



What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

March 2018

Growing in Faith • Sharing God's Love

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, March 4 – Communion

3 Cents a Meal Offering
Special Music: Youth Choir, Duet –
Pastor Karol and Don Brauen
Sound: Jay McCracken / Slides: Julia Szabo
Lay Reader: Lin Rumer
Greeters: Clair and Diane Winebar
Acolyte: Sarah Gillen

Sunday, March 11

Special Music: Choir
Sound: Bob Hursh / Slides: Diane Winebar
Lay Reader: Marilyn Edwards
Greeters: Phil and Pam Weisenbarger
Acolyte: Owen Brauen

Sunday, March 18

Special Music: Praise Team
Sound: Mike Rhonemus / Slides: Leslie Freed
Lay Reader: Phill Talavinia
Greeters: Lynda Best and Tanya Best
Acolytes: McVetta Girls

Sunday, March 25 – Palm Sunday

Special Music: Choir
Sound: Jeff Gillen/ Slides: Cathy Carroll
Lay Reader: Dick McGarrity
Greeters: Gillen Family
Acolyte: Avery Talavinia

Thursday, March 29 – Maundy Thursday

Sound: Mike Rhonemus
Lay Reader: Cindy Gillen
Greeters: Betsey Angus and Lori Schmidt
Acolyte: TBD

Sunday, April 1 – Communion / Easter

Sound: Jay McCracken / Slides: Julia Szabo
Lay Reader: Sarah Gillen
Greeters: Don and Jodi Brauen / Cindy Gillen

Mark Your Calendars!

- March 4 – Youth Group – 5:00 to 7:00 PM
- March 4 – Small Group Leaders – Following Worship
- March 8 – Session Meeting – 7:00 PM
- March 11 – Daylight Savings Time Begins – Spring Forward
- March 11 – Potluck – Following Worship
- March 14 – Praise Team – 7:30 PM
- March 14 – Deacons Meeting – 7:30 PM
- March 15 – Community Meal – 6:00 PM – Senior Center – Hosted by Bluffton Presbyterian Church
- March 15 – New Beginnings – 7:30 PM
- March 18 – Fellowship Time Hosted by Choir Following Worship
- March 21 – Mission Committee Meeting – 7:30 PM
- March 25 – Newsletter Items Deadline CEGillen@MarathonPetroleum.com
- March 29 – Maundy Thursday Service – 7:00 PM
- March 30 – Good Friday Procession of Cross – 11:30 AM – English Lutheran Church
- March 30 – Community Good Friday Service – Noon – St. Mary's Catholic Church.
- March 31 – Deacons' Annual Easter Bake Sale – 9:00 AM to Noon on Church lawn
- April 1 – Easter Breakfast – 8:00 to 9:30 AM
- April 1 – Easter Egg Hunt – 9:30 AM

Small Groups

- Claralice Circle will meet every Tuesday evening 6:30-8:30 PM in the church basement.
- Sister Min Circle will meet the 2nd and 4th Friday afternoons from 2:00-3:00 PM at Maple Crest.

Choir Rehearsal

- Wednesdays at 6:30 PM at Church

Pastor's Letter

The month of March is said to come “in like a lion and out like a lamb.” It’s a gradual time of transition between seasons, though certainly not an exact way to predict changes in the weather.

This year, that saying feels like it has a bit more meaning to it. We begin March in the middle of Lent, a period of time which recalls Jesus’ 40 days of temptation in the wilderness, surrounded as he was by lions and other wild beasts, even while angels waited on him. We continue our daily and weekly task to reflect on our relationship with God and one another, to see how we can avoid unnecessary temptations that distract us from our Creator.

During holy week, which falls the final week of March this year, we remember the last week of the life of our Savior, Jesus, from his glorious entry into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday, to the last supper with his disciples on Maundy Thursday, and the crucifixion on Good Friday. Jesus’ willingness to die on a cross leads us to the metaphor of Christ as a lamb, an innocent sacrifice taking the place of the sins of others. So March goes out with the lamb of God being taken down from the cross to lay in wait in the empty tomb. And finally, on the first of April – no joke – comes the surprising joy of resurrection on Easter morning.

No matter the weather, let us come together to worship the one who leads us through the murky shadows to the clear light of Sunday morning.

In Christ,

Pastor Karol

Reflection for Lent

If we picture all the obstructions between us and God as a wilderness, Lent presents us with time to clear and cultivate a part of that wilderness, to create an open space in it. In this newly opened space, we may live more freely and commune more closely with the divine. We can transform this wilderness and make it our home, our garden, a place that invites God in and asks God to stay.

– *A Clearing Season: Reflections for Lent* by Sarah Parsons

Highlights of February Session Meeting

- Approved request by Leslie Freed to borrow roaster for Chili Cook Off. Clerk signed official paperwork for Citizen’s National Bank – Session had approved Dick to invest money into CD.
- Souper Bowl Bistro was success even without power – approximately \$220 (after expenses) will be sent to Bluffton Community Assistance Program.
- Phil Weisenbarger volunteered to be “point” person for emergencies at manse/church while Tom is out of commission. Ant traps placed in office/preschool areas, safety salt purchased, fire extinguishers serviced, and thermostats in all areas programmed for week.
- Pastor Karol made 4 hospital/nursing home visits, served home communion to 3 with Deacon Laura From, and 11 conversations with members in church family. Congregation activities: Youth Group mini-retreat, committee meetings, and Souper Bowl Bistro. Presbytery activities: attending Commissioning Service for Julie Fogle at McComb and MVP worship planning team meeting. Community activities: meeting with local pastors, attending 2 Forums at Bluffton University, leading worship at Mennonite Memorial Home, BAMA Pulpit Exchange with English Lutheran, attending play at Bluffton University, and BAMA meeting. Attended Preaching seminar at Methodist Theological School and participated in Webinar.

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Highlights of Feb. Session Meeting Cont.

- State of Ohio website shows May 2, 1959, as our Corporation Date and that we will need to renew in 2018. CD was purchased at Citizen's National Bank.
- Bluffton Presbyterian Church advertisement running at Shannon Theater is running twice in 30 minutes prior to movies. Ad will be changed each month.

Expressions of Appreciation from Annual Congregation Meeting

- Ryan Brauen for being the point person (secure bids, meet with session, installation process) for mounting of our visual display monitors in the sanctuary.
- Sarah Brauen for leadership in chairing the Pastor Nominating Committee.
- Betsey Angus thanked the church family for the support/care shown through Bob's illnesses and death.
- Carole Enneking for her willingness to serve on Christian Education, Mission, and wherever else needed.
- Lynda Best, Jodi Brauen, and Cathy Carroll for leading the manse renovation project this summer – as well as church members who donated many volunteer hours.
- Jayne McGarrity, Linda Sycks, Sue Van Eman, choir, and those who provide special music for sharing their musical gifts which are much appreciated by our congregation.
- Laura From for designing and faithfully changing bulletin boards each month.
- Lori Schmidt for completing reports/paperwork associated with the clerk's position.
- Tenna Rhonemus for her love and enthusiasm which she shares when leading our youth.

- Mike Rhonemus for making sure sidewalks are snow/ice free on Sunday mornings.
- Roy Pneuman thanked the church family and Pastor Karol for the support/care shown during his recent health issues.
- Pastor Karol for being a blessing to our church family. She affirmed that the feeling is mutual and she feels blessed to be called to serve in Bluffton.
- To all members of our church family for always sharing love/support for each other which makes us a real family.
- To our church family who helps to meet the needs in our community by faithfully volunteering for mission projects – Chili Cook Off, Blaze of Lights, Relay for Hope, and Adopt a Family.

Conversations with Pastor Karol

One of Pastor Karol's goals for 2018 is to spend time with each individual/ family within our congregation. If you have an idea for a time that would work well for you for conversation – perhaps over a meal – let's make it happen!

Please submit this information to the church office. Thank you!

Name(s): _____

Phone: _____

Suggested time and day of the week:



Potluck

Mark your calendar!! On Sunday, March 11, there will be a potluck after worship. Please bring a dish to share, drinks will be provided. Join us for food, fun, and fellowship!

New Beginnings

“God's Garden”

“*God's Garden*”
By Robert Frost

*“God made a beauteous garden
With lovely flowers strown,
But one straight, narrow pathway
That was not overgrown.
And to this beauteous garden
He brought mankind to live,
And said "To you, my children,
These lovely flowers I give.
Prune ye my vines and fig trees,
With care my flowers tend,
But keep the pathway open
Your home is at the end.”*

This beautiful poem was written by Robert Frost. It describes a special relationship between God, nature and us, the children God loves. God created the world, "God's Garden", for us to live in and enjoy, but it is not our final destination.

But while we are here we have been given a special role in "God's Garden". We are to be caretakers. We are to tend the flowers and trees, pruning and shaping their growth. We have also been charged with keeping the pathway to our "Home" with God open.

With those ideas in mind the New Beginnings Team would like to pose two questions to the congregation. Are we caring for the piece of "God's Garden" we have been given to the best of our abilities? And are we keeping the pathway to "Home" open for all of God's children?

We have a beautiful part of "God's Garden" right outside these walls. And though it is well maintained by earthly standards, we wonder if we could be "pruning and shaping" it in ways that serve God's purpose better.

Our green space has been described as the "Presbyterian Park", "The Place with the Christmas Lights", and most recently "The Town Square". But what might that space become if we thought of it as "God's Garden" and treated it as a pathway "Home"?

The New Beginnings Team would like to ask those people in our Faith Family who are interested in exploring these ideas to form a task force. If you feel called to join the conversation please reach out to a member of the New Beginnings team: Ryan Brauen, Dick McGarrity, Lin Rumer, Diane Winebar or Tenna Rhonemus. This task force will explore ideas and work to discern God's purpose for the piece of "God's Garden" that has been placed in our care. Then they will present their findings to the rest of the congregation to determine the best way forward.

We feel we have been given a special opportunity and obligation, in this place and this time, to serve as God's caretakers while helping everyone discover the pathway "Home". This is about more than what we choose to do with the yard. It is about what we are doing with our life as a Faith Family. May the words from James 1:21 serve as a blessing to our work.

*In simple humility, let our gardener God, landscape
you with the Word,
making a salvation-garden of your life. James 1: ~21
(The Message)*



“Be willing to help and care for each other because of Christ. By doing this, you honor Christ.” Ephesians 5:21

The Deacons are searching for volunteers to help transport members to church who are unable to drive themselves. They may need some assistance when entering certain vehicles.

Your participation in this program will continue to allow us all worship the Lord together as a family. If you're interested in helping, please contact Pastor Karol or any Deacon.



Deacons Report

A heart-felt *thank you* to everyone who chose the name of a homebound member on February 11. Those whom you chose will be blessed to receive your card, note, or visit in the coming month. Our next Share the Spirit event will be held in May.

We discussed menu ideas for the upcoming Community Meal set for March 15.

The date for our Easter Bake Sale was set for March 31.

Opportunity to Serve our Children

Pastor Karol would like to have a member of the congregation lead the Time for Young Christians once or twice a month. Please let her know if you would be interested in doing so on occasion. She will coordinate a date with you and can provide you with a theme and resources if needed.

One Great Hour of Sharing

Easter Sunday will be our One Great Hour of Sharing. This will be a special time to remember those who are in need throughout the world. Through One Great Hour of Sharing, the Presbyterian Church joins with a number of other denominations to work together against world hunger and poverty.

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 \$30.98 per member in 2018. Thank You!

3 Cents A Meal Offering

Three Cents a Meal invites every member of our congregation to prayerfully contribute a few cents at each meal to help alleviate hunger and poverty. Ideally, contributions come from “living more simply so that others may simply live.” Participation in Three Cents a Meal is also a commitment to share with others in response to Jesus’ command, “You give them something to eat.” Daily participation is a reminder of the reality of hunger for millions of our sisters and brothers in the world. As the money accumulates, those participating become aware that small, regular acts can result in significant responses to hunger and that there is great strength in working together with other Christians.

Weekday Christian Ed Walkers

In March and April we have several dates that we need volunteers to walk the children to Weekday Christian Education. The dates, time ranges, and grades are listed below. Each class time is approximately 30 minutes, and you can sign up for one or more class times. The sign-up sheet is in the back of the Sanctuary or see Tenna Rhonemus if you are willing to help. Thank you for helping with this Mission Outreach!

Friday, March 9 – 8:25 to 9:55

(Two Kindergarten Classes)

Tuesday, March 20 – 8:20 to 2:50

(Nine Classes of 3rd and 1st Graders)

Thursday, April 5 – 8:50 to 9:55 and 1:45 to 2:55

(Two Classes each of 5th and 4th Graders)

Friday, April 20 – 8:50- 2:55

(Eight Classes of 5th, 2nd, and 4th Graders)

Maundy Thursday Service

Join us on March 29 at 7:00 PM for a Maundy Thursday service, so named because of Jesus' commandment (*mandatum - maundy*) to love one another. On this night when we remember the last supper with his disciples, we too will partake in the sacrament of communion. Let us gather in reflection as we prepare ourselves to journey with our Savior through his most difficult days.

Deacons' Annual Easter Bake Sale

The Deacons will be holding their annual Easter Bake Sale on Saturday, March 31 at 9:00 AM. This year we will be selling under a tent set up on our lawn. Yep, you read that right! It's the day before Easter Sunday! Please help us ensure our town will have tasty goodies on their tables this Easter made with the love of Christ from your heart to theirs.

If you are willing to donate any type of baked goods, please complete the donation form and place it in the offering plate or send it into the church office. Be sure to bring your donated items to the church by 8:30 AM that Saturday. (As set-up begins shortly after 8:00 AM.) If you're unable to bring your baked goods to the church, please contact a deacon, and we'll be happy to pick up your donations!

Easter Breakfast

The men of the church will be cooking and serving breakfast Easter Sunday from 8:00 to 9:30 AM. Join us in celebration of the joy of Easter morning.

Easter Egg Hunt

Please join us for an Easter Egg Hunt on April 1 beginning at 9:30 AM. Weather permitting, the hunt will be held on the church lawn.

Decorate the Sanctuary for Easter!

If you wish to help decorate the sanctuary for the Easter Season, the Worship Committee requests that you use the form included in the newsletter or bulletin to make a monetary donation. Please send names and money to church office by March 25.

The money collected will be used to purchase Easter Lilies and other items needed during the Easter season. The money can be given in memory of, or in honor of, a loved one. Please place your completed form in the collection plate or send it to the church office at P.O. Box 149, Bluffton OH 45817.

Youth Group

We will meet on March 4 from 5:00 to 7:00 PM for our monthly meeting. Please join us as we explore what we believe about ourselves as God's people and how we respond to God's grace. We will also be stuffing Easter Eggs during our meeting and discussing the upcoming 30 Hour Famine. It will be a meeting full of faith, planning, and fun!

We will not have a meeting in April since the first Sunday is Easter Sunday.

Graduate Recognition

We would like to recognize our high school and college graduates. If you have a student graduating, please contact Tenna Rhonemus. We would also like you to send a picture and brief description of accomplishments and future plans to Cindy Gillen to put in the newsletter. Please have this information to Cindy by April 22 for inclusion the May newsletter.

Art Show

You're invited to...continue the resurrection journey by expressing yourself thru an art form of your choice.

What would your version of The Last Supper look like in 2018?

Faith Christian Church, 2223 Shawnee Rd, Lima, OH is hosting an art show on Saturday, April 7 from 1:00 to 8:00 PM.

Draw, paint, sculpt, mold, live art (or any other art form) of your version of the "Last Supper" in 2018. Put a price tag on your art and someone may just purchase it. If you would like to exhibit your version of the Last Supper, please email your Name, Address, Phone number, and Chosen media form to: faithcc1@midohio.twcbc.com.



It's Community Meal Time!

It's Bluffton Presbyterian's turn to host the Community Meal on Thursday, March 15, at the Senior Center. The deacons are organizing a great meal and will be there to prepare the meal, meet, greet, and serve, but more help is needed!



How can you participate in this all-church effort?

- 1. BAKE A PIE** - This is our biggest need right now. Thirteen pies are needed to feed the estimated 100 guests.
- 2. ADD YOUR NAME** to the list of cheerful workers. People are needed to help serve the meal, act as "runners," clean up, and take care of any number of small tasks.
- 3. DONATE FUNDS** to help cover the cost of food and all necessary supplies. A basket for monetary donations is on the table in the narthex. Or you may donate by check. (Please write 3/15 Community Meal on the memo line.)

Sign-up sheets for both pies and volunteers will be in the back of the church.

THANK YOU for your support of this worthwhile Bluffton ministry!

Paper Recycling

Please note that paper recycling is available in the front and back of the sanctuary. Place any unwanted bulletins, etc. in the blue bins, and all other trash in the trash bins. Thank you!

Aluminum Can Recycling

Remember to save your aluminum cans. The Mission Committee sells recyclable cans and uses the proceeds to support mission causes in our area, most recently for a shelter and feeding ministry in Lima. As you gather the leftover cans from your graduation party or summer barbeque, bring the cans to the church basement and contribute them to a worthy cause.

Bluffton Community Chili Cook-off

The Bluffton Community Chili Cook-off, held on February 20, raised over \$1000 for Bluffton Community Assistance's Food Pantry. Eleven chili entries, representing seven area churches, were tasted by over 120 participants. The winner of this year's People's Choice Award was Nancy Yeager, with second place winner (and last year's winner) Tony Pinks. Other chili chefs included, Diane Winebar, Beth Buist, Leslie Freed, Kim Best, Don & Cathy Carroll, Cheryl Sommers, Patty Bunch, Missy Pilash, and Jim King. In addition to the money raised from the chili tastings and concessions, food and personal items were donated to restock the Food Pantry.

The event was sponsored by the Bluffton Presbyterian Church Mission Committee. The project would not have been possible without the support of members from Bluffton Baptist, Ebenezer Mennonite Church, Emmanuel United Church of Christ, English Lutheran Church, First United Methodist, and St. John's United Church of Christ. Entertainment was provided by Dancers Elite and Krysti's Music Studio.



Bluffton Area Food Pantry

The Bluffton Area Food Pantry thanks you for your continued support. Listed below is a revised list of some items to consider for the pantry:

Canned Meats (tuna, chicken, beef, pork)
Hamburger Helper and similar meals
Tuna and Tuna Helper
Breakfast Cereals and Instant Oatmeal
Campbells Chunky Soups and Crackers
Spaghetti Sauce (no glass)
Tomato Sauce
Macaroni and Cheese
Taco Supplies/Mexican Food Products
Chinese food products such as La Choy
Canned Fruits
Chili Beans and Baked Beans
Peanut Butter
Noodles and Beef Ramen Noodles
Baking Items: Brownies, Cookies, Cakes
Rice and Riceroni Items
Condiments: Catsup, Mustard, Mayo
Paper products: Toilet Paper, Paper Towels, Tissues, Napkins, Paper Plates
Personal Hygiene Products: Deodorant, Shampoo and Hair Care Items, Lotions, Soft Soaps, Toothpaste and Toothbrushes, Combs and Brushes

Little Free Pantry

Please do not put canned foods in the Little Free Pantry during the winter months. They can swell and leak. Also no bottles. Safe items you may consider donating: boxed foods (cereal, etc.), dry mixes (soup, etc.), rice, noodles, personal hygiene items, paper towels, Kleenex, baby items (no glass jars).

Thank you for supporting our Little Free Pantry!

Reminder

If you have Community Market receipts, please bring them in and place them in the baskets on the bulletin board or the back of the hallway. Thank you to Kay Ziessler for coordinating our congregation's participation in this rewards program.



Ignite - merging fellowship, families, and service

Bowling Party – Bites, Strikes, and Ignite!





Prayer Requests

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

Prayers of Healing for Tom Hursey, Michael Lee Bucher, Carl Wolf, Tyler and Laura From, Bob and Jean Braden, Rev. Matthew Zuehlke, Dr. Howard Shelly, Billy Marshall, Kaylie Fox and Naomi, Rev. Wade Pond, Ann Gladwell and Colletta Mullenhour.

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.

BPC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, please contact Mike Rhonemus (419-358-8148 / rhonstar@juno.com), or call the church office (419-358-5806) with your prayer request, and they 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 Mike or another deacon.

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|-------|----|-----------------------------|
| March | 1 | Greg Culbertson |
| | 2 | Emily Sycks Jane Benroth |
| | 3 | Jacob Szabo |
| | 9 | Tom Hursey |
| | 13 | Hazel Rodabaugh |
| | 14 | Erin Hotmire |
| | 16 | Jana McVetta |
| | 24 | Darrel Hotmire |
| | 26 | Laura From |
| | 28 | Drew Gable |
| | 31 | Lindsay McCracken |
| April | 1 | Megan Sycks |
| | 2 | Danielle Rhonemus |
| | 4 | Beth Buist |
| | 5 | Helen Hawk |



My family and I appreciate everyone’s thoughts and prayers. These last few weeks have had their ups and downs. All the cards and food we have received has surely brightened our days. Thank you all.

Tom Hursey and family

Lost & Found

Are you missing something that you brought with you to worship some Sunday? Perhaps an umbrella, hat, or sunglasses? Please take a moment to check the Lost & Found box in the back of the church to see if anything belongs to you.

Secretary’s Office Hours

Please note that Cathy’s office hours are now Tuesday and Thursday from 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM.

Decorate the Sanctuary for Easter!

If you wish to help decorate the sanctuary for the Easter Season, the Worship Committee requests that you use the form below to make a monetary donation.

The money collected will be used to purchase Easter Lilies and other items needed during the Easter season. Please place your completed form in the collection plate or send to the church office (P.O. Box 149, Bluffton OH 45817).
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: _____

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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

Sunday School: 9:00 AM
Sunday Worship: 10:15 AM

Pastor: Rev. Karol Farris
Phone: 419-581-9232
Email: pastor@blufftonpc.org
Office Hours: Tues & Wed 10-4,
Thu 9-11; or by appointment

Secretary: Cathy Carroll
Email: bpcbluff@wcoil.com
Office Hours: Tues & Thu 8:30-12:30

Treasurer: Darin Leugers
Email: dleugers8319@yahoo.com

Organist: Jayne McGarrity
Choir Director: Linda Sycks
Youth Choir Director: Sue Van Eman
Youth Group Director: Tenna Rhonemus
Nursery Helpers: Kori Phipps and Shawna Anderson
Custodian: Tony Carmack

2018 Church Officers

Session

Clerk of Session – Lori Schmidt
Buildings & Grounds – Tom Hursey
Christian Education – Tenna Rhonemus
Finance & Stewardship – Dick McGarrity
Mission – Lynda Best
Nominating – Tom Edwards and Cindy Gillen
Personnel – Betsey Angus
Presbytery Commissioner – Lori Schmidt
Worship – Cindy Gillen
Members at Large – Jodi Brauen, Tom Edwards, and
Phil Weisenbarger

Board of Deacons

Moderator: Laura From
Members: Tanya Best, Marilyn Edwards,
Laura From, Helen Hawk, Mike Rhonemus, and
Dave Van Eman