



# CHURCH CHAT

Butner Presbyterian Church

Pastors: Brian Stratton, Dewey Cassell

May 2025



## A Message From Dewey

You don't have to be Catholic to be moved by the recent passing of the Pope. Pope Francis died on Easter Monday at the age of 88,

after a lengthy hospital stay and subsequent convalescence. He made an appearance the day before to offer Easter blessings to those gathered in St. Peter's Square in Rome. Leaders from around the world and a crowd of 250,000 gathered to pay their final respects as he was laid to rest.

Pope Francis lived a life of faith and service, with caring and compassion for the poor and marginalized in society. He was known for embracing people he encountered, especially children, to the consternation of his handlers. Some years ago, Pope Francis was visiting a poor parish on the outskirts of Rome. He took questions from some of the youngest parishioners, including a boy named Emanuele, who asked him, "Is my father in heaven?" His father had passed away, but was not a believer, although he had made sure all four of his children were baptized. Pope Francis provided a thoughtful response, saying, "God has a dad's heart. Do you think God would be able to leave him far from himself? Does God abandon his children?"

He truly was a Pope of the people, exemplifying the life of Christ in his words and actions. He was a

beacon of light in a world that often seems filled with darkness, standing up to oppressors. He was the world's most visible and vocal advocate for the Christian faith, at a time when people are turning away from the Church – every kind of church – as if it were not relevant or did not make a difference. Pope Francis made a difference.

One week before, and closer to home, we lost one of our own – Joy Grubb. After a long and valiant fight against cancer, Joy finally went to be with her Heavenly Father. It is sad to see her go, but reassuring that she is no longer suffering. She was a long-time member of Butner Presbyterian Church, serving in a variety of ways, including as an Elder on the Session and playing the organ and piano for over 40 years. Many of us were blessed to have been touched by her caring and compassionate spirit over the years. She lived a life of faith, even in the face of adversity. She set an example, in her words and actions, that was a clear reflection of her faith. Joy made a difference. And while we grieve her passing, I am certain the halls of heaven are filled now with the sounds of her beautiful music.

We will pay tribute to Joy in a Celebration of Life service at Butner Presbyterian Church on Saturday, May 10 at 2 p.m., followed by a reception in the Fellowship Hall. I hope you can join us as we honor a life well lived.

~ Dewey

# MAY Calendar

- Thurs, 5/1** National Day of Prayer
- Sun, 5/4** 11am Communion Worship Service  
Brian Stratton, Erma Hudgins
- Sat, 5/10** 2pm Joy Grubb's Memorial Service  
Reception in Fellowship Hall afterwards
- Sun, 5/11**   
11am Worship Service  
Brian Stratton, Michelle Osborne
- Wed, 5/14** **CHURCH Clean-up DAY** 
- Sun, 5/18** 9am Session Meeting via zoom  
11am Worship Service  
Dewey Cassell, Michael McFadden  
2pm Butner Church Council Meeting  
@ Community Methodist Church
- Wed, 5/21** 7pm Pre-K Graduation
- Sun, 5/25** 11am Worship Service  
Brian Stratton, Cecil Hudgins
- Mon, 5/26** 

## FOR BETTER OR VERSE

A calendar of Bible verses, one for each day.  
Compiled by Paul Lintern, Joyful Noiseletter

- 1 Romans 5:1
- 2 2 Corinthians 5:2
- 3 I John 5:3
- 4 Matthew 5:4
- 5 Romans 5:5
- 6 John 5:6
- 7 James 5:7
- 8 I Peter 5:8
- 9 Revelation 5:9
- 10 Matthew 5:10
- 11 Ezra 5:11
- 12 James 5:12
- 13 I John 5:13
- 14 Acts 5:14
- 15 I Thess. 5:15
- 16 Luke 5:16
- 17 2 Corinthians 5:17
- 18 Romans 5:18
- 19 John 5:19
- 20 Joshua 5:20
- 21 2 Corinthians 5:21
- 22 Galatians 5:22
- 23 Jeremiah 5:23
- 24 Luke 5:24
- 25 Deuteronomy 5:25
- 26 Job 5:26
- 27 Deuteronomy 5:27
- 28 Deuteronomy 5:28
- 29 Acts 5:29
- 30 John 5:30
- 31 Deuteronomy 5:31



## Romping with the Pre-K

As I type this, the preschoolers are finishing the alphabet next week. We still do the alphabet in order, A-Z. It's worked for me all these years. We will be talking about the zoo and then going to the strawberry patch on Thursday and Friday of next week. We visit Lyon Farms every year, and the kids and families always enjoy the fellowship together, and of course the delicious strawberries.

The remainder of May will focus on letter and number review, and lots of artwork. Students will make a special painting for Parents' Day. We will host parents in the fellowship hall the mornings of May 15th and 16th. This is another special time for parents to gather, enjoy breakfast with their students and connect with other parents one last time before graduation.

We will start practicing for graduation with our older students. Graduation will be Wednesday, May 21st at 7pm. We would love help from anyone in the congregation to make sure the reception runs

smoothly and help getting kids dressed into their cap and gown during the ceremony. We would also love help with the sound system.

The last day for 2-day students will be Tues, May 20th and 3/5-day students will be Wed, May 21st. I'm blessed to have another year here at Butner Presbyterian.

I was truly saddened by the passing of Mrs. Joy. She has been such a supporter of the preschool both financially and in spirit. I will truly miss all the words of encouragement and support she has offered to me over the years of our friendship.

Please continue to pray for our preschool, we have some families who are definitely in need of some encouragement, and pray for us as teachers to continue to support them and their students. I also always ask for prayers for our graduation ceremony, and for all the students over the summer break.

We have one opening in our 3-day class for August. The 2-day class is full! We are set to have orientation in the fellowship hall on Sunday, August 10th, and classes will begin the next week on Monday August 18th.

Blessings,  
Susan Zink



### JOY GRUBB'S MEMORIAL SERVICE

A memorial service for this wonderful lady will be held at our church on Saturday, May 10<sup>th</sup> at 2pm. Dewey Cassell will be officiating.

We will need to coordinate food for the reception that will be held in the fellowship hall afterwards. Please consider helping to get the room set up ahead of time as well as food set up just before the service.

# Church News

## Building & Grounds News

### Exterior Door facing D Street

Kyle Glenn has replaced this door and the rotting wooden framework around the door, which has been in terrible condition and needing replacement for some time.

### Lights on the Cross

Since March 2024, we have been seeking an electrician to replace the flood lights that illuminate the cross in the sanctuary. Since the ceiling is 30 feet from the floor, it's been a challenge finding an electrician willing to do the work. After starting to lose hope in finding a willing electrician, Cecil remembered that Braco Electric was the company who replaced the rest of the lighting in the sanctuary several years ago.

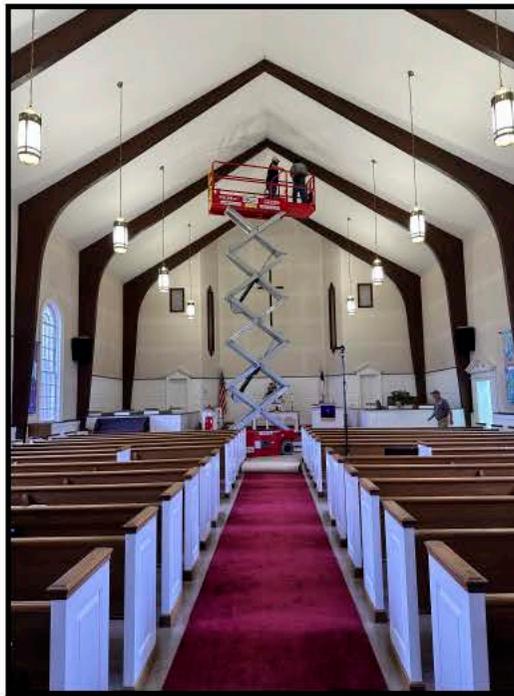
Braco was willing to do the job but needed to either rent a lift or scaffolding. The job itself was only around \$300 but the lift was a full-day rental for \$1,000. Cecil decided that he would first check with Associated Scaffolding to see if we could come up with a more affordable solution. Unfortunately, their quote was between \$4,000-\$5,000! So, we opted to pay for the rental cost of the lift for \$1,000.

The work was completed in time for the cross to be lit up brightly for Easter worship service!

Unfortunately, since the installation, one of the flood lights has already blown out! We hope that this will be the only one!



Despite its smaller size and folded down as far as it would go, the lift barely fit through the side door. Some paint in the doorway was scratched but no harm done. The lift could not be brought through the front door, (where it would have been more room) because there is no ramp, only steps.



ABOVE AND RIGHT: The lift going into place (the carpet had to be rolled back). The electricians still had a bit of a reach in order to replace the flood lights.



LEFT: The cross is now properly illuminated to cast the shadows of the other two crosses. All is ready for Easter!



## From the Editor

This month, I am mourning the loss of a great friend, Joy Grubb. She was one of those “once in a lifetime” miracles of friendship. She enjoyed having fun, was a huge supporter and encourager, and we would have deep, meaningful conversations, the kind where we could share anything and not worry about it being told to someone else later. She listened without judgement, whether our feelings were grounded or not, or appropriate or not. She listened and showed understanding. She always had biblical wisdom to share with me and Cecil in all circumstances.

Joy was always a strong cheerleader for all of our endeavors – Cecil’s thoughtful leadership and care for the church, my bible studies, Sunday School classes and especially for my vision of Wine into Water.

We missed out on the closeness of this friendship as she has been in Asheville fighting cancer, but Cecil and I visited as often as we could. For the last 10 years, I have found myself yearning to be closer to her and enjoy this friendship more. I have felt robbed of the opportunity to maintain a close and constant relationship with her.

So, the question is this: why is this friendship so “once in a lifetime”? Why aren’t we all that kind of friend? I think we can all look at the example that Joy has set and try to be more like her. And our life and world would be a much better place.

At our last visit, I read the little booklet that Hospice left behind as I waited while she slept. I found the most beautiful metaphor in the back of the book that I wanted to share with you.



*I am standing upon the seashore,  
A ship at my side spreads her white sails to the  
morning breeze and starts for the blue ocean.  
She is an object of beauty and strength.  
I stand and watch her until at length she hangs like  
a speck of white cloud just where the sea and sky  
come to mingle with each other.  
Then someone at my side says:*

*“There, she is gone!”*

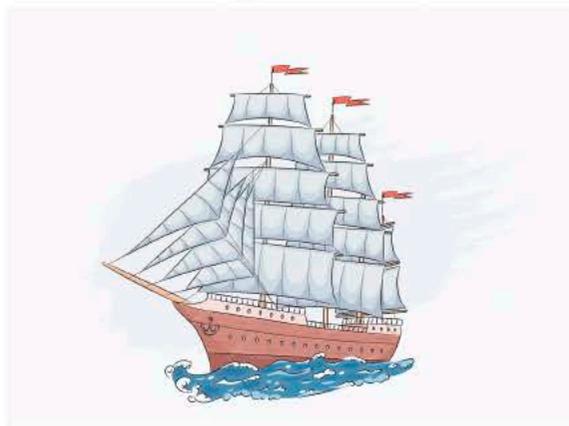
*“Gone where?”*

*Gone from my sight. That is all.  
She is just as large in mast and hull and spar as  
she was when she left my side, and she is just as able  
to bear the load of living freight to her destined port.*

*Her diminished size is in me, not in her.  
And just at the moment when someone  
at my side says: “There, she is gone!”,  
there are other eyes watching her coming,  
and other voices ready to take up the glad shout:  
“Here she comes!”*

*And that is dying.....*

*~A 19<sup>th</sup> Century Funeral Sermon ~*





**In honor of Pope Francis, who was something out of the ordinary! He was full of wisdom and humility. Here is some of his quotes:**

**On Compassion:**

"The Lord never tires of forgiving. It is we who tire of asking for forgiveness."

"A little bit of mercy makes the world less cold and more just."

"Too often we participate in the globalization of indifference. May we strive instead to live global solidarity."

"Let us care for one another and let us be loving custodians of creation." (2nd Tweet as Pope)

"Kindness is firm and persevering intention to always will the good of others, even the unfriendly."

"We must restore hope to young people, help the old, be open to the future, spread love. Be poor among the poor. We need to include the excluded and preach peace."

"We will never be disillusioned or lose our way if we are guided by God."

"We all have the duty to do good."

"Grace is not part of consciousness; it is the amount of light in our souls, not knowledge nor reason."

**On Environment:**

"We must not be indifferent or resigned to the loss of biodiversity and the destruction of ecosystems, often caused by our irresponsible and selfish behavior... Because of us, thousands of species will no longer give glory to God by their very existence ... We have no such right."

"The earth, our home, is beginning to look more and more like an immense pile of filth. In many parts of the planet, the elderly lament that once beautiful landscapes are now covered with rubbish."

"We received this world as an inheritance from past generations, but also as a loan from future generations, to whom we will have to return it!"

"God always forgives, we men forgive sometimes, but nature never forgives. If you give her a slap, she will give you one. I believe that we have exploited nature too much."

"As stewards of God's creation, we are called to make the earth a beautiful garden for the human family. When we destroy our forests, ravage our soil and pollute our seas, we betray that noble calling."

**On Hope:**

"Although the life of a person is in a land full of thorns and weeds, there is always a space in which the good seed can grow. You have to trust God."

"Let us pray for peace: peace in the world and in each of our hearts."

"God's love calls us to move beyond fear. We ask God for the courage to put on faith, hope and love as we go out into the world and become the word in body as well as spirit."

**On the Marginalized:**

"Openness to God makes us open towards the marginalized of this world, and gives us the courage to leave the confines of our own security and comfort to become bruised, hurting and dirty as we joyfully approach the suffering other in a spirit of solidarity."

"Even in the developed world, the effects of unjust structures and actions are all too apparent. Our efforts must aim at restoring hope, righting wrongs, maintaining commitments, and thus promoting the well-being of individuals and of peoples."

**On Solidarity:**

"Life is a journey. When we stop, things don't go right."

"It is impossible for peace to exist without dialogue. All the wars, all the strife, all the unsolved problems over which we clash are due to a lack of dialogue."