News from Oakmont Baptist Church

A Word from Our Pastor

t no time of the year is our appreciation of music at a higher level than during Advent and Christmas, with music of all styles. The songs of the season are embedded in our hearts, minds, and souls. They evoke memories of people we love, earlier times in life we cherish, and most of all they awaken in us deep joy for the life Jesus gives us.

As I write these words, the Joy Singers, our senior adult choir, are blessing residents of local retirement homes with their voices and their presence. The love of Jesus is being shared through their Christmas music.

As our youth decorated the Sanctuary and explained the meaning of each symbol this past Sunday, our children and ECU Choral Scholars blessed us with music that stirred our souls. It was the perfect "sight and sound" experience to begin our Advent journey!

I'm delighted we have the privilege to host the Greenville Choral Society for their annual Christmas concert this Saturday night at 7:00 in our Sanctuary. Our Sanctuary will be full, from the main floor to the balcony, and our choir loft will be bursting at the seams with singers from across our community. Join us as the music of the season continues.

Our handbell choir is back! This Sunday in worship, we will be blessed by the ringing of the bells, a sound that is beautiful all year long but especially joyful during Advent. What a joy to hear the bells ringing once more in our Sanctuary, along with the voices of our Joyful Sounds women's ensemble.

It's been a joy in rehearsal over the last several months to be immersed in the choir's Advent anthems. What a privilege for the choir, orchestra, and Revelation Players to



sing and dramatize the Christmas story in worship on Sunday morning, December 14.1 hope you will be there.

Then we have the honor of hosting another community group on Monday evening, December 15, at 7:00, when the Emerald City Big Band shares their annual Christmas concert. I not only love hearing them play Christmas music, but also love hearing them rave about how much they love the acoustics in our Sanctuary!

We sing Christmas carols to our homebound members on Sunday afternoon, December 21, at 5:00, bringing in-person voices to people who normally can only worship with us online or by television. And then on Christmas Eve we sing ourselves into the celebration of Christ's birth.

That's a lot of music! And a lot of blessings. Thanks be to God.

Grace and peace, Eric Porterfield



OBC Updates

Global Missions Offering



This year we experienced personally (through Alicia Porterfield!) the fruit of our Global Missions Offering. Alicia traveled to Uganda to serve alongside the Ackers family, who are Cooperative Baptist Fellowship missionaries in the capital city of Kampala. The Ackers lead Refuge and Hope International, a ministry that shares the

hope of Jesus through discipleship, job skills training, and pastoral care. Our gifts to the Global Missions offering provide crucial financial support to the Ackers and other missionaries around the world. We are grateful for the honor of participating in this work of God through our prayers and financial gifts.



Labyrinth at Oakmont

The Labyrinth has been set up in the multi-purpose room for people to enjoy anytime the church is open, from now thru December 31.

Come Sunday mornings—before/after Sunday School or Worship, or during the week—from 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.



December 7

Romans 15:4-13

Observance
of Holy Communion

Eric Porterfield preaching

December 14

Reflections on the Manger Chancel Choir, Orchestra & Revelation Players



The Wise Men are on the move!
Can you find where they are this week?

The Wandering Wise Men

Our Wandering Wise Men have started their journey to the manger. Be on the lookout for them each Sunday as they travel around the church on their way to the nativity scene in the sanctuary. If you spot them, be sure to let Pastor Ben know, you may just earn a prize for doing so!

The Giving Tree in the Narthex: About 20 Tags Remaining!



Every Christmas our congregation helps to provide Christmas gifts for our tutoring families and some of our neighbors in need. Please take a tag off the Giving Tree in the narthex, purchase the gift, and return it—with the Giving Tree tag firmly attached—to Rawl Parlor by Monday, Dec. 15. Contact Alicia with any questions!

*** Do you like wrapping Christmas gifts? Join us for the WRAPPING PARTY Wednesday, Dec. 17 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall!***



It's Poinsettia Time!

Once again, we will decorate our sanctuary with poinsettias for the Advent season. If you would like to <u>sponsor</u> a poinsettia in honor or in memory of a loved one, please stop by the office, the narthex, or Grand Central to pick up a form. Please return the form and payment of \$10 per poinsettia to the church office by Sunday, December 7. Thank you for helping us decorate our sanctuary for the season!

The poinsettias adorning the sanctuary this year are not live poinsettias, and they have been purchased to allow Oakmont to use them this year and for years to come. So, if you choose to "sponsor" a poinsettia as noted above and on the order form, your generous gift in honor of or in memory of your loved one will be acknowledged in an upcoming publication. However, please note that you will not have a poinsettia to take home after the Christmas Eve service. The \$10 donation per poinsettia will help fund Oakmont's Flower Team as they decorate our church so beautifully. Thank you!



Senior Adult Christmas Shopping Monday, December 8

Join us for our senior adult shopping trip to Smithfield on Monday, December 8, leaving the church at 9:15. a.m. Seats are still available!

Christmas for the Mountains



Provide Support & Hope This Christmas for WNC

Oakmont is helping CBFNC fill Christmas gift bags/backpacks with items and gift cards for teenagers. Individuals, families, or Sunday Schools will help us fill as many bags as we can before December 10! Oakmont is happy to be a drop off collection site for ENC churches.

How You Can Help

- Donate money to fill the bags. Give \$65 for each bag and we will fill the bags. (Checks made out to Oakmont; "WNC" in the memo line).
- Fill one Ziploc bag per teen by shopping the entire list OR donate specific items on the list. Download the shopping list here. The flyer and list will also be in Sunday School rooms and on bulletin boards throughout the church..

SHOPPING LISTS

- FOR TEENAGE BOYS -

- Carhartt hat or toboggan (Genuine brand, no mess back): \$15
- 3-in-1 body wash, shampoo & conditioner: \$3
- Deodorant: \$2
- Toothpaste & Toothbrush: \$4
- Washcloth: \$2

- Two pairs of good quality socks: \$4
- Two comic books (Marvel or DC)/composition notebooks with pens and pencils: \$4
- Gloves or Velcro wallet: \$5
- Gum, mints or beef jerky: \$3
- \$25 Walmart gift card

(Suggested Total: \$67.00)

- FOR TEENAGE GIRLS -

- Pastel-color Carhartt hat or toboggan: \$15-\$19
- Body wash: \$2
- Shampoo/conditioner: \$3
- Deodorant: \$2
- Toothpaste and toothbrush: \$4
- Loofah/scrubby: \$1

- Sanitary napkins, gift wrapped: \$3
- Fuzzy socks: \$4
- Gloves: \$4
- Nail polish: \$2
- Journal/composition notebook & pens: \$5
- \$25 Walmart gift card

(Suggested Total: \$70.00)

A New Youth Room Is on the Horizon! Opportunity to Support!



Architectural plans are being finalized, site plans are being formulated, and we think construction on our new Youth Room could begin by March if not before, depending on the winter weather. This is exciting!

Add to the excitement an unanticipated and much appreciated gift of \$150,000 to our Building Fund from Immanuel Baptist Church! As Immanuel continues the long process of bringing their formal ministry to a close, and as many of their members have joined us at Oakmont as we together continue Immanuel's wonderful legacy,

we're so grateful that part of the Immanuel legacy will be experienced every time a teenager walks through the doors of the new facility.

With Immanuel's gift, the eventual sale of The Branches property, and our healthy reserves, we do not anticipate a capital campaign for this new construction, currently estimated at \$950,000. But the Immanuel gift reminds us that when something wonderful happens, people want to be part of it and support it. If you would like to make a financial contribution to the new construction, we encourage you to do so! We're not asking for sacrifices or for anyone to divert their end of year giving from missions or the Ministry Action Spending Plan. But we do want to give people an opportunity to participate in this project through special giving.

Throughout our construction journey, we invite people to give as they feel led.



Emerald City Big Band Concert

Emerald City Big Band invites our congregation and our community to their upcoming concert in our sanctuary on Monday, December 15, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. *Join us!*



An Invitation to Read Through the Psalms Again!

We've heard from many people who've found the reading of one Psalm each day to be a blessing. We've started a second journey through the Psalms and we invite everyone to join in. This daily reading will take us all the way to December 30 when we read Psalm 150!

We also invite you to pray the Lord's Prayer each morning.



Friday, December 5: Psalm 125 Saturday, December 6: Psalm 126 Sunday, December 7: Psalm 127 Monday, December 8: Psalm 128 Tuesday, December 9: Psalm 129 Wed., December 10: Psalm 130 Thursday, December 11: Psalm 131

Music Ministry Memos



Sunday, December 7

3:30 p.m. | Handbell Rehearsal (sanctuary)

Wednesday, December 10

6:30 p.m. | Chancel Choir & Orchestra "Lite Bite" (Room 607) 7:00 p.m. | Chancel Choir & Orchestra Rehearsal (sanctuary)

Thursday, December 11

10:00 a.m. | JOY Singers Depart for Cypress Glen

Contact Laurie Cosby if you are interested in joining any of these groups at laurielee@oakmontchurch.com.



REFLECTIONS ON THE MANGER,

presented by the Chancel Choir, Orchestra, and Revelation Players, is coming up on Sunday, December 14 in the morning service!

Flowers in Honor/Memory for Worship

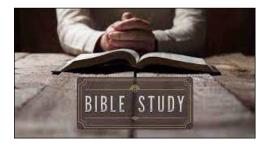


Friends: When you would like flowers in the sanctuary in honor or memory of someone, please contact Chris Rodgers, as she is the head of the Flower Team. (If you need her contact information, please contact Lauri Johnson at Oakmont Baptist Church.) This will alleviate any confusion. Also, if you would like a note in the worship outline on Sunday morning, please contact Lauri Johnson at lauri@oakmontchurch.com. Thank you!



OBC Cookbook

Would you like to be able to access our church's cookbook but don't have one? Then you're in luck! Click <u>here</u> to access a downloadable PDF so you can enjoy all of the great recipes it has to share!



Drop-In Bible Study

This class will resume the study of Paul's short letters in January. Happy Holidays, and we'll see you in 2026!

Do you know someone who is not receiving the newsletter?



Please let us know if you would like to receive *E-Connections* online. All we need is an email address. If you have received it in the past and seem to have missed some issues, please check your trash or spam folder, as sometimes it goes into those folders. If you think you should be getting it and you are not, please call us in the office at 252-756-1245. Or if you have any questions, please call us. Thank you.

Oakmont Mission Corner

Backyard Buddies After-School Ministry

Our CHRISTMAS PARTY is Monday, Dec. 8 from 3:20 to 4:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. This will be our last Backyard Buddies gathering until January 5. December's verse is Luke 2:11:"Today in the city of David a Savior has been born to you; he is the Messiah, the Lord."





Walmart Fridays

Every Friday, Oakmont van drivers take ECU International students, most of whom don't have cars, to Walmart for their weekly shopping. This ministry offers both practical support as well as relational ministry time for the drivers to connect with the students. We give thanks for everyone who makes this ministry happen!

Young Lives



Young Lives, Young Life's ministry supporting teen moms, gathers in the Fellowship Hall the third Tuesday night of the month from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m.! Bethany Bradsher facilitates this Oakmont partnership in tandem with the group's leader, Lillie Moore. Their Christmas party will be on Tuesday, Dec. 16!



Clothes Closet

WE ARE NOW ACCEPTING <u>WINTER</u> DONATIONS! The best time to drop off clothes is when the Closet is open: the first and third Tuesdays (no fifth Tuesdays) from 2:00 to 4:00 p.m. Our next date is Dec. 16.

If you can help, please contact Robin Congleton at rebecca.congleton55@gmail.com or Alicia at alicia@oakmontchurch.com!



LINKS Christmas Party Tuesday, Dec. 9!

Pitt County's teen foster support group meets the second Tuesday of each month in the Fellowship Hall from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Their Christmas party will be in our Fellowship Hall December 9! Please pray for everyone to feel welcomed and loved as they celebrate together.

Backpack Pals!



We're packing 36 backpacks a week this school year. We welcome financial gifts to support this ministry (just put Backpack Pals in the memo line) and donations of PROTEINS: CHICKEN CANS/PACKS, TUNA CANS/PACKS, CHEF-BOY-ARDEE, and SOUP. Special thanks to our team Liz Evans (lead), Kay Redd, Donna Sugg, Randy Fussell, Sabrina Lentz, Sue Thompson, Pam Templeton, and Sylvia Fuller who support this ministry. Liz is also coordinating Christmas break food bags for the students—please pray for this process.



Tuesday Night Meals

We're serving in the kitchen December 9 and 16. Each week, our homebound church family and several in-need neighbors enjoy a hot, tasty meal that not only fills the stomach, but the heart as well. Thanks, Team!

MULTI-MEDIA

Our 10:45 a.m. worship service is recorded each week and shown on Cable 7 at 12:15 p.m.

Live streaming of our service and service archives are available in the Media section of our website.



Spiritual Formation at OBC

Prayer Team at Oakmont



Oakmont, you have a prayer team that wants to pray for the issues in your life that challenge you! We have set up four prayer boxes around the church; two at the back of the sanctuary, one in Grand Central, and one in the back hallway near the choir suite. There is no issue too small; it would be our honor to support each of you this way. Please put us to work!

Care Team Update



The CARE (Connecting, Appreciating, Responding, Engaging) Team provides a ministry of love and support to some of our members who are not able to attend worship and other church activities on a regular basis. The team makes visits, phone calls, and remembers birthdays, just to name a few things. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry, please contact Lynne James at lynnei@suddenlink.net or Kimberly Williamson at kfwilliamson@suddenlink.net.

Join us on Sunday mornings!

IN-PERSON WORSHIP this Sunday at 10:45 a.m.

LIVE-STREAM WORSHIP at 10:45 a.m.

WATCH US ON CABLE CHANNEL 7 at 12:15 p.m.



You Watch our worship services online!

You're invited to subscribe to Oakmont's YouTube channel to watch our worship services online! Access it via YouTube by typing in the channel's name: "Oakmont BC Greenville NC." You can also access it by clicking here or on the YouTube logo above.



Join us for live-stream using the QR code above!





Life Lessons Bible Studies

Co-ed Small Group

Teacher: Sharron Edwards **Location:** Room 607

*Formations Adult Bible Study

(Smyth and Helwys)
Co-ed Small Group

Teacher: Cal Hayslip Location: Room 606

Nurturing Faith Bible Study

Co-ed Small Group for adults in 40s-50s who may

have children in middle and/or high school

Teacher: Mac Williamson Location: Room 501

Young Adults

Co-ed small group for young adults, 30s-40s,

who may have children
Teacher: Lauren McGee
Location: Room 502

*Formations Adult Bible Study (Smyth and Helwys)

Potter's Clay

Co-ed ongoing class for middle/older adults

Co-teachers: Tim Britton, Ed Congleton, Bill Gaston

Location: Room 300

College/Young Adult Class

A class for college-age coeds
Teacher: Michele Mazey
Location: Room 506

*Formations Adult Bible Study

(Smyth and Helwys)

Disciples

Co-ed ongoing class for older adults

Co-teachers: Dot Seay, Doug Strickland,

Fred Daniel & Wayne Taylor Location: Fellowship Hall

*Connections Adult Bible Study

(Smyth and Helwys)

Messengers

Co-ed ongoing class for senior adults

Teacher: Carol Foor Location: Room 307

*Formations Adult Bible Study

(Smyth and Helwys)

Pathfinders

Co-ed ongoing class for senior adults

Co-teachers: Tom Durham, Gerry Jolly

Location: Room 609

Koinonia

An ongoing class for women who are single, divorced, widowed, or women who do not attend a class with their husbands.

During the summer, this small group chooses a contemporary book on a relevant subject, often written by a female author, to study together.

Teacher: Bridgette Williamson

Location: Room 610 (and off-campus on occasion)

Children's Connection



FOR THE MONTH OF DECEMBER, WE WILL BE TALKING ABOUT THE CHRISTMAS STORY AND THE AMAZING BIRTH OF JESUS! AS WE GET READY TO CELEBRATE CHRISTMAS, WE WILL TALK ABOUT HOW GOD LOVED THEWORLD SO MUCHTHAT GOD GAVE US JESUS! JESUS IS WHAT CHRISTMAS IS ALL ABOUT! FOR THIS MONTH, LET US SHOW OTHERS GOD'S LOVE THROUGH OUR ACTIONS AND OUR WORDS. WHEN WE DO SO, THE MEANING OF CHRISTMAS IS CELEBRATED EVEN MORE!

Our story for this week comes to us from Luke 1:26-33,

38. In this story, Mary learns that she is going to give birth to God's Son, Jesus. One day, an angel appeared before Mary and told her that God had a special plan for her. At first Mary was afraid, she was scared about what this plan might be. But the angel told Mary that she had been chosen to give birth to Jesus! The angel told her that Jesus would bring peace to the world, and that His kingdom would never end. Jesus, God's Son, was going to do amazing things in the world! This month, as we get ready to celebrate Christmas, we can start by remembering how Mary was faithful to God's plan. Even though she was scared at first, she listened

"The Angel and Mary Video" | Click HERE.

Continued on next page...

PRESCHOOL & KINDERGARTEN

December Bible Study Lessons

(Bible story video & resources emailed out each Friday)

DECEMBER THEME: CHRISTMAS SHAPES: GOD GAVE US JESUS

Christmas is such a special time of year. It's filled with wonder and excitement! There are so many things to see and do at Christmas that it's easy to miss what Christmas is all about. That's why we want to use shapes that children already know to help them remember the most important thing they will ever know: God gave us Jesus.

The shapes we're talking about this month are so much more than just hearts, squares, circles, and stars. They are fun ways to help our children remember the true story of Christmas. Hearts remind us that "God loved the world so much that He gave his only Son" (John 3:16, GNT). Squares look like a gift, and Jesus is the best gift ever. Circles remind us of fluffy sheep, and God sent angels to announce His great gift to shepherds who were watching their sheep. Then God put a special star in the sky to lead wise men to come worship young Jesus.

This month, let us all pray that Christmas will become a time when we remember that God gave us Jesus. In doing so, our hope is that our children will begin to see reminders everywhere of the true story of Christmas.

December Memory Verse

"God loved the world so much that he gave his only Son." - John 3:16 GNT

Continued from previous page

to God and obeyed God. She put her trust in God and had faith that God was going to do amazing things through her... and that is exactly what happened! Mary gave birth to Jesus, the Savior of the world!

Ben Gurganus,
 Associate Pastor for Youth & Christian Education
 Resources and ideas are from Orange Curriculum.

First - Sixth Grade

Ist-6th Grade December Bible Study Lessons

(Bible story video & resources emailed out each Friday)

DECEMBER THEME: EXTRA! EXTRA!Celebrate the Good News of Jesus' Birth

GOD VIEW: THE CONNECTION BETWEEN TRUTH AND GOD'S CREATION, AS SHOWN THROUGH GOD'S BIG STORY

God didn't need cable news or social media to broadcast the greatest birth announcement of all time. Instead, God sent an angel to Mary and to Zechariah and a full-on angel choir to the shepherds. And then, because it was no-big-deal, God placed a brand-new star in the sky to share the news with the wise men. Throughout history, the extraordinary news of Jesus' birth has been spread in every way imaginable, which is why we're shouting it out through this month's theme: "Extra! Extra! Celebrate the Good News of Jesus' birth."

— Weekly Bottom Lines for December —

December 7

lesus is good news for everyone.

December 14

God always had a plan to send Jesus.

December 21

lesus is the greatest gift.

December 28

Celebrate Jesus all year long.

December Memory Verse

"Today in the town of David a Savior has been born to you. He is the Messiah, the Lord." - Luke 2:11, NIrV



Children's Ministry Text Group

For any parents of children who would like to be added to the Children's Ministry text alerts, please text "oakmontkids" (no quotation marks needed) to 833-744-0524. Stay informed!

— Children & Youth Updates —

DECEMBER

7 | Dinner & Advent Stations

14 | Youth Christmas Party

21 | Church-Wide Christmas Caroling Night

Our Wednesday night youth gatherings are done for the year! We will resume in 2026.



— This Week's Events —

Sunday, December 7

9:40 a.m.

Bible Study/Sunday School

10:45 a.m

In-Person & Live-Stream Worship

12:15 p.m.

Worship on Cable Channel 7

3:30 p.m.

Handbell Rehearsal

Sanctuary

4:30 p.m.

Young Life Christmas Party Fellowship Hall

5:30 p.m.

Youth Dinner & Advent Stations

Monday, December 8

9:15 a.m.

Senior Adult Christmas
Shopping Trip to Smithfield

3:15 p.m.

Backyard Buddies Christmas Party

6:30 p.m.

Celebrate Recovery

Tuesday, December 9

10:00 a.m.

Oakmont Handcrafters Group

I:00 p.m.

Homebound Meal

Preparation & Delivery

5:00 p.m.

LINKS Holiday Party Fellowship Hall

Wed., December 10

6:00 p.m.

ESL

6:30 p.m.

Choir & Orchestra "Lite Bite"
Room 607

7:00 p.m.

Chancel Choir Rehearsal Sanctuary

Thursday, December 11

10:00 a.m.

JOY Singers Depart for Cypress Glen

12:30 p.m.

The Village Christmas Party Fellowship Hall



2025 MISSIONS AND MINISTRY SPENDING PLAN: \$1,276,650

Receipts (This Week)	\$28,674	Building Fund (This Week) \$18,900
(\$4,020 On	line, \$24,654 Mail)	Building Fund (Month-to-Date) \$34,160
Receipts (Month-to-Date)	\$102,164	Building Fund (Year-to-Date) \$188,459.50
Receipts 2025 (Year-to-Date)	.\$1,067,021.87	Baptist Children's Homes (This Week) \$70
Receipts 2024 (Year-to-Date)	.\$1,005,474.67	Baptist Children's Homes (YTD)\$2,640
Communion Offering (This Week))\$560	WNC (This Week) \$130
Communion Offering (MTD)	\$3,980	WNC (YTD)\$2,557

The Worship of God at Oakmont

——— GATHERING OF GOD'S PEOPLE ————			
WELCOME		Rev. Eric Porterfield	
CALL TO WORSHIP	"Prepare Ye the Way" Joyful Sounds		
HYMN	"O Come, O Come Emmanuel"		
LIGHTING OF THE ADVENT CANDLE OF PEACE		Maria, Wyatt, and Audrey Judge	
PRAYERS A	AND OFFERINGS OF GOD	'S PEOPLE ———	
MORNING PRAYER		Rev. Eric Porterfield	
HYMN	"Joy Has Dawned"		
OFFERTORY SENTENCES		Rev. Alicia Porterfield	
OFFERTORY	"The Huron Carol" Handbell Choir		
— PROCLAMATI	ON AND RESPONSE OF G	OD'S PEOPLE ——	

CHILDREN'S WORSHIP TIME Rev. Ben Gurganus

Romans 15:4-13 **SCRIPTURE READING** Rev. Eric Porterfield

SERMON "Filled With Hope, Joy, and Peace" Rev. Eric Porterfield

CELEBRATION OF COMMUNION Rev. Eric Porterfield

COMMUNION MEDITATION "O Come, O Come, Emmanuel"

Orchestra

HYMN "It Came Upon a Midnight Clear"

SENDING FORTH GOD'S PEOPLE

LIFE AT OAKMONT Rev. Gurganus

BENEDICTION Rev. Eric Porterfield

All People of Oakmont Baptist Church Are Ministers and serve alongside

Rev. Eric Porterfield
Senior Pastor
eric@oakmontchurch.com

Dr. Laurie Cosby
Minister of Music
laurielee@oakmontchurch.com

Rev. Ben Gurganus
Associate Pastor for Youth
& Christian Education
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Rev. Alicia Porterfield

Minister of Missions

alicia@oakmontchurch.com

Dr. Greg Rogers
Pastor Emeritus

Ms. Lauri Johnson
Pastoral/Music Ministry Secretary
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Mrs. Nicole Davis
Educational Ministries Secretary
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Mr. Wayne Taylor
Facility Manager
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Communications Specialist
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Mrs. Caroline Bissette
Technical Assistant
techteam@oakmontchurch.com

Mr. Jackson Bunch Mr. David Horvath Mr. Jimmy Weaver Mr. Phillip Williamson Sextons

Worship & Music Leadership

Mrs. Alisa Gilliam
Pianist

Mr. Jim Gilliam Music Assistant

Mrs. Karen Meetze
Organist



I 100 Red Banks Road | Greenville, NC 27858 | 252.756.1245 | oakmontchurch.com Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

