

THE PROMISE

From Pastor Amy's Desk

Nov/ Dec 2025

A Season to Pause and Give Thanks

1 Chronicles 29:13 (MSG): "And here we are, O God, our God, giving thanks to you, praising your splendid Name."

Dear White Oak Family,

As we once again move toward the Holiday Season—Thanksgiving, Advent, Christmas, and finally New Year's Day, I want to invite you to pause with me and reflect on just how good God has been to us over this past year. Before the calendars fill, before the to-do lists grow, before the rush of holiday activity surrounds us, there is a holy invitation to simply *notice* God's goodness.

This past year has reminded many of us of the fragility and preciousness of life. We have celebrated joys, walked through grief, stood beside one another in sorrow and hope, and witnessed God's faithfulness in countless ways. These moments, large and small call us back to gratitude. They remind us that every breath is a gift, every relationship a blessing, and every day an opportunity to love more deeply and fully.

1 Chronicles 29:13 in *The Message* translation gives us a beautiful starting point:

"And here we are, O God, our God, giving thanks to you, praising your splendid Name."

Gratitude is not just an emotion. It is a posture of the heart, a way of walking through the world with open eyes and open hands. When we begin the holiday season with thanksgiving, we prepare our souls to receive the deeper blessings ahead.

As we approach Advent and move toward Christmas, I encourage you to intentionally cultivate this spirit of thanksgiving. I truly believe that gratitude will expand your appreciation for the Christ of Christmas, deepen your joy in the coming season, and help you enter December with renewed wonder and peace.

When I pause to acknowledge all the blessings at White Oak, I am overwhelmed with the Love that God shows us daily. I find that when I strive for an attitude of gratitude, I find more Joy. This joy comes from the Hope that I have because of Christ Jesus and what Jesus has done for me, done for all of us. This acknowledgement brings such a sense of Peace and an overwhelming feeling of Love. My prayer is for you and yours to not only live this life of gratitude but to embrace the Hope, Peace, and Joy of really knowing God.

May this November be a month of pausing, remembering, giving thanks, and recognizing God's goodness in every step.

With gratitude and love,

Pastor Amy

THE PROMISE

Words of Gratitude



"Piglet noticed that even though he had a Very Small Heart, it could hold a rather large amount of Gratitude."

—A.A. MILNE

CountryLiving

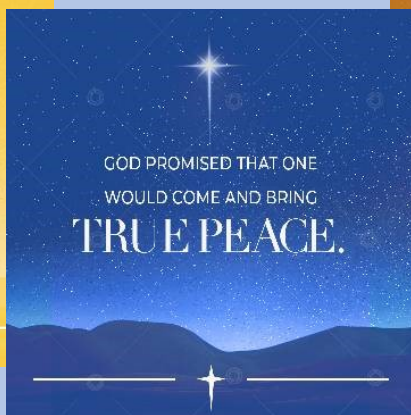
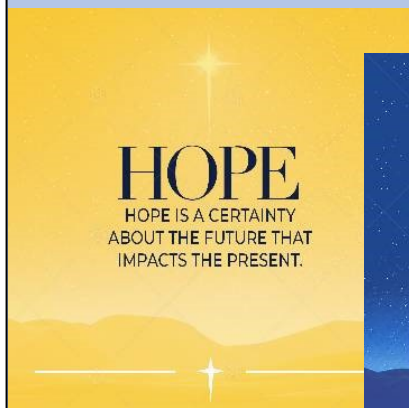
One of my favorite characters and quote! I feel an enormous amount of gratitude for all the love and support you, White Oak have shown to me for Pastor Appreciation. Your words of encouragement, cards of support, prayers for strength and expressions of love have impacted me greatly. I am a better pastor and teacher for having walked this journey with you, White Oak. My heart is full of gratitude, and I praise God for each of you!

Blessings,
Pastor Amy

May I start by saying I am honored to be a part of White Oak United Methodist Church. From day one I have felt accepted and loved. Even though no one knew me I was still welcomed with open arms and so much LOVE! I feel all the many blessings and comfort when I am with my family in Christ. I am an open book needing to fill my pages with God's word and the love of my family.

To my surprise I was finally able to get my own peaceful God filled home! I thank you all for my beautiful bed, dishes, towels, and so much more that you have given me. I can never thank you enough. In 64 years I have never felt so much peace and love. That is all thanks to my Lord above and all of you that have prayed for and loved me. I am Blessed, and my cup overflows.

With all my Love,
Clata



Sermon Series

"The Days Are Surely Coming" - Sermon Series Continues

As we close out the liturgical year, we return to the promises of God, the promise of a new reality, a new hope, and an ongoing presence that will usher all of creation into this new kingdom and kingdom of relationship and joy. It is, in a way, a pre-Advent anticipation that ends with a celebration of the Reign of Christ or Christ the King Sunday. Though this series is grounded in the Hebrew scripture lectionary texts, Christ is the center of our worship and the ground of our hope. Let us be reminded that the days are surely coming when every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.

<u>Sunday, November 9th</u>	"The Latter Splendor"	Haggai 2:1-2:9/Luke 20:27-38
<u>Sunday, November 16th</u>	"Rejoice Forever in Creation"	Isaiah 65:17-25/Luke 21:5-19
<u>Sunday, November 23rd</u>	"Christ the King Sunday"	Jeremiah 23:1-6/Luke 23:33-43

"The Promise- Our Savior Has Come" - New Sermon Series

A promise is an assurance that a certain thing will come to pass. We make promises all the time. Sometimes we see them through. Other times they never become reality. But God is different. When God makes a promise, we can be confident that God will be faithful to bring it to fruition. The Bible is full of promises from God to His people, and there is one life-changing promise we celebrate every Christmas: God's promise of a Savior named Jesus.

The Promise is a 4-week sermon series that follows Advent through the eyes of four of the first people to see the promise fulfilled and will conclude on Christmas Eve. Let us journey together for this Advent to discover the Promise that God has made to each of us.

<u>Sunday November 30th</u> First Sunday of Advent	"Simeon – HOPE"	Luke 2:25-35, Isaiah 9:2
<u>Sunday, December 7th</u>	"Shepherds – PEACE"	Luke 2:8-16, Isaiah 9:6
<u>Sunday, December 14th</u>	"Zechariah – JOY"	Luke 1:8-20, 57-66, Isaiah 40: 3-5
<u>Thursday, December 18th</u> The Longest Night Service - 6:30 PM	"The Light of Hope"	Psalms 40, Luke 2:1-7, Psalm 121
<u>Sunday, December 21st</u>	"Mary – LOVE"	Luke 1:26-38, Isaiah 7:14
<u>Wednesday, Dec 24th</u> Christmas Eve - 5 PM	"Christ Child Candle"	John 1:6-15

THE PROMISE

Bible Study

Wednesday, Zoom Only at 6:30 PM



Discover that it's not your behavior that earns the kindness of a holy God; it's the presence of Jesus coming to Earth to be with you, always.

Jesus' arrival on earth changed the course of history forever. Not only for those who lived in the first century, but for those of us in the twenty-first century as well.

The miracle and marvel of the Advent season demonstrates that we are precious to Him. He's not a distant God. He is Emmanuel, God with us. That includes wherever you are, right now.

Your hope and spirit will be revived as you recapture the wonder of Jesus' obvious love for you. You'll discover that Advent is not only a season of waiting and preparation, but also it's a season of action to share the hope of Jesus with everyone. Join us on ZOOM beginning, Wednesday, November 26th for the next four weeks, Kiley Gunter and Pastor Amy will be facilitating.

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.

Dates:

Monday, December 1st
Wednesday, December 10th
Wednesday, December 17th
Monday, December 22nd

THE PROMISE

What's Happening

Sundays

9:30 AM– Sunday School

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

*Every 1st Sunday 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 @ 12:30 PM

Mondays

Church Office Closed

Tuesdays

AA Meetings @ 7:30AM in the Fellowship Hall

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

United Methodist Women of 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

THE PROMISE

In Prayer For...

- Prayers for Lauren Byrne and her little one coming soon.
- Prayers requested for Gary Grogg, Jennifer, Denise, Owen, David, Becky, Phil and Marcia from Eloise Carpenter.
- Prayers for the Morgan Family as they prepare for the arrival of Wyatt Hillard.
- Prayers for Martha Bishop and her family as she was diagnosed with Breast Cancer and had a double mastectomy.
- Prayers for Josh Wadel dealing with some health issues.
- Prayers for Mitchell Monzon & Avery Spurling as they welcome their new baby boy, Oscar, on November 4th.
- Prayers for Maddox Gilliam, grandson of Susan and Craig Borum, as he was tentatively diagnosed with Legg-calve-Perthes disease.
- Prayers for all the families that are affected by a loss in government benefits.
- Prayers for Terry Wyatt who is having surgery to repair a leaking valve around her heart.
- Prayers for all the families that the holidays are a difficult time because of loss, grief, and difficult family dynamics.

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@epbfi.com)

THE PROMISE

Prayer Focus

Prayer Focus for November/December – Receiving and Giving Hope

*“May the God of **hope** fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in **hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.”* **Roman 15:13**

Week of November 16th - Prayers for all the families in the season of grief.

Week of November 23rd - Prayers for travel mercies as we travel and visit family over Thanksgiving Holiday.

Week of November 30th – Praises for a new Advent season filled with Hope.

Week of December 7th – Prayers for a successful and meaningful Christmas Celebration as we share and serve our community and grow closer as a body of faith. May we show love to everyone for God’s glory!

Week of December 14th – Praises for our children and youth, and those that God will bring into our care and discipleship at White Oak UMC.

Save the Dates

Monday, November 17th

Sunday, November 9th

Tuesday, November 18th

Thursday, November 27th - THANKSGIVING

Saturday, November 29th

Wednesday, December 3rd

Thursday, December 4th

Sunday, December 7th

Sunday, December 14th

Tuesday, December 16th

Thursday, December 18th

Sunday, December 21st

Wednesday, December 24th

Thursday, December 25th - CHRISTMAS

District Day with Bishop

Trustees Meeting @ 12:30pm

Church Council @ 6pm

(office CLOSED 27th & 28th)

Church Workday @ 9am– decorating for Christmas

Charge Conference @ 6:30pm

United Women of Faith @ 11am

Community Christmas Celebration 4-6pm

Trustees Meeting @ 12:30pm

Church Council @ 6pm

Longest Night Service @ 6:30pm

Christmas Pajamas Sunday @ 10:45am

Christmas Eve Service @ 5pm

(office CLOSED 24th, 25th & 26th)

Christmas Service & Events

Sunday, November 30th – First Sunday of Advent. We will light the candle of Hope. This is the Fifth Sunday of the month, and we will share family worship and give our Children's Church volunteers an opportunity to share in worship with their families.

Sunday, December 7th – Second Sunday of Advent. We will light the candle of Peace. This is the first Sunday of the month and we will celebrate Holy Communion together as a family, No Children's Church on this Sunday.

Sunday, December 7th 4-6 PM Christmas Celebration



WHITE OAK UMC INVITES EVERYONE TO THE

COMMUNITY CHRISTMAS CELEBRATION

1ST SUNDAY IN DECEMBER
FROM 4-6 PM
FREE TO EVERYONE

HAYRIDE, LETTERS TO SANTA, PONY RIDE,
MUSIC, HOT COCOA & MORE

CHRISTMAS TREE LIGHTING AT 5:45 PM

Sunday, December 14th – Third Sunday of Advent. We will light the candle of Joy

Longest Night Service Thursday, December 18th

For many of us, the Christmas season can be a bittersweet time of year. It is a time for remembering loved ones and events that have been a part of our lives in the past, but that are now changed or gone. Also, this is the time of year with the longest nights, so around this time we want to offer a quiet, meditative worship service that makes time for remembering, sharing our hurting places with God, and prepare our hearts for the coming of the Christ Child.

Please join us on **Thursday, December 18th at 6:30 PM** for a time set apart of special music, scripture reading and lighting of candles. This will be a remembrance for loved ones, healing prayer and silent reflection. Please allow God to help heal your hurts and the Christ Child to bring you peace. **Nursery Provided.**

Christmas PJ Sunday is Sunday, December 21st

Wear your favorite PJ's and join us for worship at 10:45 AM. No Sunday School today. There will be a special reading of a children's Christmas story.

RAK Sunday, December 21st

Random Acts of Kindness event (for families of all will on Sunday, December 21st, immediately following the worship service. This month's mission outreach will be making Fruit Baskets for our Shut In's. Please contact Pastor Amy for more information. whiteoakpastor@epbfi.com.

Christmas Eve Candlelight Service Tuesday, December 24th

Join us **Tuesday, December 24th at 5 PM** for our Christmas Eve candlelight service in the sanctuary. **Nursery Provided.** Each year we take up a special offering to support our Congregational Care Fund to help provide for members in need as well as community members. Thank you in advance for your generosity, now more than ever, so many people are in need and hurting and what little we can do makes a difference.

Financial Update

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

“Giving melts away our focus on ourselves, and we begin to live as we were made to live – for the glory of God and the good of others.” John Rinehart

If you wish to donate to the Christmas Celebration or the Food Pantry, there is a dropdown in REALM. Please note it on your check or on the envelope for cash.

Thanks to everyone who contributes via REALM and opted to pay some of their processing costs. In 3 1/2 months you have helped us out by contributing \$125. Thank you!

Thanks to everyone who contributes via REALM. If you haven't yet taken advantage of paying some of your processing costs and wish to, there is a box you can check on the REALM platform. Thank you either way!!

Thanks to everyone who contributes via the Plate and the mail. We get excited each week as we count the deposit. Thank you for your faithfulness.

TEXT Tribe to 73256 to give right now.

All bills presented have been paid. October was a little bumpy, but we made it through. We pray that November and December will be better Giving months and less on the Expenses months. Possibly it is time to catch up on your pledge. Possibly it is time to make your year-end Extra payment. Possibly you need to make a Required Minimum Distribution from your IRA. Possibly you want to make a Qualified Charitable Donation to the church. We can help you do all of these!!

Thanks,
Chuck/Lynn/Pat

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

Save the Date: Saturday, November 29th (after Thanksgiving) is our Church Workday. Please come out and help us decorate for Christmas! The more people we have the faster the work goes. We have jobs for everyone no matter your ability level.

Sunday, November 30th (1st Sunday of Advent) after the Worship Service we will decorate the Exterior Christmas Tree.

We had tree limbs by the Ashmore Ave Parking Lot fall that had to be removed and gutters repaired on the Sanctuary this past month.

THE PROMISE

Youth Group

We are so thankful for our dedicated you that attend each Wednesday! What a joy it is to watch them grow in their relationship with Jesus and with each other.

We are also very grateful to all of those who have provided a meal for our Youth or who have volunteered to help with transportation. We truly appreciate your thoughtfulness!

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.

Notary Public

If you are in need of a commissioned Notary Public come by the Church office during office hours. Liz Robertson, Operations Coordinator, is a Public Notary for Hamilton County.



White Oak is turning

100!

... in 2027.

It's time to start planning now!

We are looking for **THINKERS** and **DOERS** to join the

Centennial Committee!

This is a family celebration, so we would love to have many members bringing ideas and carrying them out.

Some ideas are time sensitive like interviewing long standing members.

If you are interested contact **Paige Walker** (901) 355-0623.

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>