

2024

JANUARY

NEWSLETTER

A publication of Bluffton United Methodist Church, Bluffton, SC
Volume 20, Issue 1

January 2024

Happy New Year!

On Sunday, December 31st, we faced 2024 together with the prayer from the Wesley Covenant Service. He loved this service and saw it as a holy opportunity to examine our relationship to God and how we are living our faith. I am wondering if we should not pause to examine our lives through the lens of this prayer more often. They tell me it takes 8 weeks for something to become a habit. So, if praying the prayer sparks a new habit, devotional practice, missional act, or attitude within you, then maybe we need to pull out the prayer in 8 weeks or so and see how we are doing. Of course, in 8 weeks, we will be in Lent!

The days fly by. But everyday is an opportunity to live as God's people, sharing his love and doing what we can to reveal the Kingdom of God. How do you plan to show off the Baby of Bethlehem this year?

*"I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen."*

Pastor Scarlett



Do you have questions about Islam? The Middle East? How things got to where they are today with Hamas, Hezbollah, Palestine and so on? Come and join Dean Loftin on Sunday, January 21 and 28 at 2:00 PM for an informative time.

Week 1—Mohammed and the Quran

Week 2—Islam Today

Each session is a 2-hour seminar. All are welcome to attend!

A promotional card for an author series event. On the left, there is a white calendar icon with a red top bar and the number '15' in black. To the right of the calendar is a square photograph of a woman with short, wavy, reddish-brown hair, smiling. She is wearing a white top and white earrings. To the right of the photo, the text reads: 'FREE AUTHOR SERIES!' in white, 'FEATURING GUEST SPEAKER: CASSANDRA KING CONROY' in white, and 'MONDAY, JANUARY 15 10:30AM' in gold.

MONDAY, JANUARY 15, 2024 AT 7:30 AM EST

FREE Author Series! Meet Cassandra King Conroy!

Bluffton United Methodist Church



STEPHEN MINISTRY

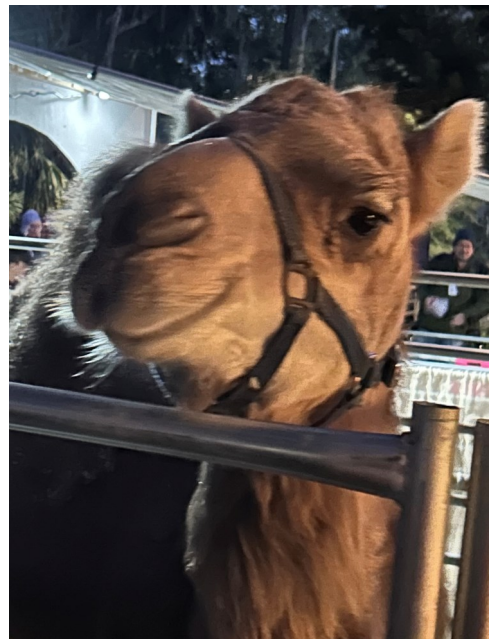
Stephen Ministry has been busy helping people, either individually and in small groups who are looking for support. The problem is that we don't have enough Stephen Ministers to meet the needs of the community. We are desperately seeking congregation members who would be willing to become Stephen Ministers.

New candidates will be trained in the skills of listening, confidentiality, empathy, boundaries and reflecting God's love. The current team is ready and eager to begin the training that could change your life and the lives of those you touch. It would happen over a period of 3 to 4 months, and will accommodate your schedule. The training could happen in the evenings for those who work.

Please consider this amazing ministry by calling the church office, or Mary Ellen Parks (843-368-1852), Bill Stutesman (214-435-0243) or Janet LaMartina (208-409-0476).

GriefShare, a 13-week class for people who are grieving the loss of a loved one, will start on January 31, 2024. We will meet in the Music Suite at 1:30 PM each Wednesday. We hope you will consider joining our group. Register at griefshare.org.

One of our GriefShare participants came to the Live Nativity on December 19 and shared this picture. You never know how God's hand is at work with His people. Praise the Lord.



2024
Happy New Year



BLUFFTON METHODIST WOMEN



Who is Florence Price?

by [Students of the Special Music School Kaufman Music Center](#) (Author), [NY Students of the Special Music School at the Kaufman Music Center](#)

Florence loved her mother's piano playing and wanted to be just like her. When she was just four years old she played her first piano concert and as she grew up she studied and wrote music hoping one day to hear her own music performed by an orchestra. This is the story of a brilliant musician who prevailed against race and gender prejudices to become the first Black woman to be recognized as a symphonic composer and be performed by a major American orchestra in 1933.

GUEST SPEAKER—We are looking forward to Bluffton Methodist Women's Sunday on January 21st with our guest speaker, Rev. Millie Nelson Smith.



This is a day of new beginnings, time to remember and move on
Time to believe what love is bringing, laying to rest the pain that's gone

For by the life and death of Jesus, God's mighty Spirit, now as then
Can make for us a world of difference, as faith and hope are born again

Then let us, with the Spirit's daring, step from the past and leave behind
Our disappointment, guilt, and grieving, seeking new paths, and sure to find

Christ is alive, and goes before us to show and share what love can do
This is a day of new beginnings; our God is making all things new
(UMH 383 "This Is a Day of New Beginnings")

Happy New Year!!! As I reflect back on 2023, I feel truly blessed to work with such a wonderful and talented music ministry team of children, youth, and adults. I feel proud to be a part of a church whose mission efforts have provided for our community. I feel grateful for all that we have learned and accomplished in 2023. But I also recognize that for some, 2023 was a difficult year. Some have struggled with illness, some have mourned the passing of loved ones, and we've all witnessed the violence and evil that is so prevalent in our world.

Yet, scripture reminds us that Jesus's birth was a new beginning. In the shadow of our pain, Jesus shines hope, peace, joy, and love. We don't forget the past, but we dare to step into the new year with the strength of the Holy Spirit, knowing that whatever this year brings, Jesus goes before us. This is a day of new beginnings and our God is making all things new!



Calling All Women!

Singers needed for our special **Women's Choir** for Bluffton Methodist Women Sunday on January 21. Rehearsals will be Wednesday, January 10 & 17 at 6:30pm. RSVP to Keeley.



Keeley DiMartino
Director of Music Ministry
MusicMinistry@BlufftonUMC.org

Michael Cole
Organist, Pianist, Accompanist
mcoleorganist@yahoo.com

Nancy Osgood
Director of Wesley Ringers
njcosgood@gmail.com



CHRISTIAN EDUCATION



Please join me in thanking our dedicated and loving volunteers who help make Christian Education an exciting and engaging ministry at BUMC –
We couldn't do it without you!

December Volunteers

Children's Messages – Keeley DiMartino, Lynn Newsom

Kids' Church – Mikey Hervocho

Assistants during CANTATA – Laura VanHorn, Annabel Court

Christian Education Publicity – Mikey Hervocho

Youth Leadership – Keeley DiMartino

AV and Tech Support – Brian Osgood

Youth Meals – The Hesters

Live Nativity – Nancy & Rick Humes, Tom McCann, Gary & Patti Taylor, Melanie Terhune, Donna Kozlowski, Mikey Hervocho, Christina Bryant, Keeley DiMartino, Brian Osgood, Laurie & John Palmer, Mike Cole, Bruce Hardie, Shari Steenson, Jillian Kozlowski and ALL THE CAST MEMBERS.



Winter 2024 Sunday Schedule

- ◆ **Nursery Sundays at 8:30 and 11 AM** – children up to 4 years old (Prekindergarten)
- ◆ **Kids' Church Sundays at 8:30 and 11 AM** – Kindergarten through 3rd Grade
- ◆ **Adult Sunday School Sundays 9:45 AM** – Conference Room 1
- ◆ **Youth Group – 6 PM Sundays** – Annex



MISSIONS



Thank you for your **MANY** donations in December and throughout the year to the **Pastor's Discretionary Benevolence Fund**. This is a reserve fund kept with the purpose of caring and providing for members of the community in need. Because of your loving hearts, many of our neighbors will be assisted with necessary living expenses throughout the coming year.

MIRACLE JAR donations in January will go to the local chapter for **Kairos Prison Ministry**. "Kairos is a lay-led, interdenominational Christian *ministry* in which men and women volunteers bring Christ's love and forgiveness to *prisoners* and their families. The word, *Kairos*, is a Greek word meaning in "God's Special Time" or in the "Fullness of Time," indicating an opportunity for our participants and guests to reconsider their life choices. The Kairos programs take the participants on a journey that demonstrates the love and forgiveness of Jesus Christ." The Local chapter ministers to those at the Ridgeland Correctional Institution. Checks may be made to the church with "miracle jar" on the memo line. Thank you in advance for your generosity.



Our sanctuary in December was filled with song, scripture, Bible lessons, beautiful Christmas decorations and **UNBELIEVABLE** expressions of **LOVE FOR OTHERS** as was displayed by the "mountains" of food donations through our **Reverse Advent Program**. Because of the generosity of our congregation, our local food banks have been stocked for the new year! **THANK YOU!**

Missions would like to take this opportunity to thank every member of the congregation for your prayers, donations, and financial support of our programs throughout 2023.



"Whoever is generous to the poor lends to the Lord, and he will repay him for his deed." Proverbs 22:9

Happy New Year 2024

MISSIONS

Epworth Children's Home in Hilton Head

Grand Opening

Join us for our Grand Opening Celebration
and ribbon cutting for our Foster Care
Program located on Hilton Head Island.

»»»»

18 January 2024 at 10 a.m

««««

18 A Pope Avenue Hilton Head Island SC 29928

<https://www.epworthchildrenshome.org/>



LANDSCAPE BEAUTIFICATION TEAM

“And the Lord God took the man and put him into the Garden of Eden to dress it and keep it” (Genesis 2:15)

The Landscape Team has had a busy end of the year, putting the perennials to bed for their yearly nap and removing spent annuals. Then, before Christmas, Linda Hall and Tom McCann planted 80 yellow snapdragons and 40 purple big face pansies in the Sanctuary Gardens to add beauty and color around the church's front steps. In accordance with the plan for 2024 established at the yearly meeting in September, by those gardeners in attendance, several perennials were planted in October and November. For example, 6 team members had added about 200 daffodils, earlier this fall. Linda Hall and Barbara McCann added 60 daffodils to the Lantana Garden and Lynn Newsom, Patti and Gary Taylor added another 60 to the Fern Garden. The remaining daffodils were planted in the Choristers Garden and the Sunshine Garden. In addition to the daffodils, 20+ Irises were planted in a raised bed in the Sunshine Garden.



Our Black-eyed Susan is still showing God's beauty in the Sunshine Garden.

In the Reflection Garden, hostas have been added to the rosemary plants that nestle in front of the azaleas there. More hydrangeas (Oakleaf) have been added to the Office Gardens where Betsy Epply has trimmed back the liriopes. In the children's Garden, the beans, peppers and tomato plants have been removed, but the basil, marigolds and zinnias are holding on. Finally, Patti Taylor has continued to pull liriopes around the signboard bed and planted mums according to her plan proposed last September. Enjoy the added color of Sweet Williams and the pansies that were recently planted.

Also, this is the time of the year to enjoy the camellias along the Allen Street walk. Jan Smith has worked to add hostas along the walk and transplanted several hostas over to the Lantana Garden.

Keep in mind that the Landscape Team is always looking for more gardeners to be stewards for the church's gardens. Currently, there are some openings to assist as a part-time gardener. We meet in the spring to plan for the year and occasionally we have planting days as a group. There are no set times to work on your designated garden, you schedule your own time. Actually, to maintain each garden (weeding and fertilizing) takes no more than twice a month. It's a good opportunity to learn some basic gardening knowledge. So if you love plants, dislike weeds and desire to serve God in His gardens, come join us. **Contact Tom or Barbara McCann (443) 618-8983.**



NURTURE AND DISCIPLISHIP

Lamentations 3:22-24 *“Because of the Lord’s great love we are not consumed, for his compassions never fail. They are new every morning; great is your faithfulness.”*

God gives mercy each day and it is refilled and refreshed each morning. We all have sins and have things we would like to change. They could be personal, they could be in your relationships, they could also be material. We all think of these things for the New Year with resolutions on the first day of the new year. Why only then? You know you can’t change some things or almost anything in a day. Let it extend to all year long. Try to set goals or a timeline. And you know if you fail or things don’t go as planned, you can pray and the Lord will give you mercy, each and every day forever. You have heard the saying “When at first you don’t succeed, try, try again”. That’s what the Lord is saying. No matter what your sin is, or your failing moment the Lord will give you mercy and forgiveness. Just ask and you will receive.



Debbie Kaulig,
Chair of Nurture & Discipleship



TREASURER'S COMMENTS **December 31, 2023**

Another year is “in the books!” Apologies for the accounting humor. What a wrap up to an eventful 2023. December brought an outpouring of support from our congregation on the offering line and also brought a Nor’easter rainstorm that raged for many hours and finally penetrated our aging roof where the sanctuary roof and education wing roof butted together on a Sunday morning before worship! Thank you very much to those who became the “bucket brigade” and saved our pews, floors and pew seat cushions from potentially damaging leaks. For the year 2023, our Total Revenue exceeded our budget estimate by \$33,878. Your continued commitments to meeting the costs of operation for God’s Bride the Church are truly amazing, generous and appreciated by our Church Leaders. In addition, our Total Expenses were under budget by \$22,728. This resulted in a 2023 General Fund Operating Surplus of \$66,762.

That is not the entire story however, since other cash expenditures on Property Plant and Equipment, the Permanent Endowment Fund and paying off the mortgage used to expand the Church in the past resulted in a negative cash flow for the year of \$(37,504.25). In early January 2024, thanks to the Nor’easter mentioned above and the fast work of the Trustees, Church Leaders, Staff, Ace Roofing and Congregation, both the entire Church Building and the Annex have new roofs. There is a 10-year warranty on the new roofs, the shingles are installed to withstand 140 mph winds, and ACE roofing will inspect the roofs quarterly to keep them in tip top shape at no extra charge.

We have asked our congregation to prayerfully consider making donations toward the cost of the roofs and are happy to report that this week over \$18,000 has been collected toward the \$85,000 cost. If you haven’t yet donated toward this necessary project, you still can by letting us know your donation is for the cost of the “roof.” Thank you so much in advance for your consideration.

This new year has me thinking about the overwhelming “immorality” impacting the world. If you are feeling anxious about the state of affairs, remember that God is in control and the best things you can do are trust and have faith while concentrating on your own self-improvement. We have control over our own minds, hearts and souls. If we fill ourselves with gratitude and the fruits of the spirit, we can make a difference by making the lives of our families, friends, coworkers and others we come in contact with better. You can’t change others, but you can change yourself! Happy New Year!

Tim Wyld, Church Treasurer



BUMC Treasurer's Report
Designated Funds as of December 31, 2023
Budget Target is 53 of 53 Sunday 100%

			YTD Expenses	Annual Budget	Percent of Budget
Worship Offerings:					
Plate			430,569	-	-
Online			166,713	-	-
Total Worship Offerings			<u>597,282</u>	<u>573,900</u>	104.1%
Other Revenue:					
Unrestricted Memorial Donation			7,125	-	
Altar Flowers, Facility Rental, Interest, Etc.			11,871	8,500	139.7%
Total Other Revenue			<u>18,996</u>	<u>8,500</u>	
Total Revenue			<u>616,278</u>	<u>582,400</u>	105.8%
EXPENSE					
Pastoral			161,501	164,108	98.4%
Worship			80,834	95,615	84.5%
Ministry & Education			65,886	67,950	97.0%
Missions			27,426	28,350	96.7%
UMC Apportionments			60,471	60,471	100.0%
Administration & Finance			82,672	77,900	106.1%
Property			70,726	77,850	90.8%
Total Expense			<u>549,516</u>	<u>572,244</u>	96.0%
Surplus YTD			<u>66,762</u>	<u>10,156</u>	
Notes:					
<i>Administration & Finance was impacted by the hiring of 2 new employees to replace the previous one employee when the 2023 budget was prepared in September 2022.</i>					
Visit Blufftonumc.org to establish your recurring online giving at the "select page prompt/donate!"					



Anniversaries, Birthdays and Prayers

Anniversaries

01/04—Joe & Kathy Walter
01/11—Jerry & Sandy Reichert
01/12—Mike & Mary Sperry
01/14—Jay & Mary Ellen Parks
01/28—Ralph & Jeanne Lemmon

Birthdays

01/01—Debbie Kaulig
01/02—Scott Harris
01/03—Keeley DiMartino
01/04—Gwynn Yocco
01/04—Becky Lynn McCorkendale
01/04—Christopher McCorkendale
01/05—Gary McDonald
01/05—Al Litster
01/06—Jeff Cooper
01/07—Robie Hester
01/10—Aidan Bryant
01/15—Sara Boyles
01/17—Sarah Sweers
01/17—Alan Ulmer Jr.
01/19—Peggy Chandler
01/20—Jackie Ulmer
01/20—Cathie Ulmer
01/20—Natalie Giles
01/24—Sandy Rhodes
01/25—Bill Starkey
01/26—Joanne Rymer
01/26—Carolyn Smith
01/28—Matt Sapochak
01/29—Jenny Gniech
01/29—Becky Manley
01/29—Tom Epply
01/30—Dave Atwood



Rebecca Adler & Family
Daniel Alba
Lana Armstrong
Rocky Austin
Lois Barton
Rita Bobko
Jenny & Bobby Brannen
Jason Brown
Krystal Buck
Paul Bucklin
Lynn Cleveland
Pat Cleveland
Pat Crews

David De Paolis
Elizabeth & Larry Duncan
Richard Falon
Donna & Kari Fiero
David Harper
Rick Humes
Mike Hurst
Meredith Inglis
Vera Jones
Lloyd & Paula Lamb
Paul Laughlin
Judy McDonald
Elizabeth Napolitano

Barbara O'Connor
Michelle O'Connor
Mackenzie Orth
Megan Phelps
Tori Rinehart
Linda Allen Smith
Betty Thraikill
Jackie Tuohig
Brent & Jeanne VanBuskirk
Steve VanHorn
Judy Walden
Joe Walter
Rick Wortman

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

January 2024

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 – Cell: 1.843.907.5389

Director of Music Ministry: Keeley DiMartino; email – musicministry@blufftonumc.org

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

Organist, Pianist, Accompanist —Michael Cole—Email—mcoleorganist@yahoo.com

Church Office: 843.757.3351; Email blufftonumc@gmail.com; Website: <http://www.blufftonumc.org>

OFFICE HOURS

Mon. – Thurs. 9:30 AM – 2:30 PM

MAILING ADDRESS

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Bluffton, SC 29910