



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.

A SEASON OF PREPARATION

On Sunday morning, December 29, I preached a year end message titled ‘What Jesus Does With Failure’ using the story of Peter’s redemption and restoration by Jesus in John 21:1-19. Along with the message, we sang Another Year Is Dawning, Revive Us Again, Amazing Grace, Everlasting Arms, and I Surrender All. The point of the message is that God is a God of redemption. God is a God of a great many things, but I wanted to highlight that God would redeem the struggles of 2024 and pave the way for a better 2025. I even asked my audience if anyone wanted to repeat the year 2024, and the resounding answer was no!

Perhaps that wasn't the right response, because a month later it snowed and we lost the use of our worship and fellowship building. Maybe 2024 wasn't so bad because the loss of the building created a different trajectory for our church by forcing us to make changes in our processes. And change for people can create a disruptive and destructive perspective. Maybe our response to repeating 2024 should have been: if it served God’s greater purpose, then let’s repeat 2024 in 2025. So, maybe God is teaching us that we need to be content in whatever He brings our way or allows to happen, because while it may be uncomfortable and hard, change orchestrated by God can be liberating and exciting. So maybe, just maybe, all the changes we are going through is God’s way of preparing us for the next season that might bring us to new levels and heights. That’s exciting!!

Perhaps this is a season of preparation and God wants to us to know Him more intimately like Paul prayed for the church at Ephesus; *“I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, “and his incomparably great power for us who believe. (Ephesians 1:17-19 NIV)*

Perhaps God is solidifying in our hearts the absolute truth that we NEED HIM! If you never felt pain, went through difficulty, felt sadness, made a mistake, got in trouble, felt broken, how would you know God heals, delivers, comforts, forgives, rescues, fixes, or provide solutions? If life was perfect, then what would we need God for?

Perhaps we need to intentionally and purposefully live out the songs we sang on December 29; Another Year Is Dawning, Revive Us Again, Amazing Grace, Everlasting Arms, and I Surrender All, reminding ourselves that we truly need to know and trust God in all things.

I am grateful God has allowed me to serve people dedicated to Gospel living.

Pastor Woody



GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE
Friday, April 18th / 6pm

EASTER SERVICES
Sunday, April 20th

8:30am Easter Service I
9:45am Sunday School
11:00am Easter Service II

NEW MEMBERS
Clifford Wright
28 Glencairn Avenue
Bluffton, SC 29910
cliffordwright66@gmail.com

Dorothy Farmer
960 Gleneagle Court
Bluffton, SC 29909
Dorothy.Farmer
@comcast.net

CONDOLENCES
Jack Tuttle passed away on 2/19/2025. Jack joined the church in 2014. A memorial service was held March 15th at Okatee Baptist Church. His obituary can be read at <https://www.saulsfh.com/listings>

STAFF

Woody Oliver, Pastor

Dr. Tim Searcy, Assoc. Pastor

Suzanne Tomlinson, Choir Dir.

Pam Seibert, Admin. Assist.

Dena Oliver, Facilities

843-987-0885



Okatee Baptist Church



Okatee Baptist Church



Okateebaptist.com

DR. TIM SEARCY (Dr. T)

ST. PETER'S BASILICA AND THE MESSAGE OF EASTER

During a recent visit to St. Peter's Basilica in Rome, I was struck by the grandeur and history of one of the world's most famous churches. Yet, as Baptists, we do not place our faith in magnificent buildings or the legacies of human institutions. Instead, our hope is anchored in the very foundation of our faith—the resurrection of Jesus Christ.

St. Peter's Basilica stands as a testament to centuries of Christian history. Tradition holds that it was built over the tomb of the apostle Peter, who boldly proclaimed Jesus as the Christ, the Son of the Living God (Matthew 16:16). But Peter himself would remind us that the true foundation of the Church is not a place or a person, but Christ alone: "For no one can lay any foundation other than the one already laid, which is Jesus Christ" (1 Corinthians 3:11).

Easter is the celebration of this truth. The empty tomb in Jerusalem, not a basilica in Rome, is our greatest monument to the faith. While the world admires architecture, we rejoice in the living Savior. The resurrection of Christ is not confined to history or grand cathedrals but is a present and personal reality for every believer.

As we approach Easter, let us remember that our faith is not in the grandeur of religious traditions but in the simple yet powerful message of the gospel: Christ has died, Christ has risen, and Christ will come again. Just as Peter preached at Pentecost, "God raised him up, loosing the pangs of death, because it was not possible for him to be held by it" (Acts 2:24).

This Easter, whether we gather in small churches or large sanctuaries, may our focus be on the risen Christ, who alone is worthy of our worship.

ASSOCIATE PASTOR SEARCH TEAM

The Associate Pastor Search Team (APST) has been meeting every other week to seek God's will in adding another staff member to our growing church. They have spent much time in prayer making sure that we are in God's will for what he has in store for us.

The team has about completed the task of the advertisement that will be posted on the South Carolina Baptist Convention website for exposure in South Carolina and neighboring states as well getting national exposure on the Southern Baptist Convention's website.

The team has also put a link to Okatee Baptist Church's website that interested candidates can access to review the Position Description and church profile. Resumes will be collected through snail mail and a dedicated email address.

REMEMBERING THOSE UNABLE TO ATTEND CHURCH

Please remember our church members who are no longer able to attend church by sending cards to them. Those members are listed under "Homebound" on the prayer list that is sent out weekly. Their addresses are in the directory that was distributed in November 2024, or call the church office (843-987-0885).

There will not be a Men's Breakfast the month of April.

CHILDREN'S CHURCH EVENT

Saturday, April 12th
10:30am Cinemark Bluffton
"The King of Kings"

FELLOWSHIP MEAL

Wednesday, April 16th / 6pm
Bring a friend and come for fellowship and fun at our Fellowship Meal. The church will provide drinks. Please bring an entrée, side dish or dessert to share with others if you are able.

GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE

Friday, April 18th / 6pm

EASTER SERVICES

Sunday, April 20th
8:30am Easter Service I
9:45am Sunday School Breakfast
11:00am Easter Service II

QUARTERLY BUSINESS MEETING

Wednesday, April 30th / 6pm

If you have any business to come before the church, please let Pastor Woody or Jim Phillips know before the meeting so you can be added to the agenda.

TUESDAY PRAYER GATHERING

11:30am

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 gathering area.



WOM is planning our yearly luncheon for all ladies of our church and any ladies they would like to invite. We will be announcing the details after our meeting in April.

Our Blessing Box has been used successfully to help those who need food and other needs. We are focusing now on filling the box with more items that can be used by children when they are home from school or out for the summer.

We will begin visiting assisted living facilities soon. We plan to visit once a quarter.

Our next meeting is April 14 @ 1:00 in the conference room at the education building. Please come join us and be a part of this wonderful group of ladies who are mission minded to show God's love locally and giving monetarily to international missions.

MUSIC MINISTRY

Choir Director: Suzanne Tomlinson

"Because He Lives" was written in the late 1960s by Bill & Gloria Gaither during a time of social upheaval, threats of war, and betrayals of national and personal trust. Things haven't changed much, have they. It was at such a time that their third little baby was born. They were personally under a lot of stress & anxiety. Bill had mononucleosis and they were experiencing verbal attacks regarding their Christian ministry. It was in the midst of this that the assurance of the risen Christ brought a calm and a peace to them. Holding their tiny son in their arms they were able to write:

'How sweet to hold our newborn baby,
And feel the pride, and joy he gives;
But greater still the calm assurance,
this child can face uncertain day because He lives.'

"Because He Lives" begins with the empty grave on Easter Sunday. Stanza two is about hope, even in uncertain days, because of the significance of the Resurrection. Stanza three takes us to heaven where we will "see the lights of glory and... know He reigns." "Because I know He holds the future; and life is worth the living just because He lives".
What a wonderful hope for today and for eternity!

CHILDREN'S MINISTRY

Gail Lenga

We are planning a family movie day to see "The King of Kings" on Saturday, April 12th. Please let Gail Lenga or Glenda Lyon know if you plan to attend. Thank you.

Easter Sunday the children will go directly upstairs instead of staying in the worship area. We have several activities planned, including a candy egg hunt. Parents, please pick your child up outside after the morning service.

Please continue to pray for more volunteers as our children's department continues to grow.

Thank you for allowing us to minister and share God's word to your children. Happy Easter to all.



APRIL

- 6th Gail Langa
- 6th Stan Smith
- 9th David Atterberry
- 12th Tom McTeer
- 14th Brian Cormier
- 18th Yvonne Price
- 19th Debbie Neal
- 21st Bill Blalock
- 23rd Ted Janosko
- 30th Jimmy Padgett



APRIL

- 6th Jim & Janet Phillips
- 6th Johnny & Je Stellon
- 12th Ted & Marilyn Janosko
- 14th David & Sara Mercer
- 16th Chris & Carrie Campbell

APRIL NURSERY

- 6th Connie Cormier
- 13th Marsha Morgan
- 20th Esther Robbins
- 27th Gail Temple

CHILDREN'S CHURCH

- Glenda Lyon
- Debbie Walls

DEACON OF THE WEEK

April 6 - 12
Chris Campbell 843-441-4276

April 13 - 19
Robert Pressley 864-614-3898

April 20 - 26
Phil Imhoff 419-295-7031

April 27 - May 3
Stan Wastowicz 703-447-9646

VBS SPORTS CAMP 2025
SAVE THE DATE: June 9-13, 5-8pm

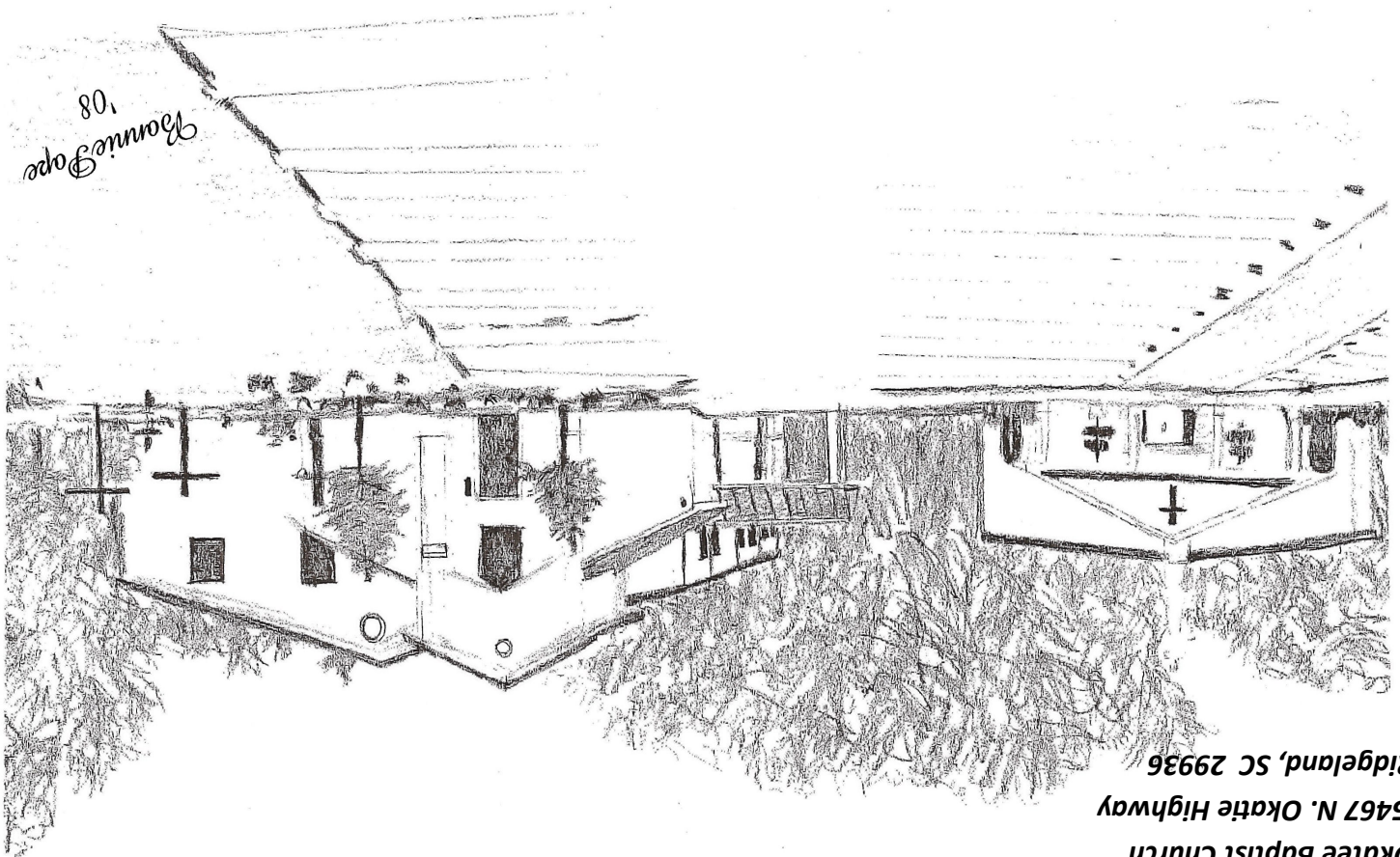
Okatee Baptist Church in partnership with UW Sports will present a sports camp for 1 week in June with the Gospel of Jesus Christ the focus of the experience. UW Sports Ministry is an equipping ministry that enhances the vision of the Church by providing sports-related resources for the effective communication of the gospel. UW Sports will provide a team to run the camp and Okatee Baptist Church will provide people to serve in the following areas: food team, security, registration, set up, prayer warriors, and administration. Each year, we average 37 workers to serve to assist the UW Team to share the Gospel and develop relationships with the campers and their families. Sign up will begin May 1st.



CHILDREN'S CHURCH FAMILIES

Upcoming Family Movie
"The King of Kings"
April 12th / 10:30am at Cinemark Bluffton

Tickets are *\$8.00 Children and \$8.50 Adults. A parent must attend with their child. The church will provide a kid's pack popcorn for your child. We hope to see you there!



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