



*Growing in Faith • Sharing God's Love*

# What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

**DECEMBER 2022**

## WORSHIP SCHEDULE

**Sunday, December 4 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of Advent,  
Communion, Pastor Karol's last Sunday,  
Farewell Reception**

Liturgist: Clair Winebar  
Special Music: Don Brauen  
Sound: Mike Rhonemus / Camera: Tenna Rhonemus  
Slides: Julia Szabo  
Acolytes: Owen and Clara  
Greeters: Bev Begg & Darlene Hey

**Sunday, December 11 – 3<sup>rd</sup> Sunday of Advent  
Cents-Ability Offering**

Pulpit Supply: Pastor Dave Good  
Liturgists: Avery, Morgan, Page  
Special Music: Youth  
Sound: Bob Hursh / Camera: Tammie Hursh  
Slides: Diane Winebar  
Acolyte: Bowen  
Greeters: Betsey Angus & Julia Szabo

**Sunday, December 18 – 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday of Advent**

Pulpit Supply: Pastor Dave Good  
Liturgist: Diane Winebar  
Special Music: Choir  
Sound: Ryan Brauen / Camera: Clair Winebar  
Slides: Talavinias  
Acolyte: Avery  
Greeters: Michelle Talavania & Chris Hochstetler

**Saturday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Service**

Pulpit Supply: Pastor Dave Good  
Sound: Jeff Gillen / Camera: Clair Winebar  
Slides: Diane Winebar  
Acolytes: Page and Morgan  
Greeters: Bob and Tammie Hursh

**Sunday, December 25 – Christmas Day:**  
Pre-recorded Service (no in-person service)

## Mark Your Calendars!

### Sundays:

Faith Formation 9:00 AM – Fellowship Hall

Worship 10:15 AM – Sanctuary

**Tuesdays:** Claralice Circle 6:30 PM – Fellowship Hall

**Wednesdays:** Choir Rehearsal 6:30 PM – Sanctuary

Dec 4 – Pastor Karol's last Sunday, Farewell Reception

Dec 4 – Stewardship & Finance Committee meeting following fellowship for Pastor Karol

Dec 5 – Pastor Karol's last day in the office

Dec 7 – Mission Committee Meeting 7:30 PM

Dec 8 – Session Meeting 7:00 PM

Dec 10 – Christmas Cookie "Mix and Match" Sale 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM in Fellowship Hall

Dec 10 – Lima Rescue Mission 4:30 PM

Dec 14 – Deacons Meeting 7:00 PM

Dec 15 – Bluffton Community Meal 6:00 PM at Senior Center

**Dec 18 – Newsletter Items Deadline to Cindy by end of day**

Dec 24 – Christmas Eve Prelude 6:30 PM, Service 7:00 PM

Dec 25 – No in-person worship. Online service 10:15 AM

Weekly livestream worship is available on our [Facebook page](#) and later posted to our [website](#).



## Pastor's Letter:

*God marked a line and told the sea  
its surging tides and waves were free  
to travel up the sloping strand,  
but not to overtake the land....*

*We are not free when we're confined  
to every wish that sweeps the mind,  
but free when freely we accept  
the sacred bounds that must be kept.*

~ Thomas H. Troeger.

One of my roles with Maumee Valley Presbytery has been serving as a Boundary Trainer. Boundaries are important in all relationships, especially in ministry – both physical and psychological boundaries. During a pastoral transition, it's important for us all to think about the boundaries that are suggested to help us navigate this time with wisdom and care for all.

While I am grateful for the chance you have given me to be your pastor, we must acknowledge that this relationship is coming to an end. After December 5, I will no longer be available to preach or perform pastoral tasks, unless invited by the current Session moderator. Of course, the fact that I am moving to Illinois the very next week will make this boundary much easier to keep than if I were moving only an hour away. Even more relevant for us is relating to one another in the digital world. By the end of December, I will plan to “unfriend” any congregation members on social media. If that is a connection that you wish to continue in the future as a friend, you are welcome to send me another request. However, I may choose to wait some length of time before accepting such requests, so that we can have some time, as well as distance, to mark the ending of our pastoral relationship.

Though I very much care for this congregation, I will intentionally not get involved with church matters either directly or indirectly after I leave. Healthy boundaries are important for healthy relationships. Thank you for all you have done and will continue to do in maintaining good boundaries in your church relationships.

It has been an honor to serve as your pastor. May we all continue to Grow in Faith and Share God's Love all our days.

In Christ,

*Pastor Karol*



The Bluffton Presbyterian Church family is invited to a special Fellowship Time following worship on December 4 - Pastor Karol's last Sunday.

Please join us to thank Pastor Karol for her five years of ministry with us and to share best wishes with both she and Chris as they leave us to embark on a new position.

The poster has a dark red background with white, ethereal smoke or mist patterns. The text is centered and reads:

**Christmas Eve**  
**at Bluffton Presbyterian**

**6:30pm Brass Trio**  
Marilyn Edwards, Dan Noland, Dave Sycks

**Oboe Duo**  
Jeremy Szabo, Linda Sycks

**7pm Worship Service**  
"Rise Up! A New Light A-Comin'" BPC Choir  
"Silent Night" candle lighting

The poster has a dark blue background with a gold border. On the left side, there are several Christmas ornaments: two gold and two white with gold stripes. The text is on the right side:

**Christmas Day**  
online service

*Celebrating the Gift of  
Christmas together!*

**10:15am on BPC  
Facebook Live**

No in-person worship 12/25





Jeff & Kerry Fremont have lived near Beaverdam almost 4 years, having previously lived in Marion and Van Wert. They have been married 9 years. Kerry helps care for her son's fiancé Taylor who has kidney issues. Jeff owns J&B Equipment in Rockford. They have five adult children: Kristen, Kari, Tyler, Daniel, and Eric. Jeff & Kerry watched some of our livestreamed services before they first came to worship in person!

**Welcome New Members!**

We were overjoyed to welcome three new couples as members of Bluffton Presbyterian Church in November!



Steve & LeAnn Carr come to us by way of Ottawa and live between Pandora and Bluffton. They have been married 12 years. Steve is the CEO of Allied Environmental Services, and LeAnn works in HR. They have two adult children: Steven who works in IT in Buffalo, NY; and Chloe who is a kindergarten teacher in Toledo.



John & Linda Nelson have lived in Bluffton for 7 years, having previously lived in Brighton, MI, Goodyear, AZ, and Massillon, OH. They have been married 55 years! Linda is retired from careers as a high school teacher and executive director of a YWCA and childcare center. John is retired from a career in finance. They have 3 adult children, including Alice and family who reside in Bluffton.



## SESSION

### November Meeting Highlights

- **Pastoral Care:** numerous texts and emails, plus: 10 visits/conversations, 8 phone calls.  
**Congregational Activities:** Weekly worship and committee meetings.  
**Community Engagement Activities:** BAMA Meeting and Emmanuel UCC Fall Festival.  
**Presbytery/Greater Church Activities:** MVP Discipleship Commission Meeting/Study, Synod Training Webinar: Leading in Divided Times – Understanding Toxic Polarization offered by the Synod of the Covenant and [One America Movement](#), Installation Service of Rev. Dr. Jeff Schooley - Bowling Green First Presbyterian Church, Maumee Valley Presbytery Meeting in Maumee and MVP Pastors cohort call.
- The Transitional Task Force, formed by Session in October to search for temporary leadership, includes Marilyn Edwards, Carole Enneking, and Dick McGarrity. Session is responsible for creating contract with the temporary leader – it might be possible for the temporary leadership to lead to a permanent position. Maumee Valley Presbytery General Presbyter Rev. Dr. Matt Meinke provided training and continues to provide assistance. The Task Force created a job posting which Matt Meinke has shared with other executives in our synod, 40 individuals in our presbytery who might be interested, and leaders of our ecumenical partners. The Task Force has started to review information they have received from people interested in the position.
- Approved request from Paul Nusbaum – “The 60’s Survivors Band” to reserve Gazebo on Friday, July 21 (Rain date, Saturday, July 22) from 7:00-9:00 p.m. for concert free to the public. Approved requests to receive Steve Carr, and John and Linda Nelson as members by Reaffirmation of Faith and to receive LeAnn Carr as member upon receipt of Letter of Transfer from Ottawa Presbyterian Church.
- To prepare for colder weather, furnaces have been checked out and thermostats are programmed. Thermal Gard had a cancellation so were able to install windows at the manse in early November.

- Insurance (property and liability) with Church Mutual was renewed for another year effective November 1, 2022 – October 31, 2023.
- Computer for Administrative Assistant is 6-7 years old and uses software which will not be supported by Microsoft in January. Approved purchasing new computer hardware/software for the Administrative Assistant, not to exceed \$2,000 from Memorial Funds.

### Free Advent Devotional

Presbyterians Today has published an Advent Devotional that can be downloaded free. It's called Kindling the Flame of Love, a Celtic Advent Devotional. The author, Maureen Paterson, writes "For each week during this season, I invite you to spend a few minutes a day with the image of kindling a flame of love for yourself, your neighbor, your foe, your friend – for Creation itself."

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/presbyterians-today-celtic-advent-devotional/>

## DEACONS

### December 2022 Deacon Highlights

- Set Communion list for 2023
- Set Deacon positions for 2023 (no changes)
- Update on elderly/homebound
- Community Meal set for December 15



## Community Meal

### Bluffton Community Meal

Bluffton Presbyterian Church will be hosting the Community Meal on December 15 at 6:00 p.m. We are in need of six people to help set up, serve, and clean up after the meal. We are asking that volunteers arrive around 5:00 or 5:30 p.m., if possible. If you are willing to volunteer, please sign up on the sheet in the back of the sanctuary or contact Tenna Rhonemus.



## WORSHIP COMMITTEE

### Our audio-visual team is looking for volunteers!

Bob and Tammie Hursh have been on the team for some time and are ready to hand off to two new people. They will provide training, and other AV team members are here to lend support. Please prayerfully consider being part of this one-Sunday-a-month ministry. Contact Diane Winebar or Mike Rhonemus with questions or to say, "Yes! I want to help!" Thank you!

### Christmas Day Online Service

After attending Christmas Eve worship on Saturday evening, wouldn't it be nice to have a "day off" from Sunday worship the next morning? We thought so! Session voted to participate in an online Christmas Day worship service with area Presbyterian churches. There will be no in-person worship December 25.

This pre-recorded service promises to be special – full of music (including our own superb choir), recollections of Christmases past, short reflections, and lots of friendly faces. You'll be able to watch the service whenever you like beginning at 10:15 a.m. on Christmas Day on our Facebook page ([facebook.com/blufftonpc](https://facebook.com/blufftonpc)). Please join your fellow Presbyterians as together we celebrate the true gift of Christmas.

## FAITH FORMATION

### DVD Discussion Series for Teens and Adults

There are stories, and then there are Tex Sample stories! Tex, an author, teacher, and specialist in church and society, presents 20 short, but profound, stories in his own down-to-earth style. You'll see how God and spirituality can be found in the most unlikely people and places. Prepare for your heart to be moved! Lively discussion will follow each tale for sure. **Join us from Dec. 4 – 18 in the Preschool room.** Have to miss a Sunday? No problem – come when you can. Led by Clair and Diane Winebar.



## Get in the Spirit!

Hello Bluffton Presbyterians!

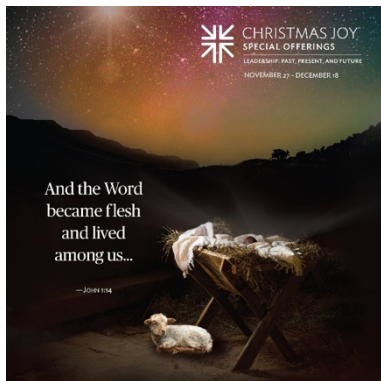
One more week is left in the *Get in the Spirit* Faith Formation Series. On Sunday, December 4, Carole Enneking will be leading a group blanket-tying activity. All ages are welcome and we will need many hands so please join! Feel free to bring your own blanket kit (available at JoAnn's and similar retailers) or use one of the one's already collected. The blankets will go towards the Mission Committee fundraiser. When resuming from the holiday break, we will go back to a Youth only group until spring as the Adult Faith Formation class has started again. Reach out to Sarah Brauen with any questions.



## MISSION

### Our Congregation in Action with on-going Mission Projects

#### Christmas Joy Offering



This annual PCUSA Offering supports church leaders- past and future! God has blessed the Church with incredible leadership in every time and place, but those leaders often need to be supported by their communities as well. The Christmas Joy Offering has been a cherished Presbyterian tradition since the 1930s. This Offering addresses the support needed by some of our leaders, including supporting leadership development for communities of color, and providing support for Presbyterian church workers in their time of need.

Donations to the Christmas Joy Offering will be accepted through the year- either in the offering plate, through the church's giving page <https://secure.myvanco.com/L-Z3BJ/campaign/C-13>, or directly through the PCUSA website <https://specialofferings.pcusa.org/make-a-gift/gift-info/christmas-joy/> (if you donate through the denomination, please remember to include our congregation's name so the donation will be counted by BPC). Thank you for your support- if we all do a little, it adds up to a lot!

#### Little Free Pantry

Nov 28-Dec 4 – Sarah Noland  
Dec 5-11 – Jodi Brauen  
Dec 12-18 – Sarah Brauen  
Dec 19-25 – Sue Van Eman  
Dec 26-Jan 1 – Diane Winebar

Please remember that during the winter months we use more boxed items than canned because of freezing temperatures. Cereal, hamburger helper, and cake mixes are helpful donations this month. Thank you!

#### Cents-Ability

The 2<sup>nd</sup> Sunday of each month is designated as Cents-Ability Sunday and will include time for reflection, education, and public witness of our support for hunger projects. Each individual/family is encouraged to setting aside a few pennies each day and bring them to join with other gifts. Monthly gifts will support Bluffton Community Assistance, Presbytery Hunger projects, and our congregation's Little Free Pantry. Cents-Ability support can be made online, and gifts specifically for the Little Free Pantry will still be welcomed.



#### Mix & Match Cookie Sale on December 10

Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 10 from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. to stop by the church to pick up Christmas Cookies! This is a new fundraiser to support Mission outreach. Some of the best bakers have signed up to bring dozens of special cookies. For a cost of \$7 per pound, customers can select their favorites from a variety of cookies. Share this event with friends and families! If you would like to donate home-baked cookies, contact Kerry Freemont, or sign up in the back of the sanctuary.



Thanks to Kerry and Jeff Fremont for helping Tammie and Bob Hursh cover November Pizza Night!

The next Pizza Nights are December 10 and January 14. Anyone interested in helping or donating drinks, chips, candy bars, plates, napkins, or gallon resealable bags, please call or text Bob Hursh. If you donate money, please submit a check (memo: LRM) to the church office or give online ([www.blufftonpc.org/give](http://www.blufftonpc.org/give)). Thanks!



**Caring for our Neighbors during the Holidays**

- **Adopt a Family** – a few items remain on the wish lists for our 3 families: Individual #6 PJ pants 4XL, socks & slippers size 9-12; Individual #34 Knife set, winter coat 3x; Family #5 Hooded sweatshirt & pants M, Queen sheets & comforter, Fast Food Gift Card. Gifts are to be returned to the sanctuary by Sunday, December 11 – please wrap presents (gift cards and paper products do not need to be wrapped) and include a post-it note with the item so we can tag them. Choose a gift off the Mission bulletin board in the back hallway of the church or contact Carole Enneking with questions.
- **Fleece Blanket Tying** – kits are available in the Narthex for anyone interested in this annual “no sew” project. Blankets will be included as an adopt-a-family gift and others will be donated to Family Promise (homeless support program in Lima). Please return finished blankets no later than December 13.

**Thank you!**

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We are thankful for the many volunteers who have taken time these past weeks to help Hilty Home residents move into MHCO Bluffton campuses. Residents and MHCO staff are very thankful for your support. While there are a few remaining residents to move in the coming days, volunteers have been scheduled to help for any remaining moves. Many blessings as you prepare for Advent. Mennonite Home Communities of Ohio.

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**Birthdays**

- |     |    |   |
|-----|----|---|
| Dec | 4  | Marilyn Edwards<br>Jim Enneking<br>Tenna Rhonemus |
|     | 11 | Kerry Fremont<br>Jeanie Nichols                   |
|     | 14 | Alora Enneking<br>Donnie Middleton                |
|     | 15 | Sarah Gillen                                      |
|     | 16 | John Nelson                                       |
|     | 17 | Ben Miracle                                       |
|     | 21 | Linda Sycks                                       |
|     | 29 | Billy Marshall                                    |
|     | 31 | Darlene Hey                                       |
| Jan | 2  | Steve Carr<br>Tyler Hochstetler                   |
|     | 3  | Chad Carroll<br>Dave Sycks                        |

**Anniversaries**

Dec 7 Jeff and Kerry Fremont

**FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP**



**October 2022 - General Fund Summary**

Balance January 1, 2022	\$
Release of Paycheck Protection Plan Proceeds into the general fund	
Receipt of employee retention credit Covid relief funds	
Offerings for 2022 received in 2021	
YTD offerings to the general fund	
YTD general fund expenses	( )
October 31, 2022 balance	\$

Thank you for financially supporting the church’s budget!



**2023 Per Capita**

You are invited to help cover the per capita cost of your membership (General Assembly, Synod, Maumee Valley Presbytery) by making a special donation through our congregation as part of your stewardship practice. The 2023 per capita amount is \$38.60 per active member, unchanged from last year! Thank you!



**Volunteers needed to help pass the offering plates.**

We need three volunteers for each Sunday worship service to serve as offering plate ushers during the introduction to the Closing Hymn: one usher on each outer aisle and one in the middle aisle. If you can help, please sign up for a Sunday (or two 😊) on the usher volunteer calendar on the back table. Or email or call or text Clair Winebar. Thank you very much for your willingness to serve!



### **Continued Prayers for:**

Those who live alone or in care facilities and are less able to engage in meaningful connections with others, including Jane Benroth, Sheila Hurlburt, Peggy Hursey, Ralph and Donnie Middleton, Ben Miracle, Dortha Radabaugh, Hazel Rodabaugh, and Owen and Kay Ziessler.

Members and friends serving in the armed forces.

Diplomacy, peace, and hope in the world.

All who use our Little Free Pantry.

All who have been afflicted with COVID-19, including residents and staff at Mennonite Memorial Home.

Ukraine – for peace and hope amid the ongoing war with Russia.

### **We Pray for God’s Healing for:**

Laura Elwood  
Sheila Hurlburt  
Gayle Marshall  
Dwight Nichols  
David Abell (Mariah Pneuman’s former son-in-law)  
Pete Amstutz (Gayle Marshall’s friend)  
Joel & Kelly Barnett (McGarrity’s nephew)  
Jeanie Basinger (Jodi Brauen’s mother)  
Shelby & Ryan and infant sons, James and Russ (Bev Begg’s granddaughter and family)  
Jim and Judy Dowling (Tanya Best’s brother and sister-in-law)  
Alva Hunt (Jerry Szabo’s friend)  
Rob Krupp (Don Brauen’s friend)  
Brenda McCoy (Betsey Angus’s friend)  
John McDonald (Gayle Marshall’s friend’s dad)  
Michael Roberts (Jeremy Szabo’s friend)  
Anessa Samsal (Mariah Pneuman’s granddaughter-in-law)  
Jessie Spencer (Darlene’s great niece)  
Joyce Suter (Nurse at Bluffton School)  
Kelly Winger (Cindy Gillen’s cousin)  
Matthew Zuehlke and kids

### **BPC Prayer Chain**

If you have a prayer request, please contact Mike Rhonemus. PLEASE leave a message if no answer. Or call the church office at (419) 358-5806 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.



### **Released Time Walkers Save the Date**

Remaining dates for “Released Time” Christian Education walkers this academic year are Dec. 2, Jan. 17, Feb 17, March 28, and May 2. Please contact Dick McGarrity if available to fill a shift.

### **Bluffton Community Preschoolers' Thanksgiving Donation for Little Free Pantry**





*Decorate the Sanctuary for Advent & Christmas!*



If you wish to help beautify the sanctuary for the Advent and Christmas seasons, use the form below to make a monetary donation. Your gift will be used to buy poinsettias and other items. **Please return your completed form and gift by December 18** to have your dedication included in the Christmas Eve bulletin. Poinsettias may be picked up following the Christmas Eve service.

Please make checks payable to Bluffton Presbyterian Church, with “poinsettias” on the memo line. Place forms and gifts 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](http://blufftonpc.org) and click on GIVE. Follow the links to Advent Decorations.

The Worship Committee thanks you!

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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):** \_\_\_\_\_

## Stewardship Campaign – Thank You from Stewardship & Finance Committee

Thank you for sharing your intentions to provide time, talents, and/or financial offerings to BPC during 2023! Through Nov. 27, we have received **31 Count Me In!** cards from families and individuals! The generous sharing of time and talents is the backbone of BPC's ministries. As always, your intentions to provide financial offerings represent your current plans and can change with circumstances.

**Count Me In!** cards received represent intentions to give totaling \$ for 2023. In comparison to 2022, there were 28 intentions to give totaling \$.

If you have not had a chance to complete a **Count Me In!** card, we welcome you to prayerfully consider providing one. You may provide cards by dropping in an offering plate, mailing to the church office, or depositing in the lockbox in the church office.





## COUNT ME IN!



To learn more about God.

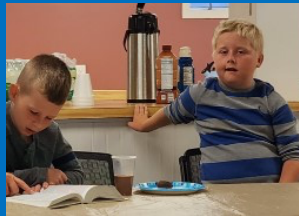


To make a positive difference through community projects!

## COUNT ME IN!



To share God's Blessings!



Merry  
CHRISTMAS

**BLUFFTON PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
**112 N. MAIN ST., P.O. BOX 149**  
**BLUFFTON, OH 45817**  
**(419) 358-5806**

Sundays: Faith Formation: 9:00 AM  
Worship: 10:15 AM

**OFFICE HOURS**

Pastor: Rev. Karol Farris Schilling

Phone:

Email:

Administrative Assistant: Cathy Carroll

Email:

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

Treasurer: Julia Szabo

Email:

Communications Coordinator: Abigail Gwin

Email:

Faith Formation Intern: Laura Irwin

Email:

Organists: Jayne McGarrity and Sue Van Eman

Choir Director: Linda Sycks

Children's Church Leaders: Laura Irwin and

Brooklyn Phillips

Email:

Custodians: Chris and John Hochstetler

**2022 Church Officers**

*Elders on Session*

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt

Buildings & Grounds – Dave Sycks

Faith Formation – Dick McGarrity

Fellowship – Tom Edwards

Mission – Carole Enneking

Nominating – Sarah Brauen and Tom Edwards

Personnel – Lori Schmidt

Stewardship & Finance – Clair Winebar

Worship – Diane Winebar

Elders at Large – Sarah Brauen and Phill Talavinia

Presbytery Commissioner – Lori Schmidt

*Board of Deacons*

Moderator: Chris Hochstetler

Members: Cindy Gillen, Rob McGarrity,

Jana McVetta, Tenna Rhonemus, Mike Rhonemus