

December 2025



# The Olive Branch

Olive Branch Baptist Church

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## From Your Associate Pastor of Youth & Families

Greetings Church Family,

We've just about completed another year, and I pray that you were blessed and experienced the awesome love and grace of God this year. I'm sure many of you are extremely busy this time of year. Maybe not so much with work, but with all the planning and preparations that come along with the Christmas season. It can be very easy to become overwhelmed at this time of year as we make plans for visiting family and friends, social gatherings for work and/or school, trying to find gifts for those on your list, and so much more.

Unfortunately, it can be extremely easy to lose focus on the entire reason we are planning all these amazing things. Too often we get so wrapped up in the events and activities that we fail to stop and acknowledge that it is because of our God that we can even experience these joyful events. You see, if you ask most people what they love about this time of year your answers will certainly vary, but despite all, the most popular one won't be Jesus. We unintentionally allow things like decorations, parties, gifts, Santa, and even our own families to become the focus and priority instead of worship and praise. During the Christmas season it seems like finding an elf in funny and awkward places take priority over reading Scripture, making a gift list takes priority over a prayer list, and the name Santa is mentioned more than Jesus.

Now before any of you start sending me hate mail or ugly emails, let me say that I am not advocating that we don't engage in some of these fun and joyful activities. My point more lies in reminding us that we can't lose focus on the importance of what and why we are celebrating. Jesus truly is the "reason for the season" and it is with the purpose of honoring, glorifying, and spreading the Gospel that should be at the forefront of planning and attending our festive events and gatherings. "And the angel said to them, 'Fear not, for behold, I bring you good news of great joy that will be for all the people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord.'" Luke 2:10-11 ESV



So, I ask you my brothers and sisters, are you more concerned about the oohs and aahs you will receive for your choice of decorations, the compliments you will receive for your yummy treats, the price tags on the gifts you will give, and the thoughtfulness of the gifts you will receive, or are you already satisfied by the gift God has freely given you? I pray you will be celebrating this year to give praise to that gift, and that you will intentionally present it to others so they too can understand the reason we truly celebrate this time of year.

December should not only be a time where we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior but also a time where we go above and beyond in exalting His Love and grace for His children. May you be truly blessed this Christmas, and may you take the time to thank God, for it is only through Him that we are able to do anything. "But Jesus looked at them and said, 'With man this is impossible, but with God all things are possible.'" Matt. 19:26 ESV



# DECEMBER

• 2025 •

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3	4	5	6
		7:00pm Choir/Cantata Practice	6:00 am Prayer Gathering 6:30-8:00pm YC, Awana			
7 2:00pm WOM @ Fellowship Hall	8	9	10	11	12	13
6:00pm Deacons Dinner		7:00pm Choir/Cantata Practice	6:00 am Prayer Gathering 6:30-8:00pm YC, Awana	11:00 - 1:00pm METS Gathering	6:30-8:0pm God's Young Ladies	
14 9:00 am Breakfast 10:30 am Living Christmas Tree	15	16	17	18	19	20
		7:00pm Choir Practice	6:00 am Prayer Gathering 6:30-8:00pm YC, Awana	6:30pm - 8:00pm Men's Fellowship		
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
			Candlelight Service 6:00 PM			
28 6-9 pm Light the Night Gathering @ New Hope	29	30	31			

# OBBC NEWS

## **Living Christmas Tree & Cantata**

The OBBC Choir will present a Christmas Cantata, **"The Living Christmas Tree" on Sunday, December 14th at a 10:30 am combined service and again at 5:00 pm.**

To add to the season's celebration, we will have a breakfast at 9:00 am in the CLC. Please bring your favorite breakfast food to share such as sausage biscuits, casseroles, quiches, muffins, donuts, bagels or fruit.

Drinks will be provided by the church.

There will only be one worship service at 10:30 am.

No Sunday School will be held.



## **Christmas Eve Candlelight Service**

We will have a candlelight service on Wednesday, December 24th at 6:00 pm in the Sanctuary. Please come join us to Celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior.



## **Christmas Card Mail Slots**

We have placed the mailbox with alphabetized mail slots in the Welcome Center for you to use to exchange Christmas Cards with your OBBC friends. Place cards in the appropriate mail slot according to the last name. Check the box regularly for any cards that may be addressed to you.



There is an online Advent Guide that has a scripture and devotion for each day from December 1st - 24th. You can also access it on the OBBC website under Christmas tab or on the app. Also available is a 2025 Advent Guide you can find in the Welcome Center to learn what Advent is, the history of Advent, and the origins of the Advent wreath and it has daily scriptures to read through the Advent season.



## **Men's Christian Fellowship**

The quarterly Men's Christian Fellowship meeting will be held on **Thursday, December 18th, at 6:30 pm.** Men, young and old, are invited to attend and enjoy a meal, devotion, and fellowship. Please sign up in the Welcome Center if you would like to attend.



# OBBC NEWS



## **METS Senior Ministry!!**

Our December METS Seniors will meet **Thursday, December 11<sup>th</sup>, from 11:00 am - 1:00 pm.** We will begin by meeting in the Sanctuary for a devotion and a special Christmas Concert by the La Crosse Elementary School chorus led by Elizabeth Taylor! You don't want to miss this special treat. We will then move to the Fellowship Hall for our Christmas lunch and cookie exchange. We are asking those of you who love to bake to bring your favorite homemade cookies for dessert. Bags will be available to take a few of the leftover cookies home to enjoy. For our service project we collected toiletry items and will be delivering them in gift bags to local group home residents for Christmas. We will be going on our first outing for the year on Friday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. On the way to the McGregor Center to see "Plaid Tidings" we will have dinner at Smithfield's Chicken 'N Bar-B-Q.

Please sign-up for Thursday's lunch on the signup sheet in the Welcome Center by Sunday, December 7<sup>th</sup> or call/email the church office.

***We wish everyone a Merry Christmas!***



## **Lottie Moon Christmas Offering - WOM Encourages Giving**

Annually, in the month of December, as a part of the OBBC WOM monthly meeting, the mission program is on always remembering the life of Lottie Moon, learning about current IMB (International Mission Board) missionaries who are funded by the Lottie Moon Christmas offering and praying for the missionaries. Lottie Moon, who was born and raised in Virginia set sail to China at the age of 33 to serve as a missionary. She faced loneliness, health problems, many challenges yet she faithfully served God sharing kindness and the Gospel with the people of China. The OBBC WOM, encourages our church family to give to this special annual offering that supports full time IMB missionaries.

### **Worship Attendance**

<b>11/2</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>11/9</b>	<b>146</b>
<b>11/16</b>	<b>135</b>
<b>11/23</b>	<b>170</b>

### **Sunday School Attendance**

<b>11/2</b>	<b>75</b>
<b>11/9</b>	<b>76</b>
<b>11/16</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>11/23</b>	<b>78</b>

### **Women On Missions**

All women and teenage girls are invited.

Our March meeting will be held on **Sunday, December 7, 2025 and will meet in the church Fellowship Hall at 2:00 pm.**

# Sunday School News

**Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!!** to all those committed to teaching, mentoring, and showing the *love of Christ* to the young and the old and all of those in between!

Thank you for your time, your commitment, and your diligence!!

Our obedience to God allows the Holy Spirit to move, leading our Sunday School attendance to grow, and His plans to unfold before us. And where God's plans are unfolding, Satan is sure to show up to create chaos and discord. Put on the Armor of God to stay alert, to stay strong, and to stay courageous for Him by leaning on His Word. And so with that...

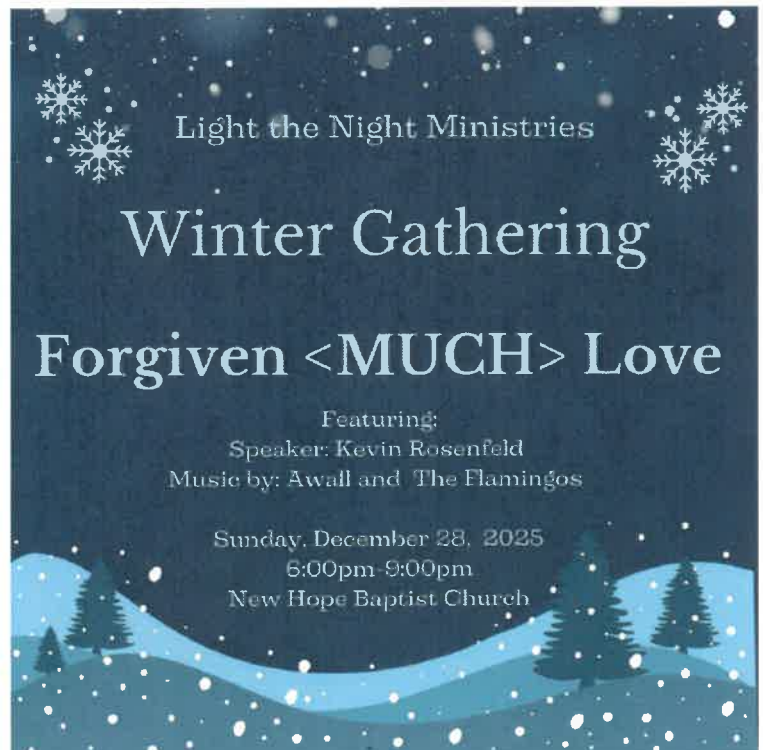
**May God richly bless your Christmas and the upcoming New Year!!!!**

Joanne Paynter

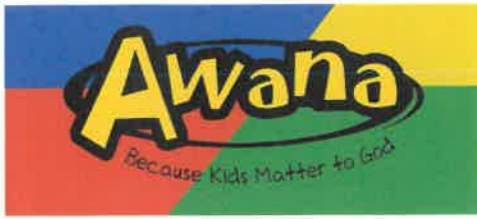
Sunday School and Christian Education Director

## Light The Night NEWS

LTN ReFuel 26 is fast approaching! March 20 - 22, 2026! Camp ReFuel is a weekend camp for students and youth groups (6th - 12th grade) held at the beautiful Camp Willow Springs on Lake Gaston in North Carolina. Hosted by Light the Night Ministries, this weekend is filled with worship, focused time with Jesus in His Word, small group connection time, fun with both indoor and outdoor activities, delicious food & snacks and so much more with beauty of God's creation in the backdrop! Registration is open and beginning to fill up. To register visit <https://lightthenight.new/camp>. Cost is \$45 per student.



# Children's & YC (6th-12th grades) News



Awana for K - 5<sup>th</sup> graders meets each Wednesday, from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm!!



D3 Youth Ministry meets each Wednesday, from 6:30 pm - 8:00 pm!!



## God's Young Ladies December 12th

All young ladies, 5th - 12th grade are invited to join in our God's Young Ladies group that meets every other Friday evening from 6:30pm - 8:30pm in the Fellowship Hall. Led by Becky Aleman, they have a lesson and a time of sharing, prayer, crafts, and a snack. They focus on issues that girls face and what the Bible says about dealing with them. For more information contact Becky Aleman at 434-447-6231.



## 2025 Another Level Basketball Kindergarten through 5th Grade

Another Level Basketball is starting soon!!! The season starts Saturday, January 3, 2026, and runs every Saturday until February 21st! The program is FREE of charge to all kids K - 5th grade. Register your child online at [www.obbcblackridge.com](http://www.obbcblackridge.com) beginning December 1st. Saturday, January 3rd will be an evaluation day (schedule below) and the teams will be formed.

**K-2nd Girls: 8:30 AM**

**K-2nd Boys: 9:00 AM**

**3rd - 5th Girls: 10:00 AM**

**3rd - 5th Boys: 11:00 AM**

If you have registered your child and they decide they do not want to play, please notify the church office. This will help to establish all the teams with the same number of players and equal playing time.

**We need volunteers to help make this a successful ministry for the children!** Please consider volunteering by helping as a coach, referee, work the scoreboard, or the concession stand on one or more of the Saturdays. This ministry draws a lot of community kids that will hear the gospel through our Pastors who give a Bible story for each team every Saturday. To join in and help OBBC spread the gospel to the community kids and parents you can register via the OBBC website, contact the church office, Pastor Wayne, or Pastor Brady. It's a great way to catch some good basketball games, too!



ARK Ministries



# Missions

Local  
Mission Support

Ray of Hope Food Pantry



## Thanksgiving Luncheon 2025

"And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him". Colossians 3:17

We had a great day of Thanksgiving at our annual luncheon for 12 Adult Group Homes today. 175 participants & Staff and about 60 volunteers from Olive Branch Baptist Church made this day special. Along with all the favorite traditional food was warm friendly fellowship and music from our Praise band! This is about the 18th year we have been blessed to host the event. We carried many meals to shut-ins as well. Homemade desserts topped off the day. Thank you to all our volunteers. - Steve Carroll





- |                      |                      |
|----------------------|----------------------|
| 1 Jean Bagley        | 18 Jessica Conner    |
| 2 Addi Wall          | 18 Kenneth Parham    |
| 2 Mary Ellen Willett | 18 Weldon Jones      |
| 3 Rex Watson         | 19 Sarah Ittner      |
| 6 Matt Clark         | 20 Jane Wells        |
| 7 Jennifer Allman    | 20 Margie Wollenberg |
| 7 Joshua Robinson    | 21 Colleen Cookson   |
| 9 Jessie Kennedy     | 21 Mike Bradley      |
| 9 RJ Nichols         | 22 Theresa Garnes    |
| 9 Waylon Kinker      | 22 Tony Garnes       |
| 10 Holly Robinson    | 25 Denny Hardee      |
| 12 Cheryl Parrish    | 26 Tristin Anderson  |
| 15 Rodney Clevinger  | 27 Justin Gittman    |
| 18 Dot Johnson       | 28 Chris Hayer       |
|                      | 28 Jennifer Conner   |
|                      | 29 Genia Glantz      |
|                      | 31 Ethan Murray      |



- |    |                           |
|----|---------------------------|
| 6  | Dustin & Jessica Anderson |
| 11 | Chase & Kory Brown        |
| 20 | Sarah & Burlin Gregory    |
| 29 | Shirley & Thomas Gittman  |
| 29 | Tim & Tracey Moseley      |



## Baby Nursery Volunteer Schedule

Date	9 AM	SUNDAY SCHOOL	11 AM
December 7	Megan Ittner	Megan Ittner	Megan Ittner
	Brittney Hensley	Jessie Kennedy	Lynn Paquette
December 14	-	-	Janeva Hutcheson
	-	-	Elizabeth Powell
December 21	Megan Ittner	Megan Ittner	Megan Ittner
	Elizabeth Powell	Cindy Clevinger	Wanda Watson
December 28	Brittney Sneed	Brittney Sneed	Brittney Sneed
	Janeva Hutcheson	Sarah Ittner	Mackenzie Salmons

## Staff & Officers

**Associate Pastor of Youth  
and Families**

Rev. Roger Stanley  
pastorroger@obbcbblackridge.com

**Church Secretary & Treasurer**

Mrs. Sandra Ittner  
office@obbcbblackridge.com  
finance@obbcbblackridge.com

**Choir Director/Pianist**

Mrs. Jan Vaughan

**Worship Leader**

Ms. Elizabeth Taylor

**Custodian/Maintenance**

Mr. George Kidd

**Chairman of Deacons**

Mr. Steve Carroll

**Personnel Officer**

Mr. Michael Smith

**Financial Officer**

Mr. Jay Eubanks