	<h1>OAKNOTES</h1>	Oakmont Presbyterian Church
		FEBRUARY

Lent enables us to face ourselves, to see the weak places, to touch the wounds in our own soul, and to determine to try once more to live beyond our lowest aspirations.

It is **one of my favorite seasons of the year**...the church year that is: Lent!

The forty days of Lent (before Easter) invite us to pause and catch our spiritual breath and in the pausing to open ourselves to search with the spirit for the “weak places” and the “wounds in our soul”. We give God permission to be at work in our hearts, minds and wills and we open ourselves by various spiritual practices such as confession, solitude and silence, spiritual reading, and outward acts of grace.

This season of Lent is **no aimless exploration** but rather a journey towards the resurrection light of Easter. In stark terms, we move in Lent out of the dark tomb and into resurrection light. In traditional language of faith, we allow more of our old selves to die that the new life in Christ may rise more fully within us. And the Spirit is our guide.

The example and pattern for the forty days of Lent comes from Jesus’ forty days in the wilderness...to which the Spirit led him! In Lent, as in all of life, the Spirit is quietly at work in us guiding, revealing, accompanying, inspiring. For that reason, we are confident that our investments of time, energy and openness will pay spiritual dividends. The Spirit is the guarantor; we “show up and open up” and the Spirit will shape us.

I invite you to observe three important practices:

- *Regular Weekly Worship* – Through the Scriptures in Lent we accompany Jesus on his journey to Jerusalem. Lenten Scripture readings will guide, challenge and encourage us on our journey.
- *Mid-week Suppers & Worship Services*: Wednesdays, February 24 – March 24
Theme: “What I’ve Learned: Member Stories of Spiritual Growth”

Suppers, 6:30 p.m.

Soups include: 24 Feb ~ *Chili*, 3 Mar ~ *Ham & Bean*,
10 Mar ~ *Vegetable Beef*, 17 Mar ~ *Tomato Bisque*, 24 Mar ~ *Wedding*

Worship in the sanctuary, 7:10 p.m.

Ash Wednesday, (worship only) February 17th at 7:00 pm

Maundy Thursday, (worship only) April 1st, 7:00 p.m.

Good Friday, (worship only) April 2nd

Community worship, Noon, Place to be announced

OPC – 7:00 p.m.

- *Devotional Readings* – We will be using the book Bread and Wine: Readings for Lent and Easter. This wonderful book was distributed to members several years ago. It is filled with short, readable meditations by mentors of faith. Additional copies will be made available.

The Church has bequeathed Lent as a gift to us. What a joy it is to determine together that we will try again to live beyond our lowest aspirations!

Steve

A Fresh Start (with Some Old Friends)...

Recently, I've been putting in a good many hours with an assistant (Ali Taylor), cataloguing and reviewing our church library. We have a host of wonderful books and other media that have hidden on shelves unnoticed by many. Too, we are in the process of merging the holdings of the Family Life Ministry resource library with Francis Frary, and making the transition to a digital catalogue of our holdings. Imagine entering all the pertinent catalogue data for several thousand books, magazines, films, audiotapes, etc., as well as culling outdated material from the collection, then reorganizing the shelving...well, it's been a chore. And we're not done yet. But, you can begin to see the shape of things to come in the near future. And you are more than welcome to check out any of the library books, and other media in the meantime. For instance, there is an excellent bi-monthly audio journal "Mars Hill", comparable to NPR's "Fresh Air", that thoughtfully examines key intersections of Christianity and culture in the arenas of both art and science.



In the process of reviewing all the books in the library I came across a "new" old favorite. I picked up a copy of "Bread and Wine", the book we offered in 2006 as the church Lenten and Easter devotional. Man, just perusing some of the daily offerings by authors like C.S. Lewis, Frederick Buechner, Philip Yancey, Kathleen Norris and Mother Teresa, I was thinking how much I'd like to dive into the book all over again. In fact, after chatting with Steve about it, that's what we'll be encouraging the rest of the church to do these Lent and Easter seasons. For those members or friends of the church who don't have a copy we'll make extras available. The book thematically travels Jesus' life (invitation, temptation, passion, crucifixion, resurrection, new life), inviting the reader to do the same, journeying deeper into the call to discipleship.

As I said before, we'll make extra copies of the Lenten and Easter devotionals available, in the Fifth Street vestibule and in Friendship Hall. And when you pass through the Fifth Street vestibule make sure to check out the new monitor displaying recent events, pictures, and information about the life of the church. The monitor is a gift from an anonymous donor, and is a great venue for sharing news and all the great pictures that our resident photographer (Doug Crist) has been kind enough to record over the last few years. Stick around for the slide shows and you never know whose face will show up, grinning ear to ear. It's a great resource and we are truly thankful to our generous donor.

Well, like the title said, in various places and ways you can see a lot of fresh starts around the church this new year. And I'm pleased to find that in each of these places and ways, you'll also find some old friends worth renewing the acquaintance with. I hope you enjoy the experience as much as I have and will.

Peace,

Brad

This July, 15 Sr. High youth group members, along with 3 adults, will participate in a mission experience that will be faith building, life changing and a growth experience that will have ripple effects for many years to come. The senior high mission team is going to Arecibo, Puerto Rico. Arecibo, El Diamante Del Norte, the diamond of the North, has a mean salary of \$19, 280. Their poverty level is twice as large as the poverty level in the United States.

While the OPC team is in Puerto Rico their mission will be relational, working on building relationships and spreading the word of Jesus Christ to children, the elderly and/or a growing homeless population. As with any growth experience, the members of this mission team will be asked to reach out of their comfort zone, stretch, struggle and grow!

Here are some upcoming activities and dates. Please mark your calendars.

February 14th: Spaghetti dinner following the 11:00 worship service in the dining room.

April 17th: Community Pancake Breakfast

May TBA: Gourmet Luncheon

May/June: lots of car washes to get rid of winter dirt!

We have a Rent-A-Team program available for big projects that you don't want to tackle by yourself! Members of the youth team will clean out your garage, do yard projects, move heavy furniture etc.

Please don't forget about your bottle of dimes. We've gotten a few back. Thank you!

Jane

**I verily think these Sunday Schools are one of
the noblest specimens of charity which have been
set on foot in England since William the Conqueror.**
John Wesley (1703-1791)

I always wondered how Sunday School began. Who saw the need to educate children/youth and adults in spiritual ways? A little research revealed that the Sunday School movement began in England by Robert Raikes in 1790. He observed street children on Sundays “swearing, stealing and being rowdy.” These children worked in factories six days a week and therefore were unable to attend school. Raikes wanted to provide an opportunity for religious education as well as teaching reading and writing. The Bible was the central core of the program. Memorization of Bible verses was required and tickets were given to students who were able to memorize all the assigned verses. Leaders of the program saw that the students were more motivated in receiving tickets rather than learning from the verses, and abandoned the memorization practice. Classes would begin at 10AM, and conclude around 2PM with lunch provided. The community saw a marked decrease in crime once the Sunday Schools started. Robert Raikes was honored for his work by many, including John Wesley.

The movement came to America, originating in Philadelphia in the 1790’s. Basically the goal was to provide literacy training to poor children and adults on their one day that they were not working. Sunday School also provided education to girls and freed African Americans. This movement was not associated with a particular church or congregation. Various Sunday School organizations and societies grew out of these movements. The Sunday School Societies were in conflict about teacher training and curriculum. A teacher training site was established that lead to the Chautauqua Movement. As the public school systems began to develop the Sunday Schools began to wane. In the 1830’s efforts were made to continue Sunday School, making it a part of a particular denomination. This idea was mainly Protestant, and the programs grew rapidly.

In the twentieth and twenty first century, Sunday School has been primarily used for the purpose of religious education. The teachers are volunteers that have a desire to assist children through adults in their faith journey. There are many more teacher training opportunities and new curriculums have been published. New ways of presenting the Biblical studies are employed using rotational models, technology and small group settings. Sunday School remains a significant tool in religious training.

Bev Taylor



A SAFE PLACE FOR COMFORT, GROWTH, & RENEWAL

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of compassion and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God.” 2 Corinthians 1:3-4

Due to the increasing need for quality Christian counseling and the scarcity of availability in the Alle-Kiski area, the Family Life Ministry program has responded.

Come and learn about the **OPC/FLM Counseling Center at the Open House on February 7th**, following the 11:00 worship service, downstairs in the Sunday School assembly area.

Memorial and Gift Fund Annual Report – 2009

In 2009, the Memorial and Gift Fund received \$3,990. Also memorials of \$75 were given to Friends of Music, \$100 to hand bells and \$75 to the Women’s Association. Memorials were given in memory of Del Pahlman, Wayne Glenn, Richard Swift, Elva Hayes, Jean Jones, Robert Erickson, James Scott, Harry Alverson, Jr., Vera Forstrom, Mary Jane Simpson, Mary Alcorn and Betty Eaton. Two leaves were added to the Memorial Tree: Richard and Carol Swift, Wayne and Kathy Glenn.

One thousand sixty-five dollars of Memorial Funds were used to purchase another octave of bells for the Bell Choir, \$1,800 was used to construct retractable leaves for the current communion table to accommodate communion trays of bread and juice, \$1,600 was used to compensate Bob Ruefle for consulting with the Christian Education Committee and upgrading our Confirmation Class curriculum and also co-teaching the class. \$4,995.35 was used to purchase a video camera, a MacBook Pro laptop for video editing with accompanying software. For the library we purchased devotions for children and adults, Mars Hill Audio Journal, various books on CD, books on integration of science and faith, and books discussing ethical dilemmas and the Christian moral response. Money from the Fund was also used for renovations and furniture for the OPC counseling center.

Joey Killian, a 2009 graduate of Riverview High School, received the Harvey D. Reed Memorial Scholarship for Music. He is attending Furman University in Greenville, SC. He was selected as the outstanding senior in music, English, mathematics, and science by the Riverview High School faculty.

STEWARDSHIP

Thank you for your participation in the 2010 pledge campaign. We are fortunate to have had 170 families pledge \$421,490 to support our church’s endeavors. However, this is \$11,690 short of what is needed to meet our church’s financial obligations.

If you have forgotten or misplaced your pledge card, it’s never too late! Please contact the church office at 412-828-5770 if you need another pledge card.

We have begun a change in the leadership of our music ministry. We thank Tim Mobley for his nearly two year’s service to our congregation. Anyone with questions, please contact Rev. Wilson or Jim Kinter, Chair of the Personnel Committee.

TRUSTEES UPDATE

The Steam boiler was repaired.

	GREETERS	FLOWERS	USHERS
Feb. 7	Dick Ayars	Shannon Meyers	Fred Shields, Head Usher;
Feb. 14	Jack Kells	Open	Linda Adzima, Diane Shields;
Feb. 21	Tom Tumulty	Doris Lewis	Bart and Janice French; and
Feb. 28	Joe McNally	Open	Dale and Joan Remail

GREETERS

If you are unable to be a Greeter on your assigned date, please contact another Greeter to take your station. **If you are interested in becoming a Greeter**, please contact Pat Zanella (724-733-1338).

FLOWERS

Please sign up on the Flower Calendar in the Fifth Street vestibule or contact Carla Lowman at 412-795-2521.

USHERING

Interested in Ushering?
Please contact Jack Lewis at 412-798-2475.

Film Discussion Series*Free Admission & Everyone is Welcome!***Screening Dates:****February 5**—Abraham, part 1**February 19**—Abraham, part 2

The Old Testament story of Abraham and the trials he endures. Commanded by God to lead his family to the promised land of Canaan with the promise that if he does so, his descendants will become a great and numerous tribe. His obedience, as well as that of his children and grandchildren, is severely tested as they prove their faith to God.

March 5—Henry Poole is Here!**March 19**—The Wager**April 9**—Hidden Secrets**April 23**—Changing Lanes**May 7**—Night of the Iguana**May 21**—Pilgrim's Progress**Women 4 Women Knitting for Peace**

If you missed the shawl blessing in November, you didn't see the new projects that have been added to the shawl project. We are now knitting or crocheting preemie hats and boy and girl dolls. There are patterns available for knitting these. The preemie hats are so valuable for saving the lives of premature infants. As always we are still collecting shawls. We will be having another blessing service in the Spring where shawls, dolls and preemie hats will be blessed. If you are interested in trying either of the new projects, contact (or remind) Diane Shields you would like a pattern.

PW Bible Study

The Bible Study Circles are meeting on Wednesday, February 3 at 1:30 in the Marie Berg Room. We will be introducing our new study entitled Joshua, A Journey of Faith by Mary Mikhael. The study begins by talking about Joshua's call to leadership and what he did in answering that call. Everyone is invited to share in the fellowship, learning and refreshments. Hope to see you there!

The price has gone up a little but the ham loaves are still as delicious as ever! We have some ready for an easy dinner. The price is now \$2.50 each. Contact Diane Shields at 412-828-7669 or the church office at 412-828-5770.

YARD SALE

The Deacon-sponsored Super Yard Sale will take place **July 30 & 31**. Please keep this in mind when you are doing your spring cleaning. We will be accepting just about anything that is in *good working order* and *clean*—housewares, ladies' and children's clothing (no men's clothing), electronics (no TVs this year), books, toys, furniture, etc. If you have questions, please contact Keith McKenzie at 412-793-9379. The yard sale is the Deacon's primary fund-raiser during the year, and we appreciate your contributions.

MEN'S BIBLE STUDY – A PURPOSE DRIVE LIFE

Are you wondering what God's purpose is for you? Are you a guy? Are you looking for a wonderful opportunity to fellowship with other men over good food and meaningful conversation? We have an opportunity for you.....beginning **February 6th**, and lasting for 6 weeks (March 13th) Nick Cratsa and Eric Walker will lead an informal men's group centered around the book, *A Purpose Driven Life*, by Rick Warren. The group will meet in the dining room Saturday morning's beginning on **February 6th at 8:00 AM** (Nick is cooking breakfast each week!) and explore God's amazing plan for you. Please contact Jane Kinter if you are interested in this group, so that a book can be ordered for you, at jkinter@oakmontpresby.org or by calling the church office.

OPC OFFICERS

TRUSTEES

Class of 2010

Hank Buechli
Bill Taylor

Class of 2011

Wayne Blackwell
Rob Repp

Class of 2012

Sam Anderson
Bay Flanery
Sally Huber-Lewis

SESSION

Class of 2010

Janice French
Sherri Geis
Jack Meyers
Bill Pennell
Dave Sipe
Tom Tumulty
*Debra Hays—Co-opted

Class of 2011

Jane Gieske
Robin Gourley
Jan Hepler
Jim Kinter
Les Leasure
Dave Fawcett

Class of 2012

Lloyd Kaiser
Sharon Myers
Rich Ogrodowski
Fred Shields
Amy Veltri
Jim Welsh

DEACONS

Class of 2010

Marian Allen
Ellen Jubeck
Bobbie Lio
Keith McKenzie
Karen Smith
Frank Roach

Class of 2011

Jody Cole
Paul Gigler
Chris Hudack
Stacey Quinio
Erik Selinger
Janet Trebac

Class of 2012

Kathy Bowser
Ron Burkert
Marge Kuhn
Shelly Marvich
Joan Remai
Adele Selinger

GREEN TEAM UPDATE

Oakmont residents, we encourage you to use the new Allied Waste Service recycling every other week here in Oakmont. We plan to continue collecting cardboard/paperboard on the *third Sunday of each month* for the next few months to see what the need is for those who don't live in Oakmont.

Battery Recycling Collection—we now have a container for the recycling collection of *A, AA, AAA, C and D batteries*, look for the recycling container in the Fifth Street vestibule.

As a committee, we will be looking at other ways to be involved in caring for God's creation and would welcome any suggestions or ideas. Feel free to talk to any of our committee members: John Rock, Steve Hoops, Dot Shreve, Maureen Stecik, Sherry Geis, Karen Smith and Sharon Myers. Stay tuned for more information in the next newsletter. Thank you for continuing to "*reduce, reuse, and recycle.*"

Men's Breakfast Fellowship
Tuesday, February 2
8:30 am in the Dining Room

Our speaker will be Bill Coombs, Director of Celebrate Recovery at Three Rivers Assembly of God in Penn Hills. Celebrate Recovery is a Christian based alcohol and drug recovery program that focuses on a relationship with God and Jesus Christ as the basis of recovery.

Hope to see you there!

Please call the church office to RSVP at 412-828-5770
Don't forget: bring a friend!

PROPERTY & FINANCE COMMITTEE

For the year 2009, OPC's expense budget finished with a negative balance as shown below:

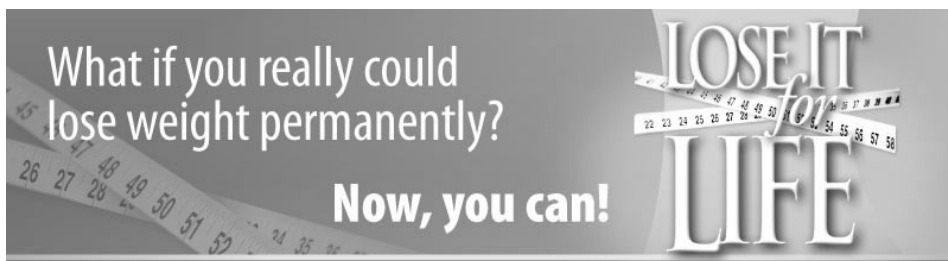
Total Income:	\$505,789
Total Expenses:	\$523,923
Budget Balance:	(\$18,134)

We want to thank all of you who contributed to the success of our church and we look forward to an even better year in 2010.

Oakmont Presbyterian Church
415 Pennsylvania Avenue
Oakmont, PA 15139

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OPC FAMILY LIFE MINISTRY



1 Business Name

LOSE IT *for* LIFE

THE TOTAL SOLUTION-Spiritual, Emotional, Physical- FOR PERMANENT WEIGHT LOSS

Chances are you've tried diet programs . . . you know the joy of making progress and the shameful defeat of gaining back the weight, plus more. Starting in February, there will be a 12- week support group for people who want to lose weight FOR LIFE, the holistic way. **LOSE IT FOR LIFE** is the total solution--Spiritual, Emotional, Physical--for Permanent Weight Loss.

Fee: \$100.00 includes book, workbook and journal planner, 12 weeks of support with a trained group facilitator, as well as other resources

Contact: Jane Kinter to register or for more info
jkinter@oakmontpresby.org or
412-916-7005