



# Blacksburg Presbyterian Church

*Loving God with Heart, Soul, and Mind*

MAY 2023 NEWSLETTER

## VBS at BPC

**Everyone can answer the  
"Hero Hotline"**

at  
Vacation Bible School  
as we are

**"Called Together to  
Serve God"**

**Sunday-Wednesday,  
June 11-14, at 5:30-8:00 pm.**

Enjoy dinner and the theme opening together, and then rotate to centers in small groups. Kids age 3 through rising 6th graders are invited to participate. Adults and older youth can help with decorating, meals, opening skits, music, as shepherds, and in Bible, games, crafts, and discovery centers. You can set up beforehand or be onsite during the programming - whatever suits your schedule.



Contact Susan Hunter at  
[susanh@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:susanh@blacksburgpres.org)  
or at 540-552-2504.

Newsletter Deadlines: We look forward to your items for the newsletter. Please have all items submitted to Rhonda by the **15th of each month** for the upcoming month's issue. Items may be submitted by email to Rhonda at the following: [rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org).

Don't forget our newsletter is available on our website: <https://www.blacksburgpres.org/newsletter>

## Prayer Concerns

### *Trusting in God's presence, grace, healing, and care, we pray . . .*

- for Stan Mathes as he recovers from surgery last week to have a shunt placed in his brain to help reduce the negative effects of hydrocephalus.
- for the people of Sudan, particularly the women and children who often bear the biggest burden during times of violence, and for church leaders, that they may be a voice of the people to the leaders of the country and Sudan's military and political leaders, that they will hear the cries of their people, stop the fighting, and restore genuine peace and security to all of Sudan.
- for those friends and members of BPC, and in our community who are struggling with physical and mental health challenges. May they and their loved ones feel comforted and supported.
- for the people of Malawi, Mozambique, and Madagascar, especially our partners in Mulanje, Malawi, suffering from extreme devastation and loss of life from Cyclone Freddy, while also working to meet ongoing health, educational and food-producing needs.
- for our community and globally to support each other as we oppose racism, antisemitism, and oppression.
- for victims of police violence and for all of us reckoning with issues of police brutality, racial inequity, and a system which engenders fear and lack of trust in many people.
- as we struggle with gun violence again and again, and know that our prayers alone are not enough, though we cannot find a helpful way forward. We pray for justice, peace, and societal wisdom.
- for political upheavals and challenges in Iran and the Middle East, and people struggling with hope and courage as they seek peace and compassion.
- for Renee Lahn, Jan McGilliard, Nancy Alexander, Wilmoth O'Dell, Bill Foy, and for those in the military: Luke Phillips, Eden Elizabeth Lawson, and Joel Hunter.
- for our partners and friends in CEDEPCA in Guatemala, and for our co-workers, Betsey and Eric Moe and their family in Guatemala. We are grateful that several folks from our Presbytery and from the Presbytery of the James were able to recently visit for the first time since COVID began.
- for our mission partners, Dessa Quesada-Palm and Cobbie Palm, in the Philippines.
- for equitable, worldwide distribution of COVID vaccines, tests, and treatments, and for continued understanding of and ability to appreciate how to cope with the continued persistence of the virus. We pray that what we have learned will have a positive effect on our church and society.
- for those suffering from increasingly alarming effects of climate change and for all of us feeling dread about what is to come. Give us the courage and will to labor with hope as we act on opportunities to mitigate and reverse the ongoing climate crisis.
- for all those struggling to have enough to eat, to live in safety, to feel loved, and to have hope.

You can send prayer requests to Rhonda ([rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org)) to be shared in three ways listed below:

- ◆ Prayers of the People in Sunday worship
- ◆ In the MidWeek Update
- ◆ Our prayer ministry page: <https://www.blacksburgpres.org/prayer>



Do you love someone who is transgender, but you're not sure you totally understand what that means? Do you want to be welcoming, but you're not sure where to start or what the Bible really says? Are you transgender or nonbinary, but you're not sure if Christianity really can be welcoming of all?

Join us for this two-part class, May 7 and 21, following worship. In the first week, we will address basic terminology and ways to be welcoming to our transgender siblings in Christ. In the second week we will dig into scripture to better understand a Christian theology of welcome. Adults and youth will meet separately the first week and together the second week. There will be light refreshments.



# Welcoming All

## What the Bible says about gender

Sundays, May 7 & 21, 11:30am

Led by Pastors Sarah Wiles and Emily Rhodes Hunter



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

## PW Upcoming Activities




The **BPC Presbyterian Women Gifts of Women Sunday** will be held on **May 14, 2023**. Celebrating PW's history of giving, a Birthday Offering is received annually during this service. The offering funds mission

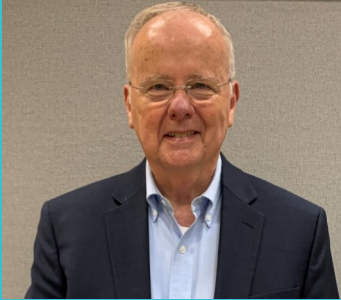
projects impacting people in the U.S. and around the world. BPC's support of the offering in 2023, will ensure that grants are provided for a group home supporting young mothers in Tallahassee, Florida, in the amount of \$150,000, and the construction of a building to house kindergarten in Ethiopia in the amount of \$99,400. Contributions will allow the two organizations proposing the projects to continue to "work for the good of all" (Galatians 6:10).

**PW Together in Service Mission Project for May:** Presbyterian Women Circles, led by the Faith Circle, are inviting the congregation to participate in a Together In Service (TIS) mission project. PW will be accepting new twin-size "Bed in a Bag" only contributions. (Individual bedding items or used items cannot be accepted.) The bags will be given to **Sleep in Heavenly Peace – NRV**, an organization that is promoting a drive advertising "No kid sleeps on the floor in our town!" The organization will provide the bed frames. Twin-size "Bed in a Bag" sets may be found on Amazon for just under \$25. BPC donations may be placed under the coat racks beside the elevator or outside the Hatcher Conference Room now through the month of May. Angela Anderson and members of the Faith Circle will drop off the bedding at the end of the collection.



Congratulations to Judith Jones who recently received the Lifetime Achievement Award from the New River Valley Leading Lights program, an organization whose mission is to acknowledge and honor volunteers across the New River Valley who are making community-changing impacts through volunteerism. The recipient selects a charity to give their cash award, and Judith was kind enough to select the Montgomery County Baby Shop.  
 (photo & details, courtesy of [NRV News](#))



Congratulations to BPC member Edward Spencer for being the recipient of the Rotary Club of Christiansburg-Blacksburg's 2023 Citizen of the Year Award. Presented at the Club's April 10th meeting, the Citizen of the Year Award honors a non-Rotarian whose voluntary acts and services have made the Christiansburg-Blacksburg area a better place to live. Ed was recognized for volunteering his time and expertise to many volunteer and non-profit organizations in the region. In addition to his significant efforts on behalf of BPC, he currently serves as chairperson of the Warm Hearth Village board of directors and as vice-president of the board of directors of the Sojourn Center.



**Emily Rhodes Hunter**

# Welcome

*Our New Campus Minister*

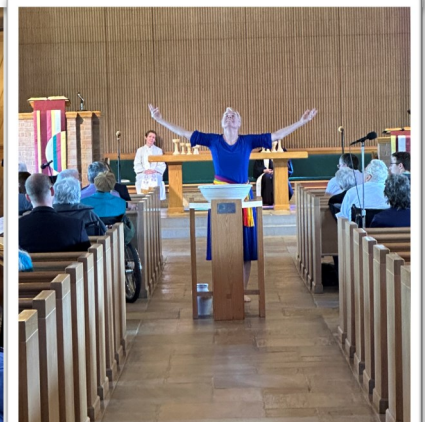
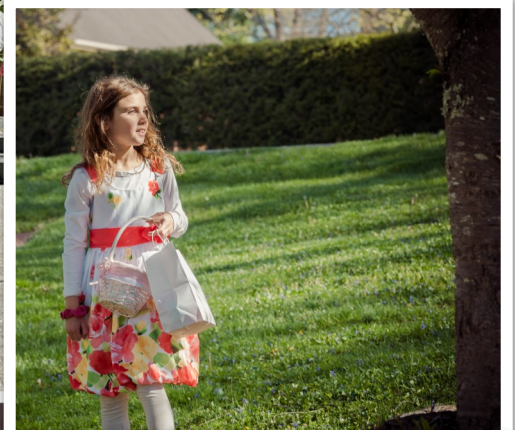
@ukirkvt

We're excited to announce that our parish associate, Rev. Emily Rhodes Hunter (she/her), has joined UKirk at Virginia Tech as its next campus minister! Emily looks forward to continuing her work at BPC while expanding her focus to include ministry with college students.

As one of the four covenant churches that support UKirk (formerly known as Cooper House), BPC is committed to walking alongside college students as they seek to grow in their faith. Whether cooking a meal for Feed the Flock, participating in the Annual Chili Cook-Off, sending care packages, or simply saying a friendly hello whenever students join us for worship, our support makes a difference.

If you are a college student who wants to connect with Emily or hear more about UKirk, you can reach her at 540-552-2473 or [campusminister@pcusa-vt.org](mailto:campusminister@pcusa-vt.org).

# Easter Sunday, 2023





## News from CEDEPCA

### Recent Travels to (and from) Guatemala

Seven representatives from Peaks Presbytery travelled to Guatemala to meet with CEDEPCA folks for a Cross-Cultural Encounter April 17-24, 2023.

Beth Mattson, from BPC, joined this group. We will be hearing more from her over the next weeks about her visit.



Betsey and Eric Moe, our mission partners with CEDEPCA will be at BPC to meet us in person the evening of Sunday, June 18, at 5:00 p.m..

**Mark your calendars!**

### Virtual Journey to Guatemala

Lessons from Tamar and José  
Empowering Teenage Girls and Boys in Guatemala

**Date:** Wednesday, May 24, 2023

**Time:** 4:30 PM Pacific; 5:30 PM Mountain/GT  
6:30 PM Central; 7:30 PM Eastern

**Suggested donation: \$11**



**[Register here](#) in advance for this meeting.**

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting. To make the suggested donation of \$11, go [here](#).

### “Young Women and Teenage Girls are Free from Violence!”



Imelda Tec Pan is a 23-year-old Maya Quiché woman who has participated in the Tamar Project to stop violence against teenage girls since 2021. This project was begun by the Women's Ministry of CEDEPCA in Guatemala, and recently expanded to activities in Costa Rica. The dream of the Women's Ministry is to implement this project through all the countries where CEDEPCA has a presence, so that teenagers and young women can increase their self-esteem, know their rights, and accomplish new dreams and new ways of being women free from violence. Meetings are conducted where they can learn about self-esteem, dignity, women's rights, types of violence and alternatives to violence, and sexual and reproductive education. After using a distance learning model in 2020 and 2021, in-person meetings became possible again in 2022.

In the workshops held in March 2022, the Women's Ministry had the opportunity to learn more about Imelda, where she shared that being a part of the Tamar Project had helped her a great deal, and continues to help her, because she has been able to identify what violence – especially sexual violence – is. Imelda shares in her own words: “It has helped me a lot to know what our rights are, how we can put it into practice, how we can help develop ourselves and how we can help others. From my end, I share about this with my friends, my sisters, and my mother...[W]hen I had the opportunity to participate in the Tamar [Project] I was very happy because I knew that it would help me, and it already has!”... In 2023, Imelda will complete the entire Tamar program which has three phases (one for each year), from 2021 to 2023. This year she also hopes to complete her studies and graduate as a teacher of bilingual intercultural preschool education.

Like Imelda, there are many teenagers and young people who desire to continue studying and learning. We invite you to be a part of this dream, and to participate together with the Women's Ministry to reach more teenage girls and young women through this project. And please join us for the virtual journey on May 24 (see above)!



# Dates to Remember

## MAY BIRTHDAYS

- 1: Gracie Byron, Nicholas Bundren
- 2: Bill Drummond, Zachary Swartzwelder
- 3: Jason Pospichal
- 4: Quin Spencer, Melinda Winslow
- 5: Jim Schlaudecker, Lucy Schor
- 7: Craig Woolsey
- 9: Janne Mathes, Reece McFall
- 11: Rick Davis, Isaac Haak, Elizabeth Day
- 12: Lilian White
- 13: Betsy O'Brien, Emma Grace Woolsey
- 15: Jim Marchman
- 17: Elise Bailey, Suzanne Sanford
- 18: Martha Dillard
- 21: Peg Warren
- 22: Steve Drumheller, Nancy Phillips
- 23: Billy Evans, Craig Winslow
- 28: Sandy Parson, Ben Wyatt
- 30: Greg Campbell, Joey Zobel



## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- 2: Riley Pienkowski
- 3: Mary Lee Hendricks
- 6: Robin Bosch
- 7: Scott King
- 8: Megan Eschenmann
- 10: Shannon Hunter, Reed Lawrence
- 11: Robert Laing, Elva Miller
- 12: Brent Opell
- 13: Tyler Warren
- 14: John Hassler
- 15: Hans Stahl
- 16: Dave Smith
- 17: Leanna House, Russell Gregory
- 18: Sue Johnson
- 20: Susan Wyatt, Hattie McClure
- 21: Blake Rascher, Courtney Bosworth
- 24: Steve Andrews, Ann Mauldon
- 25: Joel Hunter, Mary Denson Moore
- 28: Brian Smith
- 29: Ethan Eschenmann, Cole Harder
- 30: Amy Mauldon

HAPPY  
BIRTHDAY

The building is open during 8:30-4:30. Signing in is still required of everyone. Masks are optional. Meetings are in person and virtual. Please hold each other in prayer and continue to look out for one another. Say healthy, safe, and kind.

## BPC's Calendar

### MAY 2023 — Recurring Meetings:

- Monday:** Staff meeting, 10:30 a.m., HCR  
Deacons meeting, second Monday at 12:00 p.m., HCR. Meeting for May: 05/08  
Knitwits, fourth Monday at 1:00 p.m., WM
- Tuesday:** Worship Planning Team, 10:30 a.m., HCR  
BPC Quilters, 9:30 p.m., FH
- Wednesday:** Helping Neighbors by phone
- Sunday:** Sunday School for youth and children, 9:00. Contact Susan at [susanh@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:susanh@blacksburgpres.org).  
Adult Ed: Contact [adulted@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:adulted@blacksburgpres.org).  
Youth Group, 5:30-7:30 pm, FH  
Session meeting — May 21, 7:00 pm, HCR

### Presbyterian Women — upcoming meetings & PW Sunday:



- Lydia Circle Luncheon: 05/01, 11:30 am, FH
- Hildegard Circle: 05/01, 6:00 pm, Jan McGilliard's home
- Gifts of Women Sunday, 05/13
- Faith Circle: 05/25, 7:30-9:00 pm, TBA

### Youth Calendar:

- 05/07, 5:30-7:30 pm: dinner and discussion FH
- 05/14: No Youth Group — Happy Mother's Day
- 05/21, 5:00-7:00 pm: End of Year Party at the Drumhellers' home, 3711 Indian Meadow Dr., (FH, if raining)
- **Save the date!** VBS, June 11-14, 5:30-8:00 pm



Please remember to contact the church office in advance to schedule room use and avoid conflicts.

Meeting Room Key: HCR—Hatcher Conference Room, FH—Fellowship Hall, WM—Westminster Hall, SNC—Sanctuary, GS—Gathering Space

BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
701 CHURCH ST SE  
BLACKSBURG, VA 24060-5213

\*change service requested

**BPC offers both in-person and livestream worship services with both beginning at 10:30.** You can access the livestream via BPC's [YouTube channel](#).

Bookmark the page for easy access. The video will be available after Sunday worship if you missed the live service.

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**Subscribe to BPC emails today!**

To join the email list, click [here](#) or contact Rhonda at [rhonda@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:rhonda@blacksburgpres.org).

Check out our website, [www.blacksburgpres.org](http://www.blacksburgpres.org), for more information about BPC and church activities.

**BLACKSBURG PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH**  
*A Vibrant Congregation of  
Welcome, Worship, and Outreach*

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Rev. Sarah Wiles, Pastor: [pastorsarah@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:pastorsarah@blacksburgpres.org)

Dr. Larry Wyatt, Director of Music: [larry@blacksburgpres.org](mailto:larry@blacksburgpres.org)

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