"The Messenger"

November 2026

Pastor Vicky Martinez
Pine Bluffs United Methodist Church

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ANNUAL CHURCH CONFERENCE
PINE BLUFFS UMC
NOVEMBER 21 @ 10 A.M., FOLLOWED BY BRUNCH

Please have your annual reports sent via email to Helen Werner helenwernerpbumc@gmail.com by November 13 so they can be added to the packet – thank you!

Report of Clergy Orders – Pastor Vicky

A time of togetherness was had by those clergy who recently attended Clergy Orders in SLC. Held by Grace, Strengthened by Connection: Finding Renewal at Clergy Orders was the leading power of the gathering. As your beloved pastor, I am expected to attend this Conference event. I am ever so thankful that I got to do so! It is an enriching time for us as clergy to learn from each other, be led in worship and more learning by Bishop Stoneking. We also see those we haven't seen since the last year's orders. The weather was beautiful, so it was easy to lean into the power of the Holy Spirit as it shined in us. On opening night, a fellow clergy-woman (Rebecca Dunagan) led us in what would grow the theme of Spiritual Geography. She led us through a visualization exercise recognizing that bridges as such, can be a metaphor to connect spiritual geography with unseen forces and clergy self-care. From her talk, as clergy, this theme for renewal can deepen our capacity as clergy to respond to those responsibilities of our calling with steadiness and love. Some of the retreat's renewal looked as simple as sharing a meal together. Around those tables, colleagues could reconnect, tell stories, and listen. There was room for the kind of conversation that feels like gathering around a campfire – unhurried, open, and warmed by the knowledge that others understand something of the journey. And across the Mountain Sky Conference, that's important. The keynote speaker was Dr. Mark Brehin, a UM pastor who invited us to explore the sacredness of creation and the way geography shapes identify, belonging, and calling. It was a time of refreshment and retreat delivering us back into our home churches with renewed energy for what the future holds.

All Church Thanksgiving

Pine Bluffs will host the 1st Annual All Church Thanksgiving on November 22nd from 3:00pm to 5:00pm. We will gather with other Pine Bluffs churches and enjoy good food and good company. We hope everyone can join us. We welcome anyone who wants to bring finger type foods and desserts.



Pastor Appreciation

Pastor Vicky would like to thank everyone for the thoughtful cards and gifts for this Pastor Appreciation time. This congregation is so well represented in our community and the family of faith as we continue to grow stronger in our faith and faith walk with Jesus Christ. You are a beloved community to me and I appreciate and love being your pastor!

Thank you and God bless!

INSPIRATIONAL SCRIPTURE	FELLOWSHIP/WORSHIP/SUNDAY SCHOOL
Joshua 1:9 (NIV) Have I not commanded you? Be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go. **Philippians 4:6-7 (NIV)** Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus. 	Fellowship – 8:15 a.m. *(every Sunday)* Worship – 9:00 a.m. *(every Sunday)* Sunday School – 9:15 a.m. *(every Sunday, except during the Summer)* Women's Prayer Group – 9:00 a.m. *(every Friday)* 

Keeping it Real



Pastor Vicky Martinez

Struggles, Requests, Thanksgiving

Each month, as I put together this article, I am mindful of the context in which I am writing. I think about the calendar—where we are in the changing of seasons or upcoming holidays. I think about where we are in our journey as a church family—what we are celebrating and where we are struggling. And I think about what message God might have for us in any or all of those spaces. According to the calendar, we are already here in November. We'll soon be halfway through fall, with winter just around the corner. For some, as the temperature drops, so do our spirits. The days grow shorter and the nights last longer. Thanksgiving will be here before we know it and with it, our attempt to reach our neighbors. Then, I think, where are we in our faith journey together? It seems clear that we are not feeling especially thankful. Our attendance is seemingly lower than in the past few months, and that can cause discouragement. Our world is struggling to grapple with continued violence both on global and local levels as across our United States we never seem to have a break between one catastrophe or another. But here we have a choice and that choice is up to us as we choose hope. We continue to prepare, to show up, and to serve, but we feel the struggle.

We especially feel the struggle in the midst of growing concern over national current financial struggles and what that means for our future. Pine Bluffs UMC, is currently putting together a budget, and that seems to lend it to some stress among Church leadership. Members have spent hours trying to discern what steps we might be able to take now in order to find our best way forward together. On that note, we have dates for our annual Church Conferences – Pine Bluffs will occur on Saturday, November 21 at 10 am. And Grace will be on Sunday, November 22 at 1 p.m. At these two gatherings we will experience voting, reports, recommendations, celebrations and responses. Plus, some good food! At these times we will also call on leadership to engage in discernment, and with the congregations, make decisions that will impact 2027 and beyond.

There are a lot of things to look forward to in the next couple of months: Pine Bluffs; i.e. Thanksgiving Open House (Nov. 22 @ 3). The upcoming Advent Study: "Why the Nativity" by Dr. David Jeremiah, and so much more! Stay tuned.

Lately, we've been hearing a great deal about Paul's ministry and words to the different churches he served. I invite us to again listen to Paul's words in his letter to the church in the Greek city of Philippi. Read this passage slowly. Then read it again. "*4Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! 5 Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. 6 Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. 7 And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard you hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*" (Philippians 4:6-7, NIV)

These are not simplistic words suggesting that we just put on a happy face and everything will be fine. Paul wrote these words while imprisoned. He understood struggles and disappointments and challenges in ministry. His own future—even whether he would live or die—was uncertain. In the midst of Paul's struggles, and in the midst of ours, he invites us to rejoice. He says that twice. He invites us to be gentle... in our reactions to our circumstances and in our engagement with each other and everyone we encounter.

He invites us to find comfort and strength in the knowledge that God is near. He invites us to let go of anxiety and, in its place, in every situation (including our current ones), to bring our requests—our concerns, our struggles, our fears, our hopes—to God. And he invites us to include *thanksgiving* as an important part of our perspective and our prayers. That is where we are headed this November – into an attitude of thankfulness and love – to God, our neighbors, and ourselves. If we do all this, he says, the peace of God will guard our hearts and minds. May it be so for each of us as we walk this journey together.

Peace and love to you and yours as we head into this holiday season of 2026. God bless!

Pastor Vicky

WHY THE NATIVITY?

The celebration of Christmas is much bigger than a secularized holiday. Christmas is about God's plan of salvation, which He set in motion before time began.

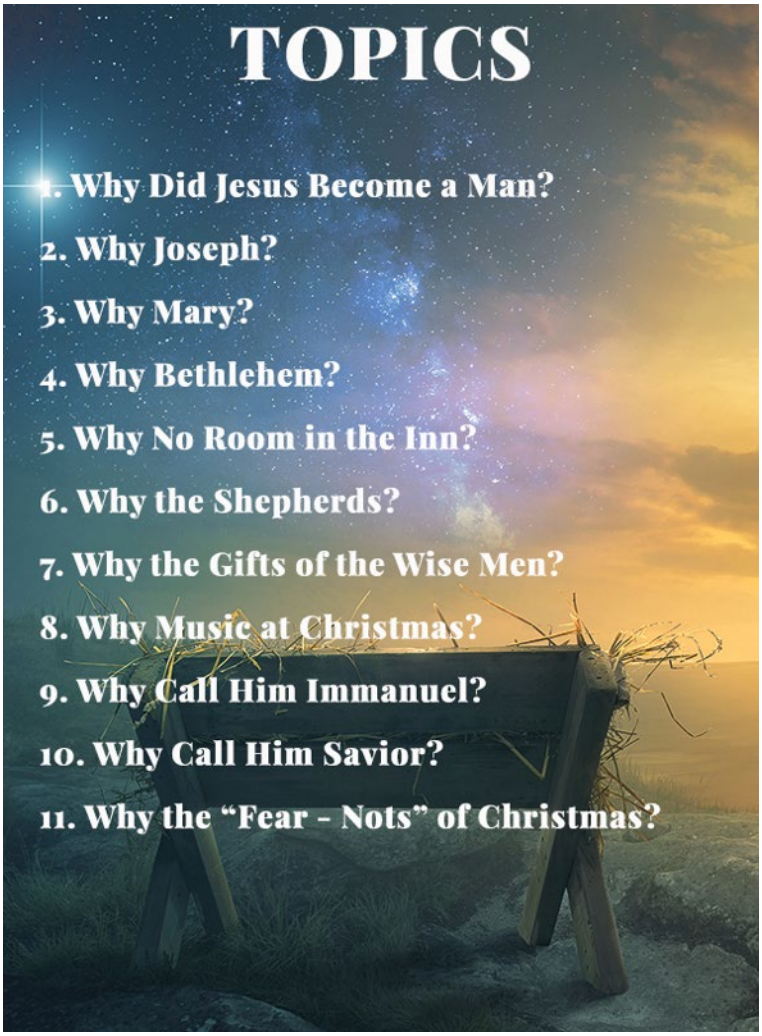
In *Why the Nativity?*, we will discover how the most minute details of Christ's coming were foretold in Old Testament prophecies. We will see that from the Davidic lineage of Jesus and His Virgin birth, to the worship by angelic hosts, common shepherds and wise men, that God was pointing us to the birth of the Messiah.

Join Dr. Jeremiah (and Pastor Vicky) as we explore this intricate and beautiful story of just how and why God sent Jesus to be born as a child. You will come away seeing that it was for the redemption of man and for the submission of sin, and that it was all for the glory of God.

Grace UMC: Tuesday's beginning 12/1/26 – UR

Pine Bluffs UMC – Wednesday's beginning 12/2/26 – Library

Cost of Study guide: $11.00



PRAYERS

Heavenly Father, we lift up all individuals & families to your grace, comfort and love. We ask that you heal all of their hearts and bodies. Amen!

November Mission Moment

Honoring our First Responders

Pine Bluffs Police Department

Pine Bluffs Emergency Services

Pine Bluffs Laramie County Fire District #5

We will be providing pizza, beverages and paper goods to our Pine Bluffs First Responders at their monthly meeting in November.

Donations are welcome.

November 2026

Church Calendar

(A) – Anniversary (B) – Birthday (FH) – Fellowship Hall (L) – Library (PV) – Pastor Vicky

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 -8:15am Fellowship -9am Worship (All Saints Sunday) -9:15am Sunday School 10am-Finance Video -(B) Wanda Carpenter 	2 PV @ Grace	3 PV @ Grace Election Day 	4 PV in Texas 4:30 Church Council	5 PV in Texas (A) M/M Hunter Jeffres	6 PV in Texas (L) 9am Women's Prayer Group	7 PV in Texas
8 PV in Texas -8:15am Fellowship -9am Worship (Veteran's Sunday) -9:15am Sunday School -(B) Pat Jeffres	9 PV in Texas -(B) Alice Theobald -(B) John Wise	10 PV @ PB 10:45am Nominations Committee @ Curries	11 PV @ PB 	12 PV @ PB	13 PV @ PB (L) 9am Women's Prayer Group	14
15 -8:15am Fellowship -9am Worship -9:15am Sunday School -10am UWIF Brunch	16 PV @ Grace	17 PV @ Grace	18 PV @ Grace	19 PV @ Grace (B) Diane Wise	20 (L) 9am Women's Prayer Group	21 -(B) Craig Johnson -10am (FH) Annual Charge Conference
22 -8:15am Fellowship -9am Worship -9:15am Sunday School -(B) Jonathan Heinert	23	24 PV @ PB	25 PV @ PB (A) M/M Michael Mollel -(B) Kyle Jeffres	26 PV @ PB	27 PV @ PB (L) 9am Women's Prayer Group	28
29 -10am Worship @ Grace -11am 5th Sunday Potluck @ Grace -First Day of Advent -(B) Janet Waddle	30 PV @ Grace -(B) Shirley Zorn					


Happy
Thanksgiving

Pine Bluffs UMC
P. O. Box 662
600 Main Street
Pine Bluffs, WY 82082



Thank you to Speakers: Mary Cushing (last month) and Lloyd Sisson (this month) for filling in.

NOVEMBER 2026 WORSHIP SCHEDULE

DATE	SERMON	SCRIPTURE	MESSAGE
November 1st	"Witness with Thanksgiving"	1 Thessalonians 2:9-13	Pastor Vicky
November 8th	"Keep Awake"	Matthew 25:1-13	Lloyd Sisson
November 15th	"Enter the Joy"	Matthew 25:14-30	Pastor Vicky
November 22nd	"Come, You Blessed"	Matthew 25:31-46	Pastor Vicky
November 29th	"Restore Us, O God"	Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19	Pastor Vicky

Communion Stewards:	Mary Cushing, Diane Wise, Linda Coffman
Music Leader:	Heather Sisson
PowerPoint / Facebook:	Helen Werner, Karen Waterman
Video:	Jim Martinez, Mary Cushing, Helen Werner
Website:	Helen Werner