The COMMUNITY MESSENGER

Community Church of Oak Orchard Millsboro, Delaware 19966 June 2025 Volume 3—Issue 6

A Message from Pastor Allen

THE GOOD NEW DAYS

Are you an optimist or a pessimist? Someone once said that a pessimist is an optimist who has lived long enough to know better. Sounds a little cynical but I suppose we are all guilty of a touch of cynicism from time to time. Time and life can lend itself to pessimism if we allow it to. Trials and troubles are part of our lives and some of our life experiences have left wounds.

We may choose to look at the future through the lens of our past difficulties, failures and losses. If we do it is pretty hard to be optimistic. We may even fear what may be coming down the pike, so to speak, and retreat into longing thoughts of the good old days. Well, may I assert that because I know Who holds tomorrow, I can be an optimist about the days to come. God's word is chocked full of promises that give us hope about the days ahead. Here are just a few:

For I know the plans I have for you, declares the Lord, plans for welfare and not for evil, to give you a future and a hope. —Jeremiah 29:11, ESV

The Lord your God is in your midst, a mighty one who will save; he will rejoice over you with gladness; he will quiet you by his love; he will exult over you with loud singing. —**Zephaniah 3:17,** ESV

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope. —**Romans 15:13,** ESV

Rejoice in hope, be patient in tribulation, be constant in prayer.

—Romans 12:12

For this light momentary affliction is preparing for us an eternal weight of glory beyond all comparison, as we look not to the things that are seen but to the things that are unseen. —2 Corinthians 4:17–18, ESV

The sufferings of this present time are not worth comparing with the glory that is to be revealed to us. —**Romans 8:18,** ESV

The song says, "Because He lives, I can face tomorrow." How can I give thanks in all things, (1 Thessalonians 5:18) and be a pessimist? I don't think I can do both; so, I choose to be an optimist and trust God and His word with the future.

That is called faith.







June 16

"As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him."

- Psalm 103:13

INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Fellowship Luncheon	2
Odyssea	3
Praise Song/Pentecost	4
Contagious Faith	5
Ministry In Motion	6
Men In the Bible	7
National News	8
World New	9
Delaware before a State	10
Washing Feet	11
Family Snapshots	12
Church Bus	13
Yard Sale	14
Kid's Korner	16
Birthdays / Comics	17
Coming Events	18

Faith, Food, Tellowship



FELLOWSHIP LUNCHEON MAY 4th





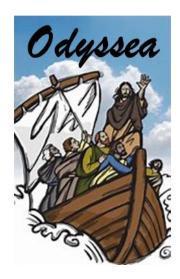
Stop taking my picture or you're going to get hit with this cheese stick!











ODYSSEA: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

God, Guide Us Forward

By Art Schmidt

What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but has no deeds? Can such faith save them? James 2:14 NIV

Summertime is the season when we get to spend more time out doors and become more active in the sunshine and fresh air. It's a time when we think about making our plans for parties we'd like to have, trips we'd like to take, and people we'd like to visit. But there are people in our community who won't have those same opportunities this summer.

Our nation is immersed in some difficult times, and instead of making fun summer plans, many people are facing joblessness, hunger, depression, discouragement, addiction, and homelessness. So far this year, we've spent time in introspective reflection during Epiphany, Lent, and Easter, but the season of Pentecost is a time to turn our perspective outward and become more involved with our community. It's the season that reminds us, as Christians, by living our faith, we grow as a person and get closer to God. As written in James 2:14-26, faith without works is dead. Jesus calls on us to be His hands and feet to carry His message of love and service out to our neighbors and local community. Summer is a great time to meet Christ face to face in the community through our ministry opportunities like Community Day, VBS, and our other outreach ministries that we sponsor.

The lessons for Pentecost tell us that this is also the season for communication—communication in the sense of being able to share oneself with others in a way that will not divide but rather unite us. The message of Pentecost is that God desires unity of purpose amongst His people knowing that we may have different and diverse spiritual gifts and skills to accomplish our shared goals. Think of our church as a boat sailing on the great Mission Ocean and we are the crew. Let's row as one body in the same direction. Just as the Apostles were in Acts, let us be all with one accord in one place.

As we continue our sacred journey in the aftermath of the Easter miracle, let us enter Pentecost with action and fellowship in our hearts. Find a cause, project, or service you are passionate about and pursue it, not just for the sake of service, but for the greater glory of God. As St. Teresa of Avia said, "Christ has no body on earth now but yours." So, this summer, be Christ's hands and feet, put your faith into action, and answer His call to serve. Let the heart of God inspire us on our journey and light the way ahead. Together, as one body, let's put our faith into action and ask God to guide us forward!

Almighty God, reclaim us now as we experience the season of Pentecost, that we might renew our commitment and be empowered for faithful service. Use our hands to do the work you have called us to do. Use our caring to build a stronger community. Use our witness to overcome ignorance of your way of love for all people. Amen

PENTECOST-JUNE 8

Christianity didn't start with Jesus' birth, death, or ascension into heaven. It started with Pentecost, fifty days after Jesus' death when the Holy Spirit entered the Upper Room holding all the apostles and descended onto them, making each speak in foreign tongue. This Pentecost experience provided the apostles direct communication with God and laid the foundation for what would become Christianity.



Father's Day Prayer

Lord, thank you for all fathers.

For the new ones, who endure sleepless nights with infants in arms.

For the busy ones, who juggle the pressures of home and family life.

For the steadfast ones, who nurture and care for our special vulnerable children.

For the patient ones, who always seek to forgive and engage with their pre-teens.

For the persistent ones, who cleverly find new ways to connect with their mini-adults.

For the father uncles, who step in to cradle and care for nieces and nephews.

For all granddads, who love and support their precious grandchildren.

For the foster dads that are called to gather and cover the fragile ones.

For the Sunday dads who care for our children and lead them in faith.

For the dads who give far beyond their own resources, who overcome disability to cherish and love.

Thank you Lord for all our beautiful fathers.

Help us to support them and keep them in our prayers.

May you bless them now on this their special day. Amen.

Source: https://www.lords-prayer-words.com/times/fathers_day_prayer.html

PENTECOST JUNE 8

Pentecost is a Christian holiday which takes place on the 49th day after Easter Day. It commemorates the descent of the Holy Spirit upon the Apostles of Jesus while they were in Jerusalem celebrating the Feast of Weeks, as described in the Acts of the Apostles.

As the apostles were "all with one accord in one place" a "rushing mighty wind filled all the house where they were sitting" and they saw "cloven tongues like as of fire" resting upon all those in attendance. Filled and emboldened by the Spirit, they began preaching to the large crowd of people from "every nation under heaven" and, miraculously, "every man heard them speak in his own language"

May our darkness be dispelled by your light, and our troubles calmed by your peace; may all evils be redeemed by your love, all pain transformed through the suffering of Christ, and all dying glorified by His risen life. Amen.



CONTAGIOUS FAITH

This month's contagious faith spotlight person is Dianna Atkins.

Dianna is an incredible person. Somewhat shy, very humble, friendly, and has a beautiful smile. One might think how could a person who is shy and humble have such contagious faith? Well, that is a good question.

People can be popular for many different reasons. Some of these reasons are fame, beauty, wealth, and so on. However, there are those who have that special something that is difficult to label. While it is difficult to pinpoint, you just enjoy being around them.

You might even say you are drawn to them. That is how I feel about Dianna!



Not long after attending C.C.O.O., I ran into Dianna at a little league baseball game. She walked right up to me and just started talking to me with that very pretty smile. From that point on, I knew that we would become friends.

Dianna enjoys doing a lot of work for the church behind the scenes. People probably don't even know what some of the things are. Here are just a few things that I know of. She has put together well over 1000 of the little Jesus packets that we hand out for our church. She helps in the kitchen at the church. She also has helped at the yard sales and pretty much any other activity that we do. All behind the scenes, that shows you where her heart is not looking for glory but doing the work of Jesus. Sharing her faith in very simple ways.

Diana also has another side to her one with a little bit of coddling will come out. When we sing our contemporary songs in church or in worship and praise night, I have managed to coax her into letting down the guard and raising her arms praising Jesus! I love it!

Thank you, Dianna, for pushing beyond your comfort zone!



Every day of our lives, we need to be *intentional* and *prepared* for the opportunity to share about the love of Jesus. With practice and time it will become second nature to be able to do this. You will grow in *intimacy with Jesus* and with those around us!

In Christ, Ed Vidzicki

Ministry in Motion:

OUR MINISTRIES & UPDATES

Our Church is growing. PRAISE THE LORD!

As this is happening, we need help! I could sugarcoat this request, but I won't! The Lord says there is a COST of discipleship and ministry work, but the rewards are out of this world!!!

<u>Maintenance</u>—We need volunteers to help with church building and grounds maintenance.

No experience necessary. Contact Ted Brown 302-549-1450 or

Elder Steve Miller- and you thought my last e-mail was long@protonmail.com 302-258-7499

<u>Home Care Ministry</u>—We need more volunteers who are willing to bring a little cheer to those who are temporarily or permanently homebound. We love each other too much to let anyone be lonely!

Contact Bonnie Shaw 724-689-3894 or Diane Long 302-945-7627.

Teaching a Bible Study or Sunday Elective Class

Contact Associate Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

<u>Women's Ministry</u>—We are starting a much needed women's ministry that will be meeting on Thursdays at 6pm starting May 8. Contact Michele Quirk 302-396-1992

<u>Men's Ministry</u>—We are looking for those interested in participating and leading this ministry at church. Contact Associate Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Community Evangelism—We need ideas that will draw our community to our church.

Contact Elder Art Schmidt art@oakorchardchurch.com 443-676-3588

<u>Kids Sunday Ministry</u>—We are in desperate need of class teachers and helpers for different age groups [infant—14 yrs old] on Sundays from 11am-12:15pm

Contact Elder Mike Koly dmkoly@verizon.net 610-350-8025 or Associate Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Youth Group Ministry—We want to create a team willing to participate in youth activities.

Contact Associate Pastor Ed ezicki@gmx.com 717-940-7433

Thank you in advance, because I have FAITH that you are more than a pew sitter! If you are not physically able to volunteer then it is your duty to now assume the higher calling of prayer warrior. Love in Christ, Pastor Ed



The Most Important Men of the Bible

In the Bible, some of the most important men include Moses, who led the Israelites out of slavery in Egypt; David, a king of Israel, famous for his strength and poetry; and Jesus, the central figure of Christianity, whose teachings and life are central to the faith. Other prominent figures include Abraham, the patriarch of Judaism, and Peter, one of Jesus's disciples.

Moses: Leading the Israelites out of Egypt, Moses received the Ten Commandments, and guided the Israelites through the wilderness. Moses is a pivotal figure in both the Old and New Testaments. He is the only person called "man of God" in the Torah.

And the child grew, and she brought him to Pharaoh's daughter, and he became her son. So she called his name Moses, saying, "Because I drew him out of the water." **Exodus 2**



David: Known for his strength, poetry, and his role as king of Israel, David's stories are filled with bravery, faith, and a complex relationship with God.

Then David spoke to the men who stood by him, saying, "Who is this uncircumcised Philistine, that he should defy the armies of the living God?" I Samuel 17



Jesus: The central figure in Christianity, Jesus is a prophet, teacher, and the son of God. His life, teachings, death, and resurrection are foundational to Christian faith.

"The next day, John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, "Behold, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world." *John 1:29*



Abraham: The father of the Jewish people, Abraham's story is one of faith, obedience, and sacrifice. He is considered a key figure in Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

And the LORD said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, "Lift your eyes now and look from the place where you are; northward, southward, eastward, and westward. For all the land which you see I give to you and your descendants forever." **Genesis 13**



Peter: One of Jesus's disciples, Peter plays a significant role in the Gospels and the early Church.

"Lord, if it's you," Peter replied, "tell me to come to you on the water."
"Come," he said. Then Peter got down out of the boat, walked on water
and came towards Jesus. But when he saw the wind, he was afraid and
beginning to sink, cried out, "Lord, save me!" Immediately Jesus reached
out his hand and caught him. "You of little faith, "he said, "why did you
doubt?" Matthew 28-31





Keeping the Faith: Church Attendance Rising Again

By Corey Olson

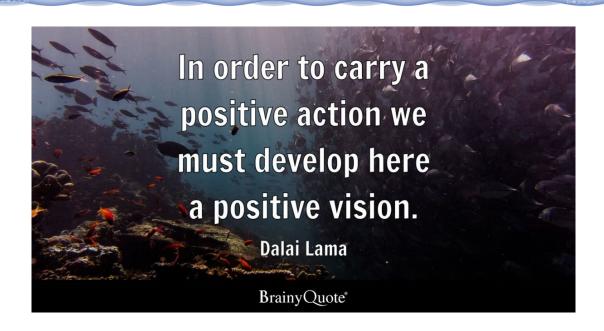
Americans may be finding their religion after years of losing it. A new survey finds more than half (52%) of Protestant churches in the U.S. report an increase in their worship attendance over the last four years, with only 15% reporting a decline in attendance. That signals a reversal of a years-long trend that has seen church attendance steadily decline in America.

There are other positive signs when it comes to Americans' faith. Bible sales are soaring, especially with younger Americans. At the same time, the share of Americans who identify as Christians is now at 62%. That is down notably from 78% nearly two decades ago, but a slight increase from the all-time low of 60% recorded in the last few years. "We're really encouraged right now by what we're seeing, including a real uptick in energy and numbers in the younger age groups," says Dave Welch, president of the Texas Pastor Council.

Welch tells KTRH his organization has seen positive trends in line with what the latest surveys show. "In the last five years, churches in which the full word of God is being taught, where the power of God is tangible, and the spirit of God is moving, have experienced steady and even explosive growth," he says. "So, the truth is, people are searching for a hope that nothing in this world can give them."

In fact, Welch wouldn't call this a comeback for the church...just a continuation. "The church was born literally 2,000 years ago in persecution, and some of its strongest growth over the centuries has been in times of actual great persecution," he explains. "So ultimately, the message hasn't changed. (Churches) are standing firmly on historic truth."

Source: https://ktrh.iheart.com/featured/houston-texas-news/content/2025-03-24-keeping-the-faith-church-attendance-rising-again/KTRH-AM Houston, Texas, March 25, 2025; Corey Olson, News Anchor/Reporter iHeartMedia





Discovery of ancient garden beneath Jesus' burial site backs up Biblical account

By Steffie Banatvala

The discovery of 2,000 year-old olive trees and grapevines are believed to reflect the Gospel of John's reports of where Jesus was crucified and buried. Getty Images Archaeologists digging under the Church of the Holy Sepulcher in Jerusalem have found signs of an ancient garden that align with biblical descriptions.

Many Christians believe the church is where Jesus was buried and it continues to be a major pilgrimage site. Now, the discovery of 2,000 year-old olive trees and grapevines are believed to reflect accounts in the Gospel of John of where Jesus was crucified and laid to rest. "Now in the place where he was crucified there was a garden, and in the garden a new tomb in which no one had yet been laid," the Gospel of John states.

"The archaeobotanical findings have been especially interesting for us, in light of what is mentioned in the Gospel of John, whose information is considered written or collected by someone familiar with Jerusalem at the time," Professor Francesca Romana Stasolla told the Times of Israel. "The Gospel mentions a green area between the Calvary and the tomb, and we identified these cultivated fields."

Excavations have since been as the churches expect crowds of pilgrims over Easter celebrations. The 2022 project marked the first major restoration since the 19th century and headed by a Sapienza University of Rome professor.

The restoration had to be agreed on by the Roman Catholic, Armenian and Greek Orthodox custodians. It also needed an Israel Antiquities Authority license. "With the renovation works, the religious communities decided to also allow archaeological excavations under the floor," Professor Stasolla said. The team found layers dating from the Iron Age under the basilica, including pottery, oil lamps and soil samples.

The presence of pre-Christian artefacts suggests the land changed over time from a quarry, through cultivated land to a burial site over time.



Source: https://www.newsbreak.com/share/3946147803046-discovery-of-ancient-garden-beneath-jesus-burial-site-backs-up-biblical-account?

What Was Delaware Called Before Becoming a State?

By William Zimmerman

DELAWARE - Before achieving statehood and earning the moniker "The First State," Delaware's identity was a bit more complex. Throughout the 17th and early 18th centuries, the region now known as Delaware existed under various names and political configurations.

Delaware: From Colonial Outpost to the First State

Early Settlements and Colonial Rule

The area that would eventually become Delaware was initially inhabited by Native American tribes, including the Lenape and Nanticoke peoples. European colonization began in the early 17th century, with the Dutch establishing the first settlement in 1631. The colony changed hands several times, passing from Dutch to Swedish to English rule, and was known by different names throughout this period.

The Lower Counties on the Delaware

Under British rule, the area was officially known as "The Three Lower Counties on the Delaware River," or simply "The Lower Counties." These counties – New Castle, Kent, and Sussex – were considered part of the Pennsylvania colony, though they operated with a degree of autonomy.

The Road to Independence

As tensions grew between the American colonies and Great Britain, Delaware, like its counterparts, began to assert its own identity and desire for self-governance. In 1704, Delaware established its own General Assembly, separating its legislative body from Pennsylvania while still sharing the same governor. On **June 15**, 1776, the Delaware Assembly took a bold step, declaring independence from Great Britain and establishing itself as a separate state. This act predated the signing of the Declaration of Independence by two weeks, making Delaware the first colony to officially break away from British rule.

The First State

Following the Declaration of Independence, Delaware drafted and adopted its own state constitution on September 20, 1776. The state's commitment to independence was further solidified on December 7, 1787, when it became the first state to ratify the United States Constitution. This historic act earned Delaware the nickname "The First State," a title that remains a source of pride for its residents.

A Legacy of Independence

Delaware's journey to statehood reflects the broader struggle for independence and self-governance that characterized the American Revolution. Its early declaration of independence and its pivotal role in ratifying the Constitution solidified its place in American history. Today, Delaware's unique past is commemorated in its state flag and seal, which proudly display the date of its independence declaration, June 15, 1776.



Source: https://www.phillybite.com/index.php/travel/66-guide/10825-delaware-called-before-a-state

Sunday Sermon, May 18

During his sermon, Pastor Allen reminded us of how important humility and service are and provided a powerful demonstration of his humility and willingness to serve by washing Tara's feet.

In the Bible, washing feet symbolizes several important concepts, including humility, service, and cleansing. Jesus willingly performed the task that was done by servants, demonstrating humility and a willingness to serve others, even those he considered his "lesser."



So he got up from the meal, took off his outer clothing, and wrapped a towel around his waist. After that, he poured water into a basin and began to wash his disciples' feet, drying them with the towel that was wrapped around him. When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. "You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. Very truly I tell you, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them." - John 13:4-5, 12-17

Washing someone's feet symbolizes humility and service. It's an expression of love, depicting that no task is beneath us when it captivates the essence of serving others with kindness and respect.

Family Promise receives grant to help Delawareans avoid homelessness

May 17, 2025

Family Promise of Southern Delaware recently received a \$20,000 grant from Clayton Homes, helping families in Sussex County receive the support they need to stay safely housed.



The grant is a portion of the \$1.5 million Clayton Homes is dispersing to the Family Promise national network as part of their recently announced partnership extension. The initiative, A Future Begins at Home, is dedicated to supporting families experiencing homelessness by helping them stay in their homes and swiftly regain stability. Since its inception in 2019, A Future Begins at Home has catalyzed millions in additional funding, resulting in more than 30,000 families served.

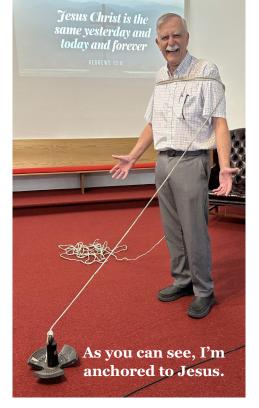
"This generous \$20,000 grant from Clayton Homes is more than a donation; it's a powerful investment in the lives of families on the brink. At Family Promise of Southern Delaware, we believe that with support and compassion, every family can find stability and hope. This gift strengthens our mission to prevent homelessness before it begins, and we are deeply grateful," said Executive Director Carolyn Ames Kelly.



I'm just hangin' out with my gnomees, but I feel a little elf-conscious wearing this sweater.









12

CHURCH BUS REFURBISHING

The church has been looking to purchase a second-hand bus for quite some time. It has been difficult to find something affordable which is in decent shape. We were fortunate to find something in Snow Hill, which was owned by a church there. It needed having the brake lines replaced which they paid for, it also needed new tires, which we paid for.

The bus needed a lot of TLC as well as the roof leaking and needed to be sealed. I volunteered to head the work needed. The roof was the most important. It had to be cleaned using a metal scrub brush, industrial cleaner, special caulk and silicone base sealant. That was the most expensive part at just over \$400.00.

The inside needed a deep cleaning, the seats were removed to able to clean the walls and floor and a heater located under one of the seats. The ceiling lights were replaced as most were damaged from water leaks. The exterior had 2 backup lamps changed as well as a couple of bulbs for lighting. The mirror brackets were removed, rust removed then primed and painted. The wheels had rust removed, primed and painted. The lettering was removed and the area's sanded, primed and painted. All seams were caulked as well as the rubber around the windows. The AC coils were cleaned. The total expenditure for what was completed was \$855.67.

I need to apologize for my absence since the end of February. I am sure most of you are aware of my situation.

My wife was placed in hospice care, and I do not feel comfortable leaving her alone. If I am outside, I come in to check about every 15 minutes. I have been able to maintain my responsibilities to the church on a behind the scenes situation. When I volunteered for this project, I asked Pastor to announce that I would like help with someone to be with my wife while I was working on the bus. There were 8 ladies who volunteered and 3 men to help outside. I have donated \$500.00 for this project in the names of all who helped with the project. Without mentioning names, you all know who you are. The church moto is

"Where Friends Become Family". This has made a whole new meaning to me. My wife loves company, and this made her a world of good.

From the bottom of my heart, I wish to thank each and every one of you.

— **Ted Brown** (Board Chair)









We raised \$1,570 for the Bus Project!









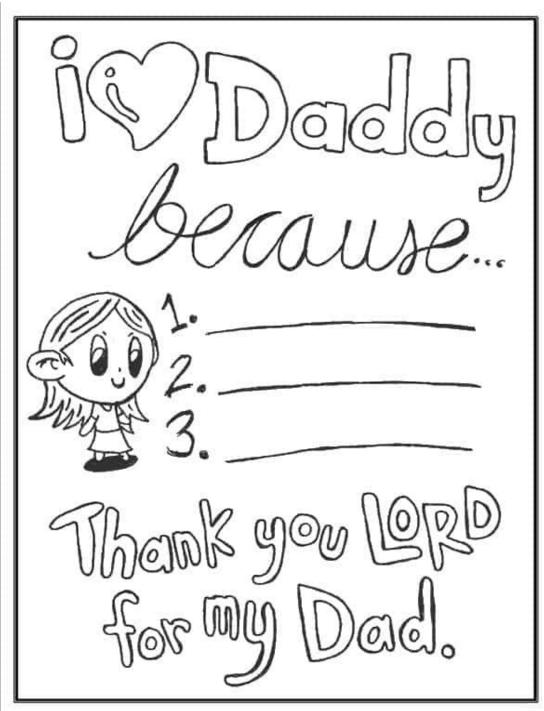








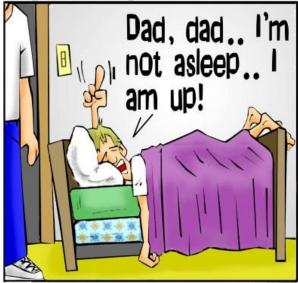




Hey Kids, color this drawing and give it to your dad on Father's Day. Have fun!







THE PARABLE OF THE SLEEPING SON - The kingdom of Heaven is like the son who depends on his dad to be his walking talking alarm clock rather than getting an alarm clock of his own, Mt 25:1-13ish

FATHERS

ALK CHENK. THEY ARE OFTEN THE PARENT RESPONSIBLE FOR TEACHING SOME OF LIFE'S MOST IMPORTANT TRADITIONS,





JUNE BIRTHDAYS

- Karen Jenson
- 13 Jessica Baker
- 17 Darlene Becker
- 23 Warren Bradley
- 24 Barbara Harris
- 24 Camden Murray
- 25 Rick Degrassi
- 27 Terri Parsons
- 27 Tim Domanski







Where Friends Become Family! 32615 Oak Orchard Road, Millsboro, DE 19966



NEWSLETTER STAFF

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oakorchardchurch.com

Scroll down to the bottom and click on the "GIVE" button.

Thank you for supporting our mission and for your faithfulness in giving!

Scan the QR Code below to visit our website.



UPCOMING EVENTS

6/1 Combined Worship Service 10am Worship Service 11am Congregational Meeting 12:15pm Fellowship Luncheon

6/3 Church Friends Night Out 6:15pm, Yellow Fins (Tentative)

6/8 Communion

6/9 Board Meeting 5:30pm

6/11 Medical Team CPR Class 5:30pm

6/12 Praise and Worship Night 6:00pm

6/15 Father's Day IRVFC Breakfast 9:00am

6/16 Dinner & Discussion 5:45pm Countering the Culture

6/17 Men's BBQ 5pm

6/21 Movie Matinee 12pm

6/23 Zoom Summer Series 6:30pm Group Dinner

6/27 *Meals 4 Missions Dinner* 4:00pm, Shepard's Pie \$15 Pre-reservation Recommended



CHURCH BOARD of ELDERS

Pastor: Allen Miller Chair: Ted Brown V/Chair: Steve Miller Assoc. Pastor: Ed Vidzicki Treasurer: Art Schmidt Dave Hammer Mike Koly



SUNDAY WORSHIP

8:00 or 11:00 AM in person or online.

Bible Study 9:30 AM

Watch our services on: Facebook— @oakorchardchurch

YouTube— @CCOakOrchard/streams

BIBLE STUDY

Tuesdays 6:30 PM Zoom Bible Study

Wednesdays 9:30-11 AM AGAPE Bible Study

ACTIVITIES

Tuesdays 10:00 AM T.O.P.S. Meeting (Take off Pounds Sensibly)

Wednesdays 8:00 pm C.D.A.

Thursdays 3:00 pm Kingdom Prayer Meeting

Fellowship Luncheon 1st Sunday of the Month at 12:30