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Oak Hill News



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With Jesus as our guide and community as our goal, we worship, love, serve and grow

What's in a Pronoun?

Guest essay from Elder Heather Macarthur

A few days ago, I received an email at work from a work colleague. I noticed that after her electronic signature she had the words *she/her/hers*. I thought that was intriguing. I have a friend who also always places the personal pronouns *she/her/hers* after her name on her messages. I have other friends on social media who state “*they/them/theirs*” under their profile. Perhaps you do too. So, what is this all about? Well I confess until recently it's not a subject I've given a lot of thought to. As a cis-gendered female, a dominant gender in society, I really haven't had to. But I now know that there are many fellow travelers on this journey of life that have had their identity quashed for too long, especially by The Church, and do indeed need to speak that identity out loud for us to hear, if we will listen.

Last year I helped coordinate Oak Hill's booth at Pride Fest in Tower Grove Park. Pastor Erin had ordered some swag for us to give away from More Light Presbyterians, a non-profit collective of Presbyterians working for full inclusion of LGBTQ persons in the church. If you are not familiar with More Light Presbyterians, you can find out more about them here www.mlp.org.

At our Pride booth we had various stickers and buttons for folks to take. My personal favorite is “God is not a boy's name.” I confess I stuck one on the refrigerator in the church kitchen!

Our buttons depicted the personal pronoun descriptors: *he/him/his*; *she/her/hers*; *they/them/theirs*...and Pride Fest goers loved them.

It's not always comfortable being at a church booth at Pride Fest. Not for the reasons you may be thinking. There are sometimes outrageous outfits and colorful behavior, but they don't bother me. What I am deeply aware of is the very unfair and unjust way that we, The Church, have treated our LGBTQ siblings throughout history. So, it wasn't a surprise when folks gave our very clearly identified Oak Hill church booth side-looks and proceeded to quickly pass us by. But then they saw the buttons and that made them stop and give us a second look, and a second chance. The buttons clearly surprised them, and many asked tentatively “can we take these?”, followed by a heartfelt “thank you so much.” How could buttons with personal pronouns mean so much? I believe the answer is core validation of someone else's humanity. As Church I think that's one of our first responsibilities. It certainly seems to me that was Jesus' example.

So why the focus on personal pronouns? Last fall, the Session approved Oak Hill becoming a member of “More Light Presbyterians”. More Light Presbyterians believe and work for the “*full participation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual (LGBTQIA+) people in the life, ministry and witness of the Presbyterian Church (USA) and in society.*”

You might be asking yourself, “don't we already do that at Oak Hill, why do we need to join a

specific group about this?” Or maybe put another way, “why do we need to be so public about it? Can’t we just welcome everyone without making a fuss?” Well many churches these days claim to be “welcoming of all” but there’s often a rather large “but” in the small print. We felt Oak Hill needed to be very clear and honest about what we mean when we say, “welcoming all.” Affirming our membership of More Light Presbyterians is part of this process.

Going forward we will be having some congregational discussions about what this might look like at Oak Hill. We’re planning a luncheon panel conversation, and we will also be getting more of those buttons to put out for folks to take. We want **anyone** who comes to Oak Hill to know they will be respected and valued for who they (and God) know they are. Incidentally God’s personal pronouns throughout scripture are also pretty fluid, so all the buttons likely apply to God at some point or another.

Heather Macarthur
Mission and Justice Committee



FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON

SUNDAY, MARCH 22

The Stewardship and Property Committee will host the March fellowship luncheon to be held on March 22 instead of the first Sunday in March. To celebrate St. Patrick’s Day they will be serving corned beef and cabbage (a kids’ meal will also be provided). You don’t have to bring anything, just come and enjoy. A free will offering will be received to help defray expenses.



WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Online Lenten Devotional: We are sharing brief, 1-minute reflections and questions each day on our Facebook and Instagram pages. Come and journey with us, watch the video, and share your own thoughts, wonderings, photos, or questions.

Wednesday Bible Study Class: The Wednesday Bible Study Class is going to be taking a break from our ongoing study on Church History (with *The Story of Christianity* by Justo Gonzalez), to spend a few weeks with Mary Oliver. We are off this week, because Pastor Erin is out of town at a conference. But beginning March 11th, we’ll dive into Mary Oliver’s poetry, and pair it with some readings from scripture, and then discuss each week. It will be a new class every week, with materials provided as we go. All are welcome to join us on Wednesdays at 11 a.m. in the Faith and Fellowship room.

Adult Sunday School Class: Sing (or read!) your way through this Lenten season with "Will You Come and Follow Me? An Adult Lenten Study on Hymns." Written by Mary Louise (Mel) Bringle and Beverly Howard, this six-session class takes a look at the text of various Lenten hymns. Each session will challenge participants to work through the meaning of the text and learn more about the hymn writers. We will also discover how the text relates to us today. Join us for one session or join us for all!



A new Flower Chart for the entire year of 2020 is posted in the hall next to the church office. If you would like to purchase Chancel flowers for worship on a special Sunday morning, sign your name and indicate the person(s) or event being honored. The usual double spray arrangement costs \$55.00. Payment should be made to the church office in person or by mail. If you would like to bring your own flower arrangement, please sign the chart and notify the office.

EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE



Individually wrapped candies that will fit in plastic Easter eggs are needed for the Easter Egg Hunt to be held on Saturday, April 11. Please place your donations in the boxes in the Large Assembly Room or the church office beginning March 15.

STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

With the resignation/retirement of our Treasurer Don Stanford and the appointment of Brent Crittenden to replace Don, our committee has been busy making decisions about the church's bookkeeping systems and investments. Under Session Highlights in this month's newsletter you can see some changes that Session has approved as the result of this committee's recommendations. Now that these recommendations have been approved, a lot of paperwork is being completed to put all of these changes in place. Our committee especially thanks our new treasurer, Brent, for all of the work he has done and continues to do.

If anyone has been in the Theleos Room lately you will notice that two new light fixtures have been installed and the room is a lot brighter. We are constantly dealing with lights and lighting fixtures, so if anyone notices a burnt out light bulb, please notify someone on our committee so it may be replaced as soon as possible.

As we get ready for the upcoming spring season and start looking for projects that need to be done on church's work day, or any other time, again, please notify someone on our committee.

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Thanks to everyone for your help with our **Winter Outreach Project**. Dena Roper is doing an awesome job coordinating our volunteers from Oak Hill, Compton Heights Christian Church, Isaiah 58 Ministries, Eden Seminary, members of the community and the Winter Outreach coordinators and driver volunteers. We've provided safe, over night accommodations, meals, and Go Bags for 30 of our un-housed neighbors. We have had several repeat guests who thank us for opening and treating them with respect, and they like our snacks, too! Thanks everyone!

A belated thank you to everyone who donated ingredients for our **salad bar at UKirk**. Pastor Max Hill reports that the salad bar is the students' favorite dinner.

Palm Sunday is the first Sunday in April, instead of hosting our traditional Pancake Breakfast we've decided to have what we're calling a "**Hosanna Brunch**," following worship. This will be our monthly church luncheon. We'll be proving pancakes, syrup and a breakfast meat side. We hope you'll bring a brunch casserole or special pancake toppings, fruit, or other exciting brunch item to share, as you are able. Watch the Sunday Bulletin, leading up to this event!

Youth Outreach Nights, join us for our **First Tuesday Neighborhood Foosball Nights at Great American Human Foosball** at Morgan Ford and Humphrey on March 3, 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. Adult participants are welcome. Bring a snack to share and join us in some giant games and fun with the neighbors. Don't forget **Third Friday Neighborhood Open Gym Night**. Basketball, snacks, games, puzzles, snacks. Did we say snacks? You'll find us in the Smylie Room and gym at 6:30 - 8:30 p.m. A special thank you to Victor Eckert for being our unofficial facilitator and showing up to play!

If you are interested in serving on the Mission and Justice Committee or helping to plan our events, contact Donna Cook.

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE (cont'd)

Isaiah 58 Ministries

Thanks to all for your help and participation at the Isaiah 58 Ministries Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper! Together we make a great team serving our community. Plans are under way for the I58 Annual Celebration and Meeting coming at the end of April! More details are coming soon!

March 2020

1st - beef ravioli and bag o' grocery bags
8th - spinach or other greens (canned of course)
15th - sardines
22nd - canned fruit
29th- macaroni and cheese

April 2020

5th - jelly (plastic jar) and bag o' grocery bags
12th - dish soap
19th - peanut butter
26th - Beef Stew

Cleaning supplies, paper products and personal hygiene items are always welcome and needed. Interested in volunteering with Isaiah 58 Ministries, contact Donna Cook. Help is especially needed on Monday mornings 9:30 a.m. to Noon to set up and help distribute fresh food. Thanks to Eva and Oliver Bischoff for spending time with us on Monday mornings and to Wendy Barrow for organizing and delivering our donations each month.

Winter Outreach

A big Thank You! to everyone who has helped with Winter Outreach so far this year! The season does not end until March 15, so keep an eye out for opportunities to help when we need to open. We open on Wednesdays when the weather is supposed to be 20 degrees or below, or 25 degrees with precipitation. We use the forecast from weather.gov as the forecast guide, so if you're curious if we might open, that's where to check! If you have any questions or want to get on our email list, please contact Dena Roper.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

The Oak Hill Scholarship Fund April 1 Deadline

Attention current and soon-to-be college students: Application forms for the Oak Hill Scholarship Fund will be available from the church office March 1. In order to be considered, completed applications should be received by the church office no later than April 1. Full-time traditional students (e.g., High School Seniors intending to go to college full-time) should apply by April 1 for assistance for the full year. Part-time or non-traditional students should use this deadline for either the Summer or Fall semester. If you have any questions about the fund, please contact Deb Wiethop at 314-852-8629.

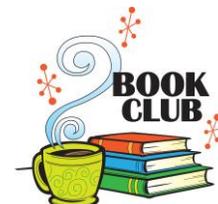
PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Circle 3 will meet on Thursday, March 5, weather permitting, at 10 a.m. or whenever you can make it. Please bring a sandwich - salad, chips and dessert will be provided. The coffee pot is always on.

BOOK CLUBS

The Touchy Topics Book and Discussion Group will meet at 7:30 p.m. on Wednesday, February 5, at Hartford Coffee Company, when we will discuss Lenny Duncan's *"Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the US."* All are welcome to join!

Book club will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 10, at Destination Café at Morgan Ford and Connecticut. We will discuss *"Where the Crawdads Sing"* by Delia Owens. Please read the book and join us.



ARTS AND CRAFT CLUB

Please join us for Craft Night on Friday, March 13, at 6:30 p.m. in the Theleos Classroom, for a fun night of crafting, visiting and snacking. This will be a “bring your own project night.” Please bring a snack to share! Please let Dena Roper know if you have any questions.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were reported or approved by Session in their February 12, 2020 Stated Scheduled Meeting:

Average Worship attendance in January was 80.

Membership January 31, 2020 is 101.

Financial Reports for January Year-to-Date 2020

	January	2019 Total
Income		
Budgeted	\$14,570.31	\$14,570.31
Actual	\$15,344.50	\$15,346.50
Expenses		
Budgeted	\$23,296.54	\$23,296.54
Actual	\$16,524.59	\$16,524.59

Session voted to authorize Brent Crittenden, as both Co-Trustee for the Wamser and Treasurer for Oak Hill Presbyterian Church, to elect Charles Schwab Trust Services as corporate trustee for the Wamser Trust and then to direct Schwab to liquidate holdings and reinvest in Schwab Intelligent Portfolio.

Session voted to authorize Brent Crittenden, as Treasurer for Oak Hill Presbyterian Church, to open a Charles Schwab brokerage account in the name of the church and to transfer all assets of the Edward Jones account and approximately \$170,000 in liquid assets to account and then to instruct Schwab to invest in the same portfolio fund as the Wamser Trust, as outlined in the previous motion. Signers on this account shall be the same as the primary checking account: Brent Crittenden, Don Stanford, Rich

Wiethop, and Carole Adams. Further, Brent Crittenden to close the Edward Jones account after this transfer.

Session voted to instruct Brent Crittenden, as Treasurer, to enroll Oak Hill with Vanco for online giving. Further, Treasurer to present statistics on online giving in monthly and annual reporting once established.

Session voted to instruct Brent Crittenden to add Bette J. Welch, CPA, as an Accountant User in the Oak Hill Quickbook file, limited to accounting reviews only.

Session voted to approve using the church’s proceeds from the Pentecost Offering to help fund the Micah 6.8 Summer Camp.

The following building requests were approved:

- Allowing one group visiting the AMEN House this summer to have a campfire on the parking lot using a fire pit.
- Allowing large group (50) visiting the AMEN House from August 2 to 8 to house some of their people in the church’s Smylie Room and to use the kitchen and Large Assembly Room.
- Take 2 Productions using the church on March, 22, 24, 26, and 29 for musical auditions.
- SSPCU use of the church on Tuesday, March 17, for a meeting
- Isaiah 58 Ministries use of the church on February 25 for their Shrove Tuesday Pancake Dinner.
- Use of the gym on Saturday, February 15, by a group staying at the AMEN House.

Under the Oak Tree



Greetings to adorn our Christmas card tree were sent from the following members and friends of Oak Hill:

- Carole Adams
- Peggy and Wendy Barrow
- Bev Brickey
- Donna Cook and Rick Soles
- Michael and Miriam Hale and Kristy Gould
- The Staff and Board of Isaiah 58 Ministries
- Janet and Clarence Jaggie
- Sandy Kay
- Rosemary and Alan Meyers
- The Ream Family
- Melburne Soles
- Janet and Don Stanford
- Christine and Will Woodward
- (one unsigned card)



LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

Sunday, March 1	Gen. 2:15-17; 3:1-7; <i>Psalm 32</i> ; Rom. 5:12-19; Matt. 4:1-11
Sunday, March 8	Gen. 12:1-4a; <i>Psalm 121</i> ; Rom. 4:1-5; 13-17; John 3:1-17
Sunday, March 15	Exodus 17:1-7; <i>Psalm 95</i> ; Rom. 5:1-11; John 4:5-42
Sunday, March 22	1Sam. 16:1-13; <i>Psalm 23</i> ; Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
Sunday, March 29	Ezek. 37:1-14; <i>Psalm 130</i> ; Rom. 8:6-11; John 11:1-45

NEIGHBORHOOD NEWS

Save the Dates: Hearings on St. Louis Public School Closures

Last year, as you may recall, there was a proposal to close Fanning Middle School in Tower Grove South due to low enrollment. The proposal was rejected by the school board.

The St. Louis Public School district is looking at another round of school closures, although they have not specified which schools. Public hearings from the end of February and through mid-March will be good opportunities to provide comment. The last scheduled hearing will be at Roosevelt High School in Tower Grove East on Thursday, March 12, from 6 - 8 p.m.



Scenes from Oak Hill

Oak Hill Youth



Oak Hill Youth (cont'd)



Worship Music



Girl Scout Cookies



Fellowship Luncheon



Winter Outreach



Winter Outreach (cont'd)



Experimenting with Transformation on Transfiguration Sunday



Oak Hill News

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www.oakhillpcusa.org
office@oakhillpcusa.org

We are a welcoming congregation where visitors are always expected!

Choir Rehearsal – 9:00 a.m.

Christian Education – 9:30 a.m.

Service of Worship – 10:30 a.m.

Nursery Care – 10:30 a.m.

The ministers of Oak Hill Church are its members assisted by:

Rev. Erin Counihan
Pastor

Rev. Dr. Alan Meyers
Rev. Jillian Embrey
Parish Associates

Ms. Susan Brown
Minister of Music

Ms. Annie Girresch
Director AMEN St. Louis

Ms. Lisa Schoonover
Student Pastor

Ms. Carole Adams
Secretary

Articles for publication in the ***Oak Hill News*** need to be submitted in writing to the church office by the 3rd Monday of each month.