear the good news!

In Jesus Christ we are forgiven!

Thanks be to God!

†PASSING THE PEACE

May the light of Christ bring peace to you and be with you today and always.

And also with you.

Let us show forth Christ's light by greeting one another with signs of Christ's peace.

†GOSPEL READING

Rita Collett

We believe that the Scriptures reveal the Word of God to us as we listen with open hearts and minds.

John 1:1-14 | *Common English Bible*

pew Bible, p. 808

¹In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God. ²The Word was with God in the beginning. ³Everything came into being through the Word, and without the Word nothing came into being. What came into being ⁴through the Word was life, and the life was the light for all people. ⁵The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness doesn't extinguish the light. ⁶A man named John was sent from God. ⁷He came as a witness to testify concerning the light, so that through him everyone would believe in the light. ⁸He himself wasn't the light, but his mission was to testify concerning the light. ⁹The true light that shines on all people was coming into the world. ¹⁰The light was in the world, and the world came into being through the light, but the world didn't recognize the light. ¹¹The light came to his own people, and his own people didn't welcome him. ¹²But those who did welcome him, those who believed in his name, he authorized to become God's children, ¹³born not from blood nor from human desire or passion but born from God. ¹⁴The Word became flesh and made his home among us. We have seen his glory, glory like that of a father's only son, full of grace and truth.

This is the Holy Gospel of the Lord.

Thanks be to God.

ANTHEM

E'en So, Lord Jesus, Quickly Come
Sanctuary Choir

Paul Manz

SERMON

Incarnate Hope: God Is with Us

Heather Harriss

The sermon seeks to bring insights from the scripture into our modern context with the hopes that guided by God's spirit, our experience, reason, and church tradition we might interpret and apply the ancient text to our lives today.

†AFFIRMATION OF FAITH

Hunter Wade

In life and in death we belong to God.

We trust in Jesus Christ,

fully human, fully God.

Jesus proclaimed the reign of God:

preaching good news to the poor

and release to the captives,

teaching by word and deed

and blessing the children,

healing the sick

and binding up the brokenhearted,

eating with outcasts,
 forgiving sinners,
 and calling all to repent and believe the gospel.
 In life, in death, in life beyond death,
 God is with us.
 We are not alone.
 Thanks be to God!³

†HYMN

Longing for Light, We Wait in Darkness

CHRIST BE OUR LIGHT

1. Long-ing for light, we wait in dark-ness. Long-ing for truth, we turn to you.
 2. Long-ing for peace, our world is trou-bled. Long-ing for hope, man-y de-spair.
 3. Long-ing for food, man-y are hun-gry. Long-ing for wa-ter, man-y still thirst.
 4. Long-ing for shel-ter, man-y are home-less. Long-ing for warmth, man-y are cold.
 5. Man-y the gifts, man-y the peo-ple, man-y the hearts that yearn to be-long.

Make us your own, your ho-ly peo-ple, light for the world to see.
 Your word a-lone has power to save us. Make us your liv-ing voice.
 Make us your bread, bro-ken for oth-ers, shared un-til all are fed.
 Make us your build-ing, shel-ter-ing oth-ers, walls made of liv-ing stone.
 Let us be ser-vants to one an-oth-er, mak-ing your kin-dom come.

Christ, be our light! Shine in our hearts. Shine through the dark-ness.

Christ, be our light! Shine in your church gath-ered to-day.

Text & Music: Bernadette Farrell, 1993

OPPORTUNITIES FOR SERVICE, CONNECTION, AND GIVING

Please register your attendance via the pew pad or QR code.

You may give online by visiting belmontumc.org/give, texting BELMONT to 73256, scanning the giving QR code (back of bulletin), contacting Sara Christi (bookkeeper@belmontumc.org) to set up a bank draft, or mailing your offering to the church, Box 120098, Nashville, TN, 37212.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM

Keep Your Lamps

André Thomas

†DOXOLOGY

OLD 100TH

The Greek word δόξα (doxa) means “glory,” and the Doxology is a brief response of praise to God for the gifts we have been given and for the offerings received today.

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow; praise Christ, all creatures
here below; praise Holy Spirit ever more; praise
triune God, whom we adore. Amen.

Text: Neil Weatherhogg, 1988

Music: Genevan Psalter 1551

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

We bring before God those things in our community and in our world that are in our hearts today.

THE LORD'S PRAYER

For over 2000 years, Christians all over the world have prayed this model prayer that Jesus taught us in Matthew 6.

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.

Thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

Give us this day our daily bread.

And forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us.

And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil.

For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever.

Amen.

†HYMN NO. 206

I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light

HOUSTON

During the final hymn, the choir will process to the front steps, where everyone is invited to join them as children hang the wreaths on the front doors, signaling the beginning of the Advent and Christmas season to our community.

HANGING OF THE GREENS

The wreath has been a symbol of many things throughout history:
victory, the immortality of the soul, eternal life, and the seasons –
a continuous cycle of life and change.

Today, we see the wreath as a symbol of hope.

Like a circle has no end, neither does the love of God have an end.

**Holy One, coming Messiah, author of hope and peace,
we celebrate your love that is never ending and is for all people.**

**We hang these wreaths here today as we await your coming
and as a sign to those around us that there is beauty and depth to be found
in ordinary things like the evergreen tree.**

Creator, bless these wreaths, bless those who wait for you in hope,
and bless our world with your peace, through Christ our Lord.

Amen.

Altar flowers are given to the glory of God in memory of John Von Weisenstein by Dawn Von Weisenstein.

Wreaths used to adorn Belmont UMC's exterior doors are given:

In memory of:

Jim Bradford
Gordon Brown
John Haeuptle
Mary & Gerald Henson
Shelton Luton
Nola Dean McCormick
Blanche Luton Shumaker McHugh
Gladys "Granny Mac" McIntyre
Anna Pierce
Steven Pierce
Dylan Pitman
Virginia & Jack Shifflett;
Olive & Oscar Luchs
David Shumaker
Gil Shumaker
Ross Stevenson, Arthur Stevenson,
Verna Stevenson, & Andy McFalls
Mary & Al Tellinghuisen
Daly Thompson
Mary Elizabeth Thrower
Norma D. Webb

Donors:

Susan Bradford
Carol Brown
Judy Isenhour
Linda Henson & Richard Fulk
Shumaker family
Courtney & Mike Worden
Shumaker family
Ingrid & Abraham McIntyre
Laura Spangler
Laura Spangler
Carol & Richard Pitman

Sue & Arvin Luchs
Shumaker family
Shumaker family
Kim & Mark Tutaj, Lynne Stevenson

Pat & Joel Tellinghuisen
Carolyn Primm
Mary Beth Franklyn
Wanda G. Webb

In honor of:

Dixie Crase
Jeanie Wright Rutland

Donors:

Amy, Bill, William, & EA Cooper
Patty & Dave McIntyre

The rosebud on the altar table celebrates the birth of Emerson Arthur Jordan, son of Alison and Michael Jordan, brother of Samuel and Arwen, grandson of Mary Kay and Louis Jordan, and nephew and cousin of Brittany, Andrew, Sophia, and Elijah Jordan. Emerson was born November 19, 2025.

LEADING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Robbie Jones, Organist

Sanctuary Choir

Paul Purdue, Senior Pastor

Heather Harriss, Senior Associate Pastor

Matthew Webb, Director of Music Ministry

Emma Bushong, Director of Ministry with Young People

Hunter Wade, Wesley Foundation Director /Discipleship Associate

Liturgy selected/written by Matthew Webb.

¹adapted from *Toda La Tierra* Advent Worship Series by Dr. Lisa Hancock, 2025

²adapted from fightthebees.com/advent-calls

³A Brief Statement of Faith and A New Creed from the United Church of Canada

We believe every person is of sacred worth and created in God's image. We commit to Jesus' example of inclusive love, care, and intentional hospitality with persons of every race, ethnicity, age, sexual orientation, gender identity, marital status, faith story, physical or mental ability, economic status, or political perspective.



Belmont UMC is a part of the Reconciling Ministries' Network, an organization that is committed to intersectional justice across and beyond the United Methodist connection, working for the full participation of all LGBTQ+ people throughout the life and leadership of the Church.

Scan to give here:



Scan to register your attendance:



Want to get involved?

Scan to learn more:



