



Joy to the World BLUFF PARK

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

733 Valley Street Hoover, AL 35226 205.822.0910

December 17, 2017

Seek God, Lose Yourself, Find Life

Worship Services

Sunday Traditional Worship

Sundays @ 8:45am and 11:00am

The Gathering at Bluff Park

Sundays @ 11:00am

Advent Morning Prayer

Thursday Mornings @ 7:30am

Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship

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

The Gathering at Bluff Park Candlelight & Communion

December 24th @ 6:00pm

Special Service Times

Christmas Eve Sunday Morning Worship

December 24th @ 10:00am

No Sunday School or Nursery

New Year's Eve Sunday Morning Worship

December 31st @ 10:00am

Wesley Covenant Service to start the New Year

www.ChristmasInBluffPark.com

Last week, we discussed that Advent is the preparation for the arrival of Jesus Christ – born unto us. We were challenged to make room for God among us by getting rid of the clutter and by cleaning up the clutter in our lives. It is so easy to fall into the trap of business and clutter...leaving very little room for God in our hearts and in our minds. Think about your calendar for a moment. How many times have you put another appointment ahead of attending worship or participating in a Sunday school class? How many times has your busy schedule prevented you from being there for a hurting friend or from pulling over to help a stranger in need?

But these are the kind of things that Christmas classics like A Christmas Carol or It's A Wonderful Life try to teach us. We can throw our lives away in the pursuit of ever more. Or we can find our lives in the pursuit of serving more. We can give our lives to something and someone greater, but it will mean taking the focus away from our own needs and desires.

Last Sunday, Angela implored us to rediscover the child within. She asked us to reconnect with that innocent and idealistic young person we once were and to believe that with God all things are possible. And it is true. All things are possible. Even unplugging from the hustle and bustle while we obtain that classic Christmas spirit of being generous to stranger and friend.

May you find the child within!

Mike



News of the Week



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.

BECOME A VOLUNTEER IN MISSIONS

We are currently recruiting team members for two 2018 VIM teams. The first team will return to South Carolina to help folks who still haven't recovered from the effects of a major flood and two hurricanes. The dates for this trip are March 25-31, 2018. This will be a combined youth and adult team. The Chile team will return to Talca, Chile for the second year. We will continue work started last year as we help the Methodist Church of Talca with remodeling and an addition. The dates for this trip are June 29 - July 14, 2018. If you would like to be a member of either of these teams please speak to Tom Duley. He can be reached at 205-822-0910 ext 112 or tduley@bpumc.org.

CHURCH OFFICE HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

The church office will be closed for Christmas on Monday December, 25th and Tuesday, December 26th. The church office will also be closed for New Year's Day on Monday, January 1st and Tuesday, January 2nd.

ADVENT MORNING PRAYER

The final Advent Morning Prayer of the 2017 season will be on Thursday December 21st at 7:30 am in the Sanctuary. This is a service of Prayer, Scripture and Holy Communion. The service lasts approximately 30 minutes.

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.

CONGRATULATIONS...

Congratulations to Jamie and Joe Mikol on the birth of a son, Ozzie Robert William on December 11th.

UPCOMING BAPTISM

This Sunday, December 17th, we celebrate the baptism of Margaret McLeod Helton at the 11:00am traditional worship.

IN THE HOSPITAL...

Brett Wood—UAB



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 2017 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 17th, we will be providing a Christmas breakfast for our children and their families in Hudson Hall during the Sunday School hour. We hope to see you there!

SUNDAY SCHOOL: The Elementary Sunday School lesson will be on Christmas and the Pre-school Sunday School lesson will be on "Wise Men Come to Worship!"

CHILDREN'S CHURCH: Our Children's Church lesson this week will be on the second half of the Christmas story and "The Candle of Joy!"

CHILDREN'S WEEKLY EMAIL: If you would like to start receiving our Children's Weekly Email to find out all of the fun and exciting things that are going on in the Children's Ministry at BPUMC, please email Melissa Hendon at mhendon@bpumc.org.

STUDENT MINISTRY

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 17TH: The Student Ministry Caroling and Christmas Party starts at 5pm... this will be our last Student Ministry event for December. RSVP with the online links!

DISCOVERY WEEKEND, FEB 2ND-4TH! This year's theme is Micah 6:8: "He has shown you, O mortal, what is good. And what does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." We encourage our students to join us and invite some friends to what is always an amazing weekend! We will be staying onsite at the church with a few outings, including one to the UAB Recreation Center. The cost for High School Students is \$25 and Middle School Students is \$75. We'll be getting started at 5pm on Friday, Feb 2nd and wrapping things up at 10am Sunday, Feb 4th. Again, check your email and text messages for online registration links!

SAVE THESE DATES Sunday, December 17: *Christmas Caroling and Party!* February 3-4, 2018: *Discovery Weekend* Register online with text and email sign up links!

THIS WEEK

Sunday, Dec 17 5:00pm Christmas Party and Caroling

SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

55+ AND FRIENDS

THANK YOU to all who supported
the Pecan Fundraiser, Benefiting
55+ and Friends Ministry

SHEPHERD'S CENTER SCHEDULE

Programs - 10 AM - Thursdays - Fireside Room - All are Welcome!
December 21 Kristi Tingle Higginbotham, Singer and Actress, "Songs of the Season"



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
- Fran Gatch, fgatch@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
- Brenda Atkins, batkins@bpumc.org
- Director of Worship Music**,
- Lonnie Parsons
- Organist**,
- Jay Tumminello, jtumminello@bpumc.org
- Preschool Director**,
- Tracy Estes, imaginations@bpumc.org
- Facilities Manager**,
- Chad Malcom, cmalcom@bpumc.org



The Week of December 17—23

Sunday, December 17
8:45 am Traditional Worship Service
9:45 am Sunday School
11:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park
11:00 am Traditional Worship Service

Monday, December 18
10:00 am Prayer Shawl

Tuesday, December 19
3:00 pm Tutoring Program

Wednesday, December 20
5:30 pm Men's Chorus
6:00 pm Handbell
6:30 pm Choir

Thursday, December 21
7:30 am Advent Morning Prayer
9:30 am Shepherd's Center
10:00 am Sewing Group
6:30 pm Finance Committee Meeting

SUNDAY, December 17, 2017
8:45 and 11:00am Traditional Worship
Luke 1:26-38
"Someday at Christmas"
Rev. Mike Holly

11:00am The Gathering
Rev. John Carl Hastings

LIFETRACK

Sunday—John 5:30-47 and Psalm 63
Monday—Psalm 41
Tuesday—Matthew 24:32-44
Wednesday—Matthew 24:45-51
Thursday—John 14:1-7
Friday—Matthew 25:14-30
Saturday—Matthew 25:31-46

SERVING SUNDAY

Ushers
8:45 Footsteps 11:00 Davis
Acolyte
8:45 Spencer Schillaci 11:00 Molly Vann
Cross
8:45 Cadence Ward 11:00 Charlie Redding
Meal on Wheels: Britain
Food Pantry January 3rd: TBA

Last Week's Record

December 10, 2017

| | |
|--------------------------------|----------------|
| Children | 64 |
| Traditional Worship/Gathering | 424/64 |
| Weekly Contributions Expected | \$27,137.00 |
| Weekly Contributions Received | \$25,535.80 |
| Annual Contributions Expected | \$1,411,109.00 |
| Contributions Expected to Date | \$1,356,850.00 |
| Contributions Received to Date | \$1,319,711.59 |
| New Members in 2017 | 32 |

10,000 REASONS CAMPAIGN

January 1, 2017—December 31, 2019

| | |
|--------------------|-----------------|
| Amount Pledged | \$1,099,621 .00 |
| Received Last Week | \$3,294.00 |
| Received to Date | \$435,581.32 |

**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.