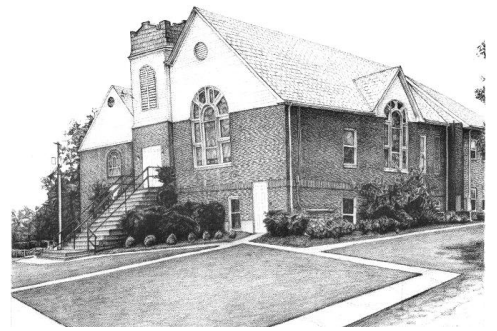


# SYCAMORE HIGHLIGHTS



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Franklin, VA 23851  
(757) 562-6749

Pastor  
Rev. Tracey Pugh  
Vol. XLIX, No. 10

Deacon of the Month  
Joey Francis  
October 2023

## IF WALMART CAN, I CAN

Fall Greetings, Sycamore Family.

Last year, at this time, I wrote to you about Fall, changing leaves, and new creation. But this year, I am writing about the upcoming holiday season. I was in Walmart last night (Sept 26) to find Christmas decorations already set up and ready for new homes. I could not believe what I was seeing, but there it was. So, I figured if Walmart could have us thinking about Christmas, so could I.

We live in a world that is increasingly either hostile or apathetic to the message of Jesus' birth. It seems at every turn, we hear about a company, business, or other organization that has decided to make this simply another "holiday," complete with holiday everything instead of the Christmas season it really is. Are we to be surprised about this? I don't think so because it is happening more and more everywhere.

When Jesus was here on this earth, we remember that he was hardly received with wide open arms by his day's political or religious leaders. He was outright opposed quite often as he ministered to the people. The Bible says,

*"<sup>18</sup>If the world hates you, you know that it hated Me before it hated you. <sup>19</sup>If you were of the world, the world would love its own. Yet because you are not of the world, but I chose you out of the world, therefore the world hates you."*  
-John 15:18-19 (NKJV)

The way Christ was born was not necessarily how we might choose to have the King of Kings and Lord of Lords enter this lost world, but instead of the splendor of a palace, we see him in a dimly lit stall for animals lying in a manger with no room for him in the inn.

Right from the very moment of his birth, and through every recorded moment of his life, was an overwhelming display of humility and meekness. Even in death, he asked the Father to "*forgive them, for they do not know what they do*" (Luke 24:34, NKJV)

Friends, let me assure you that as long as you genuinely serve Jesus, there will be times you will be misunderstood and, yes, even at times, on the receiving end of unnecessary hatred. Have no fear because this same Jesus, who came the first time in humility and meekness, will one day return in clouds of glory!

So, since Walmart and perhaps other retailers are forcing the season upon us, think about how you will approach it this year. I encourage you to worry less about the non-public displays of Jesus and be more concerned about how YOU can reflect the light of Jesus to those around you. Can you even begin to imagine the impact upon this world when we, as Christians, just be the light He called us to be for the long haul?

*<sup>16</sup>Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and glorify your Father which is in heaven.*  
-Matthew 5:16 (KJV)

We know it is all about him, so let's show others how to *act justly, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God.*

-Micah 6:8 (NKJV)

Blessings in Christ,

P. Tracey





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 them to families in our area who could use a little extra help during the holidays. We are continuing to collect specific items each month needed for the meal. We will collect green beans, cranberry sauce, and dressing in October. In November, we will collect turkeys and pies. Also, members can volunteer in November 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)

### FAMILY NIGHT 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.

October 4	Study Group
October 11	Brotherhood
October 18	Choir
October 25	Up and Coming

### OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Fall is here and we are coming to a close of this Operation Christmas Child collection year. As our last collection of this year, we ask you to donate **personal care items**. This may include **bars of soap, washcloths, toothbrushes, adhesive bandages, combs, and hairbrushes**. Please do **NOT** donate any toothpaste or lotions, as we cannot send these items. A collection container will be in front of the church library with a sign marking that it is for Operation Christmas Child.

We plan on having a packing party next month, but you are more than welcome if you want to pack a box personally. Just let us know, and we will get a box to you. If you have any questions, please see one of us. Thank you in advance for all of your help and participation.

Erin Harcum  
Janet Bulls

### COFFEE AND CONVERSATION

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



October 5	Daily Dose	09-10:30
October 12	Hubs	10-11:30
October 19	Daily Dose	09-10:30
October 26	Hubs	10-11:30

P Tracey



Riverdale Teacher Breakfast



## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!



Are you missing the fun of VBS? Don't think you can wait 'til next summer for a great VBS style adventure? Great news: You don't have to wait!

Kids ages 3 years old through 5<sup>th</sup> grade are invited to Sycamore's Bible Adventures Saturday, Nov. 4, from 9:00 am to 3:00 pm. It will be a day full of everything you love about VBS: Bible stories, music, crafts, science, missions, games, food, fun, and more! Lunch will be provided. Join us on this great adventure as we learn more about God.

To join the adventure please register by Oct. 30. We can't wait to see you!

Share the link to register today:  
[sycamorebaptist.org/bibleadventures](http://sycamorebaptist.org/bibleadventures)

Don't miss out on being a part of Bible Adventures at Sycamore! It's the fun and learning of VBS all throughout the year for kids ages 3 to 5<sup>th</sup> grade. Our first Bible Adventures day is November 4 from 9:00 a.m. -3:00 p.m. and we need your help to make it a success. There are morning (9-12), afternoon (12-3), and all day shifts available in a variety of areas. Help is needed with:

- |             |               |
|-------------|---------------|
| Music/Sound | Recreation    |
| Crafts      | Cleanup       |
| Science     | Lunch         |
| Cooking     | Decorating    |
| Missions    | Preschool     |
| Bible Story | Worship Rally |

Find the way you want to get involved and sign up today. See Tricia Davis for more details.

## CHURCH COUNCIL

The Church Council met on September 24. In that meeting the council discussed:

## DEACON REPORT

The Deacon's meeting was held on September 11, 2023. The following was discussed:

- Deacon officers for 23-24 are:  
Co-Chairs: John Jenkins and Patsy Falls  
Secretary/Treasurer: Tricia Davis
- Deacons will provide fried chicken and rolls for the picnic on October 1 at the Bronco Club.
- For committee chairs that require a church key, the deacon co-chairs will coordinate with Peggy Rush the transfer of keys from the outgoing to the incoming chairman.
- The phone system has been updated and the elevator has passed inspection.
- The annual deacon dinner is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 29.

Deacon of the month for October is Joey Francis. The next deacon meeting is scheduled for October 2.

- Average Sunday School Attendance for August was 35.
- The Discussion Class and the Up and Coming Class are currently meeting as one Sunday School class.
- The Thanksgiving Meal Bags will be packed on Wednesday, November 14, and distributed on Saturday, November 18.
- Sycamore has been invited to participate in Trunk or Treat at Soco Gatherings on Friday, October 13. Volunteers are needed.
- Brotherhood is addressing needs for the playground area.
- School supplies collected during Christmas in August were delivered to Riverdale Elementary.

Tricia Davis

Tricia Davis

## COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS



### Community Trunk or Treat

On October 13, Joey Francis and Ronnie Bulls will be representing Sycamore Baptist Church at the Trunk or Treat event at SoCo Gatherings sponsored by Smart Beginnings. We can help by donating candy to the cause. Information about Sycamore, our worship service and Sunday School and the upcoming Bible Adventures will be available for sharing.

### RAK -Random Acts of Kindness

We are collecting candy, individual tissue packs, and pocket size hand sanitizer throughout the month of October. Bags of these items will be packed at a later time to be determined and delivered to all staff at Riverdale Elementary School. "All Treats, no Tricks" will be delivered by October 31. Some of the candy collected will go to the Trunk or Treat event.

We would like to share treats with Poll workers in November on the 7th. More information will be forthcoming as that time draws near.

### Sycamore Sends

We are sending cards to members, visitors, and families in need of sunshine & love. Cards are available in the fellowship hall.

We can deliver a meal on Wednesday evening to members, neighbors and friends in need. Add names to the delivery list or tell a Community Connections team member by Monday to ensure delivery on Wednesday.

Let's truly be the hands & feet of Jesus in our community. Community Connections Team:

Holly Giles  
Erin Harcum  
Jimmy & Lou Vann  
Sharon Moore  
Tammy Woods

## CHURCH CONFERENCE

A called conference will be held on October 8 to decide whether to continue to support the Backpack Program at Riverdale Elementary School for the current school year.

The regular quarterly conference is scheduled for Sunday, October 29, immediately after worship in the fellowship hall.

Patsy Falls

### BACKPACK PROGRAM INFORMATION

We will be making a decision at a called conference following worship on October 8th

This is what we know:

-Backpacks are \$6 each, \$110 to support 1 child for the year.

-All packing will be done at the Norfolk Foodbank location (we can sign up to go there to pack).

- We can pick up backpacks in Norfolk twice a month and deliver to Riverdale OR the Foodbank will deliver to Riverdale.

- Riverdale wants to continue receiving 50 backpacks twice a month.

- The Foodbank wants a commitment from us for a "set" number (we have done 50 for the last few years).

-We also know there are families and especially children living with food insecurity. All the foods provided can be prepared using a microwave and a can opener.

Plan to be here on the 8th to help make this decision.

Holly Giles



*School  
Supplies  
Delivered to  
Riverdale ES*



# OCTOBER 2023



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> Worship at the River 11:00 a.m. Communion Covered Dish	<b>2</b> Deacons Meeting 7:00 pm.	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Family Night	<b>5</b> Coffee & Conversation Daily Dose 9-10:30 a.m.	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> Sunday Morning Schedule Community Connections 11:15 am	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Family Night	<b>12</b> Coffee & Conversation Hubs Vine 10-11:30 a.m.	<b>13</b> Soco Gatherings Trunk or Treat 5:00 p.m.	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> Sunday Morning Schedule Church Council 11:15 a.m.	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b> Women on Mission 6:15 pm.	<b>18</b> Family Night	<b>19</b> Coffee & Conversation Daily Dose 9-10:30 a.m.	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> Brotherhood Breakfast Sunday Morning Schedule Conference 11:15 a.m.	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> Family Night	<b>26</b> Coffee & Conversation Hubs Vine 10-11:30 a.m.	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> Sunday Morning Schedule	<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>				

### SUNDAY MORNING SCHEDULE

(unless otherwise noted on 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 6:30  
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: 1 (434) 953-7930  
Office Hours: 8:00-4:00 Mon-Fri | And by appointment



*Song Fest*



*Ice Cream Social*