



BLUFF PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

733 Valley Street
Hoover, AL 35226
205.822.0910

Newsletter, December 17, 2013

www.bluffparkumc.org



We have had such a wonderful Advent so far! We have been blessed by our own choir, our children's choir and the Magic City Choral Society. We have looked in detail at the Christmas story and have learned more about Zechariah, Elizabeth, Joseph and Mary. And, we have shared generously! To date, we have raised \$10,706 for the United Methodist Children's Home and have helped raise the account of the Pastor's Discretionary Fund in order to help those in need this holiday season. **THANK YOU ALL!**

As we prepare for this final Sunday of Advent, I hope that you will take some time and read the second chapter of Luke through verse 20. On Sunday and on Christmas Eve, we will be exploring this wonderful passage of Scripture which has been cherished by the Church for almost 2,000 years as it helps us understand more about the birth of the Messiah, Jesus Christ.

Please invite your friends and family to join us for a traditional Christmas Eve service with Holy Communion and Candlelight on December 24th at 4:00 and 6:00 pm. Let us celebrate together and open the doors to our community, for Christ the Lord is born for you and for me and for all human kind! *Mike*

Advent Morning Prayer will be every Wednesday morning at 7:30 a.m.

GOD
COMES DOWN



Christmas at Bluff Park UMC

- | | |
|-------------|--|
| December 22 | Sunday Morning Worship (8:45 and 11:00 am)
The Innkeeper, Luke 2:1-7
EVENING: Blue Christmas Service - 5:00 pm |
| December 24 | Christmas Eve Communion Services
(4:00 and 6:00 pm) |
| December 29 | Sunday Morning Worship (All Together at 10:00 am)
Breakfast at 9:00 am
NO EVENING WORSHIP |

Members of our Church Family in the Hospitals: **University**—Frank Love **Brookwood**—Judy Morgan
St. Vincent—Betty Lou Black **Trinity**—Fred Teaford **Lakeshore** —Odessa Harbor

Permanent Endowment Funds

Begun 20 years ago with about \$5,000, our Bluff Park UMC Permanent Endowment Funds have grown in value to almost \$640,000 today due to many contributions and gains in market value. Income, totaling over \$300,000 since inception, has supported many unexpected, unbudgeted expenses which have arisen during the 20 years. Contributions recognizing the 20 year anniversary may be made to the Funds at any time and in any amount. The contributions remain in the Funds permanently along with the change-of-market value, only the income is spent.



2014 Flower Calendar: The Calendar is up for 2014. Sign up to remember a loved one or to commemorate a special occasion. One arrangement is \$50.00; both \$100.00. Please sign up in the office of the Education building.



Come and join the fun at our "**Prayer Shawls Meeting**". The dates are: Jan. 6 Jan. 20
Feb. 3 Feb. 17 Mar. 3 Mar. 17 Apr. 7 Apr. 21 May 5
May 19 Jun. 2 Jun. 16 Call Kandis Scudder for more information

Celebrate Christmas By Blessing Others

During the month of December, we invite you to consider giving generously in two ways. The first is the **White Christmas Offering** which goes to support children in the state of Alabama. The United Methodist Children's Home helps connect children to loving families and group homes.

The second opportunity to bless others is through giving to the **Pastor's Discretionary Fund** which is used to help people in a financial crisis with the necessities of life such as food, water, and utilities.

You can give to these two ministries each and every Sunday of December by writing on the memo line of the check or on the envelope provided either 1) White Christmas Offering or 2) Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Blue Christmas: The Blue Christmas Worship Service helps minister to the needs of those for whom the Christmas season is a difficult time. Many people are coping with personal problems that make Christmas a time of pain rather than joy. The Blue Christmas service is a quiet, meditative service that reminds us of the hope and comfort that God brings to us through Jesus. This service will help us to share our hurting places with God as we prepare our hearts for the coming of Christ.

The service will be this Sunday, December 22nd at 5 p.m. in the sanctuary.



Celebrating Gifts and Year-End Giving

Thank you for your faithfulness in giving.

Churches typically receive as much as 25% of our gifts in the last two months of the year. As you make your plans to complete your 2013 financial commitment, here are three additional possibilities for resources beyond cash gifts. Please note that these possibilities are listed for educational purposes. Please consult your personal advisor for your specific information.

1. Gifts of Appreciated Stocks or Bonds

You can transfer ownership of stocks, bonds or mutual funds to the church and receive a charitable tax deduction based on the full fair market value of the securities on the date of the transfer. This avoids the capital gains tax while giving the church the benefit of the full value of the security. To receive this benefit, it is important to transfer ownership before the security is sold. For your gift to apply to the current tax year, the securities must be in the account of the local church (or our Foundation) by December 31st. So, allow plenty of lead time for your broker to complete this transaction.

2. Gifts of Real Estate

A charitable gift of real estate can be especially tax advantageous. If a home, vacation home, acreage or farm property has appreciated in value over the years - its sale could result in a sizable capital gains tax. If the real estate is given to the church prior to the sale, you can avoid the tax and realize a charitable deduction for the full fair market value of the real estate. One could even consider a bargain sale transaction with half of the funds to the church and the other half to the donor.

3. Gifts of Life Insurance

When you name the church as the owner and beneficiary of a life insurance policy, it usually offers you a tax advantage in the year you make the gift. You can take a charitable deduction approximately equal to the cash value at the time of the gift. Additionally, continued payments of premiums qualify as charitable tax deductions each year.

CHILDREN'S NEWS

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY SCHOOL will have a breakfast gathering in the Fellowship Hall on Sunday Dec. 22 at 9:45a.m.

4th 5th **FELLOWSHIP** will not meet Dec. 22 or 29. We will start back on Jan. 5.

SUNDAY SCHOOL for all children will not meet Sunday Dec. 29. There will be one service at 10a.m. with breakfast being served at 9a.m.

ELEMENTARY FIELD TRIP Monday January 20 we will go ice skating at the Pelham Civic Center. Doors to the church will open at 7:30 a.m. We will leave at 9:30 a.m. After lunch, we will see a movie. Cost is \$30.00 a child. Please make your child's reservation for the bus by calling or e-mailing Mrs. Leigh at 822.0910 ext. 107 or ldelashaw@bpumc.org.

STUDENT MINISTRY

Holy Ground Homecoming, Wednesday, December 18. All college-age and early career "alumni" of our student ministry are invited to worship with our students at our Wednesday night worship event. Trey Cathers will be giving the message and we'll have New China for dinner. Starts at 6:30pm.

Discovery Weekend is Friday—Sunday, January 24-26 here at the church. The cost is \$75 for middle school students and FREE for high school students who help lead the retreat. Over the coming weeks, we'll be working with our high school students to prepare them for their leadership roles. If you're a parent who has not yet signed up to help, you can do so online. Check the student section of our church website for more info.

Thank you to every parent who has signed up to help as a volunteer this fall. We still have several needs, including Sunday School teachers, event chaperons and small group leaders. To learn more, contact Bart at 205-790-1803 or barts@bpumc.org.

Wednesday, December 18, 6:30pm: **Holy Ground Worship** in the Youth Wing

Sunday, December 22, 10:00am: **Sunday School** in the Youth Wing

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

THURSDAY, DEC. 19: **SHEPHERD'S CENTER CHRISTMAS PARTY**—The fun starts at 9:30
Last Shepherd's Center Meeting until January 9. Santa Claus is coming!

THURSDAY, JAN. 9: **SHEPHERD'S CENTER**—Program by Leonette Slay, Cuba

TUESDAY, JAN. 14: **DAY TRIP**—Cullman—Church Tour and Lunch

MERRY CHRISTMAS



Special Moment with Jesus!

And the word became flesh and lived among us, and we have seen his glory, the glory of a Father's only son, full of grace and truth. John 1:14

Bluff Park United Methodist Church

733 Valley Street
Hoover, AL 35226

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Cindy Myers, cmyers@bpumc.org
Director of Chancel Choir and Special Programs,
Lonnie Parsons
Organist, Jamie Davis
Preschool Director
Tracy Estes, imaginations@bpumc.org

The Week of DECEMBER 22–28

Sunday, December 22

8:45 a.m. Morning Worship Service
9:45 a.m. Sunday School
9:45 a.m. Children's Breakfast
9:45 a.m. Trustees
11:00 a.m. Morning Worship Service
2:00 p.m. Young Adult Bible Study
5:00 p.m. Blue Christmas

Monday, December 23

Tuesday, December 24

4:00 6:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Services

Wednesday, December 25

Merry Christmas

Thursday, December 26

Friday, December 27

Saturday, December 28

Ushers

8:45: White 11:00: Davis

Cross

8:45: Claire Patton 11:00: Campbell Hecklinski

Acolytes

8:45: Graham Coltrane 11:00: Alyssa Chavez

Children's Church

8:45: Hendon 11:00: Neal

Greeters December 22: Vitality

Food Pantry: January 8: Penny Burns

BPUMC FOOD PANTRY

1st Wednesday each month

We are serving 200+ families a month.
We appreciate all donations!

Last Week's Record

December 15, 2013

Sunday School	477
Morning Worship	655
Weekly Operating Needs	\$27,025.00
Operating Receipts	\$52,551.33
2013 Operating Budget	\$1,405,300.00
Needed to Date	\$1,322,325.00
Received to Date	\$1,290,680.79
Building Fund Receipts	\$56,730.33
Building Fund in 2013	\$316,159.16
New Members in 2013	41

LIVING OUR LEGACY

January 1, 2013—December 31, 2015

Amount Pledged	\$1,080,950.00
Received Last Week	\$55,883.33
Received to Date	\$350,915.06

**BLUFF PARK UNITED
METHODIST COLUMBARIUM**
Information Sheets in Narthex and Church
Office

Men's Free Play Basketball In the Gym

Sunday & Thursday: 7:00pm (church members)	Wednesday: 7:00pm (community)
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VALET PARKING

Every Sunday morning! Drive
to the covered entrance near the
nursery
and Fellowship Hall.