



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.

Are we a church that embodies the **Great Commandment**?

The Great Commandment is found in Matthew 22: ³⁶ "Teacher, which is the greatest commandment in the Law?" ³⁷ Jesus replied: "Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." ³⁸ This is the first and greatest commandment. ³⁹ And the second is like it: 'Love your neighbor as yourself.' ⁴⁰ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments."

Do we (you and I) love God? I mean do we really love God?

The adverb 'really' means do we love God with all of heart, soul, and mind. In other words, do we have an undying, persevering, and passionate love for God? Do we? Do you?

How do we measure or evaluate that kind of love that Jesus says is the most important part of our being. What evidence should we look for as a reality check on the depth of our love for God. Jesus answers that when He says we are to follow up our love for God by loving one another. Simply put, loving one another means - if we are to have an intimate relationship with the God of love, comfort, encouragement, and hope, then we need to pass along his love, comfort, encouragement, and hope to others. After all, we are to be the hands and feet of Jesus Christ.

So, what does love, comfort, encouragement and hope look like in our relationships and how we relate to one another. I believe we must be intentional about identifying and meeting the real needs of people, help people experience God's Word at the point of their need, and communicate the true character of God.

What motivates the believer of Jesus Christ is the compassion of Jesus Christ - demonstrating love in action, and to provide caring concern for others. Love in action means we are intentional about meeting each other's relational needs as illuminated in God's Word: acceptance, affection, appreciation, approval, attention, comfort, encouragement, respect, security, and support.

As the Body of Christ, the church, with the power of the Holy Spirit, we can live out the Great Commandment by opening up our hearts to the needs of one another. In a dark and hurting world, we have the opportunity to relationally care for people with the love of Christ bringing light and hope from God who desires that all be reconciled back to Him.

Who will you care for this month?

Pastor Woody



*"God doesn't expect us to put a plastic smile on a broken heart."
Dr. Stephen Viars*

Griefshare: where you will view a weekly video seminar on a grief-related topic. The videos feature respected counselors and teachers who have faced their own grief and who share insights on how to walk through grief in a healthy manner. There are also personal testimonies of people who share their struggles and what has helped them. After the video, you'll spend time as a small group discussing the concepts on the video and how they apply to your day-to-day struggles and your life. The discussion time is moderated by your GriefShare leader.

Pastor Woody is facilitating a Grief-Share Group on Tuesday mornings at 9:30 AM at Okatee Baptist Church beginning February 13th. Anyone experiencing the death of a friend or family member may join at any time. Call Pastor Woody if you need more information at (864) 554-7335.

EMBRACING TRUTH AND GRACE IN THE NEW YEAR: A CALL TO RENEWAL

Dr. Tim Searcy

As we step into the dawn of a new year, let us reflect on the profound words of 1 Peter 1:22-25, a passage that beckons us to anchor our lives in the transformative power of truth and grace.

The apostle Peter, writing to a community of believers, reminds them of their purification through obedience to the truth. This truth is not merely a set of principles but a living reality, a call to sincere brotherly love from pure hearts. Why? Because we, as recipients of God's grace, have been born again—not from perishable seed but from imperishable, through the enduring word of God.

Born Again: A New Identity in Christ

This transformative rebirth in Christ sets us apart from the secular world. As new creatures, our existence transcends the fleeting glory of worldly pursuits. The secular world may overlook truth and neglect grace, but as heirs of God's kingdom, we are called to embody both, reflecting the character of our gracious and truthful God.

The Living Word: A Source of Truth and Grace

The living and enduring word of God imparts to us the inseparable concepts of truth and grace. Galatians 3:19-29 elucidates the relationship between the law and faith, emphasizing that the law served as a guardian until the revelation of faith in Christ. Through faith, we are united in Christ, transcending societal distinctions, and becoming heirs to the promise.

The Word of God stands as the ultimate standard of truth, bringing us to judgment. However, grace, the essence of God's mercy, provides the remedy for our sins. Thus, we are not only justified by faith but also united in Christ beyond worldly divisions.

The Essence of the Gospel: Truth and Grace Personified

The essence of the Gospel lies in the enduring word of God—the truth that exposes our sinfulness and the grace that offers redemption. The Gospel unveils the harsh reality that all have sinned, yet it brings the good news that the blood of Christ not only covers but eradicates our sins.

As we embark on this new year, let us wholeheartedly receive both truth and grace. May we stand firm in our identity as born-again believers, living out the dual principles of truth and grace, and embracing the Gospel that proclaims liberty and salvation.

Will you, today, open your heart to the transformative power of truth and grace? May this new year be a season of renewal, growth, and unwavering commitment to the living and enduring word of God.

REPORT FROM THE DEACONS

Dave Durham has stepped down from his position as Deacon due to a move he and his wife, Mary, made to Myrtle Beach, SC in January, to help his company establish an office there and to be closer to their daughters. Their new address is 1528 Suncrest Drive, Myrtle Beach, SC 29577. They enjoyed their time and fellowship at OBC and leaving is bittersweet.

UPCOMING EVENTS

MEMORIAL SERVICE

SUNDAY, February 4th / 5pm

Pastor Woody will lead us in a special Memorial Service to remember our members and loved ones who have passed away.

GRIEF SHARE

Tuesdays at 9:30am

Beginning February 13th

Please contact Pastor Woody for more information at 864-554-7335 or okateepastor1@gmail.com.

PRAY WITH OUR PASTOR

Tuesdays at 11:30am

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

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

February 21st / 6pm

Plan to join us for our monthly fellowship meal. February will be Italian Night. If you are able, please bring an Italian dish, or something to go with an Italian dish. The church will provide drinks. Invite your friends to this special evening with our church family. Any questions, please contact Judy Hinds at

MEN'S MINISTRY BREAKFAST

Saturday, February 24th / 8am

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

STAFF

Woody Oliver, Pastor

Dr. Tim Searcy, Assoc. Pastor

Suzanne Tomlinson, Choir Dir.

Judy Altman, Treasurer

Pam Seibert, Admin. Assist.

Dena Oliver, Facilities

843-987-0885



Okatee Baptist Church



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Okateebaptist.com

QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING REVIEW

At our January 31st Quarterly Business Meeting, we approved Okatee Baptist Church Year End financial report. Our budget total for 2023 was \$374,321 and we received \$417,198.52. We ended up with a surplus of \$42,877 to end 2023. What a great year and what a committed membership in financial support of the work God is doing at Okatee Baptist Church.

Having been blessed financially, the Finance Team presented 2 motions to the congregation to enhance our missional support. The first motion was to take \$7,500.00 out of our General Fund and add it to the \$12,500.00 already given to the Lottie Moon Christmas Offering. That means Okatee Baptist Church can provide \$20,000.00 to missionaries across the world as they share the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

The second Motion was to provide an extra gift of \$5,426.00 to the Cooperative Program to comply with our tradition of giving 10% of our receipts. Please refer to the newsletter insert to how our Cooperative Program total of \$41,744.00 is distributed.

Our total Great Commission giving which includes the Cooperative Program, Lottie Moon Christmas Offering, Annie Armstrong Easter Offering, Janie Chapman State Mission Offering, Savannah River Baptist Convention, Savannah River Baptist Association Hanshew Offering, and Direct Mission Offerings equals \$86,544.00. Oh, how God loves a cheerful giver!!

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Louise Pinckney
3 Waters Avenue
Okatie, SC 29909

Kay Kingan
3 Strobhar Court
Bluffton, SC 29909



WOMEN ON MISSION

Director: Janet Phillips

WOM has a calendar full of missions projects for 2024. We would like to invite any women in our church who would like to join our missions team to come on board. We meet the second Monday of each month in the Fellowship Hall behind the sanctuary at 1:00 pm.

There are many missions opportunities in our area and other areas that are in need of help in many ways.

MEMORIAL SERVICE

Sunday, February 4th / 5:00pm

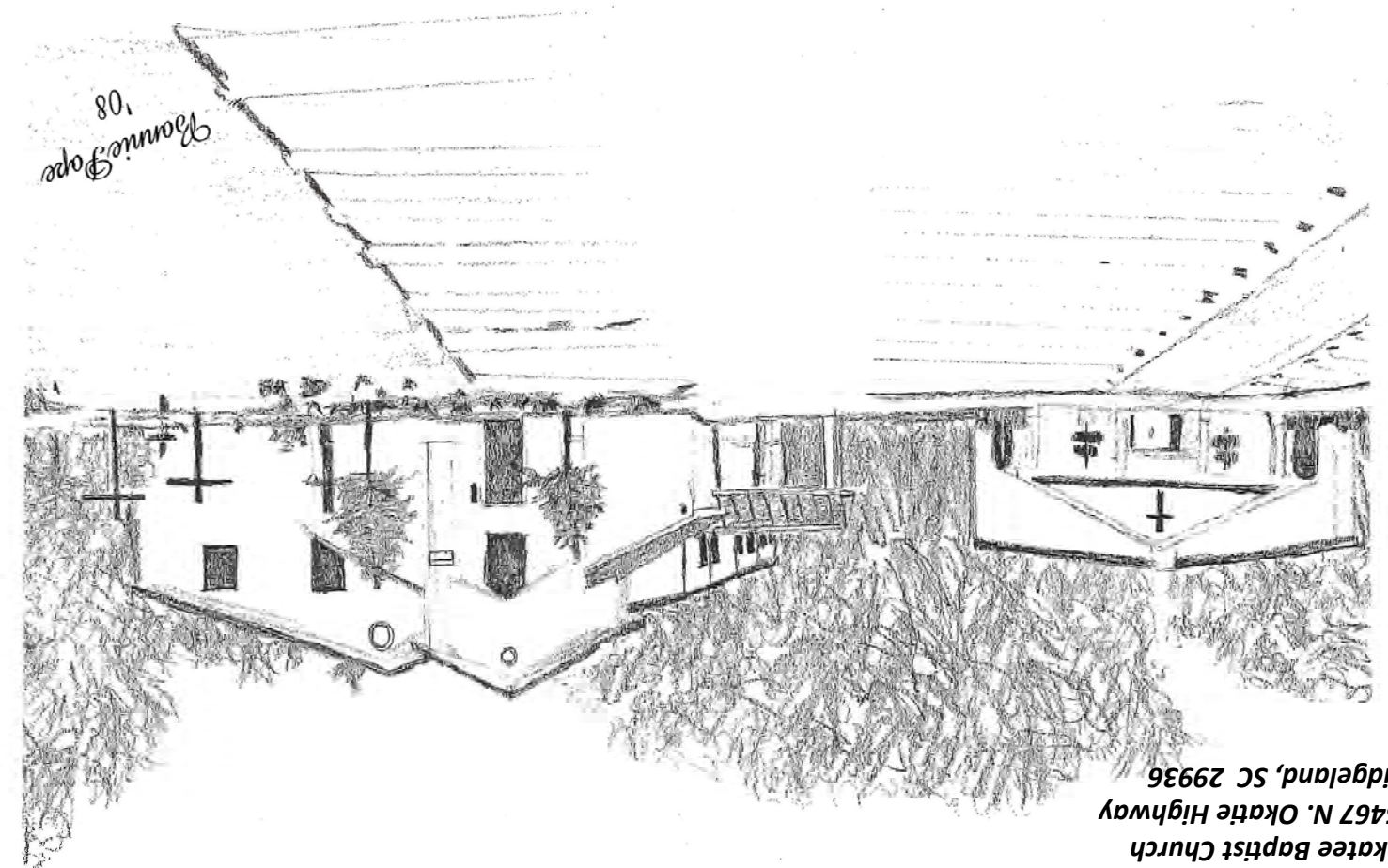
Pastor Woody will lead us in a special Memorial Service to remember our members and loved ones who have passed away.

PASSING OF ROBERTA HAMILTON, AJ SWANSON AND NORMA MARESCO

Roberta Hamilton passed away on January 4, 2024. She had been a member at OBC since 2017. A service was held in Athens, AL on January 11th.

AJ Swanson passed away on January 5, 2024. She had been a member at OBC since 2016. A funeral service was held on January 13th in Murrysville, PA. A celebration of life service will be held at Okatee Baptist Church on Saturday, February 3rd at 11am followed by a light luncheon in fellowship hall. All are welcome.

Norma Maresco passed away on January 17, 2024. She had been a member at OBC since 2007. A private service will be held at Beaufort National Cemetery at a later date.



Okatee Baptist Church
5467 N. Okatie Highway
Ridgeland, SC 29936



FEBRUARY

7th Robert & Janet Pressley
15th Phil & Mary Imhoff
17th Richard & Gloria Patrick

FEBRUARY NURSERY

4th Marsha Morgan
11th Dena Oliver
18th Marsha Morgan
25th Judith Rush

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

Glenda Lyon
Debbie Walls

DEACON OF THE WEEK

February 4 - February 10
Ted Janosko 580-917-6000

February 11 - February 17
Bob Cree 757-803-7108

February 18 - February 24
Roger Woods 912-441-5335

February 25 - March 2
Jim Phillips 864-219-0411

4th Johnny Stellan
6th Richard Patrick
9th Penny Ogureck
11th David Mercer
12th Rick Oberlin
14th Betty Randolph
14th Patricia Tupper
21st Parker Sutler
24th Marshall Stubblefield