



Oak Hills United Methodist Church

The Oak Notes

September 2022



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A Message from Our Pastor

Last month, I shared with you some of the observations I made from our initial meet the pastor sessions, including perceived strengths, areas for growth, and your hopes and dreams for the future. I asked for feedback, and from those who responded, it appears that my assessment was on target. With that data in mind, I began to brainstorm potential goals for the upcoming year, identifying five big bucket areas for our work together:

- (1) Community Involvement and Outreach
- (2) Children's and Youth Ministry
- (3) Volunteer Recruitment and Retention
- (4) Financial Stability
- (5) Bible Studies and Small Groups

I wanted to take this month to share my thoughts with you and to present these potential goals for your consideration. The board will discuss these goals in our September meeting and we will likely tweak them so please look at these as a work in progress at this point in time. That means things could still change. We would appreciate any feedback you have as we continue to solidify these goals.



Area 1: Community Involvement and Outreach

1. Work to formulate a true partnership with Oakdale and Springmyer Elementary Schools by assisting with charitable needs, providing movie nights at Oakdale, and reading to kids during the week. Through our conversations with the schools, it seems that these two schools are the most open to working with us. We have already recruited a team of 7 to read, but we are open to getting more involved as well.
2. Expand upon the success of Sissy's Pantry and our Community Dinners by working to intentionally build relationships with those attending, launching some kind of small group or fresh expression in conjunction with these ministries, and expanding to weekly dinners as we recruit more volunteers. I expect this will unfold in a series of steps over multiple years. The first step is to get our congregation to attend the dinner and build relationships with those folks from the community who are already there.
3. Launch 1-2 new ministries in the community to build ongoing relationships in our community. These ministries would need to be outside the church building and based around people's homes and hobbies. It is likely that this will be a longer term goal so that we can focus on the first two areas in the first year.

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Area 2: Children's and Youth Ministry

Much, though not all, of these goals came from the youth/kids listening lunch.



1. (Recruit and train additional kids and youth ministry volunteers. We need a team of at least 6–8 people on a rotating schedule to make JAM effective and to give folks a chance to be in worship.
2. Offer a minimum of 4 quarterly, family-based events each year for the surrounding community.
3. Work toward resuming weekly puppet shows in worship to make it more kid friendly. This is something unique that our church offers to children and families. Already, in August, we moved to two shows each month. To expand it further will require more volunteer support first. We are considering ways we might be able to reach out to the high school drama club to assist with expanding this ministry.
4. Amit and Lorna will work with the children's ministry team to identify ways to improve JAM and to integrate it with each of the other areas of the children's ministry (Sunday School, puppets, etc.).
5. Establish a volunteer nursery schedule or hire a regular nursery worker.
6. Identify fun outings and things to do with the youth group,

things that they could invite their friends to attend outside of Sunday morning, including some kind of summer youth conference/camp.

7. Build relationships with new youth through school extra-curricular and sporting events.

Area 3: Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

1. Publish and distribute a church ministry catalogue.
2. Offer a gift discovery class. We would invite all to attend the "Discover Your Purpose" class on Sundays, after church, beginning September 11. This class will explore spiritual gifts and answer the question: What is your unique SHAPE for ministry? So, if you've ever wondered about your purpose this class is for you.
3. Offer ministry fairs so people can connect with leaders and ask questions about the ministries.
4. Work towards having less people involved in boards and committees to free people up for ministry.

Area 4: Financial Stability

1. Find and promote alternative methods of giving and funding, including electronic funds transfer, online giving, Kroger Rewards, Amazon Smile, grants, and giving to the endowment via wills.
2. Offer an annual stewardship campaign.
3. Establish a 2023 budget that funds our ministry priorities and eliminates unneeded spending.
4. Work toward the sale of the Ebenezer parsonage to prepare for future capital improvement needs and identify if there are remaining child care assets that could potentially be liquidated.

Area 5: Bible Studies and Small Groups

In several of the listening visits, interest was expressed in getting a pastor's study back off the ground. Given the goals above, my plan, at least for the present, is to offer regular short-term classes that further our goals. This will start with the "Discover Your Purpose" class in September on gift discovery and then turning to a "How to Share Your Faith" class, likely during Lent, to further the outreach piece. From there I will work to discern what other classes to offer that would help us further our long range goals.

—Pastor Justin

The Meaning of Fall for Our Church in 2022

by Diane Cordell

Praise the greatness of the Lord, who loves to see his servants do well. (Psalm 35:27)

As I was growing up, fall was always a time of new beginnings. Both of my parents were schoolteachers so it was literally a time of new situations and renewal. Even now, I welcome a return to more order in my life. I restart the diet and sort through piles of accumulated stuff. This is also true spiritually. Summer is a great time to relax with God while on vacation and out doors, but by September, I *want* to be more purposeful and thorough about Bible reading and prayer.

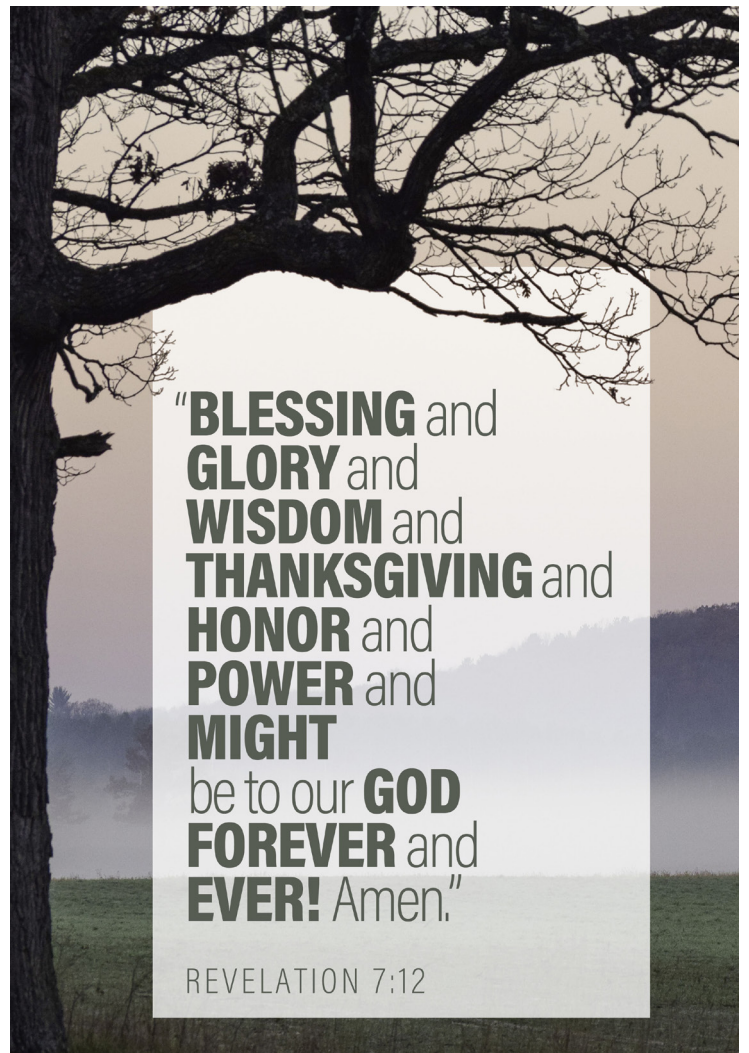
I think fall has even bigger meaning for our church this year. For one thing, we are not just ending summer, but are ending the strict regulations due to Covid. During worship, we can share together in singing and praying and praising God without heeding distances or masks or casual touch. Those who need to can still participate with their personal restrictions, but we can plan for the total group.

The second reason for moving ahead at Oak Hills is that we have a new Pastor. Justin has spent the summer getting to know us both personally and as a congregation. He has gathered information and is already moving forward. The priority is ministry and helping others, not meetings and the status quo. It will be exciting to see what can be done!

The most important thing we can do right now is to PRAY!!

1. **CATCH THE FIRE** Pray for the Holy Spirit to come into our church and dwell in our hearts, our worship, and our ministry.
2. **BE BOLD IN PRAYER AND EXPECT GOD TO ANSWER** Ask God to show us the community's needs and look for his specific answer.
3. **THY WILL BE DONE** Open our minds to God's will, not our own wishes to see things "as they used to be."
4. **TO GOD BE THE GLORY** Ministry is not meant to save our church or to give credit to Oak Hills. It's to give God all the credit and praise.
5. **TIME TO GET OFF OUR KNEES AND ON OUR FEET** If any ministry is within God's will we must be alert to when it is time for action. (And it may be before we are completely ready.) We need to listen.

Be diligent in these prayers. We can't change the world alone; we must be willing to be God's hands and feet. Pray for guidance for courage and for fortitude. Ask for strength for Pastor Justin and other leaders. In *The Purpose Driven Church*, author Rick Warren says, "While we wait for God to work for us, He is wanting to work through us!" (See *The Purpose Driven Church*, Zondervan, Grand Rapids, Michigan, 1995, p. 60) Ω



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*. 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. Ω

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. Ω



Announcements

9/5 – Trustees, 7 pm

9/7 – UMW Lunch at Nick’s American Cafe, 248 S. Miami Ave., Cleves, OH 45002, 12 pm (call Carol Reitzes at 513-319-4204 if you have questions or need a ride)

9/11 – Discover Your Purpose Starts, 12 pm

9/12 – Finance 6:30; Administrative Board 7 pm

9/17 – Sis’s Pantry open 9 am to noon (lower level of the church—help is always needed and welcome)

9/28 – Community Dinner, 6 pm

Zoom Prayer Meeting – Wednesdays 6:00-6:30 pm

Sis’s Pantry – Wednesdays 6:30-8:00 pm

Bible Studies

Sunday School 9 am

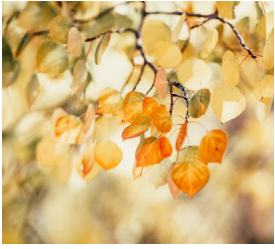
Women’s Group, Mondays at 10 am (9:30am on 1st Monday of the month)

Thursdays, 10:30 am, with John Wieman

TOGA (Thursdays on Green Acres), 1st and 3rd Thursdays, 7pm @ 5609 Green Acres Ct., 45248

Discover Your Purpose – Sundays, 12 pm (Sept 11, 18, 25, and October 2), led by Pastor Justin





September 2022

OHUMC Family Ministries

I Corinthians 1:7-9

Therefore you do not lack any spiritual gift as you eagerly wait for the Lord Jesus Christ to be revealed. He will also keep you firm to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. God is faithful, who has called you into fellowship with his Son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

OHUMC Kids:

Sunday school is from 9-10:20 am every Sunday. Join for a Bible-based lesson with crafts and prizes you can take home! Then enjoy JAM (Jesus and Me) in the Sunday school hall during the main worship service. Puppets also visit the worship service once a month, and that's always an exciting time!

OHUMC Youth:

The youth enjoy meeting weekly for group time on Sunday mornings at 9:30. There is now a small coffee bar ready for use as a nice pick-me-up, complete with a milk frother. :) We've just begun talking about the book of I Corinthians and how what this letter teaches as it relates to living out our lives as Christians. This past Sunday, we discussed chapter one and will continue to read through and discuss one chapter each week.

We will talk about the following sections of I Corinthians as the weeks pass by: (*info from The Bible Project*)

1. Chapters 1-4: A reason for unity
2. Chapters 5-7: Motivation for sexual integrity
3. Chapters 8-14: Power to love others more than yourself
4. Chapters 15-16: Victory over death and final greeting

We hope that we will learn more about the example of Jesus Christ and how we can emulate God's characteristics in our daily living.

Please feel free to share any suggestions for Family Ministries to Amit Dutta at amitincincy@gmail.com.

Here are a couple of snapshots of family ministries in action.

