



DECEMBER 2025 — JANUARY 2026

As you sit down to read this newsletter article, you will likely be in the midst of getting ready for the holidays – checking off items on your to-do list and making sure that everything is covered for the usual seasonal celebrations. Once we kick-off the advent season with the traditional Moravian Love Feast, it seems like Christmas will be just around the corner; not to mention the new year, 2026! OH MY! With busy calendars and the familiar race to the big events, a lot of folks seem to rejoice in the hustle and bustle which looms in the not-too-distant future. Do you?

Even as winter settles in all around us, we might be reminded of the goodness in God’s creation. As precious memories of Thanksgiving past are still fresh in your minds, I hope that your discipline of intentional gratitude extends into the upcoming holiday season as well. In the classic movie “White Christmas,” Bing Crosby sings a sweet little ditty that starts out with a comforting phrase... “When I’m worried and I can’t sleep, I count my blessings instead of sheep, and I fall asleep counting my blessings.” The sentiment often brings immeasurable comfort to those who find solace in remembering how blessed we truly are – even in the midst of this crazy, busy time of year. Don’t forget to put on an old Christmas classic or 2, and let the joy of the season wash all over you.

To keep things in perspective, we should look to scripture for guidance as we move ahead. I would like to point us toward I Thessalonians 5:16-18 which says, “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

Step 1 — “Rejoice always.” – Approach everything with joy in your hearts. Though this may be easy to say and difficult to do, it is worth pursuing. Even as I write this, I realize that there are a lot of folks who are wrestling with difficult seasons and difficult emotions on a daily basis; may you find joy again soon.

Step 2 — “Pray without ceasing.” – Prayer can be an ongoing conversation with God in which you open your heart and mind to divine inspiration. Though most church folks have typically been taught to pray in the quiet moments of life, we are called to integrate prayer into every moment and every movement of our waking hours. As we walk about, as we breathe, as we live every day – whether holidays are on the horizon or not, praying draws us closer to God.

Step 3 — “Give thanks in all circumstances.” – Though we may have moments when we don’t feel like rejoicing and we don’t want to lift another prayer, we might just find a way to find the silver lining in almost every situation. Make it your goal to reflect on the events and the moments that will fill the next season with a generous blend of excitement, anticipation, and exhaustion... a long list of reasons to be grateful.

With these steps in mind, I hope and pray that you will have a blessed Christmas and a happy new year!! May God continue to work in you, and may you continue to walk with God.

Blessings...Pastor Adam

CREATION CARE

A "Winter Sowing Workshop" will be offered in January by David and Annette Henson's neighbor, Emily Leake. She will teach attendees how to sow seeds of native plants in the winter, to be ready for spring planting in pollinator gardens. The goal of pollinator gardens is to provide sufficient food (nectar and pollen) to reverse the decline of pollinators, bees in particular. Bees are not only essential for the reproduction of many flowering plants, but are also responsible for pollinating billions of dollars' worth of agricultural crops. Whether you'd like to help plant and tend a garden at Oak Hill or at your home, please plan to attend. Stay tuned for a date to be announced soon.

The second project will be a plastic film recycling project. We'll be participating in a challenge to collect 1000 pounds of plastic grocery bags, bread wrappers, bubble wrap, and more in the period of one year. We will be providing plastic, which will be made into Trex lumber and is used to make decks, benches, and more. If we achieve the goal of collecting 1000 pounds, we'll be qualified to win a bench made of Trex! Hopefully, we'll reach this goal but, even if we don't win a bench, we'll be keeping lots of plastic out of the landfill, which is a great way to care for God's creation! If you want to get a headstart, find a bin and start saving plastic grocery bags, produce bags, ice bags, Ziploc & other disposable bags, cereal box liners, shrink wrap, bread bags, newspaper sleeves, dry cleaning bags, bubble wrap, and plastic bubble mailers. Be sure that all bags that formerly contained food are clean. Be aware that some bags, such as those in which sunflower seeds and nuts are sold are NOT recyclable. Those bags have a recycling symbol with a slash, meaning "Not recyclable." We hope to start this program in January.

To care for creation during the holidays, "wrap" gifts in reusable boxes and save wrapping paper for reuse next year. You'll be saving money, too!

If you have questions about any of these activities, please contact a Green Team member: Maureen Colwell, Annette and David Henson, Pam Lookadoo, Ken Clark, and Pastor Adam. If you would like to join the Green Team, please let one of us know of your interest.

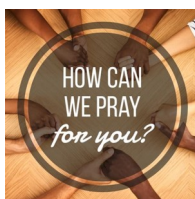


CALENDAR OF EVENTS

- Dec. 14 — Children + Youth Christmas Caroling on the downtown trolley at 5:00. *Location TBA*
- Dec. 21 — Christmas Cantata and Children's Program at 10:30
- Dec. 24 — Christmas Eve Service of Candlelight & Communion at 4:30



If you have a prayer concern, please let us know. When a church member or a family member is ill, hospitalized, or has passed away, please let Pastor Adam or the church office know of the need for pastoral care and for prayer. This will help Pastor Adam and the congregation to better care for, pray for, and offer support to our church family.



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From the Finance Committee – 4th Quarter Report for 2025



As we approach the end of 2025, it is a great time to reflect on the blessings God has given each of us look at how we have responded to God’s blessings. Our church has been the beneficiary of faithful giving. This year, many have been faithful in their regular tithes. Through this faithfulness, our church has successfully been a beacon on the hill, with wonderful things happening here: worshiping and fellowshiping regularly, maintaining our campus facilities; supporting our pastor, staff, and contractors; bringing on a Director of Youth and Family Ministries, revitalizing our children’s program; and paying all our apportionments, thereby ministering to our western NC neighbors suffering from Hurricane Helene, supporting missionaries in foreign lands and at home, feeding children, and providing essentials for refugees.

Through sacrificial giving over and beyond tithing, many have supported special projects and ministries that were/are outside our regular budget. These gifts have provided for our food pantry, our music program, youth mission trips, the special needs of some in our community who are homeless, cold, or in the dark. Our Special Fund giving has provided money for the Trustees to make unexpected and unbudgeted repairs and maintenance. We provided scholarships to deserving students. And we’ve made additional gifts to Hurricane Helene relief beyond the efforts supported by our apportionments.

Church leadership has worked diligently to faithfully administer these gifts to our church. We’ve successfully sought grants to augment our resources and God has blessed us with these that helped pay for our sanctuary reroofing, improvements to our MPAC capability for community gatherings, and our – hoped to be soon – driveway repairs. Church Council and its members carefully constructed and approved a budget for 2026 that limited the overall increase to about 3%, closely matching the annual inflation rate and many official cost of living allowances.

We will wrap-up 2025 in a good financial position thanks to God’s blessings and thanks to your tithes and offerings. We have confidence that God will continue to provide in 2026. Beyond our regular budget, we will have needs for vehicle replacements, parsonage repairs, increased food pantry expenses, and, of course, unbudgeted capital improvements. We are confident though, as the adage goes, “If God leads you to it, God will lead you through it.” Our tithing and gifts to God’s church, returning to Him a portion of all He has provided for us, has pleased God and He continues to show His pleasure to us. Thank you for your faithfulness and for your gifts in support of Oak Hill United Methodist Church.
 - Ben Nantz, Finance Committee Chair

TREASURER'S REPORT FOR WEEK ENDING 11/30/25

CASH FLOW

BALANCE SHEET	Beginning Jan. 1, 2025 - Year to Date			Week of: Nov. 24-30, 2025	
	General Fund	Special Fund	YTD TOTAL	General Fund	Special Fund
Beginning Bank Balance	38,137.43	97,967.13		6,574.51	119,451.20
Incoming + Tithes & Offerings	208,573.60	109,393.34		3,194.50	10.00
Bank Interest	10.69	46.18		-	-
Expenses	(238,009.54)	(88,345.44)	(326,354.98)	-	-
Ending Cash	8,712.18	119,061.21	127,773.39	9,769.01	119,461.20

SPECIAL FUNDS BALANCES

TREND IN TITHES & OFFERINGS

		Week ending	General Fund	Special Funds
Bank Interest	183.55			
Capital Reserve Fund	20,748.53			
Food Pantry	3,626.44			
Grant - Connect Church (MPAC)	8,001.43			
Grant - Resourceful Comm. 20-21	4,373.53	11/30/25	3,194.50	10.00
Grant - WNCC Disaster Capital	35,109.72	11/23/25	6,275.50	136.00
Robin Fleming Fund	4,934.21	11/16/25	2,230.51	20.00
Vehicle Fund	6,707.32	11/09/25	2,898.84	538.62
Youth & Family Outreach	1,561.27	11/02/25	5,358.73	445.00
All Other	33,815.21	10/26/25	2,908.00	-
TOTAL	119,061.21	10/19/25	1,782.43	50.00

This year's *Gift's for Christ* recipients will be Burke United Christian Ministries, The Meeting Place, our Food Pantry, and the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for short term help to community members in need. Thank you for your generosity.

Our collections from 2024 and 2025 will be divided evenly between these 4 worthwhile causes.

United Women in Faith

A big THANK YOU! from all the women in United Women in Faith. Thanks to your participation, we had a successful day on November 22. All the numbers are not yet in, but currently, we are over \$4,000. That is a wonderful item to share. People came in, people saw challenges and turned them into opportunities before they became a problem. Whether it was a broken down vehicle in the drive, or unloading a late vendor, someone stepped up. The Kitchen had several extra volunteers, the coffee pot was never empty, the tables were cleared, and people didn't feel rushed.

Moving forward, we have already started returning God's glory to our Community. We have added to the Christmas of two children at Oak Hill Elementary. We sponsored the Dinner with Santa, were able to help make great treat bags, and the kids had a chance to get a book of their choice for extra reading.

All said, we have big plans to share the proceeds of this year's Bake Sale, Breakfast, Bazaar to the glory of God and plan for a continued furtherment of God's Kingdom here in our Community, our Nation, and our World.

Again, without your participation, this would have not been possible. THANK YOU

— Anita Fox

A Personal Perspective on Postludes

Oh, how much I enjoy the postlude in our worship service. It truly is a part of worship for me.

And that's why it is so meaningful to me, it is part of my worship. It is a time of reflection on the worship I've just offered; a time to be reminded of the scripture – the Word of God – for this Sunday; a time to absorb the lesson Pastor Adam has been inspired to share; and a time of quiet to internalize the privilege of worship I've participated in. There will be time later to catch up on ball scores, or coordinate food pantry schedules, or check in with a pew-mate on how s/he is feeling today. There still will be time to beat the Baptists to the restaurant or to get home to the kitchen for Sunday dinner. But for these 3 minutes, I can pause and listen as the Spirit speaks to me through today's worship review.

When it's time for the prelude, at the beginning of the service, I quiet myself in preparation for worship. I stop my conversations, settle my own spirit, and begin to focus on the worship at hand. The postlude gives me that same opportunity at the other end of our service – a chance to focus on what I have heard, and professed, and sung, and to think of how all of that will prepare me for the week ahead.

My outlook is that the prelude and postlude are not "traveling music." Each is spiritually focusing music. They can be lively - I should have joy in my heart and a kick in my step when I come to worship! And each calls me to close out the distractions of the world and focus on the worshipful purpose for the moment. As the prelude leads me to prepare for worship, the postlude leads me to reflect on the worship (and teaching) that just occurred. When the postlude is over, then is the time to do my catching-up or start my race for the rest of the day. If the postlude is no more than sanctuary Musak, I am missing a great opportunity. In this hectic season, this is another opportunity for me to hear the Lord as he says, "be still and know that I am God?"

I am grateful for these 3 minutes as my Sunday morning worship concludes. I know, "we've not done it like this before," and that it is unusual for visitors and that it's nontraditional for members. For me, however, these precious moments of solitude do exactly what the Worship Committee hoped they would do when we began this – to solidify my worship, joining our profession of faith, scripture reading, lesson from the pulpit, hymn singing, and benediction into a spiritual package that I take with me into our community during the coming week.

Oh, how much I enjoy the postlude in our worship service.

— Ben Nantz

~~~~~ Birthdays ~~~~~

DECEMBER

Tracy LeMaster	12-03
Adyson Allen	12-04
Betsy Steele	12-06
Gary Barrier	12-10
Ben Nantz	12-10
Katelyn Fisher	12-15
Byron Boyd	12-16
Suzy Fitzgerald	12-18
Henry Parker	12-20
Maxwell Taylor	12-20
Susan Propst	12-21
Laura Edall	12-23
Peggy Leadbetter	12-28



JANUARY

Jim Devries	01-08
Mackenna Brown	01-09
Christopher Clark	01-09
Adam Love	01-10
Jeannie Lambert	01-10
Nina Anderson	01-17
Johnny Clark	01-17
Jay Fox	01-17
Susan Schwind	01-17
Hatchet Barrier	01-18
Sara Brown	01-19
Joe Ledford	01-23
Laura Rhodes	01-26
Ann Peeler	01-27
Jeremy LeMaster	01-28
Juli Hennessee	01-29
Clark Schuffler	01-29

~~~~~ Anniversaries ~~~~~

DECEMBER

Foy & Patsy McNeely	12-11
Rodney & Jeannie Lambert	12-13
Ty & Cindy Chapman	12-18
C. J. & Karen Shuffler	12-20
Evan & Angela Chapman	12-31

JANUARY

Jim & Judy Devries	01-18
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Please note that Senior Exercise Classes are on break until 2026.
Enjoy the holidays! See you in the New Year!

Thank you for the participation to The Giving Tree. Our 4 participants were able to help their clients and better the World with your help. Each Charity left with a box of goodies for redistribution. Participants left with a sense of love and sharing. We were able to count our blessings. We don't want to be like the Pharisee of Luke 18. Instead, we want to be more like the Tax Collector. Red Lettered sections of the Bible have more importance.

The Giving Tree is a great way to look for our Blessings ahead of the rush of Thanksgiving and Christmas. Your help and gifts have a local impact.

Hope your Thanksgiving was full of Blessings and your Christmas will be full of the miracles of Love.

- Anita Fox



Let's join in prayer for one another so we all may remain in Christ's peace, grace, and the gift of health:

Ongoing Prayer Concerns

Leon Norman, Hazel Davis, Barb Farrell, Dottie Whisenant, Mason Searcy (military), Ruby Searcy, Charles & Barbara Sellars, Carolyn Barlow, Betty Watkins, Peg Leadbetter, Helen Winters, Donna & Ann Peeler, Barb Trout, Dennis Turman, Delores Curfman, Ruth Curfman, Jody Clark, and John Chapman

Extended family and friends:

Carolyn Teseneer, Brian Duckworth; Lori Barlow (Carolyn Barlow's daughter); **Brandy Icard** (Penny Helton's niece: preparation for an upcoming stem cell transplant); **Pat Wheeler** (Maureen Colwell's aunt); **Peggy Basinger** (Maureen Colwell's sister-in-law: fighting cancer)



2026 thru 2028 Church Officers & Leaders

Church Council

Church Council Chair

Church Lay Leader

Lay Delegate / Member of Annual Conference:

Finance Chair

Staff Parish Chair

Trustees Co-Chairs

United Methodist Men President

Women in Faith President

Women in Faith Vice President

Children's Ministries Representative(s)

U.M. Youth Fellowship Representative

Treasurer

Financial Secretary / Counters Team Coordinator

Hospitality Team

Missions Committee

Nurture Committee

Sunday School Superintendent

Worship Committee

Ken Clark (2025)

Ann Aldridge

David Butler (2028)

Ben Nantz (2026)

Tim Clark (2026)

David Nantz

Elaine Nantz (co-chairs)

Richard Smith

Anita Fox

Elinora Miller

Jennifer Hampton; Pam Lookadoo; Heather Smith

TBA

Karen Butler, Money Matters

Ben Nantz

Elaine Nantz

Kitty Williams

Maggie Lookadoo

Gladys Draughon

Pam Lookadoo

Anita Fox

Church Council At-Large Members:

(Class of 2025) Suzy Fitzgerald

(Class of 2027) **Brigitte Clark**

(Class of 2028) **Melinda Clontz**

Finance Committee

Chair: Ben Nantz (2026)

Members:

Ken Clark (*Church Council Chair*); Scott Lookadoo; David Butler; David Nantz; Elaine Nantz (*Trustees*); Ann Aldridge

(*Lay Leader*); Tim Clark (*SPRC Chair*); Elaine Nantz (*Financial Secretary/Counting Team Coordinator*); (*Treasurer*);

Donnie Williams; Pastor Love

Lay Leadership / Nominations Committee

Chair: Pastor Adam Love

Class of 2025

Gladys Draughon

Class of 2026

Anita Fox

Class of 2027

Brigitte Clark

Lay Leader: Ann Aldridge

Class of 2028

Annette Henson

Staff Parish Relations Committee

Chair: Tim Clark (2026)

Class of 2025

Anita Fox

Pam Lookadoo

Class of 2026

William Brown

Tim Clark (Chair)

Class of 2027

Debbie Fisher

Becky Williams

Lay Leader: Ann Aldridge

Class of 2028

Tom Seehorn

Trustees Committee

Chair: **David Nantz & Elaine Nantz**

Class of 2025

Gary Burns

Class of 2026

Rob Angley

David Draughon

Lisa Byland

Class of 2027

Ruby Chester

Gary Barrier

Class of 2028

Stephen Fox

David Nantz

Elaine Nantz

Endowment Committee

Scott Lookadoo (*Chair*); Elaine Nantz; **Donnie Williams**

Program & Ministry Committees

Food Pantry Team Coordinators: Ben & Elaine Nantz; Team: all helpers

Hospitality Team: Kitty Williams (chair), Gladys Draughon, class greeters/ushers, etc.

Hosting for MPAC: **David and Sharon Butler**; Gary Burns

Event Host: (assigned trustee) Staging Team: David Butler; etc.

(*Other volunteers as needed.*)

Nurture Committee: Gladys Draughon (Chair); Jean Fleming; Penny Helton; Elinora Miller

Prayer Team Leader: Lisa Byland **Creation Care Coordinator:** Maureen Colwell

Scholarship Committee: Brian Searcy (Chair); Pam Lookadoo; Debbie Fisher

Worship Committee: Anita Fox (Chair); Ann Aldridge; Sharon Butler; Lisa Byland (Communion Steward);

Amalie Hinson; Ben Nantz; Pastor Love

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