



OAKNOTES

Oakmont Presbyterian
Church

MARCH

Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

A number of years ago when we developed banners for the sanctuary we struggled to choose symbols for the purple, Lenten banners. In spite of our efforts, nothing seemed right and then we came upon what may be a true spiritual insight – Lent is what you make of it. In a sense, each individual's turn toward God puts their particular image life onto the Lenten banners.

Some of our members have shared with me their particular Lenten focus. Now when I look at our Lenten banners these are some of the images I imagine:

- kneeling in prayer for others
- looking heavenward with open arms to accept God's mercy and leave shame behind
- sitting quietly in a comfortable chair and focusing on scripture reading
- walking along a path as exercise for body, mind and spirit
- lying awake at night with the trust of a child sleeping in her parent's bed
- entering the door to a recovery room

You can figure out the issues or spiritual practices people are undertaking from those images.

One challenge we must face in Lent is that of our own expectations – sometimes we think that life is what it is and that nothing will change. Clearly, that attitude can infect our thinking and undermine our practice.

Theologically, our God is the God who not only created, but continues to create. "Behold, I am making all things new" we read (Revelation 21:5). And from Paul, "So if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation: everything old has passed away; see, everything has become new!" (2 Corinthians 5:17)

In his recent book, John Savage writes of such newness coming to him.

About two years before this book was published I took part in a prayer vigil in a church that has a beautiful stained-glass window at the front of the worship area. There was a kneeler placed in front of the Communion Table. The sanctuary had been dimmed to enhance the silence. I moved and knelt on the prayer bench and focused on the well-lighted stained-glass window of Jesus kneeling in the garden of Gethsemane. In a moment of meditation I imagined myself kneeling next to Jesus. I asked, "Jesus, do you have a word for me?" the response was startling, fast and clear. "Write," he said (John Savage, *Your Spiritual IQ: Five Steps to Spiritual Growth*).

Perhaps this is the very time that you will hear God's word for you if you will stop and listen.

Grace to you, and

Peace,

Steve

Thoughtful words from author Geoffrey Hill...just a taste from the Lenten Devotional "Bread and Wine".

Peace,

Brad

Lachrimae Amantis

Geoffrey Hill

What is there in my heart that you should sue
so fiercely for its love? What kind of care
brings you as though a stranger to my door
through the long night and in the icy dew

seeking the heart that will not harbor you,
that keeps itself religiously secure?
At this dark solstice filled with frost and fire
your passion's ancient wounds must bleed anew.

So many nights the angel of my house
has fed such urgent comfort through a dream,
whispered "your lord is coming, he is close"

that I have drowsed half-faithful for a time
bathed in pure tones of promise and remorse:
"tomorrow I shall wake to welcome him."

DEACONS CORNER

The Deacons would like to thank everyone who donated desserts for the dinner that we hosted through Twin Boros Health Ministry in January. The Deacons provided meals for over 50 guests at the Verona Methodist Church.

Due to scheduling problems we have not had a blood drive in recent months. The blood drives will resume in March. The blood drives will be held in March, May, August and October on the first Saturday of the month. As in the past, the drives will alternate between OPC and the Oakmont Methodist Church with the March drive being held at OPC. If you can donate, please contact Keith McKenzie (412-793-9379), Joan Remail (412 828-7105) , or Erik Selinger (412 795-2269) to schedule your donation.

Although the weather is definitely winter, please don't forget that summer is coming and so is the Yard Sale. As you are doing your spring-cleaning, please consider donating those unneeded items to the yard sale. We need house wares, linens, furniture, books, children's clothing, toys, women's clothing, jewelry, and electronics (no TVs please). If you have questions or have large items that require pick-up, please call Keith McKenzie (412-793-9379).



The Spaghetti Dinner in support of the OPC youth mission team that was scheduled for today has been **rescheduled for Sunday, March 21st** following the 11:00 worship service. Mark your calendar!

Lent at Oakmont Presbyterian Church

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.

Lenten Worship Services

(Child care will be provided for all the worship services.)

Apr 1 Maundy Thursday, sanctuary, 7:00 pm.

Apr 2 Good Friday, sanctuary, 7:00 pm.

Lenten Suppers & Worship Services

Suppers ~ dining room

Worship ~ sanctuary

(Child care will be provided for all the worship services.)

“What We’ve Learned: Member Stories of Spiritual Growth”

- Mar 3** 6:30 pm, Supper: ham & bean soup
7:10 pm, Worship: Elva & Bill Taylor: *“What We Learned about Blending Two Families”*
- Mar 10** 6:30 pm, Supper: vegetable beef soup
7:10 pm, Worship: Janice, Natalie, & Kirsten French: *“What We’ve Learned about Family Transitions”*
- Mar 17** 6:30 pm, Supper: tomato bisque soup
7:10 pm, Worship: ‘Fireproofing Your Marriage’ Group, *“What We’ve Learned about Healthy Marriages”*
- Mar 24** 6:30 pm, Supper: wedding soup
7:10 pm, Worship: Paul Gigler, *“What I’ve Learned About My Journey”*

Financial Update from Property and Finance Committee

For January 2010, our church's expense budget shows the following:

Total Income: \$54,718
 Total Expense: \$53,382
 Budget Balance: +\$1,336

We are off to a good start this year with the budget and with your help, we will continue this positive trend all year. Thanks for your many contributions to our church.

*Karen and crew
 your kindness and
 hospitality blessed my family
 beyond words. you made a
 difficult time less so by
 providing a warm inviting
 place to visit and share
 a meal. Thank you so
 much.
 Jamie Merrill*

TRUSTEES UPDATE

The Steam boiler was repaired.

	GREETERS	FLOWERS	USHERS
Mar. 7	Dale Remail	Shannon Meyers	Kathy Bowser, Head Usher; Bob and Amy Fassinger; Eric and Adele Selinger; and John, Amy & Carmen Veltri
Mar. 14	Clare Oskin	Karen Smith	
Mar. 21	Barbara Spier	French Family	
Mar. 28	Bay Flanery	Palm Sunday	

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

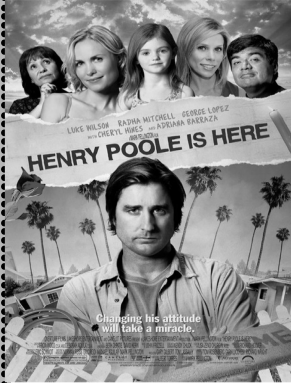
Interested in Ushering?
 Please contact Jack Lewis at 412-798-2475.

Film Discussion Series

Free Admission & Everyone is Welcome!

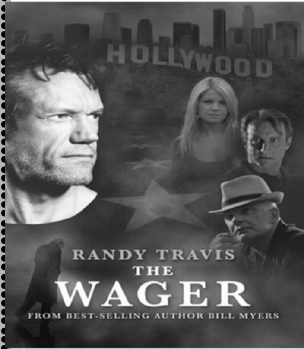
Screening Dates:

March 5—Henry Poole is Here!



A comedic drama about a disillusioned man who goes hiding in placid suburbia only to discover he cannot escape the forces of hope. Returning to the middleclass neighborhood where he grew up, Henry chooses to live in indulgent isolation. Real life, however, refuses to cooperate with his plans. Nosy neighbors interrupt him with curious visits and prying questions. Then the situation escalates as a stain on Henry's stucco wall is seen to have miraculous powers. His last-ditch hideout becomes a shrine; his backyard turns into an arena for passionate debate about faith and destiny. Seeking anonymous oblivion, cynical Henry Poole instead finds himself right at the center of the human comedy. A modern-day fable, director Mark Pellington's new film investigates the unexpected wonders of the everyday. A faithless man finds hope. A hopeless man finds love. Whether backyard miracles are real or triggered by hope and belief, their personal effects are permanent.

March 19—The Wager



An actor at the pinnacle of his Hollywood career finds himself buckling to temptation after he accepts the lead in a classic tale of good versus evil and rumors concerning his mortality and faith begin making the rounds. Michael Steele (Randy Travis) has just been nominated for Best Actor at the Academy Awards. It's the highest honor an actor could hope for, and in the wake of that announcement Michael is cast in what may be the role of a lifetime. He's set to play the lead in a timeless tale of monumental conflict, but will all of the swirling gossip cause Michael to stumble on the path of righteousness? His marriage in jeopardy and his career on the line, the man who always tried to do right by God will attempt to summon the courage and conviction needed to set his life straight.

April 9—Hidden Secrets

April 23—Changing Lanes

May 7—Night of the Iguana

May 21—Pilgrim's Progress

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.



IMPORTANT REMINDERS FROM THE GREEN TEAM

Allied Waster Services, in addition to collecting Oakmont garbage, is also collecting **additional** recycling materials:

CARDBOARD/PAPERBOARD (must be broken down flat and in 3 ft. lengths or they will not take it), GLASS BOTTLES AND JARS, PLASTICS 1-7 (no food remnants), AND NEWSPAPERS, MAGAZINES AND JUNK MAIL (IF YOU AREN'T ALREADY TAKING YOURS TO THE LOCAL PAPER RECYCLING BINS AROUND THE COMMUNITY)

We encourage you to use this recycling service every other week. We will continue to collect cardboard/paperboard and batteries in the down stairs Sunday school area near the Pennsylvania Ave. entrance, for those who do not live in the Oakmont area. This can be brought to the church at any time, as long as it is placed in the designated area. Members of the Green Team will still be available on the 3rd Sunday of every month to collect what has been brought in.

The church has been doing a great job of getting into recycling! This really does make a difference!

Now What Are You Going To Do About It?

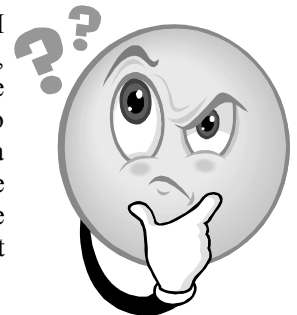
One night during a youth group meeting, the Jr. High kids started asking some really amazing questions. I don't really remember what our topic that evening was and quite frankly, as they kept asking questions, and we all kept talking, the topic at hand became irrelevant. What did become relevant was their desire for answers, their hunger for seeking and their growing curiosity. Here is a sampling of some of the questions:

- ⇒ "How can I make myself a better person to please you (God) more?"
- ⇒ "I've heard the saying 'One God', but how do we know which God is real?"
- ⇒ "Is his name really God?"
- ⇒ "How did the world start and how is it going to end?"
- ⇒ "Who created God?"
- ⇒ "Is there really such a thing as Heaven?"
- ⇒ "Why do bad things keep happening?"
- ⇒ "How did you (God) choose who you did to be your disciples?"
- ⇒ "What can I say to people to make them believe in you (God)?"

As we, the leaders, were debriefing the evening and the various things that happened, I was excited as I told the other leaders about the deep questions and the excitement stirring within the kids. Bethany Harbaugh looked at me and said "Now - what are you going to do about it?" Hmmm..... Good question!

A lot of "stuff" gets discussed during a youth group meeting (If you've never been to one, I dare, I mean I invite, you to attend) but with so many kids and personalities and so little time, sometimes we get side tracked or simply run out of time. To nurture the kids' faith, provide them with a safe place to ask questions, to teach them how and where to find answers and to encourage them in their relationships with other Christians, Bethany and I are going to start a **Jr. High Girls Bible Study** on Wednesdays, after school (starting around 2:45). This Bible study is open to any girl in grades 7-9 (Boys- if you have an interest in a Bible study see me and we will get one started. Sr. High Girls- if you would like to help with the Jr. High study it would be a great learning experience for you.)

Stay tuned for more interesting questions!





EASTER FLOWERS

It is time to think of flowers for decorating the sanctuary on Easter Sunday. Help us make the church glorious for Easter. Please use the order blank below to select your choice. Place with cash or check in an envelope clearly marked "Easter Flowers" and place in the offering plate or you can mail to Dorothy Wygant at the church. The *deadline for ordering is March 22*. Tulip colors are varied and cannot be specified.

Name _____

Phone _____

<u>Quantity</u>		<u>Price</u>
_____	Lilies @ \$7.50 (white or pink)	_____
_____	Tulips @ \$7.50 (variety)	_____
_____	Hydrangeas @ \$13.50 (pink)	_____

If this is to be in memory/honor of someone, please indicate your name and their name the way you want it printed in the bulletin.

Your Name: _____
in memory of

Name: _____

Your Name: _____
in honor of

Name: _____

Flowers may be taken following the 11:00 a.m. Easter worship service. If this is a problem, contact Ann Buechli (412-828-9382) or Dixie Anderson (412-828-2137).



“Teaching is less about doing ‘great things’, and more about doing ‘small things with great love’. – Sam Intrator From 9:30 – 10:30 there are so many “small things with great love” going on throughout the church. Pre – k classes are in the sanctuary examining, touching, talking and feeling the baptism font (all with careful supervision). The lower grades are learning about Lent, and getting acquainted with many members of the church as they each tell their stories. The Junior Highs are taking on an overview of the Old and New Testaments and are putting all that information together. Expressing your faith statements with film and media has the Confirmation Class delving into all types of creative thoughts and ideas. Using that same format, the Senior Highs are watching and discussing *The Passion of the Christ*. The teachers are directing, helping, mentoring, caring and yes loving the students in their classes. It is clear that there are many small things happening with a large amount of love.

Bev Taylor

OPC MORE THAN TITHES FOR ITS MISSION INVOLVEMENT

We are very fortunate here at OPC to have the Davis Trust to supplement our mission portion of the general budget. This enables us to give to those in need and to share the good news of Jesus Christ at well over a 10% tithing level. This level of giving combined with the hours of hands-on-work that we do through Open Hands, our Youth involvement in mission, our Deacons service and the Presbyterian women’s projects as well as the involvement of many of our small groups each have a vital share in our work as a missional church.

Your mission team has voted to support a number of worthwhile projects. The majority of the projects are of local interest. For the year of 2010, the following local groups will be supported.

Through the Pittsburgh Presbytery:

Lazarus Fund, Presbyterian Senior Care, Camp Crestfield, Presbytery undesignated mission needs and Pittsburgh Presbytery Disciplemaking.

Direct Local support:

OPC Youth mission programs, Seminarian educational support, RCAC, Wilksburg Community Ministry, House of Hanna (new church in Homewood) Intervarsity Faith, Verona Food Bank, East End Co-operative Ministry, Verona Summer Lunch and Fun Camp, a private discretionary account for the pastor, Family Life Ministry of OPC, Open Hands Ministry, Open Door Church (newly planted Presbyterian Church in the Garfield/E. Liberty area) and the Garfield Community Garden.

National and International Support:

World Mission Initiative (supports seminarians in oversea assignments), Pittsburgh Presbytery Crisis and Disaster Response, Medical Benevolence, World Gospel Mission (the Bemm family serving in Kenya) Reach Across (supporting a missionary working in a Muslim country) and support through an established Presbytery project of the people of Dalit, India.

Thank you for your part in making OPC so active in its mission programs.

Blood Drive at OPC—March 6



The Central Blood Bank collects approximately half of the blood needed for area patients through local corporate and community blood drives such as ours on **Saturday, March 6, 8:30 AM to 12:30 PM**, in the downstairs Assembly room. In the hours and days after the earthquake in Haiti, President Barack Obama asked for Americans to be reminded of the *common humanity that is shared by all*. By giving an hour of your time and donating a unit of whole blood, a blood donor can help save up to 3 lives. Please consider donating blood to help the community and patients who will benefit from your gift. There is no substitute for the generosity of someone willing to brighten the lives of others through blood donations. Reserve your time with Deacons, Eric Selinger at 412-795-2269 or Keith McKenzie at 412-793-9379 walk-ins are welcome.

“The Grieving Process”
Presented by: Dr. A. Barbara Coyne

Please join us on **March 16th** and warmly welcome **Dr. A. Barbara Coyne** as a guest speaker. **Dr. Coyne** has earned 4 academic degrees focusing on education and end of life issues. Dr. Coyne has been in private practice for over 20 years concentrating on grief and grieving and has offered support groups during this time. Once you hear her speak you will see that she truly **knows** and **understands** the process and the feelings we all share. No two experiences are exactly alike **but**, you are not alone. **There will be a question and answer session.**

We all either **are**, or **know someone** who is, going through the grieving process. Come and join us to gain understanding.

Tuesday - March 16, 2010
7-9:30pm + a time of sharing

Oakmont Presbyterian Church
415 Pennsylvania Avenue

Hosted by
www.the-empty-room.com
For more information call
Les Leasure 412-403-8644
or
Jane Kinter 412-916-7005

*This seminar is for anyone grieving **any** loss, not just the loss of a child. Please share this with anyone who you think can benefit from listening to Dr. Coyne and learning about the grieving process.



PLEASE remember the FOOD PANTRY (Oakmont/Verona and RCAC) when doing your weekly shopping with some much needed items: rice, noodles and any kind of crackers (even snack crackers), sugar, oil or shortening, flour, jelly and all types of tomato products (diced tomatoes, stewed tomatoes, tomato sauce or paste, spaghetti sauces etc.) The food pantry will also accept gift cards to Giant Eagle or Walgreens (\$10.00 maximum) to be distributed to families needing perishable products such as milk, bread etc. The gift cards can be turned in at the church office or to Marge Kuhn, Keith McKenzie, Chris Hudack or Bobbie Lio. Thanks for your support! Board of Deacons

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

Our speaker will be Dick Williams, longtime Oakmont resident whose topic will be "*Everyone has a Story to Tell*". He'll share some history which is a great way to learn about the past!

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

Oakmont Presbyterian Church
415 Pennsylvania Avenue
Oakmont, PA 15139

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Spaghetti Dinner

Sunday, March 21st
Following the 11:00 service

Come join us in support of the OPC
youth mission team.