

BETHEL

African Methodist Episcopal Church

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Sunday, January 25, 2026, at 10:30 a.m.

Third Sunday after the Epiphany

Annual Pack the Pew Rally – “A Legacy of Love”

1 Corinthians 13:13 “And now faith, hope, and love abide, these three; and greatest of these is love.”



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

Worship Leader.....Bro. Ronnie Blackmon

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.....First Lady Shandra Thornton

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

People: Our hearts rejoice as we gather in the presence of the Lord. (Psalm 27:4)

Leader: Today is the **Third Sunday after Epiphany**, and we celebrate our **Annual Pack the Pew Rally**, declaring *A Legacy of Love*.

People: The people who walked in darkness have seen a great light. (Isaiah 9:2)

Leader: The Lord is our light and our salvation; whom shall we fear? (Psalm 27:1)

People: We seek to dwell in the house of the Lord all the days of our lives. (Psalm 27:4)

Leader: Jesus said, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of people." (Matthew 4:19)

People: Because of God's great love, we will follow, we will invite, and we will make room for others. (Matthew 4:20, 1 Corinthians 13:13)

Leader: Let us walk together in unity, not divided, but centered in Christ. (1 Corinthians 1:10)

All Together: We gather today to pass on a Legacy of Love – faithful, welcoming, and Christ-centered. We come to worship the God who calls us, loves us, and sends us, Amen. (Isaiah 9:4; Matthew 4:23)

THE HYMN OF PRAISE.....Bethel's Youth Choir

"He Reigns Forever"
Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir

**We Sing praises to the King. For He is the King of Kings
We Sing praises to the King For He is the King of Kings (Repeat)**

**Give Him glory for He 's the King of kings,
Give Him glory for He's the King of kings
Give Him glory for He's the King of kings
Give Him glory for He's King of kings.**

**All hail King Jesus, All hail Emmanuel
All hail King Jesus, All hail Emmanuel...**

**He reigns forever, He reigns forever
He reigns forever and evermore.**

**He reigns..., He reigns..., He reigns....
And evermore
All hail King Jesus!!**

THE INVOCATION.....Bro. Greg McGlasker

Praise Dance.....Total Praise

THE SCRIPTURE READING.....Mason Robinson

1 Corinthians:13:1-13

If I speak in the tongues of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, but do not have love, I gain nothing.

Love is patient, love is kind. It does not envy, it does not boast, it is not proud.

It does not dishonor others, it is not self-seeking, it is not easily angered, it keeps no record of wrongs. Love does not delight in evil but rejoices with the truth.

It always protects, always trusts, always hopes, always perseveres.

Love never fails. But where there are prophecies, they will cease; where there are tongues, they will be stilled; where there is knowledge, it will pass away.

For we know in part and we prophesy in part, but when completeness comes, what is in part will disappear.

When I was a child, I talked like a child, I thought like a child, I reasoned like a child. When I became a man, I put the ways of childhood behind me.

For now we see only a reflection as in a mirror; then we shall see face to face.

And now these three remain: faith, hope, and love. But the greatest of these is love.

This passage emphasizes the importance of love as the ultimate virtue in the Christian faith.

The Decalogue.....Karmyn Foster

LEADER: Let us express our commitment to keep God's law.

PEOPLE: God of our salvation, only You are God. We will make no idols. We will not invoke with malice Your name, O God. We will remember the Sabbath Day and keep it holy. We will honor our father and mother. We will not commit murder. We will not commit adultery. We will not steal, We will not be a false witness. We will not covet anything that belongs to our neighbor.

SING: NEARER My God To Thee!

LEADER: Jesus Said: "You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul and with all your mind. This is the great and first commandment.

PEOPLE: Jesus also challenged us with a sacred commandment which is like the first: We shall love our neighbor as our self! On these two commandments depend all the law and the prophets. (THE ANVIL 2018)

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC.....Bethel's Youth Choir

THE ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF VISITORS & ANOUNCEMENTS.....JAKE

THE MINISTRY OF MUSIC.....Bethel's Youth Choir

THE SERMON

The Rev. Brandon I. Thornton

THE INVITATION TO DISCIPLESHIP/ ALTAR CALL

The Bringing of the Tithes and Offering, Calling on Pews

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 Affirmation of Faith

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 arose 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 dead. I believe in the Holy Spirit, the Church Universal, the communion of saints, the forgiveness of sins, the resurrection of the body and life everlasting. Amen.

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

Pastor's Pen

Grace and peace to each of you.

This week, we joyfully welcome all of our family, friends, and guests who have come to worship with us today. Whether you are visiting or worship with us regularly, we are grateful for your presence and thankful that you chose to share this celebrated moment with the Bethel family.

As we have been learning together in Bible study, God is a God of order, intention, and priority (1 Corinthians 14:40). Scripture reminds us that when the first is honored, the whole is blessed: “If the firstfruit is holy, the whole is also holy” (Romans 11:16). From the story of Cain and Abel, we are reminded that God is not only concerned with what we bring, but the heart, faith, and excellence behind what is offered (Genesis 4:1–7; Hebrews 11:4).

I want to thank you for your continued prayers, faithfulness, and generosity. Your support allows us to move beyond simply maintaining what we have, and to step fully into what God is calling us to do. This is what it means to be ALL IN—moving from maintenance to ministry and mission—honoring God first and trusting Him with the outcome (Proverbs 3:9; Matthew 6:33).

As we shared last week, we remain committed to being who God has called us to be. God being our helper, we will continue to walk in obedience, steward what has been entrusted to us, and faithfully do the work of our hands.

Welcome to Bethel.

There is a place here for you.

With gratitude and expectation,

Rev. Brandon L. Thornton

Pastor, Bethel A.M.E. Church

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?

Upcoming in February

February 8	Founder's Day Celebration (10:30A.M.)
February 15	Joe Cain Sunday
February 18	Ash Wednesday Services 6:00PM
February 22	Heritage Sunday (10:30 A.M.)
February 25	Mid-Year Assessment Due to P.E.
February 28	9th District YPD/LTI Gaines Chapel, Phenix City, AL