

# The Vine

“I am the vine, you are the branches...” John 15:5

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### A letter From the Bishop Tidings of Joy

I love Christmas—especially Christmas Eve. The shepherds, angels and stars announce not merely an old thing that happened long ago, but a new thing that happens that night. On this night—Christmas Eve night—God makes all things new. It is a night in which eternity enters into time. It is the night of Jesus’ birth. It is a night for rejoicing in the love of God.

Christmas Eve is a night for the whole earth to lean forward just a bit to hear angel voices. It is a night to peer into the sky’s darkness for the advent of a new star. It is a night to listen for the fluttering of unseen wings. Feet planted on earth—and for a moment—companions dwelling with the stars. Earth, heaven and the smallest child are woven together in the same vast web of creation.

It all seems too heavenly. Yet, on Christmas Eve, the astonishing, amazing love between God and humanity becomes as real and ordinary as the cry of a newborn child. The Power who created all the galaxies in the heavens and the stars in their courses comes to birth as a sweet, innocent Baby. On Christmas Eve, we delight in Mystery and let our hearts be filled with joy.

Perhaps it was something like that when the shepherd watched over their flocks by night: stars burning brightly in the sky, the wind blowing gently against their faces, and the earth warm and rich. Luke says, “An angel appeared, and the glory of the Lord shone around them, so that they were filled with fear. ‘Do not be afraid, for I bring you good news of a great joy which will be for all the people. To you is born this day in the city of David a Savior who is Messiah and Lord.’” Angels dancing among the stars. The shepherds dancing on earth. What a gift! What love! What joy!

This is Christmas joy. It’s not simply joy in the happy moments when things are going right. It is joy in the poignant moments, the humorous moments, the sad moments, the moments of quietness and solitude. It is the joy of the family holding hands at the Christmas table. It is the joy of receiving a simple, handmade gift

from one you love. It is the joy of writing a note to someone who will always be a part of the rhythm of your life. It is joy of helping to feed a hungry child whose eyes seem to pierce your heart. It is the joy of forgiving someone who has hurt you deeply. It is the joy of eating the bread and drinking the wine and experiencing again both the mystery of God and the mystery of humanity.

What can one know at such a time as Christmas Eve? What can one say? The poet W. H. Auden put it this way,

“I know nothing except what everyone

#### WORSHIP AT BELLAIRE UMC

for December 18, 2011

#### 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent

Rev. Jim Flagg will preach “The Journey Continues” using Luke 2:1-7 (NRSV) as the scripture reading.

for December 24, 2011

Christmas Eve

Rev. Flagg will preach “The Journey To the Manger” using scripture Luke 2:8-20 (NRSV).

3:00 p.m. - Traditional Worship

5:00 p.m. - Child-Friendly Contemporary Worship

11:00 p.m. - Traditional Worship

for December 25, 2011

1<sup>st</sup> Sunday of Christmas

Rev. Butler will preach. We will also have a Blessing of the Toys for all your new Christmas goodies. **Single Worship service at 11:11 a.m. in the Sanctuary.**

#### Sunday Morning Schedule

9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship (Sanctuary)

10:05 a.m. Sunday School

11:11 a.m. Traditional Worship (Sanctuary)

11:11 a.m. International Worship (Chapel)

#### Wednesday Communion Worship

12:15 p.m. & 6:15 p.m. Informal Worship w/ Communion (with a sack lunch or light dinner)

BELLAIRE  *United Methodist Church*

Connecting People

4417 Bellaire Blvd., Bellaire, TX 77401 713-666-2167 www.bellaireumc.org

# 2011 Poinsettias

Steven Leonardo and family in memory of  
Tracy Leonardo

Karen Juul Nielsen and Rick Garnett in memory  
of Dr. & Mrs. Cleuts Juul-Nielsen and Mr.  
Robert Garnett and in honor of Mrs.  
Pauline Garnett

Kris and Shirley Lloyd in memory of Kris'  
parents, LaVerne Lloyd & Christine Lloyd  
Richardson and Shirley's parents, Charles &  
Yvonne King

Jeff and Jennifer Draper in memory of Hazel  
Draper, Bill Draper and Joetta Sholes

Marjorie Wilson in memory of Nat M. Wilson,  
our parents and grandparents and in honor  
of our children's families

Bill and Natalie Lamont in memory of Jan  
Lamont and Mel Hiles and in honor of Bill  
Lamont and Bev Hiles

Bill A. Lamont in memory of Jan Lamont

Jackie Milhoan in honor of Ruth Anderson

Ron and Mary Ann Crabb in honor of Elenor  
Coursey, Allison Kirsch, and Erin Rice

Nola Brocato in memory of her parents, W.  
Loyd & Katherine Mize and in memory of  
her brother, Robert L. Mize

Leslie and Sammye Munson in memory of Sam  
& Margaret McLelland and in honor of  
Margaret Rose McLelland

Leo and Fay Peters in memory of Vernon &  
Betty Cook and Leo & Helen Peters

Carolyn White in memory of Dan White

Claude and Linda Eckert in memory of Simon &  
Marie Emanuel and C.B. & Pearl Eckert

Phyllis and John Nardy in memory of Albert &  
Elenor Lentz, John & Alice Nardy, and  
William & Alice Beasley and in honor of  
Elenor Coursey

Sharon Little and family in memory of David  
Little

Paula Koehn in memory of Jennie McMullen  
White

Joann Seuser in memory of H.S. "Buster" Key  
and in honor of Betty Alice Key

The Nowotny Family in memory of Bill  
Nowotny and Will Willardson

Ralph and Sandra Weaver in memory of Ralph  
M. Weaver, Sr., Judy Murphy Cook, and  
Dean Cook and in honor of Shirley Weaver,

Gale & Julia Cook, and our BUMC church  
family

Michael and Chrissy Ervin in honor of Gabriel  
and Benton Ervin

Jill and Alan Vaughan in memory of George &  
Fern Wallick and Rev. William Vaughan and  
in honor of Beccy Vaughan

Hal and Debbie Sharp in memory of David &  
Edna Earle Youell and Emmett Sharp and in  
honor of Merideth Sharp and Patrick Murray,  
Eunice Sharp Hibbeler, Janie Strother

Bob and Cindy Haines in memory of Nonnie  
Haines

Janie Strother in memory of Joe Strother

Leon and Dot Ullrich in honor of all teachers in  
BUMC and in honor of the Seekers Sunday  
School Class

Ellen and John Bell in memory of Jenny and  
Kate's grandmothers, Katherine Bell and  
Mary Virginia Ireton

Liz Atkinson in memory of her mom, Elizabeth  
Ranallo and in honor of her dad, George  
Ranallo and in honor of her prayer partners,  
Cynthia, Kim and Karen

Michelle and Chance Comstock in memory of  
Amy McGowan and in honor of Frank &  
Alice Paniagua

Ted and Gabrielle Pate in honor of our Lord  
and Savior Jesus Christ—"Happy  
Birthday" and in honor of  
everyone who helped  
with Bethlehem  
Village 2011

Mary Helen Carmack  
in memory of Hugh  
W. Carmack, Mary  
Glenn Bunjes, and  
Kathy Carmack

Linda Hogan and  
Penny Tooke  
in memory  
of Olivia and  
Reuben C.  
Coons.

Hazel Ruth in  
memory of  
Thomas B. Ruth  
and John T.  
Ruth



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## We Pray For Those...

### Hospitalized

Hugh W - Clarewood ECC  
Ann W - Methodist Med. Ctr.  
Jean S - Clarewood ECC

### In Need

Anonymous, Emma, Luke and all others listed at  
[bellaireumcprayer.org](http://bellaireumcprayer.org)

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Knows—if there when Grace dances,  
I should dance.”

May the angel's glad tidings of joy echo in your soul  
this Christmas Eve.

Bishop Janice Riggle Huie

### Thespians of Christ?

Hypocrite: from the greek word for actor. Pretending to be what you are not. Taking on a false persona. I love the theatre as much as anyone and appreciate what skills that takes. But, secretly, I must confess that I myself am an actor. I say I believe in Jesus Christ, He is the most important thing to me, and I sing praises on Sunday. Outside of these walls, I don't make eye contact with the Salvation Army bell ringer, scream in impatience at my messy roommates, don't call my mother enough and enter the church parking lot from the wrong direction when I hope no one is looking. Which of these is the real me, and which is the role I am playing?

The truth is, I DO love Jesus, but am scared to show it. I am influenced more by the world I live in than I am by the God who created me or His Son whom He sent to us. This season, the gift I give to the Christ child is the real me. I endeavor to do away with false pretense, false praise and self-interest and think of what God wants me to do. I don't believe for a moment this will be easy, but I know He would not call me to do it if He didn't think I could.

Lord, help me to stop being an actor and to let the real me, loved completely by You, shine in this world.

-Ben Hinshaw

### Bethlehem Village Thanks

A BIG THANK YOU to everyone who helped make Bethlehem Village a huge success. We had over 600 guests who took the tour, plus many who stopped to only look at the live nativity, and many more who drove by and checked us out. Maybe next year they'll stop and visit. It takes a lot of people to make the Village work—95 on Friday night alone, not to mention all the cookie bakers. What a wonderful way to end the tour, with homemade cookies and punch!

Each of you were part of this ministry, sharing “The Greatest Story Ever Told”—the birth of God's Son, Jesus Christ (John 3:16). We are so thankful for you and our church family for giving us your time and talents, sharing this amazing story. God bless each of you. We wish you a Merry Christmas full of love, good fellowship and peace.

The Bethlehem Village Steering Team

### Simbang Gabi is Coming Soon

Simbang Gabi, literally translated “Evening Mass,” is a Filipino tradition that normally takes place between December 16 and 24<sup>th</sup>. During the years of Spanish colonization, the friars and priests wanted to reach the masses who worked in the rice fields and the sugar and coconut plantations. Therefore, they created an evening mass that would last several days to tell the story of Christ during the Christmas season. The Filipinos in our International Service have continued with this tradition. And every year, they host Simbang Gabi in their homes. The celebration has been shortened to three days, December 21, 22 and 23. However, the excitement, food, fun and worship experience has not been lessened. If you would like to participate in this year's Simbang Gabi come by the Chapel and pick up a flier for more details.

### Bellaire United Methodist Seniors

REPORT ON SANTA'S WONDERLAND TRIP—

Twenty-seven seniors gathered for the trip to see Santa's Wonderland on Wednesday, November 30. The food at Mallet Bros. BBQ was very good and many talked about their pecan cobbler! The lights were spectacular—over 2 million now and other new features have been added since last year. They are open through the week after Christmas. It's a trip for everyone!

NO TRIP IN DECEMBER— Enjoy your Christmas holidays with your friends and families.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR— Wednesday, January 25 is the next trip on the county bus. We are working out details now. It WILL be an indoor venue just in case the weather is wintery.

**Bellaire UMC Presents  
"Twas the Night Before Christmas"**

**Puppet Show & Happy Birthday Jesus Party**

On Sunday, December 18, in the Family Life Center, we will gather together at 12:18 p.m. for a puppet show about Christmas, followed by a light lunch and birthday cake for Jesus. It's fun for all ages. The event is free, but donations are accepted. To RSVP, or for more information, contact Donna and Bob Hutchinson at 713-728-1768 or email [puppets@bellaireumc.org](mailto:puppets@bellaireumc.org).

**Socks and Mittens on a Tree**

In the upstairs children's hallway, there is a collection going on for children's socks, mittens/gloves, scarves and caps for the Star of Hope Mission. Please bring your donations during advent to add to the children's hall sock and mitten tree. These will be delivered soon, so bring some new items by when you can. Thanks for your donation!

**Year-End Contributions**

There's still time to get in your year-end contributions to have them count on your 2011 tax returns. Just mail your contribution to the church office or bring it by. We'll be here. If you have questions, just call us at 713-666-2167 and ask for Michael Hutchinson or Elizabeth Lloyd. You can also email [elloyd@bellaireumc.org](mailto:elloyd@bellaireumc.org). We'll be open until noon on 12/30 to accept contributions or they must be postmarked by 12/31.

**Signup for Flowers**

Our signup for flowers for worship for 2012 has been posted by the Connection Center. If you'd like to purchase flowers in honor or memory of a family member or loved one, or in celebration of a special event, sign up there. The cost for flowers is \$120 per Sunday. Email [flowers@bellaireumc.org](mailto:flowers@bellaireumc.org).

**Sunday School News**

**DISCOVERY**-(136/137)-Next Sunday (12/18) we will have Christmas snacks and sing Christmas carols.

**FAITHBUILDERS**-(225)-Our class will begin a new parenting series entitled, "Your Child: Essentials of Discipline: on January 15. Please come and join us in Room 225 upstairs or Contact Iska Wire for more information at [faithbuilders@bellaireumc.org](mailto:faithbuilders@bellaireumc.org).

**HERITAGE**-(Parlor)-Some good news: Janie S.'s grandson, Doug, will be home in 20 days from his second tour of duty in Afghanistan. Martha W.'s granddaughter, April, will be home from China with a new great-granddaughter that Martha and her family have never seen! Phyllis visited Frances C., who is almost 96, and reportedly is doing great! Milton's daughter is recovering nicely since her surgery! Bettye D. has decided to remain in ECC at Clarewood. Prayers: Linda and LeRoy, Virginia C., Ruth and Joe S., Wanza, Virginia F., Francisca, and Selma, who will have another spinal injection Wednesday (update: it looks as though she might have a viral infection, so this injection has been postponed). Thanks to Martha W. for teaching last Sunday and to Margaret M. who will teach this Sunday.

**Our Ministry of Time, Talent and Treasure**

**Sunday Worship**

	for 12/4	for 12/11
8:15 a.m. Contemporary Worship	110	105
10:55 a.m. Traditional Worship	124	147
11:00 a.m. International Worship	60	73
Nursery	6	8

**Total Worship Attendance** 300 333

Guests worshipping with us	30	33
Received into Membership 2011	35	35

**Sunday School**

Children (Nursery - 5th Grade)	56	55
Youth (6th - 12th grades)	25	27
Adults	175	165
<b>Total</b>	<b>256</b>	<b>247</b>

**Weekly Funds Update**

2011 Budget	\$1,258,855.00
Weekly Budget Needs	\$24,208.00
Amount Received Sunday, Dec. 11	<b>\$16,494.97</b>

Pledges and Other Gifts	
Received through 50 Sundays	\$1,083,761.64
Expenditures through 50 Sundays	\$1,052,065.25

Designated Account Balance as of Dec. 12 \$322,500.10

**Pledge Update: \$692,409**  
in 134 pledges

For your convenience, monthly pledge payments may be made through ACH Pre-Authorized Debit. The Electronic Funds Transfer form is now available at [www.bellaireumc.org/forms](http://www.bellaireumc.org/forms). To sign up or receive more information, contact Elizabeth Lloyd at 713-666-2167.

**Church Office Hours**

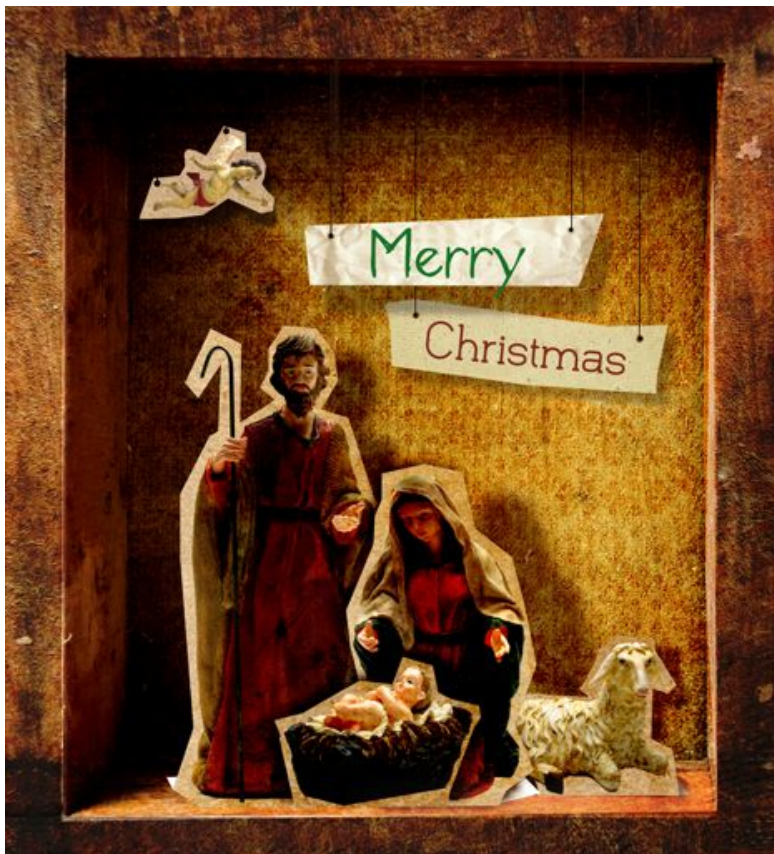
Monday - Thursday	8:30 a.m. - 5 p.m.
Friday	8:30 a.m. - Noon

**Church Building Hours**

Sunday	7 a.m. - 8 p.m.
Monday - Friday	7:30 a.m. - 9 p.m.
Saturday	9 a.m. - 4 p.m.

**Contact Information**

Bellaire UMC Church Office	713-666-2167
School for Little Children	713-666-1111
Church Fax:	713-663-6397
BUMC Information Email	<a href="mailto:info@bellaireumc.org">info@bellaireumc.org</a>
Emergency Pastor on-call	713-666-2167 x142



from your Bellaire UMC Staff

*Pastor Jim  
Pastor Siri  
Cof. Reed  
Whitney Joseph*

*Michael Erwin  
Elizabeth Lloyd  
Michael Hutchinson  
Rhonda Sampiere*

### Church Staff

Dr. Janice Riggle Huie.....Bishop  
 Rev. Lawrence Young .....District Superintendent  
 Members of BUMC.....Ministers  
 Rev. Jim Flagg .....Senior Pastor  
 Rev. Tori Butler.....Associate Pastor  
 Virilene Martin.....Interim Music Director  
 Ben Hinshaw.....Christian Education Coordinator  
 Carolyn Reed.....Director of Youth  
 Elenor Coursey.....Organist  
 Rhonda Sampiere.....Director of Weekday Ministries  
 Alice Clark.....Assoc. Director of Weekday Ministries  
 Elizabeth Lloyd.....Business Manager  
 Michael Ervin.....Communications Coordinator  
 Michael Hutchinson.....Administrative Assistant  
 Debbie Baker.....Power Camp Director  
 Denise Johnson.....Nursery Coordinator  
 Whitney Joseph.....Building Staff Coordinator  
 Rosana Cruz.....Building Staff  
 Jose Pacheco.....Building Staff  
 Jose Pascual.....Building Staff

### Upcoming Issues/Due Dates 2012

January 11/January 4  
 January 25/January 18  
 February 8/February 1  
 February 22/February 15

**Vine articles** are due by 5 p.m. one week before the Vine's publication date and should answer the questions **who, what, when, where** and **how/why** in the body. Full submission guidelines may be found at [www.bellaireumc.org/vine](http://www.bellaireumc.org/vine).



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