



Oak Hills United Methodist Church
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Pastor Article

November 2024 The Oak Notes

The modern Thanksgiving celebration that we celebrate today traces its roots back to 1621. Pilgrims, who sailed from England on the Mayflower in pursuit of religious freedom landed at Plymouth Rock, Massachusetts in 1620. A year later, in 1621, they had an abundant harvest so Gov. William Bradford organized a massive three day feast to celebrate and give thanks to God.

When we look back on that event, the stories and pictures convey it as a day of great joy. Yet, if we were to step back and look at little deeper into the history behind that first Thanksgiving, we would see a history of incredible difficulty, pain, and hurt. Back in England, the pilgrims who came to the new world were going through intense persecution for the faith. They were forced to leave behind everything they knew: their country, their home, their sense of security, their source of income, all for the uncertain journey across the Atlantic Ocean. Countless people tried to make the journey and died at sea, whether by storm, illness, dysentery, or plague. It's likely not a single family made the journey fully intact. When a family set out, they knew that at least some of them probably were not going to make the journey alive. And even if they made it, life wasn't going to be easy. They were going to have to start over with the meager supplies they had. They had the hard labor of setting up homes and learning how to farm in a new land.

If anyone had a reason to be jaded and filled with despair, it was those first pilgrims. One good harvest wasn't going to erase the memories of the pain and loss that were still there. Yet, the pilgrims come to that first Thanksgiving with praise and thanks to God for all that he has done.

Thanksgiving was never meant to be reserved only for the good times or only for one season or month of the year. God intended for us to be a people of thanksgiving in every circumstance and season of life, even the most difficult and trying periods of life. 1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 puts it like this: "Rejoice always. Pray continually. Give thanks in all circumstances for this is God's will for us in Jesus Christ." As a result, over the next few weeks we're going to explore how we can be a thankful people by learning to cultivate a life of thanks. We will address four common landmines that often derail our faith and our thankfulness and how we can overcome them: The landmine of suffering. The landmine of worry, anxiety, and fear. The landmine of a critical, negative, and pessimistic spirit. And the landmine of entitlement and greed. My hope and my prayer is that God would use this series to truly enable us to become a thankful people.

Pastor Justin

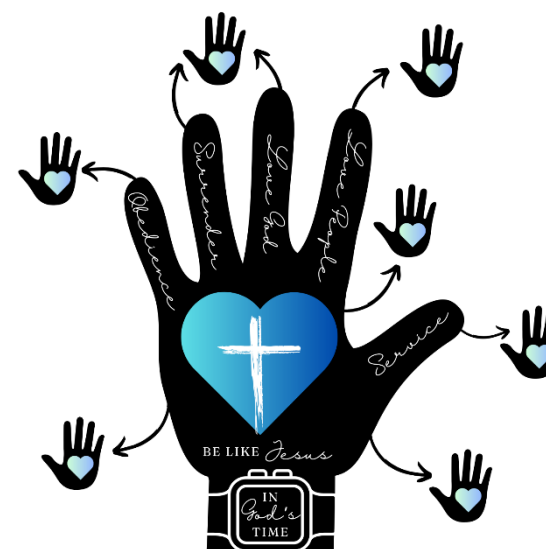


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Administrative Board Topics of Interest

1) We continued our assessment of how our church is currently doing at making the kind of disciple we say we want to produce. As a reminder: We believe a disciple of Jesus is an obedient follower of Jesus Christ, who is becoming more like Jesus in word and deed; they love and serve God and his people and are reproducing that same kind of life in other people. While we believe discipleship is present in most groups and ministries, we also discussed how we all can take further steps to improve our effectiveness. From there, we adopted four terms that define our discipleship pathway: Love, Grow, Serve, and Show. These terms come from our vision statement and our definition of a disciple of Jesus Christ. In the next month we will define each step, identify which ministries fall under each step, and develop a picture.



2) At the recommendation of the SPPRC, we have hired Debbie McCane as our new Administrative Assistant. Debbie comes to us with a wealth of experience in administrative roles, including time as a facility manager at Casey's Storage Solutions in Harrison, and as a Surgery Scheduler and Receptionist. She and her husband live in Harrison. She attends worship at the First Presbyterian Church in Harrison. Debbie begins on Monday, October 28 and will be working Mon -Fri 9 a.m.- 12 p.m. Please come say hi!

3) This year's Church Conference has been scheduled for Monday, November 11 at 6 p.m. During this meeting, we will elect new church leadership for 2025, set the pastor's pay package for 2025, and receive the annual membership, trustee, and pastor reports. All members of the church can vote.

4) Home City Ice has agreed to take responsibility of the retaining wall and to give us full usage of the lower playground lot as long as the church exists. A contract is currently being drawn up to sell the lot for \$130,000 as approved and authorized by the special session of the church conference in August.

5) Sohan Waterproofing will begin work on the water mitigation project for the old parsonage the week of October 28 to stop the leaking in the basement. The projected cost of the project will come to around \$10,500. Funds will come from the capital proceeds from the sale of the Ebenezer parsonage last year.

6) The trustees have scheduled November 9 as a painting day to paint the fellowship hall. We need all the help we can get that day. Please see Anthony Smith or Scott Wieman for more information

7) The trustees have accepted a bid from Queen City Awning totaling \$3,510 to replace the awning over the lower entrance, which is currently showing quite a bit of wear and tear.

8) Due to a \$3000 gift for Sissy's Pantry from the Cheviot Eagles, finances for the month of September came out in the black. Income for the month totaled \$19,433 and expenses \$14,916 for a net gain of \$4,517. Year to date, we continue to run in the red about \$7,200 or \$800 per month (\$200 per week). On Consecration Sunday, we received a total of 28 pledges totaling \$101,676 for the year. Additional cards were mailed to those not present.

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Announcements

- 11/4 – Soapy Joes Fundraiser Money Due
- 11/4 – Trustees, 6:30 pm
- 11/6 - UMW Luncheon, 12 pm
- 11/9 - Fellowship Hall Painting
- 11/10 – Youth Scallywag Tag/Golf, 3-4:30 p.m.
- 11/10 - Family Board Game Night, 6-9 pm
- 11/11 – Church Conference 6 p.m.
- 11/11 - Board Meeting 7 pm (NO FINANCE)
- 11/15 – Young at Heart, 7 pm
- 11/17 – Operation Christmas Child Boxes Due
- 11/22 – Arts and Crafts, 7 pm
- 11/23 – Sports Card Show, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.
- 11/24 – Hanging of the Greens, after worship
- 11/27 – Community Dinner, 6 p.m.
- 11/28-29 – Office Closed: Happy Thanksgiving

Operation Christmas Child:

Each year Samaritan's Purse collects shoeboxes filled with goodies to distribute to needy boys and girls around the world. Please pick up a shoebox in the lobby, fill it up and bring it back to church by Sunday, November 17. Need ideas on what to put inside, see the enclosed pamphlet. Please also include \$10 to cover shipping of the box. Let Carol Reitzes know if you would like to help pack shoeboxes.



- Worship – Sunday, 10:30 am
- Sissy's Pantry – Wed 6:30-8:00 pm
- Zoom Prayer – Thursday, 11 am



Bible Studies

- Sunday School 9 am
- Women's Group: Mon 10 am
- John's Study: Tuesday, 6 pm
- Pastor's Study (Walking thru the Bible): Wed 2 pm
- John's Study: Thursday, 10:30 am
- Youth After School Program: Thurs, 3-4:30 p.m.

Kroger Rewards

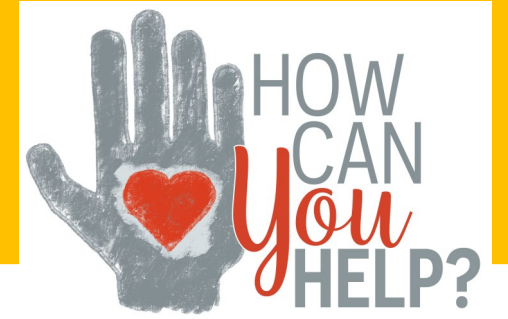
Oak Hills United Methodist Church is currently set up as a beneficiary on Kroger Community Rewards. This gives a small percentage of each purchase you make at Kroger back to the church. If you have not already done so, we would encourage you to connect your Kroger card to Oak Hills UMC online. Step 1: Get a Kroger Card. Step 2: Create a digital account at www.kroger.com/communityrewards and link your Kroger card. Step 3: Go to www.kroger.com/communityrewards and click where it says search for your organization here. Step 4: Search for Oak Hills United Methodist Church. When the church comes up, select it and click save. From now on, when you use your Kroger card a small percent of what you spent is given back to the church.



Online Giving

Did you know you can now give on our church website? Simply go to www.oakhillsumc.org and click give in the bar at the top of the page or scan the QR code and go directly to our online giving portal.

OHUMC Family Ministries



SERVANTS NEEDED!

Our children's and family ministry is looking for new servant volunteers to lead J.A.M. once a month on Sunday morning and to fill in as a substitute leader when the regularly scheduled teachers are out. Kathy will provide a lesson and training. A background check is required. Please see Kathy Cramerding or Pastor Justin if you are interested and able to help in any way.



couldn't have done it with you. Pictures will be forthcoming soon. They were not yet available at the time of publication.

A HUGE THANKS!

Oak Hills would like to extend a special thanks to everyone who came out to help with Trunk or Treat this past weekend. The event was a huge success! Whether you passed out candy from your car, helped with grilling meats, helped with a craft or a game, or helped to set up or tear down in any way. THANK YOU! We

Looking Ahead:

- Nov 10: Scallywag 3-4:30pm Putt Putt/Mini Golf
- Dec 12: Christmas Party & Service Project
- Jan 26: 3pm-4:30pm Bowling with youth group
- Feb 23: Volunteering at Meals on Wheels 12-2pm
- Mar 23: TBD (Activity chosen by youth)
- Apr 10: End of School Year Party

