



# BLUFF PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

733 Valley Street  
Hoover, AL 35226  
205.822.0910

*Newsletter December 2, 2014*

[www.BluffParkUMC.org](http://www.BluffParkUMC.org)



The Gospel of Luke declares that God favors Mary, and that she has found favor with God. Gabriel, who had first visited Zechariah, now visits Mary and calls her: “favored one.” What is interesting about this term “favor” is that in the Greek language, the word for favor is linked to the word “grace.” You could almost stretch the angelic greeting to say: “Greetings, graced one.” Mary is chosen by God’s grace – not because of anything she achieved. There is no doubt in my mind that she is a devout woman, for Luke shows her acceptance of this divine mission as being more smooth than Zechariah’s.

While Mary plays a special role in our faith and in human history, we must realize that each of us is not that far off from Mary. God could come to any of us and ask us to be a part of something new that He has in store for the world.

You see, Mary teaches us what it means to be ready for God’s call. While she is still overwhelmed by Gabriel’s presence and news, she understands that God’s objectives and will are so much more important than our own. In order to be able to see and understand this, our hearts and minds must be prepared to receive this news.

As we read together through the first chapter of Luke’s Gospel, and as we read the wonderful devotional written by our own church members, let us continue to make room in our hearts and in our lives for God’s presence – for both the small ways and the large ways in which He comes to us.

## MEMORIALS

### PASTOR’S DISCRETIONARY FUND

**Rudy Schaeffer** by Ann Gilliland

**Yevonne Bowman** by Hubert and Mary Lindsey

### PERMANENT ENDOWMENT FUND

**Louise Sturdivant** by Bob Sturdivant

### FOOD PANTRY

**Sula Parks** by the Canterbury Class, Michael and Sandra Miller

### UNDER THE BRIDGE MINISTRY

**Eleanor Walker** by The Covenant Class, James and Becky McCrary

**Elizabeth Smith** by the Canterbury Class

## HONORARIUM

### BLUFF PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

**John Irwin** by James and Becky McCrary

**Becky Walker** by the Wednesday Night Walker Bible Study

**Outgoing Officers** by the Opportunity Class

### FOOD PANTRY

**All Veterans** by Pony Thompson

### VICTOR HARBOR SCHOLARSHIP

**David and Penny Williamson** by Curtis and Paula Thompson

### CHOIR ROBE FUND

**Becky Walker** by Fred K. Battle, Jimmie Faye McFadden, Stretch and Joan Dunn, Marvin and Diane Broome

*Please note: Some Memorials and Honorariums are not listed by the request of the donors.*

# News of the Week

## THE CHRISTMAS SPIRIT IS AT WORK

Our Advent sermon series this year is focusing on the Christmas Spirit. We've already had an opportunity to see that Spirit working in our midst. Over 400 hams were collected in November and distributed through the food pantry to families in our community. We have also had an overwhelming response to the cell-phone collection project to help victims of domestic violence, and brought joy to the children of Birmingham through donations to the Festival of the Three Kings.

## STEWARDSHIP UPDATE

To date, we have received 238 Financial Pledges for 2015. Your pledges help the church make responsible financial plans. If you haven't turned in a Pledge Card, they are available in the pews, at the Welcome Desk, through the office, or can be downloaded from the church website. As we come to the close of the year, we ask that you also take time to review your 2014 commitments.

## WHITE CHRISTMAS OFFERING

Each Advent, our church takes up the White Christmas Offering in support of the United Methodist Children's Home. Their mission is to heal children, unite families, and to change lives in northern Alabama. Through your support, children are placed in safe and loving foster homes and are able to continue to be cared for in college as they transition into independent adulthood. Simply assign checks or envelopes to "White Christmas Offering" in morning worship throughout Advent, or by dropping off your gift in our Financial Office.

## ADVENT MORNING PRAYER

The holy season of Advent begins on November 30th. This year we will again have Advent Morning Prayer each Wednesday as a way of focusing our hearts and minds as we prepare for the coming of Jesus into the world. Advent Morning Prayer starts on Wednesday, December 3rd. The service begins at 7:30 am and will

be held in the sanctuary. This is a service of Scripture, prayer and Holy Communion and lasts approximately 30 minutes.

## LESSONS, CAROLS, AND COMMUNION

One of the traditional worship services of the Advent season is A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols. This service is a beautiful and inspiring way to hear the message of this holy season. We will have A Service of Nine Lessons and Carols on Sunday, December 21st at 5 PM in the Sanctuary.



## UMW CHRISTMAS PARTY

United Methodist Women Christmas Party. Wednesday, December 10, 6:00 pm, Fellowship Hall. Reservations to Tina Hardy.

## CHILE VOLUNTEERS FOR 2015

The Chile Volunteers in Mission team has openings for additional team members. We will be traveling to Angol, Chile to support the work of John Elmore our Covenant Missionary Partner at El Vergel Methodist Agricultural School. The dates of the trip are March 13-27, 2015. If you are interested or have questions please contact Tom Duley.

## ADVENT DEVOTIONAL EMAILS

Every day during the Season of Advent we are sending out a devotional written by a member of the church. Print copies are available in the office and you can sign up for the email list and view previous devotionals online at the church website:

[BluffParkUMC.org/advent-devotionals](http://BluffParkUMC.org/advent-devotionals)

## IN THE HOSPITAL...

Bernie Thompson—Princeton  
Nan Moore—Trinity  
Marshall Rogers—Brookwood

**CORRECTION:** Christmas Eve services are at 4pm&6pm. The second service was incorrectly listed as 7pm last week.



## Christmas Poinsettias

Reserve your large beautiful poinsettia now to remember or honor a loved one at Christmas. The cost is \$23.00 per plant payable to the church. Deadline for ordering is December 15.

In Honor Of: \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_  
In Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_

Return order form and payment to the church office.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

**THE CHRISTMAS PAGEANT** is Dec. 7 at 5p.m. in the sanctuary. All preschoolers through 5th graders are asked to participate. Our rehearsal is Dec. 7 at 2p.m. in the sanctuary. Speakers will rehearse during Sunday School that morning.

**WEDNESDAY NIGHTS-NEEDING 2 VOLUNTEERS** starting in January, for Wednesday night programming (6:30-7:30p.m.) Mrs. Carole needs someone to work with her while she teaches the Bible skills class to the 2nd and 3rd graders. We also need a volunteer to teach the K5-1st graders on Wednesday nights, 6:30-7:30p.m.

**ADVENT PREPARATIONS**- As Advent approaches, may you breathe in the love of God as you gather with the people who mean the most to you. Count your blessings and then be a blessing to someone else!

**THE 4th 5th FELLOWSHIP** will be going to Exit 456 at Camp Sumatanga on March 13-15. This is a 2 day event. It is a weekend designed to help children understand their Methodist heritage and to encourage their faith journey. It is a **FABULOUS** event sponsored by the North Alabama United Methodist conference. It can be a very important event for your 4th or 5th grader to attend!

### UPCOMING EVENTS

December 7 2:00pm-3:00pm	Pageant Rehearsal in the Sanctuary
December 7 5:00pm-5:30pm	Christmas Pageant in the Sanctuary
December 7 6:00pm-7:00pm	Church-wide Christmas Party in the Fellowship Hall
December 14th	Children's Choirs sing in both morning services

## STUDENT MINISTRY

**HOLY GROUND WORSHIP IN DECEMBER.** Our student worship service continues now that mid-week meals has ended. We'll have an Advent-themed series on Wednesdays, 10th and 17th. Since there won't be dinner upstairs, please bring \$5 for a light snack supper at 5:30pm on the 10th. Then on the 17th, we'll have a special **FREE** meal from New China as our college kids join us for a Holy Ground Homecoming! The worship service will continue to be 6:30-7:30pm.

**DISCOVERY WEEKEND - JANUARY 23-25, 2015.** Save the date for this incredible weekend of spiritual formation, when our high school students will lead our middle school students in worship, discussion, prayer and fellowship with the assistance of our college students and adults. High school students will begin meeting to prepare on Sunday afternoons as soon as we're back from Christmas break. We cannot wait to see what God has planned for our students! Online registration will be open very soon.

### THIS WEEK

Sunday, December 7, 10:00am	Sunday School in the Youth Wing
Sunday, December 7, 4:00pm	Holy Ground Team Rehearsal
Sunday, December 7, 5:00pm	Children's Christmas Pageant (afterwards we'll celebrate Leigh Delashaw's ministry in the Fellowship Hall at the Christmas Party)
Wednesday, December 10, 5:30pm	Snack Supper in Youth Wing (bring \$5 to eat or just come hang out before worship)
Wednesday, December 10, 6:30pm	Holy Ground Worship - Advent Conspiracy//Give More

## SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

### UPCOMING EVENTS

#### SUNDAY MORNING DECEMBER 7

**CHRISTMAS STOCKINGS FOR OUR SICK/SHUT-INS:** pick up a stocking at the Welcome Center, fill with goodies and surprises and deliver to one of our sick/shut-ins. Reap the rewards.

#### MONDAY DECEMBER 8

**GOVERNOR'S MANSON** - Christmas Tour, time to visit the 1st Lady's Gift Shop and Dinner. Traveling by tour bus. Cost: \$65.00pp - call Betty.

#### THURSDAY DECEMBER 11

**SHEPHERD'S CENTER** - Christmas program by Niki Sepsas.

#### THURSDAY DECEMBER 18

**SHEPHERD'S CENTER CHRISTMAS PARTY** The fun starts at 10:00am with special Christmas music and a visit from Santa.

#### SATURDAY DECEMBER 20

**BPUMC RED HAT CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON** with Mary Jane Wesler - call Mary Jane for reservations.

### Special Moment with Jesus

"For the word of the LORD is upright, and all his work is done in faithfulness." Psalm 33:4



## Bluff Park United Methodist Church

733 Valley Street  
Hoover, AL 35226  
(205) 822-0910

Address Service Requested

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
AUTO  
BIRMINGHAM, AL  
PERMIT NO. 1816

### Pastors

Mike Holly, mholly@bpumc.org, ext. 104  
Peter von Hermann, petervh@bpumc.org, ext. 107  
Tom Duley, tduley@bpumc.org, ext. 112  
**Director of Senior Ministries**, ext. 103  
Betty Hottenstein, bhottenstein@bpumc.org  
**Director of Student Ministries**, ext. 118  
Bart Styes, barts@bpumc.org  
**Director of Children's Ministries**, ext. 121  
Leigh Delashaw, ldelashaw@bpumc.org  
**Director of Finance and Administration**, ext. 117  
Ben Sheets, bsheets@bpumc.org  
**Financial Manager**, ext. 101  
Joe Pitard, jpitard@bpumc.org  
**Director of Communications and Media**, ext. 119  
Andrew Seltz, aseltz@bpumc.org  
**Secretary**, ext. 111  
Catherine Ward, cward@bpumc.org  
**Director of Worship Music**,  
Lonnie Parsons  
**Organist**, Jamie Davis  
**Preschool Director**,  
Tracy Estes, imaginations@bpumc.org



## The Week of December 7—December 13

### Sunday, December 7

8:45 am Morning Worship Service  
9:45 am Sunday School  
11:00 am Morning Worship Service  
1:00 pm Canterbury Class Party  
2:00 pm Christmas Pageant Rehearsal  
5:00 pm Children's Christmas Pageant  
5:30 pm Church Christmas Party

### Monday, December 8

2:30 pm Betty Day Trip  
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

### Tuesday, December 9

8:30 am Maintenance  
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

### Wednesday, December 10

7:30 am Advent Morning Prayer  
4:00 pm UMW Christmas Party  
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal  
6:00 pm Men's Chorus

### Thursday, December 11

8:00 am Shepherd's Center  
4:00 pm Prayer Shawls Christmas Party  
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal  
6:30 pm Handbell Choir

### Friday, December 12

12:00 pm Friendship Class Dinner  
6:00 pm Choir Rehearsal

### Saturday, December 13

9:00 am Choir Rehearsal

### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 7, 2014

8:45am and 11:00am Morning Worship  
*"The Christmas Spirit: Wonder"*  
Scripture - Luke 1:26-28  
Rev. Mike Holly

5:00pm Children's Christmas Pageant  
6:00pm Church-wide Christmas Party  
In the Fellowship Hall

### Lectionary Scripture Readings

Isaiah 40:1-11  
Psalm 85:1-2, 8-13  
2 Peter 3:8-15a  
Mark 1:1-8

### SERVING SUNDAY

**Ushers**  
8:45 Thompson Marshall 11:00 Vitality  
**Cross**  
8:45 John David Shanlever 11:00 Logan Watts  
**Acolytes**  
8:45 Clayton Marshall 11:00 Ruskin Gold  
**Greeters: Opportunity**  
**Meals on Wheels December 10:**  
Ken and Kay Adams  
**Food Pantry January 7:**  
TBA

## Last Week's Record

November 30, 2014

Children/Youth	76/47
Morning/Evening Worship	403/31
Weekly Operating Needs	\$29,189.36
Operating Receipts	\$12,469.50
2014 Operating Budget	\$1,517,847.00
Expected to Date	\$1,297,200.00
Received to Date	\$1,133,944.34
New Members in 2014	48

### LIVING OUR LEGACY

January 1, 2013—December 31, 2015	
Amount Pledged	\$1,083,250.00
Received Last Week	\$1,615.00
Received to Date	\$578,554.86

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

**BPUMC FOOD PANTRY**  
1st Wednesday each month  
We are serving 200+ families a month.  
We appreciate all donations!

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