

Oak City News

Oak City Baptist Church
Rev. Dr. William T. Newkirk, Sr., Pastor

DECEMBER 2023 – VOLUME 20

Christmas Blessings

Vilcare Team

Christmas blessings we send your way,
On this special, holy day,
May the light of Christ shine bright,
And guide you through both day and
night.

May you feel His love and grace,
In every moment, in every place,
May His peace and joy fill your heart,
And never from His love depart.

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From The Pastor's Desk

Rev. Dr. William T. Newkirk, Sr.

Another New Year is knocking on our door. God has proven Himself to be faithful once again to those who believe. God has blessed us beyond measure during this year. We made it through another pandemic plagued year and the future looks bright. Challenges will always be with us, but with God's help, we will be victorious!

When I look at how God is blessing our church family and helping us to grow spiritually, my heart cries out, "Thank you God, for being so good!" It is God who gets all the credit, and we must never become so fool-hearted as to think it's something we have done on our own.

I'd like to share some gems of wisdom with you as we approach the dawning of a New Year. Why not say to yourself, In 2024, I will:

Like Paul, forget those things which are behind me, and press forward to what's ahead.

Like David, lift up mine eyes unto the hills from whence comes my help.

Like Abraham, trust totally and completely in my God.

Like Enoch, walk in daily fellowship with my Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ.

Like Jehosaphat, prepare my heart to seek God daily.

Like Moses, choose rather to suffer than to enjoy the pleasure of sin for a season.

Like Daniel, commune with God at all times, morning, noon and night.

Like Caleb and Joshua, refuse to be discouraged because of superior odds.

Like Gideon, keep up the godly fight even though my friends be few.

Like the Apostle Paul, rely upon the power of God in this New Year, for "I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

***MERRY CHRISTMAS
AND
HAPPY NEW YEAR!***

Pastor Newkirk



Impressions by the First Lady

Catherine White Newkirk

2024: A More Excellent Life

Many will seek a renewed Christian life-style as we reflect on the culminating and birthing of a new year. Often, we become consumed with remorse over our floundering attempts to do it alone. The vital missing part of the equation is Jesus. We can live a Christ-centered life because of Calvary. Jesus is the ultimate Life-Changer!

A New Year With The Lord
© By M.S.Lowndes

A new year is about to unfold
With new opportunities to explore.
Doors will open for new experiences,
New adventures with the Lord.

Remember not the former things,
The things of this past year,
The Lord will do new things in us,
Much more than we are aware.

For He will make a way for us
As we put our trust in Him
And He will guide our every step
By His presence we have within.

What God has placed within our hearts,
We find we'll be able to do
If we look for the opportunities,
We'll see the door to go through.

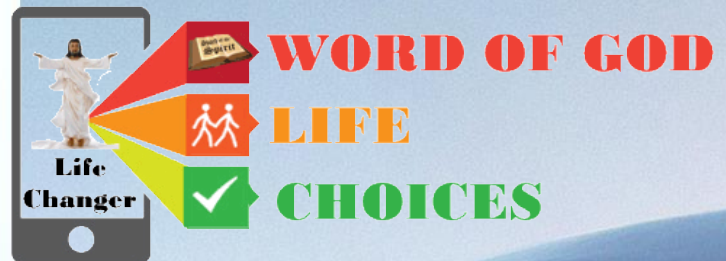
We mustn't let anything hold us back
But rise up and take our place
And be all that God wants us to be
With a fresh touch of His grace.

Remember to BELIEVE (because

Emmanuel LIVES; expect VICTORY
EVERYDAY)!

With our renewed Christ-Centered lives', let's
be Attentive, Turn Forward and March,
anticipating "Better" in 2024! If you give God
your attention, He'll always exceed your
expectations!

Trust Him in every season of your life!



Forever BELIEVING,
Lady K

Inspirations By Our New Members

Elaine Hopkins

“Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the Glory of God.”

Romans 15: 1

Kimberly Alexander

For those of you who know Kim, her unique spirit of love should not surprise you that she was born on February 14th, Valentine's Day. She and her four brothers grew up and lived with their parents in Durham. I asked Kim what memories did she have about her family. She said she remembers she was always quiet and shy.



At an early age, Kim attended Durham County Schools and later moved to Rocky Mount where she now lives while taking care of her father. She is attending Nash Community College in pursuit of her GED. When I asked Kim about her classes, she reassured me the work was sometimes hard. Nevertheless, she shared excitement and pride for, a project she is working on in her class. The project is a Leadership Vision Board, which she desires to finish and eventually share it with others who may have an interest. In an effort to receive college credit, Kim also works in a coffee shop. How very admiral!

Kim has actively worked in other surrounding churches in Nash and Durham County communities. Additionally, over the years, she has also participated in different programs and ministries here at Oak City Baptist Church including the Youth Department, the Dance Ministries, and AWANA. Having the chance to work in service for the Lord has been an opportunity for Kim and a blessing to the Body of Christ. We are pleased that she has made her membership official.

I asked Kim if there have been any special influences in her life. She was pleased to tell me

how God brings people into our lives placing them under our wings to mentor and to teach them. She described how Rev. Cassandra Stone has done just that for her as well as being a trusted friend. She is sincerely grateful how God has worked through Rev. Stone to cause her to be who she is today. Beautiful!

Mya Conyers

As a future nurse practitioner, Mya is in the 7th grade and she attends Carroll Magnet Middle School. She lives with her mother and younger brother. Having made high test scores, she was accepted in Advanced 7th Grade Math.



In an effort to get to know Mya, I called her at a scheduled time and began quizzing her, sometimes 2 questions in one. I asked her to tell me three things her friends would say to describe her. With a little thought, she responded, they would say I am funny, smart and kind.

Next, I asked her if she raises her hand a lot in school and what were her best subjects? Politely and slowly, she answered, “yes ma’am I raise my hand a lot because the work is easy. My easiest subjects are science and social studies.”

As I continued to interview Mya, I asked her what she likes most about her family. She thought about it for a few seconds and responded. She described how they all sometimes come together to cheer one another up or support each other if anyone had a hard day. Another thing she likes about her family is something they did as a tradition. On some holidays or weekends, they sometimes travel to the beach to spend overnight or sometimes 2-3 nights. Other times, as a

Inspirations By Our New Members

Elaine Hopkins

tradition, they visit their grandparents or other relatives.

When I asked Mya about how she spends her free time, she replied she journals, write down her thoughts, and meditate. Being a little stunned, quietly I stared at the phone, and Mya's mom, suddenly broke the silence by explaining that Mya's grandmother is an evangelist. She explained that Mya spends time with her grandmother. She also added that Mya recently narrated a play. Wow!

I asked Mya now that she has joined church, what would she like to do in church. She said she wanted to be in the choir, she would like to share her testimony and she would like to write.

Finally, I asked her what she sees herself doing 5-10 years from now. She said she would like to be on the track team next year and she wants to go to East Carolina to be a nurse practitioner.

Justin Conyers

Justin is an eleven-year-old fifth grader who attends Green Elementary School. He lives with his mother and sister.

In interviewing Justin via telephone, first, I asked him to tell me about his family. He said his family is nice and kind and they know how to respect people. He said on our birthdays, they give gifts; sometimes good and sometimes bad; but you can always use them. He went on to name gifts his cousins or friends have gotten.

In an effort to really find out his interest and what he was passionate about, I asked him to tell me what he really like doing a lot. He answered without thinking that it was sports: football, soccer and volleyball. He added, if he didn't have anyone to play this with, he used his devices to pull-up



those games.

I found out while speaking with Justin's mother that he goes to the YMCA after school. I asked him what he hopes to learn at the YMCA. His answer was sports.

How do you like school and how are you doing in school, I asked? His reply was I'm doing good in school. I am making 4's and a few 5's. I asked him about the subjects he is taking. His answer was math, science, World Language, art, music, and P.E. He added his best subject is science. I asked him what he would like to study when he goes off to college. He said Computer Science or I will go to the army. Justin then asked me, may I ask you a question. I said yes. He asked can I talk to you in Spanish. Yes, go for it, I answered.

Justin: (Spanish) "Hola Como estas? I replied: (French) "Tres bien merci et vous"

This was an interview on the phone and everybody burst into big, long laughter!

Note: Justin asked: "Hello, how are you"?

I replied: "Very well. Thank you, and you"? I had no idea what he had said!

The last thing I asked Justin if he could go anyplace in the world, where would it be and why? His answer was Florida or Hawaii, because they seem to be enjoyable places to be.



As we reflect on the meaning of this amazing season, let's remember to practice it's true meaning throughout the year.

To the OCBC family and all prospective members, do have a safe and enjoyable Holiday Season.

On behalf of each of our New Members, continue to be blessed just as you continue to be a blessing to others.

The Legend of the Poinsettia

Stephanie Herbek

<https://people.howstuffworks.com/culture-traditions/holidays-christmas/inspirational-christmas-stories10.htm>

Maria and Pablo lived in a tiny village in Mexico. Because Christmastime at their house did not include many gifts, Maria and Pablo looked forward to the Christmas festivities at the village church with great joy and anticipation.

To honor the birth of Christ, the church displayed a beautiful manger that drew crowds of admirers. Villagers walked miles to admire the manger, bringing lovely, expensive gifts for the Baby Jesus. As Maria and Pablo watched the villagers place their gifts in the soft hay around the manger, they felt sad. They had no money to buy gifts for their family and no money to buy a gift for the Baby Jesus.



One Christmas Eve, Maria and Pablo walked to the church for that evening's services, wishing desperately that they had a gift to bring. Just then, a soft glowing light shone through the darkness, and the shadowy outline of an angel appeared above them.

Maria and Pablo were afraid, but the angel comforted them, instructing them to pick some of the short green weeds that were growing by the road. They should bring the plants to the church, the angel explained, and place them near the manger as their gift to the Baby Jesus. Then just as quickly as she had appeared, the angel was gone, leaving Maria and Pablo on the road looking up into the dark sky. Confused but excited, the children filled their arms with large bunches of the green weeds and hurried to the church.

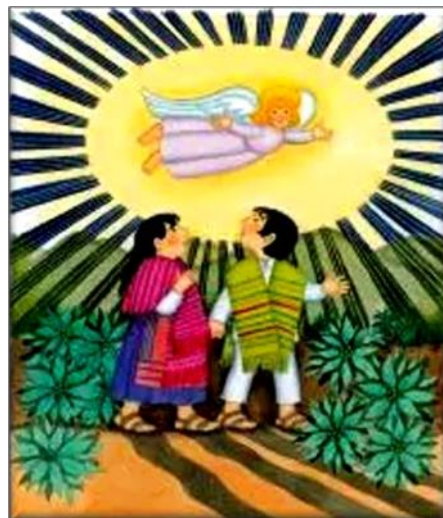
When the children entered the church, many of the villagers turned to stare. As Maria and Pablo began

placing the weeds around the manger, some of the villagers laughed at them. "Why are those children putting weeds by the manger?" they asked each other. Maria and Pablo began to feel embarrassed and ashamed of their gift to the Baby Jesus, but they stood bravely near the manger, placing the plants on the soft hay, as the angel had instructed.



Suddenly, the dull green leaves on the tops of the plants began to turn a beautiful shade of red, surrounding the Baby with beautiful blooms. The laughing villagers became silent as they watched the green plants transform into the lovely star-shaped crimson flowers we call poinsettias. As they watched the weeds bloom before their eyes, Maria and Pablo knew they had no reason to be ashamed anymore. They had given the Baby Jesus the only gift they could--and it was the most beautiful gift of all.

Today, poinsettias are a traditional symbol of Christmas, thanks to young Maria and Pablo and their special gifts to the Baby Jesus.



THE SINGLES MINISTRY

Elaine Hopkins



(seated) Toni Booker, Elaine Hopkins, Jean Campbell
(standing) Treka Spraggins, Glenda Sandlin, Mary Alston

The Oak City Baptist Church Singles Ministry began approximately one year ago under Dr. Treka Spraggins's leadership and Glenda Sandlin's assistance. Our total membership is ten, with a good positive attendance for a beginning ministry.

During our first few months of meeting via Zoom, we were very prayerful as we searched the scriptures regarding spiritual direction for widows/singles in ministries. Destined to move ahead, we quickly devised goals to help seek the direction we should go to please God.

Based on the warm, enthusiastic fellowship, this group seems ecstatic with Dr. Spraggins's passion, guidance, and vision in keeping us focused on our conversations, total group

participation, and plans and suggestions related to ministry work. For example, a specific topic during our meeting is *"Are our individual efforts and energies geared toward winning souls for Christ?"*

Matthews 4:19... "Come, follow Me" Jesus said, and I will send you out to fish for people."

Being single, we have learned, is not about dropping our heads and hoping to soon be married. On the contrary, being single offers plenty of pluses for enriching our lives with like-minded Christians of various backgrounds, thus inspiring us to strive to live that abundant life.

Our ministry looks forward to 2024. We are actively planning our growth and fellowship activities. Life and living in Christ...real joy.

Jesus Christ in a manger

Discipleship Ministry

Luke 2:11-14

"For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord. And this will be the sign to you: You will find a Babe wrapped in swaddling cloths, lying in a manger." And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: "Glory to God in the highest, And on earth peace, goodwill toward men!"

Jesus Christ is the Son of God and was born in Bethlehem of Judah to save wretches like us.

Let us follow Him as Jesus follows God the Father.



Please check your emails and listen for announcements for confirmation or changes to traditional programs held

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Web Site
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oakcitybaptist.org/watch-live-now/

Like us on Facebook
[www.facebook.com/ OakCityBaptistChurchRaleigh](https://www.facebook.com/OakCityBaptistChurchRaleigh)

Welcome New Members

September 17, 2023
Ms. Chelsea Lyndelle Mahn



October 22, 2023
Mrs. Laretta Barrett

October 22, 2023
Mr. Walter Barrett



Inspirational Words of Wisdom

When wisdom enters your heart, And knowledge is pleasant to your soul, Discretion will preserve you; Understanding will keep you,

Proverbs 2:10-11 (NKJV)

“The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. For by me your days will be multiplied, And years of life will be added to you.

Proverbs 9:10-11 (NKJV)

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