

FINANCIAL REPORT – As of June 22, 2015

Offerings & Needs (Budget for 2015)
 Needed For Mission, Ministry, & Administration \$599,996.00
 Received for Mission, Ministry, & Administration toward Yearly Goal \$282,512.28
 Weekly Consistent Need to reach the Yearly Goal..... \$11,758.56
 Amount given on 06-21-2015 \$9,829.85

Building Fund
 Balance in Building fund \$4,585,036.22
 Amount given on 06-21-2015 \$2,435.29

1. The amount needed by the last Sunday in 2015 should be an aggregate total of our financial needs including Conference Apportionments as well as all other needs.
2. The Amount Received should be the aggregate total of funds received for budgetary purposes.
3. The Consistent Weekly Need to reach the Yearly Goal will change each week depending upon the amount of weeks left as offset by the gifts received.

CHURCH STAFF

<i>James Adair</i>	<i>Custodian</i>
<i>Sylvia Beard</i>	<i>Pianist</i>
<i>Sandra Casper</i>	<i>Financial Secretary</i>
<i>Suzanne Clegg</i>	<i>Director of Youth Ministry</i>
<i>Rev. Dr. Sondra R. Jones</i>	<i>Senior Pastor</i>
<i>Cindy LaTouf</i>	<i>Office Manager</i>
<i>Leandre Majerus</i>	<i>Director of Preschool Ministry</i>
<i>Hank Morgan</i>	<i>Organist</i>
<i>Mark Ridings</i>	<i>Director of Music and the Arts</i>
<i>Susan Rosenthal</i>	<i>Director of Children & Family Ministry</i>
<i>Bradley Trammell</i>	<i>Accompanist for Children and Youth</i>

2015 Average Attendance

Worship	303
Sunday School	120

July Missions

The Buford First UMC Tree of Life Garden (located across Moreno St. from the church) needs volunteers to help! Can you spare an hour one weekend-or maybe one evening during the week? There is a signup sheet in the fellowship hall, or see Suzanne Clegg to volunteer! Produce will be given away to those in need through Sack Kids Hunger and North Gwinnett Co-Op.

Appalachia Service Project team will serve in Cocke County Tennessee, July 5-11. Prayers are needed for this group as they repair homes for the people of Appalachia.

Allergy & Asthma: With respect and concern for persons, who suffer from allergies and asthma, please refrain from wearing perfume or cologne on Sunday morning. For those who have allergic reactions to fragrances, this can cause extreme respiratory stress. Thank you for your consideration for the health and wellbeing of others.



The Connection

To Make Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World



To shine the light of Jesus so that children, youth, and adults grow in the knowledge and love of God through missions, evangelism, worship, nurture, and Christian education.

The Weeks of July 1, 2015 – July 31, 2015

Vol. 27 / No. 7

WORSHIP PREVIEW

Sunday, July 5

Holy Communion/Patriotic Music

Mark 6:1-13

“Travel Light”

Sunday, July 12

Camp Meeting

Psalm 24

“The Real Deal”

Sunday, July 19

Camp Meeting

“Church Street Station”

Ephesians 2:11-22

“Will the Circle Be Unbroken”

Sunday, July 26

Camp Meeting

John 6:1-21

“Don’t Be Afraid”

Sunday, August 2

Traditional Worship

Holy Communion

Ephesians 4:1-16

“Growing in Faith”

Sunday, August 9

John 6:35, 41-51

“Bread of Life”

Sunday, August 16

Homecoming Sunday

Ephesians 5:15-20

“Life with Jesus”



Join us on Sundays in July for Camp Meeting Month!

The bluegrass band “Church Street Station” will be our guests on July 19th during the 8:45 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. worship service.

Return Service Requested

*Buford First United Methodist Church
 285 East Main Street, P.O. Box 329
 Buford, Georgia 30515-0329
 770-945-7438 ~ www.bufordfirstumc.org
 Preschool 770-945-4161*

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A Word From The Pastor

"Christ has set us free for freedom. Therefore stand firm and don't submit to the bondage of slavery again." Galatians 5:1 CEB

While attending the annual Conference of our North Georgia Annual Conference, we heard the news of the Emanuel A.M.E. church shootings. As our Bishop, Michael Watson, spoke to us and prayed over us, I felt such overwhelming shock and sadness at what happened to the 9 people who were murdered while they studied the Bible in their beautiful, historic church. The families of those killed in this hate crime have since given witness to the power of forgiveness in the face of such hate and evil. They exercised the freedom of hospitality to welcome the young white man into their church, they exercised the freedom of being a Christian to pray and read the scripture. They exercised their freedom to face the murderer and still offer forgiveness, love and to encourage repentance and forgiveness. They are really free in the ways that matter most. To lose the lives of loved ones in an instant and to still forgive the killer is to know the love of God as really being free.

On July 4, in the midst of our celebrations of our national freedom, I encourage us to be in prayer for our nation to be healed of the evil of racism, with a particular emphasis on racial reconciliation. Our country has not always been the land of liberty for all. Then, as now, people use the Bible for justifying evil against race and gender. Remember that Jesus can change the misuse of God's word to hurt others. We must never forget that He came to free all people.

As free people, we need to name and change our prejudices against other people because of our own fear or ignorance of race, gender, sexuality and economic situations. We need to stop the hatred and fear and stop it now in the name of being free in Jesus Christ. We must be about the ministry of reconciliation for the sake of Jesus Christ.

When I hear people say they are tired of all this racial talk and protesting, they say "can't we just move on?" I say to the church, "Yes, we can move on when we move on with the truth clearly in our sights that we are broken and need to be healed of the evil of hating others and being biased against others. We can move on when people stop the killing and bullying. We can move on when people use their freedom to move toward love, not away from it. We can move on when the only way we choose to move forward is through the love of Christ, with hard, hard work toward reconciliation. Yes, then we can move on."

Friends, as Christians, we must write a brighter and more hopeful history for those who come after us. As we worship and serve, as we study the Bible in our beautiful historic sanctuary here at Buford, we need to realize the work that is ahead of us is truly significant. We want to build a future so that we can be part of healing the broken world we live in. We can create a new history that people will read one day; one that reflects how we worked to reconcile the prejudices and biases so deeply seated in our culture and in our own lives. We can live as God's free people who do not keep others in bondage by our attitudes, actions, comments, ignorance and fear. For it is then, my brothers and sisters, we are really free. May God bless us and help us as we bear witness to the freedom of His life-giving, life-saving love.

Love, Pastor Sondra



Memorial and Honorarium contributions that have been made since the May Connection publication will be published in next month's Connection. Sandra Casper, Financial Secretary, has mailed cards of notification and gratitude. Thank you for understanding.

Thank You Dear Friends,
Thank you so much for your cards, visits, meals, phone calls and most importantly your prayers during my recent illness & continuing recovery process. Sandra & I are truly blessed to be a part of the BFUMC family.
Yours in Christ, Dwight

Church Conference

The Church Conference will be held on Monday, July 20th at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary. This meeting is contingent on the approval by the District Committee on Church Development on July 9th. Everyone is welcome to attend the Church Conference, but in order to vote, you must be in full membership (have joined the church) at Buford First United Methodist Church.

A nursery will be provided.



Did you know the Missions Committee is an "open" committee? That means anyone interested in helping is welcome to join the meetings and help us plan! Our next meeting is Sunday, August 2 at 12:15 pm in the Fellowship Hall. See Wendy Lindly or Deena Rindfusz for more information.

Donations Needed for Homeless Women/Children

The youth will feed the homeless women and children on Tuesday, July 21. Donations of ground beef, spaghetti sauce, ziti noodles, salad, and cookie dough are needed. See the signup sheet on the youth bulletin board if you can help.

Music Ministry

Youth Ministry

Children & Family Ministry

MARK'S MUSIC NOTES

Our choirs may be taking a rest during the month of July, but planning for the fall and Christmas seasons is well underway! Consider making music a part of your spiritual life this coming year. There is a singing or ringing group for almost every stage and age in our church family.

Do you love children and music? There is need for a female volunteer to help lead our middle children's choir. Curriculum and lesson plans are furnished!

A pleasant singing voice and a little patience is all you need!

Please contact Mark Ridings in the church office, or music@bufordfirstumc.org for additional information.

Summer time FUN!

Youth (Rising 6th- 12th) can sign up to participate in lots of fun and meaningful activities this summer!

Be sure and mark your calendar for the following:

Mon. July 13 -Nursing Home Ministry

Wed. July 15-Sims Park Cook-Out

Fri. July 17-Junior Highs make sandwiches for SKH

Sun. July 19 -Tubing in Helen

Mon. July 20-Junior Highs cook homeless meal

Tues. July 21-Senior Highs serve the homeless

Wed. July 22-Senior Highs to Stone Mountain

Wed. July 29-Gwinnett Braves Game

Be sure to get the info you need off the youth table in the fellowship hall. And feel free to contact Suzanne Clegg at Studentministry@bufordfirstumc.org if you have any questions.
Suzanne

Wow! What a busy few weeks it has been in the Children's Ministry! We had about 90 kids and over 70 volunteers moving and grooving to G>Force during Vacation Bible School. We learned to move, act, follow, share and care to make sure EVERYONE knows about God's Love! On June 8th, we had several church kids and community kids come together to sing "Oil for my Lamp" and the G>Force Theme song for the church congregation, it was amazing!

We also celebrated promotion Sunday on June 8th and several of the kids moved up to the next grade level in Sunday school and joined Children's Church. (We are looking for volunteers to help out in Children's Church one Sunday a month, if you are interested let me know!) As we move into the summer months, I know lots of you will be on vacation, but I have lots of seats in our class so bring a friend to church when you can!! **God Bless!! Susan**



Blood Drive Report

Thanks to the 16 donors who gave blood on June 7th at the BFUMC LifeSouth Blood Drive. Plan now to give on August 2nd between 9:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.

Do something AMAZING! Give **blood!**



The Women's Retreat to Twin Rivers Resort will be November 13th-15th.

Come enjoy some time with a great group of ladies! This year's theme is "Take Me Away-Find Rest in the Lord". Donna Thomas and Beth Ritchie will lead our sessions. Cost is \$110.00 for 2 nights, if you register before August 16th. After August 16th the cost goes up to \$120.00. Turn in a \$55.00 deposit to Louise Nauman or Suzanne Clegg to register. There's information in the Narthex and in the Fellowship Hall. Hope you can join us!



Effie Wood Circle meets for their summer outing on Tuesday, July 14th, at 6:30 PM at Fish Tales Lakeside Grill located at Hide-A-Bay Marina in Flowery Branch. All church women are invited to attend. Please **RSVP** to Meredith Holt, 770-945-3655 no later than Monday July 13th by noon. Also, call for directions, if needed.



Ladies Book Club

All are welcome to discuss the second half of "A New Dawn in Beloved Community" on July 14th at 7:00 p.m. at the home of Suzanne Best. Suzanne will also lead the discussion. Please bring \$5 for a light supper. We will not meet in August, but if you want to get a jump on our reading for September, our next book is "Finding God in a Bag of Groceries" by Laura Lapins Willis. We will discuss that whole book in September. Please let Suzanne know if you plan to attend the July meeting.