

THE LAMPLIGHTER – OCTOBER, 2020

311 Cypress Street – Mt. Carmel, Tennessee 37645 - 423-357-7241 – www.ogbchurch.org

*But a generous man devises generous things, And by generosity he shall stand.
Isaiah 32:8*



Dear Family and Friends,

There have been several moments throughout this pandemic that I have witnessed God's touch. One of the most amazing has been in the generosity of Christians. When the virus first hit, denominational and state conventions were concerned that there would be a significant drop in giving because churches were having to stop having services. Several meetings and projections were prepared for how the convention and state leaders would handle anticipated shortfalls. The results would have been devastating to many ministries across the country.

Then God's people stepped up. In the convention giving has remained close to 95% of what it was last year. The Tennessee Baptist Mission Board recorded one of the largest Golden State Offerings ever received for the 12 months that ended August 31st, and this year I think we could even exceed that number. Our church has challenged itself to \$4,500. The Golden State offering is a particular offering we take up each year. The proceeds from the offering go directly to mission work in the state of Tennessee. It makes a massive difference for people in our state.

In our church, giving has remained strong. We want to say a huge thank you to every person who has been faithful to give during this time. Your offerings have kept missionaries on the mission fields worldwide and helped victims of floods, hurricanes, and tornadoes here in the United States. Southern Baptist fixed 477,000 meals since March for those affected by the storms. As a church, you have helped people with personal needs, food needs, and shelter. It has been amazing to witness God's people be so generous during such a volatile time. Thank you for your faithfulness to give.

October will bring about new steps in our journey through the pandemic. We have worked hard to meet people where they are on the journey. Our drive-in service is still doing very well with more than 50 cars this past week. Our inside service is growing. We had over 95 people this past week worshipping in the Sanctuary.

The church council and deacon leadership met last night, and we are moving forward with new changes. Starting October 4th, we will begin offering a nursery, Sunday School for all ages at 9:45, children's church, and the second Sunday of October, Jericho Junction will resume. We will continue to have the drive-in service, but the beginning time will change to 9:45, so it will be simultaneous with Sunday School. If you are going to Sunday School, we ask that you park behind the Gym. If you have trouble walking, we have people who will park your car for you. Just pull up to the covered area. The drive-in service will continue on the front parking lots. The drive-in service provides a ministry to people concerned with meeting face to face and will continue as long as there is a need. If we have bad weather on a Sunday morning, we may need to cancel for that particular Sunday, but as long as people attend, we will continue providing the opportunity.

When it comes to safety, we are trying to take as many appropriate precautions as possible. Masks are still encouraged but are not going to be required. We will be attempting to social distance in the classes, and we will limit the number of people who can be in a particular room. Eric will teach an overflow Sunday School class on the mezzanine for anyone unable to get into their regular class or for any class that does not have a teacher on a particular Sunday. The nursery will have specific guidelines sent to parents and signs posted on the doors so people will know what to expect. These are critical next steps, and we look forward to seeing all that God does. Thank you for your help and your prayers as we journey together in these unusual days.

Pastor Todd



Our Christian love & sympathy are extended to:

*Victor Jeffers & family in the death of his father, Toney Jeffers

*Trish Harrell & family in the death of her brother, Mark Evans



Dear Oak Grove Family,
Thank you for all the cards, concerns and prayers during the loss of my son, John Stone and my boyfriend, Ivan Gilliam. Please keep me in your prayers.
Love, June Stone



**Music Notes
by Doug**

Thanks to all who have made music a success in this difficult situation. We are looking to have Adult Choir rehearsal on Wednesday, September 30th immediately following prayer meeting and we will sing on Sunday, October 4th. Sunbeam Singers and Children's Choir are discussing plans for the future. More information will be coming soon.

I am planning to have an outdoor music night on Sunday, October 4th at 5:30 p.m., hopefully in the lower parking lot. We will park in the upper lot and bring lawn chairs to the lower lot in front of the trailer. This is sure to be a great night of worship!

In Christian Love,

Doug



Greetings and blessings from our house to yours! What a year so far!! Each of us could fill a sheet of paper listing things that we don't like about this year because there are so many. But how often have you tried to find the blessings that you have been given this year?

For our family, the outside service has provided an opportunity for all of us, including Ashley, to worship together and see our church family, from afar. I have also enjoyed seeing how everyone scurries all over the parking lot serving God in their roles – getting folks parked, taking care of the offering, setting up and tearing down the sound system, and making sure everything is going the way that it should. What a blessing seeing so many serve the Lord.

Another blessing that we have enjoyed is more time that we share together as a family. We have been studying the book of Matthew together for the last several months. I thought initially that we would scoot through it quickly (a chapter a day) so that we could cover more books, but then we hit the Beatitudes and the Sermon on the Mount in chapter 5. At that point we just had to slow down and dig in. It has been incredible. I love our family devotion time!

There are so many things that I could list that have made life more difficult during the last six months, but I must force myself not to focus on those things. Focus on the blessings that God has given you. Change your focus from the bad to the good and that will help you become more thankful for the blessings that God has provided.

Blessings, Eric

YOUTH EVENTS

The youth will start meeting on Sunday Nights at 5:00 for IGNITE. We met this past Sunday and had a good turnout. We will be having a Bible Study around the fire pit. We are studying the 7 churches in Revelations. This past Sunday night we looked at the church of Ephesus. The church of Ephesus was a church that was busy serving, sacrificing and working and yet Christ told them they had lost their first love. They had a heart problem. They were doing what they thought they should do as good Christians but they forgot why and who they were doing it for. They had lost their love of Christ. How often do we get so busy serving the Lord that we forget why we are doing what we do and who we are serving. Christ told them to repent. We must return to our first love - Christ. Wiersbe's commentary says "Labor is not a substitute for love neither is purity a substitute for passion. The church must have both if it is to please God." I pray we will be a youth group that does not forget our first love and serves with the love of Christ in our hearts.

Blessings,

Ramona



The walking track and gymnasium will be open during office hours (M-F – 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., closed for lunch 12:30-1:30) to Oak Grove members beginning Monday, September 28th. Everyone will be asked to sign in as they enter the building through the office. Adult supervision of children is required at **ALL TIMES** while using our gymnasium. If you are planning to play basketball, please bring your own equipment as we will not have any basketballs available for use during this time. Also, the Fellowship Hall and Gym are available to rent for Oak Grove members only. If you have any questions, please contact the church office at 423-357-7241. Thank you!



We are planning to have our annual Harvest Celebration on Saturday, October 31st from 5:30-7:30 p.m. Of course, the celebration will be presented in a limited capacity. More details will be coming soon. We will be needing lots of candy. Donations may be left in the bin outside of the office. Thank you!



THANKFUL for YOU



October is Pastor and Staff Appreciation month. Each year congregations set aside the month of October to honor pastors and ministerial staff for their hard work and dedication throughout the year. This month we encourage you to show your appreciation through a card, email, text, small gift or gift card. Just saying a kind word of thanks from your heart is wonderful too! Let's do our part to make Pastor Todd, Doug, Ramona & Eric feel loved and appreciated!







Shoebox Collection Week will be coming in November. We have received so many generous donations from everyone and are pleased to say we will be able to send many shoeboxes this year, even in the midst of this pandemic! Praise God! We are running low on a few items though. We still need Ivory soap, pens, pencils and crayons. Of course, monetary donations are always welcome. They help cover the \$9 shipping charge per box and any additional items we need to purchase.



OCTOBER

2020

| Sun | Mon | Tue | Wed | Thu | Fri | Sat |
|--|--|-----|--|-----|---|---|
| |  | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 9:45 Sunday School Outdoor Service 11:00 Indoor Service 5:30 Outdoor Music Night | 5 | 6 | 7 6:30 Prayer Meeting | 8 | 9  | 10 |
| 11 9:45 Sunday School Outdoor Service 11:00 Indoor Service 5:00 Ignite | 12 | 13 | 14 6:30 Business Meeting (Vote on Messengers to TBC) | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; display: inline-block;"> Fall Break – Sullivan, Hawkins, Kingsport City </div> | | | | | | |
| 18 9:45 Sunday School Outdoor Service 11:00 Indoor Service 5:00 Ignite | 19 6:30 HVBA Annual Meeting Shepard's Chapel - Rogersville | 20 | 21 6:30 Prayer Meeting | 22 | 23 | 24 |
| 25 9:45 Sunday School Outdoor Service 11:00 Indoor Service 5:00 Ignite | 26  | 27 | 28 6:30 Prayer Meeting | 29 | 30 | 31 5:30-7:30 Harvest Festival  |