



What's INSIDE

- 2 From the Pastor
- 3 MLK on What Really Matters
- 4 Calendar
- 5 Our Caring Ministry
- 6 Family Prayer List



Special Dates:

- January 1 - New Year's Day
- January 5 - Epiphany Sunday
- January 8 -
Bible Study & Choir Practice Resumes
- January 12 -
Baptism of the Lord
- January 18 - 25, 2025
Week of Prayer for Christian Unity
- January 19 -
Third Sunday Breakfast
- January 20 -
Martin Luther King Jr. Day

Blountstown United Methodist Church

God's Constant New Work

From the beginning of time, God's pattern has been to continually do new things and make things new. Though we can celebrate this every day, the New Year's season is especially fitting to pause and recognize God's work of renewal. Consider the following scriptures (All NIV) and how God is making them real in your own life right now.

- ♦ [God] has granted us new life to rebuild ... and repair... (Ezra 9:9)
- ♦ If [a tree] is cut down, it will sprout again, and its new shoots will not fail. (Job 14:7)
- ♦ He put a new song in my mouth, a hymn of praise to our God. (Psalm 40:3)
- ♦ See, I am doing a new thing! ... I am making a way in the wilderness and streams in the wasteland. (Isaiah 43:19)
- ♦ You will be called by a new name that the mouth of the Lord will bestow. (Isaiah 62:2)
- ♦ [God's] compassions ... are new every morning. (Lamentations 3:22-23)
- ♦ I will give you a new heart and put a new spirit in you. (Ezekiel 36:36)
- ♦ [Jesus] took the cup, saying, "This is the new covenant in my blood, which is poured out for you. (Luke 22:20)
- ♦ Just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life. (Romans 6:4)
- ♦ Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

O Hatred, on Love

Martin Luther King Jr., born on January 15, 1929, will be remembered this year on January 20. Given the rancor rampant in today's world, it's fitting to recall King's words; "Hatred paralyzes life; love released it. Hatred confuses life; love harmonizes it. Hatred darkens life; love illumines it."



FROM THE PASTOR

From the Staff:

We want to thank you for the generosity shown to us during the Christmas season. Your gifts and expressions of appreciation for our ministry with you mean so much. It is a privilege and honor to be a part of a fellowship of believers that gives a positive witness for Christ. The new year will continue to give us the opportunity as a church to share the love and joy of Christ for each of us and others. Let's embrace to the fullest these opportunities as we live for our Master. Thanks again, your church staff.

A Prayer for Spiritual Growth

When my spiritual vision is foggy, help me to find my way.

When my understanding is incomplete, open my mind and increase my patience.

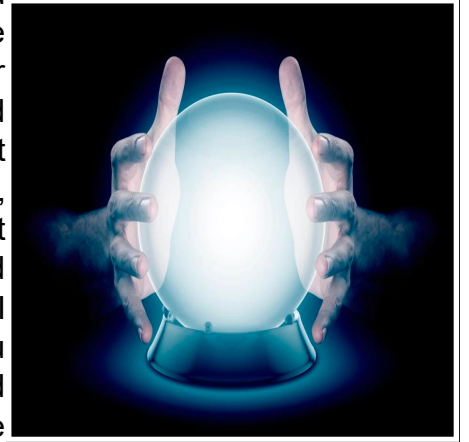
When my indifference blocks my senses, touch my heart.

When worry of fear raise their voices, speak to my faith.

Let your Spirit permeate my longings as well as my living and my loving. Amen.

— Peggy Ferrell,
Prayers and Poems

The sign outside the door; "Worried about tomorrow? I can see into the future. Come in and discover your destiny." The door creaked open, and George stepped into the dimly lit room. Herman, the fortune teller, emerged from the dark velvet curtains, and slid into his seat behind the table. "What about my future? I don't know what to expect. Can you help me?" The sage's hands trembled as he picked up his crystal ball. He shook his head slowly as he gazed intently at the gray orb. "Your future is cloudy. The projection so murky I see nothing clearly. Really, I see nothing at all." And with gnarled hands Herman, the fortune teller, grabbed the money from the table, stood up and bid the man good luck. He sulked back between the dark velvet curtains. With a blank look on his face, George stood up and pulled the door behind him as he walked out. He knew no more when he left than when he had walked in.



Any and all attempts to definitively determine the future leave us confused and frustrated. We do not know what tomorrow will bring, whether good or bad. The funny thing about time is that we cannot see one second into the future but we can be hounded permanently by our past. How many times have we heard the phrase, I didn't see that coming when something catches us by surprise. And if we anticipate those moments of surprise to be bad, they fill us with anxiety and dread. In our vision of the new year, are we anticipating moments of joy and fulfillment or dread and fear? In reality, we will have both. That's the way life is. With this truth in mind, what is our best course for 2025?

The Scriptures give us this advice in the Proverbs, "Commit your actions to the Lord, and your plans will succeed. The Lord has made everything for his own purposes, even the wicked for a day of disaster ... We can make our plans, but the Lord determines our steps." Proverbs 16:3-4,9 [NLT] The psalmist continues with this admonition. "The Lord directs our steps of the godly. He delights in every detail of their lives. Though they stumble, they will never fall, for the Lord holds them by the hand." Psalm 37:23-24 [NLT]

What lies ahead in 2025? Only the Lord knows, and He is not telling any of us. But He has promised to be with us, guiding our steps if we ask Him to lead us, helping us through the tough spots and giving us hope and strength in our struggles. We have no need to worry or to look for any other directions.

Continue on page 3

Continued from Page Two

He is big enough to handle our problems. He is loving enough to help us through them. Remember what the Scriptures tells us. “nothing can ever separate us from God’s love. Neither death or life, neither angels nor demons, neither our fears for today nor our worries about tomorrow—not even the powers of hell can separate us from God’s love. No power in the sky above or in the earth below— indeed, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from God’s love that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord.” Romans 8:38-39 [NLT] That’s God’s promise to us, and I know it’s true. Thanks be to God!

Bro. John King

God in Church or Nature? Yes.

Church isn’t designed to be an alternative to the real world. Worship is a time and space apart from the world in order for us to find our way out into the world. Worship isn’t a man-made place distinct from the beauty of the natural world; at its best, church is a place where we realize God’s glory in the world we find ourselves in. ... Do I find God in a church or out in nature? Yes. ... In church I hope to sharpen my senses so I can discover the house of God everywhere.

-James C. Howell, Everywhere is Jerusalem

Giving Your Best

Like the Magi, we can respond with our best gifts— our industry, our devotion, our very lives. We disciples are Christ’s tangible presence in the world. That same Child whose light brought such joy to the Magi now, through us, offers his mercy to every person.

Through us, every day, Christ feeds multitudes; he heals, teaches and guides countless people. Through individual volunteers and major institutions, through simple acts of kindness or worldwide coordinated efforts, the world can encounter, through the Christian community, the enduring, tangible presence of Christ.



— Michael Simone

MLK on What Really Matters

Exactly two months before his assassinations, Martin Luther King Jr. preached his final sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. On February 4, 1968, the civil-rights icon spoke about how he wanted to be remembered at his funeral. He preferred that people recall not his education or achievements, but that he “tried to give his life serving others” and “tried to love somebody.”

Adapting a 1952 homily by J. Wallace Hamilton, King decried the “drum major instinct—a desire to be out front, a desire to lead the parade.” Humans often want to be great and first, as evidenced by the disciples James and John requesting prime seats in paradise. But King urged listeners to focus on the “reordered priorities of Jesus, who wants us to “be first in love.”

As Jesus showed, “everybody can serve,” King said. Your background or status doesn’t matter, as long as you have “a heart full of grace” and “a soul generated by love.

JANUARY

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Communion Beth Herndon Offering Calhoun Liberty Ministry Center	Ushers Glenn Kimbrel Jimmy Cox Standby Stewart Herndon		1 Office Closed	2 Office Closed	3 ♪Vicky Whitfield	4 ♪Olivia Averett
5 Epiphany Sunday	6 Epiphany of the Lord	7 	8 Bible Study 10 am & 7 pm	9 	10 ♥Ken & Joan Sheppard	11 ♪Perry McGhee
12 Baptism of the Lord	13 	14 	15 	16 ♥Steve & Vicky Whitfield	17 	18
19 ♪Nick Hughes	20 Martin Luther King, Jr. Day ♪Sarah Lynn White	21 ♪Delilah Jordan	22 ♪Jim Jines ♪Ava Rae Haser ♪DellAnne Schruefer	23 ♪Emma Rea Kimbrel	24 ♪Henry McCrone	25
26 	27 	28 	29 ♪Tyler Cox ♪Laura Williams	30 ♪Briella Kate Whitfield ♥David & Karen Murrell	31 	

Our Caring Ministry List

Short Term Concerns

With the new year comes a new
Caring Ministry List

Intercessory Prayer

Those Battling Cancer

Our Shut – Ins

Betty Ann Cayson
Virginia Williams

Our Military

Ukraine soldiers and citizens
Israel Citizens
Middle East

Persecuted Christians

UM Missionaries

Caregivers

Please contact the office with any
updates to this list — Thank You!

New Year's Blessing

The eighth day of Christmas,
the eighth day of Creation,
the Next New Day,
New Year's Day.

May every day be a new year's
day for you:
a chance to forgive and be for-
given,
to start again,
May you take courage to begin
anew. ...

As you let go the year past,
may you ... in your free fall find
yourself held by an eternal love
that has come ages to be with
you,
and will carry you all the way to
the end. ...

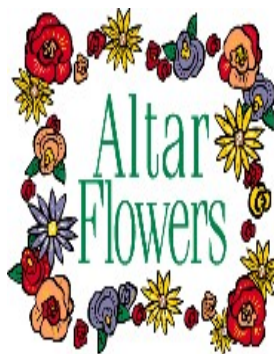
Every day may you trust your
belovedness,
your freedom from having to
prove yourself,
and receive the grace that is
given to you.

May this year be a year of grace
and hope.

-Steve Garnaas-Holmes,
unfoldinglight.net

January Flower Calendar

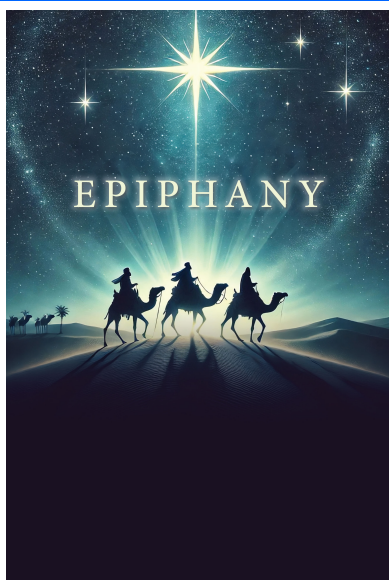
- 5 Mr. & Mrs. Jimmy Cox
- 12 Mr. & Mrs. Glen McClellan
- 19 Mrs. Vance Bareman
- 26 Mrs. Don Stephens



What is Epiphany?

Epiphany is celebrated annually in Christian churches on January 6. The word "epiphany" comes from a Greek word meaning "manifestation" or "showing forth." Its focus is on the legendary arrival of the Magi (three wise men) after the birth of Christ. They followed the light of a star to find the Light of the World.

The wise men were not Jews but Gentiles, which shows that Christ came not only for Jews but for all other people on Earth. Thus, all of us who are Gentiles are in the lineage of the Magi, the first Gentiles who came to Christ.



New
Year
Blessings

You Crown The Year With Your Goodness
Psalm 65 v 11

Blountstown United Methodist Church

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Family Prayer List

Happy New Year

volume 2 • number 1

1. Mark Herndon Family /
Jackie & David House
2. Nick Hughes Family /
Laurie James Family
3. Sandra & Jim Jines /
Billy Jordan Family
4. Becki Kastli Family /
Cathy & Glenn Kimbrel
5. Jonathan Kimbrel Family /
John King
6. Clay Knight /
Annie Jo Lander Family
7. Hester Leonard /
Alva Martin
8. Sally & Mike Mayo /
Gail & Joe Mike McCaskill
9. Marc McCaskill Family /
Michael McCaskill Family
10. Barbara & Hentz McClellan /
Danite & Glen McClellan
11. Heath McClellan Family /
Kyle McClellan Family
12. Sharon & Henry McCrone /
Perry McGhee Family
13. Phyllis & Frank Miller /
Kathryn Mitchell Family
14. Karen & David Murrell /
Brenda Parrish
15. Gary Parrish /
Jeremy Proctor
16. Charmian & Jerry Register /
Diane & Russell Scholz
17. DellAnne & Michael Schruefer /
Tracy Cox-Stanton Family
18. Ken Sheppard Family /
Stacy Sims
19. Rodney Smith Family /
Donald Stanley Family
20. Sue & Don Stanley /
Mert Stephens
21. Scott Stephens Family /
Virginia House Szrowicz
22. Betty Sue & Ken Taylor /
Chris & John Tomlinson
23. Ann & Mike Tucker /
Eric Alford
24. Esther Alford /
Dresa Barfield
25. John Barfield Family /
Wynelle Bateman
26. Vicki Bennett Family /
Alton Carpenter
27. Betty Ann Cayson /
Ron Copeland Family
28. Jane Creamer /
David Corbin Family
29. Donna & Finlay Corbin /
Peggy & Jimmy Cox
30. Steve Cox /
Gina & Tyler Cox
31. Joe Durham Family /
Debbie & Tommy Edwards