

2021

March

April

OAKWOOD / HEBRON UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES

The Messenger



What a year it has been! I know that so many of us are ready to move on from the events of the past year and put it all behind us as we return to some sense of normalcy. But in the United Methodist Church, the first couple of months of the year are known as “Year-End Report Time,” so I’ve done quite a bit of looking back over 2020 in the past few weeks. I have a love-hate relationship with year-end reports. Prior to being appointed as your pastor, when I worked at the Undergraduate Library at the U of I, a big part of my job was keeping statistics and looking at the story that numbers tell - so I appreciate how powerful data can be. But I also know that numbers don’t always tell the whole story. For example, a library circulation desk may see 30 people in an hour. That might seem like a lot, but if you found out that 20 of those 30 people were only stopping by to ask where the restrooms are, it paints a different picture. All of that to say that statistics are useful, but we often need a little more information.

For instance, the views for our YouTube channel don’t tell us that we have people from different parts of the state joining us for virtual worship services on Sundays. Our audit helps us see our financial picture, but there is no audit for the time and talent that has been given to our churches over the past year - all of which have kept us going and serving our community, whether our buildings have been open or not. There’s not a place in the year-end reports to share about the Facebook Live science experiments we did with the Bible’s Cool group, or about offering drive-through Communion, or about how offering a drive-through Christmas Eve experience resulted in some really cold hands and feet - but that serving you, and serving alongside some of you, was totally worth it.

The year end reports don’t really cover what we’ve done in our services either. In addition to reaching people who might not otherwise be able to come to church, our online service has been able to feature different spaces (both church sanctuaries, my house, outside) and different musicians - while Pastor Zach is our regular guitarist, some of my friends and colleagues have stepped in as musical guests too. We’ve been able to share messages from Bishop Beard that we probably would not have heard in different circumstances, and we have been able to offer some different kinds of experiences too, such as *lectio divina* and a peek at the inside of our sanctuaries at Christmastime.

Our in-person services have allowed us a chance to take some more reflective time with God than we usually get in church. Using a resource for fixed-hour prayer, we hear multiple readings of Scripture, spend a little time in silent prayer and contemplation, and end each service with a spoken word hymn and prayer. Like you, I am looking forward to the day that we can get back to a service that includes singing and responsive readings; but in the meantime, I hope that this service has not just served as a placeholder, but has been meaningful and created a space for deeper connection with God.

Church, I am proud of what we have done during the past year. I am so grateful to you all for allowing me to try new things and for letting me lead you. Every day I am humbled and honored by the call to serve these churches and be a part of your lives. We have done good and important work to help keep our neighbors safe. We are not out of the woods yet, but we are getting closer. Hope is always on the horizon, and I believe that God has been, and continues to be, with us every step of the way.



Blessings of peace, health, and joy to you all!

Pastor Jess

Did You Know?

Oakwood UMC Has An Endowment Fund

As a member of our congregation, you may or not may not be familiar with our Endowment Fund. The fund was created when the future of the church was in question. Gary Ludwig proposed the creation of the Endowment Fund in 1999. This fund ensures the church will be able to move forward even during hard times. A committee of the pastor and a layperson, guided by the district office, created a policy to guide decisions and change as the church changed over time. The original policy was created and passed in December of 1999. Since then our church has changed in many ways and the policy needs to be updated.

The Church Administrative Board has appointed a committee to review and update the Endowment Fund Policy. The committee will make recommendations to the full Board of any changes to the present policy as deemed necessary. Those on the committee are as follows:

Nancy Tyler- Ad Board Chair
Tim Cunningham- Trustee Chair
Deb Clow- PPRC Chair
Brett Wittig- Financial Chair



Any changes that are recommended will have an explanation for the suggested change to the policy and the reason for the change. A report will be available at the church office for all church members interested in reviewing once the committee members have completed their work.

Any questions, comments or suggestions may be made to any committee member, Board member or Pastor Jessica LeCrone.

The congregation will be notified of the time and date for the meeting to finalize the revised document. Once this step is taken, a date will be set for a final vote to accept the revised document.

All thoughts, comments and suggestions from the congregation are welcomed and appreciated. You can also email questions/comments to OakwoodUMC@outlook.com with the Subject line of "Endowment".



CONTACT information



Pastor Jessica LeCrone's Office Hours

Tuesday - Thursday - 2:00 to 5:00 pm
Friday - 1:00 to 4:00 pm

Cell Phone: 217-637-2557

Email: jessicamlecrone@gmail.com

We can be found on Facebook at: [Oakwood United Methodist Church](https://www.facebook.com/OakwoodUnitedMethodistChurch)
And on the web at ohumc.weebly.com

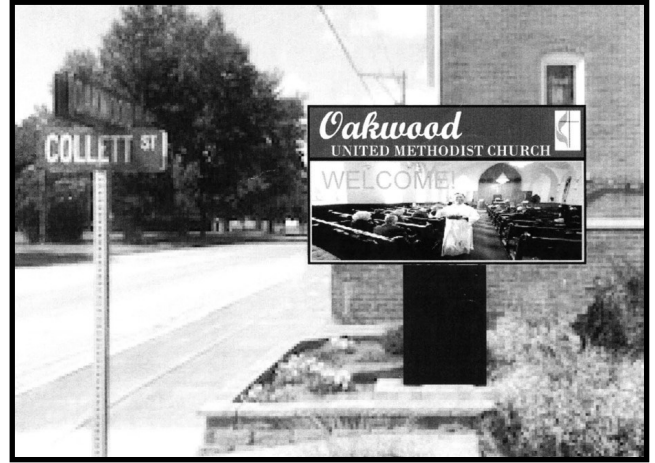
Special News

A New Digital Sign for Oakwood UMC !!!

A church LED display is the perfect way for any faith-based organization to spread the word and increase membership. Our current sign has worked well, but it is difficult and time consuming to change the message. Deb Clow has been very faithful in changing it, but we want to make it easier—especially when we have multiple things going on at church.

With an attention-grabbing LED sign, our church can reach out with inspiration and excitement to our congregation as well as to all of Oakwood and anyone traveling through.

This sign will be higher and the message will be a higher resolution that can be seen more clearly from a greater distance.



If you would like to contribute to the Digital Sign Fund, just write "Sign" in the memo section of your check.



March	Fruit Cups (single serving) *
April	Pudding Cups (single serving) *
May	Toilet paper (3 or more rolls wrapped)
June	Cereal

** Those marked with the * are for the Backpack Program and need to be single serving. Presently we serve 12 families with 26 children each weekend with meals for both Saturday and Sunday.

Don't settle

For most of us, the great danger is not that we will renounce our faith. It is that we will become so distracted and rushed and preoccupied that we will settle for a mediocre version of it. We will just skim our lives instead of actually living them. —John Ortberg, The Life You've Always Wanted

CROSS OF TRIUMPH

Also known as the Cross of Victory, this cross symbolizes Christ's final triumph and his reign throughout the earth. The Cross of Triumph is often depicted atop Jesus' scepter when he's shown in his kingly office.



Coming Events



Holy Week



Palm Sunday - March 28, 2021 Regular service times



Maundy Thursday - April 1, 2021, 7:00 pm at OUMC

Good Friday - To be determined -
Watch the OUMC website



Easter Sunrise Service - April 4, 2021, Hebron 6:00 am



Easter Service & Confirmation - April 4 2021, Oakwood UMC 9:00 am

EASTER SUNDAY

It's not too late to join our Lenten Book Study

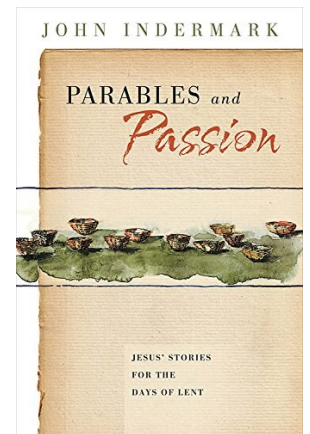
Parables and Passion:
Jesus' Stories for the Days of Lent

By John Indermark

Books can be purchased in either paperback or Kindle versions on Amazon.

Sunday nights at Oakwood UMC 5:15 pm

Examine the parables of Jesus in light of his betrayal and death on the cross. Discover the new significance of the parables as they become more transparent and clearly applicable to the lives of Christian believers.



Spring Ahead

Sunday, March 14, 2021

Remember to set your clocks forward!

Youth News

Confirmation

Our Confirmation Class has been doing excellent and important work this past year! We have learned about many things, including:

- God's love for us
- The Sacraments
- The liturgical year of the church
- The example of service and
- The love that Jesus gave us

We have created a banner with symbols of our work, which is hanging in Oakwood's Fellowship Hall, and our confirmands have helped out with worship services in various ways.

We are looking forward to our **Confirmation Service**, on **Easter Sunday** during the 9:00 service at Oakwood.

Congratulations and blessings to

Lilly Berner

Carsen Dudley

Jackson Dudley

Madi McFarland

Josiah Schlueter

Connor Smith

Quinn Sperry

as they complete their confirmation journey!



– Youth ASP 2021 – Onward

"Let's not get tired of doing good, because in time we'll have a harvest if we don't give up"
- Galatians 6:9

June 12 - 19, 2021

Junior High and High School

3 teams are registered (15 youth and 6 adults)

A meeting was held on Feb. 21. If you are interested in this trip, contact Deb (217-799-0594) as soon as possible.

ASP has been working very hard putting together COVID-19 protocols to keep volunteers, staff, and homeowners as safe as possible. Check out the website: asphome.org.

The ASP group plans to sell Beef House rolls for Easter. So be sure to place your order with one of the youth for your Easter Dinner.



COMETLAND YOUTH NEWS

Grades 7-12

Sunday 5:30 –6:30 pm

At: Muncie Baptist Church

Wearing masks and social distancing.
Currently not having any "snacks".

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


Cell: 814-969-1766

Calendar

March 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	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			

MARCH—Special Dates

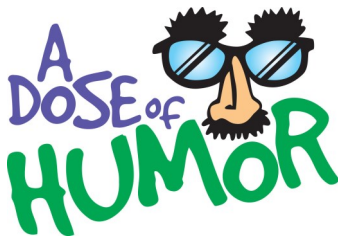
- World Day of Prayer, *March 5, 2021*
- Daylight-Saving Time begins, *March 14, 2021*
- First day of spring, *March 20, 2021*
- Holy Week, *March 28 – April 4, 2021*
- Palm/Passion Sunday, *March 28, 2021*



April 2021						
Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				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	

APRIL—Special Dates

- Maundy Thursday, *April 1, 2021*
- Good Friday, *April 2, 2021*
- Easter Sunday, *April 4, 2021*
- Administrative Professionals Day, *April 21, 2021*

Holy Hilarity!

More churches lately have been resurrecting (pardon the pun!) the early-church tradition of celebrating the second Sunday of Easter as Holy Humor Sunday, affirming the season's joy. Need some jokes for April 11? Try these:

Easter is the only time when it's perfectly safe to put all your eggs in one basket.

Knock knock. *Who's there?* Hatch. *Hatch who?* God bless you!

What should you do after eating so many Easter treats? *Eggs-ercise!*

Why shouldn't you tell an Easter egg a joke? *It might crack up!*

An irate subscriber called the newspaper, demanding to know where her Sunday edition was. "Ma'am," said the employee, "today is Saturday. The Sunday paper isn't delivered until Sunday." After a brief pause, the caller spoke with a ray of recognition: "So *that's* why no one was in church today."

Birthdays

OAKWOOD March

Birthdays

- 12 Greg Sperry
17 Christina (Clow) Byers
26 Todd Lomax
31 David Calkins

April

Birthdays

- 7 Brodie Lee
5 Jennifer Stewart
10 Adam Plawer
15 Sonna Lee
22 John Sudlow
24 Julie Calkins
26 Stella Trask
27 Larry Bott
29 Logan Lee
Nathan Stewart



HEBRON March

Birthdays

- 6 Mitchell Pouilliard
11 Allison (Fletcher) Klint
12 Kelsey Razaitis
18 Abby Johnson

April

Birthdays

- 9 Bryce Draper
16 Deanna Morton
19 Alexa Morton
30 Kristen Hayne

**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



**Write or Visit Our
Homebound**

Remember those in the Military



Capt. Toby Neal
CMR 414 Box 225
APO AE 09173
Stationed—in Germany

*“Spring shows what God can do
with a drab and dirty world.”
—Virgil A. Kraft*

Corrections

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

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



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

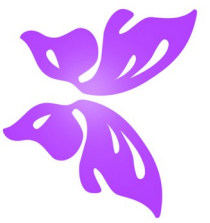
OAKWOOD/HEBRON U.M.C.

P.O. Box 218

Oakwood, IL 61858



Resurrection Butterflies



This Easter Oakwood UMC will again adorn our Sanctuary with Resurrection Butterflies. These butterflies can be given in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone who is special in your life. The cost is \$5.00 per butterfly. The money is used to support the mission work of our church. Fill out the form below and put it with your check in the offering plate by Palm Sunday, March 28, 2021. The butterflies will appear on Easter Sunday, April 4, 2020.

In Memory Of (Please print)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

In Honor Of (Please print)

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

Given by (Please print)
