



Oakland Acorn

OCTOBER / NOVEMBER 2023

Dear Friends,

If there is one thing which living through one of the worst global pandemics in history has taught us, it is to consider what we value the most. What does it mean to be the Body of Christ in our contexts/culture today? Do we value our relationships with God and with each other as we live in community, or do we prefer to prioritize our possessions? Over the past several years we have been forced to consider the essence of who we are and who God calls us to be.

The early church considered these issues as they faced similar conflicts and struggles to survive – especially from the threat of death at the hands of the Roman Empire. And this is how they responded, according to the Book of Acts:

“Awe came upon everyone, because many wonders and signs were being done by the apostles. All who believed were together and had all things in common; they would sell their possessions and goods and distribute the proceeds to all, as any had need. Day by day, as they spent much time together in the temple, they broke bread at home and ate their food with glad and generous hearts, praising God and having the goodwill of all the people. And day by day the Lord added to their number those who were being saved.”

They had glad and generous hearts. They recognized God’s blessings to them in the midst of adversity and responded with praise, thanksgiving, and a heart for giving.

Fall (October and November) is the season in the life of the church when we are invited to consider how we will support the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ in our world today through our giving to the church of Jesus Christ. We hear the word “stewardship” a lot during this time of year. Jesus has more to say about money than any other single topic in the gospels. He understood the danger of money’s lure – how easily it becomes the god we worship. Jesus was concerned that we put God, and only God, first in our lives. The way we use our resources (money in and of itself is not the problem) is reflective of our relationship with God and with other people. Stewardship is not only, or even primarily, about giving to the church to meet a proposed budget. ***Stewardship, by definition, is sharing from generous hearts what resources God has entrusted to our care with an attitude of gratitude.*** It is not ***how much*** we give which matters, but ***that*** we give to the ongoing ministry of Jesus Christ.

The Session of Oakland Presbyterian Church will begin the process of establishing a budget for our ministry together in 2024. They want to be good stewards of the resources entrusted to the care of our church. Please prayerfully consider what God has done and is continuing to do in your life and how you might give out of your sense of gratitude for God’s many blessings to you.

With gratitude for each of you and the gifts you share,
Pastor Debbie

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN'S CIRCLE

Breathe in me, O Holy Spirit, that my thoughts may all be holy. Act in men, O Holy Spirit, that my work, too, may be holy. Draw my heart, O Holy Spirit, that I love but what is holy. Strengthen me, O Holy Spirit, to defend all that is holy. Guard me, then, O Holy Spirit, that I always may be holy. Amen.

354-430

Augustine,



**PRESBYTERIAN
WOMEN**

The above was the opening prayer in our first lesson of the Presbyterian Women's Study of "Sacred Encounters," The Power and Presence of Jesus Christ in Luke and Acts. There are nine lessons in this study and the first one was on Elizabeth's Sacred Encounter, Luke 1:1-24; 39-45. This first lesson addressed how "God calls us to make ourselves available for God's Purpose." The author of this study, Olive Mahabir, pointed out from the book, "Women in the Earliest Churches, by Ben Witherington III, "Elizabeth and Mary, not Zechariah and Joseph, who are the first to receive the message of Christ's coming, who are praised and blessed by God's angels, and who are first to sing and prophesy about the Christ child." "He adds to his statement that Luke presents these women not only as witnesses to the events surrounding the births of John and Jesus but also as active participants in God's Messianic purposes."

Our discussion on what we discovered in the reading of the Word along with this lesson was enjoyable and thought provoking. Our next lesson will be on "The Exorcism in Gerasa," led by Sandra Bjorling. We invite you to attend and join us in this study. The meeting is in the Parlor from 3pm-4pm, on the second Sunday of each month. Please contact Linda Pingel (919-803-7356) for more information.

The women attending commented on how we loved the prayers included with the first Lesson. I am including both (opening prayer above and the closing prayer below), in order that you too can enjoy the thoughts expressed in these prayers from believers in the past.

Let nothing disturb you. Let nothing frighten you. All things pass. God does not change. Patience achieves everything. Whoever has God lacks nothing. God alone suffices. Christ has no body now on earth but yours; no hands but yours; no feet but yours. Yours are the eyes through which the compassion of Christ must look out on the world. Yours are the feet with which [God] is to go about doing good. Yours are the hands with which [God] is to bless [God's] people. Teresa of Avila, 1515-1582

Linda Pingel – Moderator of Presbyterian Women

October Anniversaries

Steve & Katie Dulmaine 10/6

Paul & Kitty Nappen 10/10
Celebrating 42 years

Megan and Hunter Ship 10/11
Celebrating 9 years

Chad & Leslie Myers 10/12
Celebrating 15 years

Martin & Svetlana Velie 10/14
Celebrating 28 years

Bret & Kelly Luter 10/28
Celebrating 27 years



November Anniversaries

Edward & Sarah Leonard 11/4
Celebrating 17 years

Rudy & Pat Baker 11/5
Celebrating 35 years

Steve & Carol Aschmann 11/20
Celebrating 25 years

Robert & Pamela Heath 11/20
Celebrating 41 years

Richie and Tammy Boyd 11/27
Celebrating 24 years

PRAYER REQUESTS

Stuart Anderson	Carolyn Hobgood
Pat and Larry Barbour	Ron Hockaday
Karl Barbee	Kelly Dunn Johnson
Rob Braswell	Donna Kelly
Keith Braswell	Char LaPlant
Eric Brown	Ann Lee
Norma Blackmon	Mary Lee
Karen Caruso	Linda Mahar
Phyllis Collins	Ken McGee
Erica Creech	Clara Santanta
Debbie Dockery	Shirley Watkins
Joyce English	Rudolph and Elgie Wells
Audrey Ennis	Fannie and Preston Wood
Bob Foor	Mindy Wood
Benjamin Geary	Danny Wood
Candice Green	Kris Wilson
Dawson Hammer	Lindsey Wilson
	Bill Yelvington

Financial Update

July
Revenue:
\$37,966
Expenses:
\$23,651
Difference:
\$14,315

August
Revenue:
\$20,794
Expenses:
\$20,694
Difference:
\$100

YTD :
(-9,984)



October Birthdays

Eric Braswell	10/2
James Lee	10/3
Jennifer Wells	10/4
Dianne Jones	10/5
Davis Wells	10/6
Preston Thomas	10/7
Donna Kelly	10/8
Tammy Pflum	10/8
Andrew Ruth	10/8
Helen Thomas	10/8
Denton Lee III	10/10
Ramsey Wright-Taylor	10/10
Tom Grundstrom	10/15
Jake Pflum	10/18
Merle McNutt	10/19

Jonathan Partin	10/19
Ginny Price	10/22
Craig New	10/25
Michelle Dietrich	10/27
Steve Hall	10/27
Emery Myers	10/29
Aiden Taylor	10/30
Dillon Wells	10/31

November Birthdays

Rachel Williams	11/2
Aiden Zapata	11/2
Nolan Myers	11/5
Cheryl Kirk	11/12
Shirley Watkins	11/13
Tammy Boyd	11/15

Carol White	11/17
Claire Kuppler	11/18
Art Watkins	11/20
Ed Williford	11/20
Annic Broadwell	11/21
Steve Dulmaine	11/22
Janet Foor	11/23
Linwood Jones	11/23
Jody Pleasants	11/24
Pat Barbour	11/27
Adynn Barefoot	11/27
Linda Pingel	11/28
Wilbert Miller	11/29
Cole Moore	11/29

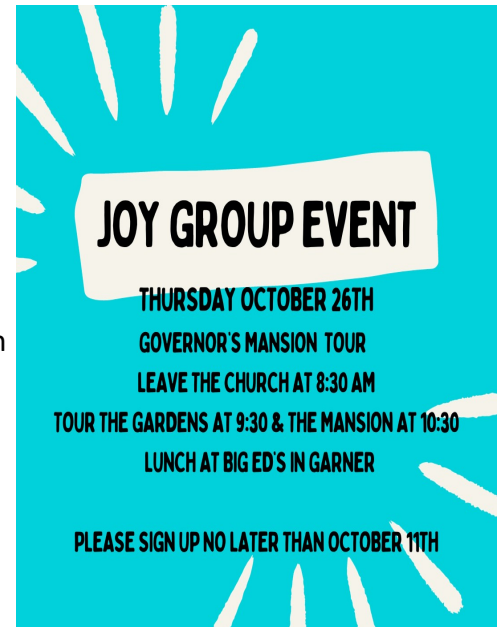


JOY GROUP UPCOMING EVENTS

The Joy Group have quite a few important dates coming up. The dates are listed below:

- October 1 & 8 Sign up for the tour of the Governor's Mansion & Gardens in Raleigh. If you plan to attend you must sign up
- October 12 Senior Lunch @ Pleasant Grove Church
1241 Old Fairgrounds Rd., Willow Springs
- October 26 Governor's Mansion Tour Leave the church at 8:30 am
Tour the gardens at 9:30 & the mansion at 10:30
Lunch at Big Ed's in Garner
- Nov. 17 Tour Seymour Johnson Air Base
Lunch at McCall's Restaurant
- Dec. 3 Singing Christmas Tree concert at Snyder Memorial Baptist Church in Fayetteville at 4:30. Leave the church at 3:00.

Tickets will be ordered on November 9. Tickets sell out fast, be sure to sign up. Look for a sign up sheet beginning on Oct 22, 29 & Nov. 5. Dinner out on the way home.



The Joy Group was established as part of the Congregational Care Committee. The purpose is to offer fellowship activities for our senior members. We have been to the Heritage Center & Ava Gardener Museum in Smithfield & to the Airborne & Special Operations Museum in Fayetteville. After the tours we have lunch together at a local restaurant. We are also participating with 5 local churches for a monthly luncheon. If you have not participated I invite you to consider joining us for some of the upcoming events. If you have questions about any of the events you can contact Helen Thomas at 919-631-6206.



2023 Outstanding Older Adult Keith Braswell

Keith was born on September 13, 1947 to Floyd and Mozelle Braswell and is one of six children. He has strong family values and maintains close connections with his three surviving siblings. Growing up on a farm that grew tobacco, cotton, corn, and soybeans Keith learned strong work ethics that he has demonstrated all his life. After high school graduation Keith married his school sweetheart Sue Ennis and joined the army where he served a tour in Vietnam. Keith is the father of three children tragically losing two of them. He is the grandfather of three tragically losing one of them and is also a great-grandfather of one. Keith has experienced many losses in his life including parents, siblings, children, and grandchild, but through these difficult and painful seasons of life Keith maintained a strong faith in the Lord as he does to this day.

Keith is well versed in the Bible and is a strong disciple of Jesus as he spreads the love of Jesus through his words and actions. Keith is a strong figure in his church, Oakland Presbyterian, serving as an elder, serving on the mission team, heading the cemetery team, leading a Bible study at a local nursing home, and teaching an adult Sunday School class. He loves his church and if there is a function happening you will most likely see him attending.

Keith has also been involved in the community having served as a volunteer fireman for many years and currently assists in a food pantry program at the local high school. He stays connected with community members and is quick to assist and/or pray for any of their needs.

Now that Keith is retired from Walmart as a truck driver, he spends many hours working in his yard and taking short backroad trips with Sue.

In conclusion, Keith Braswell certainly lives up to the title of "Outstanding Older Adult".



Submitted by Sandra Bjorling



Oakland Advent Devotional

Call for Christmas Stories!!

As we begin to look forward to Christmas, we will also start to reminisce about our favorite traditions and stories. If you find yourself walking down memory lane, why not take a few minutes to write your story down to share with Oakland for the 2023 Oakland Advent Devotional! This will be the third edition of our little church devotion, and the main thing that makes it so special is the stories you all share. Whether it is a devotion you read by another author that spoke to you during the Christmas Season or a memory of your own that you cherish, sharing stories brings us together in a way nothing else can. We would love to have each devotion include a scripture that relates to the story, but if you have a hard time deciding on one, Sarah will be happy to help with that part.

To make sure we have our devotional booklet ready by December 1st, we will need all contributions submitted to sarah@oaklandpresbyterianchurch.org by Sunday, Nov. 26th. Please reach out to Sarah Leonard if you have any questions or would like to be added to her list of potential participants that she will follow up with throughout the month of November

The Acorn is going paperless in 2024

Beginning with the February 2024 edition of the Acorn newsletter, we will begin only sending this via email. Times and prices are changing and we have gotten feedback that most people would prefer it paperless rather than through the USPS. We want to take this opportunity to be sure that we have everyone's updated information as well. If you would like to continue to receive the Acorn in your actual mailbox rather than your email inbox, please email Kate and let her know that you would like to continue to receive the newsletter via the USPS. If you would like to get the Acorn via email and you currently get the weekly email with no problems, then you do not need to take action. This transition will take a little time so please be patient with the office staff as we make the transition. If you have any questions, please email Kate (secretary@oaklandpresbyterianchurch.org)



As we update these preferences, we want to make sure we have all updated information. Every Sunday in the month of November we will have cards to fill out with all updated contact information so please be on the lookout for those.

Advent Wreath Workshop

Over the last several years, the Advent Wreath Workshop hosted by Discipleship (formerly CE) has become one of the family favorite events of Christmas! This event can be challenging to plan since we try to host it early enough so that families have their wreath to use for Advent, which usually starts the weekend after Thanksgiving.

This year, Discipleship will host our Advent Wreath Workshop as a part of Serve night on Thursday, November 30th.

We hope you will make plans to join us for dinner at 6pm followed by the wreath making. We will likely leave some supplies out for you to grab on Sunday after worship if you can't make it. If you have any questions, reach out to Sarah.



Harvest Day

During the depression, times were hard & money was scarce. Personal income, tax revenues, profits & prices dropped. Farming in rural areas suffered as crop prices fell by approximately 60%.

Members of Oakland decided to have a sale at the church to raise money for financial support. They decided to have it in the fall of the year after the crops were housed, so therefore it was called Harvest Days. The first Harvest Day was held on the November 16, 1932.

The women were so excited bringing homemade pies, cakes, jelly, jam, preserves, pickles, aprons, quilts & other handmade items. The men brought bales of cotton, chickens & anything they thought would sell.

It was an exciting day for everyone, especially the children that came after school. It was usually a long day.

When the sale was over, everyone was hungry & could hardly wait to eat. There were no picnic tables. Posts had been buried in the ground & hog wire had been stretched out & nailed to the posts. The ladies spread tablecloths over the wire & put out all the good smelling food. I can almost smell it now!



Oh, what an exciting & worthwhile day it was. The money was placed in the treasury for financial support.

In 1957, what had been called our Harvest Day became what we now know as Homecoming. A church Homecoming generally includes preaching (sometimes we have a visiting minister), singing & lunch in the fellowship hall. We always enjoy seeing former members return for this festive day!

Mark 5:18 NIV

Jesus said, "Go home to your own people & tell them how much the Lord has done for you & how He has had mercy on you.."

Shirley Watkins



It is budget time at Oakland. If you can and would like to help with our budget planning, please cut out this card and either drop it by the church office, mail to the church or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday morning.
Thank you!

2024 PLANNED GIVING CARD

In response to all Jesus has given me, and in hopes that Jesus will use me to bless another,

I, _____, plan to give to the best of my ability

\$ _____ to the General Fund every week, month, or year

AND

\$ _____ to the Building Maintenance Fund every week, month, or year so that others can grow spiritually at Oakland.

OR

I cannot commit to giving at this time, but will give as able.

Back To School Pray For Me Board

Every year, we prepare to send our kids back to school with all of the necessities: new clothes, new shoes, and the long list of school supplies. But is that the best we can do to prepare them for the year ahead, and the struggles and triumphs they will face?

Colossians 4:2 tells us to “devote yourselves to prayer, being watchful and thankful.”, and I had the idea that we could do that in a powerful way for all the kids at Oakland returning to school. The Bible tells us repeatedly the importance and power of prayer. Even having just one person pray for a situation can have a dramatic impact... even if you never know they were praying for you. So, when the start of school was looming in the distance, I got an idea (formed from several other places and awesome resources, one of which I am going to share with you) to set up an opportunity for our members to adopt a student to pray for them as the school year started and to continue praying for them throughout the school year.

All the names and grades of our school aged youth were gathered, a back to school tag was created for each of them, and then posted on our bulletin board to be chosen by members who have committed to pray for that student by taking their tag. I am so happy to report that by the second week of school, every tag had been taken which means that all of our kids are going to school each day covered in the prayers of not just their parents and family, but by a church member who cares for them!! I don't really know of anything that could be more encouraging or uplifting for our students.

My main goal for this campaign was to find a way to encourage our church family to pray for each other, but there are so many little side benefits that I can see God using through this to help our congregation grow closer. If you would like to keep your prayer buddy to yourself that is totally fine, but you also have the opportunity to let the student you chose know that you have been praying for them. Maybe take the opportunity to check in

with them from time to time to see how school is going or if they have any specific prayer request. It might seem odd, but kids love getting letters and cards in the mail, so maybe send them a short note in the mail for them. From there, I am confident that we will see relationships form and grow, and our students will see that they have a trusted person they might not have thought of before who is for them and wants the best for them. I am so excited to see how God is going to work through our prayer buddies at Oakland!

Now, for the resource I promised you. My idea for prayer buddies is a little modified from a prayer campaign I learned about called “Prayer For ME” founded by Tony Souder in Chattanooga, Tennessee. His campaign is a strategic step in mobilizing adults from every generation to intentionally begin investing in the lives of kids and teenagers in a natural way through prayer. He has several books and resources that you can check out at www.prayformecampaign.com. His books are prayer guides

that equip and lead adults through daily prayer prompts grounded in scripture over 13 weeks.

The Pray For Me Campaign Mr. Souder has started, encourages youth to find three prayer champions from different generations who will commit to praying for the student for one year. I chose to start our prayer campaign a little differently by having the adults chose the youth, but I am hoping that we will see some of the same relationship building, growing of faith, and connection among the generations that Mr. Souder has seen in churches who have initiated a Pray For Me Campaign. Thank you so much for committing to pray for the youth of Oakland and I can't wait to see God move through our congregation by connecting our generations through prayer!

~Sarah Leonard



Oakland Happenings



Come prepare your heart and decorate the church for Christmas at our annual Hanging of the Greens. Hanging of the Greens will be on November 26th at 5:30pm. We will be having a chili cookoff after the service! Be on the lookout for more details in the bulletin and weekly emails.



Parents Night Out

Friday, December 1st 5:30-9pm

FUNDRAISER FOR OPC YOUTH

DROP YOUR CHILD OFF FOR AN
EVENING OF CHRISTMAS
GAMES, PIZZA, HOT
CHOCOLATE, CHRISTMAS MOVIE
AND MORE



Operation Christmas Child collects shoe boxes filled with gifts and delivers them to children in need around the world. Every one of these shoebox gifts is an opportunity for the Gospel. You can be a part of this worldwide effort to grow the Kingdom of God even in places where the Gospel has never been heard. Be on the lookout for the shoe boxes soon!

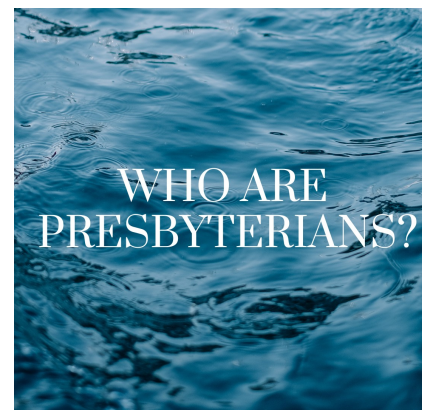
Who are Presbyterians? Come join me (Pastor Debbie) for a four-part study of what it means to be Presbyterian. We will meet the second Sunday of the month - October 8 November 12, and December 10, immediately following worship in the Fellowship Hall. We will provide a sandwich lunch (for a small donation) and childcare can be provided if needed (just let us know!). Each session will conclude by 1:30 pm.

October 8 - Presbyterian Theology, What We Believe

November 12 - What We Believe about the Sacraments

December 10 - Presbyterian Government, How We Govern Ourselves

Please let us know if you plan to join us by contacting Kate at secretary@oaklandpresbyterianchurch.org or Revdebbieo@aol.com. There is also a sign up in the fellowship hall. Questions? Give me a call at 478-363-2010.





Celebrate Homecoming

Sunday October 29

We will celebrate Homecoming on Sunday, October 29. The worship service will be followed by a covered dish lunch. Please plan to attend, bring a dish to share; invite former members and friends to join us for this special day. During the service on this day, we will also be "Remembering the Saints". We will read all those that have died in the last year and honor them. If you have a name you would like included, please email the office.

Serve Night

Thursday, October 5th will be the next serve night. Join us at 6:15 for dinner, followed by a short activity with the hospitality committee.

There will also be a serve night on November 2nd and November 30th. Each Serve night, one of the ministry teams will lead the evening in some kind of short activity that shows a little bit of what they do as well as giving some time for some ideas if anyone has anything to offer.



AMERICAN RED CROSS



**BLOOD
DRIVE**

The American Red Cross will be at Oakland on **November 17th in the Fellowship Hall from 2-6pm.**

Please check the bulletin and the weekly emails for more information.

The Oakland Acorn
Oakland Presbyterian Church
8927 Cleveland Road
Clayton, North Carolina 27520

STANDARD
NON-PROFIT ORGANIZA-
TION
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Smithfield NC
Permit No. 20

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

MAIL TO:

Oakland Presbyterian Church
invites you to our

COMMUNITY FALL CARNIVAL

Free
Admission!

8927 Cleveland Rd. Clayton, NC 27520

Concession Stand College Football watch party	October 14 4 - 6 pm	Carnival Games Bounce House Pumpkin Painting Fun Prizes
-----------------------------------------------------	----------------------------------	------------------------------------------------------------------

919-934-5467 | www.oaklandpresbyterianchurch.org

Remembering the Past
Celebrating New Beginnings
Sunday, October 29th

HOMEcoming

AMERICAN RED CROSS



BLOOD DRIVE

Friday, November 17th 2-6pm