



What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

December 2019

Growing in Faith • Sharing God's Love

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, December 1 – 1st Sunday of Advent

Communion / 3 Cents a Meal Offering

Vocal Ensemble

Sound: Jay McCracken / Slides: Julia Szabo

Liturgist: Jana McVetta

Greeters: Bev Begg and Cindy Gillen

Acolyte: Brauens

Sunday, December 8 – 2nd Sunday of Advent

Food Pantry Offering

Choir

Sound: Bob Hursh / Slides: Diane Winebar

Liturgist: Dick McGarrity

Greeters: Jane Benroth and Carole Enneking

Acolyte: Avery Talavinia

Sunday, December 15- 3rd Sunday of Advent

Praise Team

Sound: Mike Rhonemus / Slides: Talavinias

Liturgist: Tanya Best

Greeters: Betsey Angus and Helen Hawk

Acolyte: Brauens

Sunday, December 22 – 4th Sunday of Advent

Choir, Piano/Organ Duets

Sound: Jeff Gillen / Slides: Cathy Carroll

Liturgist: Jay McCracken

Greeters: Phil and Pam Weisenbarger

Acolytes: McVettas

Tuesday, December 24 – Christmas Eve Service

Choir Cantata

Sound: Mike Rhonemus / Slides: Julia Szabo

Greeters: Owen and Kay Ziessler, Tanya Best

Acolytes: McVettas

Sunday, December 29

Choir

Sound: Bob Hursh / Slides: Cathy Carroll

Liturgist: George Stultz

Greeters: Mike and Tenna Rhonemus

Acolytes: Avery Talavinia

Mark Your Calendars!

- Nov. 30 – Blaze of Lights Benefit Dinner – 5:30-7:30 PM – Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 1 – Stewardship/Finance Committee after worship
- Dec. 1 – Presbyterian 101 – 3:30-4:30 PM – Fellowship Hall
- Dec. 8 – Congregational Meeting – Following Worship
- Dec. 10 – Claralice Circle Caroling – 6:30 pm – Willow Ridge and Maple Crest
- Dec. 12 – Joint Deacon/Session Meeting – 7:00 PM
- Dec. 15 Youth skit in worship
- Dec. 15 – Fellowship Sponsored by Youth – Following Worship
- Dec. 15 – Possible Ignite Caroling afternoon
- Dec. 20 – College/Young Adult Gathering – 6:00 PM – Manse
- Dec. 24 Christmas Eve Choir Cantata 6:30 Prelude; 7:00 Service
- Dec. 25 Christmas Day
- **Dec. 29 – Newsletter Items Deadline**
Please note different email address:
Gillen3072@roadrunner.com.
- Jan. 1 – New Year's Day
- Jan. 5 – Epiphany
- Jan. 5 – Take down decorations after worship
- Jan. 5 – Annual Reports due to Cathy Carroll

WORSHIP SCHEDULE CONTINUED

Sunday, January 5 – Communion

3 Cents a Meal Offering

Sound: Jay McCracken / Slides: Julia Szabo

Liturgist: Helen Hawk



Pastor's Letter

What is the first Sunday of the month?
December 1! When does the season of Advent begin? December 1! When does the new liturgical year start? December 1! Everything aligns this year such that December 1 is the clear beginning of our season of Advent, when we prepare for the coming of Christ into our midst.

Our theme for Advent will be Waiting Well. According to PC(USA) Minister and Former General Assembly Moderator Bruce Reyes-Chow, "Waiting is generally something that the world does not like to do. Waiting is inconvenient and, depending on the source of the waiting, can be seen as some kind of affront to our personhood or perceived as the result of incompetence or malice. Sure, there are times when the frustration of waiting is justified and worthy of challenge. But learning to wait well, no matter the reason or the season, is a spiritual discipline that contributes to emotional health, spiritual vitality, and actions that are grounded in faith." Throughout Advent, we will be encouraged to "look at ways in which we can wait well, challenging the negative assumptions that waiting means inaction, apathy, or a lack of passion, and moving toward waiting that is deliberate, disciplined, and just."

Join with us in weekly worship, as we light the candles in the Advent wreath and hear God's Word to us from the Gospel of Matthew. I also encourage you to take on a spiritual practice for the season of Advent. "Straw for the Manger," an Advent Devotional centered on the Matthew 25 scripture and denominational invitation, provides specific daily suggestions for how to do just that. Copies will be available in the sanctuary for you to take home and use on your own or with your family.

After 4 Sundays of learning to wait well, on Christmas Eve the choir will invite us to hear the Christmas story anew through their cantata, *I Hear the Prophet Callin'*. Join us in eager anticipation of the coming of Jesus into our world: Emmanuel – God with us.

In Christ,

Pastor Karol

Word in the World

You are invited to weekly Word in the World discussions with Pastor Karol. Join us Wednesdays December 4, 11, and 18 from 9:00 to 10:00 AM at Twisted Whisk. We enjoy connecting God's word to today's world!

In Memory of a Loved One

If you would like to give a gift in memory of a loved one for the Advent and Christmas seasons, the Worship Committee requests that you use the form included in the newsletter or church bulletin to make a monetary donation.

Please place your completed form (with cash or check) in the offering plate or send to the church (P.O. Box 149, Bluffton) by **December 18**. Thank you!

Christmas Joy Offering

For more than 80 years, Presbyterians have given generously at Christmas to lift up those who have devoted their lives to the mission of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Throughout Advent, churches throughout the denomination will again receive this special offering. The Christmas Joy Offering is shared equally by the [Assistance Program of the Board of Pensions](#), which provides much-needed assistance to PC (USA) church workers and their families, and [Presbyterian-affiliated racial ethnic schools and colleges](#), which enable students to develop their gifts and find their calling. We will collect this offering throughout the month of December.

Per Capita

You are invited to help cover the per capita cost of your membership by making a special donation through our congregation as part of your discipline of stewardship. The per capita amount is \$35.70 per active member in 2020. Thank You!





Matthew 25: A PC(USA) Invitation

Matthew 25:31–46 calls all of us to actively engage in the world around us, so our faith comes alive and we wake up to new possibilities. Convicted by this passage, both the 2016 and 2018 General Assemblies exhorted the PC(USA) to act boldly and compassionately to serve people who are hungry, oppressed, imprisoned or poor. By accepting the Matthew 25 invitation, we can help our denomination become a more relevant presence in the world. We recognize Christ's urgent call to be a church of action, where God's love, justice and mercy shine forth and are contagious. And we rejoice how our re-energized faith can unite all Presbyterians for a common and holy purpose: our common identity to do mission.

To some degree, many churches are already doing the work of Matthew 25. We hope that by partnering with mid councils and congregations, we can together multiply and intensify our loving commitment to radical and fearless discipleship. When signing up, we will be asked to embrace one or more of the three areas of focus — building congregational vitality, dismantling structural racism, and eradicating systemic poverty. Then as we live out our commitment, we will be asked to share the story of impact that our pledge has made: how our congregation has changed, how we've discovered new passions and vitality, how our members have been re-energized as disciples ... so like in the early church, your renewed faith will fan the flames and encourage other congregations to also embrace our common mission. Find out more at <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/matthew-25/become-a-matthew-25-church/>.

Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service

The holiday season is normally a time of joy, but when someone you love has died, it can be a time of loneliness and pain. To help ease the pain and provide some comfort, Chiles-Laman Funeral & Cremation Services is offering a *Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service* in Bluffton.

On Sunday, December 8 at the Centre at Bluffton, 601 N. Main Street, Bluffton, all families in attendance will receive a free glass ornament personalized with the name and dates of their loved one that will be placed on the Christmas Tree. Families may begin arriving at 1:00 PM followed by a brief memorial service at 2:00 PM. At the conclusion of the service, the ornament is yours to take home. Additional ornaments will be available for purchase. If you would like additional ornaments please call prior to the service date to order so that we may have them ready for you.

Chiles-Laman Funeral & Cremation Services presents the Tree of Remembrance Memorial Service as a gift to the community. **All families are welcome regardless of which funeral home provided the services.** Light refreshments will be provided following the service.

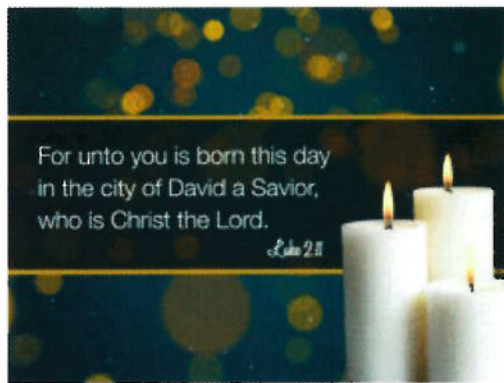
There is **no charge** to attend; however reservations are requested. To make a reservation or for more information call 419-358-2051 or email the funeral home at chilesbl@wcoil.com

Pastor Karol's Office Hours

Monday: 1-4; Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday: 9-12 and by appointment. My usual sabbath time is Friday/Saturday. I am of course available for emergencies, funerals, and special events on those days, but I typically don't engage in other work responsibilities. Outside of sabbath time, I am available by phone (419-581-9232) during the day even when not scheduled in the office. ~ Pastor Karol

Anniversary Dates Requested

Attention all married couples: please submit your wedding anniversary information to the church office right away so that we can celebrate with you on your special day!



Candles of Hope

Many Families are grieving the loss of a loved one, and over the holidays this can be difficult as their absence is often felt deeply. You are invited to drop in with your family to create a "Candle of Hope" or a "Memorial Ornament" that reminds you of your loved one. Take them home as a tangible reminder to celebrate their life throughout the holidays. We will also provide information about grieving through the holidays, as well as desserts and hot chocolate.

Date: Thursday, Dec. 12, 6:00 to 8:30 PM

Cost: FREE EVENT

Location: The Meeting Place, 220 W. Market St. Lima

REGISTRATION:

Phone: 419-581-9138

Email: Micah.Moore@cornerstoneofhope.org

*Please register by Dec. 9 to ensure we have supplies available.

Small Groups

CLARALICE CIRCLE: Every Tuesday 6:30 to 8:00 PM in the church basement.

SISTER MIN CIRCLE: 2nd and 4th Fridays 2:00 to 3:00 PM in the Family Room at Maple Crest.

Highlights of November Session Meeting

- Approved hiring Roger Broadman as Custodian at \$50 per week beginning November 2. Approved purchasing a new vacuum cleaner for the church. Membership rolls were reviewed by Clerk/Pastor no recommended changes at this time.

- Church insurance with Church Mutual renewed for 2020. Outstanding response for "Roll On" – balance at end of October \$1,260. Approved purchasing 2 new lapel wireless microphones which comply with new FCC regulations (\$973) from House of Hindenach with Jean Triplett Memorial money. Stewardship will once again work with the Ohio Northern University Auditing Class who will conduct the review of 2019 financial information.
- October Pastoral Care: 2 conversations with members/visitors; 6 home/hospital/nursing home visits and 14 cards sent. Congregational activities: Word in the World, Claralice Circle, Faith Formation Intern Supervision, committee meetings, Youth Group twice, hosted Halloween Party at manse, Member Rolls Review; Church Safety and Security Meeting, and Presbyterians 101. Presbytery events: MVP Restructure Retreat, Commissioned Ruling Elder Committee, New Pastors' Group, MVP Youth Retreat Planning, MVP Youth Retreat, and Discipleship Team Meeting. Community Engagement: led Mennonite Memorial Home worship (30 in attendance), Installation Service for Rev. Christopher L. Schilling - First Christian Church of Findlay, and Louisville Seminary Alum Board Meeting/Alum Reunion/Festival of Theology. Approved Vacation Request (for 2020): February 3 -9 (including Sunday, February 9).
- Approved accepting gift of SMART TV from Bob and Tammie Hursh. SMART TV has been placed in the church basement and can be used for Youth Group, committee meetings, etc. Instructions will be placed by TV once it is operational.
- Approved spending up to \$200 to have sanctuary carpet cleaned. Approved snow removal contract with Drew's Landscaping for church/manse.
- Approved calling Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 8, following morning worship service to elect Elders, Deacons, 2020 Nominating Committee and approve Pastor's Terms of Call for 2020.

Presbyterian 101!

A small group of curious persons has been meeting to delve into some history, reformed theology, and church governance to learn more about our denomination! Due to schedule conflicts, the final session has been moved from November 24 to December 1 from 3:30 to 4:30 PM. Join us as we hear more about worship and mission in the PC(USA)!

Faith Formation Series: ProFuture Faith

The Sunday Adult Faith Formation class has started a new Living the Questions series: ProFuture Faith. Join eco-theologian, author, and TEDx speaker, Rev. Michael Dowd in a dynamic DVD and internet-based discussion course that bridges the gap between head and heart, science and faith. Participants will be guided on a journey that accepts what is inevitable, avoids what is futile, and be inspired to attend to what is urgent. Come home to reality. Embrace a ProFuture Faith!

Christian Education Walkers

Thank you to everyone who has volunteered to walk the children to Christian Education Release Time so far this year! Our next date is Tuesday, January 7. It is a very full day working with the 3rd and 1st grades. The schedule is listed below. If you are available to help, please sign up in the back of the sanctuary or contact Tenna Rhonemus. Thank you for your willingness to serve in this special ministry!

January 7 Tuesday	
Inniger - 3 rd 8:20 – 8:50	Combs - 1 st 11:35 - 12:05
Raeburn - 3 rd 9:00 - 9:30	Steinmetz - 1 st 12:10 - 12:40
Hershberger - 3 rd 10:05 - 10:35	Huffman - 1 st 1:10 – 1:40
Armstrong – 3 rd 10:45 – 11:15	Dunlap – 1 st 1:55 – 2:25
Quinton – 3 rd 11:55 - 12:25	Unterbrink - 1 st 2:25- 2:55

Children and Youth Sunday School

The children and youth Sunday School class will not meet on Sunday, December 29. Classes will resume on January 5.

Young Adult Gathering

On Friday, December 20, Pastor Karol and Chris will host a gathering for young adults (college through early 30s) at the manse at 6:00 PM. This will be a great opportunity for our younger crowd to reconnect over the holidays by Wednesday, December 18.

Youth Group

Thanks to those who came to the youth Bible scavenger hunt! We had a lot of fun and had a good discussion about how we are all called to share our unique gifts and talents to spread God's love. Our next youth event will be an Advent skit performed during church on December 15.

Christmas Caroling

Claralice Circle will be caroling December 10, 6:30 PM at Willow Ridge and Maple Crest. All are invited to come and sing.

Ignite is planning an afternoon of caroling on Sunday, December 15. For more details sign up at the back of the sanctuary or contact Laura From.

New Beginnings Survey

Have you taken advantage of the opportunity to let Session know the path you believe Bluffton Presbyterian Church should be taking in 2020? Session wants to hear from you! All you have to do is fill out the survey found in this newsletter and either deposit in the collection plate or send to the church office. You may remain anonymous if you wish or you may sign the survey, which would be helpful if Session would appreciate further information. Please feel free to express any opinion you have even if you are not certain if it is feasible or not. Thanks for your help!

Deacons

Combined Session/Deacons Meeting December 12 at 7:00 PM.

Care packages will be sent out to Patrick, Megan, Julianna, Madison, and Sarah for finals week from the Deacons.

Mission Committee

Mission is working on Adopt-a-Family. There are sticky notes in the back of the church. Please sign the board as to which items you take. All items need to be returned by December 14. Please wrap your item and put a sticky note on it so we know which family it goes to. Small items and gift cards will be put in a gift bag.

We will still accept fleece blankets until December 14.

Please remember to bring food for the food pantry the second Sunday of November. This month items needed are **kleenex** and **canned fruit**, or any other food items you wish.

Mission Co-Worker Connections

Presbyterian World Mission

P. O. Box 643700

Pittsburgh, PA 15264-3700

Read more online:

pcusa.org/ian-and-jhan-vellenga

Thank you for supporting Ian Vellenga and Jhan Dortel-Velenga's ministry in Nicaragua. Your prayers and financial support make a difference to the lives of people in Nicaragua.

"Our Daily Bread" Mobile Meals

Mennonite Memorial Home and Hilty Home both offer a mobile meals program known as "Our Daily Bread." Through this program, a hot noon meal is delivered Monday through Friday within a 5-mile radius of Bluffton and Pandora. Cost is just \$5/meal. Call 419-358-1015, Ext. 218 for more information.

Little Free Pantry!

The LFP's mission is to help people with immediate food needs. Church members (and even people from the community) keep the LFP stocked. We are grateful for your support! It truly is making a difference in the lives of those who use it.

When donating items to the LFP, please remember: **no glass jars or bottles**, which can break if dropped. If you'd like to help families, **consider donating boxed items**: Tuna Helper, mac-n-cheese, pasta, cereal, and granola bars. Also, canned pasta sauce, canned tuna, beef, or chicken, oatmeal, rice, noodles, dried fruit, etc. School supplies would be great!

Personal care items are also appreciated: soap, shampoo, deodorant, baby care items, toilet paper, tissues, toothpaste, and toothbrushes, etc.

For safety's sake, please check the expiration dates of the items you donate. Your contributions can be placed inside the LFP or taken to the church office.

Thank you for your help as we work together as neighbors helping neighbors!



Roll On Campaign Introduced to Help Tyler and Laura From

(Highlights from the Minute for Mission)

Many of you know the Hursey family—Tom and Rebecca, their daughters Lisa and Laura, and Tom's mother Dorothy. Each member of the family has served our congregation in some way. In 2007, Laura became engaged to Tyler From. Tyler was attending UNOH in Lima when he was introduced to Laura through a mutual friend. They were married in our sanctuary in 2008 and shortly afterwards moved to Wyoming. Less than a year later, a freak accident left Tyler paralyzed.

For the last 10 years, Laura has cared full-time for Tyler. Her parents built an accessible room onto their home so Tyler and Laura could live with them. During the last year, it has become evident that the conversion van that they have been using was at the end of its useful life. Many in our church family worried each time the Froms left for medical appointments in Michigan or for a vacation. A few months ago, Tyler and Laura qualified for a loan to purchase a 2016 For Transit handicap van. For the first time, Tyler can look forward as they travel - but best of all, our church family no longer has to worry when they travel!

The *Roll On* Campaign invites each member to consider a one-time or repeating gift to help underwrite the monthly van payment. The church has committed to paying \$220 (1/2 of the payment) each month. Each gift will make it easier for Tyler and Laura to afford this necessary vehicle. The Campaign includes options of \$55 (1/4 payment), \$110 (1/2 payment), \$165 (3/4 payment), \$220 (full payment) or any amount that fits your budget.

Thank you for considering this campaign. As of October 1, four months of payments have already been pledged! In addition, the Mission Committee is planning a Blaze of Lights Benefit Dinner on November 30 with proceeds going to the Roll On Campaign.



IN OUR Thoughts and Prayers

Prayers of Sympathy for Linda Sycks and family on the death of her father Bob Braden.

Prayers of Sympathy with the families and friends of Mary Kay Wise, Jeff Bonnell, and Don Burkholder

Prayers for our members and friends serving in the armed forces: especially Kyle Begg, Andrew Warner, and Lucas Woodward.

Prayers of Healing for Laura & Tyler From, Bob McVetta, Wally Herald, Scott Benroth, Mark Blunk, Addison McGarrity, Lisa Hughes, Walter Schmidt, Alicia DeMarco, Bob James, Jeanette Warren, Marilyn Edwards, Jay Begg, Jim Mullan, Darlene Hey, Joan Badertscher, Mary Barnett, Lexie Roth, Sylvia Morman, Jan Romes, and Marlene Carrick and family.

BPC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please contact the church office (419-358-5806) with your prayer request, and we will pass along the information. If you would like to add someone to the prayer chain other than yourself, 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 Jeanette or another deacon.

Praying for You Cards

The Deacons' "Praying for You" cards are available in the pews for you to write notes to others. Ideas for recipients include homebound members, those on our prayer list, and our Church Person of the Week. Upon receipt of a card in the offering plate, the Deacons will mail it during the following week to the recipient you have indicated. Let's send some kindness to those who could use our prayers!

We Lift Our Prayers



Put a prayer request in – take a prayer request out. Look for prayer request slips in the pews and near the prayer box. Or use your own paper. Requests can be as simple as "I'm having back pain," or "My son is looking for a job." The slips can be placed in the box or in the offering plates. Prayer requests can be submitted anonymously. Allow someone in your church family to support you in private prayer.



Birthdays

December	4	Marilyn Edwards Jim Enneking
	5	Ariana Zuehlke
	9	Tenna Rhonemus Jack Henry Neff
	11	Jeanie Nichols Cheryl DeWitt
	15	Sarah Gillen
	17	Ben Miracle
	21	Linda Sycks
	22	Samuel Neff
	29	Billy Marshall
	31	Darlene Hey
January	1	Tammie Mericle
	3	Dave Sycks Chad Carroll

New Phone Number

Mary Barnett - Willow Ridge



2020 Planning Survey

Let us hear from you! Session will be defining church objectives and priorities for 2020 and wants your input.

1. Why do we exist as a congregation?
2. What do you see as our church's current top 3 objectives?
3. What would you like to see as our church's top 3 objectives?
4. What ideas do you have for the church to consider?

Name (optional):



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4. What ideas do you have for the church to consider?

Name (optional):



ROLL ON!!!



Laura and Tyler From purchased a much-needed used special needs van! To help the family make the monthly payments, Bluffton Presbyterian Church is conducting fundraising activities to provide one-half (approximately \$220) of the monthly payment obligations. Let's join together to keep the Froms rolling! I/we will assist with a ONE-TIME contribution towards an upcoming monthly payment of:

- ___ \$55, representing one-quarter of \$220
- ___ \$110, representing one-half of \$220
- ___ \$165, representing three-quarters of \$220
- ___ \$220, representing BPC's monthly goal (approx. one-half of the monthly payment)
- ___ Other, please note amount:

I/we will assist with RECURRING contributions, as described below:

___ (please circle) Monthly / Annual contributions of (please note amount): _____

Name(s): _____ Date: _____

Please return this card with your cash or check contribution payable to Bluffton Presbyterian Church with "Roll On" noted in the memo line.

Laura and Tyler thank you very much!

Bluffton Presbyterian Church

Telling Our Story!

2020 Operating Funds

Recognizing that we have received abundant gifts from God and that our worthy story of a good and active God can only be sustained when we generously share, I/we hereby declare that we will try to give as follows in 2020:

\$_____ weekly, or \$_____ (monthly)(quarterly)(annual)

(signature[s])

(name[s] printed)

Thank you for your commitment. Please check here if you prefer to not receive an acknowledgement: Please note that this commitment can be changed at any time as circumstances arise by notifying the Stewardship Committee.



Decorate the Sanctuary for Christmas!!

If you would like to help prepare the sanctuary for the Christmas, the Worship Committee requests that you use the form below to make a monetary donation.

Please place your completed form in the collection plate or send to the church office (PO Box 149, Bluffton, OH 48517). Thank 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**:

Name: _____

Bluffton Presbyterian Church
112 N. Main St., P.O. Box 149
Bluffton, OH 45817
419-358-5806

blufftonpc.org

Faith Formation: 9:00 AM

Sunday Worship: 10:15 AM

Pastor: Rev. Karol Farris Schilling

Phone: 419-581-9232

Email: pastor@blufftonpc.org

Office Hours: Mon 1-4; Tues, Wed, Thurs 9-12;
and by appointment

Secretary: Cathy Carroll

Email: bpcbluff@wcoil.com

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

Treasurer: Darin Leugers

Email: dleugers8319@yahoo.com

Faith Formation Intern: Adam Shanaman

Email: shaa-a@bluffton.edu

Organists: Jayne McGarrity and Sue Van Eman

Choir Director: Linda Sycks

Nursery Helpers: Kori Phipps and
Shawna Anderson

Custodian: Roger Broadman

2019 Church Officers

Session

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt

Buildings & Grounds – Tom Hursey

Faith Formation – Tenna Rhonemus

Finance & Stewardship – Clair Winebar

Mission – Lynda Best

New Beginnings – Sarah Brauen

Nominating – Sarah Brauen and Cindy Gillen

Personnel – Betsey Angus

Presbytery Commissioner – Lori Schmidt

Worship – Cindy Gillen

Members at Large – Jodi Brauen, Sarah Brauen,
and Tom Edwards

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Helen Hawk

Members: Tanya Best, Craig Bowman, Marilyn
Edwards, Dave Van Eman, and Jeanette Warren