

CHURCH WISE



*The communication link between
Buford Presbyterian Church and its members*

May 2024

From the pastor's desk...



Last month I shared some five-year goals that I wrote for the Pastor Nominating Committee when they asked about what BPC might look like under my leadership. This month I want to tell you what I wrote for my ten-year plans. Again, I really like to set a high bar and then work with you all to see what we can achieve together.

10-year plan

--Average worship attendance back to where it was in 2014 (391)/2015 (322). Increase from where it was (according to Ministry Information Form the average worship attendance in 2019 was 223.)

--Mortgage paid off.

--Stewardship Campaign raises money for mission/service and not for operating budget. Operating budget is based on new streams of income (like the Endowment).

--Each member is involved in Worship +2—members are worshipping at least 3 times each month (whether in-person or online) and involved in 2 other activities of BPC mission and ministry (Christian Education, Fellowship Event, Service Project, or something else)

--Youth Program becomes stronger than ever. In the midst of their busy schedules, teenagers want to attend BPC Youth events and activities.

--Every member has had the opportunity to serve locally, nationally, and internationally.

--Other churches (in the community and around the world) visit BPC and to observe, learn, and follow our models of servant leadership, of vision and action, of worship and outreach, and of love and faith.

The Statistical Report we sent to Presbytery at the beginning of this year says that our average worship attendance in 2023 was 174. Yet, that does not include those who watch our livestream or watch the worship service later in the week. It also does not take into account how numbers decreased during the pandemic and how we are now continuing to grow in worship attendance since 2021! We had over 300 attend Easter at the end of March--and it was the beginning of Spring Break, and many families were already out of town!

We have a plan in place to complete our mortgage by Christmas 2030, which will be our 140th anniversary--so we are on track! The same is true of our Endowment--it continues to grow with your gifts and contributions.

So, let's talk about how things are going! Are we on the right track? Are we heading to a brighter future?

Thanks again to everyone who makes this place so amazing. And thank you for calling me to be your pastor during this time.

Grace and Peace,

RIX

Important Upcoming Events

MAY 2

National Day of Prayer service 7:00 p5

MAY 5

Worship 8:30 & 11:00 Sanctuary/Online
New Stephen Ministers Commissioned

MAY 12

Worship 8:30 & 11:00 Sanctuary/Online
Mother's Day

MAY 19

Worship 8:30 & 11:00 Sanctuary/Online
Pentecost

MAY 26

Worship 8:30 & 11:00 Sanctuary/Online

In This Issue...

- Pentecost
- Stephen Ministry
- Circle Meetings
- Bible Studies
- Vacation Bible School
- Finance
- Property
- Faith, Fellowship, Fun
- Missions
- Thank You Notes
- National Day of Prayer
- 1 Church 1 Family
- Calendars & Directories
- From the Editor



Sunday, May 19th we'll be celebrating Pentecost AND honoring Graduates! Please join us in the Narthex for cake, cookies and beverage after both services. And don't forget to wear red for Pentecost.

Upcoming for Sunday, July 14th following the 10:00 service, "Let Freedom Ring." This will be a celebration of our American heritage. Kids will be encouraged to decorate their tricycles, bikes, and big wheels and (weather permitting) we'll have a parade outside in the back parking lot. Our cooks will be preparing another great meal for us. More details to follow!

PENTECOST ~ The Outpouring of the Holy Spirit

He will guide you into all Truth ...He will bring glory to Me. (the words of Jesus, John 16:13,14)

What Happened on the Feast of Pentecost, following the Resurrection of Christ?

After His Resurrection, Jesus appeared to His disciples and many others, teaching and performing miracles in their midst. Then, 40 days later, He ascended bodily into Heaven to take His seat at the right hand of God the Father. When He left, He commissioned His disciples to *"Go and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded."* (Matt 28:19-20) He also told them to wait in Jerusalem because He was going to send the Holy Spirit, by whose power they would carry out His commission (Acts 1:1-11).

Ten days later, the Jewish feast of the harvest -- known as Pentecost -- was celebrated in Jerusalem. It was early in the morning, and about 70 disciples had gathered behind closed doors, timid and uncertain of the future. Suddenly, a sound like a rushing wind came from Heaven and surrounded them, and something like tongues of flame alighted upon their heads! They were filled with the Holy Spirit, instantly began speaking in foreign languages, and shared the Good News of Jesus Christ to the crowd that was gathering because of the commotion. Parthians, Medes, Elamites, Cretans, Arabs, and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea, Cappadocia, Pontus, Asia, Phrygia, Pamphylia, Egypt, Libya and Rome -- all heard the Gospel in their native tongue. (Acts 2:1-12)

Peter's First Sermon and the Birth of the Church (Acts 2:13-41)

Peter, no longer fearful but empowered by the Holy Spirit, preached a mighty sermon to the assembled crowds. He defended Christ's Messiahship, Lordship, and Divinity, and closed by saying, *"Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."* When the people heard this they were cut to the heart. Peter continued, *"Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. For this promise is unto you, and to your children ...to all whom the Lord our God shall call."* About 3000 souls received faith that day and were baptized -- a bountiful first harvest, giving birth to the New Testament Church! The harvest continued, and the Word of God was confirmed in Truth, the Holy Spirit having endowed the early Christians with many and varied gifts for this purpose (Mark 16:20, Heb. 2:3-4). And so His Word stands to this day, and through it the Holy Spirit continues to work mightily, producing and strengthening faith in the hearts of men, and teaching and reminding His people of all that Christ taught.

The Holy Spirit

- **So, Who is the Holy Spirit?** *"May the grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit be with you all"* (2 Cor. 13:14)
The Holy Spirit is God (Acts 5:3-4) -- the third person of the Triune God (Matt. 3:13-17). He proceeds from both the Father and the Son (John 15:26), and in unity with the Father and the Son (Matt. 28:19) is worshiped and glorified by His people.
- **And, What is the Holy Spirit's Job?** *"From the beginning God chose you to be saved through the sanctifying work of the Spirit and through belief in the Truth."* (2 Thess. 2:13)
With the same love that God the Father showed us by sending His Son, and with the same love that God the Son, Jesus Christ, lavished upon mankind by willingly dying upon the cross to pay the penalty of sin for the whole world, God the Holy Spirit (1) proclaims and witnesses to His great love by gently and patiently calling us to Christ (John 6:44,65 & 15:26), (2) enlightens our hearts, which are unbelieving by nature (Rom. 3:9-10 & 8:7), by giving us faith (2 Thess. 2:13), (3) patiently teaches and reminds us of all that Jesus taught (John 14:26), working holiness in us by applying His Word to our lives (John 16:13; Phil. 2:13), and (4) faithfully keeps us in the One True Faith (Phil 1:6; Eph. 4:30).
- **What Tools does the Holy Spirit Use?** *"Consequently, faith comes from hearing the message, and the message is heard through the Word of Christ."* (Rom. 10:17)
The Holy Spirit works primarily through God's Word (Rom. 10:17; John 17:17). Jesus said directly that the Holy Spirit would be sent to teach and remind according to what Jesus taught (John 14:26) and that the Holy Spirit would not invent new teachings unspoken by Christ, but would teach and remind only according to what He had heard the Father give to the Son (John 16:13-15). And those words of Christ, given to Him by the Father, have been faithfully recorded and preserved for us in the Holy Bible.
But, the Holy Spirit also works through the Sacraments. In Holy Baptism, the Spirit creates faith, granting us forgiveness of sins, spiritual life and salvation (Acts 2:38; Rom. 6:1-4; Gal. 3:26-27; Titus 3:5-6; 1 Pet. 3:21). In Holy Communion, the Spirit strengthens our faith, by uniting us with Christ and granting us forgiveness of sins (1 Cor 18:11-34).
- **Why do We Need the Holy Spirit?** *"He saved us by the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, whom He poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Saviour."* (Titus 3:5-6)
The Holy Spirit is the only one who creates and strengthens faith. Faith is not a decision (John 1:12-13), or some profound hopefulness conjured by Man in his own heart. Man cannot participate in his own salvation in this or any other way -- it is impossible (1 Cor. 2:13-14; Eph. 2:1 & 4:17-19). The Bible says, *"No man can say Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit."* (1 Cor. 12:3) Thus, faith is given to us as a FREE Gift by the Holy Spirit (Eph. 2:8-9). It is entirely His work.

Pentecost and the Church Today

Fifty-two days after the first Passover and the Israelites' release from bondage in Egypt, God visited His people at Mt. Sinai, and through Moses gave His Holy Law. But fifty-two days after the final Passover (Good Friday), God the Holy Spirit visited His people -- the followers of Christ -- not to hand down additional laws written in cold stone, but to bless us with His indwelling presence, giving us hearts that burn for the Gospel! Thus, Pentecost is still celebrated by the Church today. In fact, Pentecost Sunday is the third most important holiday of the Church Calendar (after Easter, first, and Christmas, second), and the Pentecost Season is the longest of the Church Year, lasting from Pentecost Sunday, fifty days after Easter, all the way to Advent, four Sundays before Christmas. With the giving of the Holy Spirit, the New Testament Church was not only established, but so was the means by which Faith is given, Truth imparted, and the Gospel propagated. And that is why we celebrate.

Come Worship With Us, in Spirit and in Truth, this Pentecost Season!

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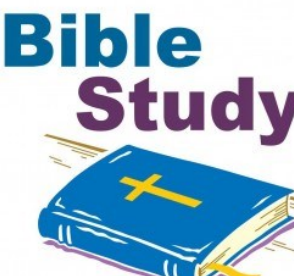


May 2024 Circle Meetings

- **Florence Settle:** May 13th 10:00- 11:30 a.m. in the Garden View room. This group meets on the 2nd Monday of each month.
- **Circle of Friends:** May 13th 6:00 p.m. at the house of host. This group meets on the 2nd Monday of each month.
- **Coffee Klatch:** Picnic May 14th 11:30 a.m. at the pavilion in Sandra's neighborhood (Sterling on the Lake). This group meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month.

This Sunday, May 5th during the 11:00 service, we will commission our new Stephen Ministers. These gifted people will follow in Jesus' footsteps by helping our congregation provide the gift of caring ministry to those who are going through a variety of life difficulties. Let us celebrate the completion of their training for this ministry and thank God for their generous response to his call, keeping the success of their ministry in our prayers. Those being Commissioned are Todd Nellis, Lynn Loftin, Katy Garner, Linda Bradley, Sandra Henderson, Ellen McClure and Kim Smith.

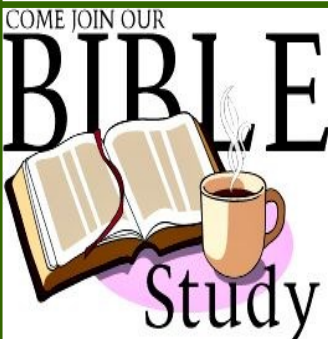
If you or someone you know might benefit from having a Stephen Minister walk with them through a difficult time, please contact Patti Battle – 678-640-8815

The logo for Bible Study features the words "Bible Study" in a blue and purple font. Below the text is an illustration of a blue Bible with a yellow cross on the cover.

Tuesday Evening Bible Study meets every Tuesday at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom. You can find the Zoom link in our weekly emails, or email Pastor Carrie at carrie@bufordpres.com.

From the Membership Committee

Have you ever wanted your own Buford Presbyterian Church name tag? We will be taking orders for name tags on May 12th. We will have a table set up in the Narthex with sign up sheets. Please write your name, (as you want it to be printed on the name tag), and leave it and a check for \$20.00 per name tag in the basket. If you have any questions please contact Brenda Pruitt @ bbpruitt1@gmail.com.

The logo for Bible Study features the text "COME JOIN OUR BIBLE Study" in a black and purple font. Below the text is an illustration of an open Bible and a steaming cup of coffee.

The Wednesday morning Bible Study meets at 10:00 a.m. in the Garden View Room.



Save the date! Get ready to go deeper than you've ever gone before as we dive into an amazing adventure the week of June 3 - 7! Be sure to mark the date on your calendar and look for registration information coming soon. If you are willing to volunteer to help make Vacation Bible School a wonderful adventure for the children of our church and our community, please email Pastor Carrie

**BPC TREE OF LIFE AND LEGACY FUNDS MINISTRY
QUARTERLY REPORT**

The BPC endowment investment accounts have a balance of \$485,010.15 as of March 31, 2024.

The 2023 rate of return for the fund we are invested in was 16.77%.

Average ten-year annual return is 7.30% as of March 31, 2024.

The BPC Endowment policy allows for up to 5% of the account balance to be used annually to supplement the budget. Thus, the importance of knowing the annual rate of growth in our investment.

Some of the companies owned by the fund we are invested in include: Apple, Amazon, Nvidia, Tesla, Berkshire Hathaway, and Eli Lilly.



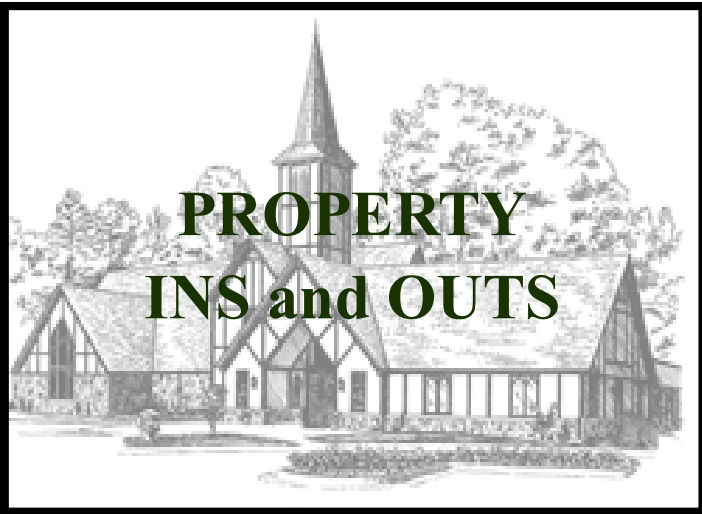
March 2024

Financial Status

March Receipts:	\$83,804
March Expenses	\$58,342
March Balance:	\$25,462
Y-T-D Receipts:	\$211,092
Y-T-D Expenses:	\$175,413
Y-T-D Balance:	\$35,679



The Buford Presbyterian Church (BPC) Tree of Life sculpture, carved in mahogany with brass and copper leaves depicting a living and growing tree, provides a unique opportunity for persons and groups who believe in the mission and ministry of Buford Presbyterian Church to help assure the continuation of this mission and ministry in the future. Throughout the ages trees have symbolized life and growth; each contribution becomes a gift that lives, and one that will continue to grow.



"Today we had several members show up to help pressure wash the front sidewalks and sides of the buildings. While we all see the beauty of our property we must all remember it takes volunteers daily to make the property stay up and running. If you feel you have been blessed with skills for gardening and/or small property repairs, we would love to have you on Property! We were lucky to have Pastor Rix, Billy Ellsbery, Jim Patillo, Jeff Garner, Jan Botha, Ed Fraley, Jason Pepperdine, Ken Hardy and Mark Mays work for 4 hours and get this job done."



"Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

— Helen Keller

FAITH, FELLOWSHIP, FUN

"When two of you get together on anything at all on earth and make a prayer of it, my Father in heaven goes into action."

Matthew 18:19 MSG

On April 9 The Coffee Klatch Circle and The Florence Settle Circle got together for a morning of fellowship, Bible study, and stocking the BPC freezer. They made chicken noodle soup, vegetable soup, and chicken casseroles. If you know of anyone in our church family or community who is experiencing health issues or other difficulties, please stop by and take them some of the delicious food, which is on the bottom shelf of the freezer marked with various colored dots.

There were 30 combined circle members in attendance. Check out a few pictures of some of the ladies having fun prepping, chopping, mixing, labeling, and visiting.





Clean Start Closet

Clean Start Closet's next collection date is May 26th . **Leave your donation in the Acolyte Room.** If you would like a tax donation letter for your donation, or if you have any questions email Robin Whitworth at robinluvsdogs@bellsouth.net

Most needed items:

Men's and women's jeans, casual pants, warm up pants, shorts, t-shirts, summer shirts (Needed the most men's waist size 30, 32, 34. We also need XXL, XXXL, and 4XL in all men's clothing. Women's clothing needed most size XXL.)

Men's large and x- large boxer brief underwear

Men's socks (colored)

Tennis shoes and flip flops

Toiletries:

Travel size shaving cream

Deodorant for men and women





Prison Alliance

MAKING DISCIPLES WORLDWIDE

Prison Alliance's mission: Impacting God's Kingdom by sharing the Gospel with the incarcerated and discipling them through correspondence Bible studies. We are collecting items such as new and gently used Bibles, Christian CD's and DVDs, and more. Leave items in the **Acolyte Room** with "Prison Alliance" marked on it. If you have any questions, contact Sandra Fisher at sjfisher35@gmail.com or Robin Whitworth at robinluvsdogs@bellsouth.net

Needed items:

- Youth Christian Materials
- Christian CD's and DVD's
- Foreign Language Material (Especially Spanish)
- Large Print Material
- New and Gently Used Christian Books
- New and Gently Used Bibles
- Hardcovers
- Softcovers

We Do Not Accept:

- Damaged Materials
- Cassette Tapes
- VHS Tapes
- Over-Sized Materials
- Spiral-bound Material
- Sunday School Quarterlies
- Magazines

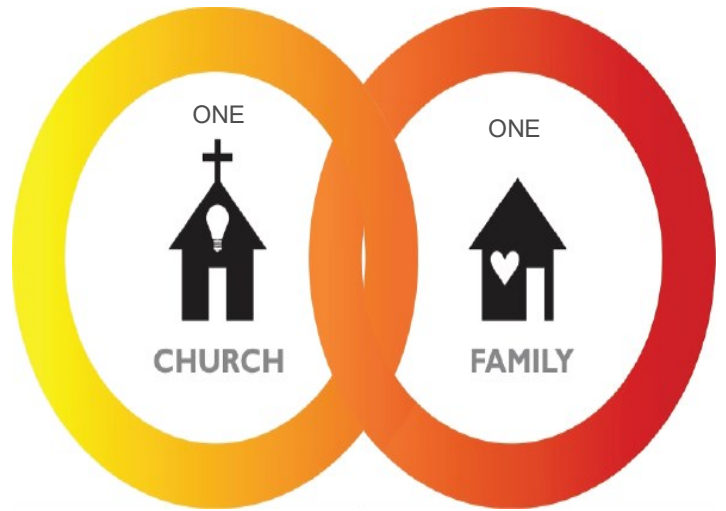


Willowwood Rehabilitation & Healthcare in Flowery Branch needs items for prizes for games they play like Bingo. They also need other items for everyday use. Items do not have to be new, just in good condition. If you have any questions, email Dana Kessler at dana@kessler3.net or Robin Whitworth at robinluvsdogs@bellsouth.net. You can leave items anytime in the **Acolyte Room** with "Willowwood" marked on it. Thank you!

Needed items:

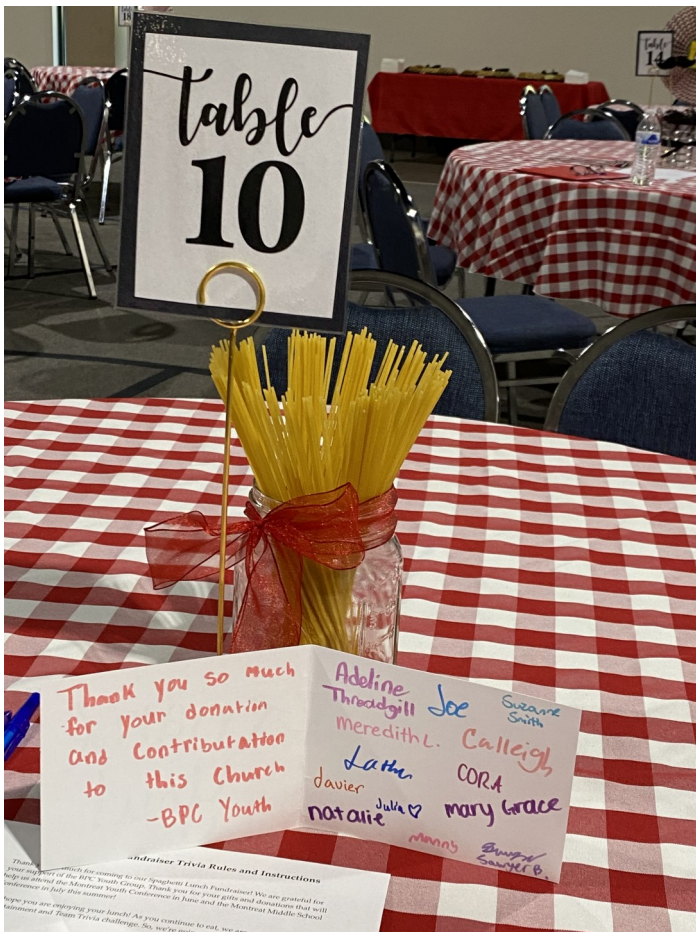
- Costume jewelry, lotion, nail polish and nail polish remover, make-up (unused), make-up cases, beanie babies, small stuffed animals, colored pencils, coloring books, word search games, hats, scarves, knick knacks, small holiday decorations, chocolate (sugar and sugar free), peanut butter crackers

LIFE IS FULL OF PASTA-BILITIES



it will be a brand new experience.

With eager anticipation of possibilities the trips will hold, and in hopes of raising funds, the youth came up with ideas for a spaghetti luncheon, parent's night out, and wall of envelopes. They worked hard, had fun, and greatly appreciated the support of their church family. Although the spaghetti luncheon and parent's night out are over, the opportunity to make a difference in the lives of our youth is ongoing; contributions marked "Youth" may be placed in the offering plate.



Summer is fast approaching, and our BPC Youth are excitedly planning their trips to the Montreat Youth Conference, and Montreat Middle School Conference. For some, previous trips have left fond memories that will last a lifetime, while for others

Check out the joy on the smiling faces of our youth at the spaghetti luncheon. They did a great job preparing the food, organizing a game of Trivial Pursuit, and making sure everybody who attended was well fed and having a good time.

LIFE IS FULL OF PASTA-BILITIES



May Birthdays

1	Miller, Brandon
1	Reilly, Patricia (Patti)
2	Smith, Suzanne
3	Langwick, John
5	Pepperdine, Reid
6	Holland, Shannon
7	Baker, Samantha
7	Sutberry, Linda
10	Hardy, Ken
11	Cleppe, Betty
11	Kim, Samantha
11	Williams, Joshua
14	Mullinax, Jeff
15	McClure, Alice (Allie)
16	Highfield, Rick
17	Ormand, Katherine (Katie)

20	Grieve, Meredith
22	Williams, Kiki
23	Smith, Joan
24	Cagle, Katie (Catherine)
24	Isaac, Kevin
24	Kessler, Dana
25	Roark, Mary Grace
26	Isaac, Rory
27	Bogenholm, Carl
27	Bohnsack, David
27	Forder, Allen (Al)
27	Phiri, Joel
28	Mackay, William (Will)
30	Johnson, Tim
30	Wilson, Cheryl
31	Elder, Nicea-Paule

May Anniversaries

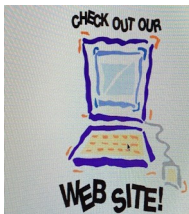
2	Daniel & Malena Conte
3	Hamilton & Carrie Barnes
6	Tom & Victoria Fletcher
12	Thomas & Denise Pecht
13	Tim & Laurie Leimkuehler
21	Jack & Kayla McClure
22	Jeff & Katy Garner
23	Gus & Odilia Acho
23	Kevin & Allyson Keller
25	Andy & Karen Williams
27	Chris & Sherry Rutledge
28	Kinney & Susan Bacon

Facebook Users

We need your help.

Please “like” the BPC page on Facebook to stay up to date on everything that is happening (just search for Buford Presbyterian).

Also, sharing BPC posts that you receive on your FB feed will expand the audience who can learn about BPC.



IMPORTANT INFORMATION ALL IN ONE PLACE: We are excited to see that the updated BPC web site is being viewed by increasing numbers. Visitors and new members are telling us that they learned about BPC from the web site. We encourage members and regular attendees to visit the site bufordpres.com often to stay informed about church activities.



YouTube channel:

We're on YouTube! Visit our YouTube channel at youtube.com/bufordpres to watch our worship services.

Senior Pastor	Rev. Rix Threadgill	rix@bufordpres.com
Associate Pastor:	Rev. Carrie Barnes	carrie@bufordpres.com
Director of Music Ministries:	Dr. Lee Barrow	lee@bufordpres.com
Children's Choir Director:	JoAnna Johnson	joanna@bufordpres.com
Organist: & Youth Choir Dir.	Melissa Espy	melissa@bufordpres.com
Financial Administrator:	Chris Latona	finance@bufordpres.com
Administrative Assistant:	JoAnna Johnson	joanna@bufordpres.com
Buford Presbyterian Weekday School	Suzanne Uebelacker	bufordpws@gmail.com
Church Office:		770-945-6711

Elders Currently Serving on Session

Jenny Baker, Clerk
Tim Leimkuehler, Treasurer

Class 2024

Chris Baker: Worship
Lenore Gregory: Congregational Life
Lynette Grimaldi: Personnel
Jim Horn: Finance
Will Mackay: Property
Dea Manotas: Missions
Natalie Mays: Youth session member

Class 2025

Malena Conte: Christian Education
Billy Elsberry: Property
Megan Pepperdine: Christian Education
Charlie Remmel: Missions
David Sanders: Worship
Michelle Smith: Finance

Class 2026

Tim Leimkuehler: **Finance**
Sonnie Hardy: **Congregational Life**
Carolyn Barr: **Congregational Life**
Sherry Rutledge: **Finance**
Brenda Pruitt: **Membership**
Dave Owenby: **Personnel**

From the Editor

If you would like to submit an article for publication in the BPC Church Wise Newsletter, please e-mail the article to Jean Collion, jcollion@outlook.com, by the 21st of each month. Phone: 678.773.8980.

Newsletter Deadline

Articles for the June 2024 issue of the BPC newsletter are due by May 21st.



Contact Us

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Visit us on the web at
www.bufordpres.com

Buford Presbyterian Church

Senior Minister
Rev. Rix Threadgill

Associate Minister
Rev. Carrie Barnes

Director of Music Ministries
Dr. Lee Barrow

Organist and Youth Choir Director
Melissa Espy

Director of Children's Music
JoAnna Johnson

Administrative Assistant
JoAnna Johnson

Financial Administrator
Chris Latona

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Have you remembered the church in your will?