

Oakdale Messenger

www.obcbaptist.org

June 2011



Have you ever wondered why some individuals, organizations and churches move forward and some don't? Why do some churches grow and

fulfill God's calling for them and some don't? God's desire for our life and for our church is that we continue to grow and reach others for Christ. Any church that is not growing and moving forward is a church not in God's will. Today's growing churches follow these Biblical principles and God blesses them:

1. Growing churches expect big things from a big God: Our vision should be big because we serve a limitless God. The Bible says "with God all things are possible." Faith plays an important part in the life of every believer and every church. Let's allow God to stretch our vision and see things (by faith) that we have never seen before.

2. Growing churches are willing to try new things to reach people for Christ: You have probably heard the old saying: "The message never changes, but the methods do." How true that is for the church. Programs and methods change, but our gospel message never changes. The truths of God's Word never change. But any church that is not willing to attempt new methods in reaching people will never grow. Let's be open to new methods to share God's message.

3. In growing churches, the members work together to accomplish God's will: In the Bible, the church is described as a body. Each part of the body works together to make the entire body function. The Apostle Paul said we are to endeavor to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace" (Ephesians 4:3). Can you imagine what would happen if every Christian walked in unity with God and in unity with his or her fellow believers?

4. Growing churches are always looking OUTWARD, not INWARD: Jesus made clear that our number one task is to reach the lost. That is done by taking advantage of every opportunity to reach out in the community and around the world. The Christian life is mission-focused, not me-focused. The growing church is not afraid to take the gospel outside its walls and engage the culture.

5. Growing churches are grounded in the Word of God: Their mission, their worship and their ministries are all Bible-centered. As we preach and teach the Word of God it will impact lives for eternity. The secret to a Bible-centered church is that it's members are Bible-centered too. They spend time daily in the Scriptures. They read, meditate and live out the principles of the Bible.

6. Growing churches are also praise-centered churches: No matter what happens, God is praised. No matter where God takes us, we give Him praise. In the ups and the downs, we give Him praise. Like the Psalmist said in Psalm 9:1- "I will praise You, O Lord, with my whole heart."

Pastor Joe

SUNDAY NIGHTS IN JUNE

June 5
DiscipleLife
6:00 PM



June 12th
Vacation Bible
School
6:30 PM

June 19th
Happy Fathers
Day!
(No PM Activities)



June 26
DiscipleLife
6:00 PM

Our mission is to KNOW Jesus, SERVE Jesus, and SHARE Jesus.

OAKDALE BAPTIST CHURCH SUMMER DAY CAMP



K-5th Grade
Monday-Friday
6:30 AM-6:00PM

We offer a wonderful 11-week Bible study along with many other activities.

Call today to reserve your spot

Michelle Marks 252-442-4005



STUDENT MINISTRY

Psalm 1:1-3 - Blessed is the man who walks not in the counsel of the wicked, nor stands in the way of sinners, nor sits in the seat of scoffers; but his delight is in the law of the Lord, and on his law he meditates day and night. He is like a tree planted by streams of water that yields its fruit in its season, and its leaf does not wither. In all that he does, he prospers.

Our prayer is for the OBC Students is to be like the Psalm 1 man. We have had a great last few weeks fellowshiping and digging into God's word. Please continue to be in prayer for our students and our upcoming events.

Upcoming Events:

- Graduate Sunday – Sunday June 5th, 11am Worship Service followed by a luncheon for the graduates and their families
- VBS – Activities for both Middle School and High School students, 12 – 16th of June
- Camp – July 3rd – 8th it is not too late to sign up!

Ongoing Events:

- Disciple Life – Sunday evenings from 6 to 7 pm
- Student Worship Service – Saturday's from 6 to 8:40 pm
- Sunday School – Every Sunday morning at 9:45 am

Thank you to the entire church family for all the support and amazing fundraiser we had. It was a huge success. Praise God! Camp will be life changing for our students.

Nate Mace



Thanks to Oakdale for another great year of Straightway T-ball. We had a wonderful awards banquet for our 10 year anniversary. Thanks especially to all of our volunteers, coaches, umpires, and our concession crew again who worked hard all year and prepared the breakfast for our banquet. Straightway continues to do weekly devotions with the kids and spread the gospel at every game. Thanks for your prayers.

In Christ,
Aaron Rhodes

CHILDREN'S CORNER



**It's not too late to sign up for
children's summer camp!!**

July 3rd - 8th

See Jennifer for more info

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
"BIG APPLE ADVENTURE"
June 12-16, 2011
6:30 PM



We are still in need of volunteers for the nursery, guides, preschool group. Please see Kim Wells if you are able to help.

Next VBS meeting will be on Wednesday June 8th @ 6:00 in the fellowship hall – ANYONE helping with VBS needs to be there.

We will have a decorating day on Saturday, June 11th – please come out to decorate and get ready for VBS!

Thank you for all of your support & prayers leading up to VBS!
Kim Wells

CHURCH MAILROOM



Oakdale,

No words will be able to express to your church family how much we thank all of you for the help you all gave in Greene County. Thank you again and our prayers are with your church family.

James & Judy Lucas

(Oakdale helped with the cleanup after the tornado)

Oakdale Baptist Church,

Thank you so much for the supplies and gift cards you sent us through Mary and Ann. It means so much to us. Things are getting a little easier to accept because of people like you.

Thanks again!

Mike, Becky & Corey Dail

(Oakdale church helped with the cleanup after the tornado)



TREASURER'S INFO

APRIL 2011

BUDGET, RECEIPTS & OFFERINGS

General offerings	\$27,247.61
Childcare transfer	\$ 2,400.00
March expenses	<u>\$29,647.61</u>
Over/under	\$ 1,354.38

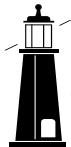
APRIL

BUILDING FUND RECEIPTS

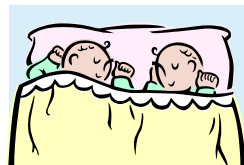
Receipts	\$2,387.00
Monthly loan payment	<u>\$3,600.00</u>
Over/Under	<\$1,213.00>

LOAN BALANCE as of 4/21/11

\$296,628.06



Six house bricks (\$520) were added to the "Lighthouse for Jesus". What engraving would you like on a brick?? Call the church office if you have questions.



Congratulations to Paige & Brad Summerlin, sister Brianna, and brother Bryson on the birth of twin boys, Chase and Garrett on May 20th. Grandparents are Billy and Angela Hill, and Barbara and Lemmie Summerlin. Their Great Grandmother is Ann Rhodes.

Our Sympathy to:

Beverly Rhodes in the passing of her dad

Misty Flory in the passing of her grandmother

ClerksCorner

Welcome New Members:

Kathy Calhoun (by statement), Joshua Calhoun (by baptism), Cody Calhoun (by baptism)

97 Joseph Lane, Rocky Mount, NC 27801

Conferences:

5/4/11 Special Called Conference

-Motion made and passed to sell the Legg Mason stock which is worth \$9,000 at present

-Motion made and passed to allow West Edgecombe Baptist Church to purchase our ownership portion in the disaster trailer for \$2,500. Reason for this is due to the fact that at times the two churches are called to different areas of need and only have one trailer. If they vote not to do this, we will buy their portion for the same amount. (footnote: WEBC voted to and did purchase our part of the trailer and we have already secured a new trailer for OBC)

5/11/11 Regular Scheduled Conference

Reports were presented by the officers, ministry teams, and staff. They are attached to the minutes in the church office for review.

-Motion made and passed to purchase a laptop computer to be used by Youth/Associate Pastor.

-Appointees by Active Deacon Board for nominating committee announced and approved by vote are: Tammy Wooten, Jenifer Engelking, and Robert Chadwick.

-Motion made and passed that we, Oakdale Church, recommend Jordan Wooten to become a student at The College at Southeastern.

DIRECTORIES HAVE ARRIVED!!



On Sunday, June 5th, we will have a table set up in the hall by the office. Those who had their pictures taken can get a free one. Any additional copies and for those who did not have a picture made, the cost is \$5.00 each.

RELAY FOR LIFE



OBC church family,

Thank you all so much for the support of the Relay team this year. To date we have raised over \$6000. Thank you to everyone that helped to make our team a success. OBC's Relay team brought home 4 awards for our camp site - 1st place Banner, 2nd place decorated camp site, 2nd place in spirit, and 3rd place for theme! Thank you to everyone that came out to support us @ Relay! We couldn't have done it without all of you!

Thank you,
OBC Relay team!

JOY GROUP NEWS

JUNE 11TH

Breakfast 8:00 AM



JUNE 18TH

Johnston Community College

JUNE BIRTHDAYS

SECURITY FOR JUNE

6/5 Steve & Cole Sturgill
 6/12 Phil Wood & Eric Stott
 6/19 Jonathan Cobb & Bill Lamm
 6/26 Stacey Nicholas & Carroll Brown

USHER TEAM FOR JUNE

KEVIN MARKS-HEAD USHER
 THOMAS BULLUCK
 TAD RHODES
 TONY LASSITER
 EMMETT TATUM

NURSERY NEWS



Boy!! Did we have an active room full of youngsters on Easter Sunday Morning. It was wonderful to see so many smiling faces at OBC. Thanks go out to nursery workers for that Sunday to Shawn, Susie, Shelby, and Spencer Webb, who kept the bed babies and to Rose Ruffin, Lisa, Carrie, and Bryce Manning for the toddlers. **Thank you parents** for bringing them to OBC. Caretakers for May thus far have been Elton & Bernice Pridgen, Angela Spain, Gwen Harvey, Nancy Lamm, Christie Joyner, Catherine Arnold, Emily Owens, Robert & Rebecca Chadwick, Nancy Lamm, and Amanda Clark. On Mother's Day, some of the men and young men offered to, and did stay as a gesture of appreciation to Mothers. Paulette Ream remained in the nursery to help with the girls. Many thanks to our men folk for thinking of that. Thank you each and every one for your love and care of our children. Stay turned for June...the hostess for June is Donna Kermon. Be on the lookout for your yellow card and always bring it with you on your Sunday to be placed in the "**box**".

6/1	Anna Rhodes	6/16	Carol Perry
6/2	Spencer Webb	6/17	Jackie Medley
6/3	Joseph Armstrong	6/17	Joshua Rose
6/3	William Lamm	6/18	Judy Costello
6/3	Duncan Tatum	6/18	Gary Winstead
6/4	Tyler Williams	6/20	Patty Collins
6/4	Rosa Winstead	6/20	Vickie Sledge
6/7	Ricky Murray	6/22	Zachary Perry
6/8	Obie Thompson	6/22	Jacob Price
6/9	Amber Williams	6/22	Sandra Walston
6/10	Luke Holloman	6/23	Stephen Hicks
6/10	Christian Langley	6/23	Collin Rhodes
6/10	Ginger Tess	6/24	Peggy Johnson
6/11	Teddy Williams	6/24	Christina Marks
6/12	Sandy Howard	6/25	Evelyn Pitt Bradley
6/13	Jim Vickers	6/26	Dorothy Grimsley
6/14	Brent Griffin	6/26	J. R. Hamlett
6/14	Jeffrey Groover	6/26	Erin Perry
6/14	Mary Reichenbaugh	6/26	Tanner Rhodes
6/15	Ethel Pitt	6/26	Kayla Strickland
6/16	Wendy Groover	6/26	Patsy Vickers
6/16	Jessica McNamara	6/27	Christy Nicholas
		6/30	Annette Joyner

IMPORTANT NURSERY MESSAGE

We have three more months left in this church year, June, July, and August. We realize that these are months when lots of people have vacation time and are not at Oakdale every Sunday. It has been most rewarding to the Nursery Ministry Team how almost everyone who was asked to serve have been so very gracious about caring for our nursery aged children. We realize that some of you who would really love to do it are not physically able and some have responsibilities during worship service that you cannot. Some have been given this opportunity only once, some two times, and with 13 Sundays left some of you will serve a third time. Thank you, as many of you already know when you will not be here, it would be a great help to the scheduling team if you would let us know which Sunday you would be available to help out in this regard so that we can proceed with making a dependable schedule. If you have never helped in the nursery and are willing and able, please let us know. You will get acquainted with Jackson, Jackson, Gavin, Lexi, Nola, Callie, Josh, Peyton, Isabel, Andrew, Avery, and others. Who knows, you may be getting acquainted with a future senator, congressman or woman, or president. More importantly, a missionary, evangelist, pastor, or chaplain. So many possibilities may be in these rooms. **THINK** about it, then **ACT**. Let us know which Sunday you want to be a part of this ministry.



MISSIONS UPDATE



Local, National and International



"But thanks be to God, who always leads us as captives in Christ's triumphal procession and uses us to spread the aroma of the knowledge of him everywhere. For we are to God the pleasing aroma of Christ among those who are being saved and those who are perishing" (2 Cor. 2-14-15).

In a past Bible study we talked about the aroma or smell of Christ and just how refreshing and sweet smelling his word is to believers and just how is actions reflected that same sweet refreshing smell. Are you spreading the sweet aroma of Christ or are you spreading a sour smell that does not reflect Christ in all that you do? We don't often think about how we are projecting Christ in our everyday lives we just live. This lesson made me really think about my "smell" and just how people see me in my everyday walk. So think about whether you project the sweet aroma of Christ or if you are projecting the stinky sweaty smell of the devil to those around you.

The heat is on! But don't let that stop you from being a part of WMU. As the summer heats up consider what a "refreshing" time it will be to meet with other women believers to learn and share about Christ and our responsibility to missions in our community and around the world.

Mission Friends/GA's/Acteens News...

Acteens will be meeting at 5:00 pm on Sunday's before DiscipleLife. If you are in grades 6-12 please consider joining us for an adventure into missions and how you can be a part.

MISSIONS INVOLVEMENT

OPERATION BANDANAS

"He who dwells in the secret place of the Most High shall abide under the shadow of the Almighty. I will say of the Lord, He is my refuge and my fortress; My God, in Him I will trust." Psalm 91:1-2

WHAT: What started as one mothers desire to encourage a son and his Special Forces Team spiritually has turned into a mission of spreading Gods love to those who protect our great nation and our way of life.

WHY: To offer inspiration, encouragement, strength and comfort to our armed forces serving in Iraq and Afghanistan. And to equip our troops with a piece of God's armor, His offensive weapon against the enemy. (Ephesians 6:10-17)

HOW: With donations from churches and other organizations Operation Bandana has been able to send 51,864 Psalm 91 bandanas in 2010.

Starting Sunday we will be collecting money for Operation Bandana. Please pray for this ministry and pray for the men and women who serve so that we have the freedom to worship freely and the opportunity to send others on the mission field to spread the good news of Christ.

To find out more about the ministry go to www.operationbandanas.org

WON'T YOU GIVE?

Karen Murray

BAPTIST MEN

Dear Faithful,

As the men and women of our church continue to move forward with a new disaster trailer, I wish to thank our church family for their support in this important effort. We will be better enabled and prepared to respond to the needs of our community, our church family and those people affected by disasters or physical needs such as handicapped ramps. You, as our church family, recognized the necessity to have and maintain our own disaster trailer and I am deeply grateful for your insight and support in this matter.

Our church has many ongoing projects including some renovation, classroom expansions, painting and other needs and I pray that our God will supply us with the materials as well as the spiritual strength to accomplish His will. Let us all continue to pray for the unity, love, compassion and understanding that we sometimes take for granted. If we seek God in all things, he will always answer our prayers.

I also humbly request that everyone be in prayer for the nominating committee as they are working diligently to fill important positions at our church. If you would like to serve on a committee or be a Sunday School Teacher please pray that God will lead you to accept the challenge of leadership.

Thank you all,

Brother Carroll

Psalm 133 vs 1



HONDURAS MISSION TRIP

Thanks again to everyone for your prayers and financial support for the upcoming mission trip! Things are coming together but yet there's still so much to do, and it's crazy to think that in less than three months, we will be back home from the mission trip sharing with everyone how God worked, and the awesome things He did! Recently we found out that we will be ministering to between 50 and 150 kids everyday at a VBS we'll be hosting. This presents a lot of challenges as they will range in age from 5 – 15. Please pray for our team of 13 that we can trust God and work in His strength. Also, please pray that God will continue to prepare our hearts for service, and that we will focus totally on Him.

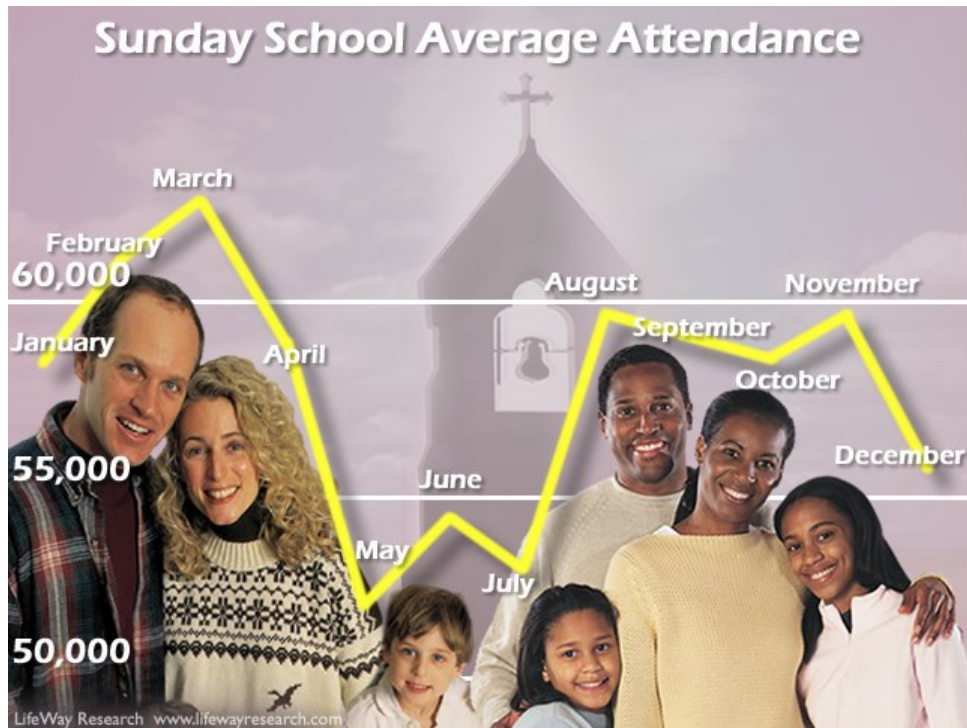
There is still a financial need all of our team, and if anyone would like to contribute just make the check out to Oakdale and in the memo line write Honduras trip.

Mission Team , our next meeting will be June 6 at 7 pm in the brick house beside Thomas & Kaye Bulluck's house.

Thank you Oakdale for all your prayers and support!

Love God,
Buie

“Steppin’ Up, Divin’ In, and Reachin’ Out”



May – July: Churches experience a deep trough in attendance in the summer months. It’s no surprise that May through July have the lowest attendance of the year. Why? Members need vacation and so does the church staff! Air travel peaks in July and vehicle travel is high (www.bts.gov). Camps and mission trips take the church on the road. Others simply use their Sundays to take advantage of the nice weather or for taking day trips. *Implications:* If churches didn’t experience an August rebound to their low July attendance, they would be devastated. Also, many formerly churched adults have admitted it’s devastating when no one notices you are gone. Caring contact is critical when folks are away. <http://www.lifeway.com/article/163843/>

I challenge each of us when we are away from our home church of Oakdale Baptist, to visit another church and their Sunday School. They will be as happy to see you as we are when we have guests at Oakdale. You will make great local contacts that can advise you on fun, family activities you can enjoy while you are visiting. Summer is usually the time for vacation, continue to attend church no matter where you are. **Bring me back their church bulletin, it will be loaded with great ideas that we may be able to implement at Oakdale!!**

Sunday School is the primary place to study the Bible in order to teach us, both young and old, how to live our lives glorifying HIM. If you don’t have a Sunday School class to be active in, please contact me, 252-567-3226 or webservant@obcbaptist.org. I will be happy to assist you in finding a class for you and your family.

FOR HIM!

Mark Ream
Sunday School Director

MISSION EMPHASIS

“Operation Bandana”

June 2011

EVERY SUNDAY: SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM DISCIPLELIFE 6:00 PM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																		
			1 7:00 PM Regular Activity	2	3	4 6:00PM Student Worship Service																		
5 Graduates Recognition & Luncheon 5:00 PM Acteens 6:00PM DiscipleLife	6 7:00 PM Honduras Mtg	7 7:00 PM WMU Bible Study Group	8 6:00PM VBS	9 7:00 PM Prayer Patriots	10	11 8:00 AM J.O.Y. Group Breakfast 6PM Student Worship Service Decorate for VBS																		
12	13	14 10:00 AM WMU Prayer Group	15	16	17	18 9:30 AM J.O.Y. Group (Johnston Comm. College) 6:00PM Student Worship Service																		
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19 Father's Day 5:00 PM Acteens No PM Activities	20	21 7:00 PM Children's Ministry Team	22 7:00 PM Regular Activity	23	24	25 6:00PM Student Worship Service																		
26 5:00 PM Acteens 6:00PM DiscipleLife	27	28	29 7:00 PM Regular Activity	30	<table border="1" style="width: 100%;"> <tr> <th colspan="3">NURSING HOME MINISTRY</th> </tr> <tr> <td>6/1</td> <td>Somerset</td> <td>10:00 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6/3</td> <td>The Albemarle</td> <td>10:30 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6/7</td> <td>Breckenridge</td> <td>10:30 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6/17</td> <td>The Albemarle</td> <td>10:00 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>6/20</td> <td>Breckenridge</td> <td>2:00 PM</td> </tr> </table>		NURSING HOME MINISTRY			6/1	Somerset	10:00 AM	6/3	The Albemarle	10:30 AM	6/7	Breckenridge	10:30 AM	6/17	The Albemarle	10:00 AM	6/20	Breckenridge	2:00 PM
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MISSION FOR JUNE

“Operation Bandana”

July 2011

EVERY SUNDAY: SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM DISCIPLELIFE 6:00 PM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																		
					1	2																		
3 <i>Call2Fall</i> <i>NO PM SERVICE</i>	4	5	6 <i>David Barten</i> <i>DVD???</i> <i>7:00 PM</i> <i>Regular Activity</i>	7	8	9 <i>8:00 AM</i> <i>J.O.Y. Group</i> <i>Breakfast</i>																		
C A M P O A K D A L E																								
10 <i>6:00pm CAMP</i> <i>REPORT</i> <i>7:00 PM</i> <i>Deacons</i>	11 <i>6:30 PM</i> <i>WMU Current</i> <i>Mission Group</i> <i>7:00 PM WMU</i> <i>Bible Study Group</i> <i>4-8 PM Red</i> <i>Cross Blood Drive</i>	12 <i>10:00 AM WMU</i> <i>Prayer Group</i> <i>7:00</i> <i>Children's</i> <i>Ministry Team</i>	13 <i>7:00 PM</i> <i>Regular Activity</i>	14 <i>7:00 PM</i> <i>Prayer Patriots</i>	15 <i>Mudcats</i> <i>Game (Church-</i> <i>wide)</i>	16																		
17 <i>2:00 PM</i> <i>RA/GA</i> <i>Pine Derby</i> <i>5:00 PM</i> <i>Acteens</i> <i>6:00 PM</i> <i>DiscipleLife</i>	18	19 <i>J.O.Y. Group</i> <i>(Farmer's Market)</i>	20 <i>7:00 PM</i> <i>Regular Activity</i>	21	22	23																		
24 <i>5:00 PM</i> <i>Acteens</i> <i>6:00 PM</i> <i>DiscipleLife</i>	25	26	27 <i>7:00 PM</i> <i>Regular Activity</i>	28 <i>6:00 PM</i> <i>J.O.Y. Group</i> <i>Covered Dish</i>	29	30																		
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MISSION FOR AUGUST

“Christmas in August”

AUGUST 2011

EVERY SUNDAY: SUNDAY SCHOOL 9:45 AM MORNING WORSHIP 11:00 AM DISCIPLELIFE 6:00 PM

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat																		
	1	2	3 <i>7:00 PM Worship on Wednesday</i>	4 <i>6:30PM Church Council</i>	5	6 <i>J.O.Y. Group (Johnston Comm. College)</i>																		
7 <i>Communion</i> <i>Commission Mission Team</i>	8 <i>6:30 PM WMU Current Mission Group</i> <i>7:00 PM WMU Bible Study Group</i>	9 <i>10:00 AM WMU Prayer Group</i> <i>7:00PM CMT Meeting</i>	10 <i>7:00 PM Church Conf.</i>	11 <i>7:00 PM Prayer Patriots</i>	12	13 <i>8:00 AM J.O.Y. Group Breakfast</i>																		
HONDURAS MISSION TRIP AUGUST 8-16																								
14	15	16	17 <i>7:00 PM Mission trip report</i>	18	19	20																		
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21	22	23	24 <i>7:00 PM Worship on Wednesday</i>	25	26	27																		
28	29	30	31 <i>7:00 PM Worship on Wednesday Celebration Banquet ??</i>	<table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="3">NURSING HOME MINISTRY</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>8/2</td> <td>Brekenridge</td> <td>10:30 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8/3</td> <td>Somerset</td> <td>10:00 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8/5</td> <td>The Albemarle</td> <td>10:30 AM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8/15</td> <td>Brekenridge</td> <td>2:00 PM</td> </tr> <tr> <td>8/19</td> <td>The Albemarle</td> <td>10:00 AM</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>			NURSING HOME MINISTRY			8/2	Brekenridge	10:30 AM	8/3	Somerset	10:00 AM	8/5	The Albemarle	10:30 AM	8/15	Brekenridge	2:00 PM	8/19	The Albemarle	10:00 AM
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Oakdale Baptist Church
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Rocky Mount, NC 27801
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Mrs. Michelle Marks, Childcare Director
Mrs. Sharon Lynch, Secretary



DEACON BEACON—News from Deacon Ministry Team
A guiding light to the rock

Oakdale Family,
Summer is approaching and along with the change in temperature and humidity, we as a church should begin anticipating the change of the church year. Soon the nominating ministry team will prayerfully begin the search for church leaders including Sunday school teachers, Student ministry leaders and ministry team members. We will also begin the process of electing three deacons to fill the vacancy left by those rotating away from active service. We will be seeking genuine Christian leadership to fill these positions, leaders who understand that this calling serves an eternal purpose and has no greater purpose than to lead and grow others in Christ.
What should a Christian leader be like? The perfect example of Christian leadership is the example of our Lord Jesus Christ. He declared, “I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep” ([John 10:11](#)). It is in this verse that we see the Lord’s description of the leader that He demonstrated to us as well as the leaders that we are expected to be. Sheep were not referred to by Christ in an affectionate way in this verse; in fact sheep rank among the least intelligent animals on earth. A stray sheep becomes easily disoriented, confused, scared, and unable to find its way back to the flock. The sheep is unable to ward off predators; in fact the stray sheep is perhaps the most helpless of all of God’s creatures. Shepherders have told stories for centuries about entire flocks that have drowned during times of flash flooding even when they were in sight of higher ground. Like it or not, when Jesus called us His sheep, He was saying that without a shepherd, we are helpless.
The shepherd has many roles regarding his sheep, he leads, encourages, nurtures, comforts, corrects and protects. The shepherd of the Lord’s flock leads by modeling godliness and righteousness in his own life and encouraging others to follow his example. Of course, our ultimate example—and the One we should follow—is Christ Himself. The Apostle Paul understood this: “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ” ([1 Corinthians 11:1](#)). The Christian leader is one who follows Christ and inspires others to follow Him as well.
As we move toward a new church year, I pray that you are seeking God’s will pertaining to your service at Oakdale. I pray that we are always mindful of the awesome responsibility that we have within the body of Christ and that we begin to earnestly seek opportunities of service to His Kingdom.
Tim Engelking