



What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

December 2012

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 2 – 1st Sunday in Advent
Communion/3 Cents a Meal Offering

Choir

Greeters: Twylah Ludwig and Jeanette Warren

Acolytes: Vanessa Compton and Madison Hursh

Sunday, December 9 – 2nd Sunday in Advent
Food Pantry

Choir and Praise Team

Greeters: The Hursh Family

Acolyte: Tayler Nowak-Valentine

Sunday, December 16 – 3rd Sunday in Advent
Choir

Greeters: Dave and Shirley Kisor

Acolytes: Avery Talavinia and Sarah Gillen

Sunday, December 23 – 4th Sunday in Advent
Choir

Greeters: Roy and Mariah Pneuman

Acolytes: Will Neff and Jacob Szabo

Monday, December 24 – Christmas Eve

Brass Ensemble – 6:30 to 7:00 PM

Greeters: Carole Enneking and Cindy Gillen

Acolytes: Jack Henry Neff and Patrick Rhonemus

Sunday, December 30

Don Brauen Solo

Greeters: Beth Buist and George Stultz

Acolytes: Skyler and Samantha Scoles

Sunday, January 6

Congregational Sing

Greeters: Bob and Betsey Angus

Acolytes: Libby and Paige McVetta

Mark Your Calendars!

- December 2 – Tree of Remembrance – Centre at Bluffton – 3:00 PM
- December 6 – Our Daily Bread Soup Kitchen – 9:30 AM to 1:00 PM
- December 8 – Youth Group Meeting – 8:00 AM
- December 9 – Congregational Meeting – Following Worship
- December 15– Zuehlke Family Open House – At the Manse – 1:00 to 3:00 PM
- December 15– Christmas Progressive Dinner – 5:30 PM
- December 16 – Christmas Joy Offering
- December 16 – Fellowship Lunch – Taco Bell – Following Worship
- December 24 – 6:30 PM Instrumental Prelude, 7:00 PM Candlelight Service
- December 30 – One Room Sunday School Class – Church Basement – 9:00 AM
- December 30 – Newsletter Deadline – CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com
- January 1 – One Family Fun Night – Church Basement – 11:00 AM



Announcement Procedure

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

December Worship Leader – Dick McGarrity

***“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under heaven.”
(Ecclesiastes 3:1)***

Dear Friends,

Well, the weather has finally changed. Gone are our 60-degree fall days that we've been enjoying for so long. On one hand, it's easy to bemoan the change in weather that marks the seasons. Yet on the other hand, there is also a real beauty in the different seasons. Certainly the new growth with spring and the changing leaves of fall are glorious times to see God's creation. So too, summer is beautiful with vacations, fireworks, and growing crops. And, I would guess, we can also find beauty in winter (albeit perhaps begrudgingly). I for one look forward to that Christmas morning – hoping that there is at least a dusting of snow on the ground!

Yes, I think we must admit that there is beauty in each season. For each season has its own unique character and value. A year all spring might have a lot of sprouting, but no harvest. And a year all summer would have the fireworks, but little weather for hot-chocolate and snow-ball fights.

So too, there is beauty and value in each of the seasons of the church year: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter, Pentecost, and Ordinary Time. The seasons in the church provide us time and opportunity to remember all the facets of God's story of grace, love, and justice to Creation. So, if we failed to focus on a season, what we would be left with would be a skewed vision of reality.

With that in mind, it's important for us all to understand that we are moving into the season of Advent. I know that everywhere you turn you see Merry Christmas, Christmas shopping, and Christmas cookies (my favorite). Thinking about Christmas in one way or another is a strong force in our culture. It seems that the pop-culture season of Christmas starts earlier and earlier each year. But for church time, Christmas starts, not concludes, on December 25. What we have now is Advent. And like all the seasons, it's just as important as any other.

Advent is all about waiting. And waiting is a major part of life – just ask any kid who has to wait weeks to open up that nicely wrapped gift under the tree! And it is expressed in a whole host of other ways. Some are good, like waiting for your date to come pick you up for the school dance. And some terrifying, like waiting for the test results to come back to the doctor's office. And many are somewhere in-between, like waiting for a new baby in pregnancy. Waiting is good – it gives us time to acclimate to a new reality as new parents, cancer survivors, etc. Psalm 27 instructs: *“Wait for the LORD; be strong and take heart and wait for the LORD.”* (vs 14)

We as a culture don't especially like to wait. We can be a very impatient people. And when we get too caught up in jumping ahead, we can fail to see constructive waiting as a spiritual discipline. It can be tempting to see waiting as a waste of time. (Who hasn't had the feeling “I should be doing something?”) Yet this year, I'd like to encourage everyone to live into the season of Advent – to get into the waiting. Think what we can do as small groups or as individuals to prepare ourselves for the new reality coming of Christ. Let us prepare ourselves for Christmas by living in Advent, rather than trying to skip ahead in our lives.

Questions to Ponder:

- 1) What Bible stories can you think about that speak about waiting?
(*ex: The Exodus waiting for 40 years of wandering in the desert.*)
- 2) When in your life has God spoke to you in a time of waiting?
What was the lesson you learned?
- 3) How do you think you could help someone else wait through a challenging time?
(*ex: Waiting through the first year of grief, waiting for a baby to be born, etc.*)

And remember friends: *“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful.”* (Hebrews 10:23)

In the Peace of Christ,
Rev. Dr. Matthew Zuehlke



October Financial Report

Beginning Balance	\$ 16,511.92
Receipts	11,899.25
Expenses	(9,030.54)
Balance	\$19,380.63

To be paid back \$ 16,389.51

Christmas Joy Offering – December 16

A cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s, the Christmas Joy Offering is one of the four special offerings designated by the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church. Gifts to the Christmas Joy Offering will be shared equally by the Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions, which provides critical assistance to Presbyterian Church workers and their families, and Presbyterian-affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges, which enable students to develop their gifts and find their calling. May the gifts we share today bring joy to others!

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 (PO Box 149, Bluffton). Thank you!

Stewardship Pledges

We have received 35 pledges for \$79,814. Anyone who has not pledged is encouraged to do so. There are pledge cards in the back of the church.



Tree of Remembrance

The holiday season is normally a time of joy, but when someone you love has died, it can be a time of loneliness and pain. To help ease the pain and provide some comfort, Chiles-Laman Funeral Home is offering a *Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service* in Bluffton.

On Sunday December 2, 2012 at the Centre at Bluffton, 601 N. Main Street, Bluffton all families in attendance will receive a free “Guardian Angel” glass ornament personalized with the name and dates of their loved one that will be placed on the Christmas Tree. Families may begin arriving at 3:00 PM followed by a brief memorial service at 4:00 PM, conducted by Sister Carol Inkrott. At the conclusion of the service, the ornament is yours to take home. Additional ornaments will be available for purchase. If you would like additional ornaments please call prior to the service date to order so that we may have them ready for you.

Chiles-Laman Funeral Home presents the Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service as a gift to the community. **All families are welcome regardless of which funeral home provided the services.** Light refreshments will be provided following the service.

There is **no charge** to attend; however reservations are requested. To make a reservation or for more information call 419-358-2051 or email Chiles-Laman Funeral Home at chilesbl@wcoil.com

Deacon News

The deacons will offer to arrange transportation to church for our elderly members during inclement weather. Please be safe in the ice and snow. Discuss any needs or concerns with your deacons.



Youth Group

This month the youth group will meet at 8:00 AM on Saturday, December 8. Please note this is a change from our usual day and time. We will have breakfast together, then help with the hanging of the greens and organize and wrap the adopted family items.

Zuehlke Family Open House

There will be an open house at the home of Pastor Matthew and Michelle on Saturday, December 15 from 1:00 to 3:00 PM. (134 Sunset Dr.) Please stop in for food and fellowship!

Annual Christmas Progressive Dinner

We will be having our Annual Christmas Progressive Dinner this year on Saturday, December 15. We will begin at one home for appetizers and move on to another for dinner and dessert. If you would like to attend, there will be a sign-up sheet in the back of the church. If you have questions, contact Betsey Angus or Cathy Carroll.

One Family Fun Night

We will have our next ONE FAMILY FUN NIGHT on January 1. We will meet at 11:00AM (Yes we know that is not actually night time) for a devotional time, and then move to a time of fellowship and games. We are asking everyone to bring a favorite New Year's Food – anything from a "Good Luck Tradition" to your favorite "Game Day Snack". Beverages will be provided. If you have a favorite board game, please bring that along too.

REMEMBER these events are for our ENTIRE FAITH FAMILY, not just those with children. We hope to see you there and feel free to bring a friend! A big family is a wonderful thing!

Fellowship Lunch

The next fellowship lunch will be held on December 16 at Taco Bell. 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.



The Hanging of the Greens

It is the Worship Committee's joy to share the schedule for the Hanging of the Greens this approaching Advent season, with some special surprises! This year, we plan to fill our church home on a "progressive" schedule throughout the Advent season, in order to ready our church home for the coming celebration remembering Christ's birth, and we would love to have your help! On Saturday mornings in December, we will be laying the fresh and artificial greens, placing the ribbons and candles, and offering breakfast to those who wish to lend their hands to this task, beginning with a very special breakfast offering! The Laying of the Greens will follow this schedule:

Saturday, December 1 – 8:00 AM – Pancake breakfast prepared by Pastor Matthew!

Saturday, December 8 – 8:00 AM – Breakfast prepared by Worship Committee

Saturday, December 15 – 8:00 AM – Breakfast prepared by Worship Committee

Saturday, December 22 – 8:00 AM – Continental Breakfast

We hope you will plan to join us!



Adopt a Family

Once again the Deacons and the Youth Group have each chosen to sponsor a family through Bluffton's Community Assistance Program and will be collecting items for Adopted Families for Christmas. If you would like to help a local family brighten their Christmas, please choose an item from the poster boards containing food and "wish list" items for each of the families in the back of the Sanctuary.

It is helpful if you attach the sticky note to the items when they are returned. If you are purchasing clothing items, please get a gift receipt in case the size is not correct. We are requesting that all items be brought to the church before December 8. The Youth Group will meet that day to sort and wrap any gifts.

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 December 6. We plan to meet in the church parking lot at 9:40 AM. Please contact Shirley Kisor (call: 419-358-0085 or email skisor@embarqmail.com) if you plan to come.

Weekday Christian Education Walkers

We are in need of a few volunteers to help with Weekday Christian Education Walking. If you are able to help on Tuesday, January 8 or Thursday, January 31, please sign up on the sheet in the back of the sanctuary or see Tenna. Thank you to all those who have already volunteered!

19th Annual Samaritan House Gift Wrapping Booth!

Lima's Samaritan House's main fundraising event of the year will run December 14 through December 24 at DeHaven Home and Garden Showplace in Lima.

How can you help?

- Donate gift wrapping supplies (paper, ribbon, tape, etc).
- Bring a few gifts to be wrapped.
- Volunteer to wrap gifts (one to three hour shifts).
10:00 AM to 7:00 PM – Monday-Saturday
12:00 to 5 PM – Sunday
9:00 AM to 1:00 PM – Christmas Eve

For more information or to volunteer, call the shelter at (419) 222-4663 or e-mail samhouselima@embarqmail.com

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.

"One Room" Sunday School

We will offer a "One Room" Sunday School class on Sunday, December 30. This class will be open to everyone children through adults. We will meet in the basement that morning.

Congregational Meeting

A Congregational meeting will be held immediately following the worship service on Sunday, December 9. Purposes of the meeting include approving items pertaining to Congregational meetings in our new Manual of Operations, and electing Elders, Deacons, and a Nominating Committee.

Happy Birthday!!



December	4	Marilyn Edwards Jim Enneking
	5	Ariana Zuehlke
	9	Tenna Rhonemus Jack Henry Neff
	11	Jeanie Nichols
	15	Sarah Gillen
	21	Linda Sycks
	22	Samuel Neff
	29	Billy Marshall
	31	Darlene Hey
January	3	David Sycks Chad Carroll
	7	Dwight Nichols Barb Fett



Thank you to everyone who donated to the adopt-a-family project this year. If I might paraphrase a line from a certain Christmas display, "It is a true joy to witness how much this Family of Faith is willing to give to help others."

~ Tenna Rhonemus

A special note of thanks to the Deacons and other helpers from the church family who together made the Memorial to Ropp Triplett such a wonderful day. Thank you very, very much.

~ Pastor Matthew

Thank you to lay readers, greeters, acolytes, sound technicians, communion servers, musicians and all others who have volunteered to help with worship service.



Prayers with Mary Emma Triplett and family in the loss of their loving husband, father, and grandfather. And for our Church family's loss of a great member and friend.

Prayers with Michelle Zuehlke and family on the recent death of her grandmother Ruth Clark.

Prayers for our members and friends serving overseas; Billy Marshall, Lucas Woodward, and Andrew Warner.

Prayers for our friends on the East Coast.

Prayers of Healing for Mary Emma Triplett, Gary Williams, Karen Long, Alice Niswander, Dusty Klingler, Bart Angus, Tyler and Laura From, Katrina Riepenhoff, and Michael Hoewisher.





Highlights of November Session Meeting

- Church did receive a Certificate of Liability for Blaze of Lights from village which added it to their insurance policy from November 10 – January 10. Information concerning new insurance policy for church/manse with Guide One was shared – have policies for MVP and many churches in the presbytery, deductible is \$500 (previously \$1,000), premium is \$2,825 (would have been \$3,500 to stay with same provider) which does include liability for employees and officers, and manse value was increased to \$190,000. Approved that we switch insurance carriers and go with Guide One – retroactive to October 1.
- Presently have five different Sunday School classes serving children-adult. Updates on current curriculum were provided. Next fall a church-wide curriculum based on “The Story” will be used – idea is that all age groups, children through adults will be studying the same lesson, in age appropriate ways, in the hopes of generating more conversation. On Sunday, December 30 there will be a multi-generational Sunday School lesson. Next “One Family Fun Night” will be January 1 from 11:00 AM to 4:00 PM.
- There was a small fire in the original furnace at the manse – resulting in needing the furnace/AC to be replaced. Approved purchasing a new furnace from M+R (range of \$2,000-\$2,700) with money to come from the “comingled old accounts” in Memorial Fund with any excess costs come from the Building Fund. The AC will be additional and will be replaced in the spring.
- MVP created Pastor Matthew’s initial contract, it was since discovered that pension fees were overpaid by \$1,028.72. Board of Pensions was contacted and we have been credited that amount on our account. Approved that this overpayment amount be paid to Pastor Matthew before the end of this year since it would impact his retirement salary package.
- Ropp Triplett passed away – Pastor Matthew will lead Memorial Service on Sunday, November 25 at 2:00 PM at the church with fellowship time at “The Centre” following the service. Approved granting permission to Pastor Matthew to use tables/chairs for the Open House at the manse on December 15. Per Capita rates for 2013 will be \$27.88 per member (increase of 17cents over last year) - General Assembly \$6.80 (increase of 17cents), Synod \$3.25 (no change), Presbytery \$17.83 (no change).
- Pastor Matthew will be officiating at services for Michelle’s grandma on Friday in Columbus. Deacons are preparing for an increased number at the Community Meal because it is being coordinated with the Community Thanksgiving Service. Office volunteers are helping out as needed. First Trick or Treat night at the church had good attendance by volunteers and participants. Pastor Matthew spoke to the Christian Pharmacy Fellowship International at Ohio Northern. Pastor Matthew attended a 2-day workshop (continuing education) on Church Visioning.
- Report from Inter-Church Board’s annual meeting – approved that the slate of officers be the same as BAMA’s officers. Paula McKibben, director of the Bluffton Food Pantry, is retiring and was presented a gift certificate of appreciation for her faithful service. New directors (2) will be selected by the board. Discussion on possible changes with present Bluffton Community Assistance program. The next time our church hosts Community Meal will be May 16.
- Approved calling Congregational Meeting for Sunday, December 9, following worship for the purposes of approving items in the Manual of Operations, as well as electing Elders, Deacons, and Nominating Committee.



IN LOVING MEMORY

Remembering Ropp

"Of all the people who walk into our lives... only a few choose to stay. Those few we call friends." My friend and father figure, Ropp has been one of those special people in my life. I first knew him when Mary Emma and he agreed to sell us their empty lot across the street from their home. We built there and have been neighbors for 38 years. In that period, much has transpired. I lost my own father before Tom and I were married. Tom's dad then became my second father. He passed away over 25 years ago. Since then, in many ways Ropp became that figure. When I needed help or fatherly advice, I crossed the street to see Ropp.

I am sure that when we became their neighbors, Mary Emma and he didn't realize what all that would involve. Whatever the problem, when Tom was gone, I never hesitated to call on Ropp for help.

Ropp and I developed a love of chocolate. We exchanged chocolate Christmas gifts, always trying to out-do the other one. No matter how hard I tried, Ropp was one step ahead of me, always a little more clever with his present. A most memorable gift was when he gave me chocolate that resembled a mountain ski run that our family enjoyed out west. In later years, Ropp and I decided that we preferred dark chocolate. Our creative gift giving was more limited but certainly not stymied.

Mary Emma and Ropp hosted our neighborhood picnic. It is an annual potluck that was held in their backyard for over 40 years. They passed the hosting baton to us a few years ago, but continued to help in organizing the annual event.

Ropp was my confidant on matters of business and church-related activities. He listened and had the appropriate words of advice and encouragement.

There was no one more appreciative of the music at church than Ropp. He was the first to congratulate musicians after a church service.

At times, I was asked to check out his latest project. Some were animated musical items that he made for polka friends' anniversaries. His biggest and most lavish projects were, without question, the Christmas displays that were set up at several locations on our street. They have been enjoyed by thousands over the years. His grandest display was erected on a house trailer chassis and is enjoyed on the parking lot across from Harmon Field during the Blaze of Lights.

As Ropp touched my life, he did the same for many others. A humble man, he would chose to leave us quietly. In a way he did. He left us just ahead of Blaze of Lights 2012, of which he was so much a part, in his quiet way. As I look at his displays once again this year, I will reflect on our friend, who left a special part of himself with me and the people of our town. ~ Marilyn Edwards

Ropp enjoyed at little humor...

Gladys Dunn was new in town and decided to visit a nearby church one Sunday. The sermon seemed to go on forever, and many in the congregation fell asleep.

After the service, to be social, she walked up to a very sleepy looking gentleman, extended her hand in greeting and said, "Hello, I'm Gladys Dunn." And the gentleman replied, "You're not the only one ma'am, I'm glad it's done too!!!"

Church Bulletin Typos

- The pastor would appreciate it if the ladies of the congregation would lend him their electric girdles for the pancake breakfast next Sunday morning.
- Pastor is on vacation. Massages can be given to the Church secretary.
- Potluck supper. Prayer and medication will follow.
- The choir invites any member of the congregation who enjoys sinning to join the choir.

Youth Christmas Program



Youth Christmas Program Continued



Youth Christmas Program Continued



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
Cell Phone: 567-825-3973
Office Hours: Mon-Thurs 9:30-1:00

Secretary: Cathy Carroll
Email: bpcbluff@wcoil.com
Office Hours: Tues & Wed 9:00-12:30
Website: blufftonpc.org

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

2012 Church Officers

Session

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt
Buildings & Grounds – Owen Ziessler
Christian Education – Tenna Rhonemus and
Stephanie Scoles
Evangelism – Jay McCracken and Min Lindsey
Finance – Clair Winebar
Mission – Beth Buist
Nominating – Beth Buist and Jay McCracken
Personnel – Kay Ziessler
Presbytery Commissioner – Darlene Hey
Worship – Rhonda Moor

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Shirley Kisor
Members: Lynda Best, Don Carroll, Barb Fett,
Lin Rumer, and Diane Winebar

**"I am bringing
you good news
of great joy
for all the
people."**

Luke 2:10, NRSV

