





*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.

Altar Flowers in Worship

If you'd like to sponsor a floral tribute on the altar in worship, use the QR code above to sign up, and our florist will handle the rest. You'll be able to note if you'd like the flowers to be in honor or memory of a loved one(s). The cost is \$50 each Sunday. Questions? Reach out to Susan Harvill (susan.harvill1252@gmail.com).

First Sunday after the Epiphany | January 11, 2026

The word Epiphany comes from the Greek word epiphania, which means "manifestation." In basic terms, it means "a revealing" or "an 'aha' moment." It's about noticing when something becomes clear—especially when God shows up in ways we might not expect.

We celebrate Epiphany on January 6, remembering the visit of the magi, who followed a star and discovered God's love revealed in the Christ child. Their journey reminds us that God meets people wherever they are and draws them forward with light and hope.

The weeks that follow are known as the Season of Epiphany. During this season (this year that's January 6 – February 17) we listen and look for the many ways Christ—our guiding light—continues to be revealed in the world and in our everyday lives.

Prelude

*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern
(How Brightly Shines the Morning Star)*

Johann Pachelbel

Chiming of the Hour

Welcome & Opening Prayer

Rev. Malinda Weaver

Choral Call to Worship

Arise, Your Light Is Come

William Walter

* Call to Worship

Pam Carter

We gather, looking for the star—
light that points us toward God's work in the world.
God, help us see your glory.

We gather, listening for the Spirit—good news whispered in unlikely places.
God, help us notice your glory.

We gather, drawn by Love—
assured we are not alone and Love will have the final word.
God, help us encounter your glory.

* Please rise in body or in spirit.

* Opening Hymn No. 209

Blessed Be the God of Israel

* Affirmation of Faith | The Apostles' Creed

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.

* Gloria Patri

GREATOREX

Glory be to the Father and to the Son and to the Holy Ghost,
as it was in the beginning is now, and ever shall be, world without end.
Amen, Amen.

* Ritual of Friendship

Children's Moment

Larry Contri

Following the Children's Moment, children (kindergarten through second grade) will be escorted to Children's Church. Parents must pick up their child(ren) from the first floor classroom after the worship service.

Act of Centering No. 349

Turn Your Eyes Upon Jesus

Turn your eyes upon Jesus, look full in his wonderful face,
and the things of earth will grow strangely dim in the light of his glory and grace.

Prayer for Illumination

Scripture

Luke 2:22-40

[†] universal

Choral Anthem*There Shall a Star Come Out of Jacob*

Felix Mendelssohn

Sermon

Old Eyes, New Visions

Pastoral Prayer with 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.

Offering*Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*

Gael Liardon

*** Doxology**

LASST UNS ERFREUEN

Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise him, all creatures here below; Alleluia! Alleluia!
Praise God the source of all our gifts!
Praise Jesus Christ whose power uplifts! Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit!
Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*** Hymn of Praise No. 246***Joy to the World**** Benediction***** Choral Benediction***Song of Simeon*

Traditional Folk

*** Postlude***Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern*

Johann Christoph Bach



MUSIC NOTES

As our observance of Epiphany continues, we turn to one of the most historically significant Epiphany hymns: *Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern* (*How Brightly Shines the Morning Star*), written by Lutheran pastor Philip Nicolai in 1597. The popular tune (#247 in our hymnal) serves as the basis for all of today's organ music, beginning with the Prelude by Johann Pachelbel (1653-1706). Remembered by modern audiences primarily for his iconic *Canon in D*, Pachelbel is recognized by scholars as one of the most significant German musicians prior to J.S. Bach. It is a cousin of the great Johann Sebastian, Johann Christoph Bach (1642-1703), who provides today's Postlude. Though not as well-known as his illustrious relation, he was a respected musician who left behind a number of sacred works. The Offertory is by Gael Liardon (1973-2018), a tragically short-lived Swiss composer and keyboardist.

Wie schön leuchtet der Morgenstern appears again in the closing section of our Anthem, *There Shall a Star from Jacob Come Forth*, by the brilliant 19th century composer Felix Mendelssohn (1809-1847). Written as part of Mendelssohn's unfinished oratorio, *Christus*, this brief work conflates prophetic text from the book of Numbers with Nicolai's popular hymn to emphasize the fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies in the New Testament narrative of the Christ of Bethlehem.

*There shall a star come out of Jacob,
and a sceptre shall rise out of Israel.*

*How brightly shines the morning star,
With mercy beaming from afar.
The host of heaven rejoices.
Amen! Alleluia! Thine be praise and adoration.*

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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.

AVONDALE

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

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