



**Oak Hills United Methodist Church**  
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**February 2025 The Oak Notes**

**Pastor Article**

Take a moment and think back to the first time you met your spouse. Think about all the things you did to impress them and show them how much you cared. The flowers. The gifts. The notes. The long calls. The special texts. A lot of times, when relationships start, we do things we don't normally do. But as time passes, the things we did at first begin to fade. The relationship becomes familiar, comfortable, and common and we start to take the other person for granted and stop doing the things we did before.

My concern is we do the same with Jesus. For those of us who've been in the church for a while, hearing the same stories, even Jesus can become common and familiar. I think back to those early years of my Christian life. I was in college at the time, and I was growing in leaps and bounds. Everything about my faith was exciting. Worship was awe-inspiring and I soaked it in like a sponge. I was consciously taking steps to grow in my faith and my love for God. And then I look at my life today. I may be a pastor, but it doesn't often have the same ability to inspire me anymore. I've had all this training. I've been around it so long, that it has become common and familiar and the things that left me in awe before have faded.

What do you think of when you hear the word Jesus? Is there any sense of awe that comes when you hear his name or is it just another word in the sand? Think about it, when was the last time you truly encountered him in a real and personal way and you knew without a doubt that he had spoken to you.

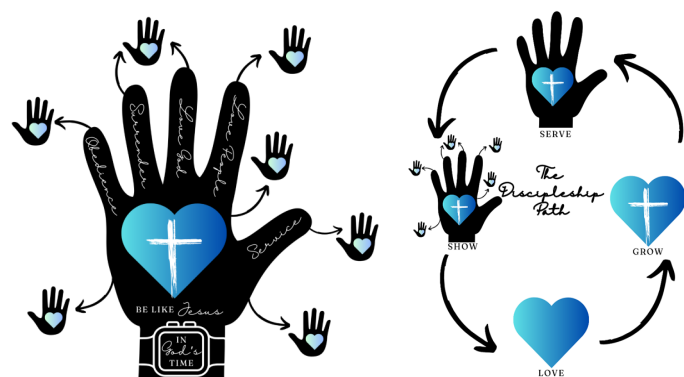
Over the next four weeks, as love is in the air, we are going to center in on loving God through worship. Jesus says that we are to love the Lord our God with all of our heart, soul, mind, and strength. I wonder: what would it look like to worship him with each and every part of us, not just with some of us. With all of our heart. With all of our soul. With all of our mind and all of our strength. With our ENTIRE BEING

Join us each week in February as we explore what it really looks like to worship God with our entire self—with our will (heart), with our bodies (strength), with our emotions (soul), and our intellect (mind).

My hope and my prayer is that this series will set you free to worship and encounter God in new ways!

God bless,

*Pastor Justin*



**Ways of the Alongsider: Sundays February 9-April 13, After church**

You might think that someone who makes disciples has to be a teacher, a missionary, or someone who is seminary trained. Would it surprise you to know that disciple making is just a lifestyle in which you offer people love, comfort, and encouragement where they live, work, and play? Despite our fears and weaknesses, Jesus invites us to participate in the Great Commission by helping people live for Jesus in the here and now. All you have to do is intentionally love God and journey alongside others life to life.

Beginning Sunday, February 9, Pastor Justin will be leading a 10 week study after church called "The Ways of an Alongsider" that spells out the how of making disciples through an alongsider approach to life. Discover and apply the practices of an alongsider, such as reading the Bible with others, asking questions, telling stories, encouraging application, and living on mission for Jesus. This course is designed as a follow-up to our January "The Path of a Disciple" series and will explore how we can work toward not only being, but also making disciples of Jesus Christ in our day to day lives. If you would like to attend, notify Pastor ASAP. If you already signed up, get your book today! Bring a dish to share!



**Administrative Board Topics of Interest –**

1) The trustees are beginning to take bids and formalize a plan and timeline for the renovation of the "prayer room" off the narthex into a café. We have received a \$8,000 grant from the West Ohio Conference for this project. Our hope is to have it completed in time for Easter on April 20, 2025.

2) Beginning in February, we will be launching Dinner and Devotion each month. Our dinners will be held on the second and last Wednesdays of the month moving forward. We will be adding a brief worship and devotional component at the beginning of the dinner each month.

3) Beginning in January, Team 1 (Radical Hospitality) will be launching a Welcome Wagon ministry. We will be identifying new movers in our area and physically go and welcome a few (around 8) each month. We are starting small with this ministry so as not to overwhelm ourselves. If you would be interested in visiting 1-2 people each month to greet them and welcome them to the neighborhood, see Bob Schloss.

4) We finished 2024 with a net income of \$99,165. However, this included proceeds from the sale of the old Penn property (back playground lot). Without those funds, we finished about \$25,000 in the red. Our income was about \$18,000 less than expected and our expenses about \$7,000 more than expected.

5) The board voted to invest \$175,000 from our capital proceeds in a CD where it can earn interest. This still leaves around \$85,000 in liquid funds for the trustees to use for any capital improvement projects.

6) We brainstormed a few wish list projects we would like to see happen in the church and sent them to the trustees for discussion, including replacing the carpet in the sanctuary, narthex and stairs, and painting the hallway. These projects would be funded from the capital proceeds not the budget.

7) We are waiting for new registers for the fellowship hall to come in before finishing the cove base.

8) Each member of the board made a commitment to express gratitude and appreciation to at least one person for their service to the church each week. Thanks for all you do to make an impact for Jesus

**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 Kroger.com 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.

**Vanco**

Did you know that you can give to the church through your phone? Simply download the free Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app on your phone, search for Oak Hills United Methodist Church, and then set up an account. Once it's set up you will be able to give either a one time or reoccurring gift. You can also contact Linda Wise (513-205-8104; lpwise@fuse.net) to set up an automatic payment to the church.

**Online Giving**

Do 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 below and go directly to our online giving portal.



# February

## Announcements

- 2/3 - Trustees, 6:30 pm
- 2/5 - UMW Luncheon, 12 pm
- 2/5 - Grief Relief, 7 pm
- 2/8 - Winter Carnival, 1-3 pm
- 2/9 - Ways of the Alongsider Begins, after church
- 2/9 - Teen Bowling 1-3 pm Stumps Lanes
- 2/9 - Valentine Care Packages Assembly
- 2/9 - Family Board Game Night, 6-9 pm
- 2/10 - Finance 6:30 pm; Board Meeting 7 pm
- 2/12 - Dinner and Devotions, 6 pm
- 2/14 - Happy Valentines Day!
- 2/16 - Fundraising 12:00 pm
- 2/19 - Grief Relief, 7 pm
- 2/21 - Young at Heart, 7pm
- 2/22 - Men's Breakfast Bob Evans 9:15 am (Glenway)
- 2/22 - Great Miami River District Clergy and Laity Gathering
- 2/23 - Youth Meals on Wheels Service Project, 12-2 pm
- 2/26 - Community Dinner, 6 pm
- 2/28 - Arts and Crafts, 7 pm
- 3/5 - Ash Wednesday Worship, 7 pm

## Weekly Bible Studies

- Sunday School 9 am
- Women's Group: Mon 10 am
- John's Study: Tuesday, 6 pm
- Pastor's Study (Study on the Minor Prophets): Wed 2 pm
- John's Study: Thursday, 10:30 am

## Prayer Partners - Lent

We will once again be establishing prayer partners for the season of Lent. Beginning today, there will be registration slips in your church bulletin to sign up to be paired up with a prayer partner for the season of Lent (March 5-April 19). We are asking that you pray for your prayer partner each day and check in with them at least one time a week to get updates and ask if there are other ways you can pray. The faith forming relations team will pair people up for prayer after worship on Sunday, March 2. If you would like to have a prayer partner please fill out the enclosed form and return it by Sunday, March 2. You will receive the name of your prayer partner by Ash Wednesday, March 5<sup>th</sup>. We are praying for 50 sets of prayer partners, please help us make our goal.



- Worship - Sunday, 10:30 am
- Sissy's Pantry - Wed 6:30-8:00 pm
- Zoom Prayer - Thursday, 11 am
- Youth After School Program: Thurs, 3-4:30 p.m.

# OHUMC Family Ministries



## Family Ministries

### Winter Carnival - February 8

Our annual Winter Carnival will be on Saturday, February 8 from 1-3 pm. There will be games, popcorn, and crafts for kids of all ages. Each child will receive a free book. We are in need of donations of new or gently used children's books. Volunteers are needed to help set up on Friday, February 7 at 2 pm and to help run games on Saturday. Please see Kathy Cramerding if you have any questions or wish to serve.

### Valentine's Care Packages for College Students

If you are a college student or a parent of a college student, please submit your or your child's name and address to Kathy Cramerding by Sunday, February 9. We will be assembling care packages for our college students that day after church. Anyone who would like to help is welcome. Donations of candy, cookies, snack items, Valentine socks, and other Valentine related accessories would be appreciated. Place these donations in the church office or give them to Kathy Cramerding. Direct all questions as well to Kathy Cramerding.



### Easter Party and Egg Hunt - April 13

Our annual Easter Party and Egg Hunt will be on Saturday, April 12, from 1-3 pm. The event will include the sharing of the Easter story, a craft, a silent auction for adults, and an egg hunt for kids. We are in need of donations of plastic eggs and candy. Please have all candy to the church by no later than **April 6**.



In January, Youth Group learned about "Resolution and Revolution", the difference between the two words and how to conduct ourselves as followers of Jesus. In the month of February we will start the series: "Truway Teens" which will guide us in understanding how the Bible is our handbook for life.

Change of date for Bowling: Stumps Lanes Sunday, February 9th 1-3pm

### Looking Ahead:

- Feb. 9: Bowling at Stumps Lanes 1-3 pm
- Feb 23: Volunteering at Meals on Wheels 12-2pm
- Mar 23: TBD (Activity chosen by youth)
- Apr 10: End of School Year Party

