

BETHEL

African Methodist Episcopal Church

714 Savannah Street
Mobile, Alabama 36603
251.206.0013
bethelamemobile9@gmail.com

Sunday, January 18, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.
Second Sunday after the Epiphany



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 DOXOLOGY

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 CALL TO WORSHIP

Leader: I was glad when they said unto me, let us go into the house of the Lord. (Psalm 122:1)

People: Our feet shall stand within thy gates, O God. (Psalm 122:2)

Leader: Today is the Second Sunday after Epiphany, and the Lord calls us before we are born and names us for God's purpose. (Isaiah 49: 1,5)

People: We wait patiently for the Lord, who hears our cry and puts a new song in our mouths. (Psalm 40:1-3)

Leader: Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world. (John 1:29)

People: We come to see, to believe, and to follow. (John 1:39-41)

THE HYMN OF PRAISE

“I Just Want to Praise You”

*I just want to praise you
Forever and ever and ever
For all you've done, done for me*

*Blessings and glory and honor
They all belong to you
Thank you Jesus for blessing me!*

THE INVOCATION

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

THE SCRIPTURE READING

Psalm 40:1-11 (KJV)

I waited patiently for the Lord; and he inclined unto me, and heard my cry.
He brought me up also out of an horrible pit, out of the miry clay, and set my feet upon a rock,
and established my goings.
And he hath put a new song in my mouth, even praise unto our God; many shall see it, and fear,
and shall trust in the Lord.
Blessed is that man maketh the Lord his trust, and respecteth not the proud, nor such as turn
aside to lies.
Many, O Lord my God, are thy wonderful works which thou hast done, and thy thoughts which
are to us-ward: they cannot be reckoned up in order unto thee: if I would declare and speak of
them, they are more than can be numbered.
Sacrifice and offering thou didst not desire; mine ears hast opened: burnt offering and sin
offering hast thou not required.
Then said I, Lo, I come: in the volume of the book it is written of me.
I delight to do thy will, O my God: yea, thy law is within my heart.
I have preached righteousness in the great congregation: lo, I have not refrained my lips, O
Lord, thou knowest.
I have not hid thy righteousness within my heart; I have declared thy faithfulness and thy
salvation: I have not concealed thy lovingkindness and thy truth from the great congregation.
Withhold not thou thy tender mercies from me, O Lord; let thy lovingkindness and thy truth
continually preserve me.

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

People: **Thanks be to God!**

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS & ANNOUNCEMENTS

THE MINISTRY OF GIVING

This is my seed. It shall meet all my needs.
I give it today, because I obey – my God and His command.

My tithe is out of obedience and love. My offering is my sacrifice.
My return shall be magnified, because I've learned to give right.
I'm the head and not the tail, a lender and not a borrower, on top and not beneath.

Because I give, I am blessed – in the city and in the field.
I'm blessed because I give my God my best.
Today and every day, I am blessed!

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC

THE SERMON

The Rev. Brandon L. Thornton

THE INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP/ ALTAR CALL

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.

Pastor's Pen

Beloved,

This past week in Bible Study, we continued our teaching **on God's Sovereign Claim on First Things**, deepening our understanding **of firstfruits, tithing, and spiritual priority**. We were reminded that this conversation is not simply about money – it is about **order, lordship, and trust**. Scripture shows us that because God is first by nature, He claims first place in our lives. Firstfruits are not leftovers; they are a declaration that God governs our priorities before outcomes are known and before convenience takes over.

We also explored the biblical distinction between **tithings and firstfruits** – that tithing follows increase, while firstfruits are given at the beginning as an act of faith. From Genesis to the teaching of Jesus, the message is consistent: when God is honored first, everything else finds proper alignment.

As we worship today, we are honored to welcome the **Toulminville High School Class of 1972**. We celebrate your legacy, your faithfulness, and the history you represent in this community. Thank you for sharing this sacred moment with us.

This teaching on priority prepares us for what lies ahead. **This coming Sunday is our Pack the Pew Rally**. It is a call to put faith into action – by inviting others to worship with us and by investing sacrificially in the future of this church. We are encouraging each pew to raise \$1,800, not out of pressure, but out of principle – trusting God as we honor Him first.

And our commitment continues beyond the sanctuary. **On the following Saturday**, we will host our **Community Food Giveaway**, with a goal of serving **over 150 families**. This is what it looks like when spiritual priority becomes tangible compassion.

God must be first --
in our worship,
in our giving,
and in our living.

As we move forward together, my prayer is that we would honor God not only with our words, but with our priorities.

We're ALL IN – together.

With love and expectation.

Pastor B

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. _____

2. _____

3. _____

WHAT WAS GOD SAYING SPECIFICALLY TO ME DURING THE SERMON?