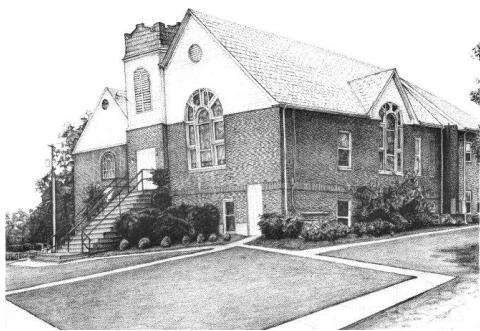


# SYCAMORE HIGHLIGHTS



31120 Sycamore Church Road  
Franklin, VA 23851  
(757) 562-6749

Pastor  
Rev. Tracey Pugh  
Vol. XLX, No. 1

Deacon of the Month  
Joey Francis  
January 2025

## ONE THING I DO

New Year Greetings!

As we begin another year, I want to share some words of encouragement that have been helpful for me lately.

So often, we “overpromise” on our New Year Resolutions. At least, I have found that's something I have done in the past. We resolve to lose weight, read the Bible and pray every day, stop being so cranky, be more thankful, and the list could go on and on.

Yet, it seems Paul the Apostle had an excellent approach as he wrote to the Philippian believers. This scripture is often used around the New Year because its themes of perseverance, forward focus, and spiritual growth resonate deeply with the reflections and aspirations people commonly associate with this time of year. The passage reads:

*"Not that I have already obtained all this, or have already arrived at my goal, but I press on to take hold of that for which Christ Jesus took hold of me. Brothers and sisters, I do not consider myself yet to have taken hold of it. But **one thing I do**: Forgetting what is behind and straining toward what is ahead, I press on toward the goal to win the prize for which God has called me heavenward in Christ Jesus."* Philippians 3:12-14 (NIV)

Paul's “main thing” was to know Christ. He was willing to go through whatever he had to go through so that he could know Christ more. He reminded the people that while he had made significant progress in Christ, he was still pressing on and learning more daily.

In declaring “**one thing I do**,” he shares three things that make up that one thing. We can look at them as a reminder for all of us to stay focused on Christ. The three things he said he would do all fell under the one thing of knowing Christ.

- 1. FORGET THOSE THINGS BEHIND. Don't allow anything from your past to hold you back from all God has for your future! Yesterday is gone, so learn from the things you can learn from and go to point two...
- 2. REACH FORWARD TO WHAT IS AHEAD. Be optimistic about the “race” or “journey” God wants to take you on. There's an old statement that goes like this; “there is joy in the journey.” And finally,
- 3. PRESS TOWARD THE GOAL. The word “press” seems to convey the idea of living life not just with the journey in mind but realizing that there is a finish line as well. Knowing Christ in a more significant way is part of that to help us now, but we need to focus on the finish line of an eternity with Jesus. So, press on, my friends.

I pray this coming year is covered with God’s blessings for you, your friends, family, and loved ones, especially in the trials that you may face. This past year was challenging for many, but I encourage you to keep pressing on. When Paul focused on “one thing,” in God's amazing way, he ensured that other things were taken care of. May your “one thing” be much like Paul's... to know Christ!

Happy New Year!

Pastor Tracey



## MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

### WOMEN ON MISSION

The Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, WMUV, has on its website the following statement.

*We exist to equip and inspire the entire church to be on mission with God.*

Women on Mission are part of the WMUV, which includes Mission Friends, Children in Action, GAs, RAs, and World Changers.

A New Year is upon us, and now is the perfect time to make that resolution and become intentional about focusing on your missional lifestyle. Join Women on Mission on the third Tuesday of each month (the 21<sup>st</sup> of this month) at 6:30 p.m. We will study missions, plan a Mission Focus each month, and discuss mission activities and events for the church.

Let's work prayerfully and intentionally together as we find effective ways to "understand and be radically involved in the work of God."

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



Thank you to everyone who supported Angel Tree Sr and Children, and who brought in frosting and sprinkles for the cookie decorating party. It was a great way to deliver the children's gifts.



Community Connections looks forward to the New Year and continuing to work in our community.

### A LOOK BACK AT 2024

### AND A LOOK AHEAD AT 2025



### Missional Activities

What a year it has been in the life of our church. May we all be grateful for the opportunities to serve and witness the positive impact God is making through the ministries of His church. All progress and accomplishments are a testament to His faithfulness.

- Global Missions Offering collection times 2
- Alma Hunt State Missions Offering
- Love Offering
- Rice Bowl Offering for World Hunger
- Pan Con Amor (Bread with Love) Offering for Peru
- Christmas Mailbox for Global Missions
- Collected hygiene kit items and household cleaning kit items for Franklin Cooperative Ministry
- Made blankets for the Genieve Shelter
- Provided weekend backpacks of food for those in need at Riverdale School
- Collected school supplies for Riverdale in the Spring and for Christmas in August and supported staff during Teacher Appreciation Week
- Packed boxes for Operation Christmas Child
- Emphasized Random Acts of Kindness quarterly
- Sent meals and cards to shut-ins
- Provided the fixings for Thanksgiving meals
- Bought gifts for children and senior adults on the Angel Tree
- Participated in a community Trunk or Treat and an Easter event
- Participated in the Community Living Nativity
- Collected money for and packed Flood Buckets for Hurricane Helene Relief

WOW! How good is our God? As we step into 2025, let's reaffirm our commitment to continuing this work with a spirit of gratitude and humility inspired to do so by God's grace alone. Together we can make a difference.

TAKING CARE OF  
BUSINESS



CONFERENCE

The regular quarterly church conference is scheduled for Sun, January 26, immediately after worship in the fellowship hall.

FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER SCHEDULE

Below is this month's supper schedule. If the assigned dates are unsuitable for your class or group, please trade with another group and let Dianne Umphlett know about the change.



January 1	No Family Night
January 8	Women’s Study Group
January 15	Brotherhood
January 22	Choir
January 29	Fellowship Hall Group

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Join me at the coffee houses listed below for a cup of coffee and some conversation. I will set up shop on Thursday mornings as follows:



January 07	Daily Dose	9-10:30
January 14	The Vine	10-11:30
January 21	Daily Dose	9-10:30
January 28	Storehouse	9-10:30

Pastor Tracey



DEACON REPORT

The Deacon's meeting was held on December 2, 2024. The following items were considered:

- Transportation schedules were discussed.
- The delivery of the Flood Buckets will be to Chase City by Charlie Daughtrey. Safety issues and the installation of cameras were considered.
- Decided to give the church the opportunity to participate in a Love Offering collection for the Tillett family, who had recently lost their home to a fire.

The next deacon meeting is scheduled for January 6.

The Deacon of the month for January is Joey Francis.

Deacon Ministry Team Leaders

- Bereavement – Ronnie Bulls
- Casserole- Holly Giles
- Hospital/Homebound – Joey Francis
- Prayer – Charlie Harcum
- Transportation – Terry McPherson

PRAYER TEAM REPORT

As background information, the following was on Sycamore’s online prayer request site and relates to the Thanksgiving Meal given by the church to this person.

*“Not a prayer request but a great big thank you for my Thanksgiving dinner. That kind of generosity is the example people need to see. I experienced the kindness of strangers when I was in need. I just want to thank you and your congregation. Please keep my family in prayer. Again, thank you.”*



## DECEMBER IN REVIEW

### CHILI COOK-OFF AND COOKIE BAKE-OFF WINNERS

We had 6 pots of chili and 6 cookie entries this year. Congratulations to Peggy Rush for winning the coveted Golden Ladle and to Savannah Moore for winning the Golder Spatula. We look forward to even more entries next year for this festive, fun event.



*Peggy received the ladle from last year's winner, Kay Holland,*



*Savannah received the spatula from Cookie Judge, Lou Vann.*



*Cookie Judges: Walter Young, Natalie Hinson, & Lou Vann.*



*Chili Judges: Charlie Harcum, Jimmy Vann, & Pastor Tracey*

### PRAYER WREATH MEETING

Prayer wreaths are a thoughtful and meaningful tradition to extend care and spiritual connection to shut-ins during Christmas. They serve as a tangible reminder of their inclusion in the church family and the love of Christ.



### HANGING OF THE GREENS

The Hanging of the Greens is an act of preparation, aligning with the themes of Advent and Christmastide. Just as homes are decorated to welcome guests, the church is adorned to welcome Christ, whose coming is celebrated during this season. We had a wonderful time preparing together,



<div>  <div>JANUARY 2025</div>  </div>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 HAPPY NEW YEAR No Family Night	2	3	4
5 Sunday Morning Schedule Communion	6 Deacons Meeting 7:00 pm.	7 Coffee and Conversation Daily Dose 9–10:30 am	8 Family Night Schedule	9	10	11
12 Sunday Morning Schedule Community Connections 11:15 a.m.	13	14 Coffee and Conversation The Vine 10–11:30 am	15 Family Night Schedule	16 .	17	18
19 Sunday Morning Schedule Church Council 11:15	20	21 Coffee and Conversation Daily Dose 9–10:30 am WOM 6:30 pm.	22 Family Night Schedule	23	24	25
26 Brotherhood Breakfast Sunday Morning Schedule Conference 11:15 am.	27	28 Coffee and Conversation Storehouse 9–10:30 am	29 Family Night Schedule		31	

**SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE**  
(unless otherwise noted on the calendar)  
Sunday School 9:00 am.  
Worship 10:00 am.

**FAMILY NIGHT ACTIVITY SCHEDULE**  
(unless otherwise noted on the calendar)  
Meal: 5:45  
Adult Study II: 6:15  
Men's Bible Study: 6:45  
Youth 6:30  
Mission Friends & Children in Action: 6:45  
Adult Choir: 7:45

**CONTACT INFORMATION**  
Secretary's email: [secretary@sycamorebaptist.org](mailto:secretary@sycamorebaptist.org)  
Church website: [sycamorebaptist.org](http://sycamorebaptist.org)

Rev. Pugh's Email: [pastor@sycamorebaptist.org](mailto:pastor@sycamorebaptist.org)  
Church phone: (757) 562-6749 ext 2  
Rev. Pugh's cell phone: 1 (434) 953-7930  
Office Hours: 8:30 – 4:30 Tues – Fri, and as needed by appointment.

