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Oak Hill News

No. 02

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Volume 71

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



“It’s Groundhog Day!!!”

That’s the screaming line that blasts from the clock radio when it wakes up Bill Murray day after day after day in that treasure of a 90s movie, “*Groundhog Day*.” In film, a tv weatherman is sent to Punxsutawney, PA, to cover the small town’s famous February 2 adventures, but he gets stuck there, through some twist of time, repeating the same day over and over again, until he figures out how to live the day “right.”

When we started planning our ministry for this next season, starting to talk about Lent and dream about Holy Week and Easter, still in this same pandemic, still doing everything online, it felt like we were back in that movie with Bill. How are we here again?!

Honestly, when we first started planning online worship, I thought it would be a few weeks. Do you remember me saying, “We’ll just celebrate Easter Sunday whichever Sunday we come back.” I never, ever would have imagined that we wouldn’t even be back together in person by the actual next Easter Sunday.

But here we are. Repeating quarantine, day after day, week after week, month after month, until we get it right, until we protect one another, until we all get vaccinated. So yes, you’ll notice, we’re planning for more online worship, online

meetings, online fellowship, and online service. Again and again. To keep one another safe. We’ve got some fun ideas, we’ll do some crafting, and we’ll have some masked outdoor gatherings when the weather gets better.

I’m reminded in this moment that the story of scripture is kinda like the movie *Groundhog Day*... no really. There’s this random collection of hilarious characters who over and over again have conversations and adventures and mess up. And they are driven to do better. But they don’t always. And yet, they keep getting opportunities to try again.

Okay, maybe it’s a stretch and maybe I just really love this movie from my teenage years. But friends, know that as a congregation and as a community, we are going to keep trying.

Oh, and watch out for that first step—it’s a doozy!

With love,

Pastor Erin (and Ned Ryerson, bing!)

***Oh, and if you also love *Groundhog Day*, check out the report from the Evangelism and Membership Committee on page 3, because we’re having a special rodent-themed fellowship event on Tuesday, February 2, you can come and join in on!*

WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

SUNDAYS AT OAK HILL (ONLINE)



We will continue gathering online for worship each week. Online worship has allowed us to continue our spiritual journey while connecting or reconnecting with family and friends from afar. On Sunday, February 7, we will celebrate the sacrament of the Lord's Supper. Please remember to have some bread and something to drink for communion.

Sunday worship, 10:30 a.m. on Zoom (Meeting ID 768 992 383. Phone: 312-636-6799.)

Sunday School

Our intergenerational Sunday School classes continue. We are following a course of study from Illustrated Ministry that includes readings, discussion, and coloring pages.

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. on Zoom (Meeting ID 768 992 383. Phone: 312-636-6799.)

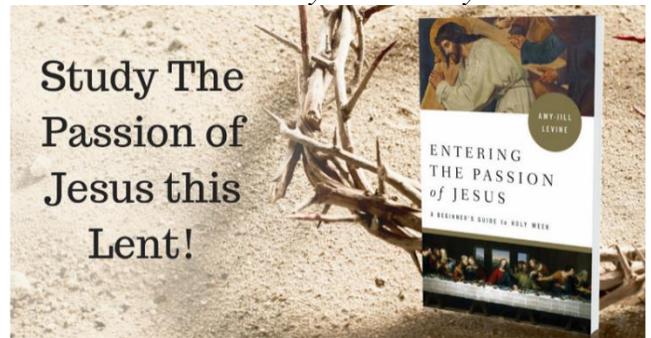


(Pastor Alan's Sunday School coloring page)

Ash Wednesday

Ash Wednesday is February 17. We are working on a method of socially distant ash distribution. We are planning a worship service on Zoom that evening at 6:30 p.m. (Meeting ID 768 992 383. Phone: 312-636-6799.) We will post details to our website and our Facebook page when they come available, i.e., when we figure something out.

Wednesday Bible Study



For Lent, the Wednesday Bible Study Class will begin a course written by scholar Amy-Jill Levine on *Entering the Passion of Jesus: A Beginner's Guide to Holy Week*. You can watch a quick intro video here (<https://youtu.be/WXl8e2Lo8ns>). You can buy the book online (Amazon, Cokesbury, etc.) and have it shipped directly to your home. Be sure to order a copy of the "Participant" version. If you need help purchasing a copy, please let Pastor Erin know.

Wednesday Bible Study is each week at 11:00 a.m. on Zoom (meeting ID 259 777 226).

Lenten Devotionals



We are ordering Lenten Devotionals for this year from A Sanctified Art called *Again & Again*. Beginning with Ash Wednesday, this weekly devotional follows the Revised Common Lectionary (Year B) through Easter Sunday. Each week offers: commentary, poetry, visual art, written reflections, and coloring pages. We encourage you to walk through these weekly readings at your own pace throughout the season, following the rhythm that works best for you. May the art, reflections, and poetry strengthen and stretch you, shaping you into a more faithful disciple. We are working on plans to print and deliver or provide print and pick-up options for you to grab a copy! Please watch our weekly emails for updated info on devotional distribution.

STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Our committee met in January to lay out the following plans for 2021:

VISION

Becoming more accessible to all those who seek what we can provide. Continue the tradition of being excellent custodians of this magnificent building and grounds, and break new ground in extending the reach of this church and the engagement with the community and with friends in other communities.

Process

Capture the starting backlog and review for starting priority

Assign owners to tasks needing them

Plan and execute long-term changes and short-term fixes

Review monthly

Tasks

Tasks for the roadmap will be gathered into a task backlog and organized by S&P to do the most good where it is most needed at the best time. If that sounds too general, that's because it is too general, but let's start here.

Here's a current list of the tasks currently on the table for 2021, to be reviewed, prioritized, and planned for the coming year:

- Financial Report Review
- Software Application Migration
- Waterproofing
- Security – Windows
- Security - Lighting
- Fire extinguishers
- Funding possibilities
- Zoom Services
- Network wiring
- Choir Loft safety for the band
- Exterior Stonework repair
- Painting
- Excess inventory
- Computer for Treasurer
- Chairlift
- Network Access Points
- Stair risers (by office)

EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

As the cold sets in, well mostly, we decided outside activities may need to move to Zoom activities. So, we have a very fun zoom room fun time planned!! On Tuesday, February 2, at 6:30 p.m. we will meet on



Zoom for Holy Rodent Groundhog games! Just in case every day is feeling like the same day all over again. Hope you can come and join us for some hilarious games, fun conversation and a nice break from all things sad and scary. Zoom Meeting ID: 853 0448 7560.

We continue to pray for many and make calls and send cards. Please let Sandy Kay or Josh Smith know if you have a special need we can maybe help meet. See you soon!!!

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

Happy New Year from the Mission & Justice Committee.

As chairperson I struggle with deadlines as our planning and projects and mission opportunities don't always fit into a normal schedule. We often wait for details from other organizations and I sometimes want to report "This Spot Left Intentionally Blank" or "Still Under Construction." Our information is often very incomplete and I find myself reporting, "watch for more details" more than I would like. But I'm giving myself grace, as all of us should, to embrace the phrase "Work in Progress." That said, there are two activities below, that have been finalized in the last couple of days that I think all of us will find exciting.

Dena Roper reports we've sent out another batch of hot sandwiches for our friends with Winter Outreach and STL Tent Mission. Thanks for your response to her Facebook post for assistance with insulated box liners to help keep meals hot!

**MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE
(cont'd)**

New February Art Wall - a call for creators!

Our outdoor art wall will get another make over for February, featuring paintings celebrating Black History Month. Artists and creatives are invited to pick a Black leader (someone famous or someone you know) and paint their image, or their words, or whatever creation comes to mind when you think of them. We're asking you to [sign up on this google sheet](#), just so we make sure to have different leaders selected, and not all artists painting the same figures. For more information, please contact Donna Cook, chair of the Mission and Justice Committee. Also please indicate on the google form if you have materials at home, or if you need us to bring you some materials for this project. to you.

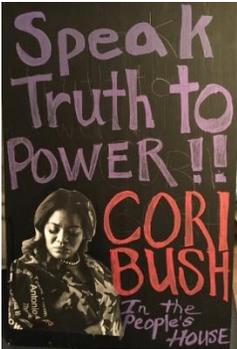
(Sample art work of Rep. Cori Bush created by Donna Cook)

Join us for a Virtual Mardi Gras Cooking Party supporting Isaiah 58 Ministries! It's a live zoom event: Sunday, February 14, 3-5 p.m. CST. Registration: \$10 per household, paid at <https://i58ministries.org/mardi-gras-cooking-party-registration/>. A zoom link will be emailed to you after registration.

The annual pancake supper in the Oak Hill basement isn't going to happen this year, so we're bringing the party to your house! Join us on zoom as we cook alongside Chef Mickey Kitterman, making our own gumbo and praline bread pudding. You provide the ingredients; we supply the recipe and the chef! Hear live updates from the ministry, and maybe even play some games!

Can't make it to the live event? Buy a ticket and you'll get a recording of the lesson, which you can play at your own leisure!

Laissez les bons temps rouler!



SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were reported or approved by Session in their January 13, 2021 Stated Scheduled Meeting:

Average Worship attendance in December (via Zoom) was 60.

Membership as of December 31, 2020 was 100 (no change).

**Financial Reports for December and
Year-to-Date 2020**

	December	2020 Total
Income		
Actual	\$48,863.96	\$194,191.33
Budgeted	\$14,570.31	\$230,310.00
Over (Under) Budget	\$22,072.36	(\$36,118.67)
Expenses		
Actual	\$14,236.32	\$196,680.84
Budgeted	\$17,075.56	\$229,339.00
Over (Under) Budget	(\$2,839.24)	(\$32,658.16)
YTD New Revenue (Loss)		(\$2,489.51)

Session elected Brent Crittenden as Treasurer and Carole Adams as Clerk of Session.

Session elected Donna Clerk to serve as Oak Hill's Designated Elder Commissioner to the Presbytery of Giddings Lovejoy.

Session voted to allow Pastor Erin to rollover one week of unused vacation (including two Sundays) from 2020 to 2021. They also voted to allow Susan Brown, our Minister of Music, to rollover any unused 2020 vacation to 2021.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS (cont'd)

Session approved the following date for serving the Lord's Supper in 2021: February 7, March 7, April 1 (Maundy Thursday), April 4 (Easter Sunrise Service and the 10:30 a.m. service), May 2, June 6, July 4, August 1, September 5, October 3, November 7, November 28, December 5, Blue Christmas Service (Date to be Determined), and January 2, 2022.

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Circle 3 will have a Zoom meeting at 10 a.m. on Thursday, February 4. Zoom Meeting ID: 886 1391 8422, Passcode: 081116. (Call in by phone using phone number: 312-626-6799, then enter both the meeting ID and the passcode). Please note that this is different meeting log-in info from the last time we met.

Circle 3 will not meet in person until the church reopens and it is safe for groups to meet again. When this occurs, we will resume meeting at 10 a.m. on the first Thursday of the month in the Theleos Room.

BOOK CLUBS

The book club will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 9, to discuss "*Where'd You Go, Bernadette?*" by Maria Semple. Please read and join us! Zoom: 259 777 226 Password: disciple (lowercase)

The Touchy Topics Book and Discussion Group will meet on Wednesday February 3, at 7:30 p.m. on Zoom to discuss "*The Yellow House*" by Sarah M. Broom. Zoom Meeting ID: 259 777 226, password: Disciple.



ARTS AND CRAFT CLUB

Craft Night

Craft night will be held on Thursday, February 25, at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom. (Zoom meeting 823 1780 8360. Password Disciple.) Join us for some visiting, some snacking and, oh yeah, crafting! Contact Dena Roper with any questions.

Under the Oak Tree



It's a Boy!!



Congratulations to Kelsi and Steve Ream upon the birth of their son Nathan Michael Ream on January 7, 2021. Nathan was born in Columbus, Ohio, and weighed 7 lbs. 5 oz. Proud member grandparents are Shery and Bob Ream, and member great grandparents are Jan and Don Stanford. Members Carolyn Ream and Matt Ream were happy to welcome their first nephew.

Scenes from Oak Hill

John Holt, Paul Bordeaux, and Brian Beckmann provide “gathering, communion, and post service music”



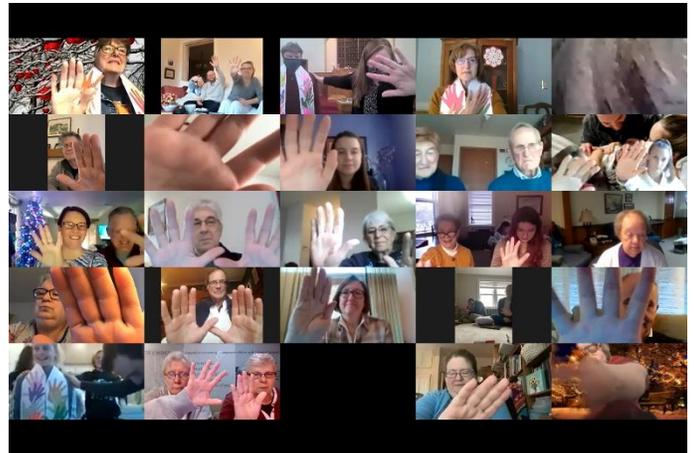
**Brian Heuckroth
Special Music**



Worship on Epiphany Sunday



Installing new elders in worship in January 2021



**WE'RE
IN THIS
TOGETHER!**



LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 7	Isaiah 40:21-31 and Psalm 147:1-11, 20c; 1 Cor. 9:16-23; Mark 1:29-39
Sunday, February 14	2 Kings 2:12 and Psalm 50:1-6; 2 Cor. 4:3-6; Mark 9:2-9
Ash Wednesday, February 17	Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 or Isaiah 58:1-12 and Psalm 51:1-17; 2 Cor. 5:2b- 6:10; Matt. 6:1-6, 16-21
Sunday, February 21	Gen. 9:8-17 and Psalm 25:1-10; 1 Peter 3:18-22; Mark 19:9-15
Sunday, February 28	Gen. 17:1-7, 15-16 and Psalm 22:23-31; Rom. 4:13-25; Mark 8:31-38



BIRDS IN THE WORD

The Bible mentions many kinds of birds. How many have you seen?

Directions: Unscramble the bird names, using the Bible references and pictures as clues. Then insert the final unscrambled bird name to complete the passage below.

-  VDEO _____ (Genesis 8:8)
-  LWO _____ (Psalm 102:6)
-  GEELA _____ (Isaiah 40:31)
-  TOKRS _____ (Jeremiah 8:7)
-  APROSWRS _____

“Are not five _____ sold for two pennies? Yet not one of them is forgotten by God. ... Don't be afraid; you are worth more than many _____.”

LUKE 12:6-7, NIV

ANSWER: dove, owl, eagle, stork, sparrow



FOR THE BIRDS

Display this recycled craft to care for feathered friends.

What you need:

- Peanut butter or vegetable shortening
- Plastic knife
- Empty toilet paper tube
- Bird seed
- A plate
- String

What you do:

1. Spread peanut butter or vegetable shortening on the tube, covering the entire outside surface.
2. Pour bird seed on a plate and roll the tube in the seeds.
3. Thread string through the tube and tie it to make a loop.
4. Hang the bird feeder outside. When seeds are eaten, coat the roll again.

Oak Hill News

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We are a welcoming congregation where visitors are always expected!

Christian Education (Zoom) – 9:30 a.m.

Service of Worship (Zoom) – 10:30 a.m.

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

Rev. Erin Counihan
Pastor

Rev. Dr. Alan Meyers
Parish Associate

Rev. Jillian Embrey
Parish Associate

Ms. Susan Brown
Minister of Music

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.