

Oak Level Baptist Church

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Volume 32

“SHARING THE JOURNEY”

December 2011/January 2012

No Public Displays of Christmas Allowed

You have read the same headlines and heard the news. *"City orders Christmas decorations removed."* *"Local malls must include symbols of all faiths when decorating."* *"School children are prohibited from singing Christmas Carols."* *"Merry Christmas is now a politically incorrect greeting. Christmas will now be referred to as Winter Break so as not to offend or exclude."* *"The Salvation Army is no longer welcome on the premises."*

Even television and movies make a mockery of our faith and commit blasphemous attacks that leave us shocked and incensed. These blatant assaults coincidentally reach their peak during the seasons Christians hold most sacred. Jesus' birth, death, and resurrection are made fun of in the most vile and obscene manner possible, and the offenders are usually encouraged and praised through the media and by activist groups, big and small. All things Christian are portrayed as stupid, narrow, and obsolete by the standards of a modern society.

As believers, our first inclination is to take offense at the changes to our most sacred traditions and look for ways to confront the anti-Christian propaganda that dominates the landscape more and more. We wonder how such attitudes could be the true expression of the majority in this democratic republic. It must be a small minority of folks leading the attacks and policy changes, so let's issue the rallying cry and set the sinners straight.

But before you get caught up in all of the uproar and ugliness, let me remind you that Jesus was not really popular in His own day and time. The religious institutions of the day refused to recognize Him, the people in the street loved Him one day but hated Him the next, and even His inner circle of closest and dearest friends abandoned Him when the government arrested, terrorized, and eventually murdered Him on false charges. It was a far darker environment than what we live in today.

We must remember that the Christian faith and Christmas have very little to do with the number of brightly lit lights, beautifully decorated trees, sacred signage, or singing carolers. It has everything to do with representing Jesus Christ in the world where we live. A government might legislate what banners or symbols are displayed on a piece of property, and activist groups may picket and force some "seasonal" traditions to be shut down or silenced, but NO ONE may extinguish the light of life and joy of Christ that lives within us!

It is required of you to be a light to the world not just for a few weeks in December but throughout the year. There is no government on the planet that is capable of legislating your relationship with God, and though the nativity scene may no longer be displayed in some places, it is impossible to quench the Spirit of God as He directs you to love your neighbor...and those who will spitefully use you and say all manner of evil against you. If the roots of our faith reach no deeper than those few days of Christmas tradition or is not visible to those around us 365 days a year, 24/7, then do we really have a faith? They will know that we are Christian by our love, not by our decorations.

I would love to see all those around me embrace the traditional symbols of Christmas and celebrate with me the meaning, joy, and peace I have come to experience in Christ, but that will never happen for the simple reason that Jesus is still not understood, respected, or loved by the huge majority of those in this present age. If even those within our churches fail to honor Jesus Christ in their daily lives, why should we ever expect those outside the church who are without a Shepherd to respond any different than the suffering and struggling mobs of unChristian masses did when Jesus walked the earth?

Unless they hear they cannot believe and unless you tell them they cannot hear. If someone this Christmas tries to turn off your lights, take down your tree, block your parade, or remove your stable, think first of Jesus. He would reach out to the hater and love him with all of His heart. May you be a Merry Christmas to those around you.

Rev. Steve Manuel, Interim Pastor

December Birthdays

Dec. 02 Trevor Nester
Sam Turner
Dec. 04 Mason Arrington
Joshua Howell
Dec. 07 Shirley Foley
Dodie McKee
Hilda Plaster
Jennifer R. Gary
Dec. 08 Boonie Hancock
Dec. 10 Kenneth Keen, Sr.
Greg Young
Dec. 11 Kay Harley
Dec. 12 Homer Hodges
Dec. 13 Nancy Stone
Dec. 15 Peggy Morris
Dec. 16 Ethel Jones
Dec. 18 Betsy Rodgers
Jean Thomas
Dec. 20 Brian Whitehead
Dec. 21 Bryan Young
Dec. 22 Ira Seay
Dec. 24 Howard Webb
Dec. 25 Barbara Slate
Sue Seay
Denver Stultz
Dec. 29 Jack Helms
Kelly Gray Conner
Meghan Thompson
Dec. 30 Nathan Martin
Dec. 31 Roy Brown

January Birthdays

Jan. 2 Brenda Woods
Shirley C. Young
Jan. 5 Ben Morris
Jan. 6 Shirley K. Young
Jan. 7 Sandra Martin
Jan. 8 Donna Winebarger
Jan. 9 Joyce Snead
Jan. 10 Ann Stone
Jan. 11 Lori Keen Pruitt
Jan. 12 Lewis Turner
Grover Harrison
Jan. 13 Buren Thomas
Jan. 14 Carlos Coleman
James Wray
Gloria Keen
Jan. 16 Ryan McKee
Jan. 18 Kelly Webb
Jan. 19 Avis Gray
Jan. 20 Jacob Gray
Eva Dale Searce
Jan. 21 Amy F. Jarrell
Heidi Hodges
Kelly Short
Jan. 22 Edwin France
Jan. 23 Linda Carter
Jan. 24 Daniel Collins
Erin Forbes
Jan. 25 Chris Andrews
Jan. 28 Frances Barnes
Jan. 30 Lester Thompson
Geraldine Williams

REHAB & REST HOME RESIDENTS

Blue Ridge Manor,
P.O. Box 4904, Martinsville, VA 24112
Alice Martin - Room 205

Blue Ridge Rehab,
P.O. Box 4904, Martinsville, VA 24112
*Glen Young - Room 216

Fork Mountain Rest Home,
2925 Fork Mtn. Rd. Rocky Mt, 24151
Golden Stone Howard Hodges
Angela Mason Hazel Sizemore
Pauline Martin Angela Mason

Hanson Home
162 Krontz Dr., Bassett, VA 24055
*Betty Sue Sparks

Harmony Hall
P.O. Box 1614, Bassett, VA 24055
Louise Turner Betty Pagans
Darlene Wray

Stanleytown Health Care
P.O. Box 538, Stanleytown, VA 24168
*Charlie Ramsey Janie Keys
*Mattie Robertson Creed King

TLC Adult Home
880 Lillian Naff Dr., Henry, VA 24102
*Lora Atkins

Trinity Mission Health & Rehab,
300 Hatcher St. Rocky Mt. VA 24151
Ruby Weaver Ida Turner



IN MEMORY

Fund

Name

Church Budget Lonnie West

IN HONOR

Children's Fund Megan Thompson
Matthew Thompson



Congratulations to Pauline Starkey Martin on the birth of her great-grandchild, Jacob Martin Duffy who was born on Sunday, September 25, 2011. His proud parents are Josh & Jessica Duffy and grandparents Chuck & Suzanne Martin.



Sanctuary FLOWERS

Flowers placed in the Sanctuary on Sunday, October 30th are given by Ken & Nancy Turner in honor of Nancy's father, Jake Divers, on his 91st. birthday and also given in loving memory of Nellie Divers and Cecil & Ruby Turner.

Flowers placed in the Church Sanctuary on November 27, 2011 are in loving memory of Jesse Hanks Cox, on his birthday, December 02. They are given by his mother, Esther Hanks, sister, Shana, and his family and friends. The small angel is given by Jesse's grandparents, Virginia and Arnold Hanks.

Flowers placed in the Church Sanctuary on Sunday, December 4th are in loving memory of John Metz and given by his wife, Virginia Metz.



Christian sympathy extended to Clyde & Vera Cahill and their family and friends on the death of Vera's sister, Ann P. Scott, who passed away Friday, September 2, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to the family and friends of Dorothy Keith Bowles of Rocky Mount, who passed away on Tuesday, September 6, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to Wilbern & Martha Meeks on the death of Wilbern's sister, Laura Meeks, who passed away Wednesday, September 28, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to Jesse & Barbara Cannaday and their family and friends on the death of Jesse's first cousin, Paul Lee Cannaday, who passed away Wednesday, October 5, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to the family and friends of Robert Owen (Rabbit) Hutcherson, who passed away Sunday, October, 23, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to the family and friends of Robert Leonard Clark, who passed away Wednesday, October 26, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to Clyde and Vera Cahill and their family and friends on the death of Clyde's sister, Nell Cahill (Kaye) Schurkens, who passed away Saturday, November 12, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to Benny & Sue Young and their family and friends on the death of Sue's father, Lonnie Rosco West, who passed away Thursday, November 17, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to Bob & Barbara Wilson on the death of Barbara's father, John Robert Cobbler, Sr., who passed away Friday, November 11, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to the family and friends of Esther Obstler who passed away Friday, October, 28, 2011.

Christian sympathy extended to Ronnie & Debra Brown and their family and friends on the death of Debra's mother, Doris Gusler who passed away, Saturday, November 26, 2011.

THANK YOU

The Youth would like to thank the church for the opportunity to share their talents and skills and allowing them to do to the October 9th Worship Service.



Oak Level Baptist Church would like to thank the Youth Department and everyone who packed shoeboxes and also to people who donated money to help with the shipping cost. A special thank you to Betty Jo Foley for inspecting and delivering the 35 shoeboxes.

Dear Friends at Oak Level Baptist Church,
Thank you so very much for calling upon me to come and share my music with you - it was such a joy for me. I pray that you felt it too - isn't GOD GOOD!! Thank you also for the wonderful refreshments and the very generous love offering. May God bless you all. Love in Christ, Jackie Belcher

I would like to thank my dear Church Family for all the prayers, food, cards, visits, calls, and caring concerns that were sent our way during the passing of my dad, Lonnie R. West. We really appreciate everything so much. A special thanks to Barbara and Jesse Cannaday for being so kind to us and for making sure we had everything that we needed.

Sue & Benny Young

Thank you Megan Thompson and Cierra Underwood for decorating the Church Bulletin Boards with beautiful and festive decorations. You did a wonderful job!

December CHRISTMAS calendar

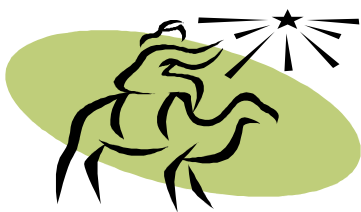
- Dec. 3, 2:00 p.m.** - Our Youth are participating in the **Bassett Christmas Parade**
- Dec. 4, 5:00 p.m.** - Christmas Cantata
- Dec. 5, 10:00 a.m.** - "Hanging of the Greens"
- Dec. 11, 5:00 p.m.** - Christmas Cantata at Fieldale Baptist Church
- Dec. 18, 11:00 a.m.** - Christmas Worship Service
Christmas "Treat bags" given.
- Dec. 18, 6:00 p.m.** - Youth Christmas Program with Angel Tree.
- Dec. 25** - Santa's Christmas Workshop



GRACE NETWORK

Include these items on your shopping list when you go to the Grocery Store. Bring them to the church and we will deliver them to Grace Network.

Food Items for December & January are:
Boxed Potato Products - (13 oz.)
Deodorant - Toilet Paper
Toothpaste - Juice (32-64 oz.)





Human exploitation is defined as “the unethical, selfish use of human beings for the satisfaction of personal desires and/or profitable advantage.” As a partner with WMU Project HELP, WMUV is addressing six main uses of exploitation.

Human Exploitation

During 2012 we will focus on awareness, education, prayer, and some basic ways to Engage in addressing Human Exploitation. As we continue to emphasize prayer in 2013, we will target specific areas in which to respond more fully. We encourage you to explore the following issues and prayerfully consider where you would join Jesus Christ were He is at work in the world.

Issues:

- Bullying, cyberbullying, queen bee bullying
- Media exploitation of children and families
- Exploitation of natural resources
- Pornography and sexting
- Human trafficking--labor
- Human Trafficking-- Sex

ALMA HUNT 2011 OFFERING FOR VA MISSIONS

OAK LEVEL BAPTIST CHURCH GOAL

\$1,000.00

TOTAL TO DATE: \$1065.00

We surpassed our Goal!

Thank you to all who gave to the
Alma Hunt Offering for VA Missions

WMU Calendar

December 2011

11-18 - Emphasis for Global Missions

14- Focus on Uganda & Republic of
Congo

27- WMU Meeting at 7:00 p.m.

January 2012

24- WMU Meeting at 7:00 p.m.



OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Thank you for the
Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes.

We had a total of **35** shoeboxes!

Give to the
CBF *Offering for*
GLOBAL MISSIONS 

OLBC Annual Goal - \$3,000.00

Total to date - \$3,117.00

We have surpassed our Annual Goal !

Thank you for your donations