



# OAK RIDGE

## METHODIST CHURCH

May 2026 Ridgerunner

Dear Oak Ridge Church Family,

Many people think that Easter is only one day of the year. Yes, we celebrate early at sunrise on Easter morning and shout, "He has RISEN! He has RISEN INDEED!" But did you know there is an Easter season? Also known as Eastertide. The Season of Easter is 49 days after the Resurrection until the Day of Ascension on the 40<sup>th</sup> day after Easter.

As we continue to celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ, may we continue to share the Good News out in our community. There are a lot of exciting things happening this month of May, which has five Sundays. On the first Sunday, we will celebrate Holy Communion and read John 14:1-14 - Don't Let Your Hearts be Troubled.

The second Sunday of May is always Mother's Day. On this special occasion, we will honor all the women in our church who serve as mothers—not only to their own children, but to every child connected to the baptisms where we, as a community, have promised to nurture, love, and care for each one.

On the third Sunday, we will have Confirmation Sunday, where the four confirmands who have been learning about the Methodist Church, our beliefs, and membership vows will profess Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It will be an amazing service to hear each answer the question, "What does Jesus mean to me?"

On the fourth Sunday, the Season of Easter comes to an end. It is Pentecost, where the disciples receive the power of the Holy Spirit. It is 50 days after Easter and the disciples are able to speak many different languages to share the Gospel with everyone that will listen.

The fifth and last Sunday, we will celebrate Trinity Sunday. Even though the word 'trinity' is not found in the Bible, we believe God is three persons in one being. In the creation, God the Father spoke everything into existence and the Word God the Father spoke was the Son of God. The scripture then mentions that the Spirit hovered over the waters to represent the Holy Spirit. We also see the trinity at the Baptism of Jesus with God the Father speaking from above saying, "this is my Son, whom I am well pleased" and then the Holy Spirit coming down as a dove upon Jesus.

I hope and pray that you will join us each Sunday in this month as we worship God together and experience the power of God moving here at Oak Ridge Methodist Church. Join me in praying for God to move in each of our lives, fanning the flame that burns inside of each one of us, like it did when we accepted Jesus Christ as our Lord & Savior.

Take care and God Bless,

Pastor Mike

## MISSION OF THE MONTH



and



### Unite Guilford Jail Ministry

Chaplain Mike Lewis recently shared that in 2025, through this ministry's support, over 350 Bibles have been distributed and 125 individuals have made decisions for Christ. He also expressed that their greatest need is prayer. In addition, they gratefully welcome donations of Bibles or other spiritual materials your church may feel led to provide.

We would like to gratefully thank Dan Nelson for his time spent with Unite - Guilford Jail Ministry.

In Dan's words - "after a life of 46 years, the Lord called me to a place where I could service others in peace. When we arrived in Oak Ridge, that calling became clearer, as He led us into Urban and Prison ministries. Through this journey, inmates have drawn me into deep prayer, and we have been greatly encouraged through Disciple Bible Study. Along the way, I have learned that we are often less faithful in loving the Lord than we are in trusting Him - but He continues to guide and transform us.

Dan Nelson

(To read more about the Unite - Guilford Jail Ministry, please visit their website [www.unitegjm.org](http://www.unitegjm.org))

### Tabitha Ministry



#### Providing HELP, HOPE and a HOME for hurting women

During the month of May, Tabitha Ministry will be featured as part of our Mission of the Month. The mission of Tabitha Ministry is to provide help, hope, and a home for women. Back in 2000, the late Cindi Wagner launched a healing center for women who are recovering from addiction and becoming reacquainted with life outside of incarceration. Tabitha Ministry, a free 12-month residential recovery program is located in Summerfield. They specialize in helping women in their 30s and 40s with a criminal record, substance abuse issues, trauma, and/or sex trafficking. These women are ready to make nothing less than a radical change in their lives in order to begin healing.

Tabitha Ministry is a Christ-based 12-step program. Applicants do not necessarily need to be Christian, however, they must have an open mind regarding the Christian faith. During the 12 months of the program, residents must cut off all forms of communication with the outside world. To be able to heal from their past pain, they must start anew.

The ministry ensures transportation to court dates, probation offices, and medical appointments. All basic needs are provided for by the Ministry. This program is very active - applicants must be physically able to climb stairs and have the stamina to stand and work in our thrift store, Tabitha's Closet, for an average of 20 hours a week (this meets the community service requirement).

Tabitha Ministry houses up to six women at any given time. Residents are required to take classes where they will learn how to change their way of thinking as well as restore their dignity and identity, all while learning about Jesus Christ. After graduating from the program, the ladies may choose to continue living on property for an additional 12 months.

If you are interested in becoming a blessing in the lives of these courageous women, there are several ways to help. Tabitha Ministry takes monetary donations to offset costs of living; you can become a volunteer in a number of different aspects (provide everyday items needed to live safely and comfortably, prayer, provide services to keep the residence and store up to par). Please consider donating any of the following items to Tabitha's Closet - clothing, household items, dishes, cookware, toys, games, puzzles, books, small appliances and electronics.

If you would like to know more about this mission, please reach out to Shelby Smith at (336) 601-7666 or visit Tabitha Ministries at [www.tabithaministry.com](http://www.tabithaministry.com).

# Maximize Your Gift

Learn about tax savings.

**DID YOU KNOW** that strategic charitable giving can benefit both your favorite church and your financial situation? By understanding and utilizing available tax benefits, you can potentially increase the impact of your gift while reducing your tax liability. This article explores several tax-smart giving strategies to help you make the most of your generosity.

**Disclaimer:** Consult a qualified tax advisor or financial planner for personalized guidance.

## Charitable Deductions - NEW in 2026

New in 2026, individuals who do not itemize on their tax return are able to take a deduction of \$1,000 (\$2,000 for joint filers) for charitable contributions. Individuals who do itemize are now subject to a .5% of AGI floor for their contributions.

### Standard Deduction:

- Maximum of \$1000 for individuals or \$2000 for joint filers
- Above the line deduction

### Itemized Deduction:

- Deduction for all contributions that exceed the .5% AGI floor
- "Bunch" contributions every other year to maximize savings

## Donating Appreciated Assets

Donating appreciated assets, such as stocks, bonds, or real estate, can offer significant tax advantages. If you donate assets that you've held for more than one year, you can generally deduct the fair market value of the asset while also avoiding capital gains taxes on the appreciation.

### Benefits:

- Avoid capital gains taxes.
- Deduct the fair market value.
- Potentially increase your gift.

This strategy is particularly beneficial if you own assets that have significantly increased in value since you purchased them. By donating these assets directly to charity, you can eliminate the tax burden associated with selling them and then donating the cash proceeds. The charity can then sell the assets tax-free, resulting in a larger gift.

## Qualified Charitable Distributions (QCDs)

If you are age 70½ or older, you can make a qualified charitable distribution (QCD) from your IRA directly to a qualified charity. A QCD can be a tax-efficient way to give, as the distribution is excluded from your taxable income.

### Key Features:

- Available for those 70½ or older.
- Distributions are excluded from taxable income.
- Can satisfy required minimum distributions (RMDs).

QCDs can be used to satisfy your required minimum distributions (RMDs) from your IRA, which can be particularly beneficial if you don't need the RMD income. By donating your RMD directly to charity, you can avoid paying income taxes on the distribution while still fulfilling your RMD obligations. There are annual limits to how much you can donate using this method.

## Donor-Advised Funds (DAFs)

A donor-advised fund (DAF) is a charitable giving vehicle that allows you to make a contribution, receive an immediate tax deduction, and then recommend grants to qualified charities over time. DAFs offer flexibility and control over your charitable giving, and they can be a valuable tool for strategic philanthropy.

### Benefits:

- Immediate tax deduction.
- Flexibility in grant recommendations.
- Potential for tax-free growth.

With a DAF, you can contribute various assets, including cash, stocks, and other appreciated property. The assets in the DAF can grow tax-free, potentially increasing the amount available for future grants. DAFs can also be useful for bunching charitable contributions in high-income years to maximize your tax benefits.

## Charitable Remainder Trusts (CRTs)

A charitable remainder trust (CRT) is an irrevocable trust that allows you to donate assets to charity while receiving an income stream for a specified period of time or for life. CRTs can provide significant tax benefits, including an immediate tax deduction, avoidance of capital gains taxes, and potential estate tax savings.

### Key Features:

- Income stream for the donor.
- Immediate tax deduction.
- Potential estate tax savings.

With a CRT, you transfer assets to the trust, and the trust pays you or your beneficiaries a fixed or variable income stream. At the end of the trust term, the remaining assets are distributed to the designated charity. CRTs can be complex, so it's important to consult with an experienced estate planning attorney to determine if this strategy is right for you.

# Quarterly Financial Update

January - March 2026

<b>Gifts</b>	\$280,917
<b>Expenses</b>	
Worship	27,722
Discipleship	59,866
Outreach	2,500
Facilities	58,615
Administration	<u>71,755</u>
<b>Total Expenses</b>	\$220,458

\*This quarterly financial update includes only the expenses incurred to date. Many of our significant annual obligations are scheduled for later in the year, and those costs will be reflected in future reports.



# GUATEMALA TEAMS 2027



## **5,000 Families Served—Will You Join Us for the Next Milestone in Guatemala?**

The Guatemala Stove and Water Filter ministry is moving forward with incredible momentum. Thanks to a lot of prayers, hard work and support, this past January we officially hit a massive milestone: **5,000 families served**. In our last trip alone, 3 teams served 477 families, provided water filters for local schools, and delivered 107 bags of essential donations—including medicine, clothing, toothbrushes, and LuoPads. This work changes lives far beyond the stoves we build, and now, it's time to prepare for **January 2027**.

### **The Goal: 450 Families**

Pastor Cardona has already identified 450 families in need. To meet this goal, we need to fill three dedicated teams.

### **2027 Team Dates:**

- **Week 1:** January 9 – 16
- **Week 2:** January 16 – 23
- **Week 3:** January 23 – 30 (Note: If the third team is not filled, we will release the Jan 9–16 slot.)

### **Trip Details & Deadlines**

- **Cost:** \$1,400 – \$1,500 (covers team fees).
- **Application Deadline:** June 27, 2026.
- **Deposit Deadline:** July 12, 2026 (\$700).

### **How to Join Us**

We have already committed to serving at least 300 families, but Pastor Cardona needs our final numbers soon to begin the months of preparation required for 450. The sooner we fill these spots, the more families we can guarantee will receive help.

1. Visit the Website: For more details on the ministry and the 2027 schedule, visit [EmpowerGuatemala.org](http://EmpowerGuatemala.org).
2. Review the Application: Download it from the Website or contact one of us to request a Word and Adobe version of the application.
3. Reserve Your Spot: Please contact one of us directly as soon as you decide to join a team.

Thank you for your continued prayers and support for the people of Guatemala. Let's make 2027 our most impactful year yet!

Max Kern  
336 643-7297  
[hmaxkern@gmail.com](mailto:hmaxkern@gmail.com)

Mike Carr  
704 574-0888  
[mike.carr@oakridgemc.org](mailto:mike.carr@oakridgemc.org)

# Children's Ministry

## Celebrating Farm Day



**BICYCLE OBSTACLE COURSE**

**MAY 13**  
**6:30 PM**

**AFTER WEDNESDAY NIGHT MEAL**

**BACK PARKING LOT**

**Save the Date**

**RAINFOREST FALLS**  
Exploring the Nature of God

**Vacation Bible School**  
**July 20-23**  
**6:00-8:00 PM**



# Practicing THE WAY OF Jesus

- LEARNING
- PRAYING
- GATHERING
- RESTING
- CONTRIBUTING



## April Recap

April was a wonderful month in the life of The Ridge Student Ministry! We had the opportunity to connect with other students and Youth Ministries at our Community Youth Night, where I had the privilege of speaking! It was an amazing night of fun, fellowship, worship, and the Word! We are looking forward to hosting the next Community Youth Night here at ORMC in June! We also had a wonderful High School Outing where we were able to split into teams and have a Scavenger Hunt around Friendly Center! We also dove into John 20 & 21 and learned about some of the interactions Jesus had with His Disciples before the Accention! All-in-all, April was a blast, and we cannot wait for May AND all this Summer has for us!

**WE NEED YOU!**  
**MAY 9TH**  
**8:30-11:30AM!**

URGENTLY NEEDED

**GLENWOOD TOGETHER SERVE DAY**

The Ridge Youth is sponsoring a Serve Day for Glennwood Together! We will leave the church at 8:30am and work from 9-11am at Glenwood, helping them with cleaning, organizing, building shelves, cleaning their nearby park, and anything else they need! Come help us serve this community and ministry!



Throw Back



Youth Night

Recreate a young picture of yourself for Youth, Sunday, May 3rd!



**SABBATH SUNDAY**

Rest | Practicing the way of Jesus

**5/10 & 5/24**

On Mother's Day and for the Holiday weekend, we will have Sabbath Sunday's those evening. We want to encourage our students to take time to spend with family, rest, unplug and reset!

**Glenwood Serve Day**  
 May 9<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-11:30am  
 Come out and help us serve the ministry  
 Glenwood Together by cleaning, organizing, and helping any way we can!

**Our Throwback Theme Night is May 3<sup>rd</sup>!**  
 Recreate a photo from your childhood and come dressed as that photo! We will also be guessing which Baby Pic belongs to which leader!



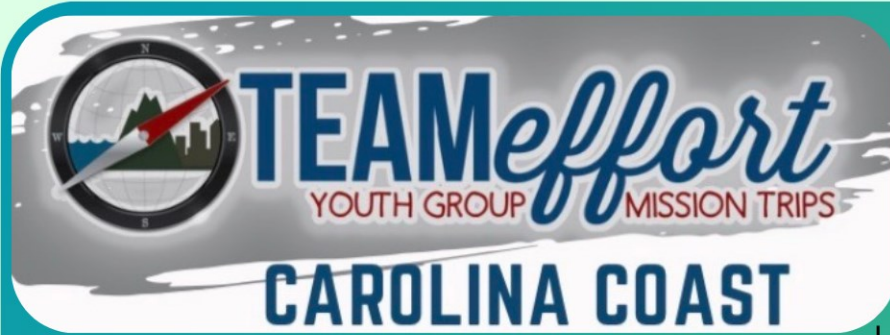
Text @theridgemc to 81010



jon.christ@oakridgemc.org



336-689-5524



## CAMP DATES & DESTINATION HAVE CHANGED!

We will be joining TeamEffort this year for a Coastal Carolina Mission Trip/Camp! The dates are **July 26<sup>th</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>**! Sign-ups ARE LIVE on Realm! We have 25 spots, so get registered ASAP & get ready for an AMAZING and spiritually impactful week!



If you have a 2026 High School OR College Graduate you wish to have honored in our 2026 Graduation Service, PLEASE RSVP with Pastor Jon by Sunday, May 31<sup>st</sup>! No submission after May 31<sup>st</sup> will be accepted. To RSVP, please email Pastor Jon at [jon.christ@oakridgemc.org](mailto:jon.christ@oakridgemc.org) and let him know the Name of your Graduate(s), the School they are graduating from, and their plans after graduation (School, job, career, etc.)



Looking for a babysitter, house or pet sitter?

We have teens and young adults eager to help and earn some extra cash! Text Kristian Christ to arrange services.

Interested in becoming a sitter? Text Kristian for next steps. 336-549-0520

*May*  
@ THE RIDGE

5/3 - Theme Night @ The Ridge

5/9 - Service Project

5/10 - Sabbath Sunday  
NO YOUTH

5/17 - Sunday Night @ The Ridge

5/24 - Sabbath Sunday  
NO YOUTH

5/31 - Sunday Night @ The Ridge

# Welcome!

## NEW MEMBERS & BAPTISMS



**CHARLOTTE MCCAIN SMITH  
BAPTIZED APRIL 19, 2026  
PARENTS - AARON & MANDY  
SIBLINGS - MAC & HANNAH**



**TRANSFER OF NEW MEMBERS  
PHILLIP & LAUREN DIXON  
ALLIE BELLE BAPTIZED  
APRIL 19, 2026**



**TRANSFER OF NEW MEMBERS  
BEN AND ELIZABETH CROUCH  
SONS - WILLIAM AND JAMES  
DAUGHTER - CHARLOTTE  
MARCH 22, 2026**



**Barnes Family**

**EASTER SUNDAY**



**Lynda Williams**



**Mia and Kellie Carr**

**TALENT SHOW 2026!**



**Landon Norman**



**Wyatt Lampley**



**Harrison Beene**

# Upward Basketball & Cheerleading 2026 Oak Ridge Methodist Church



*Did you know?*

**WHILE SUNDAY IS THE FOCAL POINT OF THE WEEK, IT REPRESENTS ONLY HALF OF THE CHURCH'S WEEKLY IMPACT ON OUR COMMUNITY.**

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## **ORMC Staff**

**Church Office / 336-643-4690**

**Senior Pastor**, Rev. Mike Carr, [mike.carr@oakridgemc.org](mailto:mike.carr@oakridgemc.org), 336-643-4690 ext. 205 / cell 704-574-0888

**Pastor of Visitation**, Tony Dowdy, [tony.dowdy@oakridgemc.org](mailto:tony.dowdy@oakridgemc.org), 336-918-8681

**Youth Pastor**, Jon Christ, [jon.christ@oakridgemc.org](mailto:jon.christ@oakridgemc.org), 336-643-4690

**Director, Children & Family Ministries**, Larissa Brown, [larissa.brown@oakridgemc.org](mailto:larissa.brown@oakridgemc.org), ext. 203

**Director, Choir**, Elizabeth Crouch, [elizabeth.crouch@oakridgemc.org](mailto:elizabeth.crouch@oakridgemc.org)

**Accompanist**, Lynn Gordon, [lynn.gordon@oakridgemc.org](mailto:lynn.gordon@oakridgemc.org)

**Praise Band Worship Leader**, Jessie Gillie, [jessie.gillie@oakridgemc.org](mailto:jessie.gillie@oakridgemc.org)

**AV and Media Producer**, David Dudley, [david.dudley@oakridgemc.org](mailto:david.dudley@oakridgemc.org)

**Director, Weekday School**, Jamie Hatchell, [jamie.hatchell@oakridgemc.org](mailto:jamie.hatchell@oakridgemc.org) ext. 208

**Director, Finance**, Monica Bogle, [monica.bogle@oakridgemc.org](mailto:monica.bogle@oakridgemc.org), ext. 218

**Manager, Facilities**, Jack Polakowski, [jack.polakowski@oakridgemc.org](mailto:jack.polakowski@oakridgemc.org), ext. 219

**Sr. Pastor's Assistant/Scheduling & Membership Coordinator**, Phyllis Rowe, [phyllis.rowe@oakridgemc.org](mailto:phyllis.rowe@oakridgemc.org), ext. 211

**Ministry Support Assistant**, Tara Blake, [tara.blake@oakridgemc.org](mailto:tara.blake@oakridgemc.org), ext. 201