

419 Maryland Ave, Oakmont PA 15139

**Oakmont
United Methodist Church**

32nd Annual

MURDER MYSTERY PRODUCTION

Fashionably DEAD AT THE MUSEUM

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 20 - 6:30 PM - \$17 (SNACK NIGHT)

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 21 - 12:00 PM - \$22 (LUNCH)

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 22 - 2:00 PM - \$22 (LUNCH)

Tickets on sale now!

Scan the QR code to
order tickets online!



Or call or email us to
purchase tickets!

724-351-8493

oakmont.umc.murdermystery@gmail.com



**ENJOY SOME GREAT FOOD WHILE WORKING
TOGETHER WITH YOUR FRIENDS TO SOLVE A MURDER!**



Oakmont United Methodist Church

419 Maryland Ave
Oakmont, PA 15139



**FEBRUARY
2026**

Beloved Church Family,

I pray that you are growing in faith as you faithfully utilize the means of grace, praying without ceasing, spending time in the word of God, engaging in worship and fellowship and participating in mission.

The Christian community is strengthened and sustained through prayer. Every dimension of Christian life is undergirded by prayer. Jesus himself prayed for all people—including those who had not yet come to believe (John 17:20–23) and his followers continue to embrace that example. Prayer is how we communicate with God and how we stand together in solidarity as the Church.

There are various forms of prayer we offer to God: **Adoration, Confession, Thanksgiving, and Supplication (ACTS)**. Just as we speak with others about matters of law, politics, health, daily habits, and personal interests, we may bring all aspects of life before God in prayer. There are no limits to what we can share with God. For example, about two years ago, a family from our son's former school relocated to England. In one of their updates, they asked the community to pray that they would make new friends. Their request reflects a simple but profound truth: people are unafraid to bring their needs before God and are willing to invite others to stand with them in prayer.

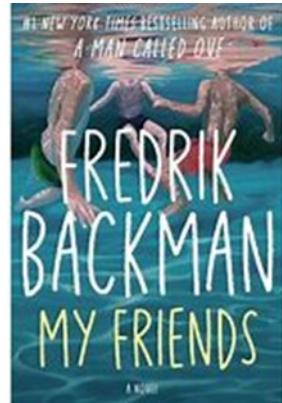
When we approach God in prayer, we do more than ask for help. We honor God's worth, acknowledge our shortcomings, give thanks for blessings received, and ask God to act in our lives and circumstances. What better way to do this than as a church family—adults, children, and youth; women and men—all pausing to pray at the same time each day, whether at home, at school, at work, at play, or on the move? The ACTS framework helps shape prayers that are not only personal but communal, grounded, and faithful.

419 Prays is therefore a call for the whole church to “*pray without ceasing*” (1 Thessalonians 5:17). It is an invitation to trust that when God’s people unite in prayer, the windows of heaven are opened, the blessings of God flow freely, and all who witness the movement and experience God’s power will testify to it—continuing in prayer and rejoicing always in the Lord.

Let us pray!

Rev. Natoya Thomas-Smith

**HOPE CIRCLE
BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP**



Hope Circle will meet on Thursday, Feb. 12th, at 11:00 a.m. in the Adult Sunday School Room to discuss *My Friends* by Fredrik Backman. Most people don't even notice them—three tiny figures sitting at the end of a long pier in the corner of one of the most famous paintings in the world. Most people think it's just a depiction of the sea. But Louisa, an aspiring artist herself, knows otherwise, and she is determined to find out the story of these three enigmatic figures.

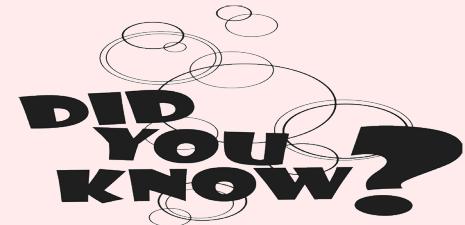
Twenty-five years earlier, in a distant seaside town, a group of teenagers find refuge from their bruising home lives by spending long summer days on an abandoned pier, telling silly jokes, sharing secrets, and committing small acts of rebellion. These lost souls find in each other a reason to get up each morning, a reason to dream, a reason to love.

Out of that summer emerges a transcendent work of art, a painting that will unexpectedly be placed into eighteen-year-old Louisa's care. She embarks on a surprise-filled cross-country journey to learn how the painting came to be and to decide what to do with it. The closer she gets to the painting's birthplace, the more nervous she becomes about what she'll find. Louisa is proof that happy endings don't always take the form we expect in this stunning testament to the transformative, timeless power of friendship and art.
(From the publisher)

Please consider Hope Circle, a place to enjoy fellowship and conversation.

GENERAL FUND NUMBERS FOR DECEMBER

Balance	11/30/2025	-\$5,367.95
Income		\$27,958.69
Expenses		\$16,575.32
Transfer in		\$93.64
Balance	12/31/2025	\$6,109.06



Did you know the Finance Committee reports the prior week's offering to the General Fund as well as the expenses weekly in the bulletin? The total offering is the actual amount of money received for that week. The expenses reported are a product of the annual budget divided by 52 weeks. The 2025 budget was \$236,766. To support that budget there needed to be \$4,553.19 in giving each week. However, historically the Church has not spent the entire budgeted amount each year. Consequently, the weekly expense amount reported is reduced by the average percentage not spent in the prior 5 years. In 2025 \$198,533.20 of the budget was spent. About 16% of what was budgeted was not spent. Our committees and staff are good stewards of our financial resources. In the newsletter the monthly giving and expenses are reported. Those are the actual amounts received and spent for the prior month. Some members give monthly and others give weekly. Some expenses happen every month and some only quarterly or once per year. Utility costs vary by season and sometimes there are unexpected expenses. These are variables. It has been brought to my attention that some members are questioning the reported numbers. If you have any questions, please talk to Liz Rajkowski in Church or call her at 412-780-6873.

The purpose of the Oakmont United Methodist Church is to grow in our dedication to the worship of God, the teaching of God's word and the caring ministry of Christ. We do this through Jesus' grace, mercy, and love which we share with the world through our daily living.

FEBRUARY

Birthdays

- 1 Thelma Lloyd
- 3 Barbara Marcus
- 4 Ralph Mayhorn, Jr.
- 5 Gail Burner
- Ashley Chamboredon
- Breanna Venanzio
- 7 Richard Grimes
- 8 Mitchell Allen
- Laura Caruso
- Brian Crooks
- 10 Bill Kennedy
- 11 Darlene DiCaprio
- Tammy Lopreiatto
- Kennedy Witucki
- 12 Kristen Parkins
- 14 Robert Bonds
- Bill Kemp
- Patrick Steimer
- 15 Lisa Allen
- 16 Gabrielle Casarcia
- 17 David Fichte
- 20 Lisa Parkins
- 22 Dany **Caruso**
Susan Peoples
- 23 Elizabeth Rajkowski
- 26 Marigene Nelson

We apologize if we inadvertently
missed your birthday.

Please call the church office and let
us know about your very special day!

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles are due February 15th
for the March newsletter.

If you would like to receive your newsletter by
email, please call the church office or send us a
message at oakmontumc@gmail.com



MISSIONS COMMITTEE NEWS

It's 2026, and Oakmont United Methodist Church's Missions Committee will be planning their activities for the year at their January 18th meeting. You are invited and encouraged to participate! Just ask any member of the Committee about how you might put your faith in action and get involved. Committee members include Linda Ashbaugh, Katherine Burdelski, Vicky Burdelski, Gladys Fichte, Jane Foster, Sharen Lenkey, Rose Miller, Deb Ormay, Laura Sawyer-Villers, and Hannah Sherer. You can make a difference!

Oakmont United Methodist Church has a covenantal relationship with Roots of Faith in Sharpsburg. Bill Handyside serves on their non-profit Board of Directors. Here's what's happening at Roots of Faith:

Roots of Faith is in the process of setting up the non-profit and purchasing a building for affordable housing and outreach programs. Unfortunately, the government shut down set them back. The grant money they were counting on to purchase the building has been delayed and not received. They are speaking with everyone they can to expedite the payments. They were supposed to close on the building in December and are now hoping to close by Jan 30th. The Board has continued to work on all of the documents, insurance, committees & other elements necessary to run a non-profit. It has been challenging however very rewarding to witness a group of people so dedicated to do some good in the world for God's kingdom. Please pray for us as we are facing some challenges to make all of this happen. Bill will keep us updated.

Please keep Roots of Faith in your prayers.

Thank you to everyone who continues to donate food to the Verona UMC Food Pantry and to our own Caring Cabinet. The Caring Cabinet is seeing a lot of action lately.

VOLUNTEER WITH US!

We are looking for volunteers to help make this year's Murder Mystery Production a success!

NAME: _____ PHONE: _____

INDICATE BELOW WHEN YOU ARE AVAILABLE TO HELP! ANY AND ALL HELP IS APPRECIATED! YOU CAN SIGN UP FOR MORE THAN ONE SHIFT.

Thursday, Feb. 19th

5:30 -8:00pm (or whenever you can get there if 5:30 is too early)
Set tables, cut/plate desserts, prep beverage station, and other snacks for Friday night show

Friday, Feb. 20th

5:00 - 8:00pm
Get beverages ready, bring desserts out, serve beverages to tables, clear plates, plate desserts for Saturday's show.

8:00 pm - ?
Put dishes away, clear tables, reset tables for Saturday's show

Saturday, Feb. 21st

10:30 - 1:30 pm
Get beverages ready, prep salad, make croissants (filling will be pre-made), plate desserts for Sunday, serve tables, clear plates

1:30pm - ?
Put dishes away, clear tables, reset tables for Sunday's show, prep beverage station for Sunday

Sunday, Feb. 22nd

12:30 - 3:30pm
Get beverages ready, prep salad, make croissants (filling will be pre-made), serve tables, clear plates

3:30pm - ?
Put away dishes, cleaning kitchen, putting tables/ chairs away, vacuuming

Place the insert in the offering.

If you are interested in helping **run the elevator, work the ticket table, or run the dishwasher**, please indicate here. We will be in touch regarding scheduling!

NEWS FROM THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

The Finance Committee and the leadership of Oakmont United Methodist Church would like to update the congregation on the end of year gifts received to support the General Fund. The gifts are as follows:

End of year giving campaign = \$7,285.00

Christmas Offering = \$4,385.00

United Methodist Women gift = \$6,841.75

The total received was \$18,511.75. The General Fund ended the year with a positive balance of \$6,109.06 so there is no need to withdrawal funds from the Endowment Account at this time. Praise God for the blessings our Church has received and for each one of you who made this possible.

A special thank you to the United Methodist Women (UMW) for the gift of \$6,841.75. This is the balance they had in their checking account as the organization has closed their account and has become inactive. Throughout the years, the UMW has worked tirelessly on behalf of the Church and supported the mission of the church, financially and otherwise. As they close this chapter of their organization, we pray for a new start for the UMW in the near future.



Adults are invited to join the Adult Sunday School Class in the church parlor Sunday mornings at 10 am as we continue to discuss and study "Women of the Bible".