



# SONLIGHT NEWSLETTER

*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.*

**DR. TIM SEARCY (Dr. T)**

**Interim Pastor**

## **REMEMBERING BEFORE WE RESOLVE**

January is a month filled with forward-looking language. New goals. New habits. New plans. Everywhere we turn, we are encouraged to make resolutions—promises to ourselves about what we will do better this year than last. Scripture, however, often invites us to begin in a different place.

***Before God's people are told to move forward, they are usually called to remember.***

In Deuteronomy 8, as Israel stands on the edge of the Promised Land, Moses does not begin with instructions for improvement. Instead, he says, “You shall remember the whole way that the Lord your God has led you” (Deut. 8:2). Before new territory comes reflection. Before obedience comes gratitude. Before progress comes memory.

***Remembering is not nostalgia. It is a spiritual discipline.***

Throughout the Bible, God's people are commanded to remember—not because God forgets, but because we do. We forget His provision in hard seasons. We forget His faithfulness when prayers were slow to be answered. We forget how often grace met us when we had little strength to offer in return.

***January is an excellent time for remembering.***

Before we resolve to read more, give more, serve more, or do better, we are invited to pause and ask: How has the Lord carried us to this moment? What did He sustain us through this past year? Where did His mercy meet us quietly, faithfully, repeatedly?

The psalmist writes, “I will remember the deeds of the Lord; yes, I will remember your wonders of old” (Psalm 77:11). This kind of remembering steadies the soul. It shifts our focus away from self-reliance and back toward trust.

***Christian faith does not begin with our promises to God. It begins with God's promises to us.***

When we remember first, our resolutions—if we make them at all—are shaped differently. They become responses to grace rather than attempts to earn it. Obedience flows not from pressure, but from gratitude. Faithfulness grows not from fear of failure, but from confidence in God's unchanging character.

The Lord's Supper itself is built on this rhythm. “Do this in remembrance of me,” Jesus says—not so that we can try harder, but so that we never forget what has already been done for us.

As a church family, we enter this new year together not with a list of achievements to chase, but with a story to remember. A story of a faithful God who has walked with His people through every season—joyful and painful alike.

***So before you resolve, remember.***

Remember the prayers that were answered. Remember the strength given when your own ran out. Remember the grace that carried you through another year.

And then, with hearts grounded in gratitude, we step forward—trusting that the God who has been faithful behind us will be faithful ahead of us as well.

# FELLOWSHIP OF DEACONS

Leader: Jim Phillips

## WHAT WILL YOU DO IN THE NEW YEAR

On Thursday, January 1, 2026, we will turn over a new unblemished page to start the new year. 12 months, 365 days to make it count. In 2026 let's make it count for God, for Okatee Baptist Church, for others, and for ourselves. In this world there are three kinds of people: those who make things happen, those who watch things happen, and those who wonder what happened. Let's be people who make things happen in 2026.



For God let us resolve to spread the gospel of Christ to everyone we possibly can. We can start with family members in making them a part of the family of God. We can then incorporate friends who do not know Christ. We know the best gift given to mankind is Christ; let's share that gift with family and friends. Let's invite them to church this year. If we should exhaust our supply of family and friends, we have the opportunity to reach every person with whom we come in contact. Ask them, do you go to church or do you know Jesus? Yes, you will be rejected and ridiculed but remember what we are told from the Bible: if God is with us who can be against us. You will also see success as the Holy Spirit develops the seeds you plant.

For Okatee Baptist Church, let us resolve to be faithful in our attendance in 2026. Attendance allows you the opportunity to grow in your spiritual pilgrimage. I know, I have been there with you: I don't feel like it, the weather is cold or rainy, I don't like the lesson or the sermon, or the music. These are some of the excuses we use to miss church. Let us resolve to be in church at every opportunity. When we return to the sanctuary, may we see every seat filled each Sunday. The results will be up to us. Let us also be good stewards of our financial resources and our talents. Be a cheerful giver when making your tithe. Use your God given talents and abilities to serve on our church's teams and committees. We also have opportunities for teaching and for singers in our choir. There is a place for you at Okatee Baptist Church to minister using the assets God has given to you. Don't let your gifts go unused.

For others let us resolve to help other people. This world is a difficult place in which to live today. People have financial needs, physical needs, and spiritual needs. Some simply need a friend. As individuals and as a church, may we resolve to identify these individuals and offer as much assistance as we are able. Remember we are to be good neighbors to all.

And finally, for each one of us, let us resolve to become better Christians. May we grow with the purpose of serving God. Develop in depth Bible study for yourself, increase your prayer time at home, and become people who like to pray and serve when given the opportunity.

What will you do with the new year? Make a change for God and Okatee Baptist Church. May each one of you become a person who makes things happen in 2026.



## THANK YOU!

The OBC staff would like to thank you for the Christmas bonus which is budgeted each year for the church employees. Your generosity is greatly appreciated. Thank you too for making this past year so special. We wish you a bright and beautiful New Year!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### TUESDAY PRAYER GATHERING

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

### LADIES BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays, 10:30am

Contact Marilyn Janosko for more information. 580-917-8088

### WOM MEETING

Monday, January 12th / 1pm

Welcome to All Women.

Seminar Room Education Bldg

### CHURCH COUNCIL MTG

SUNDAY, JAN. 18TH / 6PM

NO EVENING BIBLE STUDY

### FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Wednesday, January 21 / 6pm

Bring an entrée or dessert to share with other in attendance if you are able.

### MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST

Saturday, Jan. 24 / 8am

All men and boys are invited for food, fellowship, and a challenge for men.

### QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING

WEDNESDAY, JAN. 28TH / 6PM

If you have any information that you would like brought before the congregation, let Jim Phillips know. 864-219-0411



WOM has had a great year for missions in 2025. I shared a report of all our projects recently in one of our Sunday morning services. We helped the following facilities and individuals:

- Moss Creek Pregnancy Center - We delivered new infant clothes and diapers along with some crochet baby hats and blankets made by Donna Horsman.
- Bluffton Soup Kitchen - We provided funds to the kitchen to help them purchase items they needed to feed those who visit their facility.
- Bluffton Senior Center - We provided 26 blankets and 16 toboggans to this center.
- Liza Webber with funds for a summer mission trip.
- Abby Looney with funds on her move to Italy for missions.
- Visits to Canterbury Memory Care Unit now on a monthly schedule thanks the leadership of Kay Kingan, along with Sherry Campbell, Carrie Campbell, Sharon Wastowicz, Debbie Neal, and Brenda Searcy and any others who can join them when they go. Goody bags and lap blankets were given to the memory care residents at their Christmas party on December 16. We have received many wonderful comments on how these visits have blessed the residents of Canterbury and all who visit with our group. If I have missed anyone in this group, I apologize now.
- 227 Prisoner Bags packed and delivered to the association office.
- Our yearly luncheon for all ladies of our church and any friends they wish to invite. We had 19 at our luncheon, with Marilyn Janosko sharing a devotion and Suzanne sharing music with us. We will advertise the date for our 2026 luncheon at least one month before the actual luncheon date.
- Our Blessing Box has been used frequently in the past month. We are now needing our congregation to help us restock our pantry. Please donate cereal, bread, canned meats (Spam, Vienna sausages, tuna, chicken), soup (chicken noodle, vegetable), sugar, instant coffee, coffee creamer, saltine crackers. We of course will take any items you donate, however, these are the most needed items at this time. \*\*Please donate cans with flip tops to open and, we can put bread in the box in the winter and maybe spring. When it gets hotter, the bread will mold if not taken from the box after a few days.

We are very thankful to God and our church through tithes and offerings that fund our budget account that allow us to be able to help those in need when we receive requests for facilities and information for those in need. Every need we are made aware of is prayed over and shared with the entire WOM members who are present at our monthly meetings. We always discuss and agree on all our projects.

We invite all ladies to join our meetings any time. We meet on the second Monday of every month at 1:00 in the conference room in the education building. The meetings are not long, usually one hour to one- and one-half hours.

## JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

3<sup>rd</sup> Marilyn Janosko  
4<sup>th</sup> Glenda Lyon  
6<sup>th</sup> Pastor Woody  
10<sup>th</sup> Michael Cormier  
13<sup>th</sup> Olivia Oliver  
13<sup>th</sup> Debbie Walls  
20<sup>th</sup> Pat Stern  
23<sup>rd</sup> Michael Robbins  
24<sup>th</sup> Dorothy Farmer  
26<sup>th</sup> Andy Arruza  
26<sup>th</sup> Marsha Atterberry  
27<sup>th</sup> Jennifer Herrin  
30<sup>th</sup> Francesca Pascarella  
31<sup>st</sup> Sherry Campbell



## JANUARY NURSERY

4<sup>th</sup> Connie C. & Louise P.  
11<sup>th</sup> Kara M.  
18<sup>th</sup> Esther R. & Earline W.  
25<sup>th</sup> Gail T. & Kay K.

## CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Glenda Lyon  
Debbie Walls

## DEACON OF THE WEEK

Jan. 4 to 10 / Chris Campbell  
843-441-4276  
  
Jan 11 to 17 / Robert Pressley  
864-614-3898

Jan. 18 to 24 / Ted Janosko  
580-917-6000

Jan 25 to 31 / Ron West  
404-218-2633

## SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY Team Leaders: Ted & Marilyn Janosko

Next event will be either a Bingo Night or a Game night on Friday, January 30th from 6:30-8:30pm . Light snacks will be provided. There will not be childcare or a nursery.

Blessings

Ted and Marilyn Janosko 580-917-6000



## LADIES BIBLE STUDY

Leader: Marilyn Janosko

The Study Unshakable Hope by Max Lucado begins **THURSDAY, JANUARY 8 at 10:30**. (Note the date change from December Newsletter.)

I will have the books at church on January 4th. Please try to read pages 1-22 in the book and read and fill out pages 21-24 in the Guide before our first session on the 8th if possible.

Prayers for a very Blessed 2026 as we delve into the Promises of God.

Please contact Marilyn Janosko with any questions at [mdjanosko@gmail.com](mailto:mdjanosko@gmail.com), 580-917-8088.

## NEW MEMBER

Please welcome Sherri Busick who joined OBC on November 23, 2025. Her contact information is [artcrop@yahoo.com](mailto:artcrop@yahoo.com); 843-457-9497; 882 Wiry Greenleaf Lane, Bluffton, SC 29909

