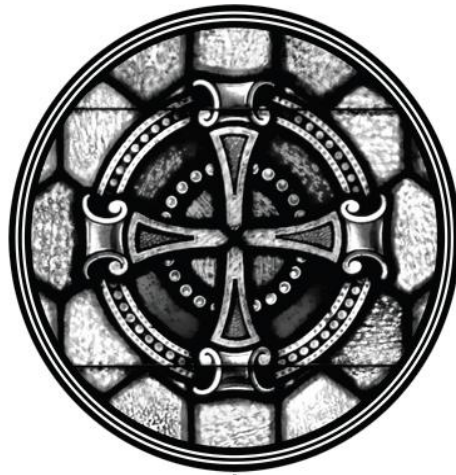


BELMONT UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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



*My soul magnifies the Lord,
and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior,
for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant.
Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed,
for the Mighty One has done great things for me,
and holy is his name;
indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him
from generation to generation.*

THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT
DECEMBER 14, 2025 10:30AM

ORDER OF WORSHIP

WELCOME

Emma Bushong

We are delighted that you have chosen to worship with us 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!

CENTERING PRAYER

The “centering prayer” helps us create a space where we quiet our minds and open our hearts to hear what God might be saying to us.

God of hope, you still speak to us –

sometimes with angelic heralds and other times in a quiet, gentle voice.

May we answer your call with the willingness, boldness, and joy of Mary.

Amen.¹

PRELUDE

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

Advent Joy
Celebration Ringers

Brian Childers

INTROIT

Wake Up
Joyful Noise Singers and friends

Millie Goodson*

Wake up! Wake up! Wake up, little shepherd girl!

Tend to your sheep! And wake your mother!

Wake up! Wake up! Wake up, little shepherd girl!

There're angels up in the sky.

Do not be afraid! They bring great joy. A baby is born tonight.

He will teach of God's great love; He will heal the sick! And He will save the world.

Now run! Now run! Now, run, little shepherd girl!

Run to see the baby in His mother's arms.

Tiptoe quietly, hum a lullaby, for Jesus is born tonight!

Wake up!

†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.

The Lord be with you!

And also with you!

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them up to the Lord!

Our souls magnify the Lord!

And our spirits rejoice in God, our Savior!

Let us worship the One who has done great things!

For the mercy of our God is from generation to generation!¹

†HYMN NO. 200

Tell Out, My Soul

WOODLANDS

LIGHTING THE CANDLE OF JOY

Krissy, Tyler, Lela Ames

In the beginning, God created the heavens and the earth and set lights in the sky —
sun and moon and stars.

By these stars, our ancestors charted their journeys. By these stars, they knew God was with them.

**Today we light the candle we call “joy” to bring the fire of the stars down from heaven to earth,
to nestle among the greens.**

We too are on a journey, and we do not always know the way. But we chart our path by the star of joy.
Even when despair is all around us and apathy seems the order of the day,
we set our face steadily towards the light.

**Lord Jesus, as we search for signs of joy this week,
help us to become the signs of joy that others are searching for.**

**As these candles are but a glimpse of the light of the heavens,
help us to be a glimpse of heaven's joy. Amen.²**



PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Heather Harriss

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 and wonderful God, we confess that we have closed our eyes to what you are doing.

We prefer to concentrate on problems, bad news and violence.

When we do, we miss all the healing, freeing and helping you accomplish in our world.

**We pass up opportunities to participate in your Good News.
We rob ourselves of so much joy.
Forgive us and give us eyes to see, ears to hear, minds to understand,
and hearts to treasure your mission in the world.
Fill us with unquenchable joy at the coming of Jesus. Amen.³**

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)

The angel told Joseph,
"You are to name the baby Jesus, for he will save his people from their sins."
Believe the good news of the gospel:
in Jesus Christ, we are forgiven! Hallelujah! Amen.³

†PASSING THE PEACE

†GOSPEL READING

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

Luke 1:39-56 | *New Revised Standard Version, Updated Edition*

³⁹In those days Mary set out and went with haste to a Judean town in the hill country, ⁴⁰where she entered the house of Zechariah and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the child leaped in her womb. And Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit ⁴²and exclaimed with a loud cry, "Blessed are you among women, and blessed is the fruit of your womb. ⁴³And why has this happened to me, that the mother of my Lord comes to me? ⁴⁴For as soon as I heard the sound of your greeting, the child in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵And blessed is she who believed that there would be a fulfillment of what was spoken to her by the Lord." ⁴⁶And Mary said, "My soul magnifies the Lord, ⁴⁷and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior, ⁴⁸for he has looked with favor on the lowly state of his servant. Surely from now on all generations will call me blessed, ⁴⁹for the Mighty One has done great things for me, and holy is his name; ⁵⁰indeed, his mercy is for those who fear him from generation to generation. ⁵¹He has shown strength with his arm; he has scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts. ⁵²He has brought down the powerful from their thrones and lifted up the lowly; ⁵³he has filled the hungry with good things and sent the rich away empty. ⁵⁴He has come to the aid of his child Israel, in remembrance of his mercy, ⁵⁵according to the promise he made to our ancestors, to Abraham and to his descendants forever." ⁵⁶And Mary remained with her about three months and then returned to her home.

This is the word of God for the people of God.
Thanks be to God.

Light one candle for hope, one bright candle for hope,
 Christ bring hope to ev'ry heart, He comes! He comes!
 Light one candle for peace, one bright candle for peace,
 Christ bring peace to ev'ry heart, He comes! He comes!
 Light one candle for joy, one bright candle for joy,
 all creation will find salvation in Bethl'em's baby boy.
 Light one candle for love, one bright candle for love,
 Christ bring love to ev'ry heart, He comes! He comes!

SERMON

Incarnate Joy

Paul Purdue

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 Christ, God gave us a glimpse of the new creation God has already begun
 and will surely finish.**

We do not know when the final day will come.

In our time we see only broken and scattered signs that the renewal of all things is under way.

**We do not yet see the end of cruelty and suffering in the world,
 the church, or our own lives.**

But we see Jesus as Lord.

**As he stands at the center of our history,
 we are confident he will stand at its end.**

He will judge all people and nations.

Evil will be condemned and rooted out of God's good creation.

There will be no more tears or pain.

All things will be made new. Amen.⁴

†HYMN NO. 198

My Soul Gives Glory to My God

MORNING SONG

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

Christmas Lullaby
 Emma Bushong, solo

Jason Robert Brown

†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 bles - sings flow; praise Christ, all crea - tures
here be - low; praise Ho - ly Spir - it ev - er - more; praise
tri - une God, whom we a - - dore. A - - men.

Text: Neil Weatherhogg, 1988

Music: Genevan Psalter 1551

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Keller Hawkins

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

Earth Was Waiting, Spent and Restless

PICARDY

1. Earth was wait - ing, spent and rest - less, with a ming - led hope and fear,
 2. Then the Spir - it of the High - est to a vir - gin meek came down,
 3. Earth has groaned and la - bored for him since the a - ges first be - gan,
 faith - ful peo - ple ev - er pray - ing, 'Sure - ly, Lord, the day is near:
 and he bur - dened her with bles - sing, and he pained her with re - nown;
 for in him was hid the se - cret which through all the a - ges ran,
 the De - sire of all the na - tions, it is time he should ap - pear!
 for she bore the Lord's a - noin - ted for his crosss and for his crown.
 Son of Ma - ry, Son of Da - vid, Son of God, and Son of Man.

†BENEDICTION

This closing prayer sends us forth into the world to live as followers of Christ.

Now unto the One who is able to do beyond what we can ask or even imagine
 be all honor and glory and power.

And may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, the love of God,
 and fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with us all, now and forever.

Amen.

(from Ephesians 3:20)

MUSIC FOR MEDITATION

We encourage you to remain seated to listen to the music and reflect on today's service, or to move to the foyer to greet one another.

Savior of the Nations, Come

Paul Manz

Robbie Jones, organ

Altar flowers are given to the glory of God in memory of Mae Dee Nevill by Kathy and Pat Nevill.

*Millie Goodson is a long-time member of Belmont UMC.

LEADING IN WORSHIP TODAY

Robbie Jones, Organist

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

Keller Hawkins, Ordained Deacon in Extension Ministry

Janet Stewart, Erin Payne, Clay McWhirt-Toler, Joyful Noise Singers directors

Katie Pattullo, Jennifer Bagwell, Music Makers directors

Amanda Dembiec, Joyful Noise Singers accompanist

Brittany Jordan, children's choir assistant

Liturgy selected/written by Matthew Webb.

¹Matthew Webb, *The Work of the People*, 2025

²Carol Holbrook Prickett, 2003

³Presbyterian Outlook, Order of Worship, Dec 14, 2025

⁴from *A Declaration of Faith*

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:



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