



## Oak Hills United Methodist Church

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# The Oak Notes

March 2023

### Pastor's Corner

Wednesday, February 22 marked the beginning of the season of Lent. Lent is a season of serious repentance and preparation, as we ready our hearts for the celebration of Easter. The earliest Christians used it as a time to prepare candidates for baptism and a time of repentance for sinners, who had been excluded from communion and were seeking restoration in the church. As a sign of their repentance, they wore sackcloth and ashes. They engaged in a strict period of fasting, eating only one meal each day. This led, to the modern practice of giving something up in order to ready our hearts and focus on Jesus.

Lent begins on Ash Wednesday and culminates on Good Friday. It continues for a period of 40 days (excluding Sundays) in memory of Jesus' temptation by the devil in the wilderness (Matthew 4:1-11). Throughout this season, we consciously pause to reflect on our lives, our sin, and the cross. During Holy Week, we meditate on the final events of Jesus' life before he dies. We'll walk with him as we partake in Holy Communion on Maundy Thursday and we'll watch him suffer and die on the cross on Good Friday.

This Lent, we are centering on the seven final words Jesus spoke from the cross. When someone is on their deathbed, we tend to listen more carefully to their words. We know they are choosing their words carefully and with intention. In the case of crucifixion, the very act of speaking was incredibly painful and required a great deal of energy. Yet, as Jesus hangs on the cross, he speaks seven final statements. Each of these statements were carefully chosen by Jesus. They required incredible energy and great pain for him to speak, which means, we ought to lean in and listen to them even more carefully. My hope and my prayer is that as we listen to Jesus' words as he hangs on the cross, we will see the cross in new light and as a result, gain a new appreciation for who Jesus is and what he came to do for each one of us.

Throughout this season, I would challenge you to do 5 things: (1) Take time to identify something to give up in order to make space to meet with Jesus. (2) Join with us in prayer, fasting, and repentance by coming to our

Thursday Zoom Prayer Meetings at 11 a.m. (3) Spend daily time in personal confession and repentance. (4) Read through the gospel of Mark by following the daily reading plan, and finally, (5) make it a priority to be with us each week in Lent and during our special worship services this season.

Our special services include:

(1) Palm/Passion Sunday (April 2, 10:30 a.m.): We re-live the move of Holy Week, from celebration to death. We begin our service with the celebration of Palm Sunday. We worship and praise Jesus to the waving of palm branches. We end our service by hearing the final words of Jesus from the cross.

(2) Maundy Thursday (April 6, 7 p.m.): Maundy Thursday is the celebration of the final meal that Jesus spends with his disciples before his execution (the Last Supper). During this meal, he institutes the sacrament of Holy Communion. We will take time to pause and reflect on what this meal means. If you wish, there will also be a station set up during our time of communion to have your feet washed.

(3) Good Friday (April 7, 12-4 p.m.): Good Friday is the day of the crucifixion, the day on which Jesus dies for the sins of the world. We invite you to take time to reflect on the cross through a series of guided prayer stations. These reflections will be different than those out throughout Lent, but they will be on the same passages. Come anytime you want between noon and 4 p.m. Spend as much or as little time as you need working through the stations. The goal is to meet with Jesus.

(4) Easter Celebration (April 9, 10:30 a.m.): We celebrate the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead. Join us as we come together to celebrate the greatest news ever told. Death is not the end of our story. Sin does not have the final word. We are raised to new life with him. We have victory over sin and the grave. The final word from the cross is not the last word, because resurrection has the final word. There will be no sunrise service this year. We will celebrate together on Sunday at 10:30 a.m.



### Lent Prayer Stations

Each week throughout Lent there will be a prayer station that goes with the message for the week. Please feel free to take time before or after worship (or through the week) to spend time in prayer and meditation. These reflections will also be posted on our church Facebook page on Tuesday.

### Upcoming Events

- 3/1 – United Methodist Women's Lunch, 12 p.m.
- 3/6 – Trustees, 7 p.m.
- 3/11 – Winter Carnival, 1-3 p.m.
- 3/12 – Don't Forget to Spring Forward!
- 3/13 – Finance 6:30 pm; Board 7 p.m.
- 3/17 – Young at Heart, 7 p.m.
- 3/24 – Scrapbooking/Craft Group, 7 p.m.
- 3/25 – Matthew 25 Paint Collection, 10 a.m.
- 3/29 – Community Dinner, 6 p.m.
- 4/1 – Easter Party and Egg Hunt, 1-3 p.m.
- 4/2 – Palm Sunday Worship, 10:30 a.m.
- 4/6 – Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 7 p.m.
- 4/7 – Good Friday Reflective Prayer Stations, 12-4 p.m.
- 4/9 – Easter Worship, 10:30 a.m.

- Worship – Sunday, 10:30 a.m.
- Sissy's Pantry – Wed 6:30-8:00 p.m.
- Zoom Prayer – Thursday, 11 a.m.

### Ongoing Small Groups

- Sunday School 9 a.m.
- Youth Group 9:30 a.m.
- Women's Group: Monday 10 a.m.
- John's Study: Thursday, 10:30 a.m.
- TOGA: 1<sup>st</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7 p.m. (5609 Green Acres Ct., Cincy)
- Contagious Faith: Sunday, 12 p.m.

### Israel Trip



Join Oak Hills United Methodist Church and Legacy Christian Church in Harrison as we join together for a fun faith-filled experience of a lifetime. Pastor Justin Fuhrmann and Pastor Mark Garrett will be leading us as we tour the Holy Lands with Medji Tours from October 23-31, 2023. We'll take a boat ride in the Sea of Galilee. You'll have the opportunity to be baptized in the Jordan River, to see the Dead Sea, Masada, and Jerusalem. We'll pray with others at the Western Wall. We'll sing Christmas carols at the place where Jesus was born, and reflect at the place where he was crucified. We'll take communion together, worship in a church in Jerusalem, and eat a Sabbath meal. There will be devotions at the sites along the way. In doing so, the Bible will come to life in a way you've never dreamed before. The cost of the trip is \$2,870 (plus airfare) per participant. That covers the tours, guides, hotels, and 2 meals a day. We need at least 12 people to make the trip possible, and if we get 15 to go, the cost of the trip will go down to \$2,600 (plus airfare) per participant. All prices are based on double occupancy. You can register online at <https://mejditours.com/tour/harrison-legacy-church/>. The deadline to register is July 24, 2023.

### Block Parties

We are looking for people who would be willing to host a block party at their home this spring or summer as a way of building relationships with our neighbors. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Justin at [jfuhrma@hotmail.com](mailto:jfuhrma@hotmail.com).



**Radical Hospitality**



Mark your calendars for Saturday, March 25th from 10:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. for a new activity that may benefit you and others. It will not cost you anything! I just counted— in my garage there are 11 half-used gallons of paint that will very likely never be used by us. Like most people we wouldn't ever pour the paint down a drain or put the paint into our garbage can— so it just sits in a corner.

Matthew 25 Ministries wants our paint! It's called the Rainbow Paint Reblending Program. I've seen their operation, I've worked there for an afternoon and it's spectacular. They take in latex, acrylic and water based paints, mix and repackage them in 5 gallon buckets and send them out into the USA and the world. We're inviting you, your family and your friends to drop off your unused and unwanted buckets of latex, acrylic and water based paints to us in the church parking lot on Saturday, March 25th from 10-1 p.m.

**Some Simple Guidelines**

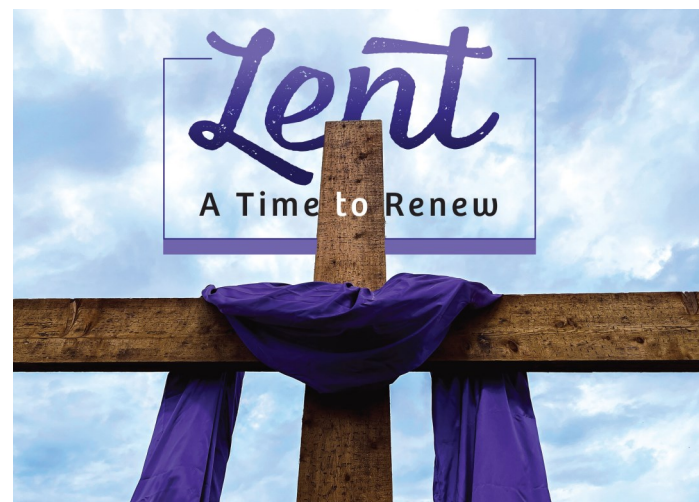
- Oil-based paints, stains, polyurethanes, etc. Aren't excepted.
- The container should be at least 1/3 full.
- The paint must be in liquid form and able to be stirred.
- It must be in the original container with the original label.

Who knows , we might even fire up the grill that day and have tubular meat products.

**Administrative Board Topics of Interest**

Greetings friends!. As a part of our ongoing effort to improve communication, here are the highlights from the administrative board meeting held on 2/13/23.

- (1) The sale of the Ebenezer parsonage is moving forward as authorized by the Church Conference last fall. The sale is currently pending and closing is currently scheduled for later in March.
- (2) We are beginning to review and update church policies, as well as working to establish a new finance policy and employee handbook.
- (3) We discussed whether or not to have a church wide conversation around disaffiliation from the United Methodist Church. It was decided we would wait until after any General Conference decision before having this conversation. The consensus was that any conversation before that time would be premature.
- (4) Finances for January had a net loss of \$2,978, but this was due to a pass through expense. The funds were received in December and paid out in January.
- (5) The trustees are getting quotes in order to replace the church boiler. This shall be paid for by funds received from the sale of the church parsonage.
- (6) Upcoming dates to put on your calendar: Flying Pig (5/4), Celebration of Women (5/18).



**Family Ministries Upcoming Events**

All Children of the Community are invited to an

# Easter Party

Saturday, April 1, 2023  
1-3 p.m., Rain or Shine

at Oak Hills United Methodist Church  
(6069 Bridgetown Road, 45248—enter from driveway on Ebenezer)

Come for a Craft, snacks, to hear the Easter story, and to hunt Easter eggs!

We are in need of donations of individual wrapped candies (please no chocolate) to fill Easter eggs. Please have all candy donations to the church by Sunday, March 26. You may give your candy to Kathy Cramerding or leave it in the church office. This year we will also have a food truck!

**WINTER CARNIVAL**

OAK HILLS UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

MARCH 11TH  
1:00 - 3:00PM

(COME AND GO AS YOU WISH DURING THESE HOURS)  
GAMES, PRIZES, CRAFTS, POPCORN

**SUGGESTED DONATIONS**  
5 NON-PERISHABLE FOOD, HOUSEHOLD, OR PERSONAL CARE ITEMS FOR OUR COMMUNITY PANTRY  
OR  
\$5.00 PER FAMILY  
ALL CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES WELCOME

CALL US FOR MORE INFORMATION: 513-574-1181  
6069 BRIDGETOWN RD.  
CINCINNATI, OH 45248- SATURDAY

Kathy Cramerding is looking for volunteer servants to help run game booths during our winter carnival on March 11 from 1-3 p.m. If you can help, please contact Kathy at [krcramerding@xlcservices.com](mailto:krcramerding@xlcservices.com). Set-up will be on Friday, March 10 at 2 p.m. If you can help set-up please let Kathy know or simply show up to help.

**Children's Sunday School**



## Oakdale Elementary Movie Night Outreach



There were more volunteers not pictured. A big thanks to all who helped!

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## Valentine's Care Packages



The youth group and ladies packing college care bags for Valentine's Day.