

# BETHEL

## African Methodist Episcopal Church

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**Sunday, January 4, 2026 at 10:30 a.m.**



**The Reverend Brandon L. Thornton, *Pastor***

The Reverend Charles A. Lewis, *Presiding Elder, The Mobile District*  
Bishop Julius H. McAllister Jr., *Presiding Prelate, Ninth Episcopal District*

### **Ministerial Staff**

The Reverend Doctor Olivia Martin, *Itinerant Elder,*  
***Family, Community & Leadership Development Leader***

The Reverend Irmatine Chastang, *Itinerant Elder,*  
***Congregational Care & Discipleship Leader***

The Reverend Pamela Greene-Irby, *Itinerant Deacon,*  
***Worship & Evangelism Leader***

# **Order of Worship**

## **THE PRAISE AND WORSHIP**

### **THE DOXOLOGY**

***“Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow”***

### **THE CALL TO WORSHIP**

Leader: I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O Jerusalem.

***People: For a day in thy courts is better than a thousand. I had rather be a doorkeeper in the house of my God than to dwell in the tents of wickedness.***

Leader: Because of the house of the Lord our God, I will seek thy good.

***People: Those that be planted in the house of the Lord shall flourish in the courts of our God.***

Leader: Blessed are they that dwell in thy house. Lord, I have loved thy habitation and the place where thy honor dwelleth.

***People: For the Lord is in His holy temple, let all the earth keep silence before Him.***

Leader: Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in Thy sight, O Lord, my strength and my Redeemer.

***People: O sing unto the Lord a new song, for He has done marvelous things. Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, all the earth, and sing praises.***

**THE HYMN OF PRAISE**  
***Hymn # 304 "And Are We Yet Alive"***

*And are we yet alive, And see each other's face?  
Glory and praise to Jesus give For His redeeming grace.*

*Preserved by power divine To full salvation here,  
Again in Jesus' praise we join, And in His sight appear.*

*What troubles have we seen, What conflicts have we passed,  
Fightings without, and fears within, Since we assembled last.*

*But out of all the Lord Hath brought us by His love;  
And still He doth His help afford, And hides our life above.*

*Then let us make our boast Of His redeeming power,  
Which saves us to the uttermost, Till we can sin no more.  
(Musical Interlude w/ Ritardando)*

*Let us take up the cross Till we the crown obtain;  
And gladly reckon all things loss, So we may Jesus gain.*

**THE INVOCATION**

**THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC**

**THE SCRIPTURE**

**Colossians 3:12-17**

Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. **13** Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. **14** And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity. **15** Let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, since as members of one body you were called to peace. And be thankful. **16** Let the message of Christ dwell among you richly as you teach and admonish one another with all wisdom through psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit, singing to God with gratitude in your hearts. **17** And whatever you

do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him.

**Leader:** This is the Word of the Lord to the people of God.

**People:** Thanks be to God!

## THE INTROIT TO THE DECALOGUE

### Choir and Congregation

*From all that dwell below the skies, let the Creator's praise arise;  
Let the Redeemer's name be sung, through every land by every tongue.*

### The Decalogue

Minister: And God spake all these words saying, "I am the Lord thy God who brought thee out of the land of Egypt, out of the house of bondage. Thou shalt have no other gods before me."

**People: Lord have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not make unto thee any graven image, or any likeness of anything that is in earth beneath, or that is in the water under the earth; thou shalt not bow down thyself to them, nor serve them; for I the Lord thy God am a jealous God, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children unto the third and Fourth generation of them that hate me; and showing mercy unto thousands of them that love me and keep my commandments.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain; for the Lord will not hold him guiltless that taketh his name in vain.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

*Hymn: My soul be on thy guard; Ten thousand foes arise; and hosts of sins are  
pressing hard, to draw thee from the skies.*

Minister: Honor thy father and thy mother; that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not kill.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not commit adultery.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not steal.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not bear false witness against thy neighbor.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law.**

Minister: Thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's house; thou shalt not covet thy neighbor's wife, nor his manservant, nor his maidservant, nor his ox, nor his ass, nor anything that is thy neighbor's.

**People: Lord, have mercy upon us, and write these laws upon our hearts.**

**Hymn: *Nearer my God to thee. Nearer to thee! E'en though it be a cross that raiseth me; Still all my song shall be. Nearer, my God to thee; Nearer my God to thee, Nearer to thee!***

Minister: Hear what Christ our Savior saith, Thou Shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind.

This is the first and great commandment and the second is like unto it; Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself. On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.

**Gloria Patri**

***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***

**THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC**

**THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS & ANNOUNCEMENTS**

**THE MINISTRY OF GIVING**

**THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC**

**THE SERMON**  
*Reverend Brandon L. Thornton*

**THE RE-COMMITMENT COVENANTAL CHARGE**

**1. PHYSICAL COMMITMENT – SHOWING UP**

Leader:

Will you recommit yourself to this church physically— to faithful worship, consistent presence, and showing up not only when it is convenient, but when the body needs you?

**People:**

*With God's help, I will.*

**2. SPIRITUAL PARTICIPATION – SERVING**

Leader:

Will you recommit to being an active part of this body—serving with your gifts, praying for this ministry, and refusing to be a spectator when God has called you to participate?

**People:**

*With God's help, I will.*

**3. FINANCIAL COMMITMENT – STEWARDSHIP**

Leader:

Will you recommit yourself financially— to faithful tithes and offerings, to supporting the mission and ministry of this church, and to honoring God not only with words, but with your resources?

**People:**

*With God's help, I will.*

**4. CONSISTENCY – NOT SPORADIC FAITHFULNESS**

Leader:

Will you recommit to consistency— not perfect attendance, not flawless giving, but faithful obedience, trusting that God honors what is steady and sincere?

**People:**

*With God's help, I will.*

## **5. COVENANT SEAL**

Leader:

Will you commit to walking with this church in unity— speaking life instead of division, addressing issues in love instead of silence or side conversations, and remembering that this is your church?

People:

*With God's help, I will.*

## **THE INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP/ ALTAR CALL**

### **THE HOLY COMMUNION**

#### **THE GENERAL CONFESSION**

Almighty God, Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Maker of all things, Judge of all men, we acknowledge and bewail our manifold sins and wickedness which we from time to time most grievously have committed by thought, word, and deed against Thy divine Majesty, provoking most justly Thy wrath and indignation against us.

We do earnestly repent and are heartily sorry for these our misdoings; the remembrance of them is grievous unto us. Have mercy upon us, have mercy upon us, most merciful Father for Your Son our Lord Jesus Christ's sake; forgive us all that is past, and grant that we may ever hereafter serve and please Thee in newness of life, to the honor and glory of Thy name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

#### **FIRST COLLECT**

Almighty God, our Heavenly Father, who of your great mercy has promised forgiveness of sins to all of them that with hearty repentance and true faith turn unto

You, have mercy upon us; pardon and deliver us from all our sins; confirm and strengthen us in all goodness; and bring us to everlasting life through Jesus Christ, our Lord,

**Amen ("Amen" Chant)**

#### **SECOND COLLECT**

Almighty God, unto whom all hearts are open, all desires known, and from whom no secrets are hidden, cleanse the thoughts of our hearts by the inspiration of Your

Holy Spirit, that we may perfectly love You, and worthily magnify Your Holy Name, through Jesus Christ our Lord. **Amen. ("Amen" Chant)**

## **PRAYER OF ADORATION**

It is very meet, right, and our bounden duty that we shall at all times and in all places give thanks unto You, O Lord, Holy Father, Almighty, Everlasting God. Therefore, with angels and archangels, and with all the company of heaven, we laud and magnify your holy name, evermore praising you and saying:  
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of hosts; heaven and earth are full of Your glory,  
Glory be to You, O Lord, Most High.

## **PRAYER OF HUMILIATION**

We do not presume to come to this Your table, O merciful Lord, trusting in our own righteousness, but in your manifold and great mercies. We are not worthy so much as to gather the crumbs under Your table. But You are the same Lord whose property is always to have mercy. Grant us, therefore, gracious Lord, so to eat the flesh of Your dear son Jesus Christ, and to drink His blood that our sinful souls and bodies may be made clean by His death and washed through His blood, and that we may evermore dwell in Him and He is us.  
**Amen. (Threefold "Amen" chant)**

## **PRAYER OF CONSECRATION**

Almighty God, our Heavenly father, who for your tender mercy didst give Your only Son Jesus Christ, to suffer death on the cross for our redemption, who made thereby His oblation of Himself, once offered, a full perfect and sufficient sacrifice, oblation, and satisfaction for the sins of the whole world; and did institute and in His holy gospel command us to continue a perpetual memory of that, his precious death until his coming again;

Hear us, O merciful Father, we most humbly beseech You, and grant that we, receiving these Your creatures of bread and wine, according to Your Son, our Savior Jesus Christ's holy institution, in remembrance of His death and passion, may be partakers of His most blessed body and blood; Who in the same night that He was betrayed took bread and when He had given thanks, He broke it, and gave it to his disciples saying,

*"Take, eat; this is My body which is broken for you. This do in remembrance of Me;"* Likewise after the supper He took the cup, and when He had given thanks He gave it to them saying,



*"Drink all of it, for this is my blood of the New Testament, which is shed for you and for many for the remission of sins; do this, as often as you drink it in remembrance of Me."*

## **THE SHARING OF THE ELEMENTS**

### **THE LORD'S PRAYER**

*Our Father which art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name.  
Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven.  
Give us this day our daily bread.  
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.  
And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil:  
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.*

### **THE DOXOLOGY**

### **THE BENEDICTION**

The peace of God which passeth all understanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of God, and of His Son Jesus Christ our Lord, and blessing of God Almighty, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit, be among you and remain with you always. Amen.

### **THE POSTLUDE**

## **SERMON APPLICATION**

### **HEARING GOD'S WORD IN THE SERMON**

*Since we forget 90% of what we hear, it has been suggested that note-taking will double the percentage of what we may receive during the hearing of God's Word.*

### **PARTICIPATE IN THE SERMON**

SERMON SCRIPTURE: \_\_\_\_\_

SERMON TITLE: \_\_\_\_\_

SUPPORTING SCRIPTURES: \_\_\_\_\_

### **THE OUTLINE OF THE MAIN POINTS:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_  
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2. \_\_\_\_\_  
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3. \_\_\_\_\_  
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**WHAT WAS GOD SAYING SPECIFICALLY TO ME DURING THE SERMON?**