



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

UNSUNG HEROES OF THE PASSION WEEK

By Pastor Tim Searcy

When we think about Passion Week, our minds naturally go to the familiar scenes—Palm Sunday, the Upper Room, Gethsemane, the cross, and the empty tomb. At the center of it all stands Jesus, the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world. Yet surrounding those sacred moments are men and women whose names are mentioned only briefly, but whose actions shine with quiet faith. They are the unsung heroes of the Passion Week.

One of those is **Simon of Cyrene**. We know almost nothing about him except that he was compelled to carry the cross of Jesus (Mark 15:21). What began as an interruption in his day became a divine appointment. For a few agonizing steps, he bore the weight of the instrument that would bring about our salvation. Simon reminds us that following Christ often begins when our plans are interrupted and we are asked to carry a cross we did not choose.

Then there is **the woman who anointed Jesus** with costly perfume (Matthew 26:6–13). While others criticized her, Jesus defended her. He said she had done a “beautiful thing” and that her act would be remembered wherever the gospel is preached. She understood something the disciples did not—Jesus was preparing to die. Her worship was sacrificial, wholehearted, and timely. She teaches us that true devotion is never wasted in the eyes of the Lord.

Consider also **Malchus**, the servant of the high priest (Luke 22:50–51). Though he came as part of the arresting party, he experienced the healing touch of Jesus when his ear was cut off. Even in betrayal and violence, Jesus showed mercy. Malchus stands as a picture of grace extended to those who least expect it.

At the foot of the cross we meet **the centurion** who declared, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Matthew 27:54). A hardened Roman soldier witnessed many crucifixions, yet something about the way Jesus died—His words, His spirit, the darkness, the earthquake—led him to faith. The cross still has that power today.

And we must not forget **Joseph of Arimathea** and **Nicodemus** (John 19:38–42). These were men of influence who had followed Jesus quietly. But when others fled, they stepped forward. Joseph asked for the body of Jesus. Nicodemus brought the burial spices. They honored Christ publicly at great personal risk. Their courage reminds us that there comes a time when secret discipleship must become open devotion.

Finally, we remember **the women at the tomb**. While many of the disciples hid in fear, these faithful followers came early on the first day of the week with spices in hand (Luke 24:1). They were the first to hear the angel’s message, “He is not here, but is risen!” Their love placed them at the very forefront of the resurrection story.

These unsung heroes were not apostles, preachers, or miracle workers. They were ordinary people who responded to Jesus with faith, courage, generosity, and love. Passion Week is not only a story about what Christ has done for us—it is also an invitation for us to respond to Him.

As we move toward Easter, may we ask ourselves: What role will we play? Will we carry a cross, offer our worship, show mercy, stand publicly for Christ, or faithfully proclaim that He is risen?

God still uses ordinary people in extraordinary moments. Perhaps the next unsung hero of the story will be you.

FELLOWSHIP OF DEACONS

Leader: **Jim Phillips**

WHAT IS GOING ON AT OKATEE BAPTIST CHURCH?

Our sanctuary repairs are progressing very nicely. Welding of the faulty beam has been completed. The walls have been repaired by the drywall specialist. The ceiling tiles will be in place in the next day or two. Next week laying of the carpet will be completed. The pews will then be put back into position. Final step will be the clean-up and reinstalling the audio-visual equipment. Then the people---that is you---will fill the pews.

Also, our Pastor Search Team continues to work diligently in locating your next pastor to lead this church. The members of this team are immersed in prayer and resumes in their search for the man of God's choosing who will follow God's will.

In both cases, sanctuary and pastor search, there are obstacles to overcome and setbacks which must be resolved. I urge each of you to continue praying for both of these projects.

Also, happening at Okatee are sermons on the book of Galatians on Sunday mornings. On Sunday night, we have an in-depth chronological study of the Bible. On Wednesday night, we are deep into the study of the book of James. The study of the Bible plays an important role in our maturity as Christians.

On Thursday mornings at 10:30 the ladies participate in a Bible study led by Marilyn Janosko. Please join us for all these times of Bible study.

The second Monday of each month at 1:00 p.m. the Women on Mission meet. These women are mission minded and participate in numerous projects related to missions. They minister to the residents in the memory care unit at Canterfield. These women are responsible for the blessing box which provides food for those in need. These ladies keep the box supplied with food for the community. Over the past several months activity for the blessing box has increased significantly. They also have many other projects. All women should seriously consider joining them in these mission endeavors.

Another opportunity available is a church choir under the direction of Suzanne Tomlinson, which provides musical selections that inspire and motivate us spiritually. If you have the talent and ability to sing, please join them on Wednesday night at 7 p m for rehearsal.

We also have a men's group who meet for breakfast and fellowship one Saturday each month. We have plenty of room available for growth. Men, please join us.

These are some of the opportunities available to you., the members of Okatee Baptist Church.

This is what's happening at OBC and much more. Consider joining us.

UPCOMING EVENTS

LADIES BIBLE STUDY

Thursdays, 10:30am

Contact Marilyn Janosko for more information 580-917-8088. Meets in Education Bldg. Currently studying "Unshakable Hope".

A new Ladies Bible Study will begin on TUESDAY APRIL 7. It is an 8 week study by Anne Graham Lotz, daughter of Billy Graham. Title is, "Jesus in Me". Marilyn needs to order workbooks for the study by March 15th. Please text her at 580-917-8088 or call and leave a message.

WOM MEETING

Monday, March 9th at 1pm

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Wednesday, March 18 / 6pm

A Passover Seder presentation will be given following the meal. The church will provide chicken and drinks. Please bring sides that are deviled eggs, roasted carrots, potatoes fixed anyway you would like, red cabbage slaw, broccoli, or collard greens. Desserts should be something with coconut. So there isn't too much of one thing, contact Judy Hinds to let her know what you are bringing. Call her at 843-705-9135 or email her at rhinds2@sc.rr.com.

MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST

Saturday, March 28 / 8am

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



WOMEN ON MISSION

Director: Janet Phillips

WOM had a great time at the Canterfield Valentine party. We have added some pictures to show some of our activities with the memory care unit. Plans for additional visits to Canterfield are already in the planning stages!!!

We will confirm our final plans for the April 25th Ladies Luncheon at our **March 9th meeting**. This will be a good time of food and fellowship. The meal will be free to all ladies who are members of our church. Meals for friends who are invited to attend and take out meals will be \$10. Plan now to attend. Get the date of April 25, 12:00-2:00 on your calendar and invite many friends!!



SENIOR ADULT MINISTRY

Team Leaders: Ted & Marilyn Janosko

1. March 18, 2026 Fellowship Meal with Passover Seder Presentation led by Dr. Searcy
2. March and April 2026 USCB Baseball. Saturday at 2:00 pm Richard Gray Sports Complex in Hardeville. Meet at the church at 1:00 pm. Dates are: Saturday, March 14th (2pm) and Saturday, April 25th (2pm)

PASSING OF OBC MEMBERS

Maggie McLendon passed away on January 28, 2026. Maggie had become a member at OBC in 2015.

Pat Tupper passed away on February 28, 2026. Pat had been a member at OBC since 2013. A memorial service will be held at OBC April 11th at 2pm.

We recently were informed that Judy Jurinko passed away March 25, 2025. Judy had been a member at OBC since 2010.



MARCH ANNIVERSARY

3/31 Sam & Mary Hollis

DEACON OF THE WEEK

March 1 - 7 / Michael Robbins
843-338-2814

- 2nd Donna Horsman
- 7th Janet Pressley
- 9th Kim Padgett
- 18th JoLane Collins
- 23rd Wayne Pennell
- 27th Gabriel Robbins
- 27th Chris Campbell
- 31st Linda Arruza
- 31st Jessie Gray

MARCH NURSERY

- 1st Connie C. & Louise P.
- 8th Kara Malphrus
- 15th Esther R. & Earline W.
- 22nd Gail Temple
- 29th Gail Temple

March 8 - 14 / Chris Campbell
843-441-4276

March 15 - 21 / Robert Pressley
864-614-3898

March 22 - 28 / Ted Janosko
580-917-6000

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Debbie Walls
Glenda Lyon

March 29 - April 4 / Ron West
404-218-2633

FIVE FACTS YOU SHOULD KNOW ABOUT [ANNIE ARMSTRONG](#) AND THE EASTER OFFERING SHE STARTED.

1. Annie Walker Armstrong was born in 1850 in Baltimore, Maryland. Her father died when she was 2, leaving her and her four siblings to be raised by her Christian mother. Although raised in a Baptist church, Armstrong did not become a believer until she was 19. In a Sunday service during the Civil War, Armstrong's pastor told his Baptist congregation, "The religion of Jesus Christ gives peace in the midst of trouble." Wanting this peace for herself, Armstrong put her faith in Jesus that day.
2. Shortly after she became a Christian, Armstrong joined 100 other members of her congregation in planting Eutaw Place Church. She remained a member of that church for nearly 70 years, until her death in 1938. At Eutaw she taught the Infant Class (i.e., children under the age of 12) for almost half a century. She also, as [Shannon Baker says](#), "maintained an interest in ministering to mothers, immigrants, the underprivileged, the sick, African Americans, Indians, and later in her life, her Jewish neighbors." It was at Eutaw that Armstrong also developed a passion for missions.
3. Armstrong [became the founder and president](#) of the Ladies' Bay View Mission, an organization that cared for the poor, located on the site where Johns Hopkins Bayview Medical Center now stands. In 1880, at the age of 30, she served as the first president of the Woman's Baptist Home Mission Society of Maryland, which involved women in supporting the SBC's Home Mission Board (now known as the North American Mission Board). The society's first priority locally was forming a school for Native Americans in what is now Oklahoma and ministering to Chinese immigrants and impoverished mountain people. Armstrong later became the corresponding secretary (equivalent to an executive director) of the Maryland Mission Rooms, later called the Mission Literature Department, SBC. Initially, this department served as a missions library and reading room, but later became a publisher and distributor of missions literature.
4. At the age of 38, Armstrong led in framing the constitution of the Woman's Missionary Union (WMU), an auxiliary to the SBC. She served as corresponding secretary until 1906. During this time she [refused a salary](#) for her work because she would never give to the Lord "that which costs me nothing" (2 Samuel 24:24). While at WMU, Armstrong and missionary Lottie Moon proposed a Christmas Offering to raise money to send single women to China to work with Moon. The offering, which raised enough for three missionaries, became the precursor to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering for Foreign Missions — so named at Armstrong's recommendation — which has raised billions from SBC churches and members for foreign missions.
5. Armstrong proposed the first WMU self-denial offering for Home Missions. In 1934, it was named in honor of Armstrong. To date, more than \$2 billion has been donated by Southern Baptist churches and individuals to the AAEO, which supports thousands of missionaries in church planting and compassion ministries. While 35% of NAMB's budget is provided by the Cooperative Program, [50% is provided by the AAEO](#). As NAMB notes, "Because of this sacrificial giving, millions of lives have been and continue to be transformed by the power of the gospel."

