

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

Ash Wednesday Service

March 5 at 7:30 PM

Lenten Bible Study

Wednesdays at 7:00 PM

March 12 - April 16

Combined Worship Service

March 30 at 10:00 AM



Oakmont United Methodist Church

419 Maryland Ave
Oakmont, PA 15139

Oakmont United Methodist Church

MARCH 2025

Beloved Oakmont United Methodist Church Family:

Greetings from God our Lord whose divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness, through the knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and excellence (2 Peter 1: 3).

As we enter the penitential season and journey through Lent, we are reminded of the importance of reflection, renewal, and recommitment. Lent is a faith journey observed by many believers through prayer, fasting, almsgiving and self-denial. Traditionally, people give up certain habits, foods, and cravings as an act of obedience to Christ. This year, I encourage you to practice tithing as a meaningful spiritual discipline and as an expression of your love and faithfulness to God.

To tithe is to give one-tenth or 10% of our income towards God's work. We do not give expecting anything in return but out of gratitude to God who blesses us with everything as stated in Psalm 24: 1. Our relationship with God is also covenantal, tithing is one way to honour that covenant.

Some hesitate to tithe due to misconceptions, such as associating it with a prosperity mindset. Others see tithing as a response to crises or special projects rather than a consistent practice. Additionally, some believe that tithing is solely an Old Testament requirement and is no longer relevant today. However, many people tithe faithfully and with discipline, while others remain uncertain due to lingering questions and concerns.

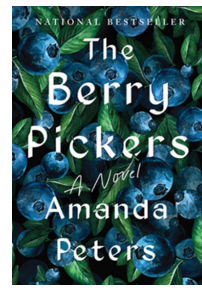
This Lent I am challenging you to begin or deepen this practice of tithing which is more than a financial obligation but a spiritual practice. While the church encourages members to support its mission, giving remains an act of freewill. It is up to each of us to decide how we give. Let us embrace tithing to prioritize God in our lives, demonstrate gratitude, and participate actively in God's divine work.

As we journey through Lent, I pray we renew our commitment to God through faithful tithing, trusting God to bless and sustain us abundantly. May our giving reflect our love and devotion to God.

Your pastor,

Rev. Natoya Thomas-Smith

**HOPE CIRCLE
BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP**



Hope Circle will meet on Thursday, March 13th, at 11:00 a.m. in the Adult Sunday School Room to discuss *The Berry Pickers* by Amanda Peters.

July 1962. A Mi'kmaq family from Nova Scotia arrives in Maine to pick blueberries for the summer. Weeks later, four-year-old Ruthie, the family's youngest child, vanishes. She is last seen by her six-year-old brother, Joe, sitting on a favorite rock at the edge of a berry field. Joe will remain distraught by his sister's disappearance for years to come.

In Maine, a young girl named Norma grows up as the only child of an affluent family. Her father is emotionally distant, her mother frustratingly overprotective. Norma is often troubled by recurring dreams and visions that seem more like memories than imagination. As she grows older, Norma slowly comes to realize there is something her parents aren't telling her. Unwilling to abandon her intuition, she will spend decades trying to uncover this family secret.

This debut by a vibrant new voice in fiction is a riveting novel about the search for truth, the shadow of trauma, and the persistence of love across time. (From the publisher)

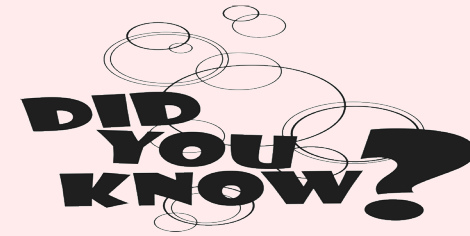
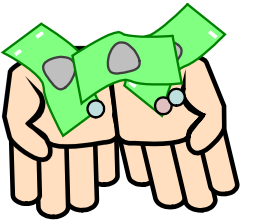
Please consider Hope Circle, a place to enjoy fellowship and conversation.

Friends Together

Friends Together is an informal small group that is open to all who enjoy a meal with friends and good conversation. The group will meet for breakfast at 9:00 a.m. on March 4th at Freedom Square Diner in Verona. No reservation is needed, just come if you are able. Laughter and lots of good coffee are guaranteed!

GENERAL FUND NUMBERS FOR JANUARY

Balance	12/31/24	-\$4,847.29
Income		\$13,590.42
Expenses		\$20,951.61
Balance	1/31/2025	-\$12,292.15



Did you know that the United Women in Faith (formerly the UMW) is urgently in need of new leaders? Without the women of our church, many activities and events can't happen. Are you able to help in positions that are in need of being filled? Do you have ideas that can be brought to fruition? With new ideas and volunteers, the possibilities are endless. If you have questions about the duties of any of the positions that need filled, please contact the church office and we can point you in the right direction or get answers for you. Since the United Women in Faith make generous donations to the general fund of the church, we stand to struggle financially as a church. This can be detrimental to the longevity and upkeep of the church building. We ask that you pray about what impact you can make on keeping the United Women in Faith going.

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.



- 1 Diane Dezzutti
Tyler Handyside
Stephen Lenkey
- 2 Mackenzie Marotta
- 3 Emma Briggs
- 4 Daniel Ross
- 6 Cindy Gaughan
Kaitlyn Lacey
- 9 Nina Crannell
- 10 Alyssa Crawford
- 15 Braeden Mechesney
- 19 Dawn Whyte
- 23 Evelyn Ferguson
Risdon Ferguson
Ian Simmers
- 24 Jack Ross
- 27 Elaine Grimes
- 29 Max Orbin
- 31 Carol Lacey

We apologize if we inadvertently missed your birthday.

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



Combined Worship

March 30, 2025

10:00 AM



Don't forget to set your clocks forward one hour on Sunday, March 9!



Begin your Lenten journey at the Ash Wednesday service on Wednesday, March 5 at 7:30 PM.

Please join us. You are welcome!

A Lenten Bible Study will begin on March 12 at 7:00 PM and will continue each Wednesday until April 16.

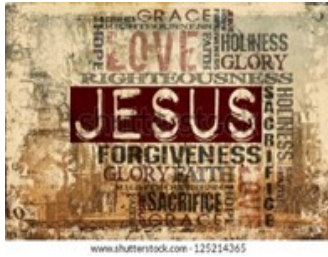


PRAYER CONCERNS

Audra Assad, Terri Aubele, Randal Burdelski, Barbara Charlton, EmmaLee Crannell, Diane and Donald Dezzutti, Lew Ferguson, John Froehlich, Beth Harley, Joann Hildebrand, John Hildebrand, Sharen Lenkey, Marigene Nelson, Cathy Smierciak, Ron Standifur

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Articles are due by March 15th for the April newsletter. If you would like to receive your newsletter by e-mail, please call the church office or send us a message at oakmontumc@gmail.com



Worship Support Committee News

Lenten Tithing Challenge

In an effort to increase faith-based giving, The Finance Committee is having a tithing challenge during the six weeks of Lent. If you already tithe, consider increasing your giving during this Lenten Season. Tithing is a journey of faith, the faith that God has provided all we have and will take care of us.

How do we prepare for Lent – Christian practices:

The number of days during Lent represent a fitting “tenth” of our calendar year. Throughout the centuries many have called the season of Lent the “tithing of the year”. During this time of year we can look at Lent as a way to disrupt our normal routines and devote more of our time and resources to God by:

Praying – taking time each day to spend with God through prayer and reading the Bible.

Fasting – giving up something we like to eat or do or even giving up a meal or two per week.

Giving or Tithing – giving money to the Church is a wonderful part of living a Gospel-centered life. (a tithe is 10% of our earnings).

Giving of ourselves and our resources should be a sacrificial act of faith, changing our hearts to be more like Christ. Jesus went into the wilderness to fast for 40 days and 40 nights after his baptism to prepare for his ministry and draw closer to God. It is our hope and prayer that we all will consider doing something meaningful and sacrificial this Lenten Season.



You may have noticed the prayer boxes. One is in the back of the Sanctuary. The other is in the chapel on the table where you pick up Sunday bulletins. Please take advantage of our church prayer ministry. Just fill out a prayer request card and slip it into the box. You can mark your prayer request confidential. The boxes are locked. Only Rev. Natoya has access. We rejoice, trusting that God answers our prayers!

What does one do when there are 5 Sundays in a month? One has a combined worship service on the 5th Sunday! Be sure not to miss out on this unique blend of worship styles on those 5th Sundays. It’s a perfect opportunity to reconnect with members of our church family we may not always see. Our next combined worship service is March 30 at 10:00 a.m. Mark your calendar!



The Worship Support Committee are actively recruiting greeters: one for the early service and two for the 11 a.m. service. Greeting others is ministry. And it’s so simple! Smile. Shake hands. Show folks where the restrooms are. Introduce them to others. Give them a bulletin. Invite them to sign the guest book and make sure they receive a Welcome Packet. Be sure to say “Yes!” when you’re asked.

UPCOMING WORSHIP

Palm Sunday: April 13 at 9:00 and 11:00 am

Maundy Thursday: April 17 at 7:30 p.m.

Good Friday, April 18: To be announced.

Easter Sunday: April 20 at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m.



Honoring the Past... Thanking the Present... Moving Forward...

As we look back over the years at all that the UMW has done, we think of our matriarchs who preceded us. Harriet, Ginny, Garnet and Grace are just a few of the renowned women who led the way.

As we look around today, we thank the hardworking members who continue to keep these time-honored traditions alive. Even as we lose special people to their jobs, family responsibilities and even death, we have managed to march on to support the church.

What Does UMW Do?

Donate to the General Fund and multiple missions

Provide paper products/beverage supplies for all events

Maintain kitchen appliances, upkeep and supplies

Purchase ingredients for Mystery Dinner, pie sales, hard candy, jams, pickles, crafts and soup for shut ins and bazaar,

Purchase and plant geraniums for the church planters

Pay for the Upper Room books annually

Provide advertising and support for Spring Yard Sale, Attic Treasures, Bake Sale and Crafts.

But as in life, society is changing and so is the UMW. Gone are the days when women had the luxury to be at church throughout the week to work on projects. In January, both our Treasurer and Craft Workshop/Bazaar coordinator resigned. And as of May 31, I will be stepping down as UMW President, after ten years of service. We are making a call to our future leaders to take up the roles that so many women have done before us. The sad fact is that without new ideas and new faces taking the helm, the long-honored traditions will fade away and find the same fate as caramel making has.

continued →

Please reach out to the Church Council, Rev. Natoya, myself or any board member if you are interested in taking over the UMW President position, Treasurer role or head up the Craft Workshop/2025 Christmas Bazaar. If we cannot fill these positions, we will be faced with the real possibility of dissolving and being just a memory of days gone by.

Yours in Christ,

Julie Trenn

President, UMW (Women in Faith)



SPRING INDOOR YARD SALE

May 17, 2025

8:30 AM - 2:00 PM

We're accepting items now and are in need of jewelry. Sorting and pricing will be in the mornings all week prior to the sale anyone can stop in and help out. Sale is May 17th from 8:30 - 2