



Growing in Faith • Sharing God's Love

What's Happening at Bluffton Presbyterian Church

May 2025

WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Sunday, May 4 – Communion

Pulpit: Rev. Jeanne Gay
Liturgist: Phil Weisenbarger
Special Music: Lori Schmidt
Sound: Mike Rhonemus/Camera: Tenna Rhonemus
Slides: Linda Nelson
Acolyte: Tenna Rhonemus

Sunday, May 11 – Cents-Ability Offering

Pulpit: Rev. Jeanne Gay
Liturgist: Lynda Best
Special Music: Jeremy Szabo
Sound: Jeff Gillen/Camera: Clair Winebar
Slides: Diane Winebar
Acolytes: Morgan and Avery

Sunday, May 18

Pulpit: Jim Boroff
Liturgist: Dave Van Eman
Special Music: Dan Noland
Sound: Jeff Gillen/Camera: Betsey Angus
Slides: Michele Talavinia
Acolyte: Betsey Angus

Sunday, May 25

Pulpit: Rev. Jeanne Gay
Liturgist: Helen Hawk
Special Music: Dave Sycks
Sound: Mike Rhonemus/Camera: Tenna Rhonemus
Slides: Cathy Carroll
Acolyte: Tenna Rhonemus
Greeters:



Mark Your Calendars!

Sundays:

Worship 10:15 AM – Sanctuary

Tuesdays:

Claralice Circle 6:30 PM

We don't meet May 27 – the final Claralice Circle meeting until September is May 20.

May 4 – Welcome Reception for Rev. Jeanne Gay

May 7 – Mission Committee Meeting – Time TBD

May 8 – Session Meeting 7:00 PM

May 10 – Lima Rescue Mission 4:30 PM

May 11 – Mother's Day

May 11 – Graduate Recognition Reception

May 25 – Newsletter Items Deadline to Cindy by end of day at jcgillen99@gmail.com

May 26 – Memorial Day



Graduate Recognition

Congratulations to the Graduates in our church family! We hope you are able to join us Sunday, May 11 as we honor our Graduates – Libby McVetta (University of Toledo), Morgan McVetta (Cory-Rawson High School), and Avery Talavinia (Bluffton High School).

They will be recognized during the worship service with a reception afterwards so you can share your Best Wishes with them!



Welcome Pastor Jeanne!

We hope you are able to join us on Sunday, May 4 as we welcome Rev. Jeanne Gay with a reception following the worship service. Opportunities for snacks, fellowship with others, ask questions to Pastor Jeanne, and a time to get to know her better as she begins her ministry with our church family! Looking forward to seeing you there.

What Do I See?

What do I see when I look at Bluffton Presbyterian Church? I see a strong church, a good church, a church with a solid future. Also, a church that's going through some really hard times right now. A church where members are hurting, and scared.

I am not convinced that this church is doomed. I think it has the potential to be around for many, many more years, worshiping God and supporting its members, the Bluffton community, and people throughout the world.

One of the standards of the Presbyterian Church – and most churches in the Reformed tradition – is that we try to do things “decently and in good order” (from 1 Corinthians 14:40). That means that Presbyterians strive to treat each other kindly, respectfully, and with concern. It means that we take time making decisions, listening humbly and prayerfully to the guidance of the Holy Spirit.

God's got us. God is in charge. Even when we walk through dark, dark valleys, we need not fear. Surely goodness and mercy shall follow us all the days of our lives, and we shall dwell in the house of the Lord our whole lives long. (Ps. 23:6)

Breathe in; breathe out. Feel the Spirit of God filling your body and your soul with peace.

Pastor Jeanne

Biography of Jeanne Gay

Jeanne Gay was born in Nebraska and moved with her family to Ann Arbor, MI at age 8, and then to Berea, OH (a suburb of Cleveland) at 11. She is the oldest of six children, of which five survive.

Jeanne has a bachelor's degree from College of Wooster (General Literature;), a Master's in English from the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and a Master's in Divinity from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia.

Before starting on her path to ministry, in her 50's, Jeanne worked as a high school English teacher, an administrative assistant, a corporate editor and trainer, an organization development consultant, and an adjunct college English professor.

Jeanne has served churches in Philadelphia (Summit), Port Clinton (Firelands), Baltimore, MD (Havenwood, Northminster, and Good Shepherd), and Toledo (Collingwood). Most of those positions have been interims. Currently, Jeanne serves as the chair of the Synod of the Covenant Administrative Commission for the Presbytery of Detroit, and she will be a mentor in the synod's 2025-26 Cultivating the Gift of Preaching program, which will start in June.

She was divorced from her husband after 12 years of marriage, in 1988. They have two children. Andrew (44) is married to Liz and lives in the metro-NYC area. They have two teen-aged children: Dylan and Nora. Jeanne's daughter, Kate (38), is married to Tim and lives in Perrysburg, OH. They have two boys: 5-year-old Jameson and Oliver, who turned 4 on April 26.

Jeanne enjoys travel, hanging out with family and friends, music, and reading. She is working on a native plant garden at her Perrysburg home, but says she grows more dandelions than anything else.



SESSION

Highlights of April 27 Called Session Meeting

- Called for the following purposes: 1. Discuss recent communications received by members of the church family. 2. Discuss options for asking Maumee Valley Presbytery to walk with us and support us. 3. Discuss Jayne McGarrity's offer to continue to work on the digital sign.
- In order to gather input from members/friends of the congregation, Session will invite them to sign up for scheduled small group Listening Sessions or to complete a Feedback Survey. Listening Sessions to be held on Thursday, May 1 with two teams available and Sunday, May 4 with one team available. Text to be sent sharing information and including a link to register to attend one of the slots.
- Approved unanimously for Session to request Maumee Valley Presbytery to provide an Administrative Commission to Bluffton Presbyterian Church to walk alongside and counsel the Session and congregation to help resolve current conflicts.
- Approved to accept Jayne McGarrity's offer to continue working with BPC's digital sign and be paid hourly for her services.

Highlights of April 14 Called Session Meeting

- Called for the purpose to allow Session to gather, understand both individually and together as a Session in the midst of conflict, to discuss communications with our church family.
- Approved for Rev. Jeanne Gay to invite Cole May to participate in Darlene Hey's Memorial Service with Rev. Jeanne Gay presiding and Cole May offering the Eulogy.
- After hearing an Elder share a letter, motion made and seconded – "BPC requests Maumee Valley Presbytery to allow Cole May to remain as Pulpit Supply in BPC, while he pursues the progression towards becoming a commissioned ruling elder or ordained Presbyterian minister. If he fails to follow through with the required expectations regarding Presbytery training, it would be appropriate to terminate his contract." Lengthy discussion followed concerning this motion. Voting done by written ballots. Motion failed – 6 No, 2 Yes.
- Treasurer Clair Winebar was asked to look over our "At-Will Agreement" as we would want to uphold our financial commitment to Cole May. He reviewed the document and reported that employment between BPC and Cole could be terminated with or without cause by either party. Based on the date Cole resigned, we were obligated to pay through April 10. Session approved to pay for the entire 90-day probationary period which would be equivalent of paying through May 2.
- Session decided to write an official letter to the church family. Elders were assigned to create the letter and they asked the Clerk to submit timeline information to them. Letter/timeline was distributed in April 17 weekly email and mailed on Friday, April 18 through the USPS system.
- The following people were approved to represent BPC when creating a contract with Rev. Jeanne Gay as our Transitional Pastor – Treasurer Clair Winebar, Personnel Chair Lori Schmidt, and Worship Chair Lynda Best.
- General Presbyter Matt Meinke shared that in our denomination communication is channeled to Moderator and Clerk and they in turn are the ones to officially report actions of Session. Matt asked for confirmation that all present understood and affirm that this would happen in the future.

Highlights of April 10 Stated Meeting

- Having completed Presbytery's training class on Communion and having been approved by the Leadership Commission, approved that the following ruling elders be approved to preside at Communion at Bluffton Presbyterian Church – Marilyn Edwards, Tom Edwards, Dick McGarrity, Linda Nelson, Phil Weisenbarger, and Clair Winebar. (Approved 9-0).
- Darlene Hey died March 24. Memorial Service will be April 26 at the church (service will be livestreamed on FB) with dinner to follow.
- Approved request from BAMA to use Gazebo/lawn on Thursday, May 1 at noon for National Day of Prayer (in case of inclement weather, permission granted to use the sanctuary).
- Approved request from ET Cetera Shop INC to hold board meeting at our church on Monday, July 21.
- Community person who volunteered to coordinate community music events using our Gazebo/lawn has shared that 7 of the 9 slots have been filled – twice a month in June, July, August, and September.
- Received Letter from Leadership Commission on March 28 – They approved our request for a sub-committee of Session to meet with the Leadership Commission at the Maumee Valley Presbytery Office at a mutually agreed upon date/time as soon as possible. Session elected following to serve as Session sub-committee – Moderator Bob Butcher, Clerk Lori Schmidt, Carole Enneking, Jana McVetta, and Linda Nelson. BPC team agreed to meet with Leadership Commission on Monday, April 8 at the Maumee Valley Presbytery Office at 10:30 a.m. BPC team met on March 27 to plan for meeting. Both BPC team and representatives of the Leadership Commission met for 3 hours. At the conclusion of that meeting all present agreed to confidentiality until Bluffton's team was able to meet with Cole on April 9 to share Collaboration/Compromise document and answer any questions. During April's stated session meeting on April 10, Bluffton's team shared their reflections on the meeting and then the Collaborative/ Compromise document was shared with Session. Cole requested an opportunity to speak. He shared his prepared remarks and ended with his letter of resignation effective immediately as our Resident Preacher. Elders shared comments with Cole. Motion approved to accept Cole May's resignation as Resident Preacher with regret.
- Session discussed immediate needs – pulpit supply for Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Easter, and large Memorial Service on April 26. Approved to contact Rev. Jeanne Gay to see if she was able to provide pulpit supply on those dates and see if she was willing to be our Transitional Pastor. Clerk contacted Jeanne via speakerphone. Jeanne graciously agreed to all our requests. Both Session and Jeanne agreed that a formal contract would be worked out but for now a verbal promise was fine considering the immediate needs. Session crafted text to be sent to the church family and authorized the Clerk to send the text that night.
- Deacons have selected Mike Rhonemus as their Moderator.
- Changed the clocks at church and the timer-light on the front stained-glass window. First lawn treatment from Fruchey's. Furnace filters changed in February. Looking ahead to spring planting/mulching around the church and manse.
- Administrative Assistant's Day recognized early with gift card and planter – due to Easter week and Memorial Service following week.

DEACONS

April Deacon's Meeting

- Discussed Easter Flowers for Shut ins.
- Discussed Communion Dates for 2025.
- Discussed Updating our Care Lists.
- Voted Mike Rhonemus in as Moderator replacing Chris Hochstetler who is stepping down.

CLARALICE CIRCLE

The following blessing was part of this year's Claralice Circle Lenten study. God spoke to us through this prayer, and we wanted to share it with you, our beloved church family.

A Blessing for Easter Sunday

Oh God, I stretch out my hands to you in this early Easter darkness. I need you to pull me up and set me on my feet again, for I am weak and tired.

God, have mercy.
Christ, have mercy.
Spirit, have mercy.

God, on that first Easter morning while it was still dark, one woman went alone to the tomb to do what could be done to honor you, though hope had drained away.

Two bright angels met her there, and then – *how is it possible?* – you were there, fully alive, beyond belief.

Blessed are we who stretch out our hands to you in doubt and grief, in sickness of body and mind and spirit, our prayers not fully realized, rejoicing...anyway.

For that is what makes us Easter people: carrying forth the realized hope of the Resurrected One, singing our alleluias great and small. while it is still dark.

Christ is risen. Christ will come again.
Alleluia. Alleluia. Alleluia.

– Kate Bowler and Jessica Richie

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

Video and Sound Techs

We are looking for volunteers to help with Video and Sound. If anyone is interested, please see Lynda Best.

Knitters and Crocheters

We would like to start a new project of giving Prayer Shawls to members and friends in the hospital or who are grieving the loss of a loved one. Anyone who likes to crochet or knit and is interested in this project, please see Lynda Best for patterns or if you have any questions.

MISSION



Pentecost Offering

The Pentecost Offering unites us in a church-wide effort to support young people and inspire them to share their faith, ideas, and unique gifts with the church and the world. Psalm 71 testifies that a foundation of faith established during childhood helps ensure lifelong faith and service. The patterns and lessons established during these formative years continue to bear fruit throughout a person's life. By receiving the Pentecost Offering, you are nurturing the faith of children, youth, and young adults.

<https://pcusa.org/special-offerings/pentecost-offering>

Our local portion will support expenses for local youth to attend the Presbyterian Youth Triennium. Gifts are welcome through May.

Little Free Pantry

April 29-May 4 – Sue Van Eman
May 5-11 – Carole Enneking
May 12-18 – Barb McClurg
May 19-25 – Sarah Noland
May 26-June 1 – Diane Winebar

The Bluffton community has used our pantry more than usual the past several months. Please consider donating the following items: canned corn, Kraft Mac & Cheese, Ramen noodles, and Knorr sides. Thank you for continuing to support this Matthew 25 mission effort!



Thank you to Barb and Dave McClurg for helping Tammie and Bob Hursh cover April Pizza Night. Also, thanks for all the donations from the congregation, we were able to serve pizza, pop, chips, and candy bars for ~25 men.

The May 10 pizza night is covered. The next two pizza nights are June 14 and July 12. Anyone interested in serving or donating soda, water, variety pack chips, candy bars, 10" plates, or gallon ziplock bags, please call or text Bob Hursh at 419-302-6065.



Thank you to all who contributed their time by setting up, serving, cleaning up, and providing food for Darlene Hey's funeral luncheon.

Deacon Cindy Gillen

Dear Friends,

Anne and I want to express our sincere thanks for the gift of the 125th anniversary night light. It's really very beautiful and most appropriate to proclaim, in Advent-Christmas season, that Christ is the Light of the world. Even the package was beautifully designed and appropriate!

Thank you very much for thinking to include us in this wonderful expression of the anniversary of your congregation. May God bless you for 125 more!

Pastor Bob and Anne Butcher

Thank you for the beautiful flowers and gift card for Administrative Assistance day. I really appreciated it.

Blessings, Cathy

FINANCE AND STEWARDSHIP

March 2025 – General Fund Summary

Balance January 1, 2025	\$134,479
Year-to-date offerings and receipts	32,398
Year-to-date expenses	(33,116)
Balance March 31, 2025	\$ 133,761

Special non-budgeted fund balances on March 31 included \$717 for Little Free Pantry supplies, and \$1,106 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!



BPC Prayer Chain

If you have a prayer request, contact Mike Rhonemus at phone – 419-812-6280 or email – mkrhon@gmail.com. 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 Joy for:

Mike and Tenna who have a new grandson, Michael (Danielle and Cody).

Carole Enneking for winning the Friends of Children award!

Libby McVetta who got engaged Saturday, March 29!

Morgan McVetta who received Academic All-Ohio!

Avery Talavinia who was elected Bluffton High School prom queen.

Our graduates: Libby and Morgan McVetta, and Avery Talavinia.

Prayers of Sympathy for:

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

The family and friends of Mike Deeter (Lori's friend) who recently passed.

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

Sylvia (Diane Winebar's sister)

Jim and Deb Augsburg (Jodi's friends)

LeAnn Carr's mother

Scott and Mindy Farling (Lynda Best's friends)

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)

Wanda McCullough (Jade Hochstetler's grandmother)

Wayne Pneuman (Mariah's son)

Joseph Robinson (Jeremy Szabo's friend)

Sandi Waibel (Donnas Stone's sister)



Anniversaries

May	8	Dan and Sarah Noland
	11	Bob and Tammie Hursh
	19	Tyler and Jade Hochstetler
	23	David and Barbara McClurg
	28	Don and Jodi Brauen

Birthdays

May	2	Patrick Rhonemus
	3	Paige McVetta
	8	Dan Noland
	11	Yuji Elwood
	14	Jade Hochstetler Elaine Thompson
	15	Lilly Friesel Jeremy Zank
	20	Sarah Brauen
	21	Becky Winebar
	24	Carole Enneking Kevin McVetta Sunny Zank
	25	Ethen Friesel
	26	Kory Enneking Rebecca Hursey
	29	Heidi Hotmire

Thank you volunteers!!

We had 15 people assist with packing food boxes at the West Ohio Food Bank on Sunday, April 27. They packed 400 boxes of food in about 3-1/2 hours of working. Each box weighed about 25 lbs. This number of boxes is about half of the quantity that is handed out each month. The boxes will be distributed to elderly clients throughout an 11-county area that is served by the food bank.

Thank you to Don and Cathy Carroll, Jeff and Kerry Fremont, Jeff and Cindy Gillen, David and Barbara McClurg, Dan and Sarah Noland, Dave and Sue Van Eman, Mike and Tenna Rhonemus, and Clair Winebar!!





Keep Making Plans

for Ruth Darlene Hey

by Abigail Hodgson Hey

She lived with spark behind her smile,
A fire that danced, a spirit wild.
With wit as quick as scissors' snip,
And kindness in each fingertip.

A prankster with a healer's heart,
She played her jokes with gentle art.
She read the stars, the cards, the skies—
And saw it all through sharp blue eyes.

No creature ever left unseen—
From fox to horse to Shih Tzu queen.
She took in strays, both fur and friend,
Her open door knew no clear end.

She cut your hair and read your chart,
Then pulled you close and healed your heart.
She worked with grit, then gave with grace—
A steady hand, a soft embrace.

She sang her heart out in the choir,
Her voice a thread, a small, bright fire.
Each hymn she raised, each note she knew,
A prayer she carried, strong and true.

She walked through life on her own terms,
With deep beliefs and love that burns.
She held her family close and dear,
And met the world with joy, not fear.

She'd say, "Don't waste your time on dread—
Just laugh a little more instead."
Then flash a grin, then make a plan—
She lived full-out, and left her stamp.

Her stories echo in our bones,
Her humor carved in sacred tones.
She gave us roots, and gave us wings—
And stitched our lives with brighter things.

The room is warm, her chair is bare,
Her love still hums in quiet air.
She taught us joy, she took a stand—
And left us this:
Keep making plans.

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

blufftonpc.org

Sundays: Worship: 10:15 AM

OFFICE HOURS

Rev. Jeanne Gay

Email: RevJeanneGay@gmail.com

Cell: 419-707-1562

Office Hours: Tues 10:00 AM

Administrative Assistant: Cathy Carroll

Email: bpcbluff@wcoil.com

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

Treasurer: Clair Winebar

Email: treasurer@blufftonpc.org

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: Mike Rhonemus

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