

WELCOME TO EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

For detailed information and to register for the below programs and events, visit our website <https://eastminsterpres.org/>.

The Longest Night Worship Service is today at 4 p.m., in the Sanctuary: As we acknowledge that the holidays can bring with them a myriad of emotions, our prayer is that this service might be a place of comfort and hope as we draw near to God this holiday season. Bring a friend who may benefit.

Thank you to all who have submitted 2026 Pledge Commitments: You may drop pledge cards in the offering plate or by the Church Office. Visit www.eastminsterpres.org and click on the PLEDGE button to pledge online.

Christmas Eve and Christmas Day Worship at Eastminster: Please join us and note that the times have changed for our Christmas Eve services. The Children's Service is at 3 p.m. The Family Candlelight Service is at 5 p.m., and the Candlelight Communion Service is at 7 p.m. We will have one carol service on Christmas Day at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Dress casually, and plan to sing Christmas favorites.

Christmas Day Lunch at Transitions: We will provide meals for up to 450 people from Transitions and The Rapid Center. 30 servers are needed between 11 a.m. and 12:30 p.m. Donations of Hawaiian Rolls, Mandarin Oranges, Homemade Christmas Desserts, and “Gorp” are due to the Church Office by 3 p.m. Visit Upcoming Events to sign up to serve or donate. Thank you to Alison McGowan for leading this outreach and to the many volunteers who serve and prepare donations each month for Transitions.

December 28th Worship Schedule: We'll have two “blended” worship services in the Sanctuary (9 a.m. & 11:15 a.m.) with a Holiday Brunch for all ages at 10 a.m. in Thompson Hall. James Blackwelder, child of EPC and second-year student at Austin Seminary, will preach. (No Sunday School or Jubilee Contemporary Worship.) Don't forget to bring a jar of peanut butter for Harvest Hope on fourth Sundays.

2025 Year-End Giving: Year-end contributions can be made via the offering plate by December 28th or postmarked by December 31st. You may also drop off at the Church Office, “Attn Treasurer,” by 5 p.m. Consult your financial advisor to give a Qualified Charitable Distribution from your IRA. To donate stock, contact Christy Rippy, Treasurer, via email at crippy@eastminsterpres.org for instructions.

Sundays@5 Adult Classes and Programming begin on January 4th: Pastoral Epistles (I & II Timothy, Titus, and Philemon) “Correspondence with Servants of God's Sovereign Word” with Dr. Douglass Key is a seven-week study in the [Gray Music Room](#) through February 15. Purchase study guides via Upcoming Events.

WE@EPC Meals and Classes begin on Wednesday, January 7th: Join Dr. Douglass Key for “Christian Prayer for Today's Christian” at 6 p.m. in the Adult Reception Hall after dinner. We'll focus on topics such as how to pray with our “whole selves” and who we are when we pray. Visit Upcoming Events to learn more. Register for class and purchase your book via Upcoming Events. Our WE@EPC Menu will be available soon.

“Winter Wellness: Connecting with God” also begins on January 7th: Join Rev. Emily Mooneyhan and Dr. Carol Byrd as we explore how spiritual practices help us to draw near to God. Explore topics like setting Godly intentions for the new year, walking meditation, and how being grateful is a gift in itself. Join us in Thompson Hall after dinner. Special guests with expertise in wellness will help lead some of our sessions. Visit Upcoming Events to see our topics through February 11th.

Kingdom Kids and Club 345 Kick off on Sunday, January 11th: at 5 p.m. Spring Registration form coming soon! See emails from Pastor Croskeys and Mrs. Stefanie for specifics. We'll meet on Sunday nights until 6:30 p.m. We will need parent volunteers! A sign-up will be available soon via Upcoming Events.

Registration is Open for EAA (Eastminster Arts Academy) Spring Classes: Join us in January. A variety of lessons, from voice and piano to guitar and strings (violin, viola, cello, and bass), will be offered from January 20 - April 20, 2026. Visit the EAA homepage on our website to register.

Unison Reading: Luke 1:8-14,16

8 Once when he was serving as priest before God during his section's turn of duty, 9 he was chosen by lot, according to the custom of the priesthood, to enter the sanctuary of the Lord to offer incense. 10 Now at the time of the incense offering, the whole assembly of the people was praying outside. 11 Then there appeared to him an angel of the Lord, standing at the right side of the altar of incense. 12 When Zechariah saw him, he was terrified, and fear overwhelmed him. 13 But the angel said to him, “Do not be afraid, Zechariah, for your prayer has been heard. Your wife Elizabeth will bear you a son, and you will name him John. 14 You will have joy and gladness, and many will rejoice at his birth, ...

16 He will turn many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God.

SERMON NOTES

Pledge Status Report as of December 15, 2025

Thank you to those who have pledged. If you have not yet done so, please give us an estimate of your giving to support Christ's work through Eastminster in 2026.

242 Pledges Increased
97 Pledges With No Change
24 Pledges Decreased
46 New Pledges

For a total of 409 pledges totaling \$4,385,763

85 pledges were made for 2025, but not yet for 2026

DEACONS: SALLIE JAMESON AND JOSH LIVINGSTON
HEAD USHER: DON HELMS (9:00 AM) BILL COGGINS (11:15 AM)
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MINISTERS—ALL OF US!

STAFF

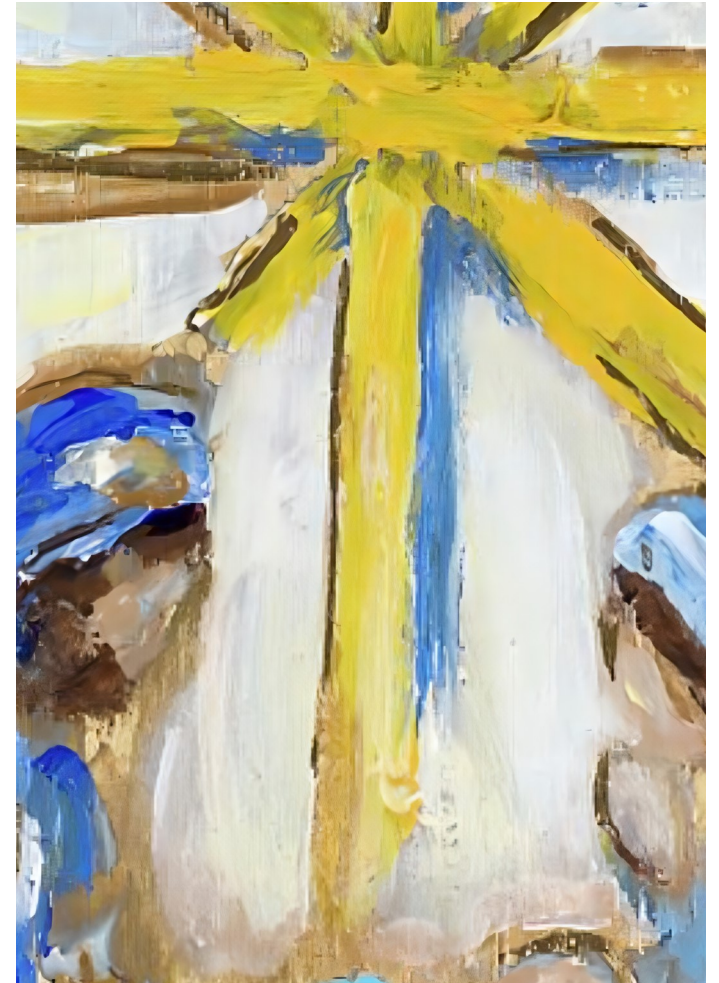
Dr. Bradley D. Smith, Pastor

Dr. Douglass D. Key, Senior Associate Pastor
Rev. W. Croskeys Royall, Associate Pastor
Fredna Lee, Director of Music Ministry
Louis Shirer, Organist
Emily Higgins, Director of Middle School Youth
Katie Herndon, Day School Director
Emmet Hough, Director of Christian Life Center
James Cassidy, A/V Director

Rev. Emily M. Mooneyhan, Associate Pastor
Rev. Rob Schoonover, Associate Pastor
Dr. Carol J. Byrd, Parish Associate
Alisha Hudson, Ex. Dir. Finance and Admin.
Dr. Augie Gil, Director of Worship and Arts
Blythe Lewis, Senior Communications Officer
Christy Rippy, Treasurer
Caroline Bennett, Small Groups Dir./Librarian
Alex Rogers, Plant Operations Director



EASTMINSTER
PRESBYTERIAN



FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT

DECEMBER 21, 2025

9:00 AND 11:15 AM

3200 TRENHOLM ROAD

COLUMBIA, SC 29204

803-256-1654

www.eastminsterpres.org

Welcome to Eastminster Presbyterian Church!
In Christ’s name, we welcome you to Eastminster. We hope that you will feel the love and peace of Christ as you worship with us. Please take this time to silence the world and focus your heart and mind on worshipping our living God.
“*So welcome each other, in the same way that Christ also welcomed you, for God’s glory.” Romans 15:7*

PRELUDE
My Soul Doth Magnify the Lord, BWV 648 J.S. Bach

WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE
Ginny and Berry Mattox, Eden and Kelsey (9:00 am)
Olivia and Ran Minter, Posey (11:15 am)

CALL TO WORSHIP from Jeremiah 33
Leader: The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill my promise to my people.
People: I will cause a righteous branch to spring up for David; he shall execute justice and righteousness in the land.
Leader: In those days my people will live in safety and shalom.
People: And this is the name by which it will be called: “The Lord is our righteousness.”

†*HYMN OF ADORATION #146
Gentle Mary Laid Her Child TEMPUS ADEST FLORIDUM

*PRAYER OF ADORATION Rev. Rob Schoonover (9:00 am)
Rev. Dr. Douglass D. Key (11:15 am)

*THE APOSTLES’ CREED (Unison)
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 Ghost, born of the Virgin Mary, suffered under Pontius Pilate, was crucified, dead, and buried; He descended into hell; the third day He rose again from the dead; He ascended into heaven, and sitteth on 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 Ghost; the holy catholic church; the communion of saints; the forgiveness of sins; the resurrection of the body; and the life everlasting. Amen.

**GLORIA PATRI (Please send the children forward.)
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.

SACRAMENT OF BAPTISM James Preston Cornwell (9:00 am)

BAPTISMAL HYMN #115
Away in a Manger MUELLER

**TIME WITH THE CHILDREN
The 3K—5K children may come to the front and bring their offering.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION Rev. Dr. Carol J. Byrd
Lord, have mercy on us. We are not ready for your coming. We live in sin, as though there were no justice. We live in fear, as though there were no grace. Forgive us, Lord. Show us your mercy and steadfast love. Lead us in your truth, and teach us your paths, for you are the God of our salvation. Hear us now in our silent prayers...

SILENT PRAYER

ASSURANCE OF PARDON
Pastor: Friends, believe the Good News of the Gospel.
Congregation: In Jesus Christ we are forgiven. Thanks be to God!

RESPONSE TO THE ASSURANCE OF PARDON #83
Come, Thou Long-Expected Jesus STUTTGART
1. Come, thou long-expected Jesus, born to set thy people free; from our fears and sins release us; let us find our rest in thee.
3. Born thy people to deliver; born a child and yet a king, born to reign in us forever, now thy gracious kingdom bring.

PASTORAL PRAYER AND THE LORD’S PRAYER Rev. Emily Mooneyhan
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 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.

SIGNING OF FRIENDSHIP REGISTER AND OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS
If you or someone you know is in need of special prayer today or if you would like to speak personally with a pastor about making a first-time commitment to Christ or growing in the Christian faith and discipleship, a pastor is on hand to speak with you following the worship service today by the pulpit in the front of the Sanctuary.

OFFERTORY ANTHEM
Magnificat David Ashley White
My soul proclaims with wonder the greatness of the Lord; rejoicing in God’s goodness, my spirit is restored. For God has looked with favor on one the world thought frail, and blessings through the ages will echo that “All hail.” God’s mercy shields the faithful and gives them safe retreat to arms that turn to scatter the proud in their conceit. The mighty have been vanquished, the lowly lifted up. The hungry find abundance; the rich, and empty cup. To Abraham’s descendants the Lord will steadfast prove; for God has made with Israel a covenant of love.

*DOXOLOGY
Praise to God, the One who made us. Praise to Christ, the soon-born Son. Praise the Spirit, ever with us. Praise the Godhead, Three in One. Clear a path! Prepare the way! Advent leads to Christmas Day!
R. G. Huff

*OFFICER’S PRAYER Sallie Jameson
*THOSE WHO ARE ABLE, PLEASE STAND. **CHILDREN MAY BRING THEIR OFFERING AT THIS TIME.
†THOSE WAITING IN THE NARTHEX MAY NOW BE SEATED.
FLASH PHOTOGRAPHY IS PROHIBITED IN ALL WORSHIP SERVICES
AT EASTMINSTER PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

SCRIPTURE LESSONS
Unison Reading: Luke 1:8-14,16 Page 52
Scripture Focus: Luke Luke 1:57-66 Page 54

Pastor: The Word of the LORD!
Congregation: Thanks be to God!

SERMON Rev. Dr. Bradley D. Smith
“Heard Her Myself, I Did!”

*HYMN OF DEDICATION #147
The First Nowell (verses 1 and 2) THE FIRST NOWELL

***CHARGE AND BENEDICTION**

*RESPONSE TO THE BENEDICTION #147
The First Nowell THE FIRST NOWELL
Then let us all with one accord sing praises to our heavenly Lord, that hath made heaven and earth of nought, and with his blood our life hath bought. Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, Nowell, born is the King of Israel.

POSTLUDE
Improvisation

***A TIME FOR GREETING AND FELLOWSHIP**



WELCOME TO EASTMINSTER
We are delighted that you have chosen to celebrate this Lord’s Day with us, and we hope that in a real and meaningful way you will sense God’s presence, power, and purpose among us. If you would like for us to connect with you, please leave your contact information in the Friendship Pad when it is passed.

INTERESTED IN MEMBERSHIP?
Contact the church office at 803-256-1654 to learn more and find out about our next First Step class which begins February 22, 2026, a class designed to help you learn about Eastminster and our ongoing ministries.

DURING THIS MORNING’S WORSHIP:
James Preston Cornwell, son of Sarah-Porter and Matt Cornwell , will receive the sacrament of baptism at the 9:00 am service. Richard Slater will offer the baptismal prayer.

December 28, 2025
Mr. James Blackwelder, Seminary Student-Austin, TX
Isaiah 65: 17-25
"Peace that Reorders the World"