



TRANSITIONS

November is a season of transition at Okatee Baptist Church. Transitions often come with death, disappointment, disease, and discouragement, among many other reasons that necessitates change. Transitions usually follow tears, chaos, and unknowns. Such is the case at Okatee as we have had to embrace change these past 2 years due to death, departure, and disease. It seems we are in a state of transition hoping for some consistency and stability, but I am reminded by Solomon when he says, *“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.” Ecclesiastes 3:1.* Yes, there is a time for everything and we can be grateful for a sovereign God who removes what was to welcome the new. Perhaps we must strive to see transitions, not so much as change which can be uncomfortable, but as a passage, crossing, or transfer. And if we renew our trust and faith in God, then it may be possible to embrace the transition and allow God to lead us through it. Based on my personal experience, it is always amazing to see what God brings next. In order to shore up our faith in what God is doing and trying to accomplish at Okatee Baptist Church, let's avoid three key mistakes.

1. We must be careful to avoid living in the past. What I mean by that is looking back to what was, can mean that we are not able to focus on what is ahead. The apostle Paul looked ahead and left his past behind. He didn't allow his former life to hinder where He was going. Paul writes in: *Philippians 3: 12- 14 “I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection. But I press on to possess that perfection for which Christ Jesus first possessed me. No, dear brothers and sisters, I have not achieved it, but I focus on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I press on to reach the end of the race and receive the heavenly prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us.”*

Here you can see that He is forgetting and leaving the past behind. Though it can be tempting to look back when the future seems unknown, we can rest assured that God has already gone ahead of us and planned the way. Deuteronomy 31: 8 says that the Lord himself has gone before you and will be with you. He won't leave you or forsake you, so there is no need to be afraid or discouraged. Even so, through changes and storms, shifting our direction from looking back to pressing forward with our eyes on Jesus is what will get us through. Sometimes it's all about perspective. He is our anchor and will guide us. Just keep your eyes on Him. He has got you covered.

2. We must not lose focus. Shifting perspectives can mislead us by directing our attention on to everything but Jesus. What are you magnifying? Jesus or the circumstances? When we magnify Jesus above all, everything else falls into place. Philippians 4: 6-7 beautifully describes how we can do this. *“Don't worry about anything, but in everything, through prayer and petition with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.”* Jesus is what guards our minds and Jesus is what gives us His peace that surpasses understanding. He himself said that we are to seek first His kingdom and His righteousness and all these other things will be added. Peace is one of those things. As we thank Him in all circumstances and rejoice in who He is, we will start to see things differently. Keeping our focus on Him cultivates our trust and allows us to move forward into what is to come without fear or worry. *Proverbs 3: 5 “Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding”.*

3. We must not be negative. It is easy to filter the next steps through the lens of our encounters of the past but we must remember that context is key, and what happened in the past may not be applicable to our current situation. Working together with a positive Christ centered attitude and truly, honestly, and genuinely trusting God *“to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever! Amen.”* Ephesians 3:20-21

It is going to be a great finish to an awesome year, and it is going to be a great 2023 - because Jesus is Lord!!!

Pastor Woody

The mission of Okatee Baptist Church is to grow a family of baptized believers in Jesus Christ who are dedicated to evangelism, worship, ministry, missions and fellowship through the empowerment of the Holy Spirit.

DEACON FAMILY MINISTRY

Jim Murphy

Jim received his formal education at Mercer University in Macon, GA, New Orleans Baptist Theological Seminary, and Luther Rice Seminary in Atlanta. Prior to his Call to Ministry, Jim began an 18 year career as a Technician in the Telephone Industry.

Toward the end of his career in the telephone industry, God called Jim into Pastoral Ministry. He served for the next 28 years as Senior Pastor in Southern Baptist Churches. He **also served as a Chaplain for the Veteran's Administration** and for other Hospitals, as well.

After retiring from Pastoral Ministry, Jim began working in Special Education with Beaufort County Schools. He retired from the Public School System in 2016.

Presently, Jim serves as Chaplain of Coastal Carolina Hospital.

Jim serves the following families in our church through the Deacon Family Ministry:

Bill and Sandy Jackson	Lois Campbell
Tim and Brenda Searcy	Maggie McLendon
John and Je Stellan	

ADVENT SEASON

We will be commemorating the Advent season of the Birth of Christ and the anticipated Advent season of the Return of Jesus Christ at the beginning of each Sunday Morning Worship Service beginning November 27th. A reading will be shared by one of our church members and Pastor Woody will bring a message to emphasize the Advent theme. The Advent season will culminate with a celebration service on Christmas Eve at 5:00pm.

PASSING OF JACK HOWARD

Our sympathy is extended to Phyllis Howard and family on the passing of her husband, Jack Howard on October 20, 2022. Cards may be sent to Phyllis at 8 Larkspur Lane, Bluffton, SC 29909. **Jack's obituary can be found on the website for Saul's Funeral Home.**

TUESDAY'S PASTOR PRAYER GATHERING

The Pastor Prayer Gathering meets on Tuesdays at 11:30am for a time of getting to know one another, sharing **one another's burdens, and praying for our church.** Please join us in the Pastor's Office.

REPORT FROM THE DEACONS

As most have already heard, Jack Howard passed away on Thursday, October 20th. Jack served as Chairman of **our Deacon Fellowship for the past 2 years. Jack 'finished well' in his service to our Lord and he became a pillar at Okatee Baptist Church** with his love for the Lord Jesus Christ and his love for people. He had the gift of diplomacy and was able to impact and influence consensus and confidence in any meeting he was a part of. He was a tireless worker in assisting Pastor Woody as they collaborated in rebuilding and enhancing the **organizational structure and ministries at Okatee. Jack's giftedness and presence will be missed at Okatee, but we rejoice that Jack is resting and rejoicing in heaven.**

The Deacon Fellowship will meet on Tuesday, November 1st, and they will go through the process of selecting a chairman and vice-chairman. Phil Imhoff will serve a one year term to fill the deacon vacancy.

LOTTIE MOON POST OFFICE

The Lottie Moon Post Office is a Christmas card exchange within our church family. As you enter the church beginning November 27th, you will see the post office box on a table to the right. Please only put **ADDRESSED** cards to church family members that are currently attending church in the appropriate alphabetical slots by last name. Check weekly for any cards addressed to you. The week of December 18th is the last week to insert cards. Please remember this is also a fundraiser for our Lottie Moon International Mission Fund. Whatever you would have spent on postage to send your cards should be contributed to the money box on top of the post office box.

Lottie Moon was a missionary to China from our Southern Baptist Convention. She was very diligent in writing to people in the United States to let them know of the needs in serving the people of China as a missionary. Thus, the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for International Missions





WOMEN ON MISSION (WOMEN, AGES 18+)

The WOM ladies are to be at the church parking lot by 12:00 noon on Monday, Nov. 14th for our tour of Rooms For Grace. Each lady is asked to bring either a bag of gently worn men's clothes or a family size frozen entree. Please let Marsha know if you plan to attend so she can arrange to car pool.

WOMEN ON MISSION OUTREACH

WOM will be collecting Christmas Prisoner Packets again this year. The list of needed items is below. We will supply the required gallon bags to put the items into and they will be in the foyer for your convenience. Items will be collected through the November 20th.

For those who would rather give a monetary donation, please give it to Nell Simmons.

Thank you in advance for sharing Christ in the Allendale prison this Christmas season.

ONE black non-retractable pen (no wire clips, no other color ink)

ONE **writing tablet no larger than 5 1/2" x 8"** (no wire bound books, composition books, or post-it notes)

ONE adult toothbrush (individually factory-sealed, no multi-packs)

ONE 4 oz to 6 oz toothpaste (no travel size)

ONE 3.2 oz to 6 oz bar of soap (no travel size, no unwrapped /unboxed bars)

TWO rolls of hard candy like LifeSavers, Breath Savers, or Mentos (No Smarties, Sweettarts, Necco Wafers, Rolos, Starburst, Tic Tacs)

THREE first class #10 stamped-embossed envelopes (These will be supplied by the Okatee BC at a cost of \$2.00 per packet. Insert \$2.00 in each prisoner packet.)

The last day to bring in your donations is Sunday, November 20th.



NOTES FROM SUZANNE

Music has a way of piercing into the deep parts of our soul, that assists in our expression and response to God. It leads us to bring praise, glory and honor to Him.

I am grateful for our choir and their dedication each week as we prepare for upcoming services. We have a great time of fellowship with one another and would love for you to join us.

We are working on different styles of music: hymn arrangements/medleys, southern gospel and contemporary songs. Christmas is just around the corner and we will soon be rehearsing some Christmas specials. We would love to invite you to join us on Wednesday evenings at 7:00pm in the sanctuary.

Singing His Praises,
Suzanne

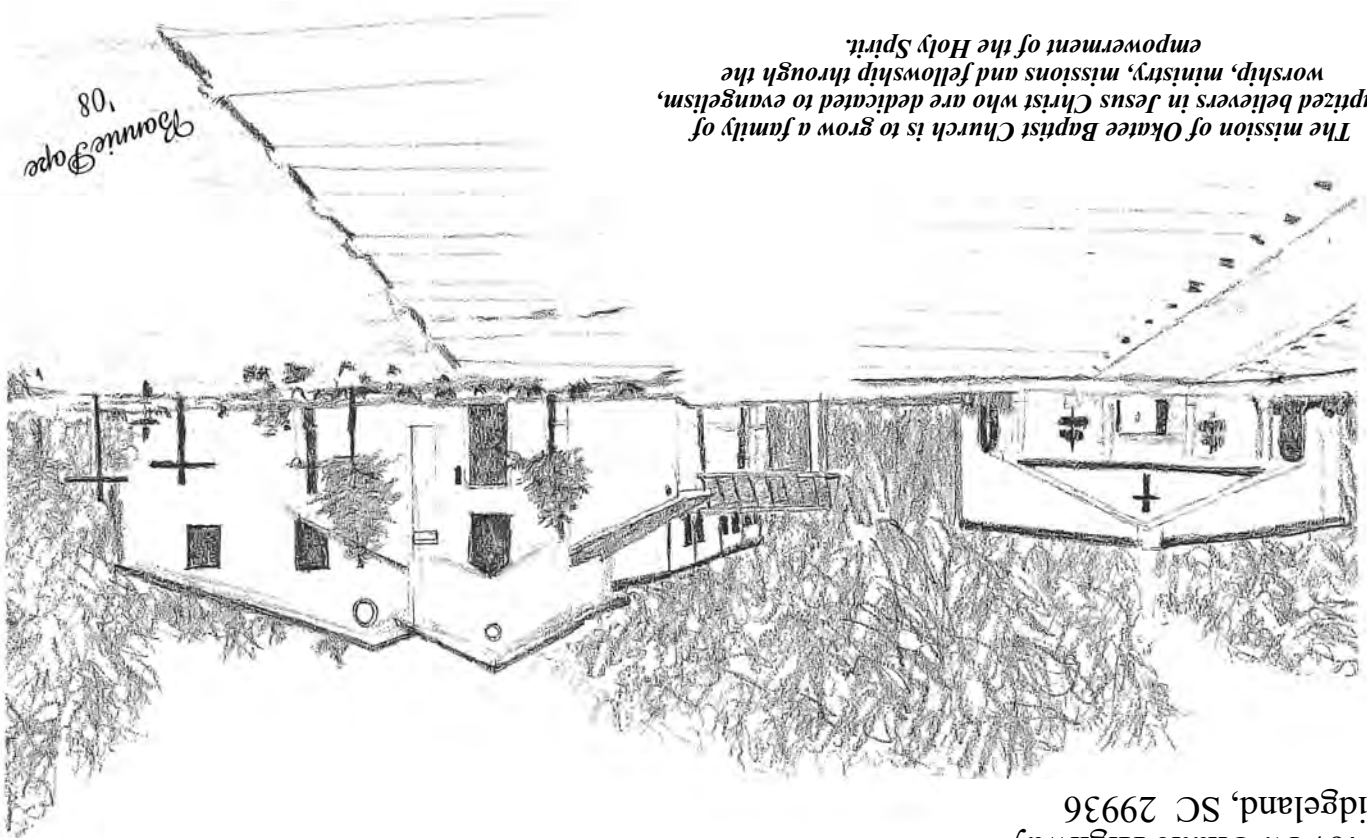
COVERED DISH MEAL

The November Covered Dish will be on Wednesday, November 16th at 6:00pm. Please bring soup, cornbread, or a dessert. The church will provide the drinks. Invite your friends to this special evening with our church family. Any questions, please contact Phyllis Howard at 843-505-2871.

NOVEMBER DATES TO NOTE

- Nov. 1 10am Constitution & Bylaws Committee Meeting
11am **Deacons' Meeting**
- Nov. 3 11:30am Pastor Prayer Gathering (on Thursday this week only)
- Nov. 5 Move Clocks Back 1 Hour Prior to Going to Bed! Daylight Savings Time Ends
- Nov. 7 10am-1pm SCBC Heart 4 Schools Training
- Nov. 8 7am-7pm Election Day - OBC is a Jasper County Voting Poll Location
10am Stewardship Meeting
- Nov. 14 12:00 WOM Trip to Rooms of Grace at St Helena's Island**
- Nov. 16 6pm Covered Dish Meal
7pm Choir
- Nov. 20 11am Last Day to Receive Prisoner Packet Donations
- Nov. 23 NO EVENING SERVICES
- Nov. 24 Happy Thanksgiving - Office Closed Nov. 24 and Nov. 25 for Holiday

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Okatee Baptist Church
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