



The Joy Connection

December 2017

A monthly publication of Buffalo United Methodist Church

Worship Events

Sunday, December 3

The Wonder of a Name

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Luke 1:26-38

Holy Communion

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, December 10

The Wonder of a Manger

Luke 2:1-7

Luke 2:8-16

Sunday, December 17

The Wonder of a Promise

Isaiah 7:14

Matthew 1:18-25

Sunday, December 24

The Wonder of Christmas

Isaiah 9:2, 6-7

Matthew 1:18-21, 22-25

Luke 1:26-38, 2:1-20

Christmas Eve

10:30 am; 5:00 & 7:30 pm

Sunday, December 31

One Simple Thing

Curtis Rieck preaching

New Year's Eve

Sunday Schedule

Joyful Praise Worship

8:15 am

Education & Fellowship Hour

9:20-10:20 am

Celebration Worship

10:30 am

Recovering Our Wonder

I can't say for sure when it first happened. Maybe it was the time my older brother, Tom, showed me the closet in our house where Mom and Dad hid the wrapped Christmas presents prior to their magical appearance underneath the Christmas tree on Christmas Eve. Maybe it was the time I discovered that if I snuck into the living room and pressed down on the thin wrapping paper, I could sometimes read what was in the wrapped package. Somewhere along the way, I began to lose some of the wonder surrounding Christmas and the weeks leading up to it.

Each phase of my life, in fact, has introduced new possibilities for that Christmas wonder to be depleted: The death of my grandparents, who were the focal point of Christmas for our extended family for most of my childhood; the loss of my sister, Laura, to cancer, shortly after Christmas; the growing realization that living in this age of Amazon Prime, there remain very few things that my family needs or even wants to find wrapped up beneath the Christmas tree.

How about you? Have you lost any of the wonder of Christmas along the way on your journey through the years? As I get older (and perhaps a little wiser) I've come to embrace the truth that the wonder of Christmas doesn't come through Black Friday sales or same-day deliveries. As Dr. Seuss so famously noted, "Then the Grinch thought of something he hadn't before! 'Maybe Christmas,' he thought, 'doesn't come from a store.' 'Maybe Christmas...perhaps...means a little bit more!'"

The wonder of Christmas doesn't even come through our favorite Christmas cookies (well, maybe just a little bit) or Christmas movies. The wonder of Christmas is that each year, we set aside four weeks to reflect on the profound love that God has for each and every one of us. As I reflect on my 55 Christmases past, the wonder that's endured has come from hearing (and often, acting out) the Christmas story from the Gospels of Matthew and Luke. It's come from knowing that even though in a few short months we'll be remembering how the Christ child would grow into a man and be crucified on a cross, God still sent his Son to be Emmanuel, God with us. The wonder of Christmas has come through times of giving and serving others, following the original Christmas gift from God to us.

So go ahead and enjoy the fun of the season. Watch "Elf" for the tenth time. Enjoy the eggnog and the spritz cookies. But if you're looking for wonder that lasts, look to Jesus for that.

Blessings,
Pastor Bill

Buffalo United Methodist Church

...serving people for Jesus Christ so that we all may know joy!

Grow in Love of God and Neighbor

*Love the Lord your God with all your heart, soul & mind and
love your neighbors as yourself* *Matthew 22:37-40*

Introduce People to Jesus

Therefore, go and make disciples of all people...
Matthew 28:19-20

Heal a Broken World

The spirit of the Lord is upon us to bring good news to the poor
Luke 4:16-21

2017 Leadership Team

Pam Sieberg	763-682-4734	Member at Large/Lay Leader
Paulette Moore	763-276-7435	Lay Leader
Dexter Lehman	763-229-0335	Treasurer
Tyson Kaldenberg	763-238-5023	Finance Team Chair
Dave Sieberg	763-682-4734	Property Team Chair
Al Sheldon	507-820-0542	Staff Parish Relations Chair
Kris Wurtzberger	763-438-0047	Recorder
Laurie Schroeder	763-682-3538	Lay Associate Minister
Bill Reinhart	763-682-3538	ex officio

Staff

Pastor	Rev. Bill Reinhart	<i>PastorBill@buffaloumc.com</i>
Lay Associate Minister	Laurie Schroeder	<i>Laurie@buffaloumc.com</i>
Family Ministries:		
Youth Coordinator	Curtis R. Rieck	<i>Curtis@buffaloumc.com</i>
Children's Coordinator	Debra Bishop	<i>Debbie@buffaloumc.com</i>
Nursery Attendant	Kaitlin Maass 9:15-10-:30	
	Amy Fouquette 10:30	
Administrative Asst.	Michelle Jones	<i>Office@buffaloumc.com</i>
Bookkeeper	Patty Steer	<i>Patty@buffaloumc.com</i>
Preschool Director	Melissa Ungaro	<i>Melissa@buffaloumc.com</i>
Preschool Teacher	Christine Hartke	
Preschool Assistant	Jenny Hanson	
Chancel Chime Director	Jill Starr	
Custodians	Bob & Ryan Highberg	<i>Bob@buffaloumc.com</i>

The Joy Connection is a monthly publication for members and constituents of Buffalo United Methodist Church. Buffalo UMC is part of the **Minnesota Annual Conference** of The United Methodist Church.

✠ Spiritual Growth

“The Wonder of Christmas”

Rediscover the true wonder of Christmas this December as we explore The Wonder of a Name, The Wonder of a Manger, and The Wonder of a Promise this December. Make a personal commitment to be in worship if you can, and it's not too late to consider joining a study group or reading the companion “Wonder” Advent study book or daily devotions book. Sign up for a group and pick up a book at church soon!

Decorate Our Tree with Ornaments

As a commitment to focusing on Christ this Advent season, we invite you to bring an ornament on one of our four themes to hang on our tree in the entryway – a star, a “Jesus” ornament, a manger or an angel for bringing the message of promise. Let's fill up the tree with ornaments as we turn our hearts to Christ!! You may take your star ornament back home after Christmas. Just label with your name and we'll see that you get it back.

Unidos en Cristo Spiritual Retreats

If you might be interested in attending a Unidos en Cristo spiritual retreat, please contact Darla O'Flanagan or see Laurie to connect you. The upcoming Men's weekend is: January 18-21, 2018 in Plymouth. Women's weekend is January 25-28, 2018 in Plymouth. They might be just what you need to re-ignite your faith life!

Sunday Sermon Discussions at 9:20

Sheryl Lehman hosts a weekly round table discussion in the fellowship hall following early service to share thoughts and perspectives regarding the sermon. Get your coffee, look for the designated table and join the conversation.

Happy Birthday Jesus Party

On **Sunday, Dec 10** the congregation is invited to join Sunday School families in the fellowship hall between services at 9:45 to have cake and sing Happy Birthday to Jesus!

Worship

Upcoming Worship Events

- Dec. 3** 2nd Sunday of Advent – Hanging of the Greens led by senior High youth
- Dec. 10** 3rd Sunday of Advent; SS program at 1:00
- Dec. 17** 4th Sunday of Advent; Jesus Rocks praise team sings in worship
- Dec. 21 (Th)** **The Longest Night** candle lighting event from 6-8 pm, with 15-minute optional service at 7:00 pm
- Dec. 24** **Christmas Eve** – 10:30; 5:00 & 7:30
- Dec. 31** **New Year's Eve** – 8:15 & 10:30

Hanging of the Greens December 3

Our senior high youth will again provide leadership for our Hanging of the Greens service on **Sunday, December 3** at both services.

Poinsettias For Sale

After the Hanging of the Greens on December 3, there will be some extra poinsettias available for sale if you wish to take one home or deliver to a friend or neighbor. The cost is \$10 and all profits go toward our mission support.

Longest Night Event Thurs. Dec. 21



The Longest Night is on **Thursday, December 21**. The term “Longest Night” is derived from the winter solstice which is the shortest day/longest night of the year.

Last year we held a service to acknowledge the sadness that many face during the holidays, and to offer hope and encouragement. This year we are doing something slightly different.

From **6:00-8:00 pm** that night the sanctuary will be open for quiet reflection and all are invited to light a candle to acknowledge the struggles we are facing, to remember those we mourn, and to be reminded that God shines in the midst of our darkness. Come and go as you wish, but a 15-minute service will take place at 7:00 pm. Invite those who might be blessed by this contemplative yet hope-filled prelude to Christmas.

Christmas Offering Designation

This year's Christmas offering will be split between UMCOR disaster relief and the Wesley Saturday meal program. Your generous offerings will provide ongoing support and meals both locally and globally. Envelopes will be sent out soon with your Christmas letters, and may be brought in through December 31.

Advent & Christmas Eve Schedules

With Christmas Eve falling on a Sunday this year, our holiday worship schedule will be a bit different from usual. First, we moved up the start of Advent from the liturgical date of December 3 to the more practical date of November 26.

Then for Sunday, December 24 we will hold three Christmas Eve services, all a bit different. Mark your calendars so you know all your worship options throughout Advent and on Christmas Eve.

Hanging of the Greens – December 3

Third Sunday of Advent - December 10, with Birthday Party for Jesus at 9:45; All-Church Potluck at 11:30 am; and Children's Christmas Program at 1:00pm

Fourth Sunday of Advent – December 17

Christmas Eve Services Sunday, December 24

10:30 am Classic Christmas Eve Service

5:00 pm Candlelight Praise Service

7:30 pm Candlelight and Carol Service



Worship Attendance

	Early	Late	Total
October 29	126	62	188
November 5	129	66	195
November 12	113	84	197
November 19	142	66	208
November 26	135	61	196

♥ Ministry & Missions

“Discover BUMC” Kick-off

We have had several new families visit BUMC these past two months, and the Guest Connections Team thinks those folks might like an informal fellowship time to discover more about our church, get acquainted with others, and be able to ask their important questions. So they will invite new (and past) visitors to an informal gathering called “Discover BUMC” between services on **Sunday, December 10 at 9:20.**

Members of the Guest Connections Team will host, but anyone is welcome to stop at the designated table in the Fellowship Hall for a quick greeting. Coffee and goodies are provided and the nursery is open if needed to help newcomers feel the warmth of our hospitality!

New Caring Ministry – Life Happens!

When **Life Happens!** What do you say? Sometimes when people experience difficult circumstances, we may end up saying the wrong thing. Other times we are a true blessing. Or how many times do we say nothing at all and avoid the topic altogether?

Life Happens is a new monthly ministry session where we will bring in guest speakers to share first-hand experiences on topics we all too often avoid, even though we care. You are invited to join us on the **2nd Monday of the month from 7:15-8:15 pm** beginning in January 2018. We'll meet in the fellowship hall for a time of listening, learning, caring, and dessert. You may join us for one month, or every month, and bring a friend if you wish. Potential topics are panic attacks, miscarriage, bankruptcy, divorce, loss of a child, stage IV diagnosis, infertility, and more. If you have any questions, topic ideas, or want to help with this ministry, contact Bonnie Kelly or Dave and Tammy Jacobs.

January Life Happens:

Miscarriage – What do I say? How can I help?

Monday, January 8, 2018

7:15-8:15 p.m.

Guest Connections Update

The “Ask Me” greeters continue to be present before and after worship in the entryway. If you encounter newcomers with questions, please direct them to the “Ask Me” person. Starting in December, the Guest Connections Team is starting a “Discover BUMC” gathering every other month during the coffee hour where newcomers can meet at a designated table and ask questions and get to know people. Hospitality help is always welcome, so if your forte is helpfulness and friendliness, sign up to help with this heartwarming ministry! Contact Gloria Farwick at 763-213-4042.

Christmas Day Dinner Help Sought



This year we serve our 21st annual Christmas Day Dinner! Last year we served around 175 and it takes a lot of helping hands to pull off. Even if you could come for just one of the shifts, it would be a great blessing. It's a great act of service, wonderful fellowship, and a fantastic meal! Here are the shifts:

Potato Peeling & Food Prep	9:00-11:30
Food Preparation & Serving	11:30-2:00
Dining Room Set-Up	11:00-1:00
Clean-Up	1:30-until done
Driver - Pick up guests	12:00 and/or 2:00

It really helps to have a “fresh” crew for clean-up! Though drop-in help is welcome, too, it's most helpful if you sign up in advance so we know who's coming, and so your time is well-used. Please sign up **as soon as possible**. See Laurie Schroeder with questions.

Support for Christmas Dinner

If you can't help on Christmas Day, there are other ways you can support the dinner:

- **Help** slice and freeze the cooked turkeys on **Saturday, Dec. 16**. Sign up on the board or talk to Craig Lilja or Del Smith if you can help.
- **Food donations** – a list of food items needed is posted and helps offset costs. Please have ALL non-perishable food donations in the church kitchen by **December 17**.
- Help decorate the fellowship hall on **Sunday, December 3 at 11:30 am**.

Attend the Christmas Dinner

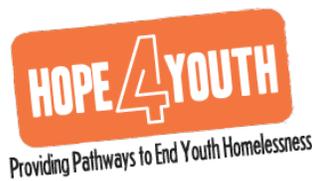
Our traditional Christmas Day Dinner is served at 1:00 pm. We invite any individual, couple or family who is spending the day apart from family to come and join us for food and fellowship.

Christmas Caroling December 17

Spread some Christmas cheer! Join us for caroling to homebound and care center members of BUMC on **Sunday, December 17**. The tentative plan is to leave church about 4:00 and return before 7:00 pm. You do NOT have to have a ‘choir voice’...just a desire to share Christmas joy and brighten the lives of some special people! See Craig Lilja with questions, or with suggestions for a caroling stop.

United Methodist Women Update

The UM Women invite you to join them on **Thursday, December 14 at 10:30 am** at church for their annual Christmas Brunch. This month all are welcome to come enjoy fellowship, devotions and a great meal. Bring a covered dish to share (breakfast or luncheon items). We'll be blessed by the BUMPreschool children singing. Additionally, we'll have a guest speaker from



Hope4Youth, who will share stories of local youth who are homeless and in need of many services. Invite your friends!

UMW Bake Sale December 3

UMW hosts a **Christmas Bake Sale** for mission on **Sunday, December 3**. All who like to make Christmas cookies, breads and candy are invited to bring some to sell. Everyone is invited to take home some sweet treats and leave a free-will donation. Proceeds will go to the Emma Norton and other mission projects of the UMW.

Unidos en Cristo Spiritual Retreats

If you might be interested in attending a Unidos en Cristo spiritual retreat, please contact Darla O'Flanagan or see Laurie to connect you. The upcoming Men's weekend is: January 18-21, 2018 in Plymouth. Women's weekend is January 25-28, 2018 in Plymouth. They might be just what you need to re-ignite your faith life!

United Methodist Men's Fellowship

The United Methodist Men's Fellowship gathers on **Saturday, December 16 at 7:30 am** for fellowship over a hot breakfast, devotions, discussions, and to look for ways to serve our church family and community. This month they'll also cut up and freeze turkeys for the Christmas Dinner following the meeting. Newcomers are welcome any time! Contact Ivan Erickson at 763-497-1742 if you have questions.

Women's Retreat "Save the Date"

We're going to hold another Women's Retreat, thanks to our Adult Discipleship Vision Team! Save the dates of **April 20, 21 & 22, 2018** on your calendar!! We'll gather at Bug-Bee-Hive Resort on Lake Koronis in Paynesville, with guest speaker Kristen Christenson on Changing your Physical, Spiritual & Soul's DNA.

More information to come after the first of the year. We look forward to you joining us. Call Tracy Daleiden 763-238-4220.

Frozen Meals Available

Thanks to our meal cooking and assembly crew, we now have ravioli lasagna frozen and available for you to deliver to someone in need of a helping meal. Who could you bless with the gift of a meal?

Blankets for Beds

The cold weather is just around the corner. It's a great time to clean out your closets and donate gently used blankets, bedding and towels for local distribution. Or perhaps for the holiday season, you'd like to buy some items to donate. If you need items to be picked up, please contact Dianne McLain at 763-682-2260.



Adopt a Family for Christmas

Buffalo Rotary is working with Love INC to sponsor the local Adopt-a-Family program. If you, or a group you're in, want to adopt a family, call 612-490-0025 or grab a form off the bulletin board by the office. Let's fill in the gap to help our neighbors in need.

MCCI/Ministry Team Updates

Our MCCI (Missional Church Consultation Initiatives) teams continue doing great work! Currently the leadership and finance teams are looking at the ways to fund the 2018 MCCI budget requests from our teams. They have been great stewards in keeping the costs for new ministries as low as they effectively can, but we do need to commit funds for them to do their work.

The Signage Audit Team has chosen new room signs and will order soon. The Re-Branding Team is currently working on a new logo for the church, and that will be followed by a visual identification stylebook to be used in all our communications. The Adult Discipleship Team is currently working on Advent study groups and the spring women's retreat dates are set. The Confirmation Design Team is working on updating the curriculum.

If you have yet to find your place on a Ministry team, sign up on the bulletin boards in the lobby! The newest forming team is our Children and Families Vision Team. If you have an interest in serving on that team, see Debbie Bishop ASAP! The Social Media Team is just getting going, as is the Staff Responsibilities Review Team so you can still join them.

Teams still forming include:

- Children & Families Vision Team
- Staff Responsibilities Review Team
- Social Media Team
- Website Team
- Worship Excellence Team
- Sunday Schedule Feasibility Team

Buffalo Food Shelf Update

The Buffalo food shelf provides food to needy families in our community. Although fewer families have been utilizing the food shelf this year than last, there is still a significant need. In the first six months of 2017, the food shelf served 4,889 individuals: 1848 were children, 2610 were adults, and 431 were over age 65. Please consider bringing non-perishable food for the red wagon (outside the church office), or donating cash (payable to BUMC and designate "food shelf" in the memo area).

Disaster Response Training at BUMC

Have you ever heard about a hurricane, tornado, or flood on the news and thought "I wish there was something I could do"? If so, consider volunteering for an UMCOR Early Response Team. The ERTs provide short-term relief designed to help prevent further damage, like tarping roofs and removing wet debris, as well as offer emotional support for those who have just experienced significant loss. While no special skills are needed to help, UMCOR trains everyone in disaster response basics before allowing them to serve on an ERT. Once trained, you are certified to serve on ERTs for 3 years.

We'd like to host one of these training events here at Buffalo UMC if there is enough interest, and UMCOR will send a trainer here for the certification class. If you are interested, please talk to Mike or Jana Knutson ASAP.

Love INC Needs Your Help

Love INC - Big Woods seeks volunteers to drive people to appointments, minor household repairs, cleaning and more. Volunteers are also needed to work at the thrift shop in Maple Lake. Call 320-401-1180 and ask for Stormy.

Coffee Hour Offerings

To improve hospitality for guests, we moved the coffee hour fellowship basket from the front end of the refreshment table to the side counter where regulars can find it and donate. Please continue to support our church budget, and Guatemalan coffee farmers and their families as you're able.



Confirmation

Confirmation Schedule

Wednesdays from 6:00-7:30 pm unless indicated

- Dec. 6** Combined Night with Senior High
- Dec. 13** Faith Night – God the Sustainer (Holy Spirit)
- Dec. 20** Focus Night – Life of Jesus (Baptism and Wilderness)
- Dec. 27** No Class – Winter Break
- Dec. 30** Wesley Meal Service Project
- Jan. 4** No Class – Winter Break

Confirmation Retreat Jan. 27-28

Students, parents and faith partners, please note that the Confirmation Retreat is on **Saturday, January 27**. Mark your calendars now so you don't forget! Faith partners spend the entire day with the students, and youth also stay overnight Saturday. This is a mandatory event for students. Please note if you have not turned in your registration form or payment for this event please get it turned in to the church office no later than January 10.

Confirmation Retreat Chaperones

We currently have Kelly Stokes scheduled to chaperone the January 27-28 retreat for confirmation. Please note that we still need **two male and one female** chaperones to stay overnight with the kids. You can drive over in the evening. The retreat is located at Koinonia Retreat Center in South Haven and is a required event for the confirmation program. Please contact the church office if you can volunteer for this ministry.

Fun & Fellowship

Kingdom Road Gospel

Saturday

December 2, 7 pm



For our next Saturday Awakenings concert, we welcome back the Kingdom Road Gospel Singers from Brooklyn UMC. They'll share some of their favorite gospel music, but also will include a Christmas set. As always, we encourage you to invite someone you know to come enjoy the evening with us. Refreshments follow; freewill offering received.



Children's Ministries & Sunday School

Sunday School Update

The Sunday School students have learned about important key figures in the bible the last several months – Moses, David and Jonah. Our focus will now switch to the Christmas story, and on December 10 we'll have a birthday party for Jesus as well as the Christmas program. Please continue to support your child's faith foundation by attending church and bringing them to Sunday School. Check out the SS Calendar dates and mark your home calendars!



Operation Christmas Child Update

Thank you for all of the donations toward the Operation Christmas Child shoebox mission. The 2 – 6th grade classes packed a few boxes and wrote letters in each of their classrooms, while the 7 – 8th graders did the same with the remaining items. We ended up with over 50 boxes plus money to ship some of them! All of the kids truly enjoyed selecting and packing gifts for the boxes. Please remind your children how special each child will feel as they open their gifts from our church family! What better way to prepare ourselves for Jesus's birth than to share love with others?

We will still collect your SS "First Sunday Mission Offering" on December 3 and send it on to help cover shipping costs of the additional shoeboxes. Thank you again for your offerings and donations - what a blessing these boxes will be to the children who receive them!

Happy Birthday Jesus Party!

On **Sunday, Dec 10** all parents are encouraged to join the kids in the fellowship hall between services at 9:45 to sing Happy Birthday to Jesus! After enjoying cake, the kids will continue the celebration in the back of the fellowship hall! Like the Wisemen who brought gifts to Baby Jesus, we invite you to bring a **wrapped** gift of a small box of diapers (any size) or baby wipes to donate to the Crisis Nursery.

Jesus Rocks sings in Church

Our youth praise group Jesus Rocks will sing near the end of the 8:15 worship service and early in the 10:30 worship service on **Sunday, December 17**. This is a way to share a "taste" of the Christmas program with the congregation in case you didn't see it! They will certainly get you in the spirit as we prepare to celebrate the birth of our Savior!

"God with Us – A Nativity" Program

The Christmas program is nearly here! Our first rehearsal is **Saturday, December 2 at 9:00 am for anyone with speaking parts**. We hope to be done by 10:30, or just after.

The final full rehearsal is on **Saturday, December 9 at 9:00-11:00** for all children. Preschoolers will be done by 10:00, but we're hoping that kindergartners and 1st graders can stay a little longer if they are able. The program is **Sunday, December 10 at 1:00 pm**, but for families staying through we will have a potluck at 11:30 am after which the kids can go to their classrooms.

Here is the full schedule for December 10:

- 9:20 Music rehearsal for program
- 9:45 Birthday party for Jesus with cake!
- 11:35 Church Potluck
- 12:30 Kids gather in classrooms
- 1:00 Program with refreshments following

Sunday School Calendar

- Dec. 3 Jesus Rocks Rehearsal @ 10:20
- Dec. 10 Potluck @11:30
Christmas program @ 1:00
- Dec. 17 Jesus Rocks sings in worship
- Dec 24 No Sunday School classes – Christmas Eve!** Worship at 10:30; 5:00; 7:30
- Dec 31 No Sunday School classes
- Jan. 7 Sunday School resumes

Nursery Help Sought

Staff Parish seeks volunteers who love kids to help out in the church nursery each Sunday during a worship service. Confirmation students can get service credit for doing this, but still need to attend worship. Anyone interested, please sign up for the Second Person Nursery Helper on the bulletin board, or call Michelle in the church office.

Ministry Team Reports

Finance Team Update

By Tyson Kaldenberg

Through the end of October, BUMC is operating at a deficit of \$3,945.44, with all apportionments paid. We are hopeful that we can catch up by end the year and meet or exceed our 2017 budget. Year to date income is about \$40,000 behind budget, and year to date expenses are about \$36,000 behind budget. Please, take a few minutes and check to see if you are on track to meet your 2017 pledge. If you have been blessed financially in 2017, please consider giving extra to the church. Also, please consider signing up for automatic electronic transfers in 2018. People that have signed up, really like how easy the process is.

End of Year Giving Deadline

Please note, all 2017 contributions should be in by **Sunday, December 31**. Thank you for your faithful giving as we end 2017 and look to a new year. Though we are slightly behind currently, we hope to close the year with all our financial obligations met.



Our Church Family

Review Us on Google

We recently updated our Google listing for the church and we're hoping that you might take a minute to go online and write a review of BUMC!



Prayer Matters...

- Prayers for the Otness family and all who loved Mianna Varner as they mourn her passing, but celebrate her wholeness in heaven. Her funeral service will be here on Monday, December 4 at 11:00 am, with visitation Sunday evening from 4-7 pm and Monday morning at 10:00.
- Pat Bowe continues to experience quite a lot of pain, so please pray for pain relief, strength and healing.

- Kathy Maiden will begin chemotherapy soon, so pray for her to tolerate it well and for it to conquer the cancer!
- Connie Irvine asks prayers for guidance for doctors treating her 1 year old niece, Gentry, who is suffering from a mystery illness.
- Glenda Vidmar continues re-gaining her strength and celebrate that the infusion treatments have not had adverse effects.
- Pray for Mary Lou and the family of John Johnson as they grieve his loss in November.
- Keep Roxie & Kenny Weese in your prayers.
- Dana Sampson is experiencing severe pain in both arm, so pray for improvement.
- Pray for the Chuck Sand family, friends of the Grimmes, who lost their son Thanksgiving Day.
- Pray for Joe Kalway and Ruthie as they deal with his cancer and other health issues.
- Continued prayers for Martha Grimme and Janice Erickson.
- Pray for Tonya Farmer, Darla O'Flanagan's sister whose cancer has returned after removal of her kidney.
- Pray for Dave Jacobs' sister Kathy and husband Bob to find a house, after months and months of turmoil.
- Lift up prayers of celebration at the beautiful sunsets and sunrises we've seen in the last few weeks.
- Pray that this Advent we all experience hope, peace, joy and love as we marvel at the wonder of Christmas.

Thank You from:

- Theresa Flanagan: *"Could you please let the church families know that I'm sorry I had to leave suddenly (as nursery attendant) and have had medical issues with my back that have kept me from visiting, that I send them love, and miss them and hope to be well enough to visit at the Christmas program. That everyone is in my prayers too. I'm grateful for the 10 years I spent with everyone. I'm very sad to not be there anymore. Hope to be getting out to more than work and doctors' appointments soon."*
- Saturday Morning AA 12x12 Group: *"Thank you so very much for allowing our AA 12x12 group to gather together in unity for our life changing recovery. It is greatly appreciated!"*



We do still have room in both our 3 and 4/5 year class, so please pass the word onto friends and family!

From the staff and students of preschool, we wish everyone a wonderful and blessed Christmas!

Melissa Ungaro, Director

How You Can Support BUMPreschool

Donate Items: 28, blue, NON breakable Christmas bulbs, paper plates, spoons,

Financial Support: We have a new Program Enhancement Fund. This is used to help cover costs of field trips and to bring in new educational programs, like the Como Zoo which is coming in January!! This also is to help pay for our physical education program with Gym Nation, this is a huge bonus for our kids, teaching fine and large motor skills and muscle development.

We also accept donations to our tuition scholarship fund, which allows us to provide low income families the opportunity to be part of our school.

Volunteer: We LOVE to have church members come in! Maybe you have a special interest or something you can share with our students. Like in the spring when we talk about Farming! Or perhaps you have an animal to share with us during one of our animal theme units. Let us know! We would love to have you come in and share with us.

Preschool Staff:

Melissa Ungaro, director
Christine Hartke, 3-year-old & 4/5 teacher
Jenny Hanson, teaching assistant

What's Up in Preschool?

At the beginning of November we had professional pictures taken mid-month, we held informative parent-teacher conferences, and we had our monthly visit from Mrs. McLain, Curtis Rieck, and Debbie Bishop for Preschool Chapel time. We ended the month celebrating Thanksgiving with lots of creative turkeys, and thankful hearts for God's many blessings!

In December we will celebrate Christmas with many wonderful songs, crafts, and activities of the season! Hearing the story of Jesus' birth is fascinating for preschoolers, and they love playing with the manger scene and all its characters. Our Christmas trees will get decorated and undecorated numerous times, and our rooms will sparkle with Christmas joy!

We end the month with a short, delightful, musical program in the sanctuary for our parents/grandparents (and anyone who wishes to stop by for a "Day Brightener") at **10:00 on Wednesday, December 20** (4/5 year olds) and at **10:00 on Thursday, December 21** (3 year olds).



Connection Points

Ministries and fellowship opportunities meeting at regularly scheduled times

United Methodist Women

Every 2nd Thursday of the month



All women are invited to join in the fellowship hall monthly to spend time in fellowship and devotions, and to learn more about the missions supported by the UMW.

This Month: Thursday, December 14 Christmas Potluck at 10:30 am

Bring: A covered dish to share (breakfast or luncheon)

United Methodist Men's Fellowship

Every 3rd Saturday of the month

Men of the church interested in service, faith and fellowship are invited to come meet with other men for fellowship, devotion and fund raising projects. The meetings begin with breakfast at 7:30 am.

This month: Saturday, December 16 at 7:30 am



Prayer Shawl Ministry

Every 4th Monday



Gather at Arlene Nelson's home at Park Terrace at 1:00 pm to knit or crochet shawls for people who might be homebound, in the hospital, grieving, or in other challenging situations. Call Dianne McLain at 763-682-2260 with questions.

This month: Not meeting this month, will resume in January

Thursday Gatherings

Every 1st Thursday of the month

Gather in the fellowship hall at 1:00 pm for a time of fellowship playing games and occasional service project. Bring a favorite game and snacks. All are welcome!

Call Esther Kiphuth at 763-477-6221 if you have questions.

This month: Thursday, December 7 at 1:00 pm



Adult Bible Study

Every Thursday



An ongoing traditional Bible study meets at Paulette Moore's home. All are welcome to join this study long- or short-term as able. Call Paulette for details at: 763-276-7435.

Currently studying 2 Peter, then will start Revelation.

Weekly: Thursdays at 6:30 pm

Diners Out Fellowship Gathering

Every 4th Thursday of the month

Gather at Perkins May-September at 5:30 pm for food and fellowship.

Primarily active seniors, but all welcome! Call Sara Gaeth at 682-4964.

This month: On Hiatus until May



Praise & Coffee

Every 1st Monday of the month



Gather at Perkins for coffee, fellowship and a spirit of praise! All welcome – men, women, young or old! Call Sheryl Lehman at 763-229-0340.

This month: December 4 at 6:00 pm

**COMING IN DECEMBER
UPCOMING STUFF**

**Grades 9-12
(6:00PM- 7:30PM)**

Hanging of the Greens

Dec. 3

All-youth gathering

Dec. 6

Christmas at the Riecks'

Dec. 13

Fruit basket delivery

Dec. 20

Longest Night Service

Dec. 21

**Drivers Needed for
3 Big Events:**

**BUMY seeks drivers to
assist with the following:**

Christmas event

Dec. 13: Travel with students
from church to Otsego.

Depart at 6 pm, return 7:30.

Christmas Baskets

Dec. 20: Travel around
Buffalo with students dropping
off holiday fruit baskets.

Depart at 6 pm, return 7:30

Snow Tubing

Jan. 13: *Snow tubing at
Powder Ridge. Times TBD.*

**Contact Curtis
immediately if you are
able to assist**



**"Where Everybody
Knows Your Name!"
CURTIS R. RIECK**

You are invited...

**CHRISTMAS
GIFT
EXCHANGE!**

Sunday, Dec. 13 - 6:00

**GRADES 9-12 SIGN UP on the youth board -
bring a gift, and enjoy fun at Curtis and Linda's home!**

On Wed, Dec. 20 BUMY students will deliver fruit baskets to those who could use some cheer and a friendly voice. Oranges and apples have already been donated. If you would like to donate bananas it would be greatly appreciated. Contact Curtis or the church office!

I don't know about you, but I'm much faster at coming up with a list of things I want for Christmas than a list of things I'm grateful for. It's also pretty easy for my prayers to become filled with phrases like "God, please give me...", "God, please help me...", or "God, I need...". I can get so tied up in what God can do for me, how He "should" impact me live, that I forget how to be thankful for what I have. Luckily, God is good at reminding me of what's important.

I want you to try something for a minute...Close your eyes, focus on your breathing, and take five deep breaths. With each breath, I want you to simply pray "Thank you, Jesus."

Go ahead, do it now. Seriously, stop reading and do it. I can wait.

For most of us, being able to breathe is probably at the top of the list of things we take for granted. However, each breath you take is a gift from God. Taking time to thank God for this most fundamental necessity of life can help remind us to have a heart of thankfulness.

Whether it is the air you breathe, your family because, well, they're your family, or the embrace of a friend or loved one, thank God today for something you normally take for granted.

We do really have it "awe"fully good...

1st Annual Luge Party

Hit the "hill of death" after warming up on the baby slope. Pile the tubes high or connect with friends to form a Whiplashing chain. You'll find a world of winter fun on our trip to Powder Ridge. Bring a bag dinner and we'll complete the meal with a dessert stop on the way home. Sign-up with Curtis, by making your payment and getting your name on the list of those who dare!

Saturday, Jan. 14..TIME: TBA..COST: \$20

December 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Sunday Schedule 8:15 am Joyful Praise Worship 9:20-10:20 am Fellowship & Education 10:30 am Traditional Worship					1 7:00 pm Private Rental	2 9:00 am AA 9:00 am Christmas Program Rehearsal 7:00 pm Saturday Awakenings Concert
						
3 <i>Holy Communion</i> <i>Hanging of the Greens</i> <i>UMW Christmas Bake Sale</i> 10:20 am Jesus Rocks Rehearsal 11:30am Decorate the FH 7:30 pm AA (FH)	4 9:00 am Commodity Distribution 10:00 am AA 6:00 pm Praise & Coffee 6:30 pm Advent Study at the Otness' 7:30 pm AA	5 10:30 am AA 6:30 pm Weight Watchers 7:00 pm Preschool Board Meeting 7:00 pm Property Team Meeting	6 8:30 am Weight Watchers 6:00 pm Senior High & Confirmation Combined 6:00 pm Advent Study with the Knutsons 6:30 pm Handbells 7:15 pm Joyful Praise	7 Noon Advent Study with Laurie 1:00 pm Thursday's Gathering 6:30 pm AA Women's Group 7:00 pm Acts Bible	8	9 9:00 am Christmas Program Rehearsal 9:00 am AA 3:00-7:00 pm OCC Shoebox Packing Day
10 Chancel Chimes Play 9:20 am Happy Birthday Jesus Party 9:30 am Discover BUMC Welcome Gathering (FH) 11:30 am Family Potluck 1:00 pm Children's Christmas Program 7:30 pm AA	11 10:00 am AA 6:30 pm BeFrienders 6:30 pm Advent Study at the Otness' 7:30 pm AA	12 10:30 am AA 6:30 pm Weight Watchers 7:00 pm Leadership Team Meeting	13 8:30 am Weight Watchers 6:00 pm Senior High 6:00 pm Confirmation – Faith Night 6:00 pm Advent Study with the Knutsons 6:30 pm Handbells 7:15 pm Joyful Praise	14 Noon Advent Study with Laurie 1:00 pm UMW 6:30 pm AA Women's Group 7:00 pm Acts Bible Study at Paulette's	15	16 7:30 am UMM 9:00 am AA
17 10:20 am Jesus Rocks Rehearsal 4:00 pm Christmas Caroling 7:30 pm AA	18 10:00 am AA 6:30 pm Advent Study at the Otness' 7:30 pm AA	19 10:30 am AA 6:30 pm Weight Watchers 7:00 pm SPRC Team Meeting	20 8:30 am Weight Watchers 10:00 am Preschool Christmas Program 6:00 pm Senior High 6:00 pm Confirmation – Focus Night 6:00 pm Advent Study with the Knutsons 7:15 pm Joyful Praise	21 10:00 am Preschool Christmas Program Noon Advent Study with Laurie 6-8 pm Longest Night Candle Lighting 6:30 pm AA Women's 7:00 pm Acts Bible Study at Paulette's	22	23 9:00 am AA
24 <i>Christmas Eve</i> No Sunday School 10:30 am Classic Christmas Eve Worship 5:00 pm Praise & Candlelight 7:30 pm Carols & Candlelight 7:30 pm AA	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> 10:00 am AA 1:00 pm Christmas Day Dinner 7:30 pm AA	26 10:30 am AA 6:30 pm Weight Watchers 7:00 pm Finance Team Meeting	27 8:30 am Weight Watchers 6:00 pm Senior High – Small Group 6:00 pm Confirmation – Focus Night 6:30 pm Handbells	28 6:30 pm AA Women's Group 7:00 pm Acts Bible Study at Paulette's	29 	30 8:00 am Wesley Meal 9:00 am AA
31 No Sunday School 7:30 pm AA						

December Schedules

Scripture Reader Schedule Traditional Celebration Service 10:30	
December 3	Natalie Roeser
December 10	Reader Needed
December 17	Darla O'Flanagan
December 24	Suzy Smith
December 31	Paulette Moore
Coffee Server Schedule	
December 3	UEC -Dennis & Tracy Daleiden
December 10	Bonnie Kelly Sr., Bonnie Kelly Jr. & Gail Hurley
December 17	Phyllis Griffith & Eric Johnson
December 24	Troy & Laura Carter
December 31	Jim & Sandy Tool
Usher Schedule	
8:15 am	
December 3	Jan Heyerdahl & Esther Kiphuth
December 10	Spencer & Kathy Hanson
December 17	Laura Gilson & Georgia Pollock
December 24	Pam & Dean Croft
December 31	Loren & Jane Van Dorp
10:30 am	
December 3	Ivan Erickson & Lester Hamann
December 10	Ushers Needed
December 17	Linda Bostic & Pat McAlister
December 24	Bill & Mary Augustin
December 31	Lester Hamann & Iona Markley

Looking Ahead... Items to Put on Your Calendar	
January 8	Life Happens! Ministry
January 27-28	Confirmation Retreat
January 28	1 st Grade Stepping Stone Blessing
January 28	Cribbage and Chili Contest
February 12	Life Happens! Ministry
February 14	Ash Wednesday Worship/Supper
March 4	5 th Grade Faith Stepping Stone Blessing



Information

Resources

Current issues of the *Upper Room*, *Alive Now*, *Pockets (for children)*, and *DevoZine* are available in the entryway for a nominal donation.

Prayer Requests

Call the office or use the cards available in the attendance pads to make prayer requests. Turn them in to the pastor before services on Sunday morning for inclusion in announcements.

Prayer Circle

Please call the church office at 763-682-3538 with prayer concerns or to be part of the prayer circle.

Flowers for the Altar

Do you have a special event or person you want to honor with flowers some Sunday? Sign up on the flower chart posted by the office, and indicate if you will bring your own, or place your check for \$39 in the offering marked "flowers" and we will order.

Please let the church office know:

- ✉ If your telephone number, e-mail address or mailing address change.
- ✉ When a member of your family is hospitalized or in need of pastoral care.
- ✉ If you would like Holy Communion brought to you.
- ✉ If you know of someone in the congregation that could use a delivered meal.





Buffalo United Methodist Church
609 8th Street Northwest
Buffalo, MN 55313
763-682-3538

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Buffalo United Methodist Church

*...serving people for Jesus Christ
so that we all may know joy!*

Office Hours:

Closed Mondays

Tuesday-Thursday – 9 am to 3 pm

Friday – 9 am to 1 pm

Phone and Fax:

763-682-3538

763-682-3614

E-Mail:

Office@BuffaloUMC.com

Website

www.BuffaloUMC.org



Find us on Facebook

“Don’t Miss” Events

Sunday Dec. 3

Hanging of the Greens

Sunday, Dec. 10

All-Church Potluck 11:35 am

Children’s program 1:00

Sunday, Dec. 17

Jesus Rocks sings in Worship

Thursday, Dec. 21

The Longest Night service 6-8pm

Sunday, Dec. 24

Celebration Worship 10:30 am

Candlelight Praise 5 pm

Candlelight & Carols 7:30

Monday, Dec. 25

Christmas Day Dinner 1:00 pm

*The Joy Connection is a monthly publication of The Buffalo United Methodist Church.
Submission deadline is the third Thursday of every month.*