



BLUFF PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

Lent and Easter Schedule 2021

Palm Sunday

Sunday, March 28th
Traditional Worship @ 10am
The Gathering @ 11am

Maundy Thursday Worship

Thursday, April 1st @ 7pm

Service of Tenebrae

Friday, April 2nd @ 7pm

Easter Sunday

Sunday, April 4th
Traditional Worship @ 10am
The Gathering @ 11am

Service of Tenebrae

A Service of Tenebrae (Latin for shadows or darkness) is based on a twelfth-century late night/early morning service and is an extended meditation on the passion of Christ. In the medieval Western Christian tradition the service was held on Maundy Thursday. In our contemporary Christian tradition the service can be held on Maundy Thursday or Good Friday. In the medieval tradition, there were 3 movements of the service. The first were the special readings from Lamentations, expressing the sorrow and mourning which would mark the next two days of Good Friday and Holy Saturday. The second was the ritual extinguishing of a number of lit candles (from 5 to 72) one by one, at the end of each psalm. After the candles were extinguished, the church was left in darkness. Then came the third ritual: the symbolic banging of the pews by the ministers and congregation, possibly as a ritual remembrance of Christ's scourging by the soldiers.

This year, the Sanctuary Choir will walk us through this deeply moving service of shadows and darkness with beautiful anthems chosen to highlight the text from the Gospel of John. We'll walk with Jesus from the olive grove, through his arrest and crucifixion, and finally to his burial. The shadows will lengthen and the darkness will fall. The increasing darkness signifies the death of Jesus and hopelessness in the world without resurrection.

The service will move toward complete darkness, as the Christ Candle is carried out of the sanctuary, symbolizing the death of Jesus. A loud sound from the Organ will note the closing of Jesus' tomb and the altar will become barren with the Cross draped in black cloth. The service will conclude with departing words and the entrance of the Vigil Candle that will stand awaiting the resurrection that is to come. This reminds us that in all times and in all circumstances, even if it seems we have been abandoned and forsaken, we are not alone. God is with us.

We hope you will join us for this meaningful service on Friday, April 2nd, at 7:00 pm.

Seek God, Lose Yourself, Find Life

www.BluffParkUMC.org

Sunday Morning

TRADITIONAL WORSHIP 10:00 am

THE GATHERING AT BLUFF PARK: 11:00 am

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

Worship online at our website:
bluffparkumc.org/church-online

Care Contact Information
205.533.9902 | care@bpumc.org

Our Staff

PHONE 205.822.0910

PASTORS

Mike Holly

mholly@bpumc.org, ext. 104

Angela Martin

amartin@bpumc.org, ext. 107

MINISTER OF CARE: Wayne Williams

membercare@bpumc.org

DIRECTOR OF STUDENT MINISTRIES:

J.T. Mercer

youthdirector@bpumc.org, ext. 105

DIRECTOR OF CHILDREN'S MINISTRIES:

Stanley Davidson

sdavidson@bpumc.org, ext. 105

CHILDREN AND STUDENT MINISTRY PROGRAM

COORDINATOR: Melissa Hendon

mhendon@bpumc.org, ext. 103

ADULT MINISTRY PROGRAM AND MISSIONS

COORDINATOR: Susan Reynolds

adultministry@bpumc.org, ext. 121

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

CHOIR DIRECTOR: Art DeWeese

adeweese@bpumc.org

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 2nd 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

We will reach the one-year mark for the COVID-19 pandemic and its effect upon our lives in Hoover in the middle of this month. It was on March 15, 2020, that we canceled in-person worship for the remainder of the Spring. Since then, we have made changes to how we operate as a church in order to continue to remain connected to God in worship and service as well as to remain



connected to one another in love and fellowship. In order to offer a better worship experience, we are now offering our worship live-streams on our website as well as on Youtube. We are also live-streaming our Traditional Worship service on Facebook. You now have three ways to participate in online worship! Our website offers the best way to engage in worship together as there are options on the side of the video for you to view the online bulletin as well as to submit prayer requests and chat with other folks watching the service.

I have heard from many of our church members that they have received their first dose of the new vaccine. In fact, my wife received her first dose at the end of February! The ongoing roll-out of the vaccine will take time and we know that there will be a continued need for physical-distancing. Please be aware that we will continue to do all we can to offer a safe space for worship and fellowship. We will continue to follow the recommendations for churches in Alabama. The success we have experienced in continuing to offer in-person worship has come from the willingness of people in attendance to do three simple things: 1) wear a mask indoors, 2) practice physical-distancing at all times, and 3) wash your hands frequently. We have only had to shut down both worship services for one week because of possible COVID-19 exposure (January 10 in The Gathering and February 7 in Traditional Worship). Thus far, it seems as though the ongoing safeguards have been effective!

My main reminder to you for this month is to stay connected to our online services, podcasts, and devotionals for this holy season of Lent. We will continue to offer ways for you to spiritually enrich your life and faith as well as to find ways to give up the toxic parts of our life that harm our relationship with God and others. Remember that Holy Week falls at the very end of March and we hope you will join us for either in-person or online worship during that sacred week!!

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

2021 Easter Love Offering – Goal \$10,000

During the Season of Lent, we ask for a special Easter Love Offering to support several of the mission agencies/projects that we work with throughout the year. Each of these ministries provides vital services to the communities they serve.

Our goal of \$10,000 will allow us to support the ministries described below. Your generosity through the Easter Love Offering enables each of them to continue to serve those in need. After thoughtful discussion, our Missions Committee chose these ministries. Criteria included their association with the United Methodist Church, ties between the selected ministry and our congregation, and BPUMC efforts to place our resources where food, water, or shelter is a part of the ministry. *The Easter Love Offering is sponsored by the BPUMC United Appeal Fund.*

Church of the Reconciler (COTR) is a United Methodist mission congregation in downtown Birmingham. They focus on building community and resources with the homeless and housing vulnerable of Birmingham. They welcome all people regardless of age, gender, race, economic status, ethnic background, mental or physical ability, or sexual orientation.

The Church of the Reconciler has had a unique relationship with the homeless since its opening in 1993. With COTR, homeless and low-income people are loved, welcomed, and guided into roles in which they can use their gifts and set their own goals.

The Church of the Reconciler focuses on long-term solutions. They are consistently booked with appointments to help people: 1) recover a state ID, birth certificate, or social security card; 2) apply for affordable housing; 3) file for stimulus checks not received; 4) write resumes and apply for jobs; 5) find help with drug or alcohol addiction; 6) find a community; and 7) utilize the church's address as their mailing address.

For more information about the Church of the Reconciler and the many ways you can help with their ministry, visit the church website at www.churchofthereconciler.com.

Fair Haven - Fountain of Love - Fair Haven is an adult senior living facility located in Birmingham, AL. They offer both independent and assisted living for their residents. Fountain of Love provides financial assistance to people living in Methodist Homes such as Fair Haven who no longer have enough financial resources to continue paying their entire monthly care charge. The fund is heavily dependent upon donations. Your gift does make a difference - in their 60+ history, no one has ever been asked to leave a Methodist Home due to their inability to pay. For more information go to www.methodisthomes.org/fountain-of-love.html.

McCoy Adult Day Care provides a place for adults who need supervision to be cared for in a protective setting. The center provides a high-quality on-site program of Adult Day Care Services, including supervision, health screening, nutrition, therapeutic activities, exercise, and lots of love. Counseling and support are provided to each client's at-home caregivers who are most often family members. A program of the United Methodist Church, McCoy

Adult Day Care is housed at McCoy United Methodist Church.

While McCoy is currently unable to provide in person programming, due to COVID-19, they continue to support their clients and their families in ways such as: 1) virtual drum and dance therapy sessions; 2) at home program materials to help caregivers maintain a schedule for their loved one; 3) weekly phone support for caregivers; and 4) essential items gift baskets for clients. For more information, go to: mccoyaduldaycare.com.

Urban Ministry is a faith-based nonprofit focused on working with the residents of Birmingham's West End to build a thriving community. West End is a poverty-stricken neighborhood with 33% of the neighborhood residents living below the poverty level; 66% of all children live with single mothers. Kids face the constant temptation to join gangs or to use drugs.

As an urban mission of the United Methodist Church, Urban Ministry works in the West End, for the West End, to change lives and better the area. Urban Ministry programs include: 1) food and utility assistance programs; 2) refurbishing and painting neglected homes; 3) after school and summer learning programs; 4) summer camps for kids; and 5) community gardens.

With some programs suspended due to the COVID pandemic, Urban Ministries has still distributed more than: \$201,000 in financial assistance, 28,000 pounds of food from the food pantry, and 10,000 meals - cooked, packed and delivered to seniors and children. For more information, go to: www.urban-ministry.org.

Bluff Park UMC's Chile Mission Team has contributed funds and sent mission teams to Chile to help missionary John Elmore's work in the various towns where he has served. His current assignment in Angol is to renovate and revitalize the only Methodist camp in Chile. It will be used for spiritual retreats, youth camps, and church meetings.

Due to COVID-19, we will send our next work team to Chile when it is safe to do so. In the meantime, we continue to monetarily support John's work. If you're interested in participating in future Chile or U.S. mission trips, please contact Susan Reynolds-Porter at misions@bpumc.org or at the church 205- 822-0910.

Rise Against Hunger is an international hunger relief organization that distributes food and life-changing aid to the world's most vulnerable. According to the World Food Programme, there are currently 151 million people facing acute hunger. Each year, approximately 3.1 million children die from undernutrition (UNICEF, 2018a). Rise Against Hunger supplies school feeding programs that can help: 1) prevent hunger, 2) increase school enrollment, 3) reduce absenteeism, and 4) improve learning outcomes.

You can help. Each meal packaged by Rise Against Hunger volunteers costs \$.34. Every \$34.00 you donate feeds 100 children. Since 2005, hundreds of thousands of volunteers have packaged more than 543 million meals consisting of rice, soy, vegetables, vitamins, and minerals. In the future, BPUMC will team with Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church to pack meals for Rise Against Hunger. For more information, visit www.riseagainsthunger.org

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Midnight Bunny Run Registration

This year the Midnight Bunny run will be Friday March 26th (that's the Friday of HCS 's Spring Break.) We will deliver 12+ eggs for each child (up to fifth grade) registered. The eggs will not have peanuts or peanut butter candy in them (we will have eaten all of those) but they will have some candy in them. On Friday March 26th between 6pm and 8pm a volunteer will come to your house and "hide" eggs in your yard or leave them on the front door (your choice.) The eggs will not be hidden super well. We want them all found! Then when your little one(s) wake up on Saturday morning (the day we usually have our Community Egg Hunt) they will have their own egg hunt in their own yard (nice and safe.)

THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR THIS WILL BE SUNDAY MARCH 14TH. SO DO IT ASAP!

Click here to sign your family up:

<https://bit.ly/3uAWfon>

Midnight Bunny Run Sponsor Opportunity

Do you know some kids that are missing our Annual Community Easter Egg Hunt that do not attend Bluff Park UMC? BPUMC Kids has an opportunity for you to sponsor an egg delivery for them! For \$10 a family we will deliver eggs to their house the night of the Midnight Bunny Run on Friday March 26th! Because our bunnies will be super busy that night, we can only deliver to homes close to the church in the Homewood, Vestavia, Hoover area.



To learn more, sponsor, and sign a family up click here:

<https://bit.ly/3sn9WoO>

THE LAST DAY TO REGISTER FOR THE MID-NIGHT BUNNY RUN WILL BE SUNDAY MARCH 14TH.

STUDENT MINISTRY

Spiritual Disciple Videos!

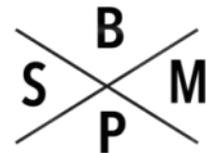
Have you seen this collection of Spiritual Disciplines videos that JT has created for our youth!

- **Why Read the Bible?**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O9zkbyjxH-Q>
- **How To Read the Bible**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xGI010KSF6E>
- **Holy Communion (Part 1)**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bWW7ceqNCIw>
- **Holy Communion (Part 2)**
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=p6F2TYcK_z0
- **Intro to Fasting**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wF6DNQ7uVCo>
- **Christian Conferencing**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=K1Eqxy14DGc>

Looking for More Information About Student Ministries?

Sign-up for our weekly Student Ministries Newsletter by contacting mhendon@bpumc.org

Adults are you interested in volunteering with our Student Ministry? Contact youthdirector@bpumc.org for more information



BLUFF PARK STUDENTS

ADULT MINISTRY

Easter Drive-Thru Luncheon

Wednesday, March 31st, 11 am to 12:30 pm

Where: Bluff Park UMC Portico under the Sanctuary

Cost: Free with a Reservation

Details: Up to Two (2) lunches per household are available to the first 100 who RSVP

Menu

Heavenly Chicken Salad on Fresh Greens

Fruited Congealed Salad

Ronda's Homemade Rolls

Strawberry Cake with Cream Cheese Frosting

RSVP by Saturday, March 20th with the number of lunches desired, to Susan Reynolds-Porter at 205-822-0910 or adultministry@bpumc.org



LOCAL, U.S. AND INTERNATIONAL MISSIONS

Volunteers Needed to Write Blessing Cards for Bundles of Hope

Bundles of Hope Diaper Ministry needs volunteers to handwrite blessing cards that are given to each person who receives diapers from our church. Bundles of Hope will provide the cards and the verbiage ~ the volunteers provide their time and handwriting! If you can help, please contact Betsy Guy at betsydguy@att.net or call her at (205) 542-6634.

Your Spring Cleaning Can Help those with Dementia

Members of Vestavia Hills United Methodist Church are making Fidget Mats and need your help getting the necessary supplies. Fidget Mats are lap quilts made from placemats, with different textures to feel, and things to open and close to keep hands busy. These mats help soothe the agitated fidgeting of people with dementia and help focus attention, stimulate senses, exercise hand muscles, and entertain the users.

As you spring clean, consider donating the following or similar items to this mission. Note that items should be small enough that several can be attached to a placemat. Also, all items should be able to withstand hot water washing and drying in a dryer. Items can be dropped off at the BPUMC church. A container to hold them is labeled and in the first office to the left when you come in the church office entrance to the building.

Placemats

Fabric in all colors and textures (scraps welcome), examples include corduroy, satin, felt, faux fur, fleece, etc.

Ribbons, lace, trims, cording

Cloth tape measurers

Bells

Small crosses

Buttons and beads – especially large ones or uniquely shaped ones

Sew-on patches (like those from national parks)

Old costume jewelry or medals – even if it is broken

Ties, belts, gloves and key rings

Old clothing with snaps or buttons, pockets

Shoelaces

Beanie Babies or similar soft items

Small doll clothes

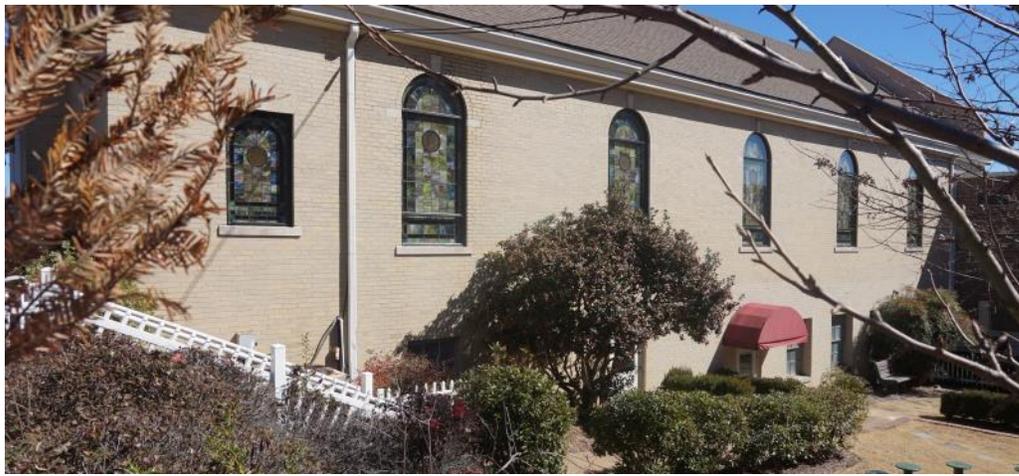
Small toys, especially cards

Marbles, game pieces/poker chips

Cookie cutters

See through net bags





The Stained Glass Window Preservation Has Begun!

The first phase of restoring and preserving our stained glass windows began in February. The Chapel and Education Building windows have been restored and protected in this first phase. The Sanctuary windows will be included in the second phase later this year. The Preserving Beauty/Preserving Ministry Campaign has made this possible!



Fabric Donations Needed

The Thursday Quilting Group needs your fabric to make quilts for homeless kids. We'll take sheets, pillow cases, and more. You can bring your donations to the church and leave them in the closet in the Seekers' classroom. If you have questions or need to arrange for someone to pick-up your fabric, call Barbara Hollifield at 1-817-807-3936. Include your name, phone number and email with your donation and we will send you pictures each month of the 5 quilts we deliver to First Light of Birmingham.

Member Updates

SYMPATHY OF THE CONGREGATION...

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to Elliot and Lila McCown in the passing of their mother, Jennifer. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to Gary White and his family in the passing of Laurie White on February 11th. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

The sympathy of the congregation goes out to Steve and Stan Shaw and their families in the passing of their mother, Jean Shaw on February 17th. Our thoughts and prayers are with the family in their time of loss.

LIFETRACK

March 1

Hebrews 1:8-12 | Psalm 57

March 2

Hebrews 11:1-3, 13-19 | Psalm 62

March 3

John 12:36-43 | Psalm 72

March 4

1 Peter 2:4-10 | Psalm 74

March 5

Exodus 19:9-15 | Psalm 95

March 6

Exodus 19:16-25 | Psalm 27

March 7

John 2:13-22 | Psalm 93

March 8

2 Chronicles 29:1-11, 16-19

Psalm 79

March 9

1 Corinthians 3:10-23

Psalm 119:97-120

March 10

Hebrews 9:23-28 | Psalm 42

March 11

Ephesians 1:3-6 | Psalm 43

March 12

Ephesians 1:7-14 | Psalm 92

March 13

John 3:1-13 | Psalm 136

March 14

John 3:14-21 | Psalm 66

March 15

Exodus 15:22-27 | Psalm 100

March 16

Numbers 20:1-13 | Psalm 94

March 17

John 8:12-20 | Psalm 101

March 18

Hebrews 4:1-13 | Psalm 69:1-23

March 19

Hebrews 4:14-5:3 | Psalm 132

March 20

John 12:1-11 | Psalm 108

March 21

John 12:20-33 | Psalm 145

March 22

2 Corinthians 3:4-11 | Psalm 31

March 23

Acts 2:14-24 | Psalm 121

March 24

John 12:34-50 | Psalm 122

March 25

Hebrews 10:4-10 | Psalm 8

March 26

Deuteronomy 16:1-8 | Psalm 141

March 27

Mark 10:32-34, 46-52 | Psalm 144

March 28

John 12:12-16

Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29

March 29

John 12:1-11 | Psalm 36

March 30

John 12:20-36 | Psalm 71

March 31

John 13:21-32 | Psalm 70

Monthly Calendar for March 2021

Tuesday, March 2 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study	11:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 5:00 pm Communion Class	Thursday, March 25 6:30 pm Finance Committee
Wednesday, March 3 7:00 am Food Pantry 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Adult Handbells 5:30 pm Elementary Midweek 6:00 pm Youth Holy Ground	Tuesday, March 16 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study 6:00 pm Under The Bridge	Sunday, March 28 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 5:00 pm Girl's High School Small Group
Sunday, March 7 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 5:00 pm Confirmation Class 5:00 pm Girl's High School Small Group	Wednesday, March 17 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Adult Handbells 5:30 pm Elementary Midweek 6:00 pm Youth Holy Ground	Tuesday, March 30 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study
Monday, March 8 6:00 pm Missions Committee	Thursday, March 18 7:00 pm Book Club	Wednesday, March 31 11:00 am Open Door Drive-Thru Spring Luncheon 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Adult Handbells 5:30 pm Elementary Midweek 6:00 pm Youth Holy Ground
Tuesday, March 9 8:30 am Maintenance 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study 6:00 pm Under the Bridge	Sunday, March 21 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Traditional Worship Service 11:00 am The Gathering at Bluff Park 5:00 pm Girl's High School Small Group	
Wednesday, March 10 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Adult Handbells 5:30 pm Elementary Midweek 6:00 pm Youth Holy Ground	Monday, March 22 10:00 am UMW Joy Circle	
Sunday, March 14 9:00 am Sunday School 10:00 am Traditional Worship Service	Tuesday, March 23 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study	
	Wednesday, March 24 5:00 pm Choir Rehearsal 5:00 pm Adult Handbells 5:30 pm Elementary Midweek 6:00 pm Youth Holy Ground	



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.

Our Livestream is available every week. No matter what happens in the weeks ahead, you can stay connected and worship with your church family here at Bluff Park.



MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

In Memory of...

BUILDING FUND
Bud Sumners, by Preston and Jo Ann Huddleston
FOOD PANTRY
Bill Best, by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher
OPERATING FUND
Bill Best, by Alice Chase
PASTOR'S DISCRETIONARY
Opportunity Class, by Glynda Culver
PERMANENT ENDOWMENT
Jean Brown, by Bob and Patsy Cummings

In Honor of...

OPEARTING FUND
Mike Holly, by Joy Riddle
UNDER THE BRIDGE
Andy Holder, by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher
Bob Walker, by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher
Pat Westbrook, by J.B. and Frankie Thrasher

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

X



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

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

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

X



X

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.