



Oak Hills United Methodist Church
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April 2026 The Oak Notes

Pastor Article - Easter

After the Sabbath, at dawn on the first day of the week, Mary Magdalene and the other Mary went to look at the tomb. There was a violent earthquake, for an angel of the Lord came down from heaven and, going to the tomb, rolled back the stone and sat on it. His appearance was white like lightning, and his clothes were white as snow. The guards were so afraid of him that they shook and became like dead men. The angel said to the women, "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who was crucified. He is not here; he has risen, just as he said. Come and see the place where he lay. Then go quickly and tell his disciples: 'He has risen from the dead and is going ahead of you into Galilee'" (Matthew 28:1-10).

Take a moment with me and step into this story. Imagine that you are walking along with the women on the way to the tomb that Easter morning. Imagine the conversation. Imagine what they are feeling. We see what they are thinking through their actions. They set out to go to a tomb. They set out looking for a corpse. They set out to embalm a dead body. They come to the tomb in mourning, with grief and tears. They went there looking for the dead and they didn't think there was any possibility for anything else.

Yet, when they get there, the stone is rolled away and they hear the greatest news ever told: "Do not be afraid, for I know that you are looking for Jesus, who as crucified. He is not here; he is risen just as he said!" The angels' words pierce into the darkness and the pain of their world with a message of hope. The crucifixion may have said that it was over, but the resurrection says, there is still hope. Crucifixion and death do not ultimately have the final word; only the resurrection of Jesus has the final word.



I wonder: What are the dead places in your life? What are the places where it looks like there's no way to move forward? What are the places where your hope is dead and gone? What are the tombs that are staring you in the face? What is it that keeps you up at night and makes you feel like there's no hope?

The message of Easter is this: If it is dead, if it looks dead, appears dead, or seems dead, it doesn't have to stay that way. Jesus Christ has risen to bring new hope and new life into the dearest, driest, most hopeless places of human life. He is risen from the grave! And his resurrection is OUR resurrection. Stop clinging to the tomb. Embrace the good news of Easter. He is not here! He is risen! A new day has come.

Happy Easter!

Pastor Justin



Pastor Vacation

Pastor Justin will be on vacation from Monday, April 6 through Sunday, April 12. Amit Dutta will be preaching on Sunday, April 12. If you are in need of emergency pastoral assistance during this time, you may contact Rev. Scott Meeker of Zion Community Church at 513-617-5952. For all other questions, please contact Debbie McCane in the church office 513-574-1131 or Board Chair Sherilyn Reynolds at 513-266-3022. Otherwise, Pastor Justin will return your message when he returns on Monday, April 13.



Administrative Board Topics of Interest– March Board Updates

1) Income for the month of February came in at \$21,266. Expenses came in at \$20,897 for a net gain of \$270. Year to date income stands at \$32,563 and expenses at \$36,695 for a net loss of \$4,132. This is slightly better than we were through the first two months of 2025 when we had a net loss of \$4,963.

2) The church board made updates to our wedding policy, our finance policy, and our safe sanctuary policy. We are also working on preparing written bylaws to be adopted at the fall's charge conference and a new immigration preparedness and response policy, which should be available in a few months.

3) Our congregational care team is now off the ground. We have recruited several folks to make phone calls, send cards, and make in-person visits. Each week the church office is distributing a few names for people to contact via phone or card, if sick, if hospitalized, or if missing from worship for a few weeks. We also established two pairs to visit our shut-ins on a monthly basis. A big thank you to all helping!

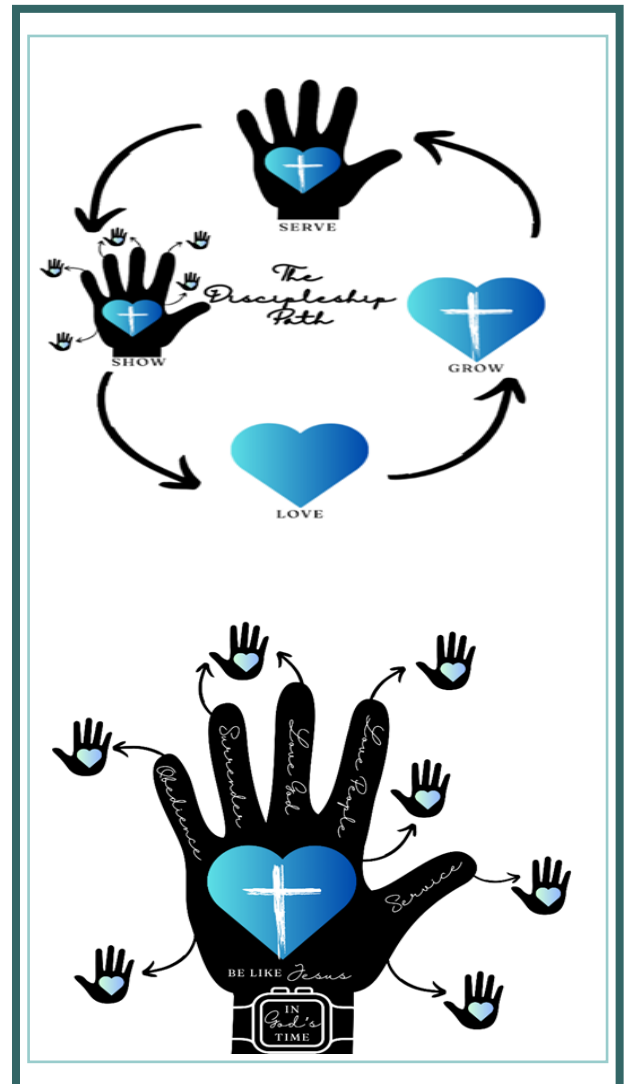
4) We are working toward showing appreciation for the schools during teacher appreciation week. We are currently in talks with Principal Mark Winters from Springmyer Elementary and the PTA to discern what might work best for them. More details will be forthcoming.

5) We continue to work toward the launch of our new Laundry Love ministry at the Washland Laundromat. During this time, we will be providing pre-paid gift cards for laundry needs at the laundromat as a way of blessing our community and building new relationships. If you can help, contact Mary Flannery.



6) On May 7, the National Day of Prayer, we will have a prayer vigil to pray for our community, our nation, and our world from 9 a.m.-5 p.m. There will be a sign-up sheet available to sign up for a 15 minute slot throughout the day to stop and pray. You may pray either in the church sanctuary or from the comfort of your own home. Whatever works best. Please sign up! God moves when his people pray.

7) The new pickleball court will be striped as soon as the weather is consistently 55 degrees outside. If you are interested in being a part of this ministry when it starts, please let us know what day works best.





Youth Group now has 20+ kids signed up; It's so exciting to see God move!

OHUMC would like to welcome our new YG members:



Thursday's YG learned how we are fearfully and wonderfully made in God's image. We drew pictures of living things and compared them, noting their similarities despite their differences. We also discussed a reading from *Genesis*, which reminded us that God made us all in his image; Even with our different hair colors, clothing styles, and hobbies, etc. God loves us all the same, and we should treat others with kindness and acceptance.

"So God created mankind in his own image; in the image of God he created them; male and female he created them." — Genesis 1:27



Sunday School has focused on the Lenten season, fasting, and almsgiving. We have shared all the ways that we've helped people around us and how we can better serve our community. We discussed that emptiness can be a good thing - emptiness is often a positive state because it allows God to fill a person with His presence, strength, and grace, transforming despair into opportunity. Being "empty" means removing self-centeredness and sin to become a useful vessel for God's purposes, rather than being full of one's own agenda. The emptier we are, the more we can receive.

"As long as the Lord has empty vessels, who are wholly yielded to Him, He pours out His Spirit, for He gives the Spirit without measure (John 3:34)." "But when the vessels have been filled, these pour out what they have because they cannot contain the presence of God inside of them. It overflows out of them like rivers of living water (John 7:38)."





Later in the month, we partnered with Team 5 to make blessing bags to hand-out to those in need in our community. Thank you, Sherilyn, for helping to organize this!

Upcoming Events

Saturday, May 2nd 9am-12pm:
BLOC Ministries volunteering.

Thursday, June 11th, 10am-1pm:
Cincinnati Zoo

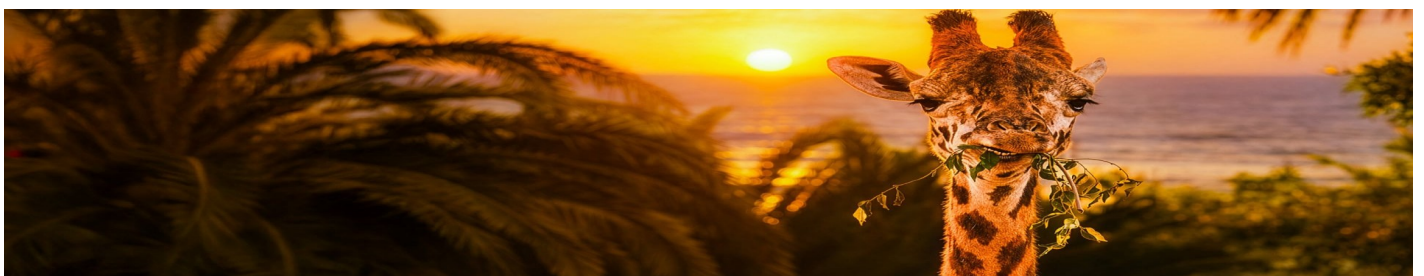
Wednesday June 17th, 12p-3p:
Freudemann Swim Club
Summer Swim Party for kids & teens.

Thursday, June 25th, 12pm:
Putt Putt at General Custards

Car Wash: Date TBD



God • fidence
KNOWING I CAN'T BUT He CAN





Announcements

- 4/1 – UMW Lunch, 12 pm
- 4/2 – Maundy Thursday Worship, 7 pm
- 4/3 – Good Friday Prayer Stations, 1-4 pm
- 4/5 – Easter Sunday Worship, 10:30 am
- 4/6 – Office Closed: Easter Holiday
- 4/6 - Trustees, 6 pm
- 4/6-4/12 – Pastor Justin Vacation
- 4/13 - Finance, 6:30 pm; Church Board, 7 pm
- 4/15 - Dinner and Devotions, 6 pm
- 4/17 – Young at Heart, 7 pm
- 4/19 – Church Potluck, 12 pm
- 4/19 – Disciple-making Practitioners, 1 pm
- 4/19 - Family Game Night 6-9 pm
- 4/28 – Great Miami River District Spring Celebration, 5-7 pm @ Church of the Savior (location changed)
- 4/29 – Community Dinner, 6 pm
- 4/30 - Flying Pig Fundraiser

Worship – Sunday, 10:30 am

Sissy’s Pantry – Wednesday, 6:30-8:00 pm

Zoom Prayer—Thursday, 11 am

Please submit your articles for publication in the bulletin to the office by Wednesday.

Please forward your submissions for the monthly newsletter to the office by the second Friday of each month.

Weekly Bible Studies

- Sunday School 9 am
- Women’s Group: Monday 10 am
- John’s Study: Tuesday, 6 pm
- Pastor’s Study (Paul’s Letters): Wednesday, 2 pm
- John’s Study: Thursday, 10:30 am
- Youth Group, Thursday, 3-4:30 pm

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.



OHUMC Family Ministries

