



Christmas Eve

GOD WITH US



at **AVONDALE** *all are welcome to...* *connect* with God and others.
grow together in faith and love.
serve the world for Jesus Christ.

Restrooms

If you need a restroom, exit the sanctuary through the door at the front to the right of the pulpit. The women's restroom is just off the foyer. The men's restroom is down the hallway from the foyer on the right.

Nursery

We welcome children of all ages in worship; however, a nursery is available for infants and toddlers under four years old who may need it. Please see an usher for assistance.

Hearing Support

We have hearing assistive technology that connects via bluetooth available. Check with an usher for an instruction card to help you connect.

Visual Support – Large Print Hymnals & Bulletins

Large print hymnals and bulletins are available. The hymnals are located on the side table to the right of the pulpit at the front of the sanctuary. Ushers can help you locate both the hymnals and the bulletins as needed.

Connect + Grow + Serve



Use this QR code (or www.AvonUMC.net/HereIAm) to go online to let us know you're here, enter a prayer request, and/or make a contribution. You can also access volunteer opportunities and wish lists to support our local outreach as well as sign up to provide flowers in honor/memory of someone one Sunday on the altar in worship.

Worship Credit

Our Worship Series for Advent and Christmas, which includes prayers and artwork, is inspired by A Sanctified Art LLC (sanctifiedart.org).

Floral Tribute

*The poinsettias surrounding the pulpit are given to the glory of God
by Henry Levens in memory of Randy Thomas.*

Christmas Eve

Wednesday, December 24, 2025 | 4:00pm

Prelude

Chiming of the Hour

Opening Prayer

Rev. Malinda Weaver

The Presence of Christ Among Us

Song of Presence

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

arr. M. Vaughn

Words from the Prophet

Isaiah 9:2-7

Song of Presence

O Come, O Come Emmanuel

arr. M. Vaughn

Receiving the Presence

Jeanne Baker

In a fearful world, where do you see the presence of God?

We see God's fingerprints all around us.

We see God in the beauty of the stars.

We see God in the love of this community.

We see God in the dreams we hold for a better world.

You are right. Even in a fearful world, God is here.

God is all around us. On this holy night,

we light the Christ Candle as a reminder of this good news.

May this flicker of light help us remember that even in a fearful world,

God's love is all around us.

Thanks be to God for a love like that!

**All: O come, Desire of nations bind
all peoples in one heart and mind.
From dust thou brought us forth to life;
deliver us from earthly strife.
Rejoice! Rejoice! Emmanuel shall come to thee, O Israel.**

*** Carols of Praise**

No. 234 *O Come, All Ye Faithful* (vs. 1 & 2)

**O come, all ye faithful, joyful and triumphant,
O come ye, O come ye, to Bethlehem.
Come and behold him, born the King of angels;
refrain: O come, let us adore Him ... O come, let us adore Him,
O come, let us adore Him, Christ the Lord.**

**True God of true God, Light from Light Eternal,
lo, he shuns not the Virgin's womb;
Son of the Father, begotten, not created. refrain**

No. 240 *Hark, the Herald Angels Sing* (vs. 1 & 2)

**Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King;
peace on earth, and mercy mild, God and sinners reconciled!"
Joyful, all ye nations, rise, join the triumph of the skies;
with the angelic hosts proclaim, "Christ is born in Bethlehem!"
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"
Christ, by highest heaven adored; Christ, the everlasting Lord;
late in time behold him come, offspring of a virgin's womb.
Veiled in flesh the Godhead see; hail the incarnate Deity,
pleased with us in flesh to dwell, Jesus, our Emmanuel.
Hark! the herald angels sing, "Glory to the newborn King!"**

* Please stand as you are able in body and in spirit.

No. 238

Angels We Have Heard on High (vs. 1 & 3)

**Angels we have heard on high sweetly singing o'er the plains,
and the mountains in reply echoing their joyous strains:**

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

**Come to Bethlehem and see Christ whose birth the angels sing;
come, adore on bended knee Christ the Lord, the new-born King.**

Gloria, in excelsis Deo! Gloria, in excelsis Deo!

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture Reading

Luke 2:1-20

The Word of God for the people of God.

Thanks be to God!

Anthem

Sweet Little Jesus Boy

Robert MacGimsey

Sermon

Good News Is Louder Than Fear

Pastoral Prayer | Prayer of Confession & Pardon

During this time of prayer, Pastor Malinda will pray for our world, community, and congregation. She will then guide us into our time of confession and pardon as we acknowledge that we are sinners saved only by God's grace.

So let us start by joining together as we confess our sins and give thanks that You are a God who freely gives us Your grace and forgiveness.

God of angel choruses,

you hang the stars in the sky, but we don't see them.

You fill the night with angelic song, but we don't hear it.

You send shepherds to tell the good news, but we don't believe them.

You bring love into the world, but we don't seek it.

Forgive us, Lord.

**Quiet the fear within us that distracts us from the good news
you put forth into the world.**

**Tune our hearts back to your song,
and make us ready for his coming.**

Family of faith, hear the good news.

God knows our fears, our struggles, our doubts
and he sends us signs of love and affirmation
to remind us that we are not alone.

No matter where we go ... no matter what we say ... no matter what we do ...
we belong to God.

We are held ... we are loved ... we are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven.

Thanks be to God. Amen.

Offertory

Come, Adore Christ the Lord

Lloyd Larson



Giving our time, talents, and money is our natural response to an understanding of the generosity of God. Use the QR code to let us know you're here, enter a prayer request, and/or make a contribution.

Tonight's offering will support the Abundant Table Offering which answers our Bishop's call to address food insecurity here in Avondale and across North Alabama. Eighty percent will support local feeding ministries through Avondale Samaritan Place, and twenty percent will fund grants for ministries supporting underserved communities across our United Methodist connection. Together, we help ensure every table has enough and every neighbor is cared for.

*** Doxology**

THE FIRST NOEL

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below; praise him above,
ye heav'nly host; praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.
Noel, Noel, Noel, Noel, born is the King of Israel.**

The Great Thanksgiving

The Lord be with you.

And also with you.

Lift up your hearts.

We lift them up to the Lord.

Let us give thanks to the Lord our God.

It is right to give our thanks and praise.

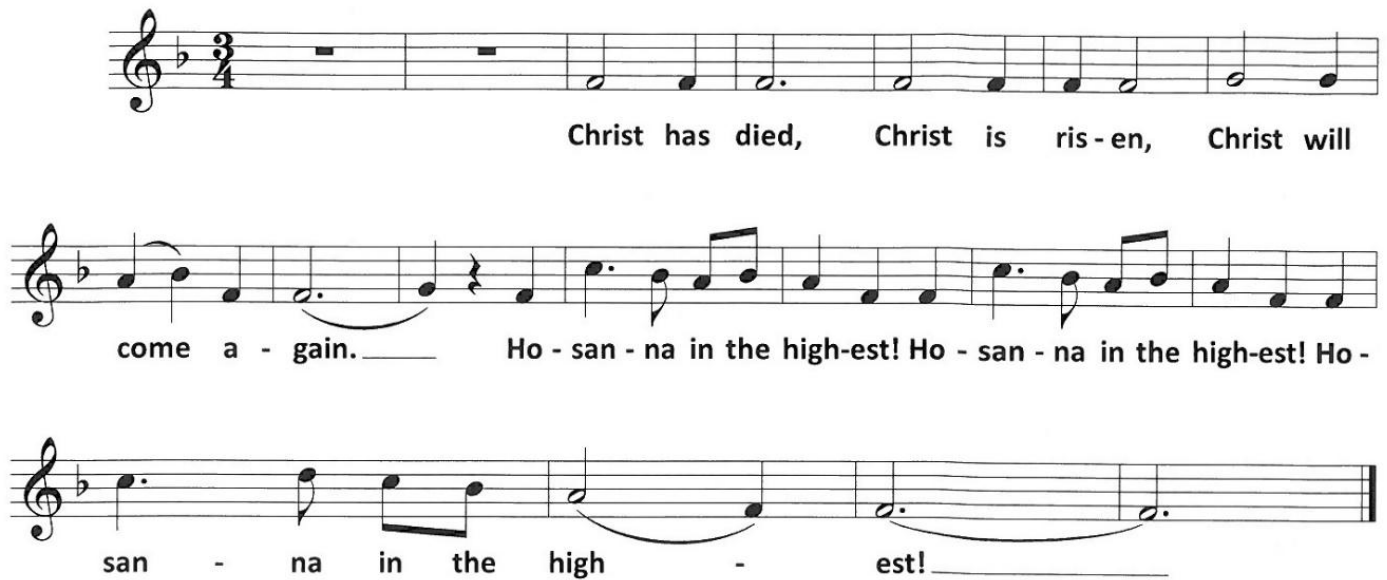
Pastor Malinda gives thanks, remembering God's acts of salvation, and concludes:

And so, with angels singing and shepherds rejoicing,
we join the heavenly chorus:



Pastor Malinda continues the thanksgiving, recalling the Lord's Supper, and concludes:

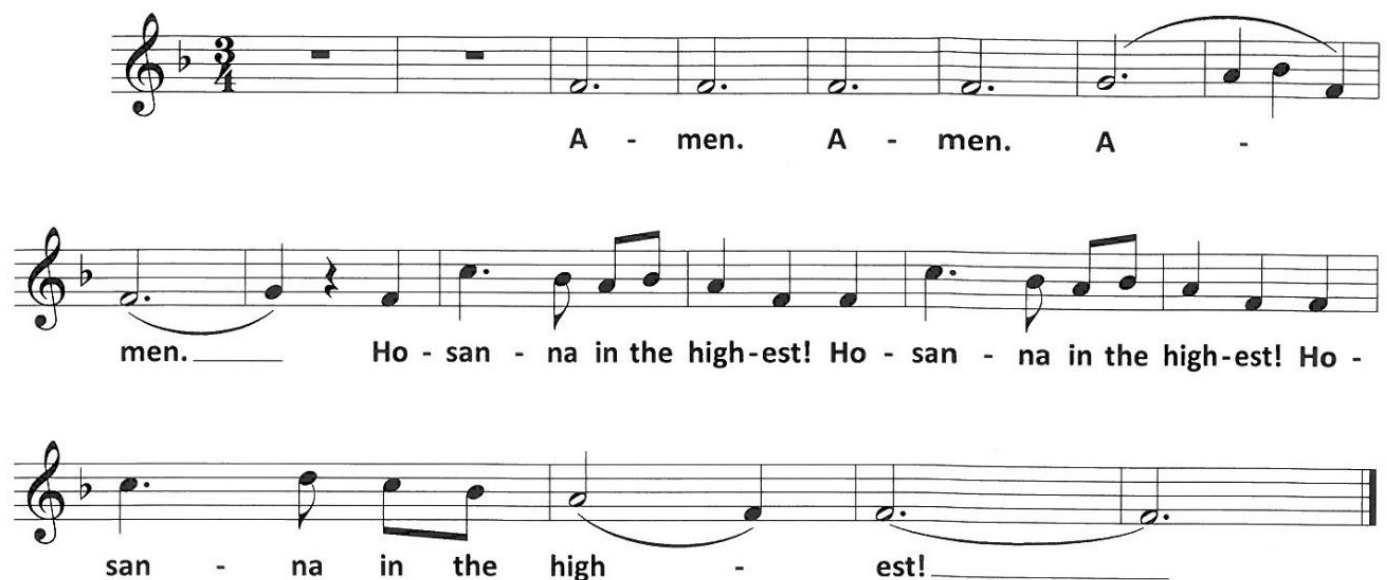
And so, we remember. We remember what you did for us through Jesus Christ. It is in his name that we offer our lives in love and service.



Christ has died, Christ is ris-en, Christ will
come a - gain. _____ Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho -
san - na in the high - est! _____

*Pastor Malinda requests the present work of the Holy Spirit
and then praises the Trinity, concluding:*

Through Your Son Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit
in your holy church, all honor and glory is yours,
almighty God, now and forever.



A - men. A - men. A -
men. _____ Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho - san - na in the high-est! Ho -
san - na in the high - est! _____

The Lord's Prayer

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.

Receiving the Bread and Cup

We believe Holy Communion is a gift from God to all people.

In The United Methodist Church everyone is welcome to receive Communion.

Gluten-free elements are available for those who need them.

Music during Communion

No. 218 *It Came Upon the Midnight Clear* (vs. 1 & 4)

It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,

from angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:

"Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's all-gracious King."

The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.

For lo! the days are hastening on, by prophet seen of old,

when with the ever-circling years shall come the time foretold

when peace shall over all the earth its ancient splendors fling,

and the whole world send back the song which now the angels sing.

No. 217 *Away in a Manger* (vs. 1 & 3)

Away in a manger, no crib for a bed,

the little Lord Jesus laid down his sweet head.

The stars in the sky looked down where he lay,

the little Lord Jesus asleep on the hay.

Be near me, Lord Jesus, I ask Thee to stay
close by me forever, and love me, I pray;
bless all the dear children in thy tender care,
and fit us for heaven to live with thee there.

No. 219 *What Child Is This* (vs. 1 & 3)

What child is this, who, laid to rest, on Mary's lap is sleeping?
Whom angels greet with anthems sweet,
while shepherds watch are keeping?
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the son of Mary.

So bring Him incense, gold, and myrrh,
come, peasant, king, to own Him; the King of kings salvation brings,
let loving hearts enthrone Him.
This, this is Christ the King, whom shepherds guard and angels sing;
haste, haste to bring him laud, the Babe, the son of Mary.

No. 229 *Infant Holy, Infant Lowly*

Infant holy, infant lowly, for His bed a cattle stall;
oxen lowing, little knowing, Christ the babe is Lord of all.
Swift are winging angels singing, noels ringing, tidings bringing:
Christ the babe is Lord of all!

Flocks were sleeping, shepherds keeping vigil till the morning new
saw the glory, heard the story, tidings of the gospel true.
Thus rejoicing, free from sorrow, praises voicing, greet the morrow:
Christ the babe was born for you.

Prayer of Thanksgiving

Holy God,
we give you thanks for this holy mystery
that reminds us that Christ is always with us.
We are never alone. We are always known.

So now, strengthened by your love,
may we carry the light of Christ into the world
and share your grace wherever we go. Amen.

*** Carol of Praise No. 239**

Silent Night

Silent night, holy night, all is calm, all is bright
round yon virgin, mother and child.

Holy infant, so tender and mild,
sleep in heavenly peace, sleep in heavenly peace.

Silent night, holy night, shepherds quake at the sight;
glories stream from heaven afar, heavenly hosts sing Alleluia!
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

Silent night, holy night, Son of God, love's pure light;
radiant beams from thy holy face
with the dawn of redeeming grace,
Jesus, Lord, at thy birth, Jesus, Lord, at thy birth.

Silent night, holy night, wondrous star, lend thy light;
with the angels let us sing, Alleluia to our King;
Christ the Savior is born, Christ the Savior is born!

*** Benediction**

*** Postlude**

BRUNCH + CHRISTMAS CAROLS

Sunday, December 28 | 10:00am

Our worship will look a little different this coming Sunday as we instead enjoy brunch and sing all of our favorite Christmas carols in the Fellowship Hall. Make plans to join us for this relaxed time of fellowship, connection, and celebration of the greatest gift God has given us. And bring something brunch-y to share with everyone.

Join us in January

MONTHLY BOOK CLUB

Tuesday, January 13 | 6:30pm

Join us each month on the second Tuesday at 6:30pm at the church to dive into thought-provoking reads that center around faith, spirituality, religion, and more. For January, we're reading *Low Anthropology* by David Zahl. Come with an open mind, a curious spirit, and maybe a friend or two.

MEN'S MISSION GATHERING

Monday, January 19

Our men are planning a mission-focused gathering on Martin Luther King Junior Day, centered on service and making a difference. Details coming soon—so save the date! For more info, contact David Majors (demaj@bellsouth.net).

WOMEN'S COFFEE

Wednesday, January 21 | 9:30am

Ladies ... come as you are, bring a friend, and let's enjoy some great company together! Our coffee gatherings happen each month on the third Wednesday at General (3813 Clairmont Avenue, Birmingham 35222).

HAND to HEART

Wednesday, January 14 & 28 | 10:00am-12:00pm

Hand to Heart, our prayer shawl ministry, meets the second and fourth Wednesdays of each month in the archive room on the first floor. This ministry is open to experienced needleworkers as well as those who want to learn. If you know someone for whom a shawl would bring comfort, contact Barb Walker (205.672.9687). We have several beautiful shawls available to give away.

WINTER NEEDS FOR OUR HOMELESS NEIGHBORS

In addition to the usual items we give to our homeless neighbors, we need winter items—things like hand warmers, skull caps, gloves, and warm socks. Drop off items weekdays from 8am-11am at Avondale Samaritan Place or bring them on Sunday mornings to worship. You can also donate through our Amazon wishlist and have things delivered directly to us. You can access that using the QR Code in your bulletin.