

# Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church Ministry Plan for 2010

## WHO WE ARE in 2010:

God is forming a new church for the many people of northern Charlottesville, Albemarle, Greene and Orange Counties at Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church in Ruckersville, Virginia. It's an exciting, on-going process that draws together people from different neighborhoods, different counties and different backgrounds to one place for worship, Christian education, compassionate mission, healthy relationships and a Christ-like community. More than anything, Blue Ridge has an emphasis on connecting real, ordinary people with God.

The people of Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church are much more interested in being the church and building a strong new church than simply going to church. So, Blue Ridge is an active, thoughtful, and intentional community of real people trying to live faithfully and well. Blue Ridge is a Presbyterian Church, a part of the Presbyterian Church USA, and a lively, modern expression of the Reformed faith.

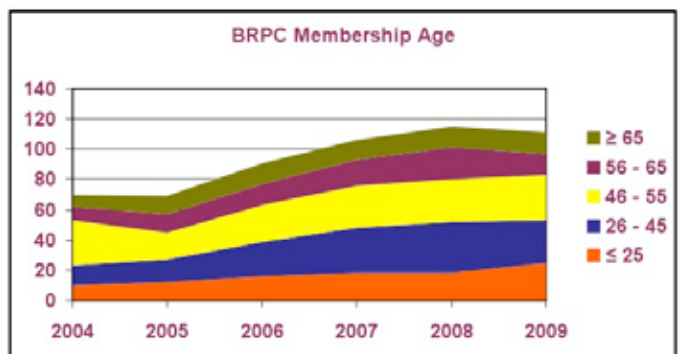
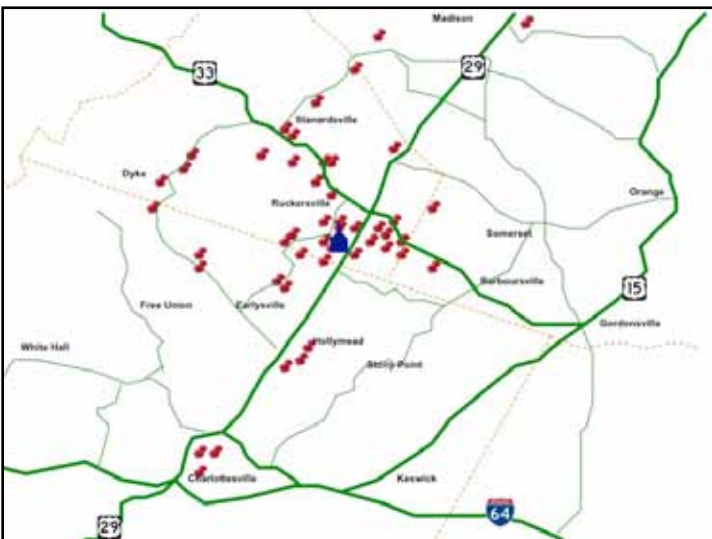
Currently the congregation is a mix of people coming together from a variety of religious experiences including:

- Presbyterians transferring from other PCUSA congregations.
- People returning to church after a period away from any religious community,
- People who were previously disaffected from the church.
- People with little or no experience with the Christian faith.

Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church membership currently numbers about 110. All age groups—children, youth, young adults, families, empty-nesters and older adults are all represented. More than 80 people attend worship each Sunday morning.

God is stirring us to reach further and connect more people with God!

In spite of strong growth over the past three years, Blue Ridge is not yet at a critical mass to sustain the mission and programs of the church on its own. Our challenge is to attract, welcome and nurture the faith of many more ordinary people and connect them to God. Member participation in the church's stewardship campaign is healthy and average contributions are above the national average. Despite our efforts, the church receives 35% of its operating budget from external support. 90% of the operating budget goes to cover fixed costs such as salaries and infrastructure. The fixed cost ratio is extremely high for any organization trying to grow. This Ministry Plan addresses these challenges.



## WHERE ARE WE GOING? Toward becoming a Missional Church

**The Challenge:** The strategic challenge is for Blue Ridge to grow by becoming a **Missional** church. Missional churches are oriented to taking their programming into the community as opposed to **Attractional** churches which rely on drawing the community to programming at the church. Blue Ridge is blessed with a beautiful property but it serves more as a tranquil campus rather than an active meeting place located at a natural crossroads of our overly busy, stressed-for-time society.

To adopt the shift towards a Missional church the 2010 Strategic Plan will focus on developing outreach and evangelism programs based on faith-initiated interests of the members and the willingness of the community to support and participate. Each community is different and finding the right balance will take time.

**Leadership:** The catalyst for this transition is present in the Elder and Deacon population of the church.



Presbyterian Women host baby showers for new mothers-to-be.

This is a natural development process following several years of establishing Elders and Deacons to serve the church. Blue Ridge is, in essence, following the model set out by the Apostles.

**Small Groups:** Society, in general, is more attuned to forming small groups. People feel comfortable in intimate gatherings no larger than what a coffee table can support. The “un-churched” and “de-churched” in our community see an emotional and physical barrier associated with going to church where the “churched” people only see the Love of God. The angst of being recognized, the sense of guilt, fear of losing independence, the inability to agree on which church to

attend, scheduling conflicts, negative perceptions of faith and clergy, the pressure to tithe, and self doubt all compete with a desire to participate in a church. The Missional church must spread the Gospel in a small group setting to be successful in today’s society.

**Evangelism:** Over the summer and fall of 2010, BRPC leaders and personable ‘rain-makers’ will use the effective *Unbinding Your Faith* series to encourage BRPC person-to-person evangelism and invitational outreach. Leaders will tackle the learning program in summer of 2010, and the entire congregation will center upon a fall E-Vent! Series to encourage a culture of invitation, welcome and outreach among the people of BRPC.

**Forming Disciples: Christian Education & Youth Ministry:** Additionally, the Small Group model will be used to facilitate the spiritual growth of children, young people and adults. Small gatherings of children and youth in both traditional church school will be one aspect of an educational ministry.

**Mission:** Jesus spent time in the community, tending the real human needs of a wide range of people. BRPC will focus on developing service and mission opportunities in the web of neighborhoods surrounding the church on Spring Hill Road. Most recently, BRPC has aligned with the mission programs of the Charlottesville Area Presbyterian Churches, participating enthusiastically in the SW Virginia Mission Trip each summer.

**Worship:** Continued energy and resources will go into strengthening and refining the worship experience at Blue Ridge Presbyterian. Music will continue to develop deep roots in the acoustic music traditions, with the piano providing the backbone of our musical expression. Particular attention will be paid to expanding and developing the 8:28 Worship service, enriching multi-sensory worship, adding technology and improving the space.

Developing off-site worship and witness opportunities is an ongoing priority in ministry. Additional worship venues and opportunities are being actively pursued beginning in summer 2010 in area retirement facilities, public spaces and in creative use of the BRPC property. Small worship experiences, community Easter Sunrise Services, a community Thanksgiving Service and a service in honor Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. will be pursued.



**Senior High School Sunday School. An active youth group is an integral part of the Blue Ridge community.**

**Connectedness:** BRPC is a product of the Presbyterian connectional church and a witness to the strength and vitality of collaborative partnerships between Presbytery, General Assembly and local churches. The web of relationships, shared expertise and support, combined with the movement of the Holy Spirit, has propelled Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church forward in ministry to this point in a new church's lifecycle. Blue Ridge Presbyterian has tried to respect and nurture these vital bonds.

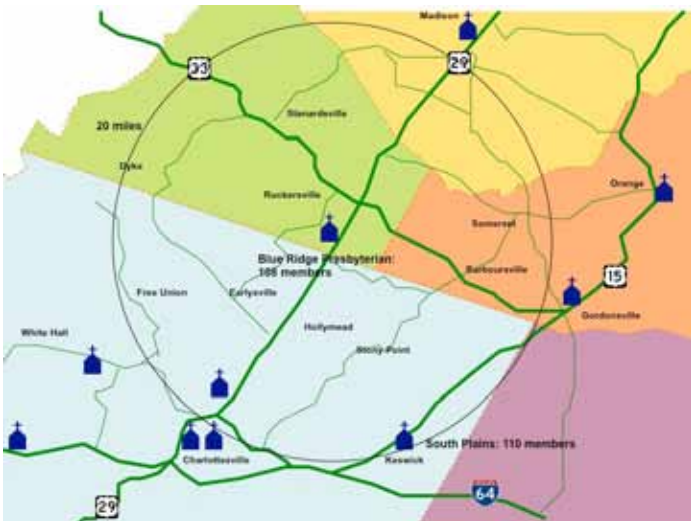
Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church seeks a final three-year period of support and collaboration among the General Assembly, the Presbytery of the James, individuals and interested local churches. During this timeframe, the BRPC congregation can vigorously pursue its vision of active ministry and Christian community-building, energetically work this Ministry Plan, steadily and intentionally increase active membership and stewardship and thrive. God is doing great things in the Blue Ridge congregation!

### **Our challenges that seek Presbyterian support:**

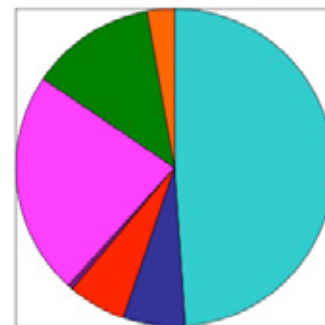
- Reaching out to District/Regional churches and local individuals to share our story and seek support and financial assistance.
- Finding a new "mother-ship" to guide, assist and support BRPC in this final phase of re-launching and growth.
- Assistance with managing cash-flow effectively.
- Tapping into the PCUSA New Church Coaches network and expertise.

**Summary:** The small missional groups will funnel perspective members into the attractional program of the church. Programs such as day care facilities, food co-ops, pastoral counseling centers, hands-on mission programs, and mid-week suppers all should be considered. Developing a nature trail and fire circle on the 13 wooded acres would allow guests the privilege of a semi-private park and give Blue Ridge a distinctive and cherished feature. Additional athletic features such as basketball and volleyball courts could also be included in a small pocket park for the Spring Hill neighborhoods and people surrounding BRPC.

The implementation of the Strategic Plan is cost-effective but will still require resources. The majority of the plan simply involves assimilating interaction and fellowship that is occurring outside of church. Participants will be willing to cover most of the costs but seed money for registration and equipment will be helpful. Creating a robust web-based bulletin board and blog will be needed to harness the informal scheduling of engagements. Acquiring some external coaching support from a person experienced in developing small missional groups will help speed up the process and avoid dead ends.



### **2010 Income, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter**



**Forecasted Income \$87,498**

**BRPC internally generates 65% of income**

## **The People and Leaders of Blue Ridge Presbyterian Church Value:**

The presence of the living, loving God, the hope of Jesus Christ and the relentless movement of the Holy Spirit in our midst:

- We love God, love our neighbor and love our world,
- We recognize that God is God and we are not!

As Christ welcomed all people, BRPC welcomes all!

- Children and youth are welcome at everything.

It's not about us, it's about them.

- Our ministry is not about us; our ministry is for all the people of the northern Charlottesville area, including Albemarle, Greene and Orange Counties.

Vibrant, multi-sensory worship that touches people with the grace of God.

Compassionate service to the community and our world.

The process of creating disciples of Christ.

The connectedness and richness of the Presbyterian Church.

Shared, collaborative leadership.

Generous stewardship of all resources.

## **Where are we going? What are we going to do?**

Create, establish, form, launch 5-7 new small groups by October 2010 with an emphasis on attracting and connecting with guests, visitors, residents of our northern Charlottesville community;

### **GOALS:**

- Raise the visibility of BRPC in our community;
- Assist BRPC members to be good witnesses and evangelists for the Good News of Jesus Christ in our community;
- Create multiple places for unchurched, dechurched and seeking people to enter into the life of the BRPC community;
- Provide places at BRPC for people to come and "stick."

## **MISSION AND SERVICE**

**Goal:** Share the Good News by doing visible ministries of compassion in our community;

- Find, create or co-opt a life-changing mission project(s).
- Focus on creating a community and/or neighborhood ministry(s) that touches lives of people living within a 5-7 mile radius of BRPC.

### **Projects to Consider:**

- "Meals-on-wheels;"
- An organic food co-operative;
- Literacy program to reach neighborhood children.
- A preschool program or program for children, families, mothers;
- A Fall Children's Festival;
- Spring Fling Festival/Block Party for neighborhood children.

## **RELATIONSHIPS/CHRISTIAN GROWTH/LIFE ISSUES/INTERESTS**

**Goal:** Establish small groups focused by October 2010 with a focus on growing small groups with new people.

### **Small Groups/Projects to Consider:**

- Wednesday Kirk Nite Study Group(s): *Unbinding Your Heart*, book study & prayer; 6 weeks, October –mid-November 2010;
- Group for Young Adults; folks between 22 and 39, with or without families; Meet for Relationship, Service or Interests;
- Group for Older Adults; Meet for Relationship, Service or Interests;
- Group to Meet in Local Active/Older Adult Community; e.g. Four Seasons; Meet for Relationship, Service or Interests;

Other interest groups such as: Presbyterian Women, Presbyterian Men, Book, Study, Cancer Support, Flower Arranging, Dinner Group(s), Outdoor/Fitness.

## **GEOGRAPHIC GROUPS/HOUSE CHURCHES**

**Goal:** Establish small groups focused by October 2010 with a focus on gathering people in a geographic area and inviting new people in the community to join

- Earlysville Area
- Hollymead /Forest Lakes Area
- Stanardsville Area
- Ruckersville Area
- Church Campus Area, Spring Hill Road Neighborhood