



December 28th

I want to start by saying a tremendous thank you to everyone in our Blackman family for a great 2018. I have been blown away by the ways in which you have contributed to a great step forward for our church. Each of you through your prayers, presence, gifts, services, and witness has added significantly to our community of faith this year and I look forward to an even greater 2019!

Over the last year we have received 24 new people into membership, seen a rise in our average attendance and exceeded our budgeted giving by approximately \$19,000 while also keeping our expenses right at, or just slightly above, budget. Furthermore, we engaged hundreds of people through our green bean and potato drops, Easter and Christmas Cantatas, Vacation Bible School, Bunny Brunch, Trunk or Treat, Christmas Eve services and other events designed to connect with the community around us.

It was through your generosity and willingness to serve that we continued our partnership with Stepping Stones Homeless ministry and served hundreds of people by sponsoring a mobile food pantry at Greenhouse Ministries. Additionally, I am grateful for the generosity you showed in helping raise funds that went to victims of natural disasters, victims of human trafficking, other persons experiencing homelessness not being served by Stepping Stones, and to provide clean drinking water to people of other countries without it.

These are just a few highlights of what has gone on in 2018 and it has all been made possible because of God's work through servants like you. But, I believe this is only the beginning of what God is calling us to do, and 2019 is the next step. Through prayerful discernment and discussion our leadership will continue working strategically to strengthen the mission and ministry of our church.

For the past couple of years our budget included \$4,500 devoted to cultivating new ministries in and through our church and those funds will still be available in 2019 so that we can continue to efficiently and adaptively grow the ministry of our church for God's Kingdom. This money helped fund initiatives like growing our Trunk or Treat, the Greenhouse Ministries Mobile Food Pantry, and providing the funds for our combined worship service earlier in the year. My hope is that each of you will be sensitive to the promptings of the Holy Spirit if there is a ministry you would like to see us pursue and share that with me or our other leaders.

This year our Finance Committee has once again chosen to tithe on the giving surplus mentioned above to an of the organization outside our church and the Church Council will be deciding which organizations will receive that money. We feel this is a way for us to be good stewards of God's resources and give thanks to God for the financial blessings of this year.

With that said, I am also pleased to announce that our Finance Committee submitted, and our Church Council approved, an approximate 3% increase in our operating budget for 2019. I celebrate this because that increase includes much-deserved raises for all of our hardworking, dedicated staff and expands the ministries of our church. For example, we are investing more money in things like our Children

and Youth ministries, Christian Education, fellowship and nurture ministries. The increased spending comes while also keeping the spending on the maintenance and upkeep of our campus in check. These moves indicate that our church leadership is choosing to invest in making better disciples and increasing ministries that will impact our world and community for God's Kingdom. In other words, we are choosing to be the church at work in our world instead of simply maintaining a building.

I want to close this article as I began it by saying a tremendous thank you for making this a wonderful year full of God's love and grace. I look forward to an even greater 2019 by the grace of God! Happy New Year and God bless!!

Bro. David



- **Thank You:** Over the past couple of weeks there has been a special collection taken up for the staff here at church. The staff would like to sincerely thank everyone for their prayers, kindness and generosity this Christmas Season. Thank You!
- **Christmas Giving Opportunities:** This is our last week for collecting cans of soup/chili, wool/winter socks, "Hot Hands" hand and feet warmers. You have done a GREAT job so far, but there is still time to give or give again if you feel led to do so.
- **Special Offering:** If you weren't able to attend the Christmas Eve services and would like to contribute to our special offering you may still do so this Sunday. All you have to do is mark XMAS Eve in the memo line of your check or on the envelope.

Prayer Requests

- **Dick Stidom**, recovery from heart procedure
- **Kerrie Greer**, mother of Nicole Greer, health issues
- **The Batey Family**, at the loss of Melissa's sister - Sally Weatherford
- **The Cable Family**, friends of Striepling's, loss of son
- **Judy Johnson**, sister of Tamara Harris, health concerns
- **Carl Shipley**, brother-in-law of Patricia Shipley, serious illness
- **Carol Matisak**, friend of Nance family, stage 4 cancer
- **Lorie Stiles**, friend of Wayne Bradford, complications with MS
- **Steve Gansel**, recovery from intense nerve pain
- **Nicole Pankey**, friend of Jenny Peck, Pancreatic cancer – going thru chemo
- **Angelina**, mother of Saru, healing from stroke
- **Lee Roy Pannell**, health concerns
- **John Sloan**, continued healing for stage 4 liver cancer

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- **Red Cross Blood Drive:** January 13 8:30-12:30 sign up on Red Cross app, Red Cross website or sign up sheet in the Narthex. Save lives! For questions call Janet Lambert. 615.300.8522 Thanks!
 - **COME HEAR THE BELLS!** The 2019 Epiphany Ring - this year on Sunday, January 6, will be at First UMC at 7pm. As always, your spirit will be lifted by the hymns, scripture, and bell choirs music. An uplifting way to begin the New Year.

Calling all Acolytes! We need you!
Would you like to be an Acolyte for BUMC? Here is a link for you to sign up for future Sundays.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0D4FAAAF2FA7F85-bumc4>

Holiday Worship Schedule

We want to say a tremendous thank you to everyone who made worship during this holiday season such a special blessing!!

Youth News

Looking Ahead:

December 30th Deposit of 25 dollars due for Warmth in Winter.

December 31st New Years Lock in Party. Escape to the Year 2019 with us. We are planning an exciting night so rest up. Donations of fireworks, snack foods or breakfast items are appreciated. Youth friends are welcome please make sure to sign up ahead of time for an accurate count for food and game supplies.

Youth Calendar

August 2018-2019 Calendar:

<http://blackmanumc.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/20182019-Calendar-Blackman-UMC-Youth.pdf>

NO YOUTH on the 23rd or 30th

December 31st. New Years Lock-In

- **Youth New Years Lock In 12/31:** Escape to 2019. We will enjoy a fun night of escape games and a movie. Arrival time will be 6:00pm. There will be food for dinner. Breakfast will be at 8:30 pick up time will be 10:00a.m.

Save The Dates:

Warmth in Winter February 1-3 Gaylord Opryland Hotel*

*Sign up sheets are outside the youth office



If you enjoy cooking we have two great volunteer opportunities coming up. January 31st and March 21st. Blackman UMC will provide the meal for the students before Thursday night worship time at The MTSU Wesley

Foundation. We will need meats, vegetables, rolls and desserts for about 40 people. There is a sign up in the Narthex for your convenience. Thank you, Chandra.]

Children's Ministry Announcement

Our children's ministry team is looking for people to join! There are many different areas where you can share your knowledge, passion and ideas: Children's church curriculum, children's outreach, be part of our VBS team, fill our Sunday morning bags, just to name a few! If you are interested, please reach out to Jenny Peck at (615) 218-9277 or orjenpeck364@gmail.com. We will have an interest meeting in January as well!

Leaders in Worship for December 30

Colossians 3:12-17

Luke 2:22-38

8:30 am:

Phillip Glass, Worship Leader

Scott Broden, Lay Reader

Mike Rose, Sound Tech and Multimedia Tech

10:45 am:

Brandon Whitt, Worship Leader

Karen Sloan, Lay Reader

Mark Spears, Sound Tech

Church Staff

Pastor: Rev. David Stockton, pastor@blackmanumc.com

Music Director: Mike Rose, music@blackmanumc.com

Youth Director: Chandra Inglis, youth@blackmanumc.com

Administrative Assistant: Mary Rose Gansel, office@blackmanumc.com