



# What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

December 2014

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Sunday, December 7 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Communion and 3 Cents a Meal Offering**

Choir

Lay Reader: Darlene Hey

Greeters: Enneking Family

Acolyte: Megan Sycks

**Sunday, December 14 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Food Pantry**

Choir

Lay Reader: Youth Group

Greeters: Dave and Sue Van Eman

Acolyte: Jacob Szabo

**Sunday, December 21 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Christmas Joy Offering**

Choir

Lay Reader: George Stultz

Greeters: Clair and Diane Winebar

Acolytes: McVetta Girls

**Wednesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve**

Greeters: Gillen Family

Acolyte: Wyatt Marshall

**Sunday, December 28**

Megan Sycks and Sarah Gillen Duet

Lay Reader: Diane Winebar

Greeters: Talavinia Family

Acolyte: Avery Talavinia

**Sunday, January 4 – Communion  
3 Cents a Meal Offering**

Lay Reader: Jay McCracken

Greeters: Ben and Judy Miracle



## Mark Your Calendars!

- December 4 – Daily Bread Soup Kitchen – 9:40 AM Church Parking Lot
- December 6 – Progressive Dinner – 5:30 PM
- December 11 – Session Meeting – 7:00 PM
- December 14 – Congregational Meeting – Following Worship
- December 14 – Youth Group Meeting – Following Worship until 1:30 PM
- December 17 – Deacon's Meeting – 7:30 PM
- December 18 – Community Meal – 5:30 to 7:30 PM – Senior Center
- December 24 – Christmas Eve Service 6:30 PM Instrumental Prelude 7:00 PM Candlelight Service
- December 28 – Newsletter Deadline – [CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com](mailto:CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com)



## Announcement Procedure

If you have an announcement to present in church during the month, get it to the church office by Wednesday morning so it will be announced by our Lay Reader.

## Coffee Talk

Wednesday – McDonalds at 8:30 AM

## Small Groups

Tuesday – Church Library at 6:30 PM

## Congregational Meeting

A Congregational Meeting has been scheduled for December 14 following the morning worship service. The purpose for this meeting is to elect officers (Elders, Deacons, and Nominating Committee).

## Grace and strength in the Advent Journey;

## And Peace to you, in the birth of Christ, our Lord.

My friends, I wish you the best of faith and faithfulness in this holiday season, this season which is simultaneously a blessing and a trial. The season presents profound gifts of spirit, in a journey of ethics and faithfulness, and in arrival of God-with-us and God's abiding presence. The season presents the trial and challenge of the dark of the year, and the pressures of family, holidays, and the real world.

I pray God's blessings upon you.

I finish this secular year, with profound thanksgiving. I find our life together to be so richly blessed. It was just a year ago that I was traipsing through the drifted snow to meet with the Session for an interview, an interview for an interim, that is, temporary position. We finish the year, (having recently traipsed through the snow), but having pursued New Beginnings, with scaffolding around the chimney, and celebrating together a life as Pastor and people which is more than temporary. We share laughter, constructive life, matters of spirit, and occasions of life and death – within God's purpose. We are grounded in God's purpose, in prayerful discernment, looking closely at our neighbor, and seeking God's future. We celebrate the adventure of learning together, the sharing of life and spirit (small groups), in ministries enacted together, in overflowing music, sacred song, and with youth, children, and elders. And we celebrate our life – in the center of Bluffton, on the square.

This is a life of rich blessing.

It is this rich blessing, gifts, and abilities that we develop as we move forward into a new year of faith. This is the context of our advent journey of ethics and faithfulness, and our approach toward God dwelling with us in Christ, our Lord.

For me this season is filled with thanksgiving, with a sense of promise, and challenge as we meet God's future.

Thank you for your every gift to me. Now let us see what God will make of us in the advent journey, and in the season of God-with-us. Let us see what God will make of us in our journey and in the year ahead to which God leads.

*Pastor Dave*

### 2015 Commitments

Thank you for your prayerful 2015 commitments to the church. We have collected 36 pledges for a total of \$87,940. If you were unable to attend worship on Stewardship Sunday, please place your commitment card in a collection plate on an upcoming Sunday or mail the card to the church office at your earliest convenience. Your pledges allow us to make plans for the upcoming year to ensure the church's limited resources are used as wisely as possible, and please remember commitments are adjustable for changes in your personal situation. Your generous gifts of skills, time, and funds are appreciated and allow us to continue our Christian work and life as a congregation!

### Per Capita

You are invited to help cover the per capita cost of your membership by making a special donation through our congregation as part of your discipline of stewardship. The per capita amount is \$ 28.57 per member in 2015. Thank You!



### November Financial Report

Beginning Balance	\$ 42,847.32
Receipts	12,989.83
Expenses	(\$10,152.47)
Balance*	\$ 45,684.68

## Adopt-a-Family

We will be adopting three families this year for Christmas: a 74-year-old female, a 64-year-old male and a family of six: mom, dad, eight-year-old girl, four-year-old boy, 22-month-old boy, and five-month-old girl. We will have sign-up sheets for donations in the sanctuary. All items should be returned by December 14. If you have any questions please see Tenna Rhonemus or Diane Winebar.

## Community Meal – An Opportunity to Share and Care

The next Community Meal we are responsible for is Thursday, December 18, at the Senior Center. Our church hosts twice a year, serving a delicious meal to 80+ people from the community. Any monetary donations given by diners at the meal go to the Bluffton Food Pantry. Leftover food is sent home with those in need.

The deacons are coordinating the meal, but because this is an *all-church effort*, there are plenty of ways you can be involved. December is a busy month, we know, but many hands make for light (and fun!) work. **THANK YOU** to those who have already volunteered to help prepare, serve, and clean up and to those who have volunteered to provide pies. (People love our pies!) **THANK YOU**, too, to those who have made monetary donations to help with food purchases.

The sign-up sheet and a basket for donations are in the back of the sanctuary. Or please call a deacon if you'd like to help. *Thank you for your support of this important Bluffton area ministry!*

## Help Wanted

We are in need of several individuals to help with the snow removal this year. Mike and Patrick Rhonemus have been doing a great job, but would like a little help due to work and school schedules. Please see Pastor Dave, Mike Rhonemus, or Tom Hursey if you are willing to help.

## Christmas Progressive Dinner

The Christmas Progressive Dinner will be Saturday, December 6 beginning at 5:30 PM. Depending on how many people we have, we will begin with appetizers at one home, then divide up and have dinner at another, and then back together for dessert. If you haven't joined in the fun in the past, please do so this year. Everyone has a great time and there is always plenty of food!



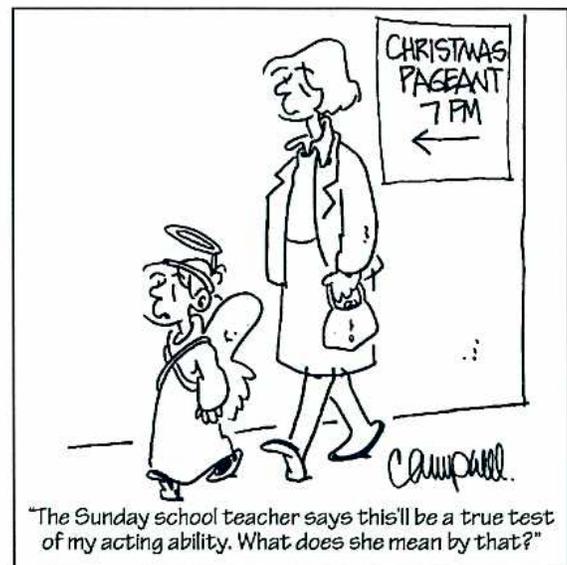
## Youth Group

The youth group will have our monthly meeting on December 14 following worship until 1:30 PM. Please bring a favorite snack to share as we wrap presents for our adopted families.

## Attention All Children and Youth!

The Children and Youth will present a Christmas play Sunday, December 14th during worship. The rehearsal schedule is below. If you have any questions or cannot be at a rehearsal, please let Tenna know.

Saturday, December 6 – 2:00 to 3:30 PM  
Saturday, December 13 – 6:00 to 8:00 PM



"The Sunday school teacher says this'll be a true test of my acting ability. What does she mean by that?"

## Deacons' Report

- Plans for the December 18 Community Meal have been finalized. Please read about how you can participate in this event elsewhere in this newsletter!
- Arrangements are being made for the deacons to help with the church's Adopt-a-Family program for Christmas.
- During inclement winter weather, deacons can provide or arrange rides for our seniors to Sunday worship. Please call a deacon the day before, if possible. Otherwise, please call a deacon by 9:00 AM Sunday morning.
- Wellmann Brothers will be meeting with us to discuss rock colors for the basement entry – man-made materials. Wellmann felt they would be setting up scaffolding week of November 10. Continuing to work on getting remaining holes which need dirt filled. Leaking water fountain was repaired by M + R. The October water bill for watering new grass was not significantly different than other months so we will not be requesting credit from the village.

## Highlights of November Session Meeting

- Approved receiving Ryan and Sarah Brauen as members by Letter of Transfer from Irvington Presbyterian Church – Indianapolis, IN. Church has received correspondence that it will be a beneficiary of Ropp/Mary Emma Triplett Trusts. Approved to participate in “Employee Dues-Share with Health and Dependent Care Flexible Savings Arrangement Plan” (an IRS Section 125 plan) and appoint Treasurer Darin Leugers as our local administrator who would be the direct contact with the claims administrator. Maumee Valley Presbytery has provided the proposed plan, as well as a claims administrator as a service to us. Approved MVP’s request asking for extra mile mission contribution of \$2.00 per member to support Christian Community of Restoration and Revival (CCRR) – new church development in MVP in the 6<sup>th</sup> year and many start up grants are no longer available. Alice Niswander passed away - Pastor Dave officiated at service and the Deacons provided a meal afterwards.
- The Church’s insurance Policy with Guide One was renewed for 2014.
- Approved that our share of Peacemaking Offering - approximately \$150 – will be designated to “Doctors without Borders” in their fight against Ebola. Mission Committee will match using mission funds so the final gift will be \$300.
- Distributed candy to approximately 100 kids on Trick or Treat night. Fall wreaths have been hung on exterior doors – Christmas wreaths will be hung before November 29 for Blaze of Lights. Hanging of the Greens will be Sunday, November 30 following worship service. Checking into options - mission or prison ministry - for donating unused Bibles, Hymnals, and Praise books. Approved installing a PowerPoint multimedia system in the sanctuary on a one-year trial basis at no cost to the church – include present wall projection (approximately 90 inches) and two additional 60-inch screens for rear wall and organ side – would use current projector but with more secure base.
- Home Communion was served. Pastor Dave is working with BAMA to develop a resource packet listing support services in three adjoining counties which could be used by all churches. Pastor Dave led another Bible Study at Maple Crest.
- Pastor’s evaluation was discussed with elders discussing their completed surveys, strengths of our ministry with Pastor Dave and suggestions. Pastor Dave continues to feel blessed to be able to minister with us. Approved calling a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 14 following the worship service for the purpose of electing Elders, Deacons, and 2015 Nominating Committee.

## Knitting Donations

Min Lindsey is accepting donations of yarn so that she can knit winter hats and such for those in need. She has had a lot of requests for Bluffton School colors and would like some red and black yarn.



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 Thank you so much for your wonderful donation of \$166.67. Your thoughtfulness is appreciated more than you know. It's the generosity of people like you that keeps us going here at Samaritan House so we can continue to help women and children. You are a blessing?

Staff

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**Prayer Requests**

**Prayers of Sympathy** with the Ned and Deb Niswander and family on the recent loss of Alice Niswander.

**Prayers for Peace** in our lives and in our World.

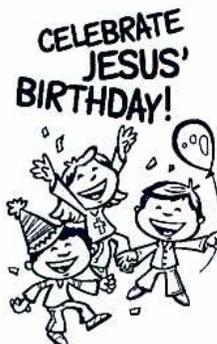
**Prayers for our members and friends** serving in the armed forces: especially Kyle Begg, Dave Soudders, Andrew Warner, and Lucas Woodward.

**Prayers of Healing** for Karen Long; Dusty Klingler; Michael Lee Bucher; Brenda Anderson; Sammie, Ava, and Lauren; Grace Gillen; The Fisher Family; Helen Kirscher; Bill Gable, Terry Huber, Bob James, and Leland Garmatter.



## BPC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please contact Diane Winebar (419-957-4046 or [dwinebar711@gmail.com](mailto:dwinebar711@gmail.com)), or call the church office (419-358-5806) with your prayer request, and they will pass along the information. If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain other than yourself, please be sure to get their permission first. Names and circumstances can be kept confidential, if desired. God knows for whom we pray. If you would like to be part of the chain or would like more information, please contact Diane or another deacon.



*Happy Birthday!!*

December	4	Marilyn Edwards Jim Enneking
	9	Tenna Rhonemus Jack Henry Neff
	11	Jeanie Nichols Cheryl DeWitt
	15	Sarah Gillen
	17	Ben Miracle
	21	Linda Sycks
	22	Samuel Neff
	29	Billy Marshall
	31	Darlene Hey
January	3	Dave Sycks Chad Carroll
	7	Dwight Nichols Barb Fett

## **Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen**

The next Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen serving day will be December 4. Please contact Beth Buist at [peppercatbeth@gmail.com](mailto:peppercatbeth@gmail.com) or (419) 969-5279 with any questions. Volunteers meet at the church parking lot at 9:40 AM and typically return by 12:30 PM.

## **“A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols”**

“A Festival of Nine Lessons and Carols,” Bluffton University’s Christmas choral concert, is set for 7:30 PM, Friday, December 5 in Yoder Recital Hall. Tickets are \$8 for adults and non-Bluffton students. They are available online at <http://tickets.bluffton.edu> or at the box office at the Marbeck Center information desk.

## **Handel’s “Messiah”**

Bluffton University will present its 119<sup>th</sup> performance of Handel’s “Messiah” at 4:00 PM on Sunday, December 7 in Founders Hall. The event is free and open to the public.

## **“Christmas at the Homestead”**

“Christmas at the Homestead” will be on December 13 from 1:00 to 6:00 PM at the Schumacher Homestead (8350 Bixel Road, Bluffton). The public is invited to tour the decorated 1843 house while snacking on homemade treats and listening to songs of the season. Guests arriving at dusk will be able to see the house lit by candles much as it would have been in 1843. The event is free to the public, but donations will be gratefully accepted.

## **“The Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service”**

Chiles-Laman will present “The Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service” on Sunday, December 7 beginning at 1:00 PM. There is no charge to attend, however reservations are suggested. If you would like a personalized ornament, call 419-358-2051 or email the funeral home at [chillesbl@wcoil.com](mailto:chillesbl@wcoil.com).

## **In Memory of a Loved One!!**

If you would like to give a gift in memory of a loved one for the Advent and Christmas seasons, the Worship Committee requests that you use the form included in the newsletter or church bulletin to make a monetary donation.

Please place your completed form (with cash or check) in the offering plate or send to the church (P.O. Box 149, Bluffton). Thank you!

## **Journey to Jerusalem**

Bluffton University’s religion professor, Rev. Randy Keeler, is leading a “Journey to Jerusalem” from December 26 and returning January 7. Cost is \$4,486 all-inclusive. You don’t have to be a Bluffton alumnus to sign up! Contact Julia Szabo for more details.

## **Christian Ed Walkers**

Christian Ed Walkers are needed for upcoming dates. Please see the posted sign-up in the back of the church.



## **Christmas Joy Offering**

For more than 80 years, Presbyterians have given generously at Christmas to lift up those who have devoted their lives to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). On December 21, churches throughout the denomination will again receive this special offering. The Christmas Joy Offering is shared equally by the [Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions](#), which provides much-needed assistance to PC(USA) church workers and their families, and Presbyterian-affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges, which enable students to develop their gifts and find their calling.

Happy Blaze to you, and cocoa too!

So I have lived through my first lighting of the Blaze. It was a fun evening, filled with people gathered on the square, and our offering of cocoa, and a fun collection of \$110 for the adopt-a-family program. I have seen more EMS trucks than I have ever seen. And the band and the show choir showed our young people (and the band director too.) And so we are off to a blazing beginning of the holiday season, and I have finally concluded my first Bluffton experience. Craft fair. Vintage wheels. And now, a blaze!



### Baby Zuehlke

We have a new baby boy in our family! Nathaniel James Zuehlke was born October 27. He was 9 lbs. 9 oz. and 22 1/2 in. long. He had a full head of hair too! Hope that everyone is doing well there - you all are often in my thoughts. Take care. - Matthew Zuehlke



# Gourd Harvest



**Decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas!!**

If you would like to help prepare the sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas seasons, the Worship Committee requests that you use the form below to make a monetary donation. The money collected will be used to purchase flowers and other items needed during the Christmas Season.

Please place your completed form (with cash or check) in the offering plate or send to the church.  
(PO Box 149, Bluffton) Thank you!

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I/We wish to donate \$\_\_\_\_\_.

I/We would like this gift to be given in **Memory Of:**

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I/We would like this gift to be given in **Honor Of:**

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Bluffton Presbyterian Church  
112 N. Main St.  
P.O. Box 149  
Bluffton, OH 45817  
419-358-5806

Pastor: Rev. David Good  
Phone: 765-993-7791  
Email: [mangendave@frontier.com](mailto:mangendave@frontier.com)  
Office Hours: Wed. 11:00-1:00 and  
Thurs.-Sat. 9:00-1:00

Secretary: Cathy Carroll  
Email: [bpcbluff@wcoil.com](mailto:bpcbluff@wcoil.com)  
Office Hours: Tues. and Wed. 9:00-12:30  
Website: [blufftonpc.org](http://blufftonpc.org)

**Sunday School: 9:00 AM**  
**Sunday Worship Service: 10:15 AM**

## **2014 Church Officers**

### *Session*

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt  
Buildings & Grounds – Tom Hursey  
Christian Education – Jay McCracken  
Finance & Stewardship – Cindy Gillen  
Mission – Beth Buist  
Nominating – Dave Kisor and Cindy Gillen  
Personnel – Lori Schmidt  
Presbytery Commissioner  
Worship – Jeanette Warren  
Members at Large – Dave Kisor, Rhonda Moor, and Donnas Stone

### *Board of Deacons*

Moderator: Diane Winebar  
Members: Don Carroll, Tom Edwards, Laura From, Lin Rumer, and Kay Ziessler.