

SYCAMORE HIGHLIGHTS



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

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

Deacon of the Month
John Jenkins
January 2026

LEANING IN

Dear Church Family,

As we turn the calendar and step into a new year, I find myself filled with gratitude and hope. There is something sacred about beginnings—a fresh page, a new chapter, another opportunity to walk with God and with one another. While we don't know all that this year will hold, we do know the One who holds us, and that is enough to face the days ahead with faith.

As we begin this year together, I keep coming back to this promise:

“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to him, and he will make your paths straight.” — Proverbs 3:5–6

What a steady word for a new season. Not a call to have it all figured out, just a call to trust. To lean into God's wisdom when ours feels limited. To take the next step, even when we can't yet see the whole path.

I'm thankful for the way you love, serve, and show up for one another. You encourage the weary, celebrate the joyful, and keep choosing community even when life is busy or complicated. That kind of steady, Christ-shaped faith is a gift. It's also a testimony to our neighbors and community that the church is not a building we visit, but a family we belong to. We are family!

As we enter this new year, my prayer is that we will continue to grow—deeper in worship, stronger in discipleship, and broader in our reach. May we listen for God's voice, follow where Jesus leads, and make room for the Spirit to work in and through us.

And on a personal note, I want you to know that I am also trusting the Lord in some significant ways as we step into this year—learning again what it means to lean not on my own understanding, but to follow God faithfully, one step at a time. I'm grateful to be on this journey with you.

Thank you for letting me serve as your pastor. It is a joy and a privilege to walk this road together. I'm looking forward to all God will do among us in the year ahead.

With hope and gratitude,

Pastor Tracey



MISSION OPPORTUNITIES



HerMission, formerly the Woman's Missionary Union of Virginia, has the following statement on its website:

“Equipping the church to live on Mission.”

HerMission includes Mission Friends, Children in Action, GAs, RAs, World Changers, and adult women's groups who are striving to learn about missions, pray for missions, do missions, and give to missions.

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 HerMission on the first Sunday of each month immediately after worship. We will study missions, plan a Mission Focus each month, and discuss mission activities and events for the church. **However, HerMission will not meet in January.** February will be our first meeting of 2026.

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



Thanks to you all, we made Christmas a little brighter for 15 seniors at Courtland Healthcare, partnering with Alayna's Closet.

We also provided gifts for 15 children in partnership with the Southampton County Department of Social Services.

We look forward to continuing to serve our community in the coming year!

CHURCH LIFE

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY



Our church continues to welcome and nurture children in the life of the church.

Back in October, we began offering a Children's Message during our Sunday services. This brief time is designed to help kids connect with the day's theme, Scripture, and God's love in a meaningful, age-appropriate way.

We're thankful for the children's participation and for the congregation's support as valued members of our worshiping family.

To help children engage during the service, we also now have new Kids' Worship Bags available each Sunday. These bags include quiet activities and "busy hands" items—simple toys and tools to help children stay calm, focused, and comfortable during worship. Families are welcome to pick up one by the piano when you arrive, and we appreciate your help in returning the bag and reusable items after worship so they can be refreshed and used again.

A reminder for families: Nursery care is available during worship for children from birth through Pre-K. Children in Kindergarten and older are encouraged to worship in the sanctuary with their families.

Children in Action have been enjoying learning and activities with Tricia on Wednesday evenings during Family Night.

We also continue to offer Sunday School classes for all ages, thanks to a team of prepared and dedicated leaders.

Thank you for helping to create a warm, welcoming space where children can grow in faith and feel at home in God's house.

MEN'S MINISTRY

Brotherhood Breakfast – happens every month, usually on the last Sunday. The January breakfast will be held on the 25th at 8 am in the Fellowship Hall.

Wednesday Night Discipleship – the men gather after supper on Wednesday evenings (also in the fellowship hall) for a time of discipleship and study as they open the Stand Firm devotional books and engage in dialogue and learning together.

All men are invited and welcome to be part of these ministries to grow in faith and in relationships with one another.

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 07 Choir
- January 14 Fellowship Hall Class
- January 21 Staff
- January 28 Men's Discipleship Class

COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Join us for Coffee & Conversation, a relaxed time to gather, sip some coffee, and enjoy one another's company. There's no planned agenda—this is strictly fellowship and connection.



Coffee and Conversation will be held as follows this month:

January 6	Daily Dose	9-10:30
January 13	Storehouse	9-10:30
January 20	Daily Dose	9-10:30
January 27	Storehouse	9-10:30

Come as you are, stay as long as you can, and take a little time to catch up, meet someone new, and be together.

Pastor Tracey

TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

CALLED CONFERENCE

There will be a Special Called Conference on Sunday, January 4, 2026, following worship, to consider a sabbatical request from Pastor Tracey to complete her doctoral degree.



QUARTERLY CONFERENCE

The regular quarterly church conference is scheduled for Sun, January 25, immediately after worship in the fellowship hall.

DEACON REPORT

The Deacons met on December 1, 2025.

Joey Francis opened the meeting with a devotion, and prayer requests were heard, followed by prayer.

Team Reports were heard and are as follows.

PRAAYER 12 requests
BEREAVEMENT 0
CASSEROLE 2 meals
HOSPITAL/HOMEBOUND 7 contacts
TRANSPORTATION Ongoing

Old business: centered on the upcoming Wednesday night meal by the deacons, the start date of Aplos financial software, updates to the church key holder list due to the new church year, and the installation of security cameras.

New business: the deacons heard from building and grounds, received emergency contact lists for new deacons, and discussed possible options for group texting to serve our church prayer chain better.

Next meeting date is Monday, January 5

The Deacon of the month for January is John Jenkins.

NEW ADDRESS

From the
Church
Secretary

Doug & Carla Vaughan
Dakota Vaughan
31245 Sycamore Church Rd
Franklin, VA 23851

PRAYER WREATH MEETING



NOV & DEC IN REVIEW

CHILI COOK-OFF AND COOKIE BAKE-OFF WINNERS

We only had three pots of chili, but we had six cookie entries this year. Congratulations to Peggy Rush for winning the coveted Golden Ladle for the second year in a row, and to Pastor Tracey for winning the Golden Spatula for her Thumbprint Cookies.



Cookie Judges: Holly Giles, Natalie Hinson, & Erin Harcum.



*Chili Judges:
P Tracey,
George Giles
(pictured), &
Jimmy Vann.*



THANKSGIVING AND SHOEBOX PACK NIGHT





JANUARY 2026



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 HAPPY NEW YEAR	2	3
4 Sunday Morning Schedule Communion Called Conference	5 Deacons Meeting 7:00 pm	6 Coffee and Conversation Daily Dose 9–10:30 am	7 Family Night Schedule	8	9	10
11 Sunday Morning Schedule Community Connections 11:15 am	12	13 Coffee and Conversation Storehouse 9–10:30 am	14 Family Night Schedule	15 . .	16	17
18 Sunday Morning Schedule Church Council 11:15 am	19	20 Coffee and Conversation Daily Dose 9–10:30 am	21 Family Night Schedule	22	23	24
25 Brotherhood Breakfast 8 am Sunday Morning Schedule Conference 11:15 am	26	27 Coffee and Conversation Storehouse 9–10:30 am	28 Family Night Schedule	29	30	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



Christmas Eve at Sycamore

CONTACT INFORMATION

Secretary's email: secretary@sycamorebaptist.org

Church website: sycamorebaptist.org

Rev. Tracey Pugh

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 Mon – Fri and
as needed by appointment.

