

Christmas at Oakwood

December 4 @6:30 pm

Music with Sarah Hager

Come sing your favorite carols

December 11 @6:30 pm

Blue Christmas

Space for the grief and frustration that sometimes
comes at Christmas

December 15 @ 9:30 am

Children's Christmas Program

Bake Sale and Fellowship to follow

December 18 @6:30 pm

Travelers Christmas Eve

This is the same service as Christmas Eve

December 24 @ 2:00 and 7:00 pm

Christmas Eve Services

Communion and Candlelight



O•A•K•W•O•O•D
United Methodist Church

CONNECT - DISCIPLE - SERVE

*I will bless you....so that you will
be a blessing. Genesis 12:2*

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WEB SITE:

www.oakwoodlife.org

**SEND PRAYER
REQUESTS TO**

prayers@oakwoodlife.org

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SUNDAY MORNING WORSHIP

9:30 am

On line and in person

WEDNESDAY Night Bible Study with Rev. Alexis

In-person at 6:30 pm

**Join on-line for our Sunday 9:30 and Wednesday 6:30 services by
going to our website at www@oakwoodlife.org
and clicking the live stream bar.**

Oakwood Kids December Schedule

We've been practicing hard for the Christmas Program and the kids are doing a great job. Can't wait for you to see the program on Sunday, December 15th! Here are the dates for remaining practices and when we will not have classes.

Wednesday December 4th – class and practice (6:30pm to 7:30pm)

Sunday December 8th – class and practice (10:30-11:30)

Wednesday December 11th – kids will go caroling at Copper Creek Nursing Home (**leave the church by 6:20pm**)

Saturday December 14th – Dress Rehearsal at 9:30am until 11:00am

Sunday December 15th – 9:30am Christmas program and fellowship to follow (**no classes**)

Wednesday December 18th – **no classes**, we are inviting children and their family members to attend our "Traveler's Christmas Eve Service". It'll start at 6:30pm and go till about 7:15pm. Hear the good news, take communion, sing Silent Night by candlelight and prepare to welcome the Christ Child.

Sunday December 22nd – **No programming**

Tuesday December 24th – 2pm and 7pm Christmas Eve Services. Both will include communion and candlelight.

Wednesday December 25th – MERRY CHRISTMAS (no regular programming)

Sunday December 29th – No programming

Wednesday January 1st – HAPPY NEW YEAR (**no regular programming**)

Sunday January 5th – **No programming**

Wednesday January 8th – Resume regular programming for Children, Youth, AND Adults. Meal starts at 5:30, followed by class and gym (6:30-7:30pm)

Sunday January 12th – Resume class (10:30am till about 11:20am)



A Word from our Lay Leader

As we enter the Christmas season and the start of a new year, were I to ask each of you if you wanted to be part of a strong church, I am confident all would answer in the affirmative. If I asked what that looked like, there would be different answers. But many would focus on things such as one that is joyful, welcoming, looking toward the future, and a church that fights through the storms and reaps the benefits of those battles.

Over the years, I have been fortunate to visit with some of the founders of this church and have learned they wanted to develop a better church; a church where everyone felt welcomed. They worked not to get upset about problems or differences of opinion. Instead, they focused on building, breaking, rebuilding, and putting it all together. Then, they handed it to us and said, "Take it to the next level."

Now, many of us are preparing to hand things to the next group. How do we do that? I would suggest we do it by meeting people where they are. By not demeaning them for wanting changes. By letting them find a way to build the new best. By listening to the ministers' and leaderships' plans. And, by asking, "How can I help?"

Some years back, I was involved in a church that had been a relatively small one. The young congregation, with the help of a new pastor, decided they really wanted to grow and did things to make that happen. In time, they outgrew their building and decided to build a bigger one in a new location. They had to fundraise at a time when that was very difficult. Still, they got a lot, and borrowed what they were short.

Years later, that loan was still being paid off and had become a drag on their finances. Interest rates had increased and the church's coffers were within a year of being empty.

One night, the leadership met to discuss where to make cuts. After a while, it became evident even cutting out everything but the minister, insurance, and utilities would still not be enough.

Two members then stepped forward to organize people. They made a plan. They asked the members of the church board to list people they knew who would be good about helping implement that plan.

Fifty people were identified who agreed (many reluctantly) to attend a meeting. At that meeting, the leaders explained how they were going to divide into committees with those present serving on and helping lead whatever committee they wanted to be involved with.

They then broke into groups (most people were not happy about having to help). Each group talked about what they could do and how they would do it.

Quickly, everyone realized while they had to do some work, they could do things they liked to do. And, only a few, who chose to do so, had to do very much.

Within two years, the money had been pledged. In less than 10 years, the church was paid off.

Today, most of the leaders from that church have stepped down or passed on. A new generation is reaping the benefits of what that group did.

As in everything, our church is changing. My generation, who has been leaders for many years, is turning over the reins to new people. As we had new ideas that better fit our generation, the next generation of churchgoers is formulating ideas that will keep this church moving forward.

We were given a church. We did our part to make it thrive. Now, our legacy must be to give that church to a new generation. We changed our church. The next generation will do the same. The changes we made were supported by those who came before us. In the same way, we must support the changes that are coming. In doing so, we are giving to a new generation the charge that was given to us.

We all want to leave a legacy. I believe that is the best legacy we can leave. Doyle Scott



Angel Tree

2024 Angel Tree

Each year, Oakwood sponsors families who need some extra help during the Christmas season. This year, we are sponsoring families from the Pleasant Hill area.

How you can participate?

If you have not already, you may select gifts from the CCB email that was sent out in November, or take a tag 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 8.*

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.



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.



Hospitality and Outreach Committee

The Hospitality and Outreach Committee (H.O.T.) has been very busy preparing for the upcoming Advent season. Information about the Christmas Eve services is included in this newsletter. Requests for volunteers, as needed, will be posted on CCB also. Thank you to all who have signed up to either greet or host fellowship. Also, a big thank you to all the secret bakers. If you plan to donate items for fellowship for a particular Sunday, please be sure to let Pam Schwartz know. Sometimes, several of our secret bakers get quite generous and we have more than enough treats and storage can become a problem.

Fellowship and Greeting are great ways to Connect – Disciple – Serve and getting to know others by being a host or a greeter. Ask a friend or friends, your bible study group, youth group to host or greet. It's easy to host Fellowship. The coffee is already made, with cups, plates and napkins, etc. available. All you need to do is provide enough goodies to serve approximately 80 people and any other type of beverages you would like to serve. There is no need to bake, packaged goodies work just fine along with fruit, meat and cheese. Both of these opportunities give you the chance to meet someone new and keep our Oakwood connections growing.

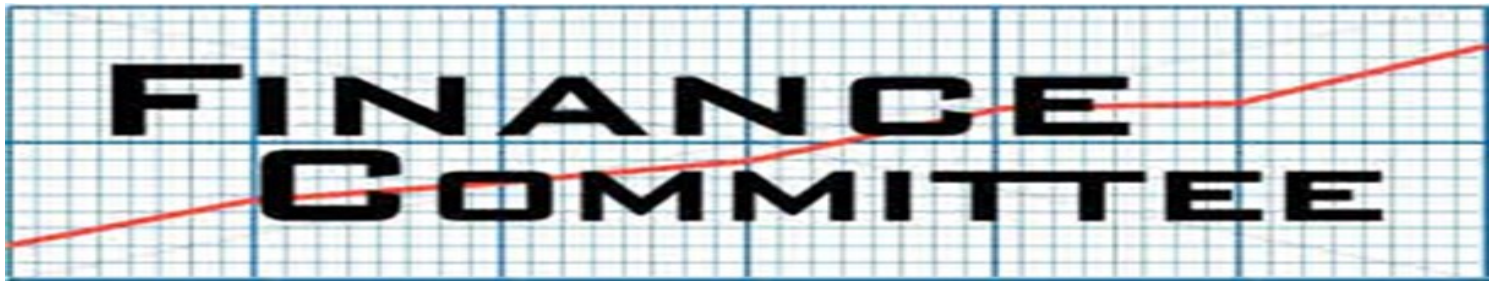
Each Monday, Nancy Berggren posts on CCB, requests for door greeters and fellowship hosts. Be sure to check your email as you can sign up there. You can also sign up on the schedule located on the counter in the Café Court.

In November, Kris Benge announced the rebranding of Oakwood. A team of 10 members are currently working on the strategy to update our logo, mission and vision statements so that the church remains relevant to current and future generations and ensure Oakwood's message resonates with the evolving culture without compromising our core beliefs. Their work will be completed in the spring.



BAKE SALE

On December 15, before and after our worship services, and during the Children's Christmas program, we will have our annual bake sale. Be sure and stop by and get your yummy treats. All proceeds go to help fund Oakwood's children's program. A special thanks to all who are contributing baked goods.



October 2024 Finances

- **Monthly Operating Fund Income:** October 2024 had regular offerings of \$44,581.34 and capital fund offerings of \$55.00 for total offerings of \$44,636.34.
- **Monthly Operating Fund Expenses:** Total operating expenses were \$32,491.20.
- **Monthly Operating Fund Net Income: +\$12,145.14.**

OCTOBER CASH BALANCES

- **Operating Cash Balance:** \$79,001.24
- **Technology Funds:** \$0.00
- **Mission Fund:** \$6,154.23
- **Memorial Fund:** \$16,544.96
- **Concert Fund:** \$5,390.99
- **Building Operations Fund:** \$0.00 (*Operation Face-Lift Fund*)
- **Building Use Fund:** \$10,803.43
- **Spaghetti Supper Fund:** \$20,253.52

If you have any questions about Oakwood finances, please contact one of our Finance Committee Members: Gary Schwartz, Chair; Steve Jurgens, Treasurer; Rev. Alexis Johnson, Mike Anderson, Nancy Berggren, Judy Carico, and Steve Rendall.

From the Finance Committee

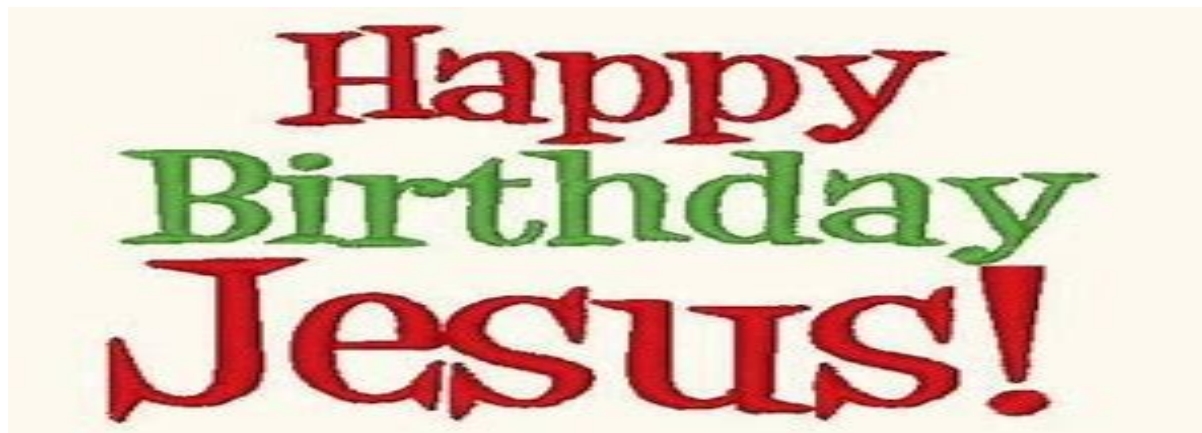
Thank you to the entire congregation for your financial support of Oakwood this year. Your weekly offerings plus your donations for our special offering are a blessing.



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, Karla Griggs	15- Brian and Angie Acker
7-Ryan Wehrman	20- Steve and Dawn Jurgens, Kathy and Joe Luce
8- Cher Brown	27-Rick and Cindy Slinger
10- Travis Beyer	30-Chris and Julie Vitek
11- Kris Baumgart	
12- Marshall Acker	
13-Joyce Delk, Jacque Harwood, Cecile, Brandon Deppe	
17-Nancy Pinkerton, Larry Zimmer	
24-Luke Meredith, Kay Bullard, Jacob Bollman	
26- Simon Zollman	
27-Graham Fulton, Nicole Griggs	
29-Nathan Bollman	
30- Tina Heuermann, Helen Miles	



Classics

The Classics Christmas Potluck will be on December 12.

They will start gathering at 11:30, then begin eating at noon. The guest speaker this month is Katharine Yarnell, Executive Director of the Iowa United Methodist Foundation. Her topic will be understanding the people you worship along side.

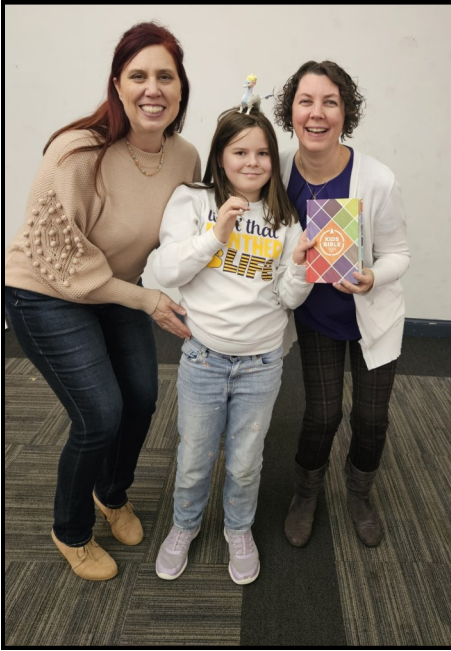
On Wednesday December 4, 11, and 18, Oakwood will offer its Wednesday night meal. This is a free will offering. Join us and stay for our Wednesday night worship.

Merry
Christmas



Bibles to Third Graders

We gave Bibles to Charolette Olson and Delainah Diamond) recently during Wednesday evening activities. What a treat to give the kids Bibles.



Advent Study

Join us for *The Journey, Walking the Road to Bethlehem*, an advent study by Adam Hamilton, which began December 1, in the prayer room. We have a lot of special fellowship times this month, so we will give everyone time for that and then get started with a video and short discussion at 10:45. There is a book and we have several available for those interested, but it is not necessary in order to participate.

This is a story you know by heart, but *The Journey* combines historical information and a chronology with Adam Hamilton's thoughtful, conversational teaching style to give you a new perspective on the story of Mary and Joseph's journey from Nazareth to Bethlehem.



Thanks, Todd

At our recent Charge Conference, all the churches attending were asked to make a presentation about their church. Todd Buchacker spoke about Oakwood and did a great job! Thanks, Todd for your efforts.