

BUMC's Quarterly

January-March Newsletter 2025

A publication of Bluffton United Methodist Church, Bluffton, SC
Volume 21, Issue 1 January-March 2025

What are you doing this year to be about the Lord's business? Are you developing a more intentional prayer or devotional life? Are you looking for more opportunities to be in mission? I am excited about how God is using us to make a difference in the world. Throughout this newsletter, you will see reports of last year and opportunities for this year. Read it all, put some things on your calendar and rejoice in what God is doing! I am so excited to serve God with you this year, and I praise God for each of you.

In the next few months, we will have many opportunities to worship and serve. Some of these are listed on the "Upcoming Events," page 3. Save those dates, and let's praise God together for all that God is doing with us, through us and even in spite of us sometimes!

Let's be about God's business together,
Pastor Scarlett

"If you can?" said Jesus. "Everything is possible for one who believes." (Mark 9:23)

To say this year has been filled with uncertainty is a significant understatement. But as I write this, I am reminded that anything is possible through faith in our Lord.

One Sunday morning in early December, I stood before the congregation and shared the very real news that Bluffton UMC was on pace for a sizable budget shortfall for the first time in more than 15 years. The Finance Committee understood that the actions of the 2024 General Conference would have an impact on our congregation (and giving) as we gathered to build the BUMC Budget for 2025. We were conservative in our planning, but we also saw the need to continue all the good work this church had accomplished in 2024!

Following that Sunday morning "call to action" however, we began to receive responses. This included a donation from a church member who offered to match any worship offerings in the remaining weeks of December (dollar for dollar) up to \$50,000.00. The responses kept coming and coming!

I am pleased to report that as of the end of the year, we have once again exceeded our annual budget for Worship Offerings and there is no budget shortfall for 2024. **God is Good.**

Our December Worship Offerings totaled a record \$177,196.00. As a result, our 2024 Worship Offerings totaled \$667,335 and exceeded our budget by more than \$40,000. We received an additional \$117,352.00 in designated funds giving, including \$68,318 in permanent endowment donations. We also received \$109,179 in Roof and HVAC repair donations in 2024. **God is Good.**

I have learned over the years that being part of a church finance committee is a difficult balancing act. It requires you to act responsibly, to utilize restraint, to focus on practical matters, and to be fiscally conservative. However, it also requires you to never lose sight of the fact that a church is not a business, and it cannot be run like one. In 2025, the BUMC Finance Committee will continue to be conservative in the management of the Church's resources, but we will not forget that through faith, all things are possible.

William Court
Chair of Finance

ANNEX UPDATE

Members of the BUMC congregation,

As we start the new year, I want to update you on the plans for the Annex, but first thank those who have worked hard to adjust so that missions can continue. All of the members who were operating in the annex have been very gracious in continuing their missions and service to others in alternative ways. There has been discussion about what will be happening with the annex as we look forward to the future after the fire.

The question that seems to be most commonly asked is what is the status and future of the annex? There is an insurance settlement that has been paid and is being held in anticipation of returning the annex to the use of the church. The full settlement will be paid to us when we make repairs or rebuild with any changes. James Atkins of Court and Atkins Architects and a member of our congregation, has met with representatives of the various groups who used the annex to gather needs and dreams. He is creating plans and options reflecting the needs and wishes and their estimated cost. Any enhancements that involve more than returning it to its original state will require additional resources. We will also likely need to address code issues in any repair or renovation.

Is this an opportunity to enhance this property to more effectively serve our mission? With that question in mind, the Administrative Council has established a committee to help frame the options ultimately to understand what are the pros and cons. This committee will consider what might be the plan going forward, but will not decide that for the church. The committee will be made up of the Chair of Administrative Council, James Atkins, representatives from Finance, Trustees and a member of the program staff. This committee will consider the question of should we stay within the limits of the insurance settlement or should we consider what enhancements would be helpful? Is there interest in a building campaign to raise the money to enhance the annex?

After considering these questions and the suggestions of what might be done with the facility, the Committee will report their findings and deliberations to the Administrative Council. Information will be shared at appropriate times with the congregation. Based upon recommendations and the level of support and different recommendations received, Administrative Council will make a decision and the project can then move forward.

Doug Oblander
Administrative Council Chair

Upcoming Events



SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

The BMW will be hosting a Souper Bowl Sunday Luncheon on **February 9th after the second service**. The soups will be cream of broccoli soup, beef vegetable soup, vegetarian soup, hot dogs, potato chips and desserts. Please enjoy fellowship and food with one another. Containers of soup will be on sale after the 2nd service. **Donated cans of soup will be very much appreciated and will go to Bluffton Self Help.**

Mark Your Calendar

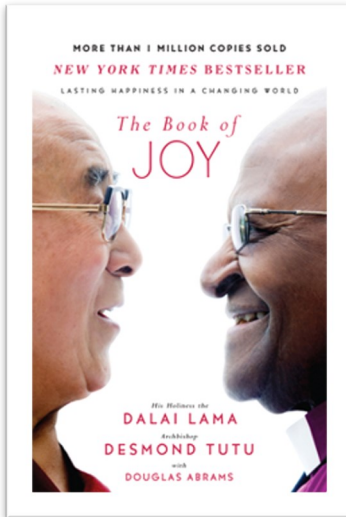
- ◆ Church Council Retreat—Saturday, February 8th (information coming).
- ◆ Shrove Tuesday Pancakes—March 3rd
- ◆ Ash Wednesday Service—March 4th
- ◆ Our District Superintendent, Rev. Terry Fleming, will preach here on Sunday, March 23rd.



✚ The BUMC church directory is in need of being updated. Photo sessions will be scheduled sometime during the Lenten season. Watch for more information in the bulletins!



Bluffton Methodist Women Reading Program



The Little Book of Joy
by His Holiness the Dalai Lama and Archbishop Desmond Tutu

In this picture book adaptation of the bestselling book by the same name, the authors share their childhood struggles to show especially young readers how they can thrive and find joy even during the most challenging times. They tell a simple story of how every child has joy inside them, even if it sometimes hides, and how we can find it, keep it close and grow by sharing it with the world.

Sally Mattingly

Nurture & Discipleship

Deuteronomy 31:6 (NIV) ***“Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid or terrified because of them, for the Lord your God goes with you: he will never leave you nor forsake you.”***



My buzz word for this year is going to be “together”. It seems to be speaking to me in so many ways. I am in an organization and we were deciding on a theme for the year and the word together is being used. In church, we blessed the new leaders on Sunday and together was emphasized as what we need to do with our different missions in our church. Working together not only gets things done, but the fellowship you share together warms your heart and also is pleasing to the Lord. Such a blessing in so many ways. Our church is one big family and family works together in good times and bad. But can also apply to our personal relationships. We always need a partner or friend to share our life journeys. In our personal lives, our jobs, and also most important our relationship with God. As it says in our scripture, He will never leave you or forsake you. We are never alone. When we pray and ask God for answers to our problems, His desire is to work them out together. And when we praise Him for our blessings, we rejoice together.

I read this in the Intouch devotional and want to share it with you. *“In Joy, In Sorrow - We don’t know what this year will bring, but there’s one thing we’re sure of: God will carry us through it all. Together.”*

Blessing to all,

Debbie Kaulig
Chair of Nurture & Discipleship



A new GriefShare class begins every Wednesday, January 15, 1:30 - 3:30 PM, for 13 weeks. It is a Christ-based program. Each class focuses on identifying the different aspects of grief and how to cope with them. Learn strategies, suggestions and awareness of triggers that occurred. The best part of GriefShare is meeting people who are dealing with the same issues. Friendships develop as the weeks go by.

The class meets in the music suite and is led by trained Stephen Ministers and past participants. Contact the church office or Mary Ellen Parks for more information. You do not need to register, just show up. We look forward to meeting you and supporting you on your grief journey.

Mary Ellen Parks, Stephen Leader
(843)368-1852
maryellen.parks22@gmail.com



Happy 2025! It's very hard to believe we've started another year. Now that the holidays have passed, maybe you'd like to get involved in something new. If so, we have just the opportunity for you!

In February, we will be conducting another Spiritual Gifts workshop. This workshop is designed to help you better understand the gifts God has given you. In three short hours, you'll learn more about spiritual gifts in general and complete an individual exercise to identify your personal gifts.

If you aren't sure what gifts you have, or if you think you know but want confirmation, we welcome you to join us. We have two potential dates available: Thursday, February 13 from 1:00-4:00 PM or Monday, February 24 from 1:00-4:00 PM.

We hope you will prayerfully consider participating. Please contact Sara Jenkins at spjuncity@aol.com or 843-298-2076 if you're interested.



Bluffton United Methodist Church Bluffton Methodist Women

Bluffton Methodist Women is a community of women who love God and love people. Our mission is to show Christ's love by helping women, children and youth through local missions and the global community while using our talents, time and contributions to show love and compassion to all.

We currently have four circles that meet on different day and times in hopes that all will find a good fit. You do not have to be a member of our church to join. Please contact a circle leader for more information. The multiple missions our fundraising efforts support are listed below.

- ◆ **Ruth Circle**, Leader: Joyce Atwood ([jla702@yahoo.com](mailto:jl702@yahoo.com)) 4th Monday, 10:00 AM.
- ◆ **Hannah Ulmer Circle**, Co-leaders: Jo Parrot (imbogo2@aol.com) and Sarah Snow (scsnow83@gmail.com), 4th Monday, 6:30 PM.
- ◆ **Esther Circle**, Leader: Debbie Kaulig (ddkaulig@gmail.com), 4th Tuesday, 9:45 AM.
- ◆ **Anna Circle**, Leader: Paula Johnson (pbkremers7@gmail.com), 4th Wednesday, 9:45 AM.

Non-profit and Faith-Based Agencies We Support That Benefit WOMEN, CHILDREN AND YOUTH

LOCAL

Back Pack Buddies of Bluffton

<https://backpackbuddiesbluffton.com>

Bluffton Self Help

<https://blufftonselfhelp.org>

Bluffton Community Soup Kitchen

<http://blufftoneats.org>

C.A.P.A.

<https://capabeaufort.org>

Family Promise

<https://familypromistbeaufortcounty.org>

Fresh Start, Healing Heart

Hopeful Horizons/Children's Advocacy

<https://www.hopefulhorizons.org>

Hospice Care of the Low Country

<https://hospicecareic.org>

Meals on Wheels

www.mowblufftonhiltonhead.org

Memory Matters Salkehatchie

<https://www.umcsc.org/salkehatchie/>

Second Helping Volunteers in Medicine (VIM)

<https://www.vimclinic.org>

STATE

Killingsworth Home

www.killingsworth.org

Wallace Family Life Center

www.wflc.tripod.com

Bethlehem Community Center

www.bethlehemcentercsc.org

(Columbia / Spartanburg)



The BUMMs have been quite active during the final months of 2024. This year's Christmas parade saw some of the coldest weather of the year. The "shivering" BUMMs hosted a donut, soft drink and coffee table at the parade, offering appreciated refreshments to the crowd attending the activities and accepting donations as donuts and drinks were distributed. All donations that were received will go into the BUMMs funds that are distributed to the charities that we support.

Every year, the BUMMs largest fundraising activity is our Pecan Sale that occurs primarily during October and November. Each year, we learn ways that might improve our sale efforts. The BUMMs have expanded our payment options now to include payment by credit card. We also participate in the weekly Bluffton Farmers Market which has expanded our market reach for pecan sales. As the year-end approaches, our gross sales total is over \$26,000.00 and our profit from sales has hit \$8,000.00. We just sold all of the bags this past Sunday, so our profit may increase slightly.

We appreciate all of the support that we receive from our Church family, as well as the community at large. The money that we raise is donated to a list of local charities that we support each year. The BUMMs also have a Scholarship fund with which we offer a cash scholarship offering to deserving students for furthering their education. We believe that education is an essential element of the growth and development of our young people. We are presently reviewing how our Scholarship fund operates with the goal being to make improvements that may offer greater benefit to our young people as they work to continue their education experience.

This year has been a good year for donations to the deserving charities and we look forward to making the next year even stronger with your help and support of the BUMMs and our activities.

The BUMMs meet on the first Saturday of each month, starting with a full breakfast prepared by our "BUMM Chefs" and served in the Church fellowship hall. Breakfast starts at 9 AM and is followed by a business meeting. We often have a guest speaker from one of our charities or some other community leader to present a program. We encourage all men of the Church family to come visit a BUMM meeting. You'll certainly find it a great breakfast and will likely meet some new friends. Our activities each year are focused on providing support to our deserving charities, as well as providing opportunities for fellowship and growth for the men of the BUMMs. Give us a try—we think you'll enjoy it!

Danny W. Jett, Secretary



Music Ministry

January 2025

Greetings from your Church Organist,

The first Organ was merely simple pipes, flutes mostly, then reeds. The organ has always been considered, and rightly so, the king of musical instruments, because it takes up all the sounds of creation – as was just said – and gives resonance to the fullness of human sentiments, from joy to sadness, from praise to lamentation. By transcending the merely human sphere, as all music of quality does, it evokes the divine. The organ's great range of timbre, from piano to a thundering fortissimo, makes it an instrument superior to all others. It is capable of echoing and expressing all the experiences of human life. The manifold possibilities of the organ in some way remind us of the immensity and the magnificence of God. While neighboring churches have abandoned the organ for worship and embraced praise bands, Bluffton UMC has embraced the organ for worship. I cannot say enough about that support. The Organ is timeless for Christian worship. The Bluffton United Methodist Church is blessed with a state-of-the-art Allen Organ.

For more about Allen Organ go to: <https://www.allenorgan.com>

Thanks to all who support the music program and the instruments that lead worship! And that's why the pipe organ is chosen to be a sacred instrument. Soli Deo Gloria!
(Soli Deo Gloria is a Latin term for Glory to God alone.)

In the spirit of Christ,

Your Organist,
Michael Cole



Music Ministry

Upcoming Events



Calling All Women!

Singers needed for our special **Women's Choir** for Bluffton Methodist Women Sunday on January 19. Rehearsal will be **Wednesday, January 15, 6:00-7:00 pm** (Chancel Choir 7-8 PM). RSVP to Keeley to reserve your chair!

Kids Praise Club (Kind - 5th grade)

Our meetings resume **Sunday, January 12, 4:30-5:30 pm** in the Music Suite. This spring we'll be back in the New Testament, exploring Jesus's parables. I can't wait to see what creative ideas we come up with this time! Look forward to that program in May.



Do you love to sing?

Our Chancel Choir is always looking for new singers. Rehearsals are Wednesday evenings, 6:30-8:00 PM in the Sanctuary. We are especially in need of SOPRANO voices in the new year.



Keeley DiMartino
Director of Music Ministry
MusicMinistry@BlufftonUMC.org

Michael Cole
Organist
mcoleanorganist@yahoo.com

Nancy Osgood
Director of Wesley Ringers
njcosgood@gmail.com

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

Happy New Year! We are excited to begin a new year of Christian Education and are changing things up a little bit!



- ✠ Our Youth Fellowship will be on Wednesday evenings and all ages are welcome! We will meet most weeks in the Music Suite at 5 PM and plan to finish about 6 PM. Our fellowship will be some lessons and discussions, some service projects, some planning, and some game nights. All activities will bring us closer to God and we will reinforce Jesus' teachings.
- ✠ Beginning in February, Brenda Armstrong will lead our Kids' Church at the 8:30 service each week except Communion Sundays. She has prepared an interactive, multi-week study on the Armor of God so try not to miss! Children in Kindergarten – 3rd grade are welcome! *(Mature Pre-K children may attend Kids' Church instead of nursery at parents' discretion.)*
- ✠ Our Adult Sunday School classes are both doing book studies and would welcome new members! The men's class meets in Conference Room 2 from 9:30 – 10:30 AM and the women's class meets in Conference Room 1 from 9:30 – 10:30 AM.
- ✠ Our Nursery Staff, Millie and Harriet, welcome children 6 weeks up to 5 years old each week at both services. They care for and play with the children and share the love of Christ with each and every one.

ACTS OF KINDNESS

I'm designating 2025 as the Year of Kindness! I recently saw this on Facebook and shared it – tip your server, return your shopping cart, pick up a piece of trash, hold the door for the person behind you, let someone into your lane. Small acts like these can have a ripple effect and that is how we change the world! These acts should come naturally to those of us who follow Christ – unfortunately, we all fall short and have to be reminded! Remember from Christmas Eve – *“the light shines in the darkness and the darkness cannot overcome it!”* Let your light shine by being kind to others – it will return to you more than you ever anticipated!

Sally LeSage
Director of Christian Education

BUMC's 2025 REPORT OF NOMINATIONS AND LEADERSHIP

Position	Name
Chair Church Council	Doug Oblander
Lay Leader	Sara Jenkins
Lay Leader	Linda Hall
Chair PPRC	Kathy Stutesman (Vice Chair – Annette Fields)
Chair Finance	William Court
Chair Trustees	Cindy Sprouse
Church Treasurer	Ron Davies
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Ron Davies
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Cindy Sprouse
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Jay Sprouse
Lay Member to Annual Conference	Keeley DiMartino
Lay Member to Annual Conference (alternate)	Joanne Davies
Lay Member to Annual Conference	William Court
President UMM (BUMMs)	Al Litster
UMYF Representative	Audrey Atkins
Chair Nurture/Discipleship	Debbie Kaulig
Co-Chair Worship	Donna Kozlowski
Co-Chair Worship	Gary Taylor
Chair Education	Mikey Hervochoch
Children Ministry	Jo Parrott
Youth Ministry	Christina Bryant
Supervisor Church School	Sally LeSage
Epworth Local Church Representative	Cheri O'Rourke
Native American Coordinator	Melanie Hyler
District Relief Coordinator	Cindy Sprouse
Prayer Coordinator	Jen Smith
Recording Secretary	Patti Taylor
Church Historian	Al Litster
Church Historian	Dian Litster
Music Director	Keeley DiMartino

Members at Large of Church Council: Nancy Humes, Tom McCann, Shirley Mingledorff, Bud Mingledorff, Mary Ellen Parks, Sarah Snow

Committee of Nominations & Leadership Development:

Previously Elected, Class of 2025: Casmere Kistner, Ralph Lemmon, Debbie Nelson.
Class of 2026: Nancy Osgood. Class of 2027: Jimmy Gainey, Fran Oblander, Sharral Ruth

Committee on Finance (Members at Large): Tom McCann, John Westervelt, William Court, Ron Davies, representative from Trustees and representative from SPPRC.

Charge Committee on Staff/Pastor Parish Relations: Previously Elected, Class of 2025: Ayers Baughman, John Clingerman, Stan Kozlowski. Class of 2026: Annette Fields, Judy Hardie, Kathy Stutesman. Class of 2027: Roy Austin, Jenny Gniech, Beth Newmarker

Trustees: Previously Elected, Class of 2025: Joanne Davies, Janet LaMartina, Jerry LeSage
Class of 2026: Ann Ansel, Brian Osgood, Cindy Sprouse. Class of 2027: Mark Flugel, Bruce Hardie, Pat Kirkland

BUMC's 2025 COMMITTEE MEMBERS

Missions & Ministries	
Men's Adult Sunday School	Jimmy Gainey
Women's Adult Sunday School	Sharral Ruth
Altar Flower Coordinator	Debbie Kaulig
Bereavement	Kathy Griebel & Sally LeSage
BMW (Bluffton Methodist Women) Ruth Circle, Joyce Atwood Hannah Ulmer Circle, Jo Parrot & Sarah Snow Esther circle, Debbie Kaulig Anna Circle, Paula Johnson	Nancy Humes
Blessing Bags	Charlie Fields & Alan Edwards
Busy Bees (Maintenance)	Contact Church Office
Landscaping Committee	Tom McCann
Prayer Shawls	Joanne Davies
Safety Team	Tom McCann
Stephen Ministry	Mary Ellen Parks, Bill Stutesman & Janet LaMartina

BUMC Treasurer's Report

As of December 31, 2024

Budget Target is 52 of 52 Sundays or 100%

	YTD Income/ Expense	Annual Budget	Percent of Budget
Worship Offerings:			
Plate	459,593	-	-
Online	208,315	-	-
Total Worship Offerings	667,908	615,500	108.5%
Other Revenue:			
Unrestricted Memorial Donation	6,219	-	
Altar Flowers, Facility Rental, Interest, Etc.	8,756	8,500	103.0%
Roof/HVAC Donations	109,179	-	
Total Other Revenue	124,154	8,500	
Total Revenue	792,062	624,000	126.9%
EXPENSE			
Pastoral	172,624	173,402	99.6%
Worship	92,383	98,589	93.7%
Church Endowment Donations	6,200		
Ministry & Education	70,347	74,700	94.2%
Missions	27,067	28,350	95.5%
UMC Apportionments	59,055	59,055	100.0%
Administration & Finance	88,221	84,835	104.0%
Property	94,828	79,215	119.7%
Total Expense	610,725	598,146	102.1%
Surplus YTD	181,337	25,854	

Notes:

Annex Fire Insurance Payment	292,269
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Visit Blufftonumc.org to establish your recurring online giving at the "select page prompt/donate!"

BLUFFTON UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
P. O. BOX 368
BLUFFTON, SC 29910

January-March 2025

TO BE ADDED TO OUR EMAIL LIST,
PLEASE CALL: 843.757.3351 OR EMAIL
THE CHURCH AT: blufftonumc@gmail.com



SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:30 AM & 11:00 AM – Online and In-Person

Pastor Scarlett's Email: pastor@blufftonumc.org
Director of Music Ministry — Keeley DiMartino—Email: musicministry@blufftonumc.org
Director of Christian Education — Sally LeSage – Email: blufftonumc.education@gmail.com
Organist — Michael Cole—Email: mcoleorganist@yahoo.com
Church Office — Laurie Palmer—Email: blufftonumc@gmail.com
Financial Secretary—Joann Garner—Email: financeatbumc@gmail.com
Website: <http://www.blufftonumc.org>