



Growing in Faith • Sharing God's Love

What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

April 2025

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, April 6 – Communion

5th Sunday in Lent

Pulpit: Cole May

Liturgist: Sarah Brauen

Special Music: Kerry Fremont

Sound: Jeff Gillen/Camera: Betsey Angus

Slides: Linda Nelson

Acolyte: Hudson

Greeters: Dan and Sarah Noland

Sunday, April 13 – Palm Sunday

Cents-Ability Offering

Pulpit: Cole May

Liturgist: Dan Noland

Special Music: Choir

Sound: Rob McGarrity/Camera: Clair Winebar

Slides: Diane Winebar

Acolyte: Robbie

Greeters: Don and Jodi Brauen

Thursday, April 17 – Maundy Thursday

Pulpit: Cole May

Sound: Jeff Gillen

Greeters: Don and Cathy Carroll

Sunday, April 20 – Easter Sunday/ Resurrection of the Lord

Pulpit: Cole May

Liturgist: Lori Schmidt

Special Music: Choir

Sound: Ryan Brauen/Camera: Owen

Slides: Michele Talavinia

Acolyte: Avery

Greeters: Phil Bowers and Betsey Angus



Mark Your Calendars!

Sundays:

Worship 10:15 AM – Sanctuary

Tuesdays:

Claralice Circle 6:30 PM

Wednesdays:

Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM

Apr 6 – Confirmation Class 9:00 AM – Fellowship Hall

Apr 6 – Deacon Meeting 9:15 AM

Apr 9 – Mission Committee Meeting 7:30 PM

Apr 10 – Session Meeting 7:00 PM

Apr 12 – Lima Rescue Mission 4:30 PM

Apr 13 – Faithline 6:30 to 8:00 PM – Methodist Church

Apr 17 – Maundy Thursday Service 7:00 PM

Apr 18 – Good Friday Community Cross Walk

Apr 20 – Easter Breakfast 8:30 – 9:30 AM

Apr 20 – Easter Egg Hunt 9:30 AM

Apr 20 – Easter Service 10:15 AM

Apr 27 – Confirmation Class 9:00 AM – Fellowship Hall

Apr 27 – Newsletter Items Deadline to Cindy by end of day

Ruling Elders Communion Class

Six members of BPC (Tom & Marilyn Edwards, Linda Nelson, Phil Weisenbarger, Clair Winebar, and Dick McGarrity) and three guests from other churches have completed the Ruling Elders Communion Class instructed by Rev. Bob Butcher. This means that these elders can administer the Celebration of Communion as needed.

Sunday, April 27

Pulpit: Cole May

Liturgist: Diane Winebar

Special Music: Don Brauen

Sound: Mike Rhonemus/Camera: Tenna

Rhonemus

Slides: Cathy Carroll

Acolytes: Owen and Clara

Greeters: Jeff and Cindy Gillen

Letter from Cole:

To my friends and family at BPC, greetings!

This is my first official article in the newsletter, and I am glad to be able to share a little with you about life from the back of the pulpit! Janelle and I continue to gain excitement about the opportunities that we have to lead the church into the future and into the blessings God has in store for us all.

So, what does this phase of ministry look like from the back of the pulpit? Glad you asked! Let me share a little bit about what I have been doing in these past months and will be doing in the several months ahead.

First, I am getting acquainted with the people, committees, and community around BPC. It's important to gain a full understanding of all the inner workings of the church and how it all functions, and that is something that takes a little time. I have attended a couple of the committee meetings (Worship and Mission) and have greatly benefited from seeing what those core areas of our church are up to, how they operate, and what the plans are for the future. I look forward to joining the other committees when they meet and learn even more about what is happening so that I can assist with, and even bring some new ideas to share as time goes on. It has been so exciting discussing ideas and planning for the spring and summer seasons to come.

I have also met with some of the pastors in our immediate community. I have really enjoyed listening to them as I try to gain an idea of what God is doing in our community and how we can come alongside and even bring leadership to our faith community in Bluffton. There is so much opportunity in this area and even more are on the horizon as we allow God's unity to shape and lead our community in faith.

What's ahead for Sundays?

While I have thoroughly enjoyed preaching this sermon series on Elijah, we are coming to an end and will be spending Sunday worship services focusing on Jesus as we lead up to Easter Sunday. After Easter Sunday we will dive into another profile of a biblical character and I would love to hear from you about who you would like it to be about!

Other exciting things happening behind the scenes on Sundays?

Sunday services are an important part of the ministry of our church and while everyone is aware of services, I wanted to share something else exciting that has been happening on Sunday mornings, confirmation class!

Each Sunday a group of our young people faithfully show up as Tenna leads them through the confirmation curriculum. I have been observing each Sunday in this class and I must share with you how excited I am about how well Tenna does with them, and how engaged and responsive the youth of our church are during the class. It's exciting to see them not just show up because they have to (although there may be an element of that), but rather are taking it seriously and demonstrating some real knowledge of their faith and our savior, Jesus. I look forward to the day they are confirmed as a proud part of the church and look forward to supporting them in the future however I can. Thank you and well done to all the parents and grandparents who have done such a great job raising these children!

I suppose I will end with this; I want to get to know you! If we haven't met yet, let's meet! I want to hear your stories, I want to hear what the church has been to you, I want to know how we as a church can continue to serve you as we seek the will of God.

Please reach out if you have any questions, just need to talk, or need some spiritual guidance or support. I am always available for texts, phone calls, a meal, or just a cup of coffee!

I am here for you all and with you all.

In His Service,
Cole May



A few words from the Preachers Wife:

Spring has come! The transition seasons (spring and fall) are my absolute favorite. Each one is a slow and beautiful process into what is next. For me, spring to summer means lots of fun family memories in the making as school ends for a time. And fall to winter means focusing on the thankfulness for all things and a preparation to rejoice in celebrating the birth of our Savior.

I especially anticipate spring for new life, new growth, and especially as an Ohioan, I anticipate a chance to get outside and enjoy weather above 35 degrees with my family. As a mom of four kids, you can imagine cabin fever hits an all-time high in the winter months and everyone is ready to get outside!

Having said that, I want to encourage you as we walk into this spring season that whatever trials, losses, or difficulties you have trudged through this past season...

1. Joy comes in the morning.
2. He did in fact rise on the 3rd day!

While we begin to witness new growth in our perennial flower beds, buds on trees on our drives to and from, we can reflect and now look back on the previous season and see what or who those blessings in disguise were, we can examine how God grew us in our faith and in our trust with Him. While it may have been a time of difficulty or of unknown because of losing a loved one, a diagnosis, a broken relationship, or bringing incredibly difficult questions to God, we can now see His perfect work orchestrated to get us from point A to point B.

Together, let's rejoice in this season in all He has taught us and showed us! Let's first reflect, then rejoice in the new growth the Lord has created in us and that we can now use for good as we witness those around us maybe struggling in similar ways in the future and have opportunities to come alongside and encourage our Brothers and Sisters in Christ.

I so look forward to going through this next transition season with you all and can't wait to celebrate our risen Savior here with our BPC family!

A side note: THANK YOU! Thank you for welcoming and loving our four kids in many ways. It has been a transition for them, but you ALL have made them feel so loved and so comfortable that they have begun to jump in serving whether it was their turn or not, and they even have sat with some of you during Sunday worship services. Your open arms and welcoming spirit has them now claiming to everyone they meet, "THIS is our church" with proud boldness.

For His glory,
Janelle May



SESSION

March Meeting Highlights

- Cole May involved in following activities in February – My family and I, and other volunteers, served Community Meal at the Bluffton Senior Citizens Center. Represented Bluffton Presbyterian Church at Vacation Bible School planning committee meeting. Met with the family of George Stultz and attended his funeral. Met with the family of Hazel Rodabaugh and officiated Hazel's funeral at the funeral home in Ada. Prepared and led 4 Sunday worship services – striving to bring services back in line with what is expected of a Presbyterian Church Service. Attended 4 Confirmation Classes led by Tenna Rhonemus. Met with the worship committee. Several lunch appointments: Jeremy Mann – Bluffton Area Ministerial Association, as well as others in our church family. Appreciate everyone who helps move our church forward every day. There are so many committed and gracious volunteers in our church that it is almost hard to believe!
- Approved to accept Deacon Chris Hochstetler's letter of resignation with regret and appreciation for her service. Approved to move Jade and Tyler Hochstetler to "other" roll as per their request.

- After early February inspection at the manse, Orkin told us we needed a LOT of work done on the manse to protect it from mice, bats, etc. They gave us an estimate of \$10,000. Second opinion/estimate done by Buckeye Exterminating – told us that we did NOT have an infestation after all, and that they could seal the outside cracks, etc. for \$300+. Decided to go with the second estimate! Installed a deadbolt on the door in church basement because police shared, they had reports of someone sleeping in the stairwell. Fixed door behind the choir loft so it will latch again. Replaced (twice!) a bulb in the choir loft. Cleared snow and ice several times at the church.
- Maumee Valley Presbytery met via Zoom on February 18. Approved listing of the church and property next to it by Celina First Presbyterian Church. Approved granting waiver to Eastminster Presbyterian Church, Toledo to allow an elder to serve more than six consecutive years on session. Approved the 2025 contract between Bruce Brown and First Presbyterian Church of Napoleon. Approved the 2025 contract between Bill Treadway and First Presbyterian Church of Waterville. Youth Triennium July 28-31 2025 – Theme “As If We Were Dreaming” – (High schoolers and their youth workers) Worship, recreation, Bible study, outreach, and faith formation @ the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville, Kentucky. Revs. Cathy Johnson (Chaplain at Adrian Dominican Sisters) and Ann Wasson (Defiance) have retired. Theme of the day was "1001 Worshipping Communities" an initiative of PCUSA. The keynote speaker was excellent – instrumental in starting "Hot Metal Bridge Faith Community" in Pittsburgh, PA. By going to hotmetalbridge.com you can learn the history of this faith community. Focus is meeting various people "where they are" vs expecting them to walk through the doors of a church. This community started in a tattoo shop and grew from there. Various faith communities saw this as an opportunity to work together to worship Christ but not in a church setting and supported the initiative. New Worshipping Communities are encouraged to see new ways of God at work around us.
- In consultation with Treasurer and Worship, Personnel agreed that Ruling Elders presiding at Communion be paid \$25 – having completed the Communion training session and been approved by Presbytery and Session. Justification – if Cole was an ordained Presbyterian minister he would be presiding. However, since he is not allowed, we are finding a way to meet our need. Ruling Elder leading Communion would need to submit liturgy to Cathy by Tuesday and be available for home Communion. In consultation with Treasurer and Faith Formation, Personnel agreed that Tenna Rhonemus be paid \$300 for preparing and leading Confirmation Class for 12 weeks. Justification – if Cole was an ordained Presbyterian minister he would be expected to lead/co-lead a Confirmation Class. However, since he is not allowed, we are finding a way to meet our need.
- Current 3 octaves of Schulmerich handbells were purchased in late 80's. Interior of bells (plastic pieces) are breaking because of age – company suggests refurbishing at least every ten years. Refurbishing is only done by two certified companies in the US (Texas and Virginia). Complete refurbishing includes – Tuning Check, Handbell Inspection, Disassemble Handbells, Assemble all new parts, Vacuum Cases, Treat Case Exterior, Polish Castings, Reassemble Parts & Handbells, Optimize Tension Adjustments, Voice/Blend handbells, Final Tuning Check. Cost for refurbishing three octaves is approximately \$6,400 with 5% discount given for off-season. FYI – New set of three octaves would cost – \$20,000! Approved to refurbish our three octaves of handbells using memorial money. Fee of \$120 per octave round trip/\$360 for three octaves – company provides boxes, labels, insurance – UPS is the carrier. Church has received gift to cover the postage expense.
- Eric Reneker (who organizes the porch fest concerts) is interested in organizing summer concerts in the Gazebo. Proposing 8 concerts every other week on Thursdays from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m., with '60's Survivor Band (we previously approved) as one of the concerts. No charge for concerts (may look for community sponsors), each group provides own sound system. Approved the request of this concert concept so that he can work on securing groups.

- Hazel Rodabaugh's service was February 28 at the Ada Funeral Home. Cole May led the service – Deacons provided a meal at our church afterwards. George Stultz passed away February 18. Memorial Service, led by Chaplain Tomas Pistora, was held February 27 in our church – Deacons provided desserts following the service.
- Approved the following people to serve on the Advisory Group – Tanya Best, Steve Carr, Don Carroll, Marilyn Edwards, Jayne McGarrity, Jana McVetta, Linda Nelson, Tenna Rhonemus, and Phill Talavinia. Elders Jana McVetta and Linda Nelson were tasked with gathering the group for the initial meeting to select leader and make decisions about meeting.

DEACONS

No meeting was held in March.

FAITH FORMATION

Confirmation Class – West Ohio Food Bank

The Big Question: *Will you be Christ's faithful disciple obeying his word and showing his love?* was posed to the Confirmation Class. They said "yes" by taking on a mission project! The class decided to volunteer at the West Ohio Food Bank, and we would like to invite members of the congregation to join us. We will be working in the warehouse on Sunday, April 27 from 1:00 to 5:00 p.m. If you would like to join us, please let Tenna Rhonemus know by Sunday, April 6. Tenna will have additional information and volunteer forms available for those who are interested.

Faithline

Our middle school and high school members are invited to attend FAITHLINE; a monthly non-denomination gathering at the Methodist church. The gathering starts at 6:30 p.m. on a Sunday night with dinner, a short non-denominational message, and then a live Christian band. The evening ends at 8:00 p.m. There is no cost to attend, and the gathering meets once a month; the next gathering is April 13.

If you would like more information, please contact Lori Lewis or Linda Nelson.

Christian Education Release Time

The schedule for Christian Education release schedule is as follows:

Thursday, April 10, 1:00 to 3:00
(1st and 5th grade)

Volunteers are needed for Thursday, April 10. We are looking for 2 volunteers for each session, a one-hour commitment. Kindergarten: 11:30 to 12:35

Instructions and classroom maps are provided at the time. This is an easy way to support Christian Education for our community. If you are interested in volunteering, sign-up sheets are available in the back, or contact Linda Nelson.

Confirmation Class

The confirmation class meets Sunday mornings at 9:00 a.m. in the church fellowship hall. The class will meet for 12 sessions, and run into May. Further information will be communicated directly to those participating.

FELLOWSHIP

Coffee/Tea Time

The fellowship committee is now going to have coffee and tea available before church at 10:00 a.m. in the back of the sanctuary each Sunday. Help yourself to a delicious cup while visiting with your church family.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Decorate the Sanctuary for Easter!

The worship committee invites you to help make our sanctuary beautiful this coming Easter season. Please use the form included in this newsletter to make a monetary donation. Easter is a wonderful time to remember loved ones with a gift given in their memory or honor. Please return your completed form with your donation by April 13. You will be able to take your flowers home after our joyful Easter Sunday worship service.



MISSION



Mission Committee Invites New Members

If you have an interest/passion for helping others, contact Carole Enneking, Lynda Best, or Sue Van Eman to learn more about our committee's work for the local and greater church. The committee currently meets the first Wednesday evening at 7:30 a.m. (immediately following choir rehearsal).

LIMA RESCUE MISSION

Thanks to Cathy and Don Carroll, Betsy Angus, and Phil Bowers for covering March Pizza Night at Lima Rescue Mission. Also, thanks to everyone who continues to help with donations.

April and May Pizza Nights are covered. We are looking for volunteers for June 14. Anyone interested in helping or donating soda, water, variety pack chips, candy bars, 10" plates, or gallon ziplock bags, please call or text Bob Hursh.



One Great Hour of Sharing Offering

Typically received during the season of Lent, each gift to PCUSA One Great Hour of Sharing supports efforts to relieve hunger, promote the Self-Development of People, and assist in areas of disaster. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, the work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance:

32% Supports Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, which is committed to helping others repair from disaster during and beyond the initial aftermath globally.

Presbyterian Hunger Program:

36% Supports the Presbyterian Hunger Program, which is committed to ending hunger globally.

Self-Development of People:

32% Supports Self-Development of People, which is committed to helping communities around the world gain the skills they need to improve their communities.

In a world of disaster, hunger, and oppression, millions of people lack access to sustainable food sources, clean water, sanitation, education, and opportunity. The three programs supported by One Great Hour of Sharing – Presbyterian Disaster Assistance, the Presbyterian Hunger Program, and Self-Development of People - all work in different ways to serve individuals and communities in need. From initial disaster response to ongoing community development, their work fits together to provide people with safety, sustenance, and hope.

To support this work, send a check to the church office or give online:

<https://www.blufftonpc.org/give.html>.

To donate directly to the PCUSA, visit <https://pcusa.org/donate/og999999-one-great-hour-sharing>. Donations will be accepted through April.

Little Free Pantry

During cold weather, we avoid any items that can freeze and explode (canned fruit, vegetables), dense items like canned pasta and meatballs, canned beef, canned chicken, nut butters, and individual-serving applesauce are welcome.

March 31-April 6 – Sarah Noland

April 7-13 – Jodi Brauen

April 14-20 – Sue Van Eman

April 21-27 – Carole Enneking

April 28-May 4 – Sarah Brauen

We would appreciate donations of canned fruit (mandarin oranges are a favorite) and Knorr side dishes. Thank you.

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

February 2025 – General Fund Summary

Balance January 1, 2025	\$
Year-to-date offerings and receipts	
Year-to-date expenses	()
Balance February 28, 2025	\$

Special non-budgeted fund balances on February 28 included \$650 for Little Free Pantry supplies and \$1,318 for monthly Lima Rescue Mission pizza dinners.

Thank you for your generous gifts of time, talents, and financial resources in support of BPC's ministries!



Cents-Ability for Hunger Relief!

Thank you to the youth for passing the clanging cans, and to everyone who contributed their change to the March 9 Cents-Ability collection. \$68 was collected to fight hunger!! One-third of gifts to Cents-Ability goes to Maumee Valley Presbytery designated for hunger programs, one-third goes to the local Bluffton Community Assistance food pantry, and one-third helps purchase supplies for our Little Free Pantry. The bank does not allow us to deposit foreign coins so please try to avoid tossing Canadian coins into the cans.

Thank you for Filling Out EPIC Survey!

Last November, members and friends were encouraged to complete a Hartford Institute Exploring the Pandemic Impact on Congregations (EPIC) Survey. We had a sufficient number of responders to earn a \$200 thank-you gift from the Institute. THANK YOU to everyone who took a few minutes to complete the survey! The \$200 is being credited to BPC's Little Free Pantry fund to help keep it stocked with emergency food supplies.

BPC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, contact Mike Rhonemus. PLEASE leave a message if no answer. Or call the church office with your prayer request, and we will pass along the information. If you would like to add someone else to the prayer chain, please be sure to get their permission first. Names and circumstances can be kept confidential, if desired. God knows for whom we pray. If you would like to be part of the chain or would like more information, please contact Mike or another deacon.

Prayers of Sympathy for:

Cole and Janelle May and family on the loss of Janelle's grandmother.

Mike and Tenna Rhonemus and family on the loss of Mike's Aunt Pat.

Kim and Lynda Best on the loss of Jean Best (Kim's stepmother).

Lynda Best's friend whose husband passed away.

The family and friends of Darlene Hey who passed on March 24.

Prayers for:

Those who live alone or in care facilities, including Beth Buist.

Those affected by the devastating storms across the country.

Members and friends serving in the armed forces.

We Pray for God's Healing for:

Jodi Diller

Sue Mathewson

Colletta Mullenhour

Jeannie Nichols

Mariah Pneuman

Donnas Stone

Mira (Mike and Tenna Rhonemus's niece)

Sylvia (Diane Winebar's sister)

Jim and Deb Augsburger (Jodi's friends)

LeAnn Carr's mother

Scott and Mindy Farling (Lynda Best's friends)

Prayers for God's Healing continued

Linda Francies (Bev Begg's daughter)
Rock and Mary Fremont (Jeff Fremont's brother and sister-in-law)
Adrian Gnam (Jeremy Szabo's friend)
Dave Hall (Jeremy Szabo's friend)
Brad Lovell (Jade's father)
Maria Macias (Diane Winebar's mom)
Wanda McCullough (Jade Hochstetler's grandmother)
Wayne Pneuman (Mariah's son)
Joseph Robinson (Jeremy Szabo's friend)
Alice Schmidt (Lori Schmidt's mother)
Sandi Waibel (Donnas Stone's sister)

New Address

Donnas Stone

Bluffton, OH 45817



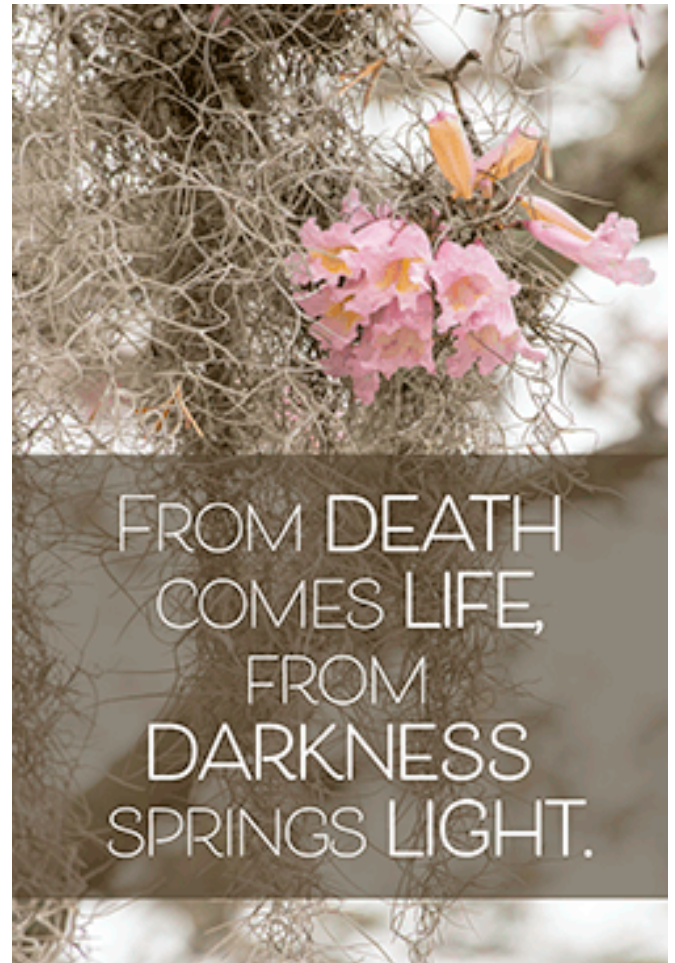
Birthdays

- Apr 1 John Hochstetler
- Megan Sycks
- 4 Beth Buist
- 5 Helen Hawk
- 8 Ashlin Freimark
- 13 Avery Talavinia
- 19 Larkin Hochstetler
- 23 Lynn Nowak
- Pam Weisenbarger
- 26 Cathy Carroll
- May 2 Patrick Rhonemus
- 3 Paige McVetta



Anniversaries

- Apr 10 Cole and Janelle May



Decorate the Sanctuary for Easter!

If you wish to help beautify the sanctuary for Easter,
use the form below to make a monetary donation.
Please return your completed form and gift by **April 13**
to have your dedication included in the Easter bulletin.

Please make checks payable to Bluffton Presbyterian Church,
with "Easter flowers" on the memo line.

Place forms in a collection plate, drop in the Treasurer's box in the office,
or mail to the church (PO Box 149, Bluffton OH 45817).

To donate online: Go to blufftonpc.org and click on GIVE.

The Worship Committee thanks you!

I/We wish to donate \$ _____

I/We would like this gift to be given in MEMORY OF:

I/We would like this gift to be given in HONOR OF:

Your Name(s): _____



BLUFFTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH
112 N. MAIN ST., P.O. BOX 149
BLUFFTON, OH 45817

Sundays: Worship: 10:15 AM

OFFICE HOURS

Resident Preacher: Cole May

Phone:

Email:

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Administrative Assistant: Cathy Carroll

Email:

Office Hours: Tues & Thurs 8:30 AM - 12:30 PM

Treasurer: Clair Winebar

Email:

Organists: Jayne McGarrity and Sue Van Eman

Choir Director: Jeremy Zank

Custodian: Debi Schmidt

2024 Church Officers

Elders on Session

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt

Buildings & Grounds – Dave Sycks

Faith Formation – Linda Nelson

Fellowship – Kerry Fremont

Mission – Carole Enneking

Nominating – LeAnn Carr and Tom Edwards

Personnel – Lori Schmidt

Presbytery Commissioner – Lori Schmidt

Stewardship & Finance – Tom Edwards

Worship – Lynda Best

Elders at Large – LeAnne Carr, Jeff Gillen,
Jana McVetta

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Chris Hochstetler

Members: Jodi Brauen, Cindy Gillen, Rob McGarrity,
Tenna Rhonemus, Mike Rhonemus