



Oak Hills United Methodist Church
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May 2026 The Oak Notes

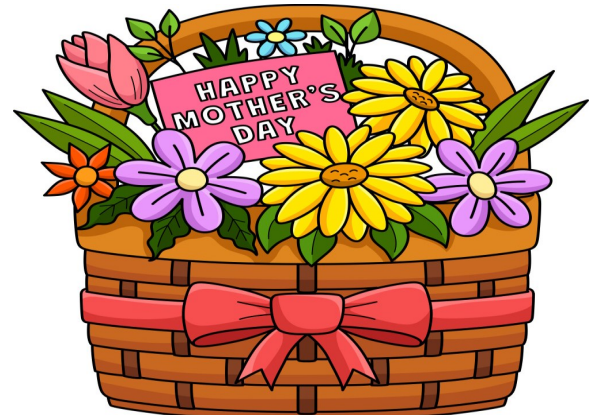
Pastor Article - Mother's Day

It was 1864. The height of the Civil War. A young soldier lay wounded in a crowded field hospital. Weak and fading, he whispered just one word, over and over and over again: "Mother." The nurse who cared for him wrote that, in his final moments, it was not thoughts of victory or defeat that filled his mind, but the memory of his mother's love. Even at the edge of death, it was his mother's comfort he wanted the most. When all else fades, the heart reaches for comfort, for that kind presence mom often embodies.

It's no surprise then, that the Bible uses that very image to describe the heart of God. Isaiah 66:13 says: "As a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you and you will be comforted over Jerusalem." These words come near the end of the book of Isaiah, a book that is filled with both judgment and hope. God's people had known rebellion, exile, discipline, and hardship. Yet here, at the end of Isaiah, God does not leave them with fear, but with comfort. Not any comfort, but the gentle, intimate comfort of a mother.

It's striking how often God chooses to describe his love and care for us with the image of a mother (cf. Matthew 23:37; Luke 13:34; Isaiah 49:15; Deuteronomy 32:11-12; Numbers 11:12). A mother's comfort is unique. It's instinctive. It's patient. It's deeply personal. It's the kind of comfort that sits beside you in silence and holds you when words fail, that remains steady and constant no matter the storms of life. A mom's love is never distant nor detached. It is always near, and the same is true with God's love for us.

On Mother's Day, we celebrate the countless women who have reflected that kind of godly love and comfort for us. We give thanks for mothers, for grandmothers, for spiritual mothers, and spiritual grandmothers who have nurtured us in the faith and shown us God's love and faithfulness toward us. But we also recognize that this day is not easy for everyone. For some it is a day of deep gratitude and joy. But for others, it is marked by pain and grief, the loss of a mother, the loss of a child, or a child that never came. Isaiah 66 speaks into all of



those places. He reminds us that even when it hurts, God is near. Even where human love has failed or left its mark, God love, care, and comfort remains constant. God's promise even in the most trying times is that "as a mother comforts her child, so will I comfort you."

So, this Mother's day, let us give thanks for the women who have reflected God's love for us. And let us remember the love and compassion of the God who loves us and comforts us even now in our pain.

Happy Mother's Day!

Pastor Justin





Administrative Board Topics of Interest– April Board Updates

1) The church board adopted an immigration preparedness and response policy. The full policy is available in the church office at your request. Here are a few of the most important highlights:

◦ All people, regardless of their immigration status, are welcome to participate in our worship services and ministries and will be treated with love and compassion.

◦ OHUMC will not ask about or track the immigration status of anyone.

◦ The church will comply with all valid, lawful orders and judicial warrants while not volunteering any information beyond what is legally required.

◦ We will not obstruct, lie to, or threaten any law enforcement officer in any way. We will not text, call, or warn individuals to hide or flee, as this could be considered unlawful harboring.

◦ If asked to provide information on the immigration status of any individual we will simply say we do not track the immigration status of any person in our congregation. Then, if pressed further, we will exercise our right to remain silent by saying so out loud. We will answer no other questions and sign no documents before consulting with legal counsel.

◦ The church has designated the following spaces as private spaces: all offices, storage rooms, and mechanical rooms. ICE may only enter these spaces with a valid judicial warrant. Absent a valid judicial warrant, the church will not voluntarily consent to entry into any private spaces.

◦ All other spaces are public spaces and by law do not require a valid judicial warrant to enter.

◦ Signs will be placed on all private spaces to clearly define them.

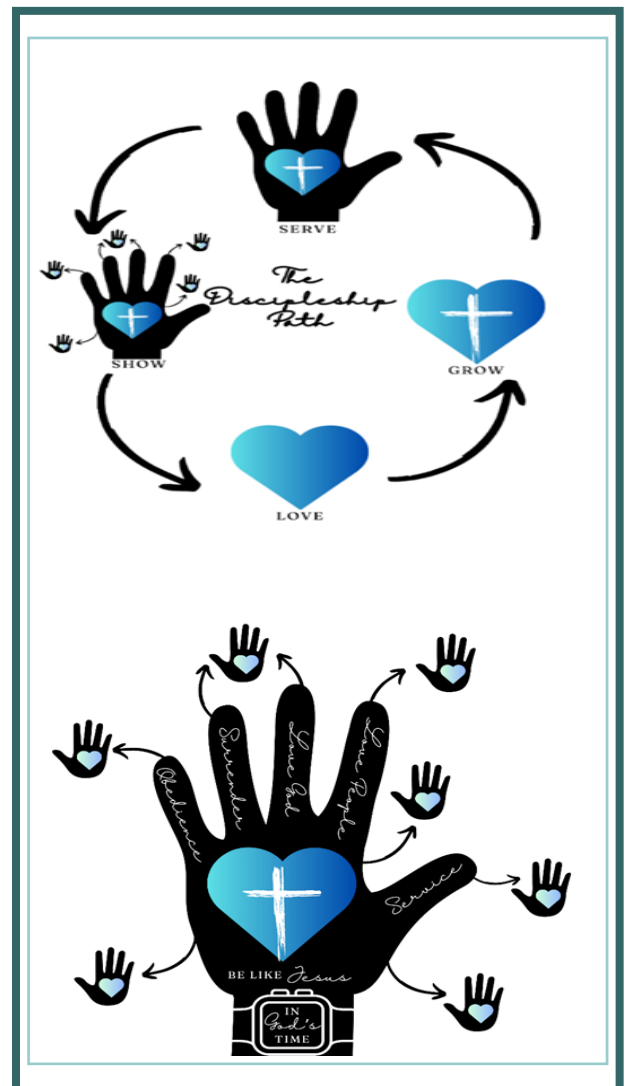
◦ Should ICE arrive on church property, only a trained and designated point-person shall engage with ICE officers. The following people will be trained as designated point persons every two years: the pastor, the office administrator, the ushers, and the leaders of Sissy's pantry. No other person should engage with ICE at all. If a designated point person is not in the building either ask them to return during normal business hours or do not answer the doors.

◦ No person, other than the pastor, should make public statements of any kind to the media to avoid miscommunication or diverse messaging.

◦ If it is safe to do so, available bystanders may openly document the interaction via cell phone.

◦ As soon as possible after a raid, all witnesses shall fill out a church incident report form detailing as much information as possible. The board will meet to discuss how we shall respond.

◦ We will provide immediate spiritual and emotional support to anyone affected by a raid.





2) Income for the month of March came in at \$24,377 and expenses at \$25,218, resulting in a net loss of \$841. Expenses included two major maintenance projects, a sewer line repair (\$4,760) and a boiler pipe repair (\$3,583). Year to date income stands at \$56,940 and expenses at \$60,813, for a loss of \$3,873.

3) The board has committed to taking time before their meetings to pray over the various ministries and spaces of the church beginning in their May meeting.

4) Work on the Pickleball Court should begin shortly with expected completion in mid-May. There will be a pickleball demonstration after church shortly after its completion. We are currently exploring all legal and insurance questions and trying to discern what date and time each month this ministry will meet. If you would like to be involved, please message Pastor Justin your general availability each month.

5) The Risk Taking Missions Team is working to offer box lunches to teachers at Springmyer Elementary during Teaching Appreciation Week (May 4-8). Please contact Mary Flannery if you can help.

6) Due to Mary Flannery's health our Laundry Love launch was put on hold. We will pick it up at a later date.

7) Fundraising is selling gift cards to White Oak Nursery for Mother's Day. Just a reminder: After the first two weeks of being in the bulletin, all order forms will be placed on the stand in the lobby to save paper.

8) Trustees have put together a "Work Request Form" that is in form central in the church office. If you see a maintenance need in the church, please fill out the form in detail and place it in the trustee box.

Welcome to Our New District Office Administrator!

The Great Miami River District has announced that Jaime Parks will be the new office administrator at the district office following Nancy Newton's retirement at the end of June. She begins full time July 1.



Calling All Graduates! – Do you have a student graduating high school or college? If so, please let us know! Send Pastor Justin information including name of the graduate, picture, institution, degree, and any future plans so that we can celebrate with them in worship and in our upcoming June newsletter.





Announcements

Announcements

5/2 – Youth Service Project: Bloc Ministries, 9am-12 pm

5/3 – SPPRC, 12 pm

5/4 - Trustees, 6 pm

5/6 – UMW Lunch, 12 pm

5/7 – National Day of Prayer, Prayer Vigil 9 am-5 pm

5/7 – West Ohio Conference Clergy Session (Lakeside, Ohio)

5/9 – Sports Card Show and Bake Sale, 9 am-3pm

5/10 – Happy Mother’s Day!

5/11 - Finance, 6:30 pm; Church Board, 7 pm

5/13 - Dinner and Devotions, 6 pm

5/15 – Young at Heart, 7 pm

5/17 – Back to School Bash Planning, 12 pm

5/17 – Disciplemaking Practitioners, 12:30 pm

5/17 – Family Game Night, 6-9 pm

5/25 – Office Closed: Memorial Day

5/27 – Community Dinner, 6 pm

5/27-30 – West Ohio Annual Conference (Capital University, Columbus, Ohio)

5/31 – Disciplemaking Practitioners, 12 pm

6/1-7 – Pastor Vacation

Worship – Sunday, 10:30 am

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

Zoom Prayer – Thursday, 11 am

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



BACK TO SCHOOL BASH PLANNING MEETING

SUNDAY MAY 17TH, 2026

Held right after church in the adult Sunday School room. Every team is requested to have at least one team member attend. This is going to be a very short meeting to set the date and to get teams to start planning what games and school supplies they want.



VBS Planning

“Journey to Blessing Bakery”

June 22-26, 2026

6:30-8 pm

Registration at 6 pm and online registration will be available.



- Day 1 The Widow's Offering
- Day 2 Parable of the Good Samaritan
- Day 3 The Feeding of the 5,000
- Day 4 The Prodigal Son
- Day 5 Trust God

Current Needs:

- Several Appliance-sized boxes
- A Craft Leader (baking)
- Helpers to escort students to activities

Decorating for VBS will be held Saturday, June 20 at 9 am.



Family MINISTRIES

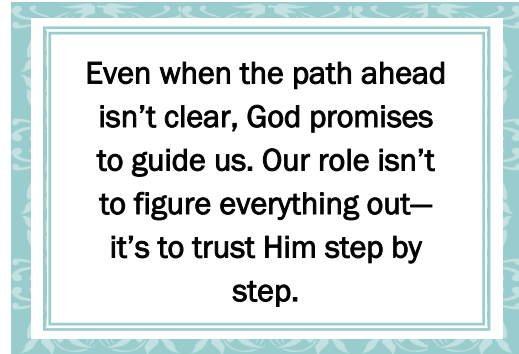
Easter Party and Egg Hunt Recap in Pictures





Sunday School Focus: Trusting God (Even When We Don't Understand)

This month, we're diving into what it really means to trust God—especially during moments when life feels confusing or uncertain. It's easy to trust when things are going well, but what about when they're not?



Proverbs 3:5-6

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding; in all your ways submit to Him, and He will make your paths straight."

Sometimes, life just doesn't make sense—and that's something we all experience.

Teens today face challenges like:

- Friendship struggles
- School pressure and stress
- Family difficulties
- Feeling left out or overlooked

In these moments, it's natural to want answers right away. But our understanding is limited—we can only see a small part of the picture. God, however, sees everything.

What Does It Mean to Trust God?

Trusting God means:

- Believing He knows what He is doing, even when we don't
- Choosing to follow Him, even when life feels uncertain
- Letting go of the need to have all the answers

**WHAT GOD
HAS FOR YOU,
IS FOR YOU.
TRUST HIS
TIMING.
TRUST HIS
PLAN.**





Ministry Highlight

Youth Group is excited to share that Ali recently had the opportunity to speak at the FCA meeting at Oak Hills High School. We're grateful for the way God is opening doors to reach young people in our community.



Upcoming Events:

Saturday, May 2nd 9 am-11 am: BLOC Ministries volunteering.

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

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

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

Thursday, July 9th: 12pm-2 pm Bowling at Western Bowl

Wednesday, July 29th: 12 pm-2 pm (kid chosen event)

