



APRIL / MAY 2023

#### A Note from Pastor Debbie

"O sing to the Lord a new song; sing to the Lord, all the earth. Sing to the Lord, bless his name; tell of his salvation from day to day. Declare his glory among the nations, his marvelous works among all the peoples. For great is the Lord, and greatly to be praised!" (Psalm 96)

Let us sing a new song. Because our God is a great God and God has done marvelous things.

God has blessed Oakland Presbyterian Church in so many ways, down through the decades – since 1858! And God will continue to lead Oakland into the future.

The Session, Staff and Mission Study Team met on the afternoon of March 12 with Elizabeth Hamilton from Holy Cow Consulting to review the results of the congregational survey which you completed in February. We had 108% of the worshipping congregation (based on average in-person worship attendance) complete the survey. Excellent participation which indicates that this family of faith is engaged and cares about the future of Oakland Presbyterian Church! The Mission Study Team will take this nearly 30 page report and summarize it to share with the congregation. We will share what the data showed and what Elizabeth interpreted for us. (In other words, we will not put "our spin" on this information but try to condense it to make it more accessible to you.) The Mission Study Team will meet after Easter to begin this summary work. We hope to be able to invite you to lunch after worship one of the first Sundays in June to share this important information. Stay tuned! Oakland is a diverse family of faith and we need to use that diversity to strengthen our congregation and enable us to grow. Elizabeth asked the leadership "Why do you want to grow?" And the immediate response, with which we all agreed, was to share the good news of Jesus Christ with our community." I will keep you informed as we make this journey of faith together!

And I want to invite you to join our Thursday night Bible Study at 7 pm. We will complete our study of the Exodus – A People in Transition (sound familiar?) in April. Beginning the first Thursday in May, we will begin a study of the Book of Acts – the story of how God's Holy Spirit blew through and among the early Christian Church. We have fabulous conversation so I hope you will come join us. Also, the Thursday Bible Study participants will be leading our Seder Worship on Maundy Thursday, April 6 at 7 pm in the Fellowship Hall. My prayer and hope are that we will connect the biblical stories of faith with the story of Oakland Presbyterian Church. The biblical witness will provide a foundation for our present experiences. Come join us!

I look forward to journeying with you through Holy Week and worshipping the Risen Lord with you on Easter morning – at 6:30 and 10:30 am! O sing to the Lord a new song!

Blessings!  
Debbie



### **Office Closed**

The Church office will be closed on Monday April 10th and Monday May 29th.



### **April & May Anniversaries**

Mark & Danielle Hamer	4/17
<i>Celebrating 24 years</i>	
Arthur & Shelly Watkins	4/17
<i>Celebrating 12 years</i>	
Eric & Christy Braswell	4/24
<i>Celebrating 13 years</i>	
Tom & Michelle Dietrich	4/24
<i>Celebrating 41 years</i>	



*Tom and Ann Grundstrom 5/6  
Celebrating 28 years*

*Stephen & Linda Pingel 5/6  
Celebrating 52 years*

*Trey & Becca Jolly 5/29  
Celebrating 18 years*

*Grady & Pam Watkins 5/31  
Celebrating 48 years*

## PRAYER REQUESTS

Stuart Anderson	Bo Kelly
Eric Brown	Ann Lee
Mike Brewer	Jane Lee
Jennifer Bausman	Ken McGee
Phyllis Collins	Jeremy Myers
Debbie Dockery	Bill Norris
John B Dalton	Ada Norris
Audrey Ennis	Clara Santana
Joyce English	Bob Webb
Stephanie English	Alfred Workman
Franciose Family	Danny Wood
Benjamin Geary	Paulette Woodard
Candice Green	Kris Wilson
	Bill Yelvington

## Financial Update

### January

Revenue - \$16,629

Expense - \$32,074

Difference - (-\$12,445)

### February

Revenue - \$19,696

Expense - \$20,061

Difference - (-\$365)

YTD - (-\$12,810)

### Percy and Flossie Barber Memorial Scholarship

Applications are being accepted for the Percy and Flossie Barber Memorial Scholarship. To recognize the importance of Oakland Presbyterian Church and Cleveland community in the lives of Percy and Flossie Barber, this annual scholarship is awarded to a deserving graduating high school senior to provide assistance with college expenses. Applica-

tions are available online or you can contact the office if you would like on.

All applications are due to the church office by **May 1, 2023**.

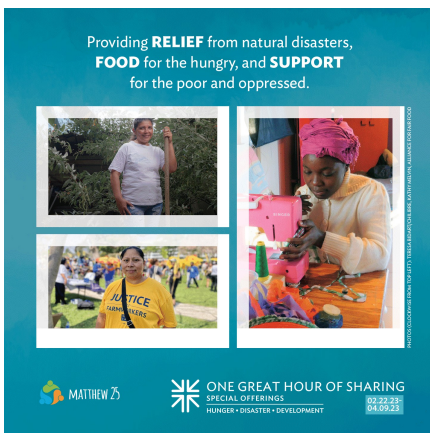
Katelyn Caldwell	4/1	Pam Watkins	4/16	Jeff Swick	5/1	Amelia Broadwell	5/25
Robert Heath	4/1	Nata Barber	4/18	Carol Benson	5/2	Trey Jolly	5/25
Abby Thomas	4/1	William Jones II	4/18	Billy Barefoot	5/3	Paul Miller	5/27
Ben Swift	4/2	Emma Watkins	4/18	Martin Velie	5/5	Priscilla Willis	5/27
Leslie Myers	4/3	Jane Lee	4/20	Bonnie Adams	5/9	Tammy Barefoot	5/29
Jennifer Mayes	4/6	Joe David Austin	4/21	Pat Baker	5/9		
Brian LaRue	4/7	Megan Massengill	4/21	Larry Barbour	5/9		
Chad Massengill	4/8	Kristopher Dietrich	4/22	Autumn Swift	5/11		
Norma Blackmon	4/9	Jonathan Crowe	4/23	Logan Swift	5/11		
Dennis Garvin	4/9	Katie Lower	4/23	Brandon Pleasants	5/14		
Kitty Nappen	4/10	Shannon Gooding	4/25	Becky Stover	5/15		
Wayne Baker	4/12	Morgan Mayes	4/26	Alex Wright-Taylor	5/16		
Wanda Watkins	4/13	Preston Woods	4/26	Beth McGee	5/18		
Lois Langston	4/14	Svetlana Velie	4/28	Mary Jo New	5/19		
Brad Lower	4/16	Marie Barbour	4/30	Jacob Miller	5/20		
Ashley Massengill	4/16	Charlotte McNutt	4/30	Laura New	5/21		





## Missions Food Drive

The Mission Team will be starting our first drive of 2023 with a Food Drive to benefit Polenta's Backpack Buddies program as well as the Blessing Box located in front of the school. While any non-perishable items are appreciated, the items of greatest need are canned meats and 8 oz.-sized Horizon Organic shelf-stable milk. Additionally, pop-top cans are preferred when possible for children who may need to prepare food themselves and are unable to use a can opener. For additional donation suggestions, please visit the Backpack Buddies website. The food drive will go through Sunday, April 23rd.



## One Great Hour of Sharing

Oakland will be collecting the One Great Hour of Sharing offering on [Sunday, April 2nd](#) and [Sunday April 9th](#). This offering has a three prong focus or emphasis: 1) Disaster Assistance 2) Hunger 3) Self-Development of People. There will be special envelopes in the pews on these two Sundays.

THANK YOU!!

A BIG Thank you to all the donated and supported the BBQ and Bid fundraiser this year. A little over \$9000 was raised and will be a huge blessing and help for the mission team this summer!



## PYC News & Events

Oakland's PYC has been on the move the last couple of months, and things are looking to keep us moving through the end of the school year! The youth did a great job leading and running our annual "Soup"er Bowl lunch in February. **THANK YOU** to everyone who donated soup, bread, crackers, and desserts and a big **THANK YOU** to all who came and ate with us. You helped the youth group raise almost \$500 to use for our activities and outings!!

We had an awesome time at Winter Jam 2023 and loved hearing so many of today's Christian artists perform! The lineup this year included Austin French, Andy Minneo, Jeremy Camp, Anne Wilson, and We The Kingdom. Many of the youth are still singing the songs they heard that night and I wouldn't be

surprised if you didn't hear a couple of them come up in Youth Sunday in June ;-). After the concert we hit up Cookout for a late night snack, and then came back to the church for a lock-in...which was a blast!

On Sunday, March 26<sup>th</sup> we had the opportunity to serve once again with the Cleveland Area Back Pack Buddies. They definitely kept us busy as we packed close to 500 bags in total for April's distribution, bags for Spring Break, and some extra bags to get a jump start on May. We also helped with reorganizing and sorting some of the food in the storage unit. We all left tired but so filled by the work we did knowing that it will bless so many kids in our area who are in need of food!

Looking ahead, we are so close to finishing up our study in Revelation. I have really enjoyed working through the book of Revelation with youth and they have done an awesome job with it. Our approach to this study has been to read and discuss each chapter directly from the Bible to see what God reveals about Jesus and Himself, and I really think the youth have gotten a lot out of it!! We will finish up Revelation when we return from Spring Break on April 16<sup>th</sup>, and then we will have a couple of topical kind of studies for the remainder of the year as we host a couple of "Bring a Friend to Youth Nights".

And last but certainly not least, the event of the year is coming up in April...our annual PYC Beach Retreat! We are so excited to once again take some time to get away as a group and spend some time together in God's Word and having fun as we build relationships. Our theme for this year is Discipleship and our kind of motto for the weekend will be "Love God, Love People, Make Disciples." We would love for each of you to be in prayer for our group and leaders during the retreat from April 21-23. Then on June 4<sup>th</sup>, the youth will share with you some of the lessons and takeaways from the weekend as they lead service during Youth Sunday on

June 4<sup>th</sup>.

God is moving in some awesome ways in our youth, and I am so excited to see what He has in store for us over the summer and as we plan to start a new school year in the fall!





# T H E F I R S T S U N R I S E S E R V I C E

*by Shirley Watkins*

As most of you know our former ministers were yoked with three churches; Oakland, White Memorial and Mount Pleasant.

The first Sunrise Service was held at Mount Pleasant in 1954. Rev. Galen Elliott was minister at that time. It was decided that the service would alternate at the other churches in the future.

In 1955, Oakland had its first Sunrise Service. Members of the congregation and the other churches were invited to attend. The Service was most impressive as the combined choirs of the three churches marched out of the church singing while grouped together facing the sunrise. An inspirational message was delivered by Rev. Elliott. Following the service, choir members and other guests served themselves coffee and donuts which had been prepared by the Women of the Church. As they sipped their coffee, they listened to a recording of the service just held. It was thrilling to hear the music and sermon again as well as the birds in the treetops that chirped so loudly while Rev. Elliott delivered the sermon.

Easter is a time when we celebrate the resurrection of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Matthew 28:6 (KJV) says "He is not here for he is risen, as he said. Come see the place where the Lord lay."





Community Family  
night fun! We have  
been having lots of  
fun at these, be sure  
to be on the look out  
for the next one and  
invite some friends!



# EASTER Activities

## **April 2:** Palm Sunday

10:30 worship service

## **April 6:** Seder Service at 7pm

Service with communion

## **April 9:** Easter Sunday

Sunrise Service at 6:30am

Easter party/family craft and breakfast at  
9am

10:30 worship service



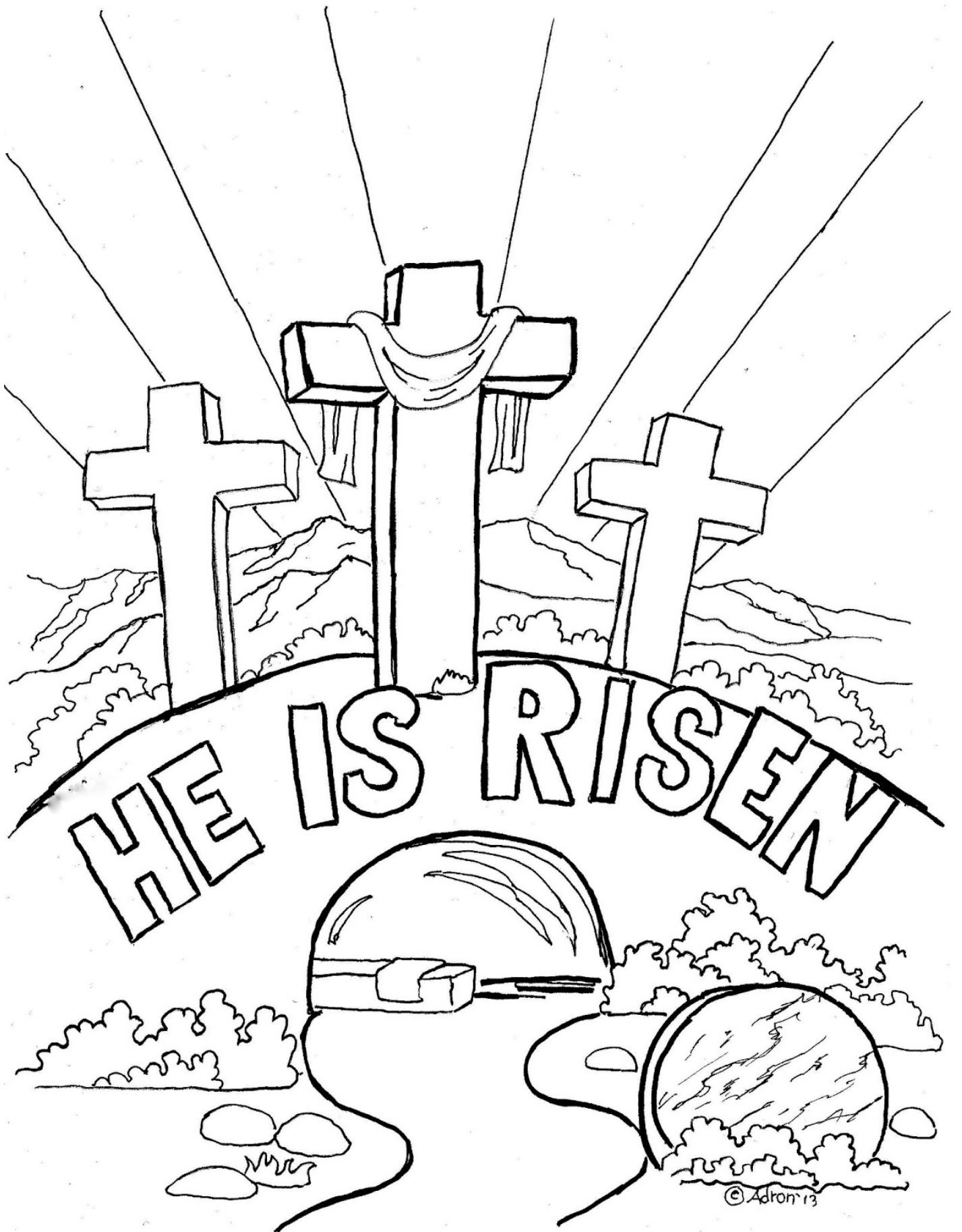
## **Easter Morning**

We hope to see you and your family on Easter morning. There will be sunrise service at 6:30am. There will be an Easter gathering beginning at 9am with a small Easter activity for families to do together while we all have breakfast together. Breakfast will be pot luck style so please bring something to share.

Don't forget to bring your flowers for the flower cross also!







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### Helping hands ministry

Do you know of someone in the church in need of some help with yard work? Need help with a project around the house? Do you know of someone that might need help with some spring cleaning? Oakland has a ministry for that! The helping hands ministry can help with yard work, small projects or clean up around the house. Please email Kate (secretary@oaklandpresbyterianchurch.org) if you know of a need and she will get you in touch with the right person.



### Serve Night

Serve Night is the 1st Thursday of each month. There will be no Serve night in April. Please join us on Thursday, May 4th. There will be dinner at 6:15, followed by a short devotional and committee meetings start at 7pm.

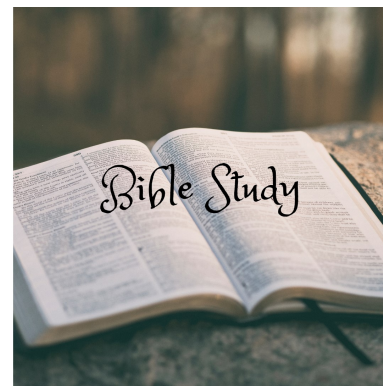
### Bible Study

Bob and Janet Foor are leading a weekly Bible Study on **Wednesday at 11am in the Parlor**. They will not be meeting on Wed April 5th or 12th due to Easter and Spring break.

There is also an evening weekly Bible Study led by Pastor Debbie on **Thursday evenings at 7pm**. There will be no Bible Study Thursday (April 6th due to the Seder Service) or Thursday (April 13th due to Spring Break. If you would like to join this evening Bible Study remotely, please use this link.

<https://meet.google.com/vzc-jhq-n-gex>

The current study is Exodus and starting May 4th, Pastor Debbie will be studying the book of Acts.





### **Save the Date**

Sunday, June 4th will be Youth Sunday! Please plan to come and hear our youth as they take over the worship service and share their lessons and experiences with the congregation.

### **Questions?**

Have you been visiting Oakland for a while and have some questions you would like to ask Pastor Debbie? Would you like to just get to know her a little better? She would love to have the opportunity to get to know you better too. Please be sure and RSVP to [revdebbieo@aol.com](mailto:revdebbieo@aol.com) if you would like to come and let us know if you need childcare.

YOU ARE INVITED!

## **DESSERTS AND DISCUSSION WITH PASTOR DEBBIE**

**PASTOR DEBBIE WOULD LOVE TO GET TO  
KNOW YOU BETTER AND ANSWER ANY  
QUESTIONS YOU MIGHT HAVE ABOUT  
OAKLAND**

**PLEASE JOIN HER AT THE HOME OF ED  
AND DEBORAH WILLIFORD  
8730 CLEVELAND ROAD  
CLAYTON, NC 27520**

**SUNDAY APRIL 16TH AT 4PM.**

**PLEASE RSVP TO  
[REVDEBBIEO@AOL.COM](mailto:REVDEBBIEO@AOL.COM)**

**PLEASE ALSO LET US KNOW IF YOU NEED CHILDCARE**

Four cupcakes with light blue frosting and colorful sprinkles are arranged in a row at the bottom of the invitation card.



The Oakland Acorn  
Oakland Presbyterian Church  
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Clayton, North Carolina 27520

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