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Oak Hill News

No. 03

MARCH 2023

Volume 73

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



We began our Lenten journey together on Ash Wednesday with a very meaningful service held

jointly with our ministry partners from the Compton Heights Christian Church, the St. John's Episcopal Church, and Isaiah 58. I am so impressed that our congregations have been working closely together in mission and ministry for more than twenty years. We were reminded on Ash Wednesday that every day we are given is a precious gift, and we need to make the most of every moment.

The Psalmist writes: "Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me." (Psalm 51) The Season of Lent is an ancient spiritual tradition and practice which is perhaps more relevant today than ever before. It gives us the opportunity and invitation to slow down and carve out some time in our busy schedules to spend in meditation, contemplation, and introspection. It is like a spiritual re-boot, allowing us to notice areas in our lives where we have become out of balance. Inviting us to re-start, renew, refresh, repent, and reconnect with God and ourselves. It is a time to remember who we are, and whose we are.

I invite you to make a special effort to spend a little more time in prayer and to make attending worship a priority as we work on preparing our minds and hearts for Holy Week and Easter.

In some faith backgrounds it is a tradition to give something up for lent. I have heard of individuals giving up meat, alcohol, sugar, or even social media for Lent. I have included a beautiful prayer for the Lenten

Journey which was used at the Ash Wednesday service. I encourage you to print it out and put it on your refrigerator or somewhere you will see it every day during Lent. It will remind you of those things that are truly important in life.

Grace and Peace,
Pastor Wanda

Prayer for the Lenten Journey

Let us feast on simple pleasures, and fast from all that gets our bodies and souls out of balance. Let us feast on kindness, and fast from sarcasm. Let us feast on compassion, and fast from holding grudges.

Let us feast on patience, and fast from anxiety. Let us feast on peace, and fast from stirring up needless conflict.

Let us feast on acceptance, and fast from judgment.

Let us feast on joy, and fast from jealousy.

Let us feast on faith, and fast from fear.

Let us feast on creativity, and fast from all that deadens our souls.

Let us feast on justice, and fast from negligence toward the most vulnerable.

Let us feast on service to others, and fast from selfishness.

Let us feast on delight, and fast from despair.

Let us feast on bread and wine in spiritual communion, and fast from all that keeps us from communing deeply, with each other and with God, so that our lives might be sufficient, fulfilled, complete, whole, and enough. Amen.

SPECIAL LUNCHEON



The Stewardship and Property Committee will host the March fellowship luncheon to be held on March 19. 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. Following the meal, there will be an "Irish Sing-along." A free will offering will be received to help defray expenses.

WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

By Matt Hanify

Worship

At Oak Hill Presbyterian Church, all are welcome for worship. It's not important when you were here last or if you've ever been here before. It's not important what you are wearing or if you are a hat-wearer. Age, financial status, favorite sports team – none of that is important. What is important is that you are here. Welcome – come on in, with kindness in your heart.

We continue to try and maintain a level of pandemic standards. This can include, but is not necessarily bound by, limited physical contact with one another and trying to mask up when we're in close proximity. Please use your best judgment, and if you are unsure whether you are welcome, please see the previous paragraph.

We also continue to offer online worship via Zoom if you prefer.

Sunday worship, 10:30 a.m., in person or on Zoom (meeting ID 768 992 383)

Communion

Communion will be offered on Sunday, March 5. We offer portions of bread and juice in individual portions (tiny paper or plastic cups, depending on its contents) that have been prepared in keeping with COVID-19 protocols. If you would like a safer option, we also offer small, individual cups of juice with a portion of Communion bread in the lid (this also doubles as the gluten-free option). Feel free to request this if you are immunocompromised or are not comfortable with the previous option. Should pandemic numbers spike, we

reserve the right to abandon the more standard bread and juice and to go solely with the individualized portions of bread and juice. You are also invited to bring your own Communion materials from home if you prefer.

We also offer in-home Communion for our extended members. Please let us know if one of our extended members would like Communion in their home, and we can schedule a time. Please reach out to Pastor Wanda or someone on our committee.

Sunday School

Children's Sunday School meets at 9:30 in the morning. Until the weather warms up, the class meets in the nursery, which is upstairs in the Education Annex (the "newer" part of our building). Miss Lisa and Miss Sarah will be happy to see you. It's an interactive and creative experience, often featuring crafts.

Adult Sunday School also meets at 9:30 in the morning on the lower level of the main building (the "older" part of our building) in the Theleous Room, whose name I totally knew and didn't have to ask and that I totally haven't been vaguely describing as "a room with a piano and some trophies" for months. Adult Sunday School is also interactive, although I don't know about its crafts policy.

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. (in person only)

Wednesday Bible Study

Wednesday Bible Study is reading and discussing *Pleading, Cursing, Praising*, by Irene Nowell. The book is about the Psalms as a guide to prayer. Everyone is invited and welcome to come to Bible study (even if you haven't done the reading).

Wednesday Bible Study, 11:00 a.m., Zoom (259 777 226, password Disciple)

Volunteering

If you would like to take a more active role in worship around here, well, we would like that as well. We need volunteers at various positions: greeters, liturgists, nursery caregivers, educators, etc. Please let one of us know, or you can sign up on the website, oakhillpcusa.org (the "Worship" tab has an orange box that contains a Sign-up Genius link).

Lent (for planners)

Ash Wednesday (February 22): We joined St. John's Episcopal Church, Compton Heights Christian Church, and Isaiah 58 for a joint service at Compton Heights. Pastor Wanda was invited to preach and did an amazing job.

Lenten devotionals: This year's devotional is *The Joy of Salvation*, by Henri J. M. Nouwen. It features Nouwen's insights paired with reflections and prayer. These are available in booklet form in the sanctuary. Feel free to pick one up.

**Easter flowers:**

If you wish to purchase a lily plant to be placed in the sanctuary on Easter in honor or memory of someone, order forms are available on the table in the back of the sanctuary. Each plant comes with 3-5 blooms and costs \$19.00.

Palm Sunday (April 2): We will make crosses for Palm Sunday on Saturday, April 1, at 10 a.m. in the Large Assembly Room under the sanctuary. Have you ever made palm crosses before? Neither have I, but I have been assured that it is relatively easy and painless. Please join us.



Maundy Thursday (April 6): We will be hosting a joint service with St. John's Episcopal Church and Compton Heights Christian Church at 7:00 p.m. The Lord's Supper will be celebrated. If that's not enough to entice you, this will be a Tenebrae service (i.e., darkness), which features several candles that are gradually extinguished until the sanctuary is in near total darkness. This service will also be available on Zoom (meeting ID 768 992 383).

Good Friday (April 7): We will not be celebrating worship on Good Friday, but St. John's Episcopal Church is offering a service. Please contact the church (towergrovechurch.org) for details.

Saturday Easter Vigil (April 8): We will be holding vigil in the sanctuary for Christ's resurrection on Saturday afternoon. You can reserve an hour on our Sign-up Genius (located in an orange box under the "Worship" tab at our website, oakhillpcusa.org) to pray, meditate, light candles, or whatever else might move you during this time.

Easter Sunday (April 9): Two service options are available. Our Sunrise Service begins at 6:30 a.m. and is held outdoors on the front steps, weather permitting. Communion will be offered (the smaller, individual portions). At our 10:30 a.m. regular service, there will be the flowering of the cross (it will make sense when you see it). Feel free to bring your own flowers, but we will have flowers available as well. Communion will also be offered.

EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

By Valery Welch

Many thanks to everyone who brought scrumptious food and participated in the February 12th "Let's Taco 'Bout Love" luncheon! A special shout-out of thanks to the Mission & Justice Committee for partnering with Evangelism & Membership on the meat preparation and coordination/serving of food. We also shared a group Valentine card signing activity to celebrate our members at home. It was a great Valentine's Day celebration for all!

Looking forward to Easter—Evangelism & Membership (E&M) has reserved the Turkish Pavilion in Tower Grove Park for the great annual OHPC Easter Egg Hunt! Mark your calendars as follows:

- **March 6, Monday.** The E&M Committee hopes to have creative yard signs to announce the OHPC Easter Events: the great annual OHPC Egg Hunt, our Easter Sunrise Service, & our Easter Sunday Worship Service!
- **March 19, Sunday.** Boxes will be set up outside the sanctuary to begin collecting donations of Easter candy.

EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE (cont'd)

- **April 8, Saturday, 8:45 a.m.** The E&M Committee (*and anyone else who wants to join!*) will meet at the church to pack up and transport supplies from the church to the pavilion for setup (candy, plastic eggs, etc.).
- **April 8, Saturday, 10:00 a.m.** The great annual OHPC Easter Egg Hunt begins!! Volunteers are needed to host games and hide eggs.



And finally, as we near our holiest of holidays and commemorate Jesus' resurrection, the E&M Committee looks forward to preparing a special Easter gift for our members at home. In the weekly notice we'll announce when the gifts and cards will be available after the church service so everyone can sign the cards as we share snacks and fellowship in the Large Assembly Room!

The Evangelism & Membership Committee meets on the first Monday of the month at 6:00 p.m. via Zoom. If you even *think* you might be interested in joining us on Zoom—please do!

Your Evangelism & Membership Committee:
 Josh Smith, Chair
 Millie Crittenden
 Jeff Dahl
 Valery Welch

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

By Donna Cook

March is the month of expectation.

~ Emily Dickinson

March is Women's History Month here are some links to books, films, and other resources. Also some cool quotes from awesome folks!

All Women in the Church.

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/racial-equity-womens-intercultural-ministries/allwomen/>

Thirty -Six Activities to Celebrate Women's History Month

<https://www.goodgoodgood.co/articles/how-to-celebrate-womens-history-month>

“They’ll tell you you’re too loud – that you need to wait your turn and ask the right people for permission. Do it anyway.”

– Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez

“Women, if the soul of the nation is to be saved, I believe you must become its soul.”

– Coretta Scott King

“I think transwomen, and transpeople in general, show everyone that you can define what it means to be a man or woman on your own terms. A lot of what feminism is about is moving outside of roles and moving outside of expectations of who and what you're supposed to be to live a more authentic life.”

– Laverne Cox

“We need to encourage girls that their voice matters. I think there are hundreds and thousands of Malalas out there.”

– Malala Yousafzai

“Women belong in all places where decisions are being made. It shouldn't be that women are the exception.”

– Ruth Bader Ginsburg

Isaiah 58 Ministries Shopping List

March 2023

5th - sardines
 12th - canned chili
 19th - cooking oil (smaller bottles)
 26th - razors/shaving cream

April 2023

2nd - peanut butter or other nut butter
 9th - paper towels
 16th - shelf stable milk
 23rd - Deluxe Mac and Cheese (no additional ingredients needed)
 30th- toilet paper

Thank you from all the folks at I58 for your continued support of the ministry.

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE (cont'd)

Our committee continues to plan mission opportunities for the congregation, advocate for social justice concerns, and works to support various ministries in our community. Plans are in the works for our summer mission teams at AMEN St. Louis. If you have any questions, you can contact the members of our committee: Heather Macarthur, Toby Eckert, Dena Roper, and Donna Cook, Chair.

P.S. We're hosting a **Spring Break Mission Team** at AMEN St. Louis from Greenfield, UMC in Iowa, March 16 - 22. They'll be working on Friday, Saturday, Monday, and Tuesday. Watch the weekly update for opportunities to participate.

SCHOLARSHIP COMMITTEE

Scholarship Fund

Scholarship Application Packets for the fall semester of 2023 from the Oak Hill Scholarship Fund will be available in the church office beginning March 1. The purpose of this fund is to assist members of the Oak Hill family in their pursuit of higher education. Individuals eligible are students pursuing an undergraduate college degree or a post-secondary degree at any state-licensed educational facility. Graduate students are not eligible for this scholarship. Applications must be submitted by June 1 to be considered for scholarship. Please contact the church office or Carole Adams for an application.

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were reported or approved by Session in their January 11, 2023, Stated Session Meeting.

Average Worship attendance in person and via Zoom in December was 50.

Membership as of December 31, 2022, was 96. (No change from the previous report.)

Session approved the 2022 Statistical Report.

Session approved Pastor Wanda taking vacation from February 27 to March 5.

Session approved funding up to four persons to attend the Generosity and Stewardship in a New Day conference on Tuesday, March 7, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

Session approved purchasing books for 30 to 40 people to be used as part of the Mission Study.

In accordance with our Bylaws, session approved allowing the use of telephone conference calls and electronic communications for all stated or called meetings in 2023, including voting on matters therein, unless a simple majority of the body requests a face-to-face meeting. Meetings held by conference call or electronically abide by the same policies and procedures as a face-to-face meeting.

BOOK CLUBS

Oak Hill Book Club

The book club will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 14, at the Barrow residence to discuss "*Perestroika in Paris*."

The book by Pulitzer Prize-winning author Jane Smiley is a magical tale of a racehorse, a dog, a raven, two mallards and an 8-year-old boy who befriends them in Paris.

Please bring your dinner and join us. For those who want to join us on Zoom about 7 p.m.: 259 777 226 Password: Disciple (case sensitive)

Wednesday Touchy Topics Book Club

The next meeting will be Wednesday, April 5. The group will discuss Desmond Tutu's *No Future Without Forgiveness*, which explores the role of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission exposed atrocities and moved toward resolution as South Africa moved from despotism to democracy. As Tutu writes, "Thus to forgive is indeed the best form of self-interest since anger, resentment, and revenge are corrosive of that summum bonum, that greatest good, communal harmony that enhances the humanity and personhood of all in the community."

Touchy Topics Book Club, Wednesday, April 5, at 7:00 p.m. on Zoom (contact the church via Facebook for the link)

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Circle 3 will meet on Thursday, March 16, at 10 a.m. (or whenever you can make it) in the Theleus Classroom. Please bring a sandwich - salad, chips, dessert, and coffee will be provided.

CRAFT CLUB

Join us on Zoom on Friday, March 17, at 7:00 p.m. for crafting fun! Bring your favorite project and a snack and visit with us! Contact Dena Roper with any questions!

Zoom meeting 823 1780 8360 password Disciple.

Under the Oak Tree



Dear Friends with Oak Hill Presbyterian Church,

As the Executive Director of the St. Louis Christmas Carols Association, I want to personally acknowledge and sincerely thank you for your charitable donation of \$73.00 made in 2022 and the caroling season.

Donations such as yours enable us to continue the tradition of “Caroling to Benefit Children” begun by our founder, William Danforth, in 1911! These funds provide much needed financial support for our partner non-profit agencies and allow us to sponsor caroling groups as they bring a message of cheer and good will to people in neighborhoods and public spaces throughout St. Louis.

Our Chairman, Don Danforth III, and our Board of Trustees join me in thanking you for helping us keep this unique St. Louis tradition alive. We are truly blessed to have so many wonderful people raising their voices in support of the St. Louis Christmas Carols Association. Best wishes for a wonderful 2023!

With Warmest Regards,
Elizabeth Hogan
Executive Director

Scenes from Oak Hill

“Let’s Taco ‘Bout Love” Luncheon





LECTIONARY FOR MARCH

Sunday, March 5	Genesis 12:1-4a and <i>Psalm 121</i> ; Romans 4:1-5, 13-17; John 3:1-17
Sunday, March 12	Exodus 17:1-7 and <i>Psalm 95</i> ; Romans 5:1-11; John 4:5-42
Sunday, March 19	1 Samuel 16:1-13 and <i>Psalm 23</i> ; Eph. 5:8-14; John 9:1-41
Sunday, March 26	Ezek. 37:1-14 and <i>Psalm 130</i> ; Romans 8:6-11; John 11:1-45



Spring Forward

**Daylight saving time begins
March 12**

Christian symbol

SHAMROCK — St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach people about the Godhead. Holding up a shamrock, he challenged them, “Is this one leaf, or three?” Inevitably, people replied that it was both, prompting St. Patrick to draw the analogy that so, too, is God: one God in three Persons — the Holy Trinity.

Limiting distractions

Getting a cell phone is a major milestone for kids — and a huge decision for parents. Despite our boys’ complaints, we made them wait longer than most of their peers. We emphasized accountability, monitoring and time limits. Out of curiosity, I checked my own phone usage. It was more than double the limit we set for our kids! I came up with reasons (excuses, really) why I needed more time.

But God stopped me in my tracks and prompted me to use a “time’s up” notification. It helps me be intentional about removing distractions. What diverts you from God’s best? Are you listening to him and then redirecting your attention? God, speak clearly — and prompt us to listen!

—Janna Firestone

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www.oakhillpcusa.org

office@oakhillpcusa.org

We are a welcoming congregation where visitors are always expected!

**Christian Education - 9:30 a.m.
(In Person)**

**Service of Worship
(In Person and on Zoom)
10:30 a.m.**

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

Rev. Wanda Lawry
Transitional Pastor

Rev. Dr. Alan Meyers
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.