

2020

January

February

OAKWOOD / HEBRON UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES

# The Messenger



I must confess that it is difficult to think about January while, at the time of this writing, Christmas is still a week out. How can I write about the new year when we haven't even finished the old one yet? I won't even mention the Christmas shopping that is not quite done yet...

But here we are, on the verge of a new year and a new decade, and in many ways, a lot of us have already started preparing for it. Around my house, we're all looking forward to another year of school. Joie is working on some winter break homework that will earn her a prize when she returns to school. Emilie is rehearsing for her first band concert. Zach is gearing up to begin the application process for seminary. And I am already beginning school work in preparation for my next semester of school.

Even though Christmas will have come and gone by the time you are reading this, I can't help but be reminded of Advent during all of these preparations - especially Mary and Joseph, who both said yes to God. Both knew that society would be working against them, but both also knew that they were chosen and being honored by God.

The parallel between these decisions to be made in first century Bethlehem and those at the edge of 2020 are striking. A lot of us may feel like society is working against the church, which shows up as declining church attendance and involvement. Indeed, we have moved on from a time where participation in church was the default position. It is no longer the case that one church is vying for attention among all of the other religious options; now, church itself is vying for attention among all of the other possible things someone could be involved in.

On top of this, regardless of where you stand on the issues facing the United Methodist Church, there will be a General Conference meeting this spring, which will very likely attempt to further define our mission and goals as a denomination. And regardless of where you land in United States politics, there will be a congressional and presidential election this fall. To my knowledge, there has not been a single US election that has made 100% of the country happy, so we will likely be facing all sorts of division this year.

But before you get too bummed out, remember this: God is still on the throne. God has been on the throne and will continue to be, and I do not believe that God is a silent observer in this world. In fact, I believe that God is urgently calling for our participation in God's mission for the world, and I think that this new year is the perfect time to respond. So, like Mary and Joseph before us, I am inviting you all to join me in saying yes to God and embracing the adventure that awaits us in 2020.

I have been your pastor for half a year now (already!) and I still wake up every day in complete awe and gratitude that I have been called here to this time and place for a mission such as this. I am excited by all of the things that we might be able to do together this year, and I know that God is calling us to big things at Hebron and Oakwood. Saying yes to God can feel risky or scary, and honestly, sometimes it actually is risky and scary. But God promises to be faithful to us, and so we can safely and securely step out in faith into a partnership with God.

Remember, the mission statement of the UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world. We cannot participate in this transformation without partnership with God and with each other. As we begin this new year, let us say yes to God in faith, work together in love, and begin a new adventure with joy.

Peace,  
Pastor Jess



Oakwood —9:00 am  
Hebron —10:30 am

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# Did You Know?

*Reaching out to our community....*

The **Oakwood Area Food Pantry** serves the Oakwood School District, Fithian, Muncie, Fairmont, Sidell, Indianaola and Catlin residents. The Food Pantry now has its own building, located at 202 S. Scott Street. The Food Pantry incorporated as a non profit organization and continues to work with the support of the ERIC churches.

The OAFP now provides commodities to over 45 families (or over 85 individuals). It is open every Tuesday from 10:00 am until Noon. Volunteers from the ERIC churches distribute the food, unload the Food Bank Trunk each month, stock the shelves and order and pick up additional items needed throughout the month. Carol Leverenz, Nancy Tyler and Marilyn Elrod are there most Tuesdays and Laura Wittig and Tim and Linda Cunningham are always available to help when called.

The Food Pantry also provides holiday baskets at Thanksgiving, Christmas and Easter. The items for these baskets are provided by the ERIC churches. These churches also provide items each month to help with things that are hard to get from the Central Illinois Food Bank. Without this support, the Food Pantry would not be able to continue to serve those who need this assistance.

Oakwood UMC provides support through our weekly “noisy bucket” collection and fund raisers throughout the year for our missions. With these funds we are able to provide meat every other month as well as continue to provide monetary support throughout the year. We are indeed blessed to be able help to serve our community.

The **Back Pack Program** also operates out of the Food Pantry building. Debbie Huddleson of Hebron UMC directs this effort. It provides food for students in need over the weekends when schools are not open to provide meals. The program now serves 15 families with 36 students. She also receives monetary support from the ERIC churches including Oakwood and Hebron. If you have any questions or would like to help, contact Debbie at 217-453-2333

We at Oakwood and Hebron are definitely involved in the community with answering the call to help those who need a little assistance from time to time.

*Matthew 25:35 “I was hungry and you gave me food to eat. I was thirsty and you gave me a drink. I was a stranger and you welcomed me in.” CEB*

## CONTACT information



**Pastor Jessica LeCrone's Office Hours**

**Wednesday—10:00 am to 1:00 pm**

**Thursday—1:00 pm to 6 pm**

**Friday —10:00 am to 2:00 pm**

**Cell Phone: 217-637-2557**

**Email: [jessicamlecrone@gmail.com](mailto:jessicamlecrone@gmail.com)**

**We can be found on Facebook at: Oakwood United Methodist Church**

**And on the web at [ohumc.weebly.com](http://ohumc.weebly.com)**

# Special news

## NURSEY AVAILABLE

Oakwood has nursesey care available during Sunday worship time.

If you would like to have your child go to the nursesey, please let Pastor Jess or Laura Wittig know.

## UPDATE ON STAINED GLASS WINDOWS



We have raised over \$10,000 toward our goal of over \$25,000.

Your continued support is appreciated and needed if we are to meet this goal.

Please think about making a special donation to ensure that we can save these precious windows.



I would like to thank everyone at Oakwood and Hebron for their thoughtfulness by remembering me at Christmas time.

This has been a wonderful 6 months with all of you and I look forward to the coming year and many more years serving you and the community.

Pastor Jess

**To Hebron UMC** - Thank you so much for my own little Hebron church. I am happy to spend Sunday mornings with you as much as possible. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

**To Oakwood UMC** - Thanks for remembering me at Christmas. I love being able to service God along side all of you. Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Deb



*Clip and Save*

## Food Pantry Needs For 2020

- January – \$1 box of chocolates (valentine's day gift)
- February-- brownie mixes
- March -- hair shampoo/conditioner
- April-- canned meat
- May-- toilet paper (3 or more rolls wrapped together)
- June-- deodorant
- July-- sugar
- August-- flour
- September -- dish soap
- October-- bath soap/shower gel
- November-- cereal
- December-- large cans of soup (18-20oz)

**Marian Stevens**  
1928 to 2019



We share with her family her loss and will keep you in our prayers

# Upcoming events

## GAME NIGHT AT THE CHURCH

As the days begin to get a little longer, the skies stay dark and snow continues to blow, we are planning a **game night** at the Oakwood UMC.

Saturday, January 25th  
5:00 to 6:30 pm

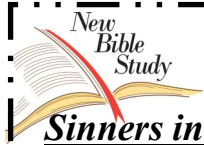
Kids, family and adult card and board games will be available, along with yummy snacks.

**ALL AGES ARE WELCOME TO GAME NIGHT**

## Valentine's Day Babysitting February 14, 2020

In order to allow parents to have a nice Valentine's Day dinner, the Oakwood UMC is offering free baby sitting for children 3 years to 12 years old, 5:30 pm until 8:00 pm.

If you would like us to baby sit on Valentine's Day, you must contact the church and reserve a place.  
217-354-4950



## Sinners in the Hands of a Loving God

by Brian Zahnd.

Oakwood UMC  
Wednesday from 6:30-7:30  
Starting March 4 through April 8



## ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE

February 26th

7:00 pm

Hebron UMC

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Pastor Jess will be at the Oakwood UMC  
from 10 am to 1pm  
for those who would like to have ashes applied.



## Spaghetti Dinner

## COACH MAC'S ANNUAL SPAGHETTI DINNER

Saturday, February 1st  
4:00 - 7:00 pm

All proceeds go to support our youth on their ASP mission trip this summer.

**Come and support the youth and enjoy a great spaghetti dinner!!!!**

# Youth News

## COMETLAND YOUTH NEWS

Grades 7-12

Sunday 6:00 –7:15 pm

At: to be announced

Stay in touch with Josh Hunsberger to learn about upcoming activities.

Cell: 814-969-1766



## ASP 2020 – Complete, but not finished

*"I'm sure about this: the one who started a good work in you will stay with you to complete the job by the day of Christ Jesus." -Philippians 1:6*

Our 2020 trip is less than six month away, so it is time to make preparations. The dates for the trip are: Saturday, June 6 – Saturday, June 13. This year there will be a junior high school group in addition to the high school group.

There will be a meeting on:

**Sunday, Jan. 12 at 2:00 pm**

## At Oakwood United Methodist Church

All youth and adults planning to participate or wanting more information should plan to attend this meeting. (Invite anyone who might be interested.) If your parent has not attended a meeting, I urge a parent to attend with you.

I have registered 3 high school teams (15 youth and 6 adults) (may need to be increased to 4 teams – 20 and 8) and 1 junior high team. We need adults to travel (need to be at least 25 years old and like high school youth) and we need adults to help with planning. **BRING interested ADULTS to the meeting – the trip can not happen without adults!!!**

**Check and bring your calendar.** We need to confirm dates.

Our Spaghetti Dinner is scheduled for **Saturday, Feb. 1, 2020.**

All youth and traveling adults should plan to work during the dinner. (If you know of a conflict, let me know as soon as possible.) A schedule will be available to sign up.

Education hours, construction hours, and fundraising dates must be set. Again all dates need to be attended by all youth and traveling adults. You should plan for at least 2 hours each date.

These are the dates I'm looking at, if there are definite conflicts, I need to know as soon as possible.

Sunday, **Jan. 26** – 2pm

Sunday, **Feb. 9** – 2pm

Sunday, **Feb. 23** – 2pm

Sunday, **Mar. 15** – 2pm

Sunday, **April 19** – 2pm – **REQUIRED** youth and parent meeting

Sunday – construction practice TBD

Contact Deb for more information. 217-799-0594

## BIBLE'S COOL CONTINUES

Thursdays

youth grades 3 to 6

3:15 pm-4:45 pm

Oakwood UMC

**LOOKING FORWARD TO SEEING YOU  
!!!**

## ASP 2019 Adults

ASP adults traveled to Jonesville, VA from Nov. 3-9 to work on a house that needed major floor repair and a new bathroom.

It was a rewarding trip for all as the guys tore up a bedroom floor (rotting joists) and started the process of reinforcing the walls and floor. The guys were working in damp ground (or should I say mud). The women went to work on the bathroom that had already been enclosed with plumbing coming through the floor. They were able to paint the entire room, attach the shower, toilet, vanity and lay new flooring.

The owners were able to take a hot bath and use an inside toilet for the first time in weeks.

We all hated to leave the couple and look forward to seeing them next year.

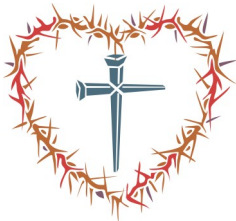
I hope some of you will consider joining us next fall. Let Deb know if you have any questions.

# Calendar



January 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
			1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February 2020						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29



Lent, the church-year season that begins on Ash Wednesday, is a time of penitence and spiritual renewal. Some people give up a luxury or vice during Lent as a form of self-denial; others undertake a project that benefits others.

The point isn't to denigrate ourselves or to see how much we can do without. Instead, Lent helps us reflect on Jesus' death. As Timothy Keller writes in *The Reason for God*: "The Christian Gospel is that I am so flawed that Jesus had to die for me, yet I am so loved and valued that Jesus was glad to die for me. This leads to deep humility and deep confidence at the same time. It undermines both swaggering and sniveling. I cannot feel superior to anyone, and yet I have nothing to prove to anyone. I do not think more of myself nor less of myself. Instead, I think of myself less."

## JANUARY

- 1st Wednesday New Years Day
- 4th Saturday Administrative Council  
Hebron—9 am
- 5th Sunday Communion
- 6th Monday Epiphany
- 12th Sunday Administrative Council  
7:30 am (OUMC)
- 20th Monday Martin Luther King , Jr Day

## FEBRUARY

- 2nd Sunday Communion
- 9th Sunday Administrative Council  
7:30 am (OUMC)
- 14th Friday Valentine's Day
- 26th Wednesday Ash Wednesday  
Marilyn's Birthday
- 29th Saturday Leap Year



Let Nancy Tyler know if you need an annual giving statement for tax purposes. (354-4787)

# Birthdays & Anniversaries

## OAKWOOD January

### Birthdays:

- 3 Mike Wise
- 4 Audra Tyler
- 5 Carsen Dudley
- 8 Joyce Okeli
- 17 Paul Wasser
- 23 Carol Leverenz

## February

### Birthdays:

- 1 Mike Cannon
- 8 Beth Sudlow
- 16 Amy Ludwig Rouse
- 20 Judy Steffen
- 24 Miriah Plawer Volmerding  
Nancy Bott
- 26 Marilyn Elrod
- 27 John Dudley

### Anniversaries:

- 19 Larry & Nancy Bott



## HEBRON January

### Birthdays:

- 1 Adam Grove
- 12 Daryl Grove
- 25 Erin Pouilliard

## February

### Birthdays:

- 15 Lori Parker
- 19 Trent Parker
- 25 Dede Doney
- 29 Crystal Davis

### Anniversaries:

- 11 Darrin & Shelia Fletcher

### Remember our Church Family Living Away from their Homes

**Laura Lomax**  
Pleasant Meadows Christian  
Village  
400 W. Washington Ave.  
Chrisman, IL 61924  
(217)269-2369

**Joyce Okeli**  
2000 W. John Street. #309  
Champaign, IL 61821  
(217) 403-0235

### **Remember those in the Military**

Capt. Toby Neil  
Stationed—  
somewhere in Germany



## NEWSLETTER UPDATE

If you would like to receive your newsletter by email,  
thereby getting it immediately and in color. Please let me know.

Contact — Marilyn at (217) 474-3260 or  
email at [melrodmae@gmail.com](mailto:melrodmae@gmail.com)

If you have any additions or corrections to  
the Birthday/Anniversary list, please let  
me know.

[melrodmae@gmail.com](mailto:melrodmae@gmail.com)  
Cell: (217) 474-3260

OAKWOOD/HEBRON U.M.C.

P.O. Box 218

Oakwood, IL 61858



## ***SPAGHETTI DINNER***

*Featuring*

**COACH MAC'S 'THE WORKS' Spaghetti Sauce**

OAKWOOD UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Corner of Oakwood & Collett

**Saturday, February 1 from 4PM to 7PM**

FREE WILL DONATION

All proceed go to the  
OUMC Appalachia Service Project group