

I joined the church about 10 years ago when I started preschool. I started with MMO, then two day twos, three day threes, four day fours, then left for kindergarten. This church has shown me an amazing loving community to deepen my connection with God. **I am so grateful for this community that I have been given.**

The activities at the church are so fun and filled with devotion. For example, every Sunday I am able to go. I go to JOY class followed by UMYF in the evening. In JOY class, we are either talking about how we can deepen our connection with God or packing boxes for the in crowd, for Wee Care, Thanksgiving boxes, and many others. We also have the opportunity to write letters to people that are unable to go to the church telling them what we are doing and what we are learning about. In UMYF, **I am able to see my friends in a loving community.** We have fun playing games followed by a calm group of middle school girls where we talk about certain topics and how each other's week was. It certainly is an amazing way to start my week.

These activities have gotten me closer to God because **I have learned and developed an understanding on how to get closer to God and talk to God whenever I need to.** Christmas is my favorite because I would always be the donkey in the elementary school play. Now, I get to see my two younger sisters do it, one of them having their last year being able to be the lead angel as a 3rd grader. Now I have my youngest sister as a kindergartener starting elementary school play herself. I also enjoy singing Silent Night in the sanctuary on Christmas Eve. Another one of my favorite holidays at the church is Easter. I love waking up, collecting eggs in my yard, then going to church to learn about what Easter means and what Jesus sacrificed for all of us.

This church has been such a huge blessing for my life and my family as my sisters and I grow up. **I have learned so much and I have grown up with such a great community to be surrounded by as I continue to grow my faith in the lord.** This church is so perfect for my family in so many ways, and I am so thankful for being able to go to youth group, go to JOY class and go to the sanctuary. I am so honored to be a member of HBUMC church.

**Allison Barzola**