

BUMC's Quarterly

April-June Newsletter 2026

A publication of Bluffton United Methodist Church, Bluffton, SC
Volume 22, Issue 2



How does NASA organize a party? They planet. Yes, that is about as corny as it gets, but you probably smiled a little.

In this season of "incredible and glorious joy," the laughter of Christians can be heard as a sign of faith and hope. We respond to the Resurrection with trust that all will be made well to the glory of God, who is indeed omnipotent! So for the next few weeks, we will have specific tasks. This week, we are to TELL. Peter might have said witness. Tell someone about your faith. It does not have to be a dramatic pronouncement, but when the opportunity arises, speak! Later, we will Do, Pray, Give, Invite and more.

When I was younger, we waited to plant our garden until the leaves on the pecan trees were the size of squirrels' ears. My dad learned from his father what those measurements are. It was fun to see those seeds go into the ground and to imagine the wonderful bounty of summer and early fall. My mom liked to plant flowers among the vegetables, especially zinnias. It was a beautiful garden, but it was a lot of work. Hoeing, watering, weeding, chasing the deer, wild hogs and rabbits was not fun, but the juicy tomatoes and sweet watermelons and all the other fruits and vegetables made it worthwhile.

I think that's a good analogy for our faith and church. We have to make an effort, and sometimes it takes hard work and patience. Reading and seeking understanding of God's Word can be daunting, but keep at it! There will be a harvest in your life. Inviting others means putting yourself out there, but there will be a harvest! Participating in the ministries of the church may be challenging because you don't know everyone or there may be a new skill - give it a try, there will be a harvest. We get out of faith what we put into it.

There are new things coming, the annex will soon be under construction, there's a plan for a Wedding Vow Renewal, we are writing and creating our own VBS based on Christmas, and more. These are opportunities for our church! And some things continue - we are starting real planning for the 2026 Live Nativity this week.

How are you living into the indescribable and glorious Joy of Christ? Are you planting even now for the harvest to come?

Faithfully,
Pastor Scarlett



Upcoming Events

MAY FEST



The May Festival will be held on **Saturday, May 9, 2026**, outdoors, in front of the church. Volunteers are needed for setup and assistance throughout the day. Please plan to arrive by 7:30 AM to help set up. Joyce Atwood and Harriet Edwards will coordinate the event, while Sharral Ruth will oversee the craft table. If you have any questions, feel free to contact them.

See Page 5 for more information!

Mark Your Calendars!

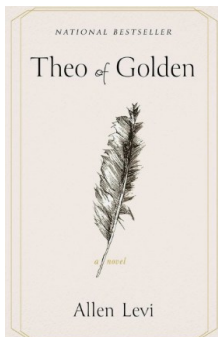
- ◆ Missions Meeting is scheduled for every other month, and the next meeting is **Tuesday, April 21st at 10:00 AM** in Conference Room 1. New members are welcome!
- ◆ BUMC Early Dining on **Thursday, April 23, 5:30 PM** – Toomer's Seafood House, 27 Mellinchamp Dr., Old Bluffton.
- ◆ Libraries for Kids Int'l world Book Day celebration is **Saturday, April 25th**. Visit <https://dreamsunderserengeti.org/> for more information.
- ◆ Blood Drive, **Thursday, May 21 – 12-5 PM**.
- ◆ Wedding Vow Renewal Ceremony and Reception, **Saturday June 20, 2026**. More details to follow.



Bluffton Methodist Women Reading Program

Ladies of Bluffton Methodist Church—PLEASE visit your library in Classroom 1.

I'm sure you'll find something to your taste and for your enjoyment. Don't forget to let Sally Mattingly know by mid-November (call 715-218-3194 or email blagoonhh@aol.com) if you have read 6 or more of our books and what they were. We'd love to give you a little surprise at our Christmas fellowship luncheon.



One of our 2026 books is Theo of Golden. This is currently a very popular book. If someone asks "Have you read...", many will say Theo of Golden. It was first self-published and then bought by Simon and Schuster.

It is a story of giving and receiving, of seeing and being seen. It is a wonderful book about the power of generosity, the importance of connection, and the little miracles we can experience if we choose kindness and wonder. I (Sally M.) think it's one of the best books I've ever read.

HAPPY READING!!!!
Sally Mattingly

Nurture & Discipleship



Romans 10:17 (ESV)

“So Faith comes from hearing, and hearing by the word of God.”

Now, how do we hear the word of God? By reading and studying the Bible, by listening to the scriptures read and the sermons in the Sunday services, and by attending Bible Studies. And on a more personal relationship through daily prayer and reading or listening to devotions. These are just some ways to hear the word of God and build a strong Faith.

If Faith comes by hearing God's word, doubt comes by not hearing it. Let the truth of God's Word be what you hear and receive. We go through life where our faith is tested many, many times and in many different ways. When something bad happens, we wonder where is God? Did he abandoned us? Of course the answer is, no. He is always with us. Faith is knowing he will bring us through what ever situation we find ourselves facing. Not in our time but in His. I have found there is always a scripture to read in my time of pain or uncertainty and I am led to it by my Faith. My Faith that Jesus Christ is my savior and in believing in Him I will have eternal life in Heaven. And if you have faith by hearing the word of God you will have eternal life also. And that calls for a big AMEN.

Blessings to all,

Debbie Kaulig
Chair of Nurture & Discipleship

Annex Update

We have received a bid for the Annex repair and renovation that is within the motion passed by the Church Council at the last meeting. We have accepted the bid and work should begin shortly. I know we are all glad to see this work begin and look forward to its completion.

Doug Oblander
Church Council Chair



Our quilting group has a new name and logo! As mentioned in a recent Children's Sermon, the word Amen can be translated "so be it." So we said YES and we have begun crafting in several new ways to be of service to our church and to the community.

We continue to provide pillowcases to Hopeful Horizons and make prayer shawls and lap robes, but we are also now working on items for Hilton Head Hospital including wheelchair lap robes and baby hats (with a special focus on preemies!). In the past three months, we provided "pencil holders" for the choir and repaired one of the kneelers, but our focus has been on crafting items for May Fest in partnership with Bluffton Methodist Women. We have fun flip-flops, Kleenex box covers, post-it note holders, card holders, and much more in the works.

We are meeting on Thursdays (currently the 2nd and 4th of the month), to finish all these projects by May 5. We hope you can join us some week at 9 am in Fellowship Hall to discover the ways this ministry continues to grow and learn how we can make and create together.

Diane Ciba



Bluffton Methodist Women

May Fest Information

Donation Collection

Donations will be accepted on May 6, May 7 and May 8, 2026. You can drop off your items between 10:00 AM and 12:00 PM in Fellowship Hall. Please bring small items, such as books, small kitchen items, trinkets, jewelry, and similar goods that can be easily carried. **Please do not bring electronics, furniture, clothing, or broken items.** Someone will be available to assist with your donation.

Baked Goods Sale

A variety of baked goods will also be available for sale. Please pack baked items in small bags for distribution. If any items contain nuts, clearly mark the bag to inform buyers.

The BMW Circles Meeting Times and Dates

Ruth Anna—4th Monday at 10 AM in Conference Room 2. Leader: Harriet Edwards

Hanna Ulmer—4th Monday at 6:30 PM in Conference Room 1. Leader: Sarah Snow

Esther—4th Tuesday at 9:45 AM in Fellowship Hall. Leader: Debbie Kaulig

Upcoming Events

Rummage Sale Preview

We are looking forward to organizing a Rummage Sale in October or November. Start saving your treasures for this event. More information will be provided soon.

BUMMS Collaboration

Plans are underway to work with the BUMMS group on parking and other events, including the possibility of offering parking for the July 4th fireworks. Stay tuned for additional details.



The BUMMs will be busy this quarter with activities planned for our church and community. A highlight is our \$500 scholarship program for deserving youth who are active in the church. Scholarship applications will be available this quarter. If you have any questions, please contact Doug Oblander – oblанда@gmail.com

On May 9, we will once again provide hot dogs, hamburgers, chili dogs, drinks, and other food items at the Bluffton Village Festival, commonly known as Mayfest. All proceeds from this event will go to our charities, of which there are now twelve. The festival began in 1978 as a small arts and crafts gathering created to celebrate spring and showcase local talent. Mayfest was founded by local shop owner Babbie Gusco of “The Store on Calhoun Street”, who envisioned a relaxed, community centered event rather than a commercial fair. Early festivals emphasized local artists, simple homemade food, and broad community participation, including food prepared by members of the Church of the Cross. Over the years, Mayfest has grown into one of Bluffton’s most cherished traditions. Today, the event—now officially known as the Bluffton Village Festival—is organized by the Rotary Club of Bluffton, which has overseen the festival since 2009 while preserving its original spirit of community, creativity, and connection.

On May 10, Mother’s Day, the BUMMs will be handing out carnations after to the women of our church. We will also be providing and serving food to everyone after each service for Second Sunday fellowship.

The BUMMs will have no meetings in July or August and will start again on September 12th. However, the Busy Bees will still be working around our church & grounds during this hiatus.

Al Litster
President, BUMMs

James Snow BUMM scholarship applications are available now. The scholarship is open to this year’s high school graduate who are admitted to a college or trade school for next year. Applications are available from Doug Oblander at oblанда@gmail.com or from Sally Lesage. **Deadline for submitting them is May 15, 2026.**



HISTORY CORNER

COMING SOON—175th Anniversary in 2028

The History Committee has several projects in the works. We are digitizing church records and creating an online repository that currently contains over 5,250 documents and photos. We are recording oral histories and hope to expand this project soon. We are photographing items to document events and activities for future generations.

The main focus for the next few years will be organizing and creating events and activities to celebrate the 175th anniversary of Methodists in Bluffton. Diane Ciba has been appointed to chair a Task Force that will include a member from each committee or group of our church. The Task Force will begin meeting in May to discuss all of the many projects that might be included in the festivities for the year 2028. The goal is to celebrate several of the faith-filled people who built our community

We are also working with the Bluffton Historical Foundation to create a walking tour that is scheduled for the spring of 2028 as well. This project will include historic reenactors who will share information about Antebellum homes and churches in the community. These Pre-Civil War actors will include some of our church's formative leaders, including Rev. George Allen and his father-in-law, Dr. Jacob DeVaux Guerard, the cornerstones of Campbell Chapel, our first church.

If you would like to help with any of these projects or have suggestions for activities or events for the 175th anniversary, please contact Al Litster or Diane Ciba.



Music Ministry

“There’s a Reason for the Robe”

Have you ever looked at the choir on a Sunday morning and wondered, “*Why the robes?*” Robes may appear as something we’ve just “always done,” but there’s actually a meaningful story behind them.

Historically, choir robes trace back to the early church, when those leading worship often dressed similarly to clergy. It wasn’t about looking impressive – it was about setting apart the role of leading God’s people in worship. As choirs became more organized over time, robes became a simple and consistent way to reflect that shared purpose.

But robes aren’t just about history – they still matter today.

A large reason as to why robes still matter – unity. When a choir wears robes, you don’t notice who’s wearing what or who stands out more. Instead, you see one group singing with one voice. It reflects what we read in Romans 12:5 – *So in Christ, though many, form one body, and each member belongs to all the others.* The robe is a small but visible reminder that worship is something we do together.

Robes also help shift the focus away from the individual. Choir members aren’t up there to perform or draw attention to themselves – they’re there to lead worship. The robe quietly says, “This isn’t about me.” It allows the message of the music – and ultimately, the message of Christ – to take center stage.

Finally, robes connect us to the larger story of the Church. When we wear our robes, we step into a tradition that spans generations and places around the world. It’s a reminder that we’re part of something much bigger than just one Sunday morning.

Friends - that’s why (the abbreviated version) we wear robes. Not for tradition’s sake alone, but to remind ourselves who we are and whose we are. We wear them to stand together, to lead with humility, and to point every note, every word, and every moment of worship back to God.

In the coming weeks, whether you’re in the choir loft or in a pew, take a moment and ask yourself: *What am I bringing into worship?* Is it a distraction? Pride? Routine? – ...or a heart ready to honor God?

Let the image of the choir robe be a reminder for all of us: to set aside ourselves, to come together in unity, and to refocus on what truly matters. Worship isn’t about being noticed – it is about noticing God.

General Announcement – *The Chancel Choir’s last Sunday this year will be Sunday, May 31st. Please celebrate each choir member for their leading us in song this year! If you have something musical “in your back pocket” that you’d like to share with the congregation one Sunday this summer, please contact Josh to sign up to musically lead a Summer Service. The Chancel Choir will return to regular practice on Wednesday, August 5th and the first Sunday in the loft will be Sunday, August 16th.*

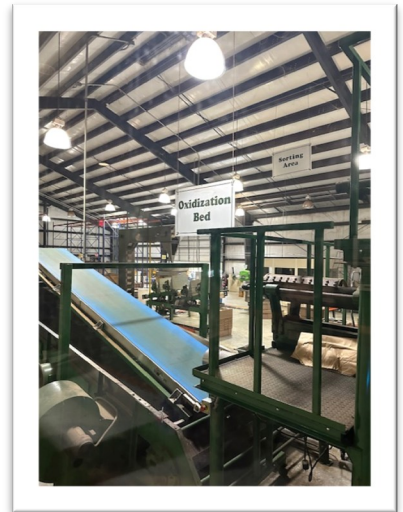
Blessings,
Josh Wall

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

adult ministries



J.O.Y. (Just Older Youth) Journeys visited Charleston Tea Garden, as well as the Angel Tree in February – a wonderful day out of fellowship and fun:



Know of a fun day trip we should do? Send your ideas to blufftonumc.education@gmail.com

Adult Sunday School – the **Seekers** class will begin a study called: *What's the Least I Can Believe and Still Be a Christian?* Contact Sharral Ruth – ruthsharral@gmail.com for more information. The **Connections** class will finish their study on the Sermon on the Mount and begin a new study in May. For more information, contact Jerry LeSage – jlesage50@att.net

Disciple Bible Study – did you know we have 4 groups ongoing? Fall of 2026 we will begin another Disciple I Group – so be thinking now how you can participate!



Bluffton Youth Fellowship (BYF) continues to meet on Sunday afternoons from 5-6 pm. In 2026, we will meet twice a month. All youth from 6th through 12th grades are invited to come for fellowship, fun and growing closer to God through discussions, service and games!

Kids' Church - every Sunday except Communion Sundays, children ages Kindergarten through 3rd grade are invited to leave after the children's message at the 8:30 AM service with the Kids' Church leader. (*Mature PreK children may attend Kids' Church instead of nursery at parents' discretion.*) We have a dedicated team of leaders and fun curriculum lined up for this spring.



Kids Praise Choir (KPC) - Each Sunday from 4 - 4:45 (ish) children Kindergarten through 5th grade are invited to come learn and sing with us! Our theme for 2025-26 is Worship and kids will be learning about all the parts of a worship service and the liturgical year. Kids will sing in worship 2 times during the spring.

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.

- ⇒ Sunday, April 26 — End of year celebration for Kids Praise Choir, 4-4:45 PM.
- ⇒ Sunday, May 3—Graduate Recognition, both services.
- ⇒ Sunday, June 14 – Disciple Recognition.
- ⇒ July, 13–17—Vacation Bible School, 5:30-8:00 PM.



SAVE THE DATES for VBS 2026!
July 13-17— 5:30-8 PM

BUMC Treasurer's Report

As of March 31, 2026

Budget Target is 13 of 52 Sundays or 25%

	YTD Income/ Expense	Annual Budget	Percent of Budget
Worship Offerings:			
Plate	90,175	-	-
Online	53,532	-	-
Total Worship Offerings	143,707	603,200	23.8%
Other Revenue:			
Unrestricted Memorial Donation	25	-	
Altar Flowers, Facility Rental, Interest, Etc.	1,628		
M&E Income (books, events)	845		
UMC Grant			
PPSPRC/Stephen Ministries	211	-	
Stock Income			
Annex Fire Donations			
Total Other Revenue	2,709	-	
Total Revenue	146,416	603,200	24.3%
EXPENSE			
Pastoral	43,074	173,402	24.8%
Worship	24,226	106,839	22.7%
Ministry & Education	16,638	62,500	26.6%
Missions	3,478	27,500	12.6%
UMC Apportionments	13,960	59,598	23.4%
Administration & Finance	20,945	93,321	22.4%
Property	56,978	77,040	74.0%
Total Expense	179,299	600,200	29.9%
Surplus YTD	(32,883)	3,000	

Notes:

Annex Fire Insurance Payment Balance

263,470

*Annual Property Insurance paid in full

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

April-June 2026

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 — Josh Wall—Email: musicministry@blufftonumc.org

Director of Christian Education — Sally LeSage – Email: blufftonumc.education@gmail.com

Organist — TBD—Email: organist@blufftonumc.org

Church Office — Laurie Palmer—Email: blufftonumc@gmail.com

Financial Secretary—Joann Garner—Email: financeatbumc@gmail.com

Website: <http://www.blufftonumc.org>

OFFICE HOURS

Mon. – Thurs. 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM
(843) 757-3351

MAILING ADDRESS

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Bluffton, SC 29910