



BLUFF PARK UNITED METHODIST CHURCH MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

GRACETRACK

Stay in Love with God

There are 5 core practices in the Christian faith that help each and every one of us to stay in love with God and to grow in grace.

These 5 practices are:

- ◇ Prayer
- ◇ Searching the Scriptures
- ◇ Holy Communion
- ◇ Fasting
- ◇ Christian Conferencing

Each of these practices is a time-tested way of helping to transform our hearts and minds. Each one of us should set aside time for these special practices and disciplines.

We have gathered resources on our website to help you explore these 5 practices and continue growing in your relationship with God.

bluffparkumc.org/prayer

bluffparkumc.org/scriptures

bluffparkumc.org/holy-communion

bluffparkumc.org/fasting

bluffparkumc.org/christian-conferencing

Staff Parish Relations Committee Updates

MINISTERIAL STAFF

The SPRC has requested that all three of our pastors be reappointed to Bluff Park UMC for 2019-2020; and, (thank goodness!) all three of the pastors have also requested to be reappointed with us.

RECENT STAFF COMINGS AND GOINGS

Going ~ Rev. Tom Duley resigned from his ministry roles in missions and congregational care at Bluff Park UMC in 2018. Bart Styes resigned as the Director of Student Ministries in the fall. Director of Senior Ministries, Fran Gatch, is no longer employed by BPUMC. Student Ministries Program Coordinator, Meghan Bohanan, resigned as of January 15, 2019 (she will continue to volunteer with the ministry).

Coming ~ After serving a short interim period, Art DeWeese has joined us as the new Director of the Sanctuary Choir. Student intern, Noah Glover returned to BPUMC this year, and he coordinates some of our mission projects along with other assignments. Stephen Ingram is the Interim Director of Student Ministries. Melissa Hendon, who is currently the Children's Ministries Program Coordinator, will expand her role to work also with Student Ministries on an interim basis.

PLANS

A search is underway for the Director of Student Ministries. Discussions are ongoing for filling leadership and administrative roles in areas of missions, senior ministries, and congregational care.

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!

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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

Last week, all eyes were glued to the skies in the early morning watching for some promised snow to fall. A little snow did fall upon the church building, but it quickly melted in the warm sun. It was troubling to hear that some of the citizens of our greater Birmingham area took out their disappointment on local meteorologists. They cannot predict with certain accuracy. They can only forecast what the signs and models are describing.



In the Gospel of John, Jesus is not predicting who he is and what he has come to do. Jesus is certain of his identity and his mission. In fact, Jesus describes himself in wondrous and beautiful ways that help us to understand who he is and what he will do for us. The "I Am" sayings of Jesus are unique to the John's Gospel and during the Season of Lent in March, we will focus on these "I Am" sayings in the Traditional Worship Services.

Next, you may recall the financial reporting of our church family being a little troubling at the end of 2018. Our church, like so many others, operates from the generosity of the faithful members and attendees. Our Finance Committee and church leadership was prayerful watching and waiting to see if any action was needed. Our members demonstrated radical generosity yet again and we ended the 2018 year with a surplus. While this is wonderful news, that surplus did cover the deficit left at the end of 2017. This means that we are still a healthy church, but we do require continued generosity in order to offer programming and mission to our membership, our community, and our city.

Our Finance Committee would like to submit our 2019 annual ministry budget to the Church Council, but we are still waiting for about forty pledge cards to be turned in. We know that some of our membership had to wait until the end of the year or the start of tax season before they could submit their faithful pledge to the church office. I humbly ask each and every household to please do so as soon as possible so we can move forward with planning for a fruitful and faithful year of ministry at Bluff Park UMC.

Finally, I want to remind you that this is the third and final year of the 10,000 Reasons capital campaign. Our church family committed just over \$1 million to the construction of the ministry space that is now open for our student ministry. Our senior adults are also now using the gymnasium and we hope to open the ministry space beyond our church family in the coming year. While we are on track with giving to the capital campaign, we do need to finish strong so that we can continue to make timely payments to the necessary funds. Our church's financial staff is ready to help you if you have questions about where you stand with either pledge!



“Therefore let us be grateful for receiving a kingdom that cannot be shaken, and thus let us offer to God acceptable worship, with reverence and awe.” Hebrews 12:28

Thank you Bluff Park UMC for your gracious welcome and words of encouragement these past weeks. It is an honor to stand before the choir each week and to have the opportunity to lead you in worship each Sunday. God has allowed Debbie and me to be a part of this wonderful congregation since moving here from Kentucky in September to be closer to our grandchildren.

I want to invite and encourage you to give prayerful consideration to being a part of this wonderful group of people call the “Sanctuary Choir.” Now is the perfect time as we begin a new year to give serious thought to using the gifts God has given each of us for His service. For some of you that is the gift of music and singing in the choir. Is participating in choir a commitment? Yes, but what a rewarding one ! The choir is a small family that cares about and for each other, as we are all a part of the larger Bluff Park family. We can always find an excuse to not be a part of the choir such as “I can’t read music or I can’t sing both of the worship services.” It is not necessary to read music in order to sing in the choir, and if you cannot sing both of the worship services, that is perfectly okay too.

I encourage you to visit with us on Wednesday evenings at 6:30 in the choir room and see what God is doing with a group of individual voices that come together to give their praise to God our Father each week, proclaiming the Good News and the message of love and hope. We rehearse from 6:30-7:45 each week and we have an empty chair that is just waiting for you!

In His Service,
Art DeWeese

Under the Bridge

Bluff Park United Methodist Church has many food ministries providing for children, families, and the homeless who might otherwise go hungry. During cold weather, our Under the Bridge food ministry becomes a valuable resource to the Birmingham community.

When temperatures drop, the city of Birmingham opens up warming stations to provide shelter for homeless individuals. Our Under the Bridge team is one of the first groups they call to prepare and serve meals to those sheltering from the cold. The Under the Bridge team served ham, mac and cheese, black-eyed peas, and corn muffins to 275 people on January 29th.

Contact the church office to learn more about how you can get involved with this important ministry of the church.



CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

We in the Children's Ministry at Bluff Park UMC are committed to offering our Vacation Bible School and Camp on the Bluff free of charge, so that any child that would like to attend VBS and a skills based summer camp is able to attend these events. Last year, we had over 350 children from our church and our community attend VBS and Camp on the Bluff! One of the primary ways that we are able to offer these free ministries for such a large number of children is through proceeds from Bargains on the Bluff, our church's semi-annual Mommy and Me Consignment Sale. This year's sale will be held on February 8th -9th, and we need your help! First, we need volunteers to help before, during, and after the sale. There are many ways that people of all ages can help! To learn more about how you can volunteer, please contact Melissa Hendon at mhendon@bpumc.org. Secondly, we would love for as many people as possible to come and shop at Bargains on the Bluff. Every dollar you spend helps children be able to attend VBS and Camp on the Bluff, and learn about the love of Jesus Christ while they are there! We hope that you will make time to volunteer and/or shop at Bargains on the Bluff this year!

The Children's Ministry will be spending much of the month of February planning for four upcoming events: Exit 456 (an overnight spiritual life retreat for 4th and 5th graders), our community Easter Egg Hunt, Camp on the Bluff, and Vacation Bible School. Would you join us in praying for each of these events, the volunteers who help make them possible, and especially for the children and families that attend these events? We are excited for what has already happened in 2019, and cannot wait to see what God has in store for our children throughout the rest of this year!



BLUFF PARK UMC PRESENTS
BO+TB
BARGAINS ON THE BLUFF
A MOM and ME Consignment Sale Event

THURSDAY, February 7th 2-7 PM
Preview Sale - Consignors & Volunteers only
FRIDAY, February 8th 9-6 PM, PUBLIC SALE
***SATURDAY, February 9th 9-2 PM, PUBLIC SALE**
*25% Off on Select Items

FEATURING:
new and gently used

- *SPRING/SUMMER Kids, Ladies, Maternity Clothing,
- *Shoes and Accessories *Swings, Exersaucers, High Chairs
- *Strollers & other baby equipment *Children's Furniture
- *Children/Baby Bedding *Indoor & Outdoor toys
- *Books/Games/DVDs *Much, Much More!

We need your help!
Volunteer for a shift or two and get VIP Shopping Privileges!
www.BargainsOnTheBluff.com

STUDENT MINISTRY

Silent Auction Fundraiser

On Friday, March 1st, from 6:30-10:30pm, we are having a Mardi Gras themed party at The Barn at Shady Lane. There will be dinner, dancing with a live band, games, fellowship, a live auction, and a silent auction. The proceeds from this event will go to support the Student Ministry here at Bluff Park.

Please help support this important event. Purchase tickets, donate auction items, and invite your friends. This party is open to the whole community.

To purchase tickets online visit BluffParkUMC.org/silent-auction. For more information, to make a donation, or to volunteer for this event contact Aimie Marshall @ aimielmarshall@hotmail.com.

Weekly Events

Every Wednesday Night during the school year, we come together to worship, pray, play games, eat and have Bible study in our youth worship service, Holy Ground. Each month we tackle a different theme that is both meaningful and relevant to students lives. Join us for dinner starting at 5:30 and then for worship starting at 6:30. **PLEASE NOTE:** Any student on church property during youth programming must either be with our youth staff and volunteers or stay with a parent or guardian.

Each Sunday Night the Student Ministry comes together from 5:00-7:00pm for food, fun, service and devotion!

Each Sunday Morning at 10 am we meet in the Youth Wing for Sunday School and snacks. We offer two classes for one for 6th-8th grade students and another for 9th-12th grade students.

Discovery 2019

February 22-24, 2019

Registration

January 1- February 11

Cost: \$75 for Jr. High and Sr. High

Discovery is our biggest retreat of the year! It is a weekend of fun, worship, and spiritual growth, and it all happens here at Bluff Park UMC.

Discovery is unique because it is designed for Jr. High participants and Sr. High leaders. Sr. High leaders are required to attend 2 of the 3 trainings in order to participate, the training dates are February 3, 6, and 10. We will have a hard end to registration where NO REGISTRATIONS will be taken after February 11 so make sure to get your registration in ASAP! Registrations are online at www.bluffparkumc.org/ students starting January 1!

Bluff Park UMC has a wealth of ministry opportunities for people 55+ and their friends. Activities abound for those who are not yet ready to retire! Dancing, concerts, free movies, travel for learning and fun. In addition to fun social and learning opportunities, we serve the Bluff Park community by reading with elementary children, delivering flowers to the homebound, writing cards to the sick, and more. Join us for a new year of fun and service.

One of our favorite weekly activities is Conversation and Candlelight in the Faith Classroom on Wednesday nights from 5-6:30 pm. Everyone is invited. Pick up your food in the Fellowship Hall and join us for a time of relaxed fellowship. We can't wait to see you there!

WEDNESDAY NIGHTS

"Conversation and Candlelight" ~ Gather 5-6:30pm in the Faith Classroom

UPCOMING EVENTS

2019 Concert Series: Million Dollar Quartet, February 3, Virginia Samford Theatre. Church bus will leave at 1:30pm. Performance starts at 2:30pm.

Valentine Banquet, Sunday, February 10 @ 5:00 pm in the Fellowship Hall. Dinner and Entertainment featuring: The Bob Moore Band "Playing the Big Band Sound" - Directed by AB Baggett. Tickets to this event are sold out! We can't wait to see everyone on February 10th.

The Open Door Café

Exercise—9:45 AM—Meet & Greet—10 AM—Programs — 10:30 AM - Lunch—11:30 AM—Games & Movies— 12:30pm

Thursdays In The Fireside Room
All are Welcome!

The exercise group is now meeting at 9:45am on Thursdays in the New Gym! This is a wonderful space with a comfortable rubberized floor and natural light.

February 7

Trip to the Hoover Senior Center.
Leave at 10:15 and return for lunch by 11:30

February 14

Valentine's Party
Hosted by the Compassion Circle!



SILENT AUCTION FUNDRAISER

Friday, March 1st
6:30-10:30 pm

The Barn at Shady Lane
290 Sunbelt Parkway
Birmingham, AL 35022

Dinner, Dancing with Live Band, Games, Fellowship,
Live Auction and Silent Auction!

Tickets go on sale now:

BluffParkUMC.org/silent-auction

Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Make plans to join us March 5th, from 5-7pm in the Fellowship Hall for this fun annual fundraiser event. Proceeds support the Under the Bridge food ministry.

We're doing things a little differently this year. The Under the Bridge team will be hosting the event in 2019

The 2019 Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper is sponsored by the Bluff Park United Appeal Fund.



Meet the Staff

NAME: Art DeWeese

JOB TITLE: Director of Sanctuary Choir

BRIEFLY DESCRIBE YOUR JOB RESPONSIBILITIES

I am responsible for preparing the Sanctuary Choir for leading Worship in both of our traditional services. We rehearse each week on Wednesday evenings from 6:30 on until 7:45pm. I have the joy of directing the Sanctuary Choir each Sunday morning as they sing a Choral Introit, Anthem and Benediction. I also lead the congregation in congregational singing each Sunday. I attend a worship planning meeting each week with Rev. Holly and Rev. Martin and then the full staff meeting which follows. I select the anthems, introits, and any music the choir sings each week, working to support the spoken word and scripture.

HOW LONG HAVE YOU BEEN IN YOUR ROLE?

I have been at Bluff Park since the first Sunday of November of this year as the Interim Choir Director and now as the permanent Choir Director.

WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE PART OF YOUR JOB?

I very much enjoy preparing the choir each week for worship. Being able to take a piece of music and bringing it to life is very exciting. The relationship that develops with the choir is a very special one for me. Being able to share good times and more difficult times with each other as a church and choir family is important. Finding music that enhances the scripture and message each week is very rewarding and can be challenging at times. I am enjoying getting to know the staff and members of Bluff Park.

TELL US ABOUT YOUR FAMILY:

Debbie and I have one daughter Nicole, who is married and has three children. Debbie and I are both retired educators and moved here from Paducah, Kentucky, where we were life-long residents. Our son-in-law was transferred here to his company's corporate office in June of this past year. We decided that we didn't want to be over six hours away from our grandkids, so we moved here in September of this past fall. I have one brother that lives in Kentucky and my mother resides in the same town as my brother.

FAVORITE THING TO DO AWAY FROM WORK?

We love spending time with our three grandchildren and spending time on the beach enjoying the sun! The fact that our beach trip travel time has been cut in half is an added pleasure of residing in Pelham.



LIFETRACK

February 1

Acts 19:1-10 | Psalm 42

February 2

2 Chronicles 36:1-21

Psalm 122

February 3

1 Corinthians 13:1-13 | Psalm 8

February 4

1 Corinthians 2:6-16 | Psalm 57

February 5

2 Kings 5:1-14 | Psalm 61

February 6

Luke 19:41-44 | Psalm 72

February 7

Numbers 20:22-29 | Psalm 71

February 8

Acts 9:26-31 | Psalm 73

February 9

Luke 4:42-44 | Psalm 75

February 10

Luke 5:1-11 | Psalm 34

February 11

1 Corinthians 14:26-40 | Psalm 77

February 12

1 Timothy 3:1-9 | Psalm 78:1-39

February 13

Luke 5:27-32 | Psalm 81

February 14

Jeremiah 13:12-19 | Psalm 85

February 15

1 Peter 1:17-2:1 | Psalm 88

February 16

Luke 11:24-28 | Psalm 90

February 17

Jeremiah 17:5-10 | Psalm 19

February 18

1 Corinthians 15:20-34

Psalm 89:1-18

February 19

2 Corinthians 1:12-19 | Psalm 99

February 20

Luke 11:37-52 | Psalm 101

February 21

Romans 8:1-11 | Psalm 105:1-22

February 22

1 John 2:12-17 | Psalm 102

February 23

Luke 12:57-59 | Psalm 108

February 24

Exodus 3:1-15 | Psalm 80

February 25

Genesis 33:1-17 | Psalm 106:1-18

February 26

1 Corinthians 11:17-22, 27-33

Psalm 121

February 27

Luke 17:1-4 | Psalm 128

February 28

Acts 3:11-16 | Psalm 135

Member Updates

NEW MEMBERS

- Quinten and Kelly Lochmann—1/6/19
- Shelby and Chase Smith—1/6/19

BAPTISMS

- Andrew Huddleston—1/20/19

Monthly Calendar for February 2019

<p>Sunday, February 3 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, February 4 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Tuesday, February 5 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study Wednesday, February 6 9:00 am Food Pantry 4:30 pm Pastors' Bible Study 5:00 pm Student Ministry 5:00 pm Midweek Meetup 5:00 pm 55+ Conversation and Candlelight 5:30 pm Men's Chorus 6:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love Book Study 6:30 pm "Mere Christianity" Rick and Tina Hardy Bible Study 6:30 pm LifePath: Living in Ministry 6:30 pm Living Your Strengths Class Thursday, February 7 9:30 am Sewing Group 10:00 am The Open Door Cafe Friday, February 8 9:00 am-6:00 pm Bargains on the Bluff 12:00 pm Friendship Class Luncheon Saturday, February 9 9:00 am-2:00 pm Bargains on the Bluff Sunday, February 10 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 4:00 pm Confirmation Class 5:00 pm Valentine's Banquet Monday, February 11 10:00 am Prayer Shawl</p>	<p>Tuesday, February 12 8:30 am Maintenance 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study 6:00 pm Under the Bridge Wednesday, February 13 4:30 pm Pastors' Bible Study 5:00 pm Student Ministry 5:00 pm Midweek Meetup 5:00 pm 55+ Conversation and Candlelight 5:30 pm Men's Chorus 6:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm "Fear of the Other: No Fear in Love" Book Study 6:30 pm "Mere Christianity" Rick and Tina Hardy Bible Study 6:30 pm LifePath: Living in Ministry 6:30 pm Living Your Strengths Class Thursday, February 14 9:30 am Sewing Group 10:00 am The Open Door Cafe Sunday, February 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 4:00 pm Confirmation Class 4:00 pm Strengths-Based Marriage Monday, February 18 7:30 am Children's Mission/Field Trip 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Tuesday, February 19 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study 6:00 pm Under the Bridge Wednesday, February 20 5:00 pm Student Ministry 5:00 pm Midweek Meetup 5:00 pm 55+ Conversation and Candlelight 5:30 pm Men's Chorus 6:30 pm Choir</p>	<p>6:30 pm "Mere Christianity" Rick and Tina Hardy Bible Study 6:30 pm LifePath: Living in Ministry 6:30 pm Living Your Strengths Class Thursday, February 21 9:30 am Sewing Group 10:00 am The Open Door Cafe Friday, February 22 5:00 pm Youth Discovery Weekend 5:00 pm Fishermen Class Social Saturday, February 23 Youth Discovery Weekend Sunday, February 24 Youth Discovery Weekend 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 4:00 pm Children's Council Monday, February 25 9:30 am UMW Hope-Love Circles 10:00 am UMW Joy Circle 10:00 am Prayer Shawl Tuesday, February 26 9:30 am Becky Walker Bible Study Wednesday, February 27 5:00 pm Student Ministry 5:00 pm Midweek Meetup 5:00 pm 55+ Conversation and Candlelight 5:30 pm Men's Chorus 6:30 pm Choir 6:30 pm "Mere Christianity" Rick and Tina Hardy Bible Study 6:30 pm LifePath: Living in Ministry Thursday, February 28 9:30 am Sewing Group 9:30 pm UMW Friendship Circle 10:00 am The Open Door Cafe 6:30 pm Finance Committee 7:00 pm Book Club</p>
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MEMORIALS AND HONORARIUMS

In Memory of...

GENERAL OPERATING FUND
Charles Cain, by Patty Cain
 VICTOR HARBOR SCHOLARSHIP
Thomas Finley, by Tom & Jan Bailey
 FOOD PANTRY
Mr. and Mrs. Emmet McFadden, by Daniel and Jimmie Faye McFadden
 WHITE CHRISTMAS
Mr. and Mrs. James D. Abston, Sr., by Daniel and Jimmie Faye McFadden
John Pearson, by Jack and Sue Pearson
Hunter O. Powell, by Lynda and Virgil Powell

In Honor of...

GENERAL SCHOLARSHIP FUND
Paulette Pearson, by Lisa Avant

OPERATING FUND

Mike and Julie Holly, by James and Charlotte Holly
John and Debi Whitcomb, by Curtis and Paula Thompson

MUSIC FUND

Sylvia Sumners, by Fishermen Class
Charlie Trucks, by Fishermen Class
Wayne Williams, by Fishermen Class

FOOD PANTRY

Leonette Slay, by Elizabeth Davis
 55 +

Sara Perry, by Pony Green

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

X



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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.