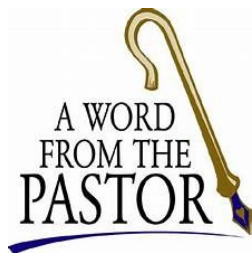


BUMC's Quarterly NEWSLETTER

A publication of Bluffton United Methodist Church, Bluffton, SC
Volume 21, Issue 4

October-December 2025



In this newsletter, you will read about SO MANY exciting possibilities for us to worship and serve God together, it is a season of joyful busyness. However, there is one special moment I invite you to pause and ponder. In August, we participated in the baptism of Elliott D'Angelo. As I explained to her sisters, who were also baptized here, in baptism, God says, "*You are mine, forever and ever.*" Elliott smiled at all of you and you smiled and nudged each other as we walked past, it was a special and holy day.

I was at Annual Conference this past June, Bishop Fairley called a Special Session of the Annual Conference to convene on October 18th electronically to hear the proposals from the Jeremiah Teams and to vote. I have served on the Jeremiah Team entrusted with studying how the number of districts in the South Carolina Annual Conference could be, or should be, reduced. After a year of study that included data analysis, conversations with district superintendents, district admins, leaders from other conferences, our conference treasurer and more, we have determined that reduction is necessary and prudent. We propose going from 12 to 10 districts, with a provision that the study will be continued and this first reduction may be considered a first phase. You may learn more by reading the [Advocate](#) or on the Conference website, where there is a [full report of the Jeremiah Teams](#).

Faithfully,
Pastor Scarlett

On Sunday, August 31, we celebrated the baptism of Elliott Victoria D'Antonio

Baptism



Annex Update—September 18, 2025

William Court presented a verbal update to the congregation at both services on September 14, 2025. Vacations, time away and other commitments meant that we had to wait to have a full Council meeting, but the Council wanted to be assured that everyone had access to the progress in decision making on the Annex. After much conversation and deliberation, the Council determined the next steps for the direction we are taking with the Annex in the aftermath of the fire. I want to bring you up to date and answer some questions surrounding this project.

I want to begin by thanking James Atkins and the staff at Court Atkins for all of their work. They met with members of the congregation to ascertain needs. They spent considerable time developing plans and seeking bids to allow the Church Council to make an informed decision. Their support in reviewing this helps us to be good stewards of the resources and balance them with the needs of the church. James met with Bluffton Town officials to gain preliminary support.

Previously, Church Council considered three options for the Annex:

1. Tearing down the building and building a replacement.
2. Repairing the building with some changes to make it meet current codes and improve functionality for the missions and other church activities while staying within the current footprint and a prudent budget set by the insurance settlement.
3. Repairing and renovating the building with the addition of a second floor in the center part of the building. This would result in an unfinished second floor space of approximately 600 square feet. This space would be available for future use when the purpose is determined. This expansion would not be for current use, but this is the best opportunity to add it when the work is being completed.

It was agreed that the first option was very cost prohibitive and was therefore dismissed. The Council asked James and his staff to review options 2 and 3. James presented drawings of those two as well as two bids from contractors who could do the work.

Adding a second floor would require additional funding in the range of \$150,000 to \$200,000, which would require us to undertake a capital campaign. Church Council discussion centered around the issue whether or not the church needed space at this time. Although this would be the most cost-effective **time** to add the space, there was not strong sentiment to add it without a specific purpose in mind.

The second option allows for upgrading restrooms to accessible standards, adding needed storage, and making the Annex more functional for mission and meeting use. I want to take this opportunity to thank the Busy Bees who moved their equipment and supplies to the storage shed making new use of the garage space a part of this discussion.

It was the decision of Church Council to move forward with the second option. James and his staff have already met with the people who utilize the building most to understand their needs. Within budget constraints they will develop a plan to meet those needs and move forward with repair and renovation of the Annex. As those plans are completed, we will share them with the congregation.

The Church Council has shown good judgement assessing our current needs and being good stewards of our resources. I believe we will have created and improved a critical space for our church activities within manageable costs.

Doug Oblander
Chair, Church Council

Upcoming Events for All Ages

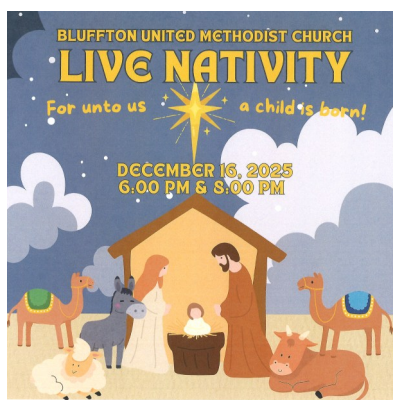
Mark Your Calendars -

Harvest Festival! October 26, 2025!



- ⇒ 3:30 PM - Spooky Organ Concert (Sanctuary). Kid and Adult friendly, with costume parade!
- ⇒ 4:30 – 6:30 PM - Games, food, prizes and fun on the Lawn.
- ⇒ Halloween costumes are encouraged – we'll have a photo booth!
- ⇒ Candy bags are welcomed to hold prizes and treats. For more information or to volunteer, contact Sally LeSage <mailto:blufftonumc.education@gmail.com>

King and Queen of the Harvest! – New addition to the Harvest Festival – \$1 per vote and the funds will go towards our Live Nativity – help us bring back the camel! Voting starts early October, King and Queen will be crowned at the Harvest Festival! **Voting jars are in the Fellowship Hall.**



BUMC's LIVE NATIVITY

Tuesday, December 16, 6-8 PM
(weather permitting—no rain date)

Join us for a family-friendly experience of the Christmas Story. Meet nativity animals and enjoy some light refreshments.

Limited seating is available so it is advised you bring your own chair.

If you would like to put a poinsettia in the church for Christmas in honor or in memory of someone, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate, along with your check. The cost is **\$15.00** each. **The deadline is Sunday, November 23rd.** You may take the plant home after the evening worship service on December 24th. Please place your form & check in the offering plate OR mail your form & check to BUMC, P.O. Box 368, Bluffton, SC 29910. Thank you!



Given by: _____

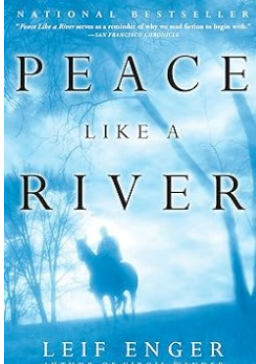
How many plants? _____

In Honor of: _____



Bluffton Methodist Women Reading Program

Ladies, our reading year is flying by. **Please let me know by the end of October** if you have read 6 or more of our library books this year. If so, at our December fellowship, you will receive recognition and a little "happy". Either email me at blagoonhh@aol.com or mail me your list at Sally Mattingly, 23 Middleton Gardens Pl., Bluffton, SC 29910. Be sure and visit our library as there are lot of good books for you to enjoy such as-----



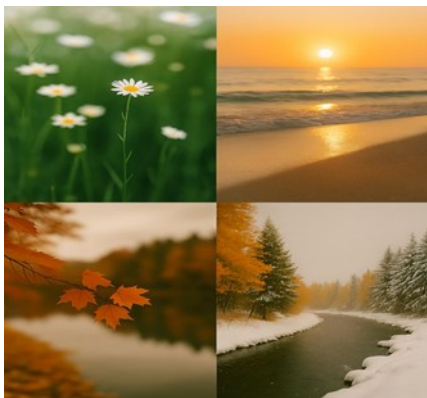
Peace Like a River by Leif Enger

Narrated by 11 year-old Reuben Land, it is the story of his unusual family and their journey across the frozen Badlands of the Dakotas in search of his fugitive brother. It is at once a tragedy, a romance, and an unflagging exploration into the spirituality and magic possible in the everyday world. It is a celebration of family, faith and spirit.

Sally Mattingly

Nurture & Discipleship

Ecclesiastes 3:1 (NIV) - *"There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the*



Don't you just love the changing of the seasons? We are now changing from summer to fall and then winter will come. Then before we know it, Spring will make everything new again. We also have the season of Thanksgiving and Christmas coming up. Most of us have many reasons for gratitude and praise to the Lord for our many blessings of family and friends. And we may have peace in where we are in the season of life.

Now think back on all the seasons of life. The joys, the sorrows, the victories, the failures, good health, the sicknesses, the happy times and the very sad times, the many births and deaths. All that life stuff.

But through it all, our faith in the Lord carries us through the good and the bad. He always loves us and gives us the strength to carry on. The words we read in scriptures about seasons are many. And the word season can mean just a specific time. The Lord gives us seasons in life and in our natural world. And when we go home there will be only one season. A glorious one with God.

Blessing to all,

Debbie Kaulig
Chair of Nurture & Discipleship



Stephen Ministry

On Saturday September 13, 2025, our Stephen Ministers attended the 50th year celebration of the founding of the Stephen Ministry Program. The celebration known as JUBILEE was held at Providence Presbyterian Church on Hilton Head Island, SC.

Stephen Ministers, leaders and care receivers—past and present—gathered for a special one-day event. The morning presentation was led by Dr. Kenneth Haugk, the founder of Stephen Ministries, and other key faculty. Dr. Haugk took the stage, his voice full of warmth and gratitude, as he recounted the humble beginnings of the ministry in 1975. He shared stories of the first nine lay caregivers he trained, and how Stephen Ministry has grown.

Currently, Stephen Ministry is now in more than 14,000 congregations from more than 190 Christian denominations, in all 50 states in the US, 10 Canadian provinces, and 30 other countries. More than 75,000 pastors, church staff, and laypeople have trained as Stephen Leaders (those who oversee and direct Stephen Ministry in the congregation). More than 600,000 people have trained as Stephen Ministers (laypeople who provide care to those who are hurting) in their congregations.

During this one-day event, Stephen Ministers were presented with lectures regarding current trends of modern-day challenges through the lens of faith-based caring.

Understanding grief: Grief is a natural, ongoing process that requires compassionate, long-term support. Caregivers were reminded of the importance of allowing grieving individuals a safe space to process their feelings.

Empathy as a core ministry: Empathy, modeled by Jesus, is central to offering Christ-centered care. Ministers were encouraged to practice non-judgmental listening to help others feel truly heard and understood.

Mental health awareness: With the increased prevalence of mental health struggles, Stephen Ministers were equipped with awareness and tools to support those who are hurting. The training stressed the importance of knowing when to connect someone with professional help.

God's role in the healing process: Throughout the sessions, speakers reinforced the Christ-centered nature of the ministry, emphasizing that God's love and comfort are the ultimate source of healing for those facing life's struggles.

Stephen Ministry serves to bring Christ's healing love to those who are hurt. Jesus instructed his disciples to *"love one another as I have loved you"* (John 13:34). Stephen Ministry provides the foundation of active listening, grace acceptance, empathy and confidentiality.



Left to Right: Libby Gordon, Brenda Armstrong, Mark Thomas, Dr. Haugk, Sharral Ruth, Janet LaMartina, Bill Stutesman. Missing: Mary Ellen Parks.



**The
BUMM's
Pecans Sales
26 Years**



TIME TO ORDER PECANS FOR CHARITY

- Order forms are available at our Pecan Stations in the Narthex & Fellowship Hall
- Place your completed order form with remittance in the receptacle
- Alternately, pay by credit card at our pecan station in Fellowship Hall when manned
- We will announce when church orders will be ready for pickup at the church sometime in November.



History Corner

Divided Loyalties of the Revolutionary War

Like the rest of the South at the dawn of the American Revolution, the residents of May River Neck — present day Palmetto Bluff — were caught in the chaos of a divided nation with neighbors, and sometimes even families, on opposing sides. Turmoil erupted among patriots, loyalists, and neutral parties who refused to take a side fueling tensions that rippled through the colonies resulting in an ideological clash which turned into a bloody conflict at Palmetto Bluff.

To find out about Palmetto Bluff's surprising past, and those who lived there during the Revolutionary War, **please join Palmetto Bluff Archaeologist Katie Epps for her talk on Divided Loyalties at Palmetto Bluff on October 22nd at 3:30 at Bluffton United Methodist Church.**



Bluffton United Methodist Church Bluffton Methodist Women (BMW)

Second Sunday Fellowship Dates:

- ♦ October 12th—hosted by Esther Circle.
- ♦ November 9th—hosted by Anna Circle
- ♦ December 14th —hosted by Hanna Ulmer/Ruth Circles.

All are welcome!

All women of BUMC are invited to attend our Saturday Fellowship events. The next event is Saturday, October 25, 2025. We will start at 10:30 AM with a short meeting, followed by a guest speaker from a representative from Duffy Stone's Office. We will also be doing a small craft together; Dian Ciba will be leading this. December 13 is our next fellowship. There will be lots of fun, singing Christmas Carols, games, crafts and of course, fellowship. Also, there will be 3 door prizes to be given away.

Sunday, October 26, is Harvest Festival at 4:30 PM. BMW are planning to have a bake sale between services and all proceeds will go to our missions. We are looking for items such as pies, small cakes, cupcakes and bread. If interested, please contact Casmere Kistner cwkistner@verizon.net. There will be a craft table at the festival to sell our special items.

Still looking for some fundraising ideas. Suggestions include bingo night, dance, or tea. Other ideas are welcome.

All women are invited to the BMW events. More events to come in 2026!!

Non-profit and Faith-Based Agencies We Support That Benefit

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)



Music Ministry

Hello friends!

First – thank you ALL for the warm welcome as I’ve transitioned into my role here at BUMC. The friendly faces, welcoming hugs, and joyful music made has been a comfort. I am grateful to all of you and look forward to making more of a “joyful noise” as we worship together.

With the Advent season approaching, I started thinking about the “thing” that church choirs have been doing for what seems like an eternity – the cantata. Further, I began to question how do we as Christians today learn about worship and church music? How do we think about what music we will sing in Christian worship and the principles that should guide us in choosing and leading church music? This “short” blurb hopes to offer and explore an example of how we live out God’s call in leading music: by studying the example of a faithful Christian musician from the past. I hope to clarify from the start that I’m not saying J.S. Bach is the best example of a church musician and certainly not that he is the only example. However, Bach does offer us one example of a musician who dedicated most of his life to creating and leading music for the Christian church and sought to do so faithfully, creatively, and skillfully.

The church cantata is a form or dramatic religious music that originated in Italy and was later adopted by German composers like Bach. It is characterized by its multi-movement structure, often based on hymn texts, and was intended to be sung. Bach would fuse much music traditions of choral songs and congregational singings with operatic styles of solo songs. A standard cantata is typically in six to eight different movements and quotes text (Bible verses and Hymn verses) and new poetry. Most cantatas would begin with an opening Bible verse and conclude with a choral (or hymn verse) with the middle movements consisting of newly written poetry.

Bach’s contributions to the cantata have been significant as he expanded its repertoire and introduced new forms and styles. His cantatas were not only a reflection of his musical genius, but also a response to the changing musical landscape of his time. Throughout Bach’s lifetime, he composed over 275 cantatas. Having started composing cantatas in 1707, the first documented performances of his works took place in Germany in 1708. Bach composed for the church year and if one were to perform all of the cantatas in order, one would start at the First Sunday of Advent (the start of the Church Year) and would perform a cantata themed for that feast day or season throughout the remainder of the year. FUN FACT: Bach composed five cantatas for the First Sunday in Advent alone. For Christmas Day...14 cantatas. WOW!

How does this apply to our worship today? Well...that is where you can do some reflection. Music scholars state that Bach’s cantatas can teach us three lessons – practical (how we do church music), creative (how we create art), and spiritual (for ourselves and our congregations). However, do we need to perform a Bach cantata in churches today? Not necessarily. However, what if we all strove to follow the example of our forebears in 18th century Germany – and so many other Christians of countless times and places – who in their own ways sought to offer God worship that was faithful, Spirit-filled, ground in Word and Sacrament, excellent in both personal and communal, both ancient and new? Moreover, what if we did our best to provide structures and resources to ensure such worship would continue?

May God grant us the grace to offer him such worship.

The BUMC Choir Cantata – “An Invitation to a Miracle” by Joseph Martian will be presented during both services on Sunday, December 7th.

Josh Wall

Josh Wall
Director of Music Ministry
MusicMinistry@BlufftonUMC.org

Michael Cole
Organist
organist@blufftonumc.org

Nancy Osgood
Director of Wesley Ringers
[njcosgood@gmail.com](mailto:njosgood@gmail.com)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

I am writing this on the first day of Fall, a beautiful, clear and typical low country fall day. Hopefully, we can enjoy these mild days and nights and the hurricanes will go around us! Our activities for the new school year began a month ago and we are all enjoying the frogs around the church that remind us to **Fully Rely On God** – our “theme” for this fall’s Education Ministries.

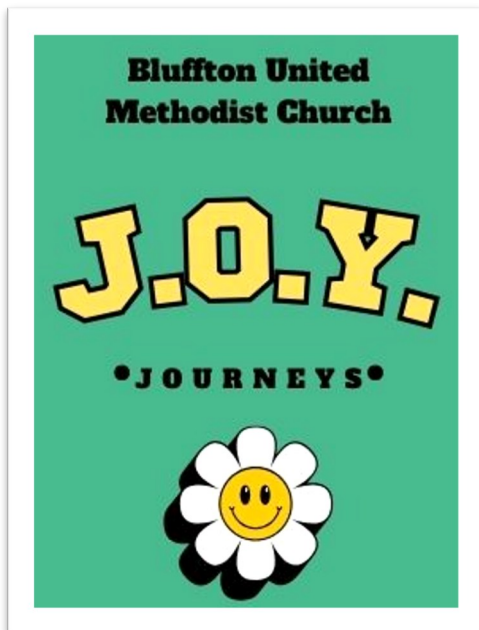


Bluffton Youth Fellowship (BYF) has enjoyed a game night, a service project and a guest speaker already this fall! Roy Austin presented a wonderful program on Africa that we all enjoyed on September 21. Upcoming for youth group we have more game nights, service projects and guest speakers – to get the full schedule and join in, email blufftonumc.education@gmail.com All are welcome, and we encourage youth to bring their friends!



- † **Kids Praise Choir (KPC)** has gotten off to a fabulous start – we’ve had new kids joining us and they are all learning all about the various parts of our worship services and what they mean. They’ve even written their own song about Praising God! KPC will share songs and more at the 8:30 AM worship service on October 19! Please come to support and encourage them! All children Kindergarten through 5th grade are welcome and bring friends!
- † **Adult Education**—Our 4 Disciple Bible Study groups are back in session. Our Adult Sunday School classes continue with book studies and would welcome new members! The Men’s class meets in Conference Room 2 from 9:30 – 10:30 and the Women’s class meets in Conference Room 1 from 9:30 – 10:30.
- † **Sunday Mornings**—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.
- † Following the Children’s Message at the 8:30 AM service, children ages 5 – 3rd grade are welcome to go with one of our Kids’ Church leaders for a lesson/craft/activity. Currently, we do not offer Kids’ Church at the 11 AM service. On Communion Sundays we do not have Kids’ Church, and children of all ages are welcome to stay in “big church.”

J.O.Y. JOURNEY



Our next J.O.Y. Journey is booked!

Where: Mepkin Abbey Crèche Festival
Moncks Corner, SC

When: Tuesday, December 2, 2025
12:00 NOON

How: We will drive our own vehicles and carpool

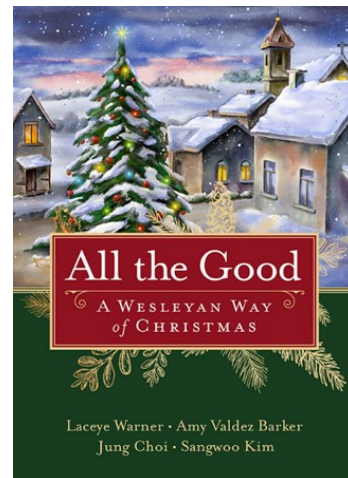
25 spaces available – first-come, first-served
RSVP to Sally at blufftonumc.education@gmail.com

The Mepkin Abbey Crèche Festival is a self-guided walking tour of nativity displays from around the world. Displays are both outside and inside. It is approximately 1/4 mile walk each way, but it is wheelchair accessible.

There is no cost to attend, but we kindly appreciate donations to offset the cost of hosting the festival. Cookies, hot cocoa, and coffee will be available for purchase, and there is a gift shop with holiday gifts and fruitcakes. Mepkin also offers a Crèche Store with a wide variety of nativity sets so that you can begin your own crèche collection.

Advent Bible Study

- † Tuesdays – December 2, 9, 16 and 23
- † Noon in the Music Suite
- † Books are \$10 payable to BUMC
- † Sign up and order books from Sally LeSage
blufftonumc.education@gmail.com



IMPORTANT -

YOUTH CONFERENCE

Mark Your Calendars Now for *Revolution 2026*

The yearly South Carolina United Methodist Youth Conference in Columbia, SC

January 30—February 1. New location this year.

**You do not want to miss this faith growing,
life changing event!**

Details and registration information coming soon!

BUMC Treasurer's Report

As of September 30, 2025
Budget Target is 39 of 52 Sundays or 75%

			YTD Income/ Expense	Annual Budget	Percent of Budget	
Worship Offerings:						
Plate			261,933	-	-	
Online			144,447	-	-	
Total Worship Offerings			406,380	615,500	66.0%	
Other Revenue:						
Unrestricted Memorial Donation			-	-		
Altar Flowers, Facility Rental, Interest, Etc.			5,027	8,500	59.1%	
M&E Income (books, events)			2,716			
UMC Grant			21,855			
Roof/HVAC Donations			-	-		
Annex Fire Donations			5,000			
Total Other Revenue			34,598	8,500		
Total Revenue			440,978	624,000	70.7%	
EXPENSE						
Pastoral			124,724	173,402	71.9%	
Worship			70,843	98,589	71.9%	
Ministry & Education			47,801	74,700	64.0%	
Missions			14,283	28,350	50.4%	
UMC Apportionments			44,698	59,055	75.7%	
Administration & Finance			55,968	84,835	66.0%	
Property			78,963	79,215	99.7%	*
Total Expense			437,280	598,146	73.1%	
Surplus YTD			3,698	25,854		
Notes:						
Annex Fire Insurance Payment			292,269			
*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

October-December 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 — Joshua Wall—Email: musicministry@blufftonumc.org

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

Organist — Michael Cole—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

Bluffton UMC
P.O. Box 368
Bluffton, SC 29910