

FINANCIAL REPORT – As of November 16, 2015

Offerings & Needs (Budget for 2015)

Needed For Mission, Ministry, & Administration.....	\$599,996.00
Received for Mission, Ministry, & Administration toward Yearly Goal.....	\$496,332.62
Weekly Consistent Need to reach the Yearly Goal.....	\$17,277.23
Amount given on 11-15-2015.....	\$4,333.50

Building Fund

Balance in Building fund.....	\$4,503,936.91
Amount given on 11-15-2015.....	\$1,118.00

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

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

2015 Average Attendance

Worship	290
Sunday School	116

December Missions

The **Alternative Christmas program** of Buford First United Methodist Church allows you to purchase a Christmas gift for someone in the form of a contribution to a worthwhile ministry. The ministries supported by the Alternative Christmas are: The United Methodist Committee on Relief (UMCOR), Heifer Project International, The Gwinnett Children’s Shelter, Causelife (a clean water ministry), and Murphy Harpst Children’s Home. The ministry’s wish list brochure will be in the fellowship hall by November 1, and shopping begins November 22! When you purchase a gift you will receive a special card to present to your relative or friend.

The **Angel Tree** is in the fellowship hall and there is one in the narthex too! Please stop by and pick an angel to provide some joy to someone in need this Christmas!

Sack Kids Hunger Christmas Meal will be December 19 and will benefit the Gwinnett Shelter and other local organizations. More details follow in this newsletter.

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 December 1, 2015 – December 31, 2015

Vol. 27 / No. 12

Welcome to our 2016 Church Board

Church Board Chairperson: Kevin Gohman
Vice Chairperson: Larry Miller
Board Secretary: Chris Close
Lay Leader: Mike Rosenthal
Lay Delegate to Annual Conference: Mary Alice Beard
Treasurer: Donnie McQuaig
Assistant Treasurer: Joe Best
Financial Secretary: Sandra Casper
Church Historian: Mary Alice Beard
UMYF Representative(s): Sarah Farr and Sydney Yancey
UMM President: Chris Simonson
UMW President: Sandra Burgess
Finance Committee Chair: Bradley White
Stewardship Committee Chair: Suzanne Best
Staff-Parish Relation Committee Chair: Lenna Applebee
Trustee Committee Chair: Will be elected in January 2016
Building Committee Chair(s): Linda McQuaig & Tracey Yancey
Communications/Evangelism Committee Chair: John Alford
Older Adult Committee Chair: Pam Kocher
Youth Committee Chair: Jennifer Yang
Children’s Committee Chair: Pam Stewart
Sunday School Superintendent: Joe Best
Preschool Advisory Chair: Beth Langston
Missions Committee Chair: Mike Casper
Security Committee Chair: Mike Countess
Worship Committee Chair: Mike Countess
Congregational Care Coordinator(s): Beth Langston & Linda Hummer
Senior Pastor: Rev. Dr. Sondra R. Jones
Director of Adult Ministry: Suzanne Clegg
Office Manager/Corporate Secretary: Cindy LaTouf
Director of BFUMC Preschool: Leandre Majerus
Church Organist: Hank Morgan
Director of Music & the Arts: Mark Ridings
Director of Children & Family Ministry: Susan Rosenthal
Director of Youth Ministry: Micah Wright

2015 ADVENT & CHRISTMAS EVENTS

Sunday, December 6th

The Second Sunday of Advent
 Worship at 8:45 & 11:00 am
 - 12:15 pm -
 Children’s “Happy Birthday Jesus” party
 (Fellowship Hall)

Saturday, December 12th

- 10:00 am -
 United Methodist Women’s Christmas Brunch
 (Sanctuary & Fellowship Hall)

Sunday, December 13th

The Third Sunday of Advent
 - 8:45 & 11:00 am -
A Service of Lessons & Carols
 Chancel Choir, brass quintet, tympani & organ
 Youth Choir & Chancel Ringers
 (Sanctuary, Nursery Provided)
 - 5:00 pm -

“Silent Night: The Birth of a Carol”

Children’s Choirs & Handchimes
 (Sanctuary)

Sunday, December 20th

The Fourth Sunday of Advent
 Worship at 8:45 & 11:00 am
 4:00 pm Youth Caroling
 6:00 pm Youth Christmas Party

Thursday, December 24th

Christmas Eve Worship
 - 5:00, 8:00 & 11:00 pm -
 Christmas Eve Worship with Holy Communion & Candlelight
 (Sanctuary, Nursery Provided at 5:00 & 8:00 pm)

Friday, December 25th

Christmas Day, For Unto Us A Savior Is Born!

Sunday, December 27th

The First Sunday after Christmas
Only one worship service this Sunday and no Sunday School
 - 10:00 am -
 Worship & Blessing of the Toys
 (One toy per child please – Sanctuary, Nursery Provided)

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

The Gifts of Christmas



HOPE
PEACE
JOY
LOVE

Dear Friends,

As we enter into the season of Advent, then celebrate the birth of our Savior on Christmas Eve, I pray for you to fully experience the blessings of the Christ Child during this holy season. Please review the opportunities to celebrate in worship and to invite others to be part of these wonderful experiences.

Prayers for those who are overwhelmed by the pressures and parties, the expectations and situations of life, the sometimes chaotic, stress-filled season, for those in grief during the holidays.

HOPE. Hope is our gift from Jesus so that we can trust God's heart to save us from sin and death. Hope is a gift that doubt cannot take away. Hope is the promise of our eternal home in heaven.

PEACE. Peace is our gift from Jesus so that we can rely on the mercy and grace of God to sustain us in the midst of every circumstance. Peace is the gift that is the answer to anger, hate, and violence in the world that God desires to be at peace, to be whole.

JOY. Joy is our gift from Jesus so that even when we are not necessarily happy, we can be joyful, we can rejoice in what Jesus does for us, in us and through us. Joy is our gift so that contentment can be realized in our every day lives.

LOVE. Love is our gift from Jesus so that we can know how deeply we are loved by God, to know we are made in God's image because of love. Love is our gift because God so loves us that Jesus came and gave His life for us so that we can live a life of loving God and our neighbor. May God bless you, your family and friends as you celebrate the real gifts of Christmas. Peace, Hope, Joy and Love.

Christmas blessings and love, Sondra



*A donation has been given in honor of Sandra Casper, Donnie McQuaig, and Martha Wilkins by: Al and Pam Kocher.
*A donation has been given in honor of Sandra Casper, Rick Huckaby, Donnie & Linda McQuaig, and Martha Wilkins by: Kenny and Cindy Karr.
*A donation has been given in honor of Sandra Casper, Pam Kocher, and Martha Wilkins by: Rick and Marsha Huckaby.
*A donation has been given in honor of James Adair, Mike and Sandra Casper, Al and Pam Kocher, and Martha Wilkins by: Donnie and Linda McQuaig.
*A donation has been given in honor of Sandra Casper by: Dwight and Sandra Burgess.



2015 SKH Christmas Meal

This year we would like to expand our deliveries to include as many folks as possible in the area whether they have a financial need or not but would appreciate a turkey dinner and a friendly visitor. We are also looking for local organizations that could use the meal as well such as the Gwinnett Shelter. If you know of someone – or a charity, organization etc. please tell them about our meal on Dec 19th. Sunday bulletins for Dec 6th and 13th will have forms for you to supply specific information on the recipients. If you have any questions or additional information, please contact Tracey Yancey at tyancey@woodfruitticher.com or at (770) 653-6131 or Lynne Bryan at lynnebryan@yahoo.com or Mike Casper at mcasper@charter.net.



Ladies Book Club

We will meet on December 8th at 7 PM at Dominick's in Buford as a fellowship time and to pick our books for next year. If you haven't been to Book Club or haven't been in a while this would be a great time to join us. We will have a casual evening of food and fun and welcome everyone. Bring a friend if you like. Call Sue Jones at 770-932-2202 with any questions.



Thanks to **Barbara Money** for chairing the Women's Retreat Committee this year. Twenty-five women had a wonderful time in fellowship, study, and reflection. Thanks also to **Beth Ritchie** for leading the sessions. We had a great time!

Purchase a BFUMC Christmas Ornament

Carol Scott Circle will be selling Christmas ornaments which are made of a unique porcelain featuring our own Buford First United Methodist church on front. The back of the ornament lists the name of the Church and that it was established in 1871. Our present day church was built in 1926. These ornaments are one of a kind and would make a perfect gift for a member of Buford First or even to grace your Christmas tree. They can also be displayed year round on an ornament stand. An order form will be in the church bulletin or you can see Amy Simonson before Sunday School or Sherry Seabrooke after the 11:00 a.m. worship service. The cost of the ornament is \$20 and a check can be made out to Carol Scott Circle with "Ornament" listed at the bottom left. Amy can also be contacted at mamie97@comcast.net or Sherry Seabrooke at 770-886-2922 or stseabrooke@gmail.com.



Music Ministry

Youth Ministry

Children & Family Ministry

THE SERVICE OF LESSONS AND CAROLS

On Sunday, December 13th in the 8:45 and 11:00 services, our adult and youth choirs, brass quintet, timpani and organ and handbells will present a service of Lessons and Carols.

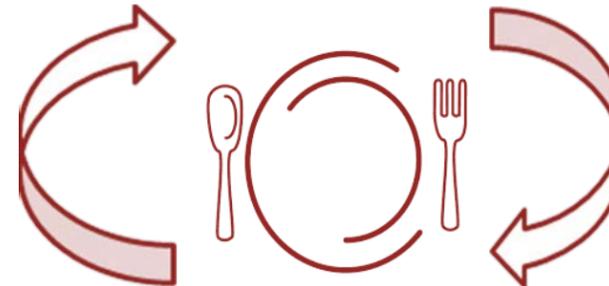
This wonderful service, began in 1881 in Turo, England, is still celebrated around the world. The most famous one is broadcast every year from King's College, Cambridge, England.

In our service, we will use the famous, and much loved, settings of "O Come, All Ye Faithful," "The First Noel" and "Hark! The Herald Angels Sing" by Sir David Willcocks. The choir will also sing carols from ancient times, seasonal favorites and new settings by American composers.

Mark

Youth Progressive Dinner

On December 5 we will be travelling to 3 houses for appetizers, a main course, and desert! Youth meet at 5:00p.m. to leave for a night of food, fun, and fellowship! Make sure you are signed up for this filling experience!



Micah

Look at the Candy Cane
What do you see?
Stripes that are red
Like the blood shed for me

White is for my Saviour
Who is sinless and pure.
"I" is for Jesus My Lord, that's for sure!

Turn it around
And a staff you will see
Jesus my shepherd
Was born for me!



Blessings, Susan

The hustle and bustle of the holiday season is upon us. It's time for parties and gatherings and cookies exchanges and shopping and eating.... It is so easy to get caught up in all the merriment of the holidays that we easily lose sight of the true reason this time of year is so special. Help me to help the children to remember that Jesus is why we celebrate and there is not gift under the tree, no Christmas cookie, no stocking stuffer that is more precious or more wonderful than HIS love. Keep a candy cane close by as you celebrate the season and think about what you can do share HIS love with others not only this season, but every day.

December 'Young at Heart' Events



December 3rd - Thursday night - Northwind's Symphonic Band Holiday concert. Cost is \$2.00 for van gas and a love offering if you choose. We will leave at 5:30 and go to Schlotzky's Deli for dinner on your own then to the concert at

Gainesville First Baptist Church. If you would like to go but can't make the 5:30 departure time, please let Debbie know so she can save seats. Reserve a space by Nov. 29th. **December 6th - Sunday afternoon** event-- Bah Humbug! Let's get in a better spirit of Christmas. We will go to see a holiday favorite, *A Christmas Carol*. This is a one-man show presented by Anthony Rodriguez owner of the Aurora Theatre. Reserve a spot by Nov. 29th. Cost is \$20.00 Bus will load at 1:30 P.M. - the play starts at 2:30 P.M. Please make payments in advance if possible to Pam Kocher or Debbie Atcheson. Contact Debbie at djatcheson@gmail.com or 770-965-3729.

December PRESCHOOL Happenings

1st: Staff Meeting 1:15
3rd: Christmas Movie Day
10th: PJ/Pizza Party For T/Th 2's Class
14th: Fire Drill
15th: Christmas Program 12:00 Sanctuary/Last Day For The T/Th 2's
16th: Polar Express/PJ/Pizza Day and Last Day Of School!
December 17th-January 5: Winter Break
Return To School On January 6, 2016
Have a Very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year from the Ladies at RFLIMC Preschool!



Youth Christmas Party

Put on your Santa hats and find a reindeer, because on December 20th the Youth will be celebrating Christmas BIG! Caroling will begin at 4:00, followed by the party, which will include many Christmas games such as *White Elephant!* Bring a gift and be merry!



A set of Double 18 Dominoes is yours for a donation. See the set on the youth

table in the fellowship hall. Donations will help the youth go on trips. See Suzanne Clegg if you would like a set.



Sack Kids Hunger News

A BIG thank you to Mike Casper and Celina Countess for leading all the volunteers in the Sack Kids Hunger Ministry! We appreciate your serious dedication to this important mission of BFUMC. The committee will meet Tuesday December 1 at 6:30 p.m. in the Beacon Room to discuss 2016. If you are interested in joining us, please let Suzanne Clegg know. You can email her at adultministry@bufordfirstumc.org