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Oak Hill News

No. 02 FEBRUARY 2025 Volume 75

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

from the PASTOR

Dear Friends,

We are living in very challenging and uncertain times. We are witnessing profound shifts in our society that deeply affect our communities, especially those that are most vulnerable.

As followers of Jesus, we are called to be a voice for the voiceless, to care for the marginalized, and to stand in solidarity with strangers. The Gospel compels us to offer love and compassion to all people, particularity those who are suffering or living in fear.

We are actively engaged with our ministry partners across the city. We are seeking to work together to provide opportunities for connection, conversation, and compassion in action.

On Sunday, February 16, we will host an MCU event from 2:00 to 4:30 p.m. in the Large Assembly Room. This training event will focus on the issue of Environmental Justice. We will learn more about how we can work together to affect changes in our area.

We are also meeting with our neighborhood churches to plan our joint Lenten worship services. This year the theme will be, "Hope in the Wilderness." The first worship opportunity will be the Ash Wednesday service which will be held on Wednesday, March 5, 2025, at 7:00 p.m. at the St. John's Episcopal Church.

We continue to work closely with Isaiah 58 to help meet the needs of those in our neighborhood who are struggling to make ends meet and to put food on the table. Please be sure to participate by picking up the items listed on page 3 when you do your regular grocery shopping.

Most importantly, I encourage you to be sure to make worship a priority so that you can be strengthened in your faith journey during this difficult time.

In Romans 5, the Apostle Paul proclaims, "Suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not disappoint us, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit."

May you experience God's love and hope in the days ahead.

In Christ's love,
Pastor Wanda

FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEONS

February 2 potluck – Charcuterie in February

That almost rhymes, which is as good a reason as any to serve as the overarching concept for our February potluck. We (people on the Worship and Christian Education Committee) will provide fruit, cheese, and bread. We are asking you to provide desserts, drinks, salads, hummus, absolutely nothing but yourself, sparkling conversation, or a desire to sit and eat and not have anything to clean up later. Join us. We would love to have you here!

WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE

Submitted by Matt Hanify

Worship

Happy February. While it's a short month, it's absolutely packed: Groundhog Day (February 2), the Grammys (also February 2), National Wear Red Day (February 7), Super Bowl (February 9), Safer Internet Day (February 11), Valentine's Day (February 14). That's a lot! A and we are so very grateful you've managed to find time in this surprisingly busy month to join us at Oak Hill Presbyterian Church. Welcome!

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

Communion

Communion will be celebrated on Sunday, February 2. Everyone is always welcome to partake. We offer pre-sliced portions of bread and individual servings of juice. We also offer individual Communion units with juice on one end and a piece of bread on the other. This doubles as our gluten-free option.

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 – adult and youth

Children's Sunday School continues working through *Feasting on the Word* at 9:30 a.m. Miss Sarah and Miss Lisa meet with the class in the Large Assembly Room, downstairs from the sanctuary. If you are a first-time student, welcome. There are no prerequisites other than to show up roughly on time and participate enthusiastically.

Adult Sunday School has also started back up, also at 9:30 a.m., also studying *Feasting on the Word* (although not the same Feasting on the Word). However, it meets in the Theleos Room in our main building. If you need help finding the place, track somebody down for directions, and that person will be happy to point you in the right direction. Miss Donna and Pastor Alan are always excited to see fresh faces (and those that maybe woke up too early). The prerequisites here, much like the youth class, are show up, participate, and have fun.

Sunday School, 9:30 a.m. (no Zoom option for Sunday school)

Childcare

Kids are noisy. We get that; we kind of like that. But you might need a moment to settle things, take a couple of deep breaths. No problem – we have you covered. Downstairs in the Large Assembly Room (the space directly beneath the sanctuary), we have established our Calming Corner. Feel free to head there if either you or your child needs a break. A television has been installed, so you can continue to watch the service while coloring or just doing nothing. There are books and games and toys and chairs, and we're happy to send one of our older students downstairs to show you around, keep you company, fetch things you might need.

Wednesday Bible Study

The Wednesday Bible Study has a new book: *Following Jesus: Finding Our Way Home in an Age of Anxiety*, by Henri Nouwen. A Dutch-born Catholic priest, professor, and pastor, Nouwen authored over 30 books on the spiritual life, which have sold nearly seven million copies globally and have been translated into more than 30 languages. Everyone is always welcome to participate in Bible study (even if you haven't done the reading), but if you want to know the reading assignment, contact the church office or Pastor Alan.

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

WORSHIP AND CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMITTEE (cont'd)

Volunteering

We are in regular need of volunteers here: greeters, liturgists, youth group chaperones, those sorts of things. You don't have to be a church member. You don't have to be especially talented (trust me on that one). You just have to want to do stuff. Please let somebody 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). Or you can just start doing stuff – people might offer "helpful" guidance, but nobody is likely to stop you.

Choir

Chancel choir rehearses at 9:00 a.m. in the choir room. Please contact our Minister of Music, Susan Brown, if you'd like to participate.

Youth Group

Eden Johnson, Tower Grove Youth Pastor (youthpastoreden@gmail.com), is hard at work with our emerging, but growing, youth group. So far, youth from Oak Hill, St. John's Episcopal, and Compton Heights Christian Church have seen "Wicked," visited Garden Glow, and assembled Go-Bags for our unhoused neighbors. In the process, they have grown both personally and spiritually. Contact Oak Hill or Pastor Eden for more information.

The group could also use help with chaperoning or providing snacks. Let Pastor Eden know if this sounds like something you could do.

Scheduled February events:

- February 2: Being the blessing, AMEN House, 5:00–6:00 p.m.
- February 9: Elements of self and service, AMEN House, 5:00–6:00 p.m.
- February 16: Environmental Justice Training, Oak Hill Presbyterian, 2:00–4:30 p.m.
- February 23: Game night, AMEN House (Fungeon), 5:00–6:00 p.m.

EVANGELISM AND MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

Submitted by Josh Smith

E&M helped serve pancakes at the New Year's Brunch service, 3 kinds of pancakes were served along with a host of other breakfast yummies.

Fungeon Games

We are having a game night on Sunday, February 23, at 5:00 PM, in the Education Building (we'll come in the 4111 Connecticut entrance, at the doors by the office). There will be video games, games of low skill, crafts, and black light ping pong in the Fungeon (the room below AMEN House). And mysterious games of Clue in the History Room. Please bring along any game you like to play and share it with the group. Snacks will be served. We will play until about 6:30 PM. Everyone is invited.

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE

By Donna Cook

Mission and Justice for all!

No justice, no peace. Our lives begin to end the day we become silent about things that matter. Racism is not about how you look, it's about how people assign meaning to how you look. There comes a time when silence is betrayal -Martin Luther King Jr.

Isaiah 58 Ministries Shopping List

February 2025

2nd - sardines
9th - canned fruit
16th - salt free seasoning
23rd - razors/shaving cream

March 2025

2nd - chili
9th - shelf stable milk
16th - canned ravioli or other canned meat
23rd - dish soap
30th - Mac and cheese (no milk needed boxes are appreciated.)

MISSION AND JUSTICE COMMITTEE (cont'd)

We're collecting underwear for Isaiah 58's Back-to-School Fair 2025. I'm glad we have a head start. We need 125 pairs of adult-size **underwear** for teen girls and boys. Assorted sizes. Each child receives 5 pairs of **underwear** with their back-to-school supplies. They would really like the underwear in packs of 5. (I found that hard to find.) Plus, folks may not be able to buy 5, but they may be able to buy 1 or 2. So if you are able, we'd appreciate the help.

Mom: Does your underwear have holes in it?
Kid: Of course not!
Mom: Then how do you get your legs in them?

AMEN St. Louis. It's that time of year when we start contacting our AMEN St. Louis Mission Partners. Registrations have been coming. We're putting finishing touches on the website. Watch for volunteer work days and other projects between now and May!

Hunger Action. Watch for more information from Dena about new projects.

Go-Bags are available outside the sanctuary and in the Large Assembly Room.

"If there is no struggle, there is no progress." - Frederick Douglass

STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE

Committee meeting (January 16):

1) We acknowledged the Session vote on January 8 to add sidewalk snow removal to our current parking lot contract (@ $60/man hour).
2) Noted completion of the boiler work in the Sanctuary building and rerouting of the heating pipes to the Education building (solving a difficult leak problem). Josh Smith (and other volunteers?) will begin work on repairing the walls where the pipes were rerouted.
3) Revised a draft "Building/Facility and Property Use Policy" and agreed to forward the document to Session for further discussion, revision, and eventual approval. This is a desirable step primarily to guide the approval of, and streamline the process for, event space requests. However, it is also useful as the Church contemplates the possibility of leasing underutilized space to outside groups.
4) Updated the committee's "Building Repair and Upgrades" spreadsheet to reflect completed projects, progress on active projects, projects waiting to be pursued, and the addition of new projects that were recently suggested (or required). We discussed and noted our committee's view of the relative importance/urgency and cost of several of these projects, particularly those related to building systems and structural integrity. We shared this spreadsheet with Session and the Mission Study Team for further review and opinions. The intent of this document is to help focus our limited resources on repairs and upgrades that will drive our Mission.
5) Agreed to change our meetings to the first Wednesday of the month to better accommodate committee members and precede the monthly meeting of Session.

Insurer-mandated (Church Mutual) building inspection (January 17):

1) It seems likely that we will have to address a relatively minor code violation in the configuration of the Amen House boiler pressure relief valve assembly. No other issues were mentioned although the final report is still pending.

STEWARDSHIP AND PROPERTY COMMITTEE (cont'd)

Active projects:

1) Repair of walls in the Theleos and Choir rooms (see above).
2) Alderman and Neighborhood Stabilization Officer responded promptly to our concerns regarding the uneven Connecticut St. sidewalk and are reaching out to the Commissioner of Streets (maybe don't hold your breath on this one).
3) No word yet from the Federal Nonprofit Security Grant Program on our $93K (reimbursement) funding request for exterior security lighting and camera installation. Admittedly, this is a low probability/high reward venture.

Do you know of a building, property or security issue we should address?

Contact:
Bob Ream, Chair
Stewardship and Property Committee

SESSION HIGHLIGHTS

The following actions were reported or approved by Session in their January 15, 2025, Stated Session Meeting.

Average Worship attendance in person and via Zoom in December was 66. There were 94 at our Christmas Eve Service.

Membership as of December 31, 2024, was 110.

The following financial report was provided to session:

Financial Reports for December and Year-to-Date 2024

	December	2024 YTD Total
Income		
Actual	$25,105.71	$269,402.24
Budgeted	$42,469.63	$224,418.00
Over (Under) Budget	($17,363.92	$44,984.24
Expenses		
Actual	$23,361.62	$262,787.54
Budgeted	$19,948.02	$265,640.44
Over/(Under) Budget	$3,413.60	($2,852.90)
Net Revenue/(Loss)	$1,744.09	$6,614.70

BOOK CLUB

Submitted by Deb Wiethop

Book Club will meet at 6:30 p.m. on Tuesday, February 11, at the Barrow residence to discuss the book "The Briar Club" by Kate Quinn. The novel tells the story of female friendships and secrets in a Washington, D.C., boardinghouse during the McCarthy era.

Please bring your dinner and join us. We are looking for new members!

Discussion of the book will start about 7 p.m. on Zoom: 259 777 226. Password: Disciple (case sensitive).

PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN

Submitted by Jan Stanford

Circle 3 will meet on Thursday, February 20, at 10 a.m., weather permitting. Bring a sandwich -- salad, chips, dessert and coffee will be provided.

Under the Oak Tree

Thank You

Thank you so much for your kindness and generosity. It is a blessing to so many families that appreciate the support during the holiday. Your graciousness makes lots of children happy and feelings of love. Much Gratitude!

The School District of University City
School Social Workers

Bible Readings for the Month

LECTIONARY FOR FEBRUARY

Sunday, February 2	Jer. 1:4-10 *and Psalm 71:1-6;* 1 Cor. 13:1-13; Luke 4:21-30
Sunday, February 9	Isaiah 6:1-8 (9-13) *and Psalm 138;* 1 Cor. 15:1-11; Luke 5:1-11
Sunday, February 16	Jer. 17:5-10 *and Psalm 1;* 1 Cor. 15:12-20; Luke 6:17-26
Sunday, February 23	Genesis 45:3-11, *15 and Psalm 37:*1-11, 39-40; 1 Cor. 15:35-38, 42-50; Luke 6:27-38

Oak Hill Presbyterian Church
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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 Only))

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

Eden Johnson
Youth Leader

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.