



October 2020

BLUFF PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Worship In October



Traditional Worship

On every Sunday in October, we will offer an Online Traditional Worship Service as well as in-person physically-distanced worship in our Sanctuary at 10:30am. In order to attend the in-person physically-distanced worship services in our Sanctuary, you will need to register for worship either through our Realm membership database online or by calling the main office at 205-822-0910. Visitors are welcome, but they need to register through the main office. Please only register members of your household. The online Traditional Worship service will continue to be premiered at 10:30 am on Facebook as well as on our website. Remember that once the premiere has finished, the recording is available all week long.

The Gathering



The Gathering will be holding in-person physically-distanced worship in our Chapel at 9:00 am. In order to attend the in-person physically-distanced worship services in our Chapel, you will need to register for worship either through our Realm membership database online or by calling the main office at 205-822-0910. The Gathering worship service will be livestreamed on Facebook and the church website at 9:00 am. After the livestream ends, a recording is available on the Facebook page.

Get Connected This Fall

CONNECT WITH GOD: Over five months ago, our physical distancing began in Alabama as the coronavirus spread through our communities. This disruption has moved many of us into online worship and video conference Sunday school classes and small groups. While many of these practices will have to continue for the time being, our church family is going to offer more ways to connect with God this fall:

Rooted in Faith - Weekly Worship online and weekly in-person Traditional Worship with safeguards starting September! Join the LifeTrack:Daily devotional and make reading Scripture and prayer a part of your daily routine!
Growing in Grace - New regular podcast with a roundtable of our pastors discussing faith and life. New weekly Bible study videos for individual or group studies.

CONNECT WITH ONE ANOTHER: Physical distancing disrupted some of the ways that our church family operates, but groups were able to stay connected by phone, email, and weekly video conferenced gatherings. Members of these Sunday school classes and Common Tables report that these connections have helped sustain them during this pandemic! We want to help you connect with others this Fall!

For Children's Ministries - Wednesday afternoon Zoom Gatherings and Sunday Children's Church

For Student Ministries - Outdoor small group gatherings and Wednesday evening worship as well as worship on Instagram Live.

For Adult Ministries - join a Sunday school class or Common Table. Many classes are meeting online and we can help connect you with a group who will encourage you and check in on you! You can also get connected with the Open Door Cafe for interesting articles, online speakers and more...

Seek God, Lose Yourself, Find Life

www.BluffParkUMC.org

Sunday Morning

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 10:30 am

THE GATHERING AT BLUFF PARK: 9:00 am

Worship online at Facebook:
www.facebook.com/bluffparkumc

Worship online at our website:
bluffparkumc.org/livestream

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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

During the month of October, our church is going to focus on love. It seems like an odd topic for the month in which people decorate their porches and yards with jack-o'-lanterns, spider webs, and other spooky decorations. Maybe love is a better topic for Christmas or February!



But we are going to explore what Agape looks like. What is Agape? It is the love demonstrated by God. It is a self-giving, sacrificial love. It is the kind of love that Paul talks about in 1 Corinthians 13: love is patient, kind, and it is not envious, boastful, or rude.

In his book *Reckless Love*, United Methodist pastor Rev. Tom Berlin says that Jesus shows us how to love like God loves. That is an important theme in the New Testament book 1 John. Over and over, the author reminds us that if we have God in our lives, we love others. If we do not have God in our lives, we do not love others. Loving others, then, is a very usual sign that someone is growing in their love of God.

I hope that you will use the month of October to demonstrate love to your neighbor. It's time for the people of God to show that God's love is still alive and active in the world. In such a time of division and anxiety, we need to be loved more than ever! My hope is that the words we read from 1 John in worship and the words we hear in our sermons and conversations this month will give us creative ideas for random acts of kindness or opportunities for generosity for our neighbors. Please pray for God to show you ways to demonstrate His love to others this month!

I hope you will join us in Traditional Worship or at The Gathering at Bluff Park as we talk about how "Love Has A Name."

Friends,

As many of you have heard by now, I will be transitioning out of pastoral ministry at the end of September with my last Sunday at Bluff Park being September 27. What a profound and enriching experience service as one of your pastors for more than four years has been! This church has been a remarkable reminder of what the Church can be when good folks get together to follow Jesus and love one another. I have been so inspired and encouraged to watch each of you use the gifts God has given uniquely to you to be a light to our community through the ministry of this church. Your words of encouragement, acts of service and support, and gifts of resources and time to support the work I've done here have been tangible acts of God's grace in my life. For those and so many other things, I am so grateful to have been a part of BPUMC's story.



Most of you know that my wife Tori is an ordained minister as well, serving at Canterbury UMC in Mountain Brook. Over the last several years, we have been discerning together about what we hoped our life would look like going forward. We began to feel called to foster in our family the core value of community, where we are able to invest in the same place, worship together, and raise our children together in an atmosphere of worship and service. As we further discerned that call, it became clear that I was the one being led to explore new avenues of calling outside the church. Due to my undergraduate background in finance, I began to rehone my skills in the business world and will begin in October in the field of accounting.

In many ways, this work that we've undertaken as a family is no different than the work that I've asked our friends in The Gathering to take up as well: the work of discernment, following the voice of God into the world, and responding to God's Word as it comes to us through the Scriptures, through the liturgy, and yes, even through the voice of our community. God does not ask us to be static creatures that profess our faith in Jesus and are done but are constant watchers and listeners for God's voice, directing us to our next move, finding our next place to invest and serve.

I would be remiss if I didn't express my gratitude to Mike and Angela and Stanley and JT and all the staff at BPUMC. They have been dear coworkers and friends and are each insanely gifted for the work of ministry here. I am also grateful to those saints who gave so much time, energy, and heart in doing the work to start The Gathering, and who are also too numerous to name here. Finally, my gratitude extends to each of you reading this for your heart and spirit that you pour into this church. As I leave Bluff Park and pastoral ministry, I find myself encouraged and strengthened in my faith in Jesus Christ because of your witness and love. Whatever shape the world takes in the coming days, months, and years, I know that the people of this church will continue to be set on the mission of loving God and our neighbors here in Bluff Park and that God's work will continue here in this place.

Though you will not see me on Sundays, I am grateful that we serve a God that connects each of us together through the Spirit that leads and guides and comforts us on to the next thing.

With gratitude and love and in God's Peace,

John Carl

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

BLUFF PARK UMC COMMUNITY HALLOWEEN DRIVE THRU!!!

Instead of our normal Community Halloween Carnival, we will be holding a Community Halloween Drive Thru this year on Wednesday, October 28th from 6:00-7:00pm in the Bluff Park UMC parking lot! Families in our community will be invited to drive through our church's parking lot, which will be filled with Halloween decorations, cars decorated for Halloween/Fall, music, lights, members of our church in costume, and/or members of our church waving signs. At the end of the drive thru, each child in each car will receive a bag of candy! While no one will be allowed to leave their cars as they drive through, we will encourage children to ride through in their costumes so they can show them off and interact with our members along the route!

We need your help in two ways to make this happen!

First, we need a TON of candy to make this event a success! The candy needs to be individually wrapped and cannot contain peanuts or peanut butter. If you would like to pick up a bag or two (or five!) to donate to the event, you can bring them to the church office Monday through Friday 8am-4pm. Or drop them off at the Welcome Center in the Narthex during in-person worship. We will be collecting until Wednesday, October 21st. If you would like to donate some money to buy candy instead of going out we have a link set up for that. The suggested amount is \$10 but we will of course be very grateful for any amount given. The link is here: BluffParkUMC.org/halloweendonation

Second, we need you to participate. Here's how: ***Please note, we will be following the current Covid protocol during this event (facemask, social distancing, etc.)***

- Families and Groups can sign up for 1 to 4 parking spots. You can park vehicles in those spots and decorate them "Trunk or Treat" style, or you can just decorate the area by putting a few tables and chairs out, signs, pumpkins, whatever you want to bring. We will be renting/buying a few generators for the event so let us know if you need access to electricity.
- Individuals that would like to volunteer can do so as well. We will need folks to direct traffic, hold signs, wave and say "Happy Halloween!" etc. Youth (6th grade and up) will be asked to join through BPUMC Students.
- Prizes will be awarded to the best booth/area by a group and to the best individual costume not in a group. The prize will be a great addition to any Sunday School classroom or home.

To participate in the event, email Melissa at mhendon@bpumc.org and she will get the needed info from you for registration. The cut off for registration will be October 15th or whenever we reach capacity.

STUDENT MINISTRY

Family Worship

We are excited to offer an outdoors worship service made specifically for families on October 7th at 6:00. We will join together for a few songs then split into 3 groups for Children, Youth, and Parents. The children will learn a lesson and play some games. The youth will hear a message from JT and sing some more songs. The parents will have some time to decompress and support each other and Rev. Mike will be available to listen and talk as well! We will finish at 7:00 and we are asking people to bring chairs/blankets to sit on!

Hangouts on Zoom

Join us for Bi-Weekly Zoom Hangouts from 7:00-7:40 on Mondays (9/28, 10/12, 10/26)

In-Person Holy Ground Worship

Bi-Weekly In-Person Worship takes place on Wednesdays (10/7, 10/21) from 6-7. We worship outside over by the bus shed and we will meet in the chapel if the weather doesn't cooperate.



ADULT MINISTRY

Free Educational Programs for Adults

The Osher Lifelong Learning Institute (OLLI) at the University of Alabama has free bonus classes available for adults. All classes are currently conducted via Zoom. If you are interested in participating in any of the classes listed below, please contact Sylvia Sumners at ssumners@bellsouth.net or at 205-482-5680. You must let Sylvia know which class(es) you are interested in at least one week before the program(s). She will also need your first name, last name and email address. Once we register you, you will receive a link to join the program.

WEDNESDAYS Bonus Programs 12:00–1:15pm. via Zoom

Oct. 14 ~ Terminal Station: Birmingham's Great Temple of Travel ~ Marvin Clemons

Oct. 21 ~ The Election that Will Change America ~ Natalie Davis

Oct. 28 ~ Freedom Which Knew No Restraint: Political Barbecues and the Anti-Barbecue Movement in Madison County ~ Mark Johnson

Nov. 4 ~ Kentuck Art Festival: Behind the Scene ~ Amy Echocho

THURSDAYS Bonus Programs 12:00–1:15pm via Zoom

Oct. 15 ~ Fourteenth Colony: The Forgotten Story of the Gulf South During America's Revolutionary Era ~ Mike Bunn

Oct. 22 ~ State of Vestavia Hills ~ Mayor Ashley Curry

Oct. 29 ~ Prepare Now for Next Year's Garden ~ Eric Shavey

Nov. 5 ~ An Evening with Poe ~ Dave Murdock

The Open Door Café

All Open Door Café weekly programming is cancelled until further notice.

OLLI is an adult learning membership program designed for men and women age 50 and better who wish to pursue lifelong learning in a relaxed non-competitive atmosphere. An OLLI membership that allows you to participate in all their programs is \$50 per year. Additional information can be found at: olli.ua.edu.



MISSIONS

Hurricane Disaster Relief

The 2020 hurricane season has been very active and storms in the Gulf Coast region have damaged churches and communities. What can you do to help? Give to Bluff Park UMC for Disaster Relief. Give online at **BluffParkUMC.org/give**. Make sure to designate your financial gift for the UMCOR Relief Fund! If you prefer to mail or drop off a check at the church office, make sure your check or the envelope includes either: Hurricane Relief or UMCOR Relief.

First Light Shelter

Meals Needed Now and at Thanksgiving

The First Light Shelter for homeless women and children needs volunteers to provide breakfast and/or lunch for approximately 15 to 20 of their guests. There are several options for providing the food:

1. You can purchase prepared meals, purchase food and prepare it at home, or purchase food and prepare it in the First Light kitchen.

2. You can serve the food to the guests at First Light or you can drop it off at the shelter for someone there to serve.

In addition to help now, First Light is looking for volunteers to help prepare and serve, breakfast, lunch and dinner meals over the long Thanksgiving weekend. If you, your family and/or a group of your friends can help, please contact Deborah Everson @ deborah.everson@firstlightshelter.org.

September Food Pantry Report

We had another successful drive-through Food Pantry in September:

- 285 Families Received Food
- 7,525 Diapers Given out
- 24 Weekend Backpacks Given Out
- 37 Volunteers Prepared for and Operated the Food Pantry

Thanks to everyone for your help and support!



Realm is an online ministry tool designed for real-time connection. It helps members of our church family connect with each other and with our staff. Realm allows you to manage your personal information and who is allowed to see it, control your giving, and keep in touch with the ministry groups that matter to you.

Realm is not like a social network that's open to everyone. It's only made up of the people in your church. Realm gives you control over what information you share and who can see it.

You can access Realm on the web or through a free app on your phone.

If you have not setup your Realm account yet, contact Jason McCrory in the church office and request an invitation to join.

Let's get connected.

Giving Update

In the midst of quarantine and social distancing, the work of ministry and mission at Bluff Park United Methodist Church continues. Your giving is needed now more than ever. By financially supporting the church you are witnessing to your faith that God is at work even in difficult times. Your generosity funds our church's mission even as we have cut back on non-essential expenses and invested more heavily in staying connected to our church family and in serving the needs of our community.

Remember, God calls us to be generous with what we have. Maybe what you have now is a little different from what you had a month ago. But what you have can still be used to make a difference in our community!

You can give by: 1) Giving at worship, 2) mailing in a check, 3) setting up a recurring gift with your bank, 4) giving online with Realm, or 5) coming to the church office during business hours and dropping off your donation!

Member Updates

SYMPATHY OF THE CONGREGATION...

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to the family of Jim Windham in his passing on September 1st. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to the family of Barbara Boyd in her passing on September 17th. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to Linda Mixon and her family in the passing of her husband, Richard, on September 22nd. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to Fay Nichols in the passing of her husband, Jim, on September 22nd. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to Andy King and his family in the passing of his wife, Linda, on September 23rd. Our thoughts and prayers are with the King and Chatterton families in their time of loss..

LIFETRACK

October 1

Colossians 2:16-23

Psalms 105:1-22

October 2

Philippians 3:1-4 | Psalm 102

October 3

John 7:40-52 | Psalm 33

October 4

Matthew 21:33-46 | Psalm 118

October 5

1 Peter 2:4-10 | Psalm 106:1-18

October 6

2 Corinthians 5:17-21 | Psalm 121

October 7

Deuteronomy 6:10-25 | Psalm 129

October 8

1 Peter 5:1-5 | Psalm 132

October 9

James 4:4-10 | Psalm 140

October 10

Mark 2:18-22 | Psalm 144

October 11

Matthew 22:1-14 | Psalm 147

October 12

Jude 17-25 | Psalm 1

October 13

Philippians 3:13-4:1 | Psalm 2

October 14

John 6:25-35 | Psalm 12

October 15

3 John 9-12 | Psalm 5

October 16

1 Thessalonians 1:1-10 | Psalm 6

October 17

Matthew 14:1-12 | Psalm 16

October 18

Matthew 22:15-22 | Psalm 20

October 19

Exodus 40:34-38 | Psalm 9

October 20

Numbers 12:1-9 | Psalm 25

October 21

Matthew 17:22-27 | Psalm 26

October 22

Titus 1:5-16 | Psalm 38

October 23

Titus 2:7-8, 11-15 | Psalm 30

October 24

John 5:39-47 | Psalm 32

October 25

Matthew 22:34-46 | Psalm 63

October 26

James 2:8-13 | Psalm 42

October 27

James 2:14-26 | Psalm 45

October 28

Matthew 19:16-22 | Psalm 48

October 29

Romans 2:17-29 | Psalm 60

October 30

Joshua 2:1-14 | Psalm 54

October 31

Matthew 23:13-28 | Psalm 34

Monthly Calendar for October 2020

Thursday, October 1 9:30 am Sewing Group	Monday, October 12 6:00 pm Missions Committee Zoom	Wednesday, October 21 5:00 pm Handbell Rehearsal
Sunday, October 4 9:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 10:30 am Traditional Worship Service	Tuesday, October 13 8:30 am Maintenance 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study 6:00 pm Under the Bridge	Thursday, October 22 9:30 am Sewing Group 6:30 pm Finance Committee
Tuesday, October 6 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study	Wednesday, October 14 5:00 pm Handbell Rehearsal	Sunday, October 25 9:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 10:30 am Traditional Worship Service
Wednesday, October 7 7:00 am Food Pantry 4:30 pm Drive-Thru Communion 6:00 pm Family Worship	Thursday, October 15 9:30 am Sewing Group	Monday, October 26 10:00 am UMW Joy Circle
Thursday, October 8 9:30 am Sewing Group	Sunday, October 18 9:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 10:30 am Traditional Worship Service 4:00 pm Children's Movie Night	Tuesday, October 27 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study
Sunday, October 11 7:30 am Red Cross Blood Drive 9:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 10:30 am Traditional Worship Service	Tuesday, October 20 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study 6:00 pm Under the Bridge	Wednesday, October 28 6:00 pm Drive-Thru Halloween 5:00 pm Handbell Rehearsal
		Thursday, October 29 9:30 am Sewing Group

How To Worship Online

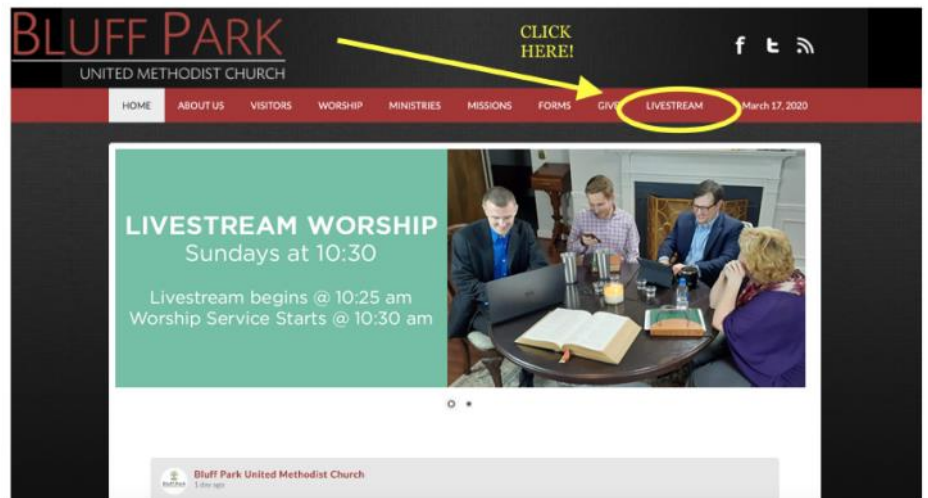
On Sunday mornings the weekly worship Livestream can be found on our Facebook Pages. If you aren't a Facebook user, there is also a dedicated page on our website where you can tune in live each week. The link to the livestream page is on the upper right of the website homepage and will take you to the Livestream page.

If you are not able to tune in to the live broadcast, the full service recording is available immediately after the service on the Livestream page and on Facebook.

Even when we are able to return to our normal worship schedule, our Livestream is available every week. No matter what happens in the coming weeks, you can stay connected and worship with your church family here at Bluff Park.

Step 1: Visit www.bluffparkumc.org

Step 2: Click "Livestream" in the top ribbon



MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

In Memory of...

ADULT MINISTRY

Joy Raine-Thrash, by Jim and Gaile Ketchersid

CHOIR FUND

Linda King, by Elizabeth Davis, Jim and Olivia Howard

CHRISTIN CROCKETT SCHOLARSHIP

Ray Crockett, by Ann Hill, Jan Voorhees

FOOD PANTRY

Linda King, by John and Sue Irwin

Jim Nichols, by John and Sue Irwin

Gene Sumners, by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher

MUSIC FUND

Jim Nichols, by Jim and Olivia Howard

OPERATING FUND

Harold Bailey, by Alice Morgan

John Whitcomb, by Gary and Eva Click

Bill White, by Jeff and Patricia Andrews (Happy Birthday Daddy, Mr. Bill, Gran Gran)

PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY

James Windham, Sr., by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher

UNDER THE BRIDGE

Julia Vinson Roan, by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher

In Honor of...

CHOIR

Randy Morrison, by Audrey Ann Wilson

ORGAN FUND

Jackie Wesson, by George and Alice Singleton

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

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Bluff Park
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
—Rooted in Faith, Growing in Grace—

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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.

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.