

# SYCAMORE HIGHLIGHTS



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Pastor  
Rev. Tracey Pugh  
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Deacon of the Month  
Tricia Davis  
October 2025

Autumn Greetings,

October has arrived, and I am sure I've mentioned before that Fall is my favorite season. With it comes the unmistakable signs of change that are happening all around us. The mornings begin with a chill, the evenings are starting to come a little sooner, and the trees will soon put on their annual display of color that always takes my breath away. Fall is a reminder that God built into creation a rhythm of seasons—not just for the earth, but for us too. Just as the farmer trusts that harvest will follow planting, we trust that God is at work in us through each change, each challenge, and each new beginning.

I'm reminded of the words from Ecclesiastes: *"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven"* (Ecclesiastes 3:1). Autumn is a season of harvest, but it is also a season of letting go. The leaves fall, the days shorten, and nature prepares for rest. In our lives, too, God sometimes calls us to harvest the blessings of hard work and faithful waiting, while at other times He invites us to release what we've been holding onto so that He can do something new. Both are acts of trust, and both remind us that God's hand is steady through it all.

In the life of our church, October is a reset month as we begin a new church year, and it is always a month rich with fellowship and mission. We gather not only on Sundays for worship but also for conversations over coffee, in the voices of the choir lifting hymns and anthems of praise, and in the joy of preparing and serving our community in various ways. These are holy rhythms that anchor us when the world feels uncertain. Boy, do we need some anchoring these days! I am continually grateful for how you, Sycamore, embody the love of Christ in your prayers and your care for one another.

This fall, I encourage you to slow down enough to notice the gifts God is placing right before you. Take a walk and breathe in the crisp air. Sit for a moment with your Bible open and let God's Word speak to your heart. Write a note of encouragement to someone who may be walking through a hard season. Each of these simple acts is a way of living with gratitude, of saying, "Lord, I see Your hand at work, and I trust You."

The psalmist declared, *"The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it"* (Psalm 24:1). As we look at the beauty of the season, may we remember that we belong to the Lord as well. The same God who paints the trees in brilliant colors is the God who shapes us daily by His grace. Even when our own lives feel like they are in a season of transition—perhaps letting go or possibly waiting for a new harvest—we can be confident that His faithfulness remains unchanged.

Friends, let us continue to walk together in this season with hearts open to God's leading. Let us worship with joy, serve with compassion, and pray with hope. And as we do, may we be a living testimony that no matter the season, God is good, God is near, and God is worthy of our praise.

With gratitude to each of you,

**P. Tracey**



## MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

*Local, Global,  
And Everything In Between*



This fall, Sycamore once again has the opportunity to share God's blessings by providing Thanksgiving dinners for area families in need. With all church members working together, we will collect, organize, and pack food for complete Thanksgiving dinners and distribute it to families in our area who could use a little extra help during the holidays.

We continue to collect specific items each month that are needed for the meal. In October, we will collect green beans, cranberry sauce, and dressing. In November, we will collect turkeys and pies.

Also in November, members can volunteer to organize, pack, or distribute the meals to local families. Stay tuned for additional details and dates. We look forward to the entire church working together to serve our community this Thanksgiving season as we give thanks while giving to others.

### OCTOBER MISSION FOCUS



For our Thanksgiving Meal Ministry, please bring:

- Dressing Mix (box)
- Green Beans (50 oz. can)
- Cranberry Sauce (can)

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Fall is here, and we are coming to the close of this Operation Christmas Child collection year. As our final collection of the year, we are requesting **personal care items**.

This may include **wash clothes, toothbrushes, adhesive bandages, combs, and hairbrushes**. Please do **NOT** donate any toothpaste, soaps, or lotions as we cannot send these items.

A collection container marked for Operation Christmas Child will be in the Fellowship Hall.

We plan to have a packing party next month. If you would like to pack your own box, you are more than welcome to do so. Just let us know, and we will get a box to you. If you have any questions, please feel free to ask one of us.

Thank you in advance for all your help and participation.

Erin Harcum & Janet Bulls

### COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



We are partnering with Western Tidewater Early Childhood on Friday, October 24, from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. at the Trunk or Treat event at SoCo Gatherings. We plan to decorate a trunk and hand out lollipop ghosts.

Help is needed to set up, hand out treats, and clean up.

Those serving at this event can expect to greet children and families, sharing a bit of Jesus' love with the community.

To make ghost pops, we need 200 lollipops (Dum Dums AND Tootsie Pops). A collection box will be in the fellowship hall.



### Sycamore's WMU is now HerMission!

In 1894, Sycamore organized The Ladies' Aid Society with the purpose to "procure funds for the spread of the Gospel, and to help in general church work and for charity." This marked the beginning of a women's mission group at Sycamore, followed by the establishment of the Ladies' Missionary Society in 1909. The organization was later known as the Women's Missionary Society and the Women's Missionary Union (WMU). In 2025, we are excited to continue our missional work as **HerMission**.

**HerMission** will meet monthly on the first Sunday of the month following worship. Meetings will include a light lunch and will focus on missions by:

- Learning about missions
- Praying for missions
- Giving to missions
- Serving in missions
- Supporting missions

We invite all women to join us for the first meeting on **Sunday, November 2, at 11:30 a.m.** as we begin this new chapter of women's missions at Sycamore, living on mission with God and being the presence of Christ where we are.

### CALLING ALL LADIES



Join us at Eagle Eyrie for a time to step away from the everyday and draw closer to God. Experience powerful worship, practical breakout sessions, and meaningful community with other women. Learn more at [onhermission.org/getaway](https://onhermission.org/getaway).

Make plans now to be refreshed, inspired, and renewed on November 7-8. Contact Patsy Falls if you wish to be registered and attend.

## CHURCH LIFE

### COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

Join me at the coffee houses listed below for a cup of coffee and some conversation.



October 7	Daily Dose 9-10:30
October 14	Cancelled
October 21	Daily Dose 9-10:30
October 28	Storehouse 9-10:30

P Tracey

### FAMILY NIGHT SUPPER SCHEDULE

If the assigned dates are unsuitable for your class or group, please arrange an alternative with another group and notify Dianne Umphlett of the change.

October 1	Fellowship Hall Class
October 8	Staff
October 15	Men's Disciples Group
October 22	Children's Group
October 29	Covered Dish

A reminder to all about Family Night meals.

- Sign up if you are coming!
- Cancel if you are not!
- Meals are \$5.00 per person or \$12.00 for a family of three or more.

### TURN OVER MEANS TURN IT IN



**THE KEYS**

Please remember to turn in your church key if you are going off a committee as the chairperson. Your code will also be deleted at that time. Peggy Rush is the "keeper of the keys", so you will need to see her. If you have another reason to need a key, a new request form must be completed.

### PASTOR'S DINNER

I regret to share that this year's Pastor's Dinner has been cancelled. Following my recent back surgery, I am still not able to stand in the kitchen for as many hours as I would like, making it impossible for me to prepare for this event. I apologize and will make it up to you next year!

Pastor Tracey



## BELLS ACROSS AMERICA



For the second consecutive year, Sycamore participated in Bells Across America. The ringing of the bells commemorates the signing of the Constitution on September 17, precisely at 4 pm. This year, John Jenkins (not pictured) and Oaklynn Pugh rang the Sycamore bell for one minute—many thanks to Tricia Milteer for the invitation to participate in this meaningful community event.

## CHILDREN'S MOMENT COMING SOON

We are excited to share that beginning in just a few weeks, our worship services will include a special *Children's Moment*!

During this time, the youngest members of our congregation will be invited to come forward for a short message designed just for them. These moments will help children connect with God's Word in ways that are simple, meaningful, and age-appropriate—reminding them that they are a vital part of our church family.

## MINISTRY TO AND FOR CHILDREN

We are delighted to share that nursery care is available each Sunday during worship for children from birth through Pre-K. Our nursery is a safe and welcoming space, staffed by caring individuals who love and nurture little ones, allowing parents and caregivers to participate fully in worship. We are grateful for this ministry that blesses both our children and their families!

To that end, at Sycamore, we believe it is essential for children to grow up knowing they belong in worship. Beginning around kindergarten, we encourage children to remain in the sanctuary with their families, allowing them to learn the rhythms of prayer, singing, giving, and hearing God's Word. We know children may wiggle and whisper—and that's okay! Their presence reminds us of the joy and wonder that faith brings.

## TAKING CARE OF BUSINESS

### CHURCH COUNCIL REPORT

Church Council met on Sunday, September 28. The following was discussed and decided.

- ❖ The ramp at the parsonage has been an enormous help for Ayla, and the Brotherhood will soon pour the concrete for the landing.
- ❖ The WMU, now known as HerMission, as it is statewide, is collecting Thanksgiving meal items and is planning to have a kick-off luncheon in November.
- ❖ Christmas cantata will be presented on December 14.
- ❖ Sycamore will be participating in the community-wide live nativity on December 17-19.
- ❖ Aplos, the church software provider, is receiving the information it needs to set up a program specific to our needs.
- ❖ The appropriate groups are handling the church picnic details.
- ❖ The deacon officers for the upcoming year are Peggy Rush, chair; Charlie Harcum, vice chair; and Charlie Daughtrey, secretary/treasurer.
- ❖ The Men's Wednesday night Bible Study has begun.
- ❖ The average Sunday School attendance for August was 36, and the numbers for September are increasing.
- ❖ Children and Youth Sunday School teachers are working together to ensure coverage each Sunday. Volunteers are needed as substitutes.
- ❖ The Thanksgiving Service will be moved to the morning worship service on November 23 with a covered dish lunch following the worship service.
- ❖ Hanging of the Greens will be incorporated into the morning worship service on November 30.
- ❖ Children's Time will be included in the worship service beginning later in October.

# DEACON REPORT

The Deacon’s meeting was held on September 2, 2025. The incoming deacons for the new church year met with the group to be brought up to date on deacon concerns and to elect the new officers for a smoother transition. A summary of what transpired follows.

- A time of devotion and prayer, concerns were shared.
- Team reports were given.
- Deacon officers for 2024-25 are:  
Chair: Peggy Rush  
Vice Chair: Charlie Harcum  
Secretary/Treasurer: Charlie Daughtrey
- Deacons will provide fried chicken and rolls for the picnic on Oct. 5 at the Bronco Club.
- It was noted that John Jenkins would ring the church bells for Constitution Day, September 17, at 4:00 p.m.
- Communion will be observed at the church picnic.
- The deacons were informed of the three bids received for the HVAC system at the parsonage.
- The consensus was that the church would continue to participate in the community nativity in December.
- It was noted that the ADT (fire alarm) fee was increasing.
- Approval was given to Tracey to proceed with having Aplos (financial software for the church) set up the system, with the fee coming from the pastor’s discretionary fund. It was noted that our system is a fund-based system requiring the expertise that Aplos has in this area.

The next deacon meeting is scheduled for October 6. Deacon of the month for October is Tricia Davis.



Coffee and Conversation Group

# CALLED CONFERENCE REPORT

A special called conference was held on Sunday, September 7, in the sanctuary immediately after worship. Thirty-two members were present. Joey Francis presented a recommendation from the Building and Grounds Committee that the church accept a bid from REDS Mechanical LLC in the amount of \$13,900.00 to replace all the ductwork and install a 5-ton heat pump at the parsonage. It will be a 14 Seer Heat pump. The recommendation passed.

## FALL CONFERENCE

Conference is scheduled for October 26. Mark your calendars and plan to be a part of this important time of discussion and the decision-making for our church.

*A few pictures from Christmas in August escape room last month.*



<div>  <div>OCTOBER 2025</div>  </div>						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Family Night	2	3	4
5 Worship at the River 11:00 a.m. Communion Baptism Covered Dish Picnic	6 Deacons Meeting 7:00 p.m.	7 Coffee & Conversation Daily Dose 9-10:30 a.m.	8 Family Night	9	10	11
12 Sunday Morning Schedule Community Connections 11:15 a.m.	13	14 No coffee & Conversation	15 Family Night	16	17	18
19 Sunday Morning Schedule Church Council 11:15 a.m.	20	21 Coffee & Conversation Daily Dose 9-10:30 a.m. HerMission 6:30 pm.	22 Family Night	23	24	25
26 Brotherhood Breakfast Sunday Morning Schedule Conference	27	28 Coffee & Conversation Storehouse 9-10:30 a.m.	29 Family Night	30	31	

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

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

**CONTACT INFORMATION**  
Secretary's email: [secretary@sycamorebaptist.org](mailto:secretary@sycamorebaptist.org)  
Church website: [www.sycamorebaptist.org](http://www.sycamorebaptist.org)  
Church phone: 757.562.6749  
Rev. Pugh's email: [pastor@sycamorebaptist.org](mailto:pastor@sycamorebaptist.org)  
Rev. Pugh's cell phone: 434.953.7930  
Office Hours: 8:00 a.m.- 4:00 p.m., Tuesday through Friday, and by appointment as needed.

