

OAKWOOD
OAKLEAF



DECEMBER
2025



Now that we are in the Advent Season, there is so much going on at Oakwood.

Music Sunday, on December 7 at 9:30 am will feature the Kid's Christmas Program with their Bake Sale before and after worship. Be sure and take a look at all the goodies. Yum! The picture of the kids practicing is on this page.

On December 21, at 2:30 pm is our Blue Christmas Service. The focus of this service is to reflect on the grief we may have experienced during the year, but more importantly the hope we have in Christ.

This year we will have three Christmas Eve Services at 4:00, 7:00 and 11:00 pm with Communion and Candlelight at each one. Be sure and join us for this special night.

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Consecration Sunday
Bible Year in 2026



CONNECT

GROW

SERVE



CONNECT - GROW - SERVE
*I will bless you....so that you will
be a blessing. Genesis 12:2*

400 NE 56th Street
Pleasant Hill, Iowa 50327
515-262-6007 Office

WEB SITE:
www.oakwoodlife.org

**SEND PRAYER
REQUESTS TO**
prayers@oakwoodlife.org

Senior Pastor, Alexis Johnson
515-262-6007
Alexis.johnson@oakwoodlife.org

**Small Group Ministry &
Congregational Care**
Julie Feldman
Julie.feldman@oakwoodlife.org

**Connections &
Welcome**
Angie Acker
Angie.acker@oakwoodlife.org

Music Ministries
Brian Acker
Brian.acker@oakwoodlife.org

Children's Ministry
Ruby Ruby
Jessica.Ruby@oakwoodlife.org
Tania Bentley, 515-360-9817
Tania.bentley@oakwoodlife.org

Administration
Nancy Berggren
Nancy.berggren@oakwoodlife.org

Youth
Nathan Fischer
Nathan.fischer@oakwoodlife.org

SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP **9:30 am**

On line and in person

Join on-line

**by going to our website at
www.oakwoodlife.org
and clicking the live stream bar.**

Child care is available.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY

This Bible Study meets every Saturday at
8:00 am. All men are welcome. If you would
like to join, please contact Mike Feldman.

Classics

*Classics meets the 2nd Thursday of each
month. The next gathering is
December 11, 2025.
This potluck start at noon.
Come for great food and fellowship.*



An Oakwood Manger Miracle



Oakwood's Music Sunday is December 7 at 9:30 am. As part of that service, the children will be presenting:

An Oakwood Manger Miracle.

The kids are busy practicing now, so be sure and come and enjoy their work.



BAKE SALE

On December 7, before and after our worship service, we will have our annual bake sale. Be sure and stop by and get your yummy treats. All proceeds go to help fund the Oakwood's children's program. A special thanks to all who are contributing baked goods.

ALL OF THE EARTH IS WAITING



* CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICES
COMMUNION AND CANDLELIGHT
DECEMBER 24
4:00, 7:00 AND 11:00 PM

OAKWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
400 NE 56TH STREET
PLEASANT HILL
515-262-6007

Angel Tree

2025 Angel Tree

Each year Oakwood provides gifts to families who need some extra help during the Christmas season. This year, Oakwood is sponsoring families from the Southeast Polk area.

How you can participate?

If you have not already, you may select gifts tags from the Christmas trees at Oakwood. Purchase and wrap the gift for the individual, and write the name, family number and what the gift is on the outside of the package. ***The deadline for bringing the gifts to church is December 14.***



If you don't want to shop this year, we will take checks and do the shopping. If you want to do this, please contact the church office.

Thank you for your support.
Blessings, The Mission Team

Merry
CHRISTMAS

Hospitality Committee

Thank you to all who have hosted fellowship or greeted at doors in November. You are helping to spread the love of Jesus. In addition, we are grateful to the Hospitality Team volunteers in making our Pastor Appreciation Sunday such a success as well as to all who helped with the Hanging of the Greens soup luncheon in any way. We Methodists sure know how to make soup!

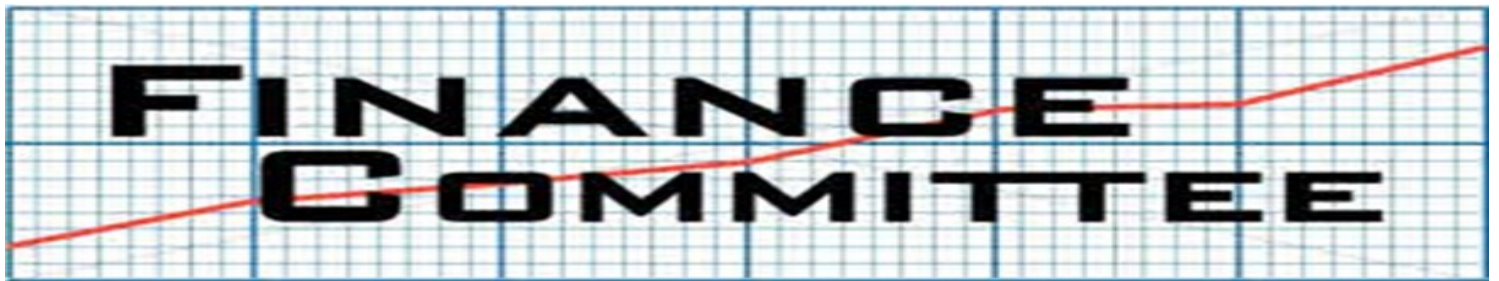
Oakwood is so fortunate to have Dari Storms as a part of the Hospitality Team. On one day's notice, Dari redecorated the church's outside wreath which desperately needed an update. Thank you also to Sharon Kirkpatrick for providing the supplies. The wreath is beautiful.

Ordering name badges will continue until December 14th. Be sure to see Angie Acker at the front doors to place your order. The cost is \$10 each and you need to choose whether you want a magnetic back or a pin back. The \$10 will be collected when the badges have arrived. An email will go out from the office letting you know they have arrived after we meet the minimum order.

There are still a few Sunday Fellowship December dates needing a host(s). The monthly sign up for Fellowship host(s) is located on the Café Court counter. You can also sign up for Fellowship Host or Greeter on CCB which is emailed out each week. If the Sunday Fellowship date remains unfilled, there will be coffee available. If you would like to donate either baked or prepackaged treats for fellowship, please let Angie Acker or Pam Schwartz know. Both of the above are acts of kindness and volunteerism which express to others how we at Oakwood show our Christian love for each other and that "All Are Welcome".

The Hospitality Team remains active. The Team members are each assigned with a date and they serve as the Narthex Monitor. This volunteer position assists those who come after the church service begins. We also assist the Worship Team with different tasks that require a few more hands.

The Hospitality Team is always in need of additional team members. Many hands make light work. Any questions about any of the above volunteer opportunities, be sure to ask Angie Acker (515-720-6918)/acker1234@msn.com or Pam Schwartz (641-425-9919)/pamschwartz72@yahoo.com



Consecration Sunday

Thank you to all who came to our Consecration Sunday Worship Service and Brunch. Our worship service was a great reflection of our commitment to God! And brunch was filled with wonderful fellowship and food too!

We are so grateful that many of our new members and regular attendees participated for the first time and completed an estimate of giving card. And many of our regular attendees stepped-up and increased their giving. Please know that all your gifts will go to our growing in Christ. God is good.

On a housekeeping note, if you did change your giving for 2026 and you give through Vanco or ACH, please remember that you have to change your amount either through the Vanco app, or if you donate by ACH, at your bank.

From the Finance Committee

Thank you to the entire congregation for your financial support of Oakwood this year. Your weekly offerings plus your donations for our special events and offerings are a blessing.



Happy Birthday

Happy Anniversary

December Birthdays	December Anniversaries
1– Jordan Benge	7-Jim and Rhonda Reed
5-Christina Paterson	11-Eric and Stacie Newton
6-Kenneth Groen	15– Brian and Angie Acker
7-Ryan Wehrman, Brent Davis	20– Kathy and Joe Luce
11– Kris Baumgart	27-Rick and Cindy Slinger
12– Marshall Acker	30-Chris and Julie Vitek
13-Joyce Delk,	
17-Nancy Pinkerton, Larry Zimmer	
21– Cheryl Timmins	
24-, Kay Bullard,	
30– Helen Miles	

Happy
Birthday
Jesus!

Oakwood Kids

Thank you Oakwood Family for your continued support and excitement for our Children's Ministry Program. Wednesday evenings continue to grow and we'd love to add a few more volunteers to help on a weekly basis. If you feel the Holy Spirit nudging you, please let Tania or Ruby know and we'll get you plugged in for Wednesday evenings.

We hope our Oakwood Family looks forward to the Children's Christmas Program Sunday December 7th! The kids have been working so hard and they're excited to perform for everyone.

Please remember we will also have our Annual Children's Bake Sale December 7th after Sunday Worship Service. It is a free will offering to help fund our Children's Ministry Program. We thank you in advance for your financial contributions and baked goods!

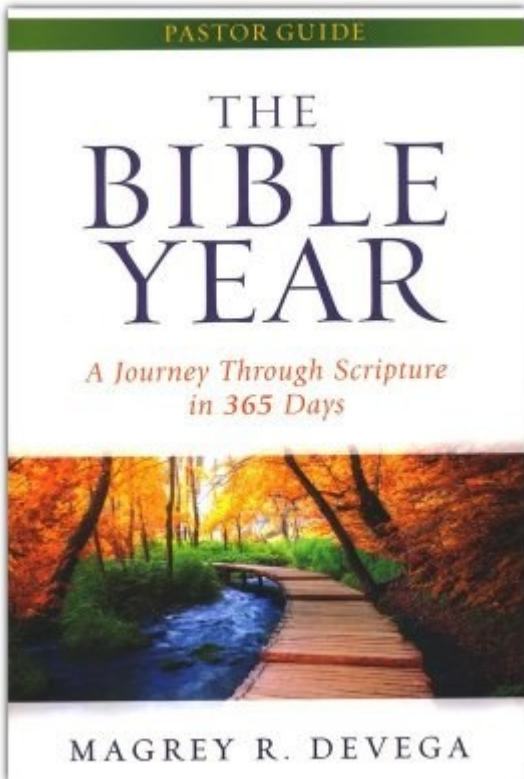
We have also included a photo of many of our Oakwood Kids in front of the food donations that were purchased from monies raised during Easter and VBS. Way to go Oakwood Kids! You are blessing many families in Pleasant Hill. Our Oakwood Family is VERY proud of you!



Bible Year

Beloved,

A few weeks ago I was reading the Bible and I realized that we never talk about MOST of the text in worship. I also realized that I sometimes have a hard time staying on task with a Bible reading plan unless someone is holding me accountable. So let's work on those two things together!



I invite you to join me in reading the whole Bible, Genesis to Revelation in 2026. We'll actually start Dec 31st! What a great New Year's Resolution that will shape our whole year as we fall more in love with God's sacred text.

Most of our sermons on Sunday will be based on texts we're all reading together. The whole plan will be available at the Welcome Center. We'll also email out the plan for the month in the Newsletter and weekly reminders for each week's plan on Sunday evening.

If you are interested in a small group discussion of the material, there will be in person groups on Sunday morning after worship and Tuesday evening 5:15 – 6:15 pm in the Prayer Room. Or you can join our Zoom group on Mondays 7:00-8:00 pm.

If you would like to host a small group based on this study, we can help you access the leader guide and teaching videos via Amplify Media.

Blessings, Rev. Alexis



January Reading Plan

1	31-Dec	Genesis 1:1 - 3:24
2	1-Jan	Genesis 4:1 - 5:32
3	2-Jan	Genesis 6:1 - 9:17
4	3-Jan	Genesis 9:18 - 11:32
5	4-Jan	Genesis 12:1 - 14:24
6	5-Jan	Genesis 15:1 - 17:27
7	6-Jan	Genesis 18:1 - 20:18
8	7-Jan	Genesis 21:1 - 23:20
9	8-Jan	Genesis 24:1 - 25:18
10	9-Jan	Genesis 25:19 - 28:9
11	10-Jan	Genesis 28:10 - 30:43
12	11-Jan	Genesis 31:1 - 36:43
13	12-Jan	Genesis 37:1 - 41:57
14	13-Jan	Genesis 42:1 - 45:28
15	14-Jan	Genesis 46:1 - 50:26
16	15-Jan	Exodus 1:1 - 4:31
17	16-Jan	Exodus 5:1 - 7:13
18	17-Jan	Exodus 7:14 - 12:30

19	18-Jan	Exodus 12:31 - 15:21
20	19-Jan	Exodus 15:22 - 18:27
21	20-Jan	Exodus 19:1 - 21:36
22	21-Jan	Exodus 22:1 - 24:18
23	22-Jan	Exodus 25:1 - 27:21
24	23-Jan	Exodus 28:1 - 30:38
25	24-Jan	Exodus 31:1 - 34:35
26	25-Jan	Exodus 35:1 - 40:38
27	26-Jan	Leviticus 1:1 - 4:35
28	27-Jan	Leviticus 5:1 - 7:38
29	28-Jan	Leviticus 8:1 - 10:20
30	29-Jan	Leviticus 11:1 - 14:37
31	30-Jan	Leviticus 15:1 - 18:30
32	31-Jan	Leviticus 19:1 - 23:44



SANDI STONE

THE POWER OF SHOWING UP

In the hustle and bustle of everyday life, we often underestimate the power of simply being present. Yet, for Sandi Stone, this simple act has become her guiding principle. “I didn’t do anything. I just showed up,” she humbly remarked a month ago, capturing the essence of what it means to be a truly impactful volunteer.

Sandi’s journey with the food pantry began with a simple commitment to be present. Every Wednesday, she dedicates her time to unload deliveries from Caring Hands, a task that might seem mundane to some, but is vital for the smooth operation of the pantry. In a world where multitasking is often glorified, Sandi’s dedication to being there, consistently, is a reminder of the power of presence.

Her involvement doesn’t stop at the food pantry. Sandi is actively engaged in numerous church ministries, including hospitality, the congregational team, and the angel tree project. Each role she takes on is anchored by her initial philosophy: just show up.

While Sandi might downplay her contributions, those around her see the magic she creates by just being there. She has a unique ability to hear a need—whether it’s a passing comment or an urgent requirement—and respond to it, often making things appear in the pantry as if by magic. Her actions remind us that sometimes, the most profound impact comes not from grand gestures, but from small, consistent acts of kindness.

After the Covid-19 pandemic, Sandi, like many others, found herself feeling disconnected from her community. Her involvement in various church activities became a way to rebuild those connections, not just with people, but with her faith and purpose. It’s a testament to the healing power of community service and the profound connections it fosters.

Outside of her volunteer work, Sandi is a devoted mother to her daughter, Dani, and an avid hobbyist. Whether she’s cross-stitching, reading, or collecting fabrics for quilting, she finds joy in the quiet moments of life. An interesting tidbit about Sandi is her summer stint as a nanny for Marlon Perkins’ grandchildren, a unique chapter in her life!

Sandi’s story is a poignant reminder of the impact of showing up. In a world where the emphasis is often on doing more, Sandi exemplifies the value of being present. Her journey teaches us that sometimes, the most important thing we can do is to simply be there, ready to listen, observe, and act. Sandi’s quiet dedication inspires us to consider how we can show up in our own lives and the lives of others.

In every corner of the church, Sandi’s presence is felt, a testament to the influence one person can have by just being present. Let her story encourage all of us to embrace the power of showing up and see where it might lead us.

Blessings,
Cassie Lahmann

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE

DECEMBER 21 2:30 PM

A TIME FOR EXPRESSIONS OF GRIEF, PAIN, AND
HEARTBREAK YOU HAVE EXPERIENCED

AND AN OPPORTUNITY TO FOCUS ON
THE PROMISE OF HOPE FOUND IN CHRIST.

Oakwood United Methodist Church
400 NE 56 th Street
Pleasant Hill
515-262-6007

ALL ARE WELCOME

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICES ARE OFTEN HELD ON
OR NEAR THE WINTER SOLTICE..., THE DARKEST
AND LONGEST NIGHT OF THE YEAR.

THIS REFLECTS THE LONG STRUGGLE SOME
EXPERIENCE



***Free Food
Pantry***
Open
WEDNESDAYS
5:30 -7:00 pm



***Oakwood United
Methodist Church
400 NE 56th Street
Pleasant Hill
515-262-6007***

Please park in our west
parking lot at the back
of the church.

Thanks to Caring Hands in
Altoona for their support.



**The food pantry will be open on both December 24 and
December 31 from 5:30-7:00 pm.**

