

# CHURCH CHAT

Butner Presbyterian Church

Pastors: Brian Stratton, Dewey Cassell

February 2026



## A Message From Dewey

The Session of Butner Presbyterian Church held its annual retreat at Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church in Durham a couple of weeks ago. The retreat is an opportunity for the Elders to step away from the day-to-day operations of the church to discuss plans for the coming year, and Trinity Avenue was very gracious in allowing us to meet there at no cost.

We talked about a variety of topics at the retreat, such as the new piano in the sanctuary and the desire to periodically have a guest pianist play it during worship or a special event. More on that to come.

One of the other things we discussed was advertising. We have talked about it in previous years but have stopped short of taking action. This year, we are moving forward with plans to run an advertisement on Facebook. The thought is that people new to the area would likely turn to Facebook for advice on where to worship, so it would provide a good forum for us to get the word out about Butner Presbyterian Church.

The advertisement emphasizes the small, close-knit nature of Butner Presbyterian Church – the feeling like family – as well as our commitment to mission work. It encourages the reader to join us for

worship on Sunday and directs them to the website to find more information.

If you see the advertisement on Facebook, please “like” it and share. You could also send it as a private message to a friend. The goal would be to get as wide exposure as possible.

Cecil has also updated the website to have more current articles and photographs about the things we have going on at church. You can help by taking pictures at the various events – ACIM, Butner Church Council activities, monthly luncheons, cleaning days, and even worship – and sending the pictures to Cecil.

In Jesus’ day, he and his disciples walked from one town to the next, spreading the Good News and encouraging people to join the “church.” Today, we can help accomplish that same goal by posting on Facebook (and save on the shoe leather.)

We have a good thing going at Butner Presbyterian Church. It is a special group of people who are dedicated to caring for and supporting each other and doing the work of God. But we need help getting the word out to other people to join us, and hopefully the Facebook advertisement will help us to do that. It’s evangelism in the digital age!

May you have a blessed month of February. Stay warm and safe.

Yours in Christ -  
Dewey



# FEBRUARY Calendar

**SUNDAY, 2/1**

11:00 am Communion Worship Service  
Brian Stratton, Michelle Osborne

ACIM Ministry

**MONDAY, 2/2**



**SUNDAY, 2/8**

11:00 am Worship Service  
Brian Stratton, Michael McFadden

"Souper" Bowl Fellowship  
After worship service

2:00 pm Butner Church Council Meeting  
@ Community Methodist Church

**SATURDAY, 2/14**



**SUNDAY, 2/15**

9:00 am Session Meeting  
via Zoom

11:00 am Worship & Installation Service  
Dewey Cassell, Erma Hudgins

12:00 pm Church Clean-Up  
After worship

**WEDNESDAY, 2/18**

7:00 pm Ash Wednesday Service  
Dewey Cassell



**SUNDAY, 2/22**

11:00 am Worship Service  
Brian Stratton, Cecil Hudgins

**SATURDAY, 2/28**

9:00 am Presbytery Gathering  
Erma & Cecil Hudgins attending

## **ASH WEDNESDAY:**

*Remember you are dust, to dust you will return. But best that you not wait until the end for you to learn. Because it really is a promise, don't fear it is a threat. The Lord who formed you from the earth, says live not in regret. But take my hand, receive my mark, adoption through the cross. Celebrate the life I give, and count the rest as loss.*

*The preschool* had a wonderful Christmas program and we appreciate all the support from the church. The new year has begun and January was filled with lots of fun. We started the year off with a field trip to Pump it Up before beginning classes again. We covered the letter L and ladybugs where we got to read some of my favorite books, the "Ladybug Girl" series. If you have young children in your life, I encourage you to check out this series. My favorite is "Ladybug Girl and Bumblebee Boy".



## *Romping with the Pre-K*

We took a week to talk about how all of us are special and different in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. It still feels so strange to me that my parents' generation grew up in a nation that was segregated by color. I try to explain this to the students and it just seems so silly to them that we would treat someone differently just because of the color of their skin. We had outer space week and took over the fellowship hall for Astronaut Camp. If we have school next week, we will learn all about owls, shadows, and groundhogs. I'm really hoping the groundhog says spring is near!

We held our registration for next year and I am happy to say that we filled both classes by 9:30am that morning, with the registration opening at 9am. The board did decide to raise tuition for all classes by \$15 a month next year. I am so grateful to the volunteers who helped that day, and to all our preschool families for sharing their good experiences with our preschool in the community.

I have a teacher team brag moment to share. I received a picture from a family with a child who graduated from our preschool last year. He now attends kindergarten at Mt. Energy, where he received the highest score in his class for midyear math "i-Ready" assessments. She sent me a picture of him on stage with 3 other students. I am proud to say that 3 of the 4 students standing up there had been students of our preschool. Another of our former preschool students recently received a reading award at Mt. Energy. So, all 4 of our former students who attended Mt. Energy have received midyear awards! It really makes my heart so happy to know that we are giving them such a firm foundation and a love for learning.

In February we will have our Valentine's Day parties in the classroom on 2/12 and 2/13. We will be off for a teacher workday on Monday, 2/16. February is filled with more of my favorite themes! Pigeons and Pandas, we will read several of Mo Willems books "Don't Let the Pigeon...". We will cover Valentine's Day and dental hygiene, pirates, and then finishing out the month with Under the Sea!

Thank you again for all your support!

Blessings, Susan Zink



# Church News

## 2026 Church Plans

Our Session met for their annual retreat on Saturday, January 10th at Trinity Avenue Presbyterian Church. Members are Cecil Hudgins, Erma Hudgins, Michael McFadden, Michelle Osborne, and Nancy Wilkins. Dewey Cassell is the moderator.

## Updated Website

Our website tends to be stagnant. Cecil, our web master, has plans to keep our website looking more “alive” with current activities etc. Take a moment to look at the website!  
[www.butnerpresbyterianchurch.com](http://www.butnerpresbyterianchurch.com).

## Piano Donation

You may have noticed that we now have a baby grand piano in the sanctuary. It was donated to us by Ricky Dixon, who attended church here as a child. The piano that was in our sanctuary is now located in the fellowship hall.

We would like to work toward having a pianist at our church on occasion so if you know of anyone who could possibly be available to play at our church, please let Erma know.

## Missions

Our current ongoing missions include support of the Butner Food Pantry, including the Thanksgiving boxes and Angel Tree, serving at ACIM, and sponsoring a child through World Vision. Occasionally, we hold a Wine into Water event to raise money for wells in small villages in Africa.

If you have any other mission ideas that we could consider, please talk to Michael McFadden.

## Installation Service

As a part of our worship service on February 15th, we will include an installation service for re-elected session members Erma Hudgins and Nancy Wilkins.

## 2026 Fellowships

The plans are in place for our fellowships this year! They are as follows:

- Feb 8: The annual “Souper Bowl” fellowship lunch  
We each bring a soup to share
- March 15: Fellowship - theme TBD
- April 2: Our Maundy Thursday devotion and dinner
- April 18: Saturday FIELD TRIP to Rock of Ages Vineyards
- May 17: “Picnic” fellowship
- June 21: Father’s Day breakfast
- August: Date TBD - our annual Durham Bulls game outing
- Sept 20: Worship at the Lake and fellowship lunch
- Oct 18: Oktoberfest fellowship
- Nov 22: Pizza lunch and decorate sanctuary
- Dec 20: Church Christmas Party
- Jan 3, 2027: Pizza lunch and take down sanctuary decorations

*Mark your calendars with all these fun events!*

## Ash Wednesday Service

We will hold our annual Ash Wednesday service on February 18th at 7 pm. Dewey Cassell will bring the message and administer the ashes.

## Building and Grounds

Recently, Cecil and Donald repaired and replaced baseboards in our kitchen that was coming unglued from the walls.



## Mouse in the House!!

It was discovered just before Christmas that the church kitchen had been invaded.

No worries, it's all been taken care of. The exterminator came on December 29th. Then traps were set and steel wool around pipes have been placed.

Clean-up began on December 31st when Erma and Nancy worked several days cleaning out drawers and cabinets and replacing contact paper. Many items in the drawers had to be tossed, especially plastics that had been chewed on. What was left was thoroughly washed.

Mouse nests were found in the drawers with pot holders and drying towels. What wasn't tossed was washed.

New knives were purchased and is located in the far right hand drawer. Some of our knives were older than we are and wouldn't cut warm butter.

We have a lot of silverware, which we should be using instead of plasticware. We are also considering accepting donations of plates, bowls, and cups so we can stop using paper products. (Handwashing dishes after fellowships for twelve people is not an overwhelming job).

If anyone has any dish sets to donate, please let Michelle or Nancy know.



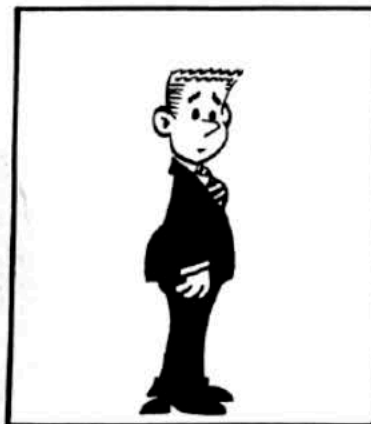
"My husband is active in church. He squirms."

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## PHILLIP'S FLOCK

By Doc Goodwin

from JoyfulNoiseletter.com  
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## From the Editor

### TODAY IS GOING TO BE MY PEACEFUL DAY



Have y'all been keeping up with the Venerable Monks and their walk for peace? There are 24 Buddhist monks walking from Fort Worth, Texas to Washington DC in a "Walk for Peace", offering hope and inspiration. They are walking 2,300 miles promoting peace, love, and unity. When they arrived in Raleigh on Saturday, January 24, they had already been walking 91 days. I watched the WRAL coverage of the monks in Raleigh. (See WRAL video – Venerable Monks on Walk for Peace Address Raleigh).

As the monks addressed the crowds in front of the NC State Capitol building, they said that this is the first state where the governor personally came out and delivered a proclamation to them. The monks were amazed at all the people of North Carolina who have been coming out to see them every single day during their walk through NC. Their goal is to change our mindsets to be more mindful of peace - for ourselves, our families, our nation and the universe. We have forgotten peace; it is locked away in our hearts, and we each must find the key to unlock our hearts. They said that there are many religions in this world and all of them want peace. We all want peace, loving kindness and compassion, and we each need to take action; it starts with us. We must practice "mindfulness" toward being peaceful. It takes energy to create peace. We must create peace within ourselves first. If we have no peace within ourselves, we suffer. If we react to our families without that mindfulness, there will be no peace in our families. They suffer. Practice peace so the family can be at peace. Start there.

The monk then gave instructions. "Each morning, write down 'Today is going to be my peaceful day'. Then read it, meditate on it, and practice it throughout the day. Don't let others destroy your peace." Force all unwholesomeness away before it takes over. Never multitask because it causes you to not be able to concentrate on one single thing.

Then the monk started talking about our cell-phones. He called it our "lovers", which was kind of cute, but we need to realize our addictions to them as well as other electronics. He said to let it go. Put it in a drawer. It's necessary to restore our peace. The cellphone causes stress and we use them too much. We look at them too much. It takes us away from what's around us.

We are so busy in our own little worlds looking at our cellphones. We should instead spend time practicing mindfulness and eliminating suffering. We should spend time checking on our neighbors and helping others. Also, we should not be looking at cellphones within one hour before bedtime or it will interrupt our sleep and if we wake up in the middle of the night, do not start looking at the cellphone. The monk suggested that we do not pick up our cellphones in the morning. Take the time to meditate (or pray), exercise and eat breakfast. Be mindful of having a peaceful day. Start with making your bed.

This is how we all can start to change the world. We must start with ourselves. Decide that today is going to be your peaceful day. Do not let anyone take that away from you and as you practice peace, loving kindness and compassion, you pass your mindset of peace to someone else.

~Erma



***"Seek peace and pursue it. The eyes of the LORD are on the righteous, and his ears are open to their cry for help."*** ~Psalm 34:14-15 (CSB)



# Bible Book Club

I enjoyed this past month's bible book club readings more than I thought I would. Some great and some disturbing stories.

In Genesis, Chapter 6, I read that the Nephilim were on the earth before AND after the flood??! What?! When DID they leave?? Did they ever leave?!

I found it interesting that the Lord told Hagar she would have a son and was to name him Ismael and that his hand will be against everyone and everyone's hand against him, and he will live in hostility toward all his brothers. Wow.

And Lot and his daughters - ewww.. And where did they get the wine?

The Psalms were great - Psalms 1 is so powerful. Proverbs - so much wisdom.

And Matthew's Sermon on the Mount is always a great read and a great reminder of how to live righteously and it also serves as a reminder that no matter what, we are sinners in need of a savior because we could never be that perfect.

*Let me know if any of you picked up on anything interesting!*

## FEBRUARY'S READING CHALLENGE:

### Old Testament: Genesis, chapters 26-50

Read more about Isaac, then Jacob & Esau, Rebekah, Dinah and that drama, and the whole Joseph story, which is really cool reading.

### Psalms: Chapters 5-8

Consider these as little poems. Read one per week.

### Proverbs: Chapter 2

Read about wisdom.

### New Testament: Matthew Chapters 8-13

This covers a bit of Jesus' ministry. Miracles and parables abound.

**HAPPY READING!**



FIRST WE **OVERLOOK** EVIL.

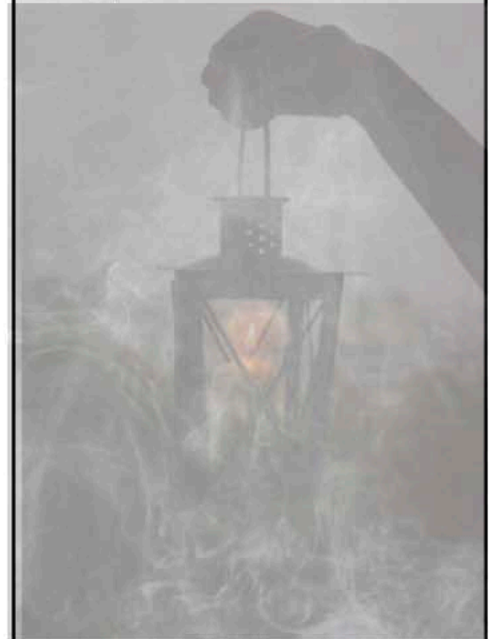
THEN WE **PERMIT** EVIL.

THEN WE **LEGALIZE** EVIL.

THEN WE **PROMOTE** EVIL.

THEN WE **CELEBRATE** EVIL.

THEN WE **PERSECUTE** THOSE WHO **STILL** CALL IT EVIL.



***“Woe unto them who call evil good, and good evil.”***

**-Isaiah 5:20**