



BLUFF PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

The NEWsletter

Starting with this issue, we are shifting from publishing a weekly church newsletter to a monthly newsletter. One obvious reason for the change is cost. Formatting, printing, and mailing hundreds of newsletters each week use a lot of resources. There are hours of work involved by staff and volunteers in addition to the costs of postage and printing. But the cost is not the only reason for the change.

In addition to publishing less frequently, we are also focusing more on telling the story of ministry here at Bluff Park United Methodist Church. We want to do a better job of sharing the transformations that are happening in our church family and community because of what God is doing here at Bluff Park.

When people discover the impact a ministry is having on people they:

1. Support the ministry
2. Get involved personally
3. Connect people in need to the ministries that can help

This monthly newsletter is a work-in-progress. We will be revising and refining it over the summer months to make sure it effectively meets the needs of the church. We welcome comments and suggestions.

Weekly announcements and age-level ministry updates and schedules will continue to be published in the Sunday bulletin. We will be posting the weekly attendance and financial updates in the bulletin going forward. A weekly email update will continue for people on the email newsletter list, and there will be a monthly schedule printout available at the welcome center and in the church office for people who prefer to have something to 'stick to the fridge door.'

Seek God, Lose Yourself, Find Life

www.BluffParkUMC.org

Sunday Morning

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 8:45 & 11:00 am

THE GATHERING AT BLUFF PARK: 11:00 am

SUNDAY SCHOOL: 9:45 am

Nursery care available all morning!

Our Staff

PHONE: 205.822.0910

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: Fran Gatch

fgatch@bpumc.org, ext. 103

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT MINISTRIES: Bart Styes

barts@bpumc.org, ext. 118

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES:

Stanley Davidson

sdavidson@bpumc.org, ext. 105

DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION:

Jason McCrory

jmccrory@bpumc.org, ext. 117

FINANCIAL MANAGER: Joe Pitard

jpitar@bpumc.org, ext. 101

DIRECTOR OF COMMUNICATIONS AND MEDIA:

Andrew Seltz

aseltz@bpumc.org, ext. 119

SECRETARY: Brenda Atkins

batkins@bpumc.org, ext. 111

DIRECTOR OF WORSHIP MUSIC: Lonnie Parsons

ORGANIST: Jay Tumminello

jtumminello@bpumc.org

PRESCHOOL DIRECTOR: Tracy Estes

imagination@bpumc.org

FACILITIES MANAGER: Chad Malcom

cmalcom@bpumc.org

Published monthly by

Bluff Park United Methodist Church

733 Valley Street, Hoover, AL 35226

Article deadline 3rd Tuesday monthly

Editor, Andrew Seltz

newsletter@bpumc.org

Our faith, our lives, and our ministries take on a new life when the stories are shared with others. Help us tell God's story of love as it unfolds in our church and community. Send news, photos, videos, and stories to newsletter@bpumc.org

Message from the Pastor



Friends, on Sunday, April 29, the Church Council passed the 2018 Ministry Budget submitted by our Finance Team. This team did some wonderful work in putting together a budget for ministry and mission in 2018. I wanted to share with you some of the ways we were able to put together this budget even though we did not receive enough pledges to approve the requested expenses for 2018.

1. We have decided to reduce spending on programming at Mid-week Meetup. Primarily this means moving towards less expensive studies as well as an investment in the wonderful program "LifePath - Living Your Strengths." Classes will be offered throughout this year.

2. We also reduced the budget of our Church Life area by \$1,000. This area usually provides things like the Fall Block Party and the Day of Service and the annual Chili Cook-Off.

3. We have made an effort to significantly cut our postage use. Instead of sending quarterly giving statements, we will send those twice a year (cutting out the first and third quarters). We are also asking more people to choose to receive the church newsletter by e-mail. You can sign up for the e-newsletter online, but you must also ask to be removed from the print newsletter by contacting the main office. Brenda Atkins, our church secretary, can help you with this process (822-0910 or batkins@bpumc.org).

You may sign up for the newsletter by going to our website: bluff-parkumc.org/newsletter

4. We have placed a freeze on hiring which means that we will not hire a youth worship leader in 2018. We had not hired a worship leader for Holy Ground (the Wednesday evening youth worship service) by the time the budget was put together. We see this as an opportunity to help focus our finances towards moving the youth into the new building when it opens at the end of the summer.

5. Finally, we are having to balance our 2018 Ministry Budget by making a transfer of just over \$41,000 from our reserves. These reserves were built up over time and are there to help us when giving dips or for rainy day expenses. However, utilizing this account means that most of our ministries can continue unaffected. Our hope is that we will not need to use this amount due to the generosity of our church family.

Blessings and peace!

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Mike".

FEEDING THE HUNGRY

The first time you visit Bluff Park United Methodist Church the words 'food distribution' might not immediately pop into your mind. But, providing food to people in need is part of the DNA of this church. It happens in big obvious ways and many small ones too.

Every month dozens of people come together to pack hundreds of bags full of food to distribute to families in our community through the Pantry on the Bluff. We also join together with other churches and groups around the area each year to package meals for Rise Against Hunger. And, our Under the Bridge ministry has been mentioned in the news a few times for providing meals to the homeless at Boutwell Auditorium when the city opens it as a warming station during very cold winter nights. These are some of the more obvious ways we provide food to people in our community. But there are less obvious ways.

There are a surprising number of students in our community who don't have enough food to eat in their homes. They can get help through school during the week, but that help doesn't extend to the weekends. We have members who pack food into backpacks that these students can bring home with them so they don't go hungry when school is out. Our church's student ministry started a program called Room 35226 that provides resource rooms in our local schools. One of the items they include in the rooms is non-perishable food for students who are hungry but may be embarrassed to tell anyone.

We even have people who prepare Little Bags for members of the congregation to pick up and share with the homeless and hungry they encounter throughout the week. These brown paper lunch sacks have non-perishable food and drinks in them and can be picked up at the Welcome Desk in the church Narthex.

If you feel that God is calling you to feed the hungry, there are many ways for you to answer that call at Bluff Park United Methodist Church!



"...for I was hungry and you gave me food, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink, I was a stranger and you welcomed me..."

Matthew 25:35

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Exciting things are happening in the Children's Ministry this month! To begin with, we are working hard with the Student Ministry to transition our current 5th graders into 6th grade and the Youth Group. Already, these thirteen 5th graders have visited Holy Ground, the Student Ministry Wednesday night worship service, as well as attended a Student Ministry Q&A with Bart Styes and their parents. During the month of May, they will attend a cookout at Bart Styes house, where they will get to know both him and their student mentor, a current member of the Student Ministry who will guide them as they transition into their new place in our church. Then, at the end of May, they will be invited to both a waterpark and a pool party with select members and leaders of both the Children's Ministry and Student Ministries. Our hope and prayer is that through this process our 5th graders will transition well into the Student Ministry and continue to grow in their relationship with God! Please join me in praying for them as they make this transition!

We will also spend the month of May planning and organizing our two main summer programs: Camp on the Bluff and Vacation Bible School. Camp on the Bluff is a one-week summer camp for elementary aged children that teaches those who attend the basics of either cooking, basketball, science, gardening, or cheer-leading. All children who attend will also hear a Bible lesson each day that teaches them the basics of the Christian faith. We strategically gear this camp to the children of our church as well as children in our community who cannot afford to attend a skills-based summer camp. This camp is already full with 100 children attending, and we can't wait for them to arrive! Further, we already have 130 children from our church and community registered for our Vacation Bible School, and we are expecting record breaking numbers again this year! Please pray for us as we prepare for these two events, and let us know if you would like to help with either of these events by emailing Melissa Hendon at mhendon@bpumc.org.



STUDENT MINISTRY

Each Wednesday night at Holy Ground worship, we share our God sightings. These are moments, not for us to brag on our own accomplishments, but to point out when we have felt God's presence or seen His hand at work in the past week. I'd like to share some with y'all.

Our student worship team featured four vocalists, three musicians, and two running the tech table. Jacob Elliott, a senior at Hoover High School, gave a great message comparing when Joshua had to learn to trust God directly (instead of leaning on Moses) to his own teenage faith journey and shared solid advice for those who are facing their own transitions from elementary to middle school, middle to high school, and beyond. The rising 5th and 6th graders joined us, singing hymns and sharing their prayer requests with our current students.

In the letter to the Hebrews, we are encouraged to spur one another on toward love and good deeds, and I can attest to you that the entire Wednesday night at Holy Ground carried out the spirit of those words. What a God sighting!

We will take a break from Midweek Meals, small groups and student worship until the fall semester begins in August. But we will continue building a Christian community for each of our 6th-12th graders through some really fun and meaningful experiences this summer. Look for our calendar online, at the info desk in the Narthex, or request an electronic copy by emailing mbohanan@bpumc.org

DATES TO REMEMBER THIS MONTH:

Sun, May 6th @ 10am Youth Sunday School/Prep for Car Wash

Sunday, May 6th from 11am-2pm Car Wash Fundraiser for Summer Trips will be in the church parking lot

Wednesday, May 9th from 5-7pm Rising 6th Grade Cookout at The Stye's Home. Signup to attend & bring a side dish!

Summer evening Sun & Wed night activities will resume the 1st week in June

MARK YOUR CALENDARS

Senior Recognition Sunday & Brunch will be May 20th

Adventure Camp at Whitewater Express is June 22nd-24th

ASP Mission Trip is July 8th-14th.

FIRST DAY OF SPRING

The delicious scent of flowers filled the air. The stage was in imitation of spring with its pots of blossoming pink, white and blue Hydranges. Friends chatted with guest as violin music floated through the room. Poppy Seed Chicken tempted appetites. BPUMC

55+ Volunteers briskly served almost one hundred persons at the First Day of Spring Luncheon March 20th in the Fellowship Hall.

Actress and Storyteller, Dolores Hydock amused and enlightened the crowd with her stories of actual dirt and what grows out of it. As a little girl Dolores had observed her neighbor, Mrs. Reed. Mrs. Reed earned her living by baking but her joy was working in her flower garden. She had been known to throw crotchety words at boys who trampled her beautiful plants. Recently Dolores noted that when her flowers were in danger she herself threw out crotchety words at boys running through her garden. Oh, no! She had turned into Mrs. Reed!

Upon leaving many attenders stated that the event had been the most delightful experience that they had ever enjoyed for 55+ persons. Several visitors express gratitude for the program, lunch and meaning it had added to their day. Another member stated that the luncheon and program were of such excellence she hoped that such quality would continue for our church. Hope is springing into flower here at BPUMC. Blessings on the leadership of the 55+Ministry Council!!!

LEARNING, LAUGHING, AND HAVING FUN

“When you are laughing you are learning,” said the Education Professor of my youth. As it turns out - he was right. Not just about the young but for persons in all stages of life. Among the very best things you can do for your brain if to keep on learning. At BPUMC 55+ programs we hold learning events in high priority.

ENCOURAGEMENT

Did you know that encouragement is needed to motivate those over fifty? “Why should that be so?” Statistics show that mature persons have had many experiences in life - many of which have not been good. All BPUMC events and programming for those over fifty are infused with elements of motivation. Encouragement to live life to its fullest is what we are all about. Here are some of the opportunities offered for the coming months:

June	Hiking in Red Mountain Park Dinner Theater with World Traveler, Niki Sepsas and dinner by Jim N Nicks Barbeque
July	Summer Dance with live band, “Pocket Change”
August	Movie Night ~ Choose from 3 Movies ~ Treats, too!
September	Welcome Fall ~ enjoy music by Kristie Tingle, Jan Hunter, Drexel and Friends and more!
October	Travel through beautiful fall leaves and mountain breezes to Lexington, Kentucky. Tour the “Ark” and the “Creation Museum” with friends from Bluff Park.
November	Pecans and Pies Fundraiser ~ Sundays in November
December	Stockings to Go ~ Treats for our Homebound Members

SHEPHERD’S CENTER SCHEDULE

Meet & Greet—10 AM—Programs –
10:30 AM - Lunch—11:30 AM—
Games & Exercise—12:30pm
Thursdays In The Fireside Room
All are Welcome!

May 3

“Top Ten Mothers in the Bible”,
Master Teacher, Jan Rogers

May 10

“May Day” Party: Games, Prizes and
Surprises

May 17

“Housing Options for Retirement”,
Julie White

May 24

“Stories of the Vikings”, Niki Sepsas,
Tour Guide

May 31

Memorial Day Holiday



How You Can Help Fund Ministry and Mission At BPUMC

Ask any church how they plan to fund the ministries and missions of their church and they will tell you that they rely on the promises of the families in their church. A pledge is a vital way of helping a church plan a budget. Most families are able to meet their pledge at the end of the year. Some are not able to do so as life changes in unanticipated ways. Some families receive more than they anticipated and give an additional amount to God through the ministries and missions of our church.

You can help us plan for ministry and mission by 1) turning in a pledge card every year by the end of the year.

You can help us plan for ministry and mission by 2) giving generously and working to increase your giving. Some families start with 3% of their income and move up to 6% and eventually 10% or above.

You can also 3) invite people to become part of our church. Once new people become passionate about what God is doing through the ministries and missions of the church, they often want to participate in serving and giving generously as well. This is as easy as inviting people to attend Traditional Worship or the Gathering, or inviting them to a Bible Study or Sunday school class, or inviting them to an event like the Halloween Carnival or the fall block party.

Finally, you might consider 4) pre-paying your summer giving before you go on vacation. People are in an out during the summer and our giving does tend to dip. While we are thrilled that people are able to go with their families on well-deserved rest and restoration, we do still have expenses related to ministry and mission over the summer such as the Chile Mission Trip, Vacation Bible School and other family, youth and children's programs. By pre-paying your giving throughout the summer you will ensure that we have no issues with funding important ministries over the summer.

If you have any questions, please do contact our pastoral staff or financial staff!

You are vital to our ministry as a church!

And you already make a difference.

This is a time for our church family to step out in faith that God has so much for us to do for our congregation and for our community.



Give Online With **easyTithe**

Bluff Park United Methodist Church has implemented a set of online giving tools, powered by easyTithe.com. This provides the ability to quickly and easily make pledges and donations on our website and through a convenient mobile app! You can make your pledge electronically and track your online giving throughout the year.

After creating an EasyTithe account, you're able to give directly or schedule a series of donations using your debit or credit card.

To get started, visit the church website and select 'Donate Online' under the 'Give' link

in the top menu. Step-by-step video tutorials are available on the main 'Give' landing page.

www.BluffParkUMC.org/give-online

LIFETRACK

May 1

James 3:17-18 | Psalm 119:137-160

May 2

Isaiah 65:17-25 | Psalm 72

May 3

Acts 10:1-34 | Psalm 74

May 4

Acts 10:34-43 | Psalm 106:1-18

May 5

Mark 10:42-45 | Psalm 27

May 6

John 15:9-17 | Psalm 34

May 7

1 Timothy 6:11-12 | Psalm 77

May 8

1 Timothy 6:13-16 | Psalm 78:1-39

May 9

Deuteronomy 11:18-21
Psalm 68:1-20

May 10

Acts 1:1-11 | Psalm 47

May 11

Exodus 24:15-18 | Psalm 91

May 12

John 16:4-11 | Psalm 90

May 13

John 17:6-19 | Psalm 19

May 14

Philippians 1:3-11 | Psalm 89:1-18

May 15

Titus 1:1-9 | Psalm 99

May 16

John 16:16-24 | Psalm 101

May 17

Genesis 2:4-7 | Psalm 105:1-22

May 18

1 Corinthians 15:50-57
Psalm 102

May 19

Exodus 15:6-11 | Psalm 33

May 20

Acts 2:1-21 | Psalm 145

May 21

Joel 2:18-29 | Psalm 2

May 22

Genesis 11:1-9 | Psalm 5

May 23

Ezekiel 37:1-14 | Psalm 12

May 24

Romans 8:1-8 | Psalm 18:1-20

May 25

Romans 8:9-11 | Psalm 17

May 26

John 15:18-20 | Psalm 104

May 27

Isaiah 6:1-8 | Psalm 146

May 28

Numbers 9:15-23 | Psalm 15

May 29

1 Corinthians 2:1-10 | Psalm 28

May 30

Mark 4:21-25 | Psalm 132

May 31

Acts 25:1-12 | Psalm 72

Monthly Calendar for May 2018

Tuesday, May 1 9:30 am Wednesday, May 2 9:00 am 5:30 pm 5:30 pm 6:00 pm 6:00 pm 6:30 pm	Becky Walker's Bible Study Food Pantry Kids Waterslide Night Men's Chorus Handbell Strengths Finder Class Choir	Monday, May 14 8:00 am 10:00 am Tuesday, May 15 9:30 am 6:00 pm Wednesday, May 16 5:30 pm 6:00 pm 6:00 pm 6:30 pm	UMW Executive Council Meeting Prayer Shawl Becky Walker's Bible Study Under the Bridge Men's Chorus Handbell Strengths Finder Class Choir	8:45 am 9:45 am 11:00 am 11:00 am Monday, May 28 9:30 am 10:00 am 10:00 am Tuesday, May 29 9:30 am Wednesday, May 30 5:30 pm 6:00 pm 6:30 pm Thursday, May 31 9:30 am 10:00 am 10:00 pm	Traditional Worship Service Sunday School The Gathering at Bluff Park Traditional Worship Service Traditional Worship Service UMW Hope/Love Circle UMW Joy Circle Prayer Shawl Becky Walker's Bible Study Men's Chorus Handbell Choir Sewing Group Shepherd's Center Preschool Splash Party
Thursday, May 3 9:30 am 10:00 am Sunday, May 6 8:45 am 9:45 am 10:00 am 11:00 am 11:00 am 4:30 pm Monday, May 7 10:00 am Tuesday, May 8 8:30 am 9:30 am 6:00 pm Wednesday, May 9 9:00 am 10:00 am 5:30 pm 6:00 pm 6:00 pm 6:30 pm Thursday, May 10 9:30 am 10:00 am Friday, May 11 12:00 pm Saturday, May 12 4:00 pm Sunday, May 13 8:45 am 9:45 am 11:00 am 11:00 am	Sewing Group Shepherd's Center Traditional Worship Service Sunday School Youth Car Wash The Gathering at Bluff Park Traditional Worship Service Children's Council Prayer Shawl Maintenance Becky Walker's Bible Study Under the Bridge Building Committee 55+ Trip to Aliceville Men's Chorus Handbell Strengths Finder Class Choir Sewing Group Shepherd's Center Friendship Class Luncheon Covenant Class Party Traditional Worship Service Sunday School The Gathering at Bluff Park Traditional Worship Service	Thursday, May 17 9:30 am 10:00 am Sunday, May 20 8:45 am 9:45 am 10:00 am 11:00 am 11:00 am 12:30 pm Monday, May 21 10:00 am Tuesday, May 22 9:30 am Wednesday, May 23 9:00 am 5:30 pm 6:00 pm 6:00 pm 6:30 pm Thursday, May 24 9:30 am 9:30 am 10:00 am 6:30 pm 7:00 pm Friday, May 25 5:00 pm Sunday, May 27 7:30 am	Sewing Group Shepherd's Center Traditional Worship Service Sunday School Senior Recognition Brunch The Gathering at Bluff Park Traditional Worship Service Youth Council Meeting Prayer Shawl Becky Walker's Bible Study Building Committee Meeting Men's Chorus Handbell Strengths Finder Class Choir Sewing Group UMW Friendship Circle Shepherd's Center Finance Committee Meeting Book Club Fisherman Class Social Blood Drive		



MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

In Memory of...

GENERAL OPERATING FUND

Ted Johnston, by Martha Johnston Parsons

George Nash, by Wayne and Jackie Walton

PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY

George Nash, by Bradley Word

GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP

Michael Thompson, by Pony Green

CHRISTIN CROCKETT SCHOLARSHIP

Morris Dillard, by Gene and Jean Brown

George Nash, by Gene and Jean Brown

HANDBELL FUND

Jane Robinson, Randy and Judy Smith

MUSIC FUND

Martha Bond Cook Hilburn, by Pat and Joe Campbell, Eva and Gary Click, Pam and Jim McIntosh, Robert McGuffie, Bob and Becky Walker

In Honor of...

OPERATING FUND

Tom Duley, by James and Becky McCrary

Mike Holly, by James and Becky McCrary

Angela Martin, by James and Becky McCrary

BUILDING FUND

Lena Holly, by James and Charlotte Holly

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

X



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

X

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

follow us



Seek God, Lose Yourself, Find Life!

Our Purpose

Bluff Park United Methodist Church exists to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world around us. We seek to guide, develop and nurture persons to deepen their faith and service to God through vibrant worship and dynamic opportunities for learning, growth and life-giving mission.

Our Vision

Bluff Park United Methodist Church seeks to be a community creating relational experiences to help all people find life and know through a relationship with God: who they are, why they matter, and how they can serve the world in love.