



So That They May Be One

White Oak Witness

April / May 2026

From Pastor Amy's Desk

"He Breathed On Them"

I am breathing. I am breathing in deep. I am exhaling. I am breathing and noticing the rhythm of my breathing. I am aware of the rise and fall of my lungs in my chest. I am breathing with intention. You might think, this seems rather silly, for of course, I am breathing. However, I often find myself unaware of my breathing. Or even worse, often I realize that I am barely breathing.

This is one of the main reasons I take Pilate classes, to exercise and practice my breathing. Without this exercise and reminder of Jesus' promise, I can find myself with shallow breathing or feeling the need to gasp for air as my anxiety can consume me at times. In these moments of recognition, my soul longs for peace and steady slow breathing. How are you breathing in this moment?

I tend to worry about things that I cannot control. My brain seems to never shut off. I am constantly thinking about all the things I could do, should do, or have forgotten to do. Can I get an Amen in the house? Perhaps, you can relate to it on some level.

As I have wrestled with this thought for most of my life I decided to take this Easter season, the forty days of Jesus' appearances post resurrection, and committed myself to listening for God to speak into these moments of my anxiety. I have been praying for a clear answer. I waited, I prayed, and I waited, but I did not hear God speak. I heard my own breath. I listened to the rhythm of my breathing with intentionality. Then, as the Holy Spirit always works and moves in my life, the Holy Spirit took me to scripture. It was a familiar scripture. A scripture that I am planning on using on Pentecost Sunday, May 24th, however this time in reading the scripture, I began to feel the words.

John 20:21-22 NLT "Jesus said to them again, *"Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you."* When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, *"Receive the Holy Spirit."*



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This thought of Jesus breathing on his disciples was powerful. I think about the men and women in that room, as they were fearful and traumatized as to what had transpired over the past several days of Jesus arrest, crucifixion and resurrection. I can only begin to imagine their fear and shallow breathing.

Jesus breathes (enephusen) on the disciples and tells them to “Receive (the) Holy Spirit.” This is where the breath of Jesus becomes important. The use of enephusen is what scholars call a hapax legomenon, meaning this is the only time the word appears in the Greek New Testament. Greek readers of the Septuagint (the Greek translation of the Hebrew Bible) would recognize the word in Genesis 2:7 where “... the Lord God ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and the man became a living being.”¹

As a community hiding in fear, I would classify the disciples as emotionally dead and awaiting the breath of Jesus that mirrors the Genesis narrative. This breath brings them back to life. Beloved, I am struck by the sense that many of us have not experienced sustained peace since 2020. I think that collectively as a society, the multiple pandemics of Covid-19, racial injustices, wars, with the increase of gun violence, has left many of us holding our collective breath waiting for the next tragedy to occur. Many of us desire a double portion of peace so that we can breathe again.

In John’s gospel, chapter 20, Jesus does that for the disciples. Accordingly, in the following reflection, I believe a double portion of peace is necessary because it:

1. frees the disciples from fear
2. stresses the importance of Jesus’ breath in our lives, and
3. ushers in the Spirit to an empowered community.

I pray you will join us in worship in the upcoming weeks, as we explore this sense of Peace and the power of Jesus’ breath in our lives, and how this movement can and WILL empower us as a community.

Beloved, breathe in deep, receive the Holy Spirit and feel the peace that Jesus offers to us!

Pastor Amy

1. See Martyn, J. Louis. *History and Theology in the Fourth Gospel*. 3rd ed. (Louisville, Ky.: Westminster John Knox Press, 2003). See also John 9:22; 12:42; and 16:2.

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Sermon Series



When God Came Down Like Fire

Pentecost is both an event in the life of the church and a season that lives out the implications of the event. Pentecost Sunday marks the shift in the liturgical calendar from telling the story of Jesus, our Messiah and Savior, to telling the story of the church, the ones who choose to be disciples of Jesus the Christ. It doesn't mean, of course, that we stop talking about Jesus or that the church doesn't appear in the first half of the liturgical year. It does mean that this long season we sometimes call Ordinary Time is our time, the church's time to remember the sending of the Great Commission and the empowerment of the Pentecost event and to live our faith out loud in the world, reflecting the values and priorities of the kingdom of God.

To shore us up for the long journey ahead of us, we remember the sending. We remember the moment when fire came from heaven and the power of the Spirit blew through the church with gale-force winds. And then we stop in adoration and awe as we consider the source of this power and the sustaining presence that is ours in this endeavor of faith. So, a short, two-week series this time, Pentecost Sunday and Trinity Sunday together. Join us as we remember together the time when God came like fire.

May 17th – Accession Sunday

Acts 24:40-51

May 24th – Pentecost Sunday

John 20:19-23 & Acts 2:1-21

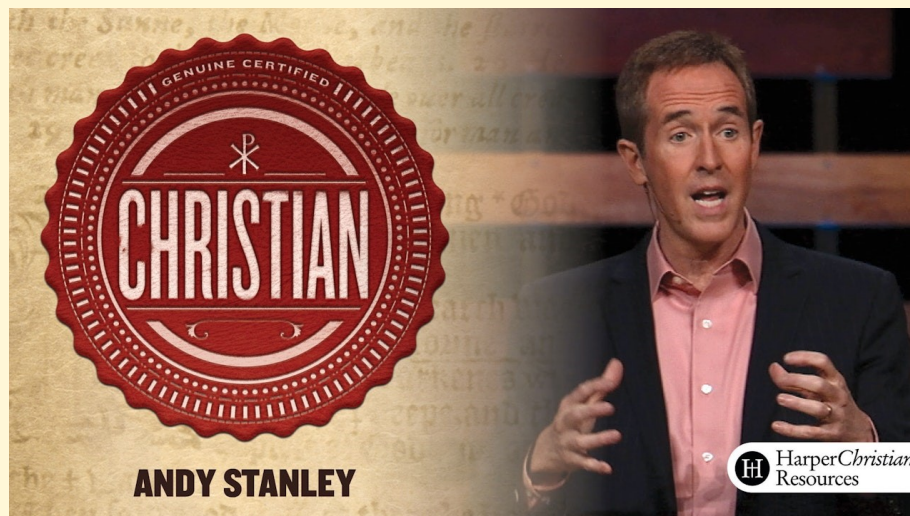
May 31st – Trinity Sunday

Matthew 28:16-20

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Bible Study

“Christian” by Andy Stanley



According to Andy Stanley, the words used to describe Christians today often bear no resemblance to how Jesus wanted his followers to live. In *Christian*, an eight-session, video-based study, Andy offers a better term—one that Jesus used throughout the New Testament to describe Christians—that more accurately depicts Christians. Then he leads you through what Christianity should look like today considering Jesus' teachings.

This study will begin June, Wednesday, 3rd – July 22nd, facilitated by Kiley Gunter and Pastor Amy.

Please join us via Zoom

Meeting ID: 423 877 6042 followed by #, followed by our password 6042#.

You can also join by phone at 1-646-558-8656, then put in meeting ID 4238776042 followed by the # (you can expect a few seconds delay before the next prompt).

You will be prompted to enter the participant ID, just hit # and then you will be prompted for a password, you will enter 6042# and you will hear that you have been joined to the meeting.



So That They May Be One

What's Happening

Sundays

9:30 AM– Sunday School

10:45 AM– Worship in Sanctuary (Zoom & Facebook Live)

*Every 1st & 5th Sundays Holy Communion

*Children's Church (Ages K-5th)- *except the 1st & 5th Sundays*

*Every 5th Sunday, Holston Children's Home Offering

Trustee's Meeting every 2nd Sunday of the month in the Library (immediately after worship)

Church Office Closed

Mondays

Tuesdays

Church office hours 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Church Council Meeting Every 3rd Tuesday of the month in the Library @ 6 PM

Women's Prayer Time on Zoom Only @ 7 PM

Wednesdays

Church office hours 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

6:30 PM Adult Bible Study on Zoom Only

6:30 PM Adult Small Group in Fellowship Hall

Youth Small Group @ 6:30 PM with dinner in Fellowship Hall

Thursdays

Church office hours 9:00 AM – 4:00 PM

Every other Thursday Girl Scout Troops Meet from 6 – 7:30 PM in the Children's Area

AA Meetings @ 7 PM in the Fellowship Hall

UWF—United Women in Faith (formerly UMW) meet every 1st Thursday of the month
in the Library @ 11 AM

Fridays

Church office hours 9:00 AM – 12:00 PM

Saturdays

Church Office Closed

Every other Saturday Girl Scout Troops Meet from 3PM – 4:30 PM in the Children's Area

*Food Pantry is open during the Church Office Hours during the week.



So That They May Be One

In Prayer For...

- Prayers for Bill Fetherolf as he recovers from surgery on May 11th. The surgeon removed a kidney stone and placed a stent in. Bill is currently still hospitalized and fighting a fever from an undetected infection that occurred post-op.
- Prayers for Marsha Fetherolf as she starts her PT from her back surgery on March 23rd and is in process of skin cancer healing.
- Prayers for Theresa Nix, founder/director of Downside Up Inc., as she goes through chemo treatment for her recent diagnosis of Breast Cancer.
- Prayers for Sandra Parker as she continues treatment of infusions for her Liver cancer, the lesions are slightly smaller and the inflammation is improving! Glory!
- Prayers for Annette Palmer, as she is no longer a candidate for a lung transplant and is battling an autoimmune disorder.
- Prayers for Tony Martin, as he continues to recover and gain his strength back.
- Prayers for Linda Parker as she continues to recover from a fall on Sunday, March 29th. She has seen improvement with her right leg and ankle and hopeful to start PT soon.
- Prayers for Maddox Gilliam, grandson of Susan and Craig Borum, as he will have surgery Tuesday, June 16th. Maddox was diagnosed with Legg-calve-Perthes disease, earlier this year.
- Prayers for the children of Gateway to Victory School in Kericho, Kenya.
- Prayers for the Mission team as they make plans to go back to Gateway To Victory in Kenya for a house build and training on Grief Recovery for the school staff. Tentatively September 17-29th.
- Praises for the healing Mrs. Celia is experiencing from her DMEK eye surgery on March 12th, her eyesight is improving, GLORY!!

If you have a [PRAYER REQUEST](#) you can fill out one of the [Purple](#) papers in the pews and drop it in the plates during worship service on Sunday, or email it to the church office. (whiteoakchurch@epbf.com)



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Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus for the Month of May/June – Commitment to Prayer: **2 Chronicles 7:14**
NRSV

¹⁴“If my people who are called by my name humble themselves, pray, seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.”

Week of May 17^h Praises for All of our Graduates!

Week of May 24th Prayers for All to seek the face of God and seek a closer prayer life.

Week of May 31st Prayers for our leadership at Annual Conference

Week of June 7th Prayers for Downside Up as Summer Camps begin

Week of June 14th Prayers for families as they travel for summer vacations.

Youth Group

Congratulations Graduates! We are so proud of all your accomplishments!

Youth group (6th grade-12th grade) meets on Wednesday nights from 6:30pm-7:30pm. Dinner is provided each week. Transportation is available. Contact **Maddy Easterly** at maddy.easterly@gmail.com for more details.

Congratulations Graduates

Ella Pierce, graduated from **Lake View North High School** (*Minnesota*), and will be attending University of Tennessee at Knoxville this fall, to major in Business Management.

Zari Poureshmenantalem, graduating from **Girls Preparatory School**, and will be attending University of Tennessee at Knoxville this fall to major in Kinesiology.

Natalie Wilson, graduating from **Ringgold High School**, and will be attending University of West Georgia to major in Music Education.

Mia Bryne and **Olivia Riddle** will be graduating from **Hixson Middle School** and will be attending Hixson High School next school year.

Cyra Poureshmenanatalem, will be graduating from **Girls Preparatory Middle School**, and will be attending GPS High School next school year.



Ella



Zari



Natalie



Mia



Olivia



Cyra

June Youth Small Group Series

What Is a Christian?

Ever wondered what really makes someone a Christian?

Is it what you believe? Is it how you act, or something deeper?

In this **six-week small group**, we'll dig into the basics of the Christian faith and ask honest questions about what unites Christians across time, cultures, and churches. No pressure. No pretending. Just real conversations about faith, purpose, and God.

Through short videos and group discussion led by **Francis Chan**, we'll explore the essential truths every Christian shares—and how they matter in everyday life.

What to Expect

- Transportation provided, if needed
- Begin with snack supper
- Real talk and meaningful discussion
- A safe space for questions and doubts
- Short video teaching + conversation
- Connection with friends and leaders who care

When & Where - Wednesdays | June 3rd- July 8th from 6:30 -7:45 PM

Facilitators— Pastor Amy & John Nutt



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Financial Update

TEXT Tribe to 73256 and go directly to our Realm Giving App.

JOYFUL FINANCES - from Philippians 4:14-20

We do not thank you enough for your gifts to WOUMC. We are incredibly grateful.

Your giving creates a PARTNERSHIP with GOD. Paul entered a partnership with his church in Macedonia and as he traveled, they sent him gifts for his expenses. Not that he sought the gift, "...but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit."

Your gifts PLEASE GOD. Your sacrificial gift is a fragrant offering to God and to WOUMC. Face it, without your gift, how would we carry on with our ministries?

Your gift is a PROMISE FROM GOD, and my God will supply every need of yours according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus. - Philippians 4:19

Thank you for your gifts for HEAT.

We are now introducing 2 more needs we have at the church:

COOL - Our 25-year-old air conditioning unit for the sanctuary is failing. \$38,000 is needed for this replacement.

ROOF - Our roof has some missing shingles and needs some repair work. \$3000 is needed for this project.

As you can see these are large expenditures. Your normal gifts fund our normal expenses, but your EXTRA gifts will go to fund COOL and ROOF. If you would like to fund all or any of these needs, write COOL or ROOF on your check or click it in Realm. Thank you.

Thank you for everything; your time, your talents, your gifts, and your witness. Invite someone to visit WOUMC. In other words, God does not want to give you a miracle; he wants you to become a miracle for someone else. This brings to him greater GLORY, which brings you greater blessings. Now that is a GLORY!

Thanks,
Treasurers- White Oak United Methodist Church

We are committed to being open and transparent. More detailed reports available upon request.

Email whiteoakfinance@epbfi.com

Trustees Update



Hello from the trustees. Our exciting news this month is that we have a new sandbox in our playground. It is much safer and in a better location. Look at all the little ones that played the first Sunday after church.

Also, we have repaired the walls in the lady's bathroom and placed panels behind the toilets, so there is no longer rough drywall, and it looks much better.

Did you know that we have a facility use form? We have them for both members and non-members. If you have a special event you want to host at White Oak UMC it is free to members of the church. It is available to non-members for a fee. If you would like to use the facility, you need to contact Liz in the Church office, and she can email the form to you.

(423-877-6042 whiteoakchurch@epbfi.com)

There is always work to be done around the church, especially in the summer. So if you would like to volunteer to maintain some hedges or do any kind of outside work, please contact Sandy Cunningham.

Save the Dates

- Sunday, **May 17th**— Senior Recognition Sunday
- Sunday, **May 31st-June 3rd**— Annual Conference for the Scenic South UMC.
- Sunday, **June 1st-5th**—1st week of Downside Up Summer camp at the church
- Thursday, **June 4th**— United Women in Faith (UWF) luncheon at “Beyond the Garden Gate” Tea Room at 11am
- Saturday, **June 6th**—CPR training in the Fellowship Hall (9am-12pm)
- Sunday, **June 14th**— Trustees meets after worship service in the Library.

Get Connected!

Join In-Person, on ZOOM or Facebook Live for Worship!

Topic: White Oak UMC Worship

Time: **Sunday 10:45 AM EST in the sanctuary.**

You can also join using the Zoom information below or on Facebook Live

Meeting ID: 423 877 6042 followed by #, followed by our password 6042#

You can also join by phone at 1-646-558-8656, then put in meeting ID 4238776042 followed by the # (you can expect a few seconds delay before the next prompt). You will be prompted to enter the participant ID, just hit # and then you will be prompted for a password, you will enter 6042# and you will hear that you have been joined to the meeting.

SMALL GROUPS

- The Hilander Class meets in the Chapel at 9:45 AM with rotating teachers of Mary Alice Thomas, Pauline Howard and Frank Parker.
- The Women's Group is meeting in the HEM Ministry classroom on the 2nd floor at 9:30am with Hillary Morgan leading.
- The Men's Discipleship Class is lead by Bill Fetherolf in library at 9:45 AM
- Children's Sunday School is meeting on the 2nd floor at 9:45 AM with Adelaide Weaver.
- Women's Prayer Time is meeting on Tuesday's at 7:00 PM Zoom Only
- Bible Study is meeting on Wednesday's at 6:30 PM on Zoom Only
- Adult Small Group is meeting on Wednesday's at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship hall
- Youth is meeting in person on Wednesday's at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall, dinner provided.

Please FILL OUT a Connection Card and drop in the offering plates to get more connected.

Our website is up and running!

whiteoakumc.org

Ministry Partnerships

Have you experienced a loss, and you now carry the weight of Grief?

You are not alone. Our center offers **The Grief Recovery Method**; an evidenced based program to help you understand and process the emotions of Grief.

Individual and group classes are available.

- Grief Recovery Method
- Helping Children with Loss
- Pet Loss



For more information, email, call, or text

Karen Sarnosky Adv.GRMS, CPC

karen@griefchatt.com

423-888-7322 www.griefchatt.com

The Family Justice Center of Chattanooga, TN 423-643-7600

The FJC serves residents of Hamilton County and the City of Chattanooga by co-locating services in a trauma-informed environment to:

- Address intimate partner and family violence
- Address abuse of older adults through elder justice services
- Address human trafficking

All services provided at the FJC are **FREE and confidential** -- no appointment is necessary during regular business hours.

We also have bilingual staff to serve the growing Hispanic/Latino population.

Services provided:

- Assistance in creating a personal safety plan
- Help finding a safe place for you, your children, and pets
- Education and awareness regarding domestic violence, elder abuse, and human trafficking
- Referrals to services available in Chattanooga
- Civil Legal services and help with obtaining Orders of Protection
- Personal support in court appointments
- Emotional support

**LOCAL Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault
CRISIS HOTLINE 423.755.2700**
Available 7 days a week,

Downside Up Inc.

We help children with disabilities and their families build community through our creative spaces and experiences.

- **Theresa Nix**, founder & CEO
- downsideupinc@gmail.com
- downsideupinc.org



White Oak Bicycle Co-Operative

The White Oak Bicycle Cooperative is a volunteer-run non-profit 501(c)(3) community bicycle organization that provides free access to bicycles, repair services, and safety

education to schools, partner organizations, and communities across Southeast Tennessee.

P.O. Box 15102
Red Bank, TN 37415

contact@whiteoakbicycle.org
<https://www.whiteoakbicycle.org/>



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<i>Monday:</i>	<i>Office Closed</i>
<i>Tuesday:</i>	<i>9:00-4:00</i>
<i>Wednesday:</i>	<i>9:00-4:00</i>
<i>Thursday:</i>	<i>9:00-4:00</i>
<i>Friday:</i>	<i>9:00-12:00</i>