



# GOOD TIDINGS NEWSLETTER

## NOVEMBER

### OAKLAND CHRISTIAN UCC

### SUNDAY WORSHIP 10AM



Telephone: (757) 255-4353  
Office Hours: 9 AM to 3 PM Monday - Thursday  
Email: [Office@OaklandUCC.com](mailto:Office@OaklandUCC.com)

Beloved,

Several years ago, I had the opportunity to attend a wonderful discussion group entitled “Doing Evangelism UCC Style.” The presenter was the Rev. Mike Piazza, who at that time served as the Dean of The Cathedral of Hope in Dallas, Texas.

For those of you who may be unaware of this church, here’s a little background. When he came to Dallas in 1987 the church had 250 members and a budget of \$280,000. Today they have over 4,500 members and a budget of \$2,500,000 (of which they give away 1.3 million every year). They are the 2<sup>nd</sup> largest UCC congregation in our denomination ... only Trinity UCC in Chicago is larger. How’d they do that? Well, Rev. Piazza has written a fascinating book that details their growth entitled, Prophetic Renewal – Hope for the Liberal Church which I would encourage you to read.

In it he states, *“We simply cannot allow Christianity to become a fundamentalist, vindictive, excluding religion. I believe our progressive values and vision are most congruent with the gospels witness of who Jesus was and what he taught. We cannot allow the world to come to believe Jesus is the vengeful fundamentalist messiah that, all too often, he is depicted to be. We have a word of grace to speak to the soul of a hurting world. We cannot be silent. We must not allow our witness to die away. It is my conviction that what we have to offer is exactly what people need at this time in history.”*

He insists that people don’t know that the UCC exists, and that it is up to us to get the message out that we offer an alternative to fundamentalist beliefs. He suggests that we can do this by:

- becoming progressive prophets of justice
- speaking with integrity and truth
- worshiping with passion
- offering a fervent sense of hope
- living out (in visible ways) the values we claim to hold

Those are big ideas, but they are also old ideas that need new life today when institutions and communities are struggling and can’t find their way. So many folks have turned away from the church because they no longer feel it speaks their truth. Could we not be a place of welcome and belonging for them? Could we not be a place of eyes wide open, awake to love and joy, hearts “strangely warmed?” I believe that we are well on our way in doing so, but I need your help. I’m sure that each one of you knows someone who has turned away from church. Won’t you tell them about Oakland, and invite them to come with you on a Sunday morning? Our website states that, *“With the guidance of the Spirit we extend the promise that no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.”* Let’s show them that we mean it!

Grace, peace and love,  
**Pastor Mary Anne**





### TIS THE SEASON....

for giving! Yes, Christmas will be here before we know it, and we all plan to give good gifts to our loved ones.

But wait a minute - this is only the beginning of November. Why are we talking about Christmas? Well, just as we plan to give gifts to family and friends in December, we should plan on giving to GOD in 2021.

If we think about the poverty in our world, and how many people struggle to even feed their families,  
we can't help but be thankful and praise GOD for all HE has given us.

Let's keep GOD first in our lives.

As we approach **Commitment Sunday (November 8)**, let's remember how blessed we are. HE has given us so much, so let's return our portion to HIM.

We ask that you complete your pledge card and return it on or before November 8 when our pledges will be blessed during the service.

If you are still worshipping from home, please mail your card in the envelope provided, to:

Oakland Christian UCC  
P.O. Box 2008  
Suffolk VA 23432

We **thank you** for your continued support and generosity to Oakland UCC, as we continue to do GOD's work.

Loving the children,  
Loving our neighbors,  
Loving creation, and  
Putting that love into action.

***Your Stewardship Committee***



# Confirmation

Come and be a witness to the future of Oakland!

It gives me great pleasure to announce that on  
**Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>**  
 we will celebrate the **CONFIRMATION**  
 of five **OUTSTANDING** young people:

**William Brennecke**  
**Clark Brennecke**  
**Kadie Bunch**  
**Braedon Harris**  
**Gabe Hathaway**

**Please make every effort to be present as we welcome these newest members into the  
 Oakland Christian United Church of Christ family!**



November 15th Congregational Church Conference  
 Immediately after worship

Voting on Elected Committees, 2021 Budget, Articles of Incorporation

Dear Reverend Biggs,

Thank you so very much for your generous contribution toward two of our **Barnabas Medicine Boxes**. We are so grateful for your support.

We are excited with the great progress that this project is making. We are certain that these boxes will help to ensure the good health of our partner communities while empowering them to help one another. The trained community health volunteer in Cordoncillos is most grateful.

Please see the attached photo of the volunteer and community leaders accepting the Barnabas Medicine Box and also the photo of the health volunteer being trained by our Community Health Nurse Pascuala.

Thanks so much for being a part of this wonderful project which is helping many who are in need.  
 With gratitude,  
 Erin Caldwell





|                  |   |                |    |                 |    |
|------------------|---|----------------|----|-----------------|----|
| Sharon Creekmore | 4 | Parker Howell  | 12 | Iola Saunders   | 19 |
| Susie Eaton      | 4 | Bernice Butler | 13 | Rick Vroman     | 19 |
| Trudy Norfleet   | 4 | Mary Williams  | 13 | Julie Johnson   | 20 |
| Colen Hodgson    | 5 | David Marr     | 14 | Julie Doyle     | 21 |
| Judy Gardner     | 6 | Sandi Randall  | 14 | Marian Campbell | 21 |
| Carole Matt      | 6 | Lou Haddad     | 16 | Penny Hathaway  | 22 |
|                  |   |                |    | Ann Smith       | 30 |

If we missed your Birthday or have it incorrect, please call the office 255-4353 and let us know.



Healthy Suffolk is partnering with local churches and community groups to offer free Pop-Up produce stands around the City of Suffolk for the holidays. Baskets of fresh produce and shelf stable foods will be offered on a first come first served basis at each event. All events will be drive by and will follow all COVID-19 safety precautions.

Healthy Suffolk is asking the community to spread the word and to gather donations of shelf stable items to support this effort. Any church or organization that collects donations should drop them off at Oakland Christian Church in Chuckatuck on Saturday November 21, from 8:00-10:00AM. Cash donations to sponsor fresh produce purchases for these events are appreciated and can be offered at <http://healthysuffolkva.org/donate> or mailed to Healthy Suffolk 425 West Washington St, Suite 4, Suffolk, VA 23434.

### **DATES FOR THANKSGIVING POP-UP PRODUCE MARKETS EVENTS**

Monday, November 23 10:00AM-2:00PM  
at the East Suffolk Rec Center parking lot, 138 South Sixth Street, Suffolk.

Tuesday, November 24 10:00AM-2:00PM  
at Oakland Christian Church, 5641 Godwin Blvd, Suffolk. (Chuckatuck)

Additional information, contact Healthy Suffolk at (757)414-7652 email [info@healthysuffolkva.org](mailto:info@healthysuffolkva.org)

**We're also asking for area churches to consider volunteering to help the Healthy Suffolk board assemble the produce packages, and I hope members of our congregation will lend a hand and Volunteer for the work day on November 21 at Oakland Christian Church. We will assemble the contributions and the boxes beginning at 8 am that day.**

**Rob Rhodes**



# Music Corner

Paul Putnam - Minister of Music  
[peputnam@yahoo.com](mailto:peputnam@yahoo.com)

## Give Thanks by Don Moen

Give thanks with a grateful heart  
Give thanks to the Holy One  
Give thanks because He's given Jesus Christ, His Son

And now let the weak say, "I am strong"  
Let the poor say, "I am rich"  
Because of what the Lord has done for us"

I love Thanksgiving! Autumn has always been one of my favorite seasons since I was a child growing up in New England. The crisp autumn air would arrive, and the trees would begin their magical display of colors. My mom and grandmother would bring me apple picking in a nearby orchard, and then all the delicious treats would begin to come out of the kitchen. I think this is why I absolutely love apples & cinnamon!

What I love most of all is that we as Christians take time to be grateful for all that has been bestowed on us by our creator, God. Thanksgiving Day becomes a celebration of all that we have to be thankful for as an individual and in our families. It is so important during these difficult times to maintain that "attitude of gratitude". We could moan and groan about all that has been taken away from us, but we have been given a gift of time.

Let us be grateful for the gift of time and share with others those things which we are thankful for. Be a positive light during these darkening autumn days. The world needs you to let your light shine!

Happy Thanksgiving!

~Paul

Paul Putnam  
Music Director



## We are pleased to have celebrated two Baptisms in October



Baptism

Son and Daughter of:  
Tamika and Corey Blanchette

Grandparents:  
Marti and Paul Putnam

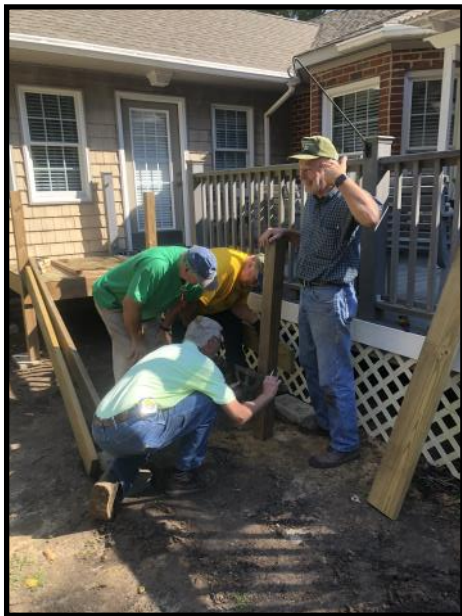
Bryn Elizabeth Blanchette

Grayson Arthur Blanchette



**Congratulations to  
Steve & Kasie Wilson  
on the birth of their son**

Lincoln James Wilson  
October 8, 2020



Dear Oakland Family,

Bill and I just want to give a huge thank you to Randy Rowell, Paul Saunders, Carl Lancaster, John Mitchell and John Matt for installing part of the handi-capped ramp, which formerly belonged to the church, to the back entrance to our house.

Their hard work and commitment to the project were greatly appreciated and will certainly help us in the years ahead.

Thank you, again, for your skills, time and efforts. You are the best!

Truly blessed and grateful,

Bill and Diane Saunders



## Good Tidings

### Halloween 2020 at Oakland

Our Activities Committee put together a Spooktacular event for our Oakland Youth.

Thanks to everyone who contributed snacks for our drive through, virtual and socially distanced event.



Kristen Creely, Sandy Butler, Jean Keeling,  
Darden and Suzanne Langston,  
Kimmie Curliss

Families were invited to  
take a picture of their  
Halloween Pumpkins and  
enter them for a prize.



Winners - The Wilson Family  
Witches Brew



Runners up - The Burgess Family



Steve, Harper, Aubri, Lincoln, Kasie



Kendall, Helena



Robert, Charlotte, Samantha



Andy, Clark, William, Jack, Becky



Penny, Gabe



Jameson



Lucas, Sharon



## We Welcome You

If you believe that God is calling you to be a member of this congregation, please let us know with a call to our church office. We can help you join by baptism or profession of faith, as a transfer, or by reinstatement.

*It would be wonderful to have you in our Church Family!*

### STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

*To share* God's love with all people,  
*To serve* the Lord with humility and kindness,  
*To grow* with the Lord in wisdom and strength.

**Oakland Christian United Church of Christ**  
**P. O. Box 2008**  
**Suffolk, VA 23432**

**NOVEMBER 2020**

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

**Pastor:** Rev. Mary Anne Biggs  
**Minister of Music:** Paul E. Putnam  
**Secretary & Newsletter Editor:** Connie Edwards  
**Financial Secretary:** Janice Roberts  
**Nursery Attendant:** Kimmy Curliss

**Telephone:** (757) 255-4353  
**Office Hours:** 9 AM to 3 PM Monday - Thursday

**Email:** [Office@OaklandUCC.com](mailto:Office@OaklandUCC.com)



**Website:**  
[www.OaklandUCC.org](http://www.OaklandUCC.org)