



## Oak Hills United Methodist Church

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## The Oak Notes

by Pastor Justin

### Pastor's Corner

*"When the Sabbath was over, Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James and Salome bought spices so that they might go to anoint Jesus' body. Very early on the first day of the week, just after sunrise, they were on their way to the tomb and they asked each other, 'Who will roll the stone away from the entrance of the tomb?' But when they looked up, they saw that the stone, which was very large, had been rolled away. As they entered the tomb, they saw a young man dressed in a white robe sitting on the right side, and they were alarmed. 'Don't be alarmed,' he said. 'You are looking for Jesus the Nazarene, who was crucified. He has risen! He is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter, 'He is going ahead of you into Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you.' Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid" (Mark 16:1-8).*

Of all the Easter resurrection narratives, this one has always been the most puzzling to me. "Trembling and bewildered, the women went out and fled from the tomb. They said nothing to anyone, because they were afraid" (Mark 16:8). It seems like such an odd way to end the greatest story ever told.

What we expect is what we see in the other gospels: joy, excitement, enthusiasm. We expect them to hurry away and tell the disciples all about it (see Matthew 28:8). What we expect is some kind of post-resurrection story where Jesus shows up and shows himself to the disciples (Luke 24:13-49). But none of that is here. This is how Mark chooses to end his story: with a statement of fear and disobedience. Though the angel tells them to go and tell the disciples that Jesus has risen, their fear paralyzes them from moving forward. Their fear paralyzes them from obedience to the voice of God. Their fear paralyzes them from even sharing this good news with one other person. They said nothing to anyone.

It's such a shocking and surprising ending to the story that even the early church added not just one but two different endings to try and resolve the issue (Mark 16:9-20). While it's possible the original ending was lost, it seems more likely that Mark intended to end in this kind of jarring way. And because the early church found it so shocking, they composed a more suitable ending from the other gospel stories.

then why did he choose to end on such an odd note? What's it have to say to us? One possibility is that WE ARE CALLED TO FINISH THE STORY. We are the ones who are supposed to hear the good news of the resurrection of Jesus from the grave and then go out and finish the story by telling everyone we know.

The question is will we? Will we step out in obedience and tell others about the good news of Easter? Or will we, like Mary Magdalene, Mary the mother of James, and Salome, go out in fear and say nothing to anyone? The truth is we too are often paralyzed in our fear. And so, we too go out and say nothing to anyone. Maybe it's because we don't know what to say. Maybe it's because we don't know how to say it. Maybe it's because we're afraid they won't believe us or even that we're afraid they'll reject us.

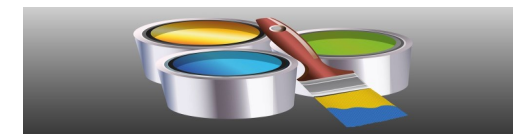
My challenge for you this Easter is to STEP OUT. Move past your fear. Obey the voice of God. And go and tell everyone you know the good news of Jesus Christ. You don't have to have all the answers. Simply tell them what Easter means to you or invite them to come and worship and find out for themselves. One way to do this is to join us at 2 p.m. on Tuesday April 4 to walk (or drive) the neighborhood and pass out flyers inviting people to come to our Easter service. If you can't make it at that time, please feel free to take some extra cards and distribute them on the street you live on any time that week as well!

Here's the question I want to focus on today: If this was Mark's original intent, as most scholars affirm,

### 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 3/13/23.

- (1) We have officially closed on the sale of the Ebenezer parsonage as authorized by the Church Conference last fall. A portion of the funds will be set aside in a separate account. The remainder will be used to fix up the Bridgetown parsonage so we can rent it out and to cover maintenance needs.
- (2) The trustees are currently taking bids to replace the boiler and to fix the roof of the sanctuary. We will utilize funds from the sale of the Ebenezer parsonage to cover these expenses. However, if you would like to give to these projects above and beyond your normal tithes and offerings, you may do so.
- (3) We updated our church use, wedding, and safe sanctuary policies and adopted a new finance policy and employee handbook. Kathy Cramerding will be updating background checks offering training on the safe sanctuary updates for all children's and youth ministry servants after Easter.
- (4) We discussed progress toward our church goals and some possible next steps, including launching some new small groups in the fall and offering a family board game night (scheduled May 7, 6-9 p.m.). If you would be interested in co-leading a small group, there will be a training after church on May 21.
- (5) Finances for February had a net loss of \$3,110, giving us a total loss of \$6,089 for the year. While our expenses to date are on target with our budget, giving has dipped in the last few months. We ask that you continue to remain faithful in giving, especially as we move into the second quarter of the year.
- (6) There will be no board meeting in April due to Pastor Justin's vacation. The next meeting is May 8.
- (7) Upcoming dates to put on your calendar: Flying Pig (5/4), Family Board Game Night (5/7), Celebration of Women (5/18).



### Paint Project

The first phase of the Paint Project went well and we delivered 39 cans of used paint to Matthew 25 Ministries. The second phase of this project will occur in May with more information coming after Easter.



# Hello SPRING

## Announcements

- 4/1 – Easter Party and Egg Hunt, 1-3 pm
- 4/2 – Palm Sunday Worship, 10:30 am
- 4/3 – Trustees, 7pm
- 4/4 – Easter Invite Distribution, 2 pm
- 4/5 – United Methodist Women’s Lunch, 12 pm
- 4/6 – Maundy Thursday Communion Service, 7 pm
- 4/7 – Good Friday Reflective Prayer Stations, 12-4 pm
- 4/9 – Easter Worship, 10:30 am
- 4/10 – Office Closed: Easter Monday
- 4/10-4/16 – Pastor Vacation
- 4/21 – Young at Heart, 7 pm
- 4/22 – Sports Card Show, 9 am-3 pm
- 4/23 – Passionate Worship (after worship)
- 4/26 – Community Dinner, 6 pm
- 4/28 – Scrapbooking/Craft Group, 7 pm

Worship – Sunday, 10:30 am

Sissy’s Pantry – Wed 6:30-8:00 pm

Zoom Prayer – Thursday, 11 am

There will be no finance or administrative board meeting in April due to pastor’s vacation.

## Bible Studies

Sunday School 9 am

Women’s Group: Mon 10 am (1st Mon 9:30 am)

John’s Study: Thursday, 10:30 am

TOGA: 1st and 3rd Thursday, 7pm @ 5609 Green Acres Ct., Cincy



## Pastor Vacation

Pastor Justin will be on vacation from Monday, April 10 through Sunday, April 16. Our Family Pastor, Amit Dutta, will be preaching on Sunday, April 16. If you have a pastoral emergency during this time, please contact Rev. Scott Meeker at Zion UMC (513-617-5952). All other questions may be directed to the church office (513-574-1131), Family Pastors Amit (513-658-2867) or Lorna Dutta (317-503-0894), Administrative Board Chair Mary Flannery (513-378-7085), or Lay Leader Bob Schloss (513-702-7118).

## 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, contact Pastor Justin at [jfuhrma@hotmail.com](mailto:jfuhrma@hotmail.com). If you are hosting, please have a date to pastor by the end of April.

## 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. 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 rooms. You can register online at <https://mejditours.com/tour/harrison-legacy-church/>. The deadline to register is July 24, 2023.

## *Family Ministries by Amit and Lorna Dutta*

### Upcoming Family Ministries Events:

**Easter Party & Egg Hunt** - Saturday, April 1st from 1 - 3 PM

What: A party for kids of all ages to enjoy the true meaning of Easter and a big egg hunt across the entire church property! There will be fun Christ-centered crafts indoors, an Easter movie, and an egg hunt outside. (Come rain or shine) This year, we will have a new addition - a food truck! Invite your friends!

**Summer VBS** - Monday-Friday, June 19-23, from 6:30-8:30 pm

Don’t forget that the closing program will be on Sunday, June 25th. Invite your neighborhood kids and friends to the weekly program nights



and the Sunday morning program!

### **Weekly Sunday School Program:**

Every Sunday, we have children’s Sunday school from 9-10:20 am and then JAM during the worship service. The youth also have Sunday school from 9:30-10:20 am every week. We always have a hot breakfast and coffee. Come join us!

Below, you will find some photos from the recent Winter Carnival, Sunday School, and JAM.

Feel free to share any suggestions for Family Ministries with Amit Dutta at [amitincincy@gmail.com](mailto:amitincincy@gmail.com).

