



# Joy to the World

## BLUFF PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

733 Valley Street Hoover, AL 35226 205.822.0910

December 18, 2016

Seek God, Lose Yourself, Find Life

### Worship Services

#### Sunday Morning Worship

Sundays @ 8:45am and 11:00am

#### Advent Morning Prayer

Wednesday Mornings @ 7:30am

#### Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

December 24th @ 4:00pm and 6:00pm

### Special Service Times

#### Christmas Day Sunday Worship

December 25th @ 11:00am

*No Sunday School or Nursery*

#### New Year's Day Sunday Worship

January 1st @ 11:00am

[www.ChristmasInBluffPark.com](http://www.ChristmasInBluffPark.com)

Friends, we're not even to Christmas yet, and already I have begun to see "Year In Review" videos in social media as well as discussions about the best song of the year and the best movie of the year. It has led me to reflect a little early on the year 2016 which has been a year with several surprises indeed. One interesting thing that I have seen is a trend of people stating that they cannot wait for this particular year to end. They seem to be signaling that there has been enough bad news for one calendar year.

When you think about it, that is a very sad thing to consider, particularly at the time of year that we prepare to welcome and worship the Messiah and Savior of the world. Shouldn't this be the very time that we look around and count our many blessings and circle around the family hearth to sing? Well, yes. That is part of what our lives should include during this time of the year. But when enough bad news has occurred, it may also be the very time that we gather together, holding hands and hoping for a new and more harmonious world. A world that only the child of Christmas can bring to us. So on Christmas Eve, I will be inviting us all to reflect upon this year and upon our need for good news. We will consider the power that good news has to lift our spirits and challenge us to persevere.

Because at Christmas, what we receive is very good news.

*Mike*



# News of the Week

## COMMUNION TEAM

The Communion Team needs help for the Christmas Eve services this year. We need help setting up and cleaning up. If you are available to serve, please call Joan Davis to volunteer at 824-3415.

## ATTENTION COLLEGE STUDENTS!

All college-aged students home for the holidays are invited to join the Young Professionals for Sunday School and refreshments in their classroom on the Third Floor, room 366, above the church office. See Rev. John Carl Hastings or the Welcome Desk for directions or any questions.

## ADVENT MORNING PRAYER

Advent Morning Prayer has begun. Join us on Wednesday mornings at 7:30 AM in the sanctuary. This is a service of Prayer, Scripture and Holy Communion. The service will be held on each Wednesday morning of Advent. The service lasts approximately 30 minutes.

## SPECIAL HOLIDAY WORSHIP TIMES

Christmas Day and New Year's Day both fall on a Sunday this year. We will have a single worship service at 11:00 am both days and no Sunday School hour Christmas day. Make sure to mark your calendar.

## CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The church office will be closed after Christmas on Monday December 26th and Tuesday December 27th. The church office will also be closed following New Year's Day on Monday January 2nd and Tuesday January 3rd.



## INVITE A FRIEND OR NEIGHBOR...

Christmas is a time of year when people are often receptive to an invitation to church. We have prepared a color postcard with an invitation to our Christmas Eve worship that you can use to invite someone to church. The cards are available at the Welcome desk in the Narthex, and also in the church office. One fun idea is to tape a mini candy cane to each card before sharing them.

## 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 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.



## CELEBRATING GIFTS AND YEAR-END 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 2016 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.

### 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.

### 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.

### 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 may qualify as charitable tax deductions each year.

## CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

**CHRISTMAS SUNDAY SCHOOL BREAKFAST:** On Sunday, December 18th, we will be providing a Christmas breakfast for our children and their families in the Fellowship Hall during the Sunday School hour. We hope to see you there!

**CHRISTMAS DAY/NEW YEARS DAY:** There will only be one worship service at 11:00 on both Christmas Day and New Years Day. We will provide a nursery during the worship services on both days, but there will be no Children's Church. There will be no Children's Sunday School on Christmas Day, but there will be a Children's Sunday School for both our Elementary and Preschool children on New Years Day from 10:00-10:45 for those that would like to attend.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** Our Preschool and Elementary Sunday School lessons this week will be on the Christmas story!

**CHILDREN'S CHURCH:** Our lesson in Children's Church this week will be on "The Candle of Love" and "The Christ Candle!"

## STUDENT MINISTRY

**YOUTH CHRISTMAS PARTY & CAROLING - SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18TH** We'll meet in the Youth Wing at 5pm and divide into vehicles to go Christmas Caroling. Then we'll return to the Church for a covered dish dinner and a game of Dirty Santa. We need your help to make the evening a success: Parents: We need a side dish or dessert. Students: we need a fun, goofy, inexpensive or FREE gift for Dirty Santa AND we need a monetary donation or a gift card to Publix or Target for a family in need we're helping this holiday season.

**DISCOVERY WEEKEND - FEBRUARY 3-5, 2017** 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. We cannot wait to see what God has planned for our students! Registration is now open and all 6th-12th graders are welcome to attend. Contact Kathryn kdavis@bpumc.org for registration info.

**DOWNLOAD OUR MOBILE APP & KEEP UP WITH THE FAST-MOVING WINTER SCHEDULE.** There's so much going on as we move closer to 2017: Holy Ground Worship, Discovery Weekend and more. You can keep track of things via your smartphone or tablet by going to your app store and downloading our free app. Just search the key words Youth Wing to find it.

**SAVE THESE DATES** Friday-Sunday, February 3-5, 2017: *Discovery Weekend*, Sunday-Saturday, July 2-8, 2017 (tentative): *Appalachia Service Project Mission Trip*. (Contact Kathryn Davis kdavis@bpumc.org if you have any issues.)

### THIS WEEK

Sunday, Dec 18, 10:00am

Sunday School

Sunday, Dec 18, 5:00 pm

Christmas Caroling & Party

Sunday, Dec 25

NO Sunday School or Afternoon/Evening Events

## SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

### UPCOMING EVENTS

THURSDAY DECEMBER 15

**SHEPHERD' CENTER—Christmas Party** - Bobby, Jerry, and Brian (3 on a String) will be here. Surprise visit from Santa Claus, kindergarten child will sing for us, and Doris will have a wonderful lunch. Bring a White Elephant gift and a can of food for the food pantry. Come prepared for a morning of Christmas cheer. Invite a friend.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 22

**NO SHEPHERD'S CENTER—Merry Christmas**

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 29

**NO SHEPHERD'S CENTER - Happy New Year**

### SPECIAL MOMENT WITH JESUS

During this Christmas season, remember your Care n' Contact person.

Thank you to everyone for my celebration of retirement this past Sunday –for your prayers, for your love, for your support over the past years, and for your friendship. I truly appreciate the cards, the flowers, the gifts, the clock from the Staff Parish Committee, and the delicious food prepared by Marvin. I was overwhelmed with happiness. I'm retiring but not leaving. It has been my honor and pleasure to serve our church.

Love, Betty!



**Bluff Park United Methodist Church**

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

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

**Pastors**

- Mike Holly, mholly@bpumc.org, ext. 104
- Angela Martin, amartin@bpumc.org, ext. 107
- Tom Duley, tduley@bpumc.org, ext. 112
- John Carl Hastings, jchastings@bpumc.org, ext. 120
- 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. 105
- Stanley Davidson, sdavidson@bpumc.org
- Director of Finance and Administration**, ext. 117
- Jason McCrory, jmcCrory@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**,
- Jay Tumminello, jtumminello@bpumc.org
- Preschool Director**,
- Tracy Estes, imaginations@bpumc.org
- Facilities Manager**,
- Chad Malcolm, cmalcolm@bpumc.org



**The Week of December 18—24**

**Sunday, December 18**  
8:45 am Morning Worship Service  
9:45 am Sunday School  
9:50 am Children's Sunday School  
Christmas Party  
11:00 am Morning Worship Service  
5:00 pm Youth Caroling and Christmas Party

**Monday, December 19**  
10:00 am Prayer Shawl

**Wednesday, December 21**  
7:30 am Advent Morning Prayer  
5:45 pm Men's Chorus  
6:00 pm Handbell Choir  
6:30 pm Choir

**Saturday, December 24**  
4:00 pm Candlelight Worship Service  
6:00 pm Candlelight Worship Service

**SUNDAY, December 18, 2016**  
8:45am and 11:00am Morning Worship  
*"Living The Dream"*  
**Matthew 1:18-25**  
**Rev. Angela Martin**

**Lectionary Scripture Readings**  
Isaiah 7:10-16  
Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19  
Romans 1:1-7  
Matthew 1:18-25

**SERVING SUNDAY**  
**Ushers**  
8:45am Footsteps 11:00am Davis  
**Cross**  
8:45 Natalie Self 11:00 Mary El Neal  
**Acolyte**  
8:45 Jackie Fort 11:00 Emma Ruth Cooper  
**Greeters: Vitality**  
**Meals on Wheels: Chambers**  
**Food Pantry January 4th:**  
Adams/Cummings

**Last Week's Record**

December 11, 2016

Children	88
Morning Worship	485
Weekly Contributions Expected	\$27,212.00
Weekly Contributions Received	\$22,382.00
Annual Contributions Expected	\$1,415,000.00
Contributions Expected to Date	\$1,333,383.00
Contributions Received to Date	\$1,296,660.51
New Members in 2016	26

**LIVING OUR LEGACY**

January 1, 2013–December 31, 2015

Amount Pledged	\$1,083,250.00
Received Last Week	\$380.00
Received to Date	\$986,237.87

**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.