



# What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

January 2013

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Sunday, January 6**

**Epiphany and Communion Sunday**

**3 Cents a Meal Offering**

Congregational Sing

Greeters: Bob and Betsey Angus

Acolytes: Libby and Paige McVetta

**Sunday, January 13**

**Installation/Ordination of Elders and Deacons**

**Food Pantry**

Choir

Greeters: Lin Rumer and Donnas Stone

Acolytes: Vanessa Compton and Megan Sycks

**Sunday, January 20**

Praise Team

Greeters: Barb Fett and Darlene Hey

Acolytes: Molly McCracken and Tayler Nowak-Valentine

**Sunday, January 27**

Choir

Greeters: The Scoles Family

Acolytes: Sarah Gillen and Avery Talavinia

**Sunday, February 3**

**Communion Sunday**

**3 Cents a Meal Offering**

Greeters: Gene and Sue Mathewson

Acolytes: Jacob Szabo and Neff Brother



## Mark Your Calendars!

- January 6 – Youth Group Meeting – 5:00 to 7:00 PM
- January 6 – Session Members and Deacons – Yearend Reports Due
- January 13 – Ordination/Installation of Elders and Deacons
- January 16 – Praise Team Practice – 7:30 PM
- January 20 – Fellowship Lunch – Tu Pueblo – Following Worship
- January 27 – Focus Meeting/Meal – Following Worship
- January 27 – Newsletter Deadline – [CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com](mailto:CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com)
- January 28 – Prayer Luncheon – 11:00 AM – Church Basement
- February 3 – Pastor Matthew's Sunday School Class – "Presbyterians, A Quick Overview and Refresher" – 9:00 AM
- February 3 – Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting
- February 13 – Ash Wednesday Service



## Announcement Procedure

If you have an announcement to present in church during the month of January, get it to the church office and it will be announced by our Worship Leader for the month.

January Worship Leader – Jeremy Scoles



## Directions & Goals Meeting (with meal)

On January 27, we will be having a very special congregational meeting after worship. This is not our normal, annual business meeting. Rather, we are going to be talking about direction.

Certainly we all need direction in life. Without a certain portion of leading, we would be tossed about at random by whims – either our own or those of others – and chance. It is little surprise then that the Book of Proverbs tells us that: *“without good direction, people lose their way; the more wise counsel you follow, the better your chances.”* (Proverbs 11:14 MSG) So, if we don't want to lose our way, we need wise counsel. Makes sense.

The next and very important question: how do we find that counsel? Well, we have to *ask* for it. So, I want to ask your counsel. I want to hear from you your counsel for what our church's directions and goals should be for the future. And it's not just me – all of Session and the committee structure of the church want to ask your thoughts, wishes, desires, and goals. We want to know if we are losing our way or if we are on course. For there are a multitude of ministries and a number of different directions we *could* go. Yet, in order to be effective, we need to know which we should focus on.

So, after worship on the 27<sup>th</sup> of January we will be having a lunch downstairs in the fellowship hall. Then I will be leading us on a collective brainstorming and listening session. I cannot stress how important this time will be for us as a church family, as well as, me as your pastor and moderator of Session. We all want it to be a beneficial discussion, but in order for that to happen we need to have as many voices present as possible. This includes members and attendees both. If you have a conflict, and cannot be in attendance, I encourage you to find me before hand so we might include your thoughts in our conversation.

As always, if you have any questions, please contact me.

In Peace, Pastor Matthew

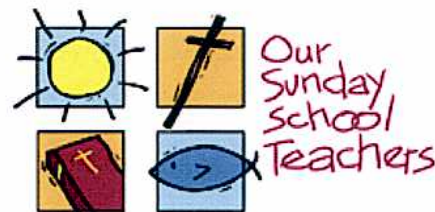


## New Sunday School – Reformed Refresher Course

Do you ever find yourself wondering “Why do Presbyterians (we) do it like this?” Or perhaps you can't quite remember confirmation class and what the Confessions are.

Or maybe you've recently (in the last ten or so years) been installed as an elder or deacon, and you've been asked to “uphold the tenants of the Reformed Faith” – and you're not quite sure what that means.

If you feel that any of the above statements describe your life, there's a new class for you, starting February 3 Pastor Matthew will hold: “Presbyterians, A Quick Overview and Refresher” during Sunday School (9:00 to 10:00 AM). This would be an excellent chance to brush up on your knowledge of the unique qualities of Presbyterian worship, thought, and theology. This is an excellent time to bring your questions and pondering as we work out together what it means to be Reformed. This class will run until March 17.



## Sunday School Teachers

We are looking for volunteers to teach Sunday School to our youngest two age groups beginning in the month of February and continuing through May. If you are available for any of these months, please see a member of the Christian Education Committee: Jay, Tenna, Stephanie, Linda, or Tammie.



## Who Was St. Nicholas?

This might sound like an odd question now – as Christmas is over – but do you know who St. Nicholas is? St. Nicholas is, of course, the origin of what we in the United States call Santa Claus. But, before all the jolly fat man in a red suit, did you know that Nicholas was a real human being?

In the coming months, I'm going to give you a quick overview of a number of lives in Christian history who embodied Christ's message in such a particular and strong way that Christianity has since called them Saints. While we do not focus the life of Saints in the same way as our Orthodox and Roman Catholic brothers and sisters, we still acknowledge their ministries, as well as the ways that their lives can be examples for us in our Christian ministry. So, as we start off on this series, I encourage you each time to think: "how does this life of faith challenge me to live?"

Nicholas, also called Nikolaos of Myra, was born in the 300s A.D. in what is now the country of Turkey. He was born in the busy little harbor town of Patara, to wealthy, Christian parents. It appears he was the only child, but records that old are spotty. The young Nicholas showed a great interest in the Christian religion and worship. Life looked like it would be clear and easy for the young man until a disease outbreak killed both of his parents.

Finding himself an orphan, Nicholas went to live with his uncle (also Nicholas, oddly enough) who was a bishop in the region. It is under his uncle's guidance that Nicholas' education flourished. He even became a bishop himself (of nearby Myra). Eventually Nicholas came into his own and inherited the full value of his parent's fortune. He was very well to do. If he played his cards right, Nicholas would not have to ever work a day in his life. So, what do you think he did?

Nicholas was so inspired by the teaching of Christ to "sell all that you own and give the money to the poor" (Matthew 19:21) that he did just that. He used his entire inheritance over the coming years to provide for the poor and needy in his region. And, more often than not, he gave his gifts anonymously.

One famous story of Nicholas' generosity was in the case of a wedding. Well, actually three of them. You see, in those days when a girl was to marry, her father had to give the groom or the groom's family something of value (some say this is the origin of the tradition where the bride's family pays for the wedding). And the larger the value of that gift, the better pick of husbands the girls could receive. Being that the farmer was not only poor, but also had to find three such gifts – one for each daughter, the chance of the girls to all receive reasonable prospects for marriage. Nicholas took pity on the situation and quietly provided enough money for a reasonable dowry for each girl in turn. Sounds more like Valentines than Christmas, doesn't it?

There are a number of other stories of Nicholas giving gifts. He provided for the poor, for sailors, and for children. It is likely this last group, as well as being known as a gift giver, that made later story writers seize upon him for the Christmas tie-in.

So what do we do with Nicholas today? If we strip away the red suit and the reindeer, what we have left is a man who took Christ's words deeply to heart. Let us ask ourselves now, looking at such a life where he could have had everything come easily yet chose to serve and give to others, where can I do more like Nicholas?

*P.S. Oddly enough, Kris Kringle has nothing to do with St. Nicholas. Rather it is a mistranslation of the German term "Christkindl" which means "Christ Child".*



## Per Capita

You are invited, if you are able, 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 \$27.88 per member in 2013. Thank You!





## November Financial Report

|                   |              |
|-------------------|--------------|
| Beginning Balance | \$ 19,380.63 |
| Receipts          | 10,164.95    |
| Expenses          | (9,745.04)   |
| Balance           | \$19,800.54  |

To be paid back \$ 16,169.51

## Church Directory

Corrections:  
Szabo Family  
160 W. Kibler St.  
Bluffton, OH 45817

Donnas Stone  
419-358-0787

New Address Change:  
Barbara Fett  
203 Hart St.  
P.O. Box 184  
Pandora, OH 45877

## Deacon News

The deacons will offer to arrange transportation to church for our elderly members during inclement weather. We want you to be safe in the ice and snow, so call a deacon the night before or early the morning of to arrange transportation.

## Adopt-A-Family

The Deacons would like to thank the congregation for their generous support of the Adopt-a-Family Program! Clothing, toys, and food (including some holiday treats) were donated for the families. The Bluffton Community Assistance Program was able to assist **56 families** this year through the continued support of organizations in our community. Thank you!



## BPC Prayer Chain

The BPC prayer chain has a new lead contact. If you have a prayer request, please contact Diane Winebar (419-957-4046 or [dwinebar711@gmail.com](mailto:dwinebar711@gmail.com)), and she will begin circulating the request. You may also call the church office (419-358-5806) with your prayer request, and they will pass along the information. Thank you, Jeanette Warren, for your time spent as lead contact. We appreciate you!

*Do you feel drawn to this ministry? If you would like to be part of the chain or would like more information, please contact Diane or another deacon.*



## Prayer Luncheon

*"Are you hurting? Pray. Do you feel great? Sing. Are you sick? Call the church leaders together to pray and anoint you with oil in the name of the Master. Believing prayer will heal you, and Jesus will put you on your feet." (James 5:13-15)*

Starting on Monday, January 28 at 11:00 AM, Pastor Matthew will be hosting a Prayer Luncheon in the church basement. Come for a simple meal cooked by Pastor, followed by a time of guided prayer for our church family, community, and world concerns. We will be having a similar Prayer Luncheon on the last Monday of each month. This is a wonderful time for those in the prayer chain, in caring ministries, and those who just feel that they would like to join to come together in support.



# Faith & Fellowship

## Fellowship Lunch

The next fellowship lunch will be held on January 20 at Tu Pueblo. No reservations necessary. Join us in the back of the sanctuary following worship and we will walk down the street.

Can't make this one....don't worry, the church office will be organizing a lunch the third Sunday of each month. We will explore the various restaurants of Bluffton together while enjoying each other's company.

## Youth Group

The youth group will have our monthly meeting on Sunday, January 6 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM. Come join us for some food, fun, and of course faith!

## Mission Committee

Keep the cans coming! One full "load" of cans provides a week's worth of bus passes for a Samaritan House tenant to go to work!

## Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen

Bluffton Presbyterian Church will assist with serving lunches at Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen in Lima on February 7. We plan to meet in the church parking lot at 9:40 AM. Please contact Shirley Kisor (call: 419-358-0085 or email [slkisor@embarqmail.com](mailto:slkisor@embarqmail.com)) if you plan to come.

In December, over 100 meals were served. Our volunteers also took 5 bags of hats and mittens from our "tree" to donate. One gentleman asked if he could take a pair of mittens for his daughter. As we were leaving, we noticed a few people already wearing hats that members of our congregation had knitted or crocheted.

Thank you to our dedicated needleworkers!

## Small Groups

Tuesday – Church Library at 6:30 PM  
Thursday – Maple Crest at 1:30 PM  
Saturday – Maple Crest at 9:30 AM

Contact Beth Buist, George Stultz, Jeanette Warren, Jayne McGarrity or Roy Pneuman for more information.

## Tuesday Night Small Group



*Happy Birthday!!*



|          |    |                                 |
|----------|----|---------------------------------|
| January  | 3  | David Sycks<br>Chad Carroll     |
|          | 7  | Dwight Nichols<br>Barb Fett     |
|          | 10 | Sue Basinger<br>Addie McGarrity |
|          | 12 | Melanie Mathewson               |
|          | 13 | Chris Gable<br>Matthew Zuehlke  |
|          | 21 | Colletta Mullenhour             |
|          | 25 | Shirley Kisor                   |
|          | 29 | Richard McGarrity               |
|          | 30 | Tammie Hursh                    |
| February | 2  | Jodie Parker                    |
|          | 5  | John Marshall                   |





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Thank you to Pastor Matthew, the Worship Committee, and all those who played a part in making Advent and Christmas so special this year. The Christmas Eve Services in particular were wonderful in that all of our senses were involved in experiencing the Christmas story once again.

Tenna

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Dear Deacons and Our Church Family,

Thank you so very much for the meals you have brought us! It is so nice to not have to worry about fixing meal. The gas card is also much appreciated. With my many trips to Toledo, it will definitely be used! Thank you again for your thoughtfulness and prayers. Having the support of our church family helps us stay positive!

With Gratitude,  
The Sycks

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Thank you for the Visa gift card and the Cheddars Gift card. What a nice surprise for Christmas! Thank you all very much.

Cathy

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To My Church Family,

Thank you all so very much for the Cheddar's gift card. Dave and I are planning a night out together to use it. Thank you also for the Visa gift card.

You all are so very special to me and my family. I love sharing beautiful music with you! It is truly a blessing to be a part of such a warm and caring congregation. Thank you all again.

In Christ,  
Linda

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To the person who found my glove and pinned it to the bulletin board...thanks a bunch! I appreciate your kindness.

Shirley

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Friends,

We are deeply grateful for all that the members of Bluffton Presbyterian Church did to make the Ropp Triplett memorial service so wonderful. A special thanks to the Deacons for providing and serving the delicious food. We appreciate all the ushers did to make things run smoothly. Last, but not least, thank you for all those who worked behind the scenes in support.

Love,  
The Triplett Family

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Thank you to the BPC family for the Christmas greeting and gift card. It is such a pleasure to praise God with music at this church and to have such wonderful colleagues to work with. Thanks to the choir, praise team, and all who have provided special music throughout the year.

Jayne

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**Continued Prayers** for Newtown Connecticut.

**Prayers** for our members and friends serving in the armed forces; Billy Marshall, Lucas Woodward, and Andrew Warner.

**Prayers of Healing** for Mary Emma Triplett, Karen Long, Dusty Klingler, Tyler and Laura From, Katrina Riepenhoff, Jennifer Hough and James, Robert Braden, Donna Joyce, Jordan Diller, Michael Lee Bucher, Norma Best, Bart Deiters, Kathryn Wade, Larry Battle, and John McCracken.





## Highlights of December Session Meeting

- All Deacons (Lynda Best, Barb Fett, Diane Winebar, Shirley Kisor, Don Carroll, and Lin Rumer) were present to share their activities for the year with Session. Activities included – CARE Ministry, set-up assist with Communion each month, accompany Pastor and assist with home Communion to home-bound members, sending cards, deliver worship CDs to home-bound members, fellowship time after Sunday worship services, receptions for Confirmation Class and graduates, visitation during Pastor's vacation, offer transportation for elderly members to appointments or church services, spring clean kitchen, maintain prayer chain, funeral dinners (Methel Benroth, Jean Triplett, Ropp Triplett), annual bake sale, prepared/ served two community meals, sponsored Adopt-a-Family in December, participated in welcoming activity for students at Bluffton University, donated money towards Youth Triennium Fund, annual subscriptions to Presbyterian Today, Splash Newsletter for preschool students, and worked with Stewardship and Mission to establish a Deacon's Aid Fund to assist church members facing hardships. Pastor Matthew and session expressed great appreciation for the super work done by our Deacons.
- Nominating Committee reported that all slots were filled (Elders – Mariah Pneuman, Beth Buist, Tom Edwards, Donnas Stone; Deacons – Laura From and Darlene Hey; Nominating Committee – Dave Sycks, Mike Rhonemus, Judy Bloom, and Cindy Gillen) and elected at Congregational Meeting.
- Approved motion to pay each church employee \$100 Christmas Appreciation gift because there are sufficient funds in the general fund. These will be in addition to the traditional gift given by the Personnel Committee. Approved motion that any balance in the general fund exceeding \$12,418 (\$12,000 in general fund and \$418 Triennium contributions being carried over to 2013) at the end of the year, be applied as payback to funds previously borrowed from Memorial Funds.
- Approved recommendation by Deacons to establish a "Deacon's Aid Fund" – to be used for church members facing hardships. This would be an unbudgeted item, but people may make contributions - unspent money would roll over each year.
- Approved motion to spend up to \$1000 from Virginia Edwards Memorial fund on materials for adults (books, DVDs, small group leaders resources) for the church library. Committee to select material will include Pastor Matthew and Roy/Mariah Pneuman. Approved motion to adopt the 2013 budget.
- Approved request by residents of Sunset Drive to plant a tree on church grounds in memory of Ropp Triplett.
- Approved serving Communion on Christmas Eve – will follow the fellowship time after Christmas Eve service.
- Pastor Matthew reported that Ropp Triplett's Memorial service was well attended (approximately 300) with the service and fellowship time very appreciated by the family.
- Allen County will be holding Crisis Intervention Training workshops in January which Pastor Matthew will attend. Approved to grant Matthew Continuing Education time/money to participate in Interfaith Digital Workshop on one Saturday in January, February, March, and April - \$150 registration cost. Approved request for vacation time from December 26 – January 2 (January 1 excluded as he will participate in the One Family Fun day). Deacons will be available for visitations if necessary.
- Approved receiving following by Letters of Transfer – Donnas Stone from Epworth United Methodist in Kenton and Hazel Rodabaugh from Ada Presbyterian. Pastor Matthew has met with both and they will be publicly welcomed in an upcoming worship service. Set January 27 as date for focus meeting/meal. Ordination/Installation of Officers will be January 13. Approved calling the Annual Congregational/Corporation Meeting for February 3.
- MVP is streamlining its budget by eliminating some positions including Jane Hedges – administrative secretary for over 20 years.



## Dead Sea Scrolls Trip

In 1947, a Bedouin shepherd discovered a cave in the Dead Sea region. Inside was a collection of scrolls that were placed there over two centuries beforehand. These scrolls, a total of over nine hundred of them, have since become known as the Dead Sea Scrolls. And within their number, they contain some of the earliest surviving examples of some of the Books of the Bible, as well as other ancient works. And now some of the scrolls, as well as a collection of ancient artifacts from Israel, are here in Ohio. The Cincinnati Museum Center at Union Terminal is hosting the traveling exhibition: Dead Sea Scrolls: Life and Faith in Ancient Times. But this is a traveling exhibit and will only be in Ohio until early April.

We are currently inquiring if there is enough interest to make a trip to this exhibit in February. Price will depend largely on the number in our group. Transportation will be provided. This is likely, for many of us, a once-in-a-life chance to see this sort of exhibit of early Israelite writings and artifacts. So, contact the office or Pastor Matthew with your interest and a couple of available dates. For questions, contact Pastor Matthew.

### Letters from students in Ms. Stultz's class at Moler Elementary School, Columbus, Ohio – 4<sup>th</sup> grade



Min,

Thank you so much for all of the hats you have made. I wish you could see each child's face when they get to choose a hat. They are always so excited and wear the hats so proudly. They are amazed that someone from my dad's church actually knit the hats for them! It makes them feel very special! Thanks!

Beth Stultz

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Dear Ms. Lindsey,

Thank you for the hat. I love the hat. I hug the hat every night. Thank you for giving me the hat.

RJ

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Dear Mrs. Lindsey,

Thank you for all of the colored hats. You make me feel very warm and cozy outside in the snow and rain this year. I hope I get to meet you in person.

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Dear Lindsey,

Thank you for the colorful hats. I got the hat that's red and white. It was a surprise when Ms. Stultz gave us the hats from you, thanks again.

Your friend, Adreannah

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Dear Ms. Lindsey,

Thank you for knitting our hats. They're very colorful and neat. You are a very sweet lady and hard-working because you made us hats by your self. I like my hat because it has my favorite colors, such as blue and gray. The hat is the most important thing because it helps the heat stay inside your body.

Love, Camenyah

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Dear Ms Lindsey,

Thank you for the hats. I liked everybody's hats I liked red and white hat. Plus I liked all of the hats too. But my favorite one was gray and dark pink one. That the one I liked best. The gray and dark pink one is mine.

Love, Jaqhayla Ayers

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Thank you Ms. Lindsey for the hat. I love it. It keeps my hair warm and it keeps joy inside me.

Your friend, Madison

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Dear Ms. Lindsey,

Thank you for knitting us the hats. I like them and they are very warm and colorfull. I like the ball on the top of the hat because it's furry. I always wear it when I go outside. Thank you.

Sincerely, Deshawn

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Dear Ms. Lacy,

Thank you for the hat I hope I get to meet you in person. I hope I get to see you.

From Jason Queen

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Dear Ms. Lindsey,

Thank you for the hats that you made for our class. We really liked them. I really liked the brown and white one that you made. I really like them a lot thank you!

Sincerely, Eryk

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

Pastor: Rev. Dr. Matthew Zuehlke  
Email: [revdrmz@gmail.com](mailto:revdrmz@gmail.com)  
Cell Phone: 567-825-3973  
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9:30-1:00

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

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

## **2013 Church Officers**

### *Session*

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt  
Buildings & Grounds – Owen Ziessler  
Christian Education – Jay McCracken  
Finance – Clair Winebar  
Mission – Beth Buist  
Nominating – Beth Buist and Jay McCracken  
Personnel – Kay Ziessler  
Presbytery Commissioner – Darlene Hey  
Worship – Rhonda Moor  
Members at Large – Tom Edwards, Mariah  
Pneuman, and Donnas Stone

### *Board of Deacons*

Moderator: Shirley Kisor  
Members: Don Carroll, Laura From, Darlene  
Hey, Lin Rumer and Diane Winebar.