



ACORN

Seeds For Growth

Serving the Church & World

In the last several issues of the ACORN, Pastor Paul has done a great job of summarizing our vision of Love~Grow~Serve. In reading those articles, I noted that it all starts with a heart change. We are commanded to “love the Lord your God with all your whole heart...” (Deut. 6:5). Out of a heart that is focused on loving God will come a desire to worship Him with others; connect with others for encouragement to keep focus; and the desire to serve whenever and wherever God asks.

The most recent articles from Pastor Paul encouraged us to look at how each of us can fit into an area of service either in Oakwood or reaching the world around us. There are many opportunities to serve the youngest to the “most seasoned” participants here at Oakwood. Each area could use some more folks to help make that particular ministry more effective. Please let me know if you would like to find out more about these opportunities here at Oakwood.

Last Sunday, you were able to hear more about how the leadership sees Oakwood “Serving the World” moving forward. The Elders have spent a good bit of time praying and discussing how we as a church family can reach our world for Jesus Christ. As many of you know, there was considerable work done last year in developing a new missions strategy that is to help us understand how we view Missions in the future. Along with that, we were able to obtain a large amount of demographic information concerning the areas around Oakwood. This gave us a good snapshot of who lives near us and the challenges they face. Again, with much prayer, the new Missions Strategy, the demographic study, and understanding who we are as a church family, the “Serve The World” component began to crystallize. **We see Oakwood serving the world through four avenues, Missions, Local Evangelism Outreach, Help A Family, and Compassion In Action.**

As was mentioned Sunday, the Missions Strategy and implementation has been about a two year process. **Missions** at Oakwood is the intentional outreach with the Good News of Jesus Christ to those who have not yet heard and/or believed, specifically those “unlike us near and unlike us far.” We are pursuing those that are cross cultural and/or cross language with our missions’ effort. Our newly formed Missions Team has spent a good bit of time absorbing this new strategy and is moving forward with implementation.



Continued on Page 5

Oakwood Community Church
 11209 Casey Rd
 Tampa FL 33618-5306
 813.969.2303
www.oakwoodfl.org

The mission of Oakwood is to...

Transform ordinary people into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.

Oakwood is a member of the Evangelical Free Church of America.



Inside this issue:

OCC Updates	2-5
Thanksgiving Bonfire	2
Congregational Meeting	2
Opportunities to Serve	3
Hurricane Relief	4
Serve The World	5
PowerHouse News	6
Marriage Matters	7
Kids Corner	8
Calendar at a Glance	9



Work Day

The deacons will be hosting a work day on Saturday, November 10. We will be starting at 8:00 AM and working until 3:00 PM. You are welcome to come and go at any time. Even an hour is a help. We will have several different projects available, big and small, inside and out. All are welcome and will have something to do.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Ben Smith (bendsmith83@gmail.com) if you plan to attend so we can have an accurate count for the food needed.

Let It Shine: Stories of Expanded Territory



The **evening of Saturday, November 17 from 6:00 to 7:30** marks the second annual Thanksgiving bonfire – *Let it Shine*. While there will be music and prayer as well, this year's focus is upon sharing thankful testimonies for how God has **expanded our territories** throughout this year.

God may have expanded your territory in these areas

- 1) **personal/family/spiritual life,**
- 2) **work/school/professional life,**
- 3) **church life.**

There will be opportunity for many to give testimony on that night. If you have seen God *Expand Your Territory* in one of the areas above, consider sharing it at the bonfire. It might be helpful to write down briefly what you'd like to communicate.

For the prayer event, please, **bring your own chair** to gather around the fire. Also, the Prayeritory team is also looking for volunteers to assist with set-up and clean-up. If you are available for either, please contact Adrienne Smith at adriannediane@gmail.com or 813-968-4422.



One way that Oakwood has expanded its territory is by shining its light through **Naomi's Daughters**, which is a ministry for single moms that provides clothing and food to the moms as well as the children.

For the *Let It Shine* event, Oakwood will be collecting pantry needs for Naomi's Daughters, such as cereal, canned goods, rice, and pasta.

Annual Congregational Meeting—November 18

Everyone is invited to join us right after the morning Worship Service on Sunday, November 18. We anticipate the meeting to be from 12:00—12:45 PM.



Your elder/deacon team will present to you our Proposed Budget for 2013. We will also communicate updates on our progress in developing our *Serve the World* strategy, among other important ministry updates. Finally we will interperse our meeting with prayer. We highly encourage everyone to attend this important and special annual meeting. This is for both members and our attenders too!

Childcare will be provided for Nursery – 5th Graders for those who pre-register at the TreeHouse Welcome Station or the Information Center.

Opportunity to *Serve The Church & World*



Oakwood is being given the privilege to *Serve the World* by helping at Metropolitan Ministries during the holiday season. This Thanksgiving, we have been asked to provide some of the volunteer work. Needed are people to help with parking, shopping, loading the cart and getting the goods to their cars. We still need 5 volunteers on Monday, November 19, 3:30 – 6:30 PM; and 11 volunteers on Tuesday, November 20, 3:30 – 6:30 PM. Please either contact the Church Office or sign up at the Information Center in the lobby.

We're also collecting **YAMS** to help with the food needs of the people who come to Metropolitan Ministries during the Thanksgiving food distribution. You can place your donations in the barrel in the lobby of the Worship Center.

These are great opportunities to show compassion and give a sense of hope to those who may not know The One who is Hope. Please join us as we give thanks by giving time.

Naomi's Daughters is a ministry for single moms that provides clothing to the moms as well as the children. The Oakwood family, along with others in the community, provides donations of clothing, food and money to keep this ministry moving forward.

This ministry meets the 1st and 3rd Tuesday each month in PowerHouse and TreeHouse. There are some specific needs that the Oakwood family can potentially help with:

- Someone with HR skills who could help put together a resume for single mom's as well as help with interview skills.
- Someone who has taught school that could help as a tutor for the children (and the mom's)

If you have experience in these areas and would like to volunteer some time, please contact Beth Ross at (813) 879-5231

The Clothes Closet opens once a month, typically on the 3rd Saturday of the month, for any single mom in need.



Your continued donations of new or gently worn clothes and non-perishable foods are greatly appreciated. Donations can be left on the screened area in the back of the gray house on our property. There are bins provided along with tax deductible forms. **Pantry needs:** cereal, canned goods, rice, pasta. If you are aware of a single mom that could benefit from this ministry, please have them contact the church office.

Please pray that we can continue to reach people in this ministry and show the hands and feet of the Lord to those who come through the door of the gray house.

Oakwood Mill

The Oakwood Mill is the Adult Education Ministry of Oakwood Community Church. We currently have three classes meeting on Sunday mornings at 9:15 AM in the Education Center. They are:

The Five Love Languages of Teenagers—facilitated by Brian & Terri Johnson in room 108

This We Believe—a look at the Statement of Faith of Oakwood Community Church and the EFCA—facilitated by Guy Sas in room 102/104

The Epistles of Peter—led by Bill Clarke in room 106



Join the relief effort

It's a rare occurrence when a hurricane meets a nor'easter and combines to cause catastrophic results. Hurricane Sandy has been called the "storm of the century."

A church leader in the [Tottenville EFC](#) on Staten Island, NY, has been praying with victims who have lost family and everything they own. Their area has people and homes missing, and the people are cold and hungry. He asked for prayer.

Besides a few certain reports such as flooded homes, toppled trees, and power outages, about 20 percent of Evangelical Free Churches of America (EFCA) churches in the affected area have reported in with significant damages.

Oakwood is taking a special offering this Sunday (November 11) to help our EFCA's [TouchGlobal](#) to reach out to the people affected by Hurricane Sandy along the Eastern Coast of the U.S.

You may learn more from the following links:

[Updates about the holistic ministry developing in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.](#)

We'll be posting frequent updates on our [Facebook page](#), too.

In addition to this Sunday's offering at Oakwood, financial donations to the response efforts for the U.S. East Coast are needed for the initial response. [GIVE NOW](#) so the immediate needs can be met.

Monetary donations may be mailed to:

EFCA Hurricane Relief 21709-3969
901 East 78th Street
Minneapolis, MN 55420-1300

Make your check out to EFCA and include #21709-3969 in the memo line.

Interested in sending a team? Contact TGteams@efca.org.

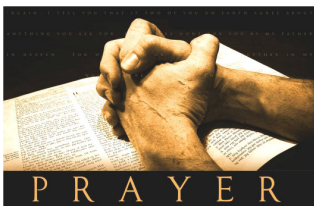
Pray

- For the churches in Sandy's path as they mobilize resources to respond.
- For the mission field that follows this crisis.

For our assessment team trying to connect with EFCA churches.



Sunday Morning Prayer



Another opportunity to pray—Every Sunday morning from 10:30 - 10:50 in the Church Library you will find a pair of Oakwoodians leading prayer. Everyone is invited, as you feel led, to join in this guided prayer time.

Prayer Guide

Oakwood Community Church is *fueling* the new vision of **Expanding Our Territory, Together** united with **Love ~ Grow ~ Serve**. In May, we will be focusing on how we can Love God, the Holy Spirit and how that will affect our service for the church in the world both for those who are near and like us or far and unlike us.



Your November Prayer Guide is available at the Information Center or view it on our website.

Seeds For Growth—continued

We also want to be intentional in reaching those who live near us. The **Local Evangelism Outreach** (LEO) Team will be formed to help give motivation in doing this with more purpose. We are currently doing some of this with our Contagious Christian seminars but want to pick up the pace.

In looking at the demographics, we saw that families in our area are being stretched in a number of ways. One of the items that stood out is the financial situation many in our neighborhood are enduring. When the **Help A Family** team was formed, one of the first things noted was the opportunity to address this with the skill set of some of our family members. Oakwood is finishing up a “Financial Peace University” (Dave Ramsey) class at the Carrollwood Cultural Center. Of a group about 40 strong, half are folks that do not attend Oakwood. Each week, they are hearing how important God is in the process of handling their finances. This will be an active team in 2013 as we see needs that we can meet and connect with the families in the Carrollwood and Plantation area.

Our **Compassion In Action** team will be looking for opportunities for Oakwood to come along side those in our area that need a hand up. We have the opportunity to partner more closely with Metropolitan Ministries as they develop a program to reach the homeless kids in Hillsborough County. Oakwood will be given the chance to connect those kids in northwest Hillsborough County with the ministries and agencies that can give them the needed boost to get out of the difficult situation. Metropolitan Ministries is hopeful to have the program up and running by Jan. 1. In the mean time, we are participating with them at Thanksgiving by volunteering at the Big Tent. This is a great event that helps us see the need and bless so many who would not have a Thanksgiving meal otherwise. Many of you have signed up but we can use a few more to fill the slots we have committed to. The signup sheet is in the Information Station in the lobby of the Worship Center.

We are already moving forward with our ministry to the single moms, Naomi’s Daughters. Beth Ross is doing a great job connecting with about 15 single moms and their kids. There will be more opportunities coming for the Compassion In Action team in the next month.

All of these teams have as their goal the privilege of sharing the Good News of Jesus Christ. We want to bless others and also share with them how they can have a joy filled life in Jesus Christ. So, where is your heart? Where do you fit? Where do you believe the Lord is asking you to serve? There are so many opportunities for you. We are challenged to be “doers of the Word and not hearers only.” Please pray and let us know where you would like to serve.

Dave Dorsey
Director of Ministries





PowerHouse Schedule

Nov 11—Regular Sunday evening—5:00—7:30

Nov 18—PowerHouse Food Bag Ministry
Super Hero Party—watch for details

Nov 19 & 20—Service @ Metropolitan Ministries

Nov 25—Regular Sunday evening—5:00—7:30

Dec 2—Regular Sunday evening—5:00—7:30

Metropolitan Ministries

Do you want to
make a difference
to a family in need?

Metropolitan Ministries serves
Thanksgiving food
to thousands of
Tampa Bay people in need.

Come and help serve
“Boxes of Hope”
November 19th & 20th
3:30 to 6:30 pm
Parents and teens—mark the date!
Sign up in Welcome Center.



Food Bag Ministry

Did you know that our PowerHouse students have a monthly fundraiser assembling food bags that are distributed to medical clinics in Tampa, Lakeland, Haines City and Winter Haven? These bags are distributed to indigent patients at the clinic to provide some basic food needs of the patients and their family.

PowerHouse teens can raise money for summer mission/conference trips by participating in our monthly Food Bag Ministry, typically on the third Sunday of each month. Our next Food Bag Prep day is **Sunday, November 18** right after the Worship Service.

Teens can raise extra funds by helping shop for the food and/or helping with delivery of the food bags to the medical clinics. Shopping for the next fundraiser will be Friday, November 16. Meet at Aldi at the corner of Bearss & Florida Ave. at 5:00 PM (or contact Cam Whipple) if you want to help. For more details contact Sandy Clarke at 931-0668.

Delivery drivers needed—We are also in need of people who can help with delivery of these food bags, especially to Lakeland, Haines City, and Winter Haven. If you can help deliver, please contact Sandy Clarke at 931-0668.





*Why couples
need stamina
and courage for
marriage*

This Isn't For Quitters

By Annette LaPlaca,

Last summer when it got hot and steamy and I discovered that our air conditioning was on the blink, I made it only a couple of hours before I dragged my kids and the stroller off to the cool of the mall. I also take Tylenol at the first hint of a headache, and I begged my obstetrician for painkillers during delivery months before my babies were due to be born. As you can see, I'm all for making life comfortable whenever possible.

I thank God for aspirin, personally, and for the many other ways I escape discomfort simply because I can. But sometimes I wonder if we take our "escapes" at the expense of God-given instructions to "persevere" and "forgive grievances" and "endure." I think maybe we're missing out because we're too quick to be quitters. Nobody likes pain, of course, but sometimes enduring tough times is necessary to learn to do what's right. In a culture where pleasing yourself has become the national pastime, nobody really wants to hear that doing what's right is more important than being "happy"—but it is!

There are gray areas certainly. It may be right to change jobs, neighborhoods, or churches when things become unbearably difficult. Those are situations that call for prayer and guidance from God.

But hanging in there in your marriage versus giving up is a no-brainer. The Bible states clearly that God considers the covenant of marriage sacred. This is not an area where we can afford to be quitters. Yet it's happening all around us.

Now that I'm in my thirties (okay, late thirties), I've reached the age where I'm hearing that friends from work or church or college have split up. To tell the truth, I find it depressing, especially when it turns out that everyday marital stresses—communicating over roles or money, handling the balance of work versus home, in-law issues—pushed these couples to that feeling of hopelessness.

My friend Diane Eble once wrote about marriage calling for courage. When problems—even big glaring problems—come up, it's the courageous who speak up and get help, who knuckle down in humility to work at their marriages, who hang in there until

time and effort do their work and things get better.

Nothing wrenches me more than when couples race to the idea of separation. I can imagine the despair of feeling that problems are so painful, so wide-ranging that the only option to reach for is a way to stop the pain. But I'd love to encourage those couples to hang on. To get help from everywhere—friends, church, counselors, and the God who changes lives. I feel like telling them stories of folks I've known who hung in there—and later were so glad they did.

My friends Ann and Jim started out pregnant and struggled their way through years of young children, unemployment, and marital disappointment. You should see them now. Their marital unity is something they treasure because it was so hard-won.

I know two couples who reunited after counseling and short separations following the extreme betrayal of adultery. In both cases, the recovery was slow and sometimes joyless, but the end result for both couples was joy and gratification. Both couples were so satisfied and hopeful about their marriages that they went on to have more children together. It can happen, with God's help.

My best friend went through a tough time in her marriage when she discovered that they were in financial ruin because of her husband's long-term addiction to pornography. Not only are they still together, but today she trusts her husband completely. God gave her grace to deal with her hurt and anger over time, and her husband discovered an incredible love for his family and for God. They're expecting another baby, too.

Let's not be quitters. Let's have the courage and humility to do what's right, day by day, in our homes. Even if there's discomfort and pain now, in the end, doing what's right will bring you the ultimate comfort and joy.

Annette LaPlaca, a freelance writer, lives with her husband and her three kids in suburban Chicago.

Copyright © 2001 by the author or Christianity Today/Marriage Partnership magazine.

Kids Corner

Give Thanks



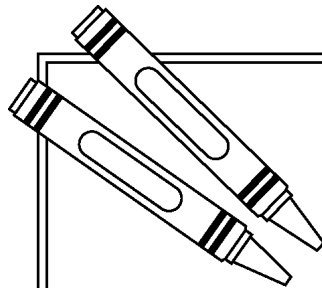
Sing a prayer at your Thanksgiving meal—or any meal!

(sung to the tune of "Kum Ba Yah")

For our food, o Lord,
we give thanks.
For our homes, o
Lord, we give thanks.
For our families,
we give thanks.
O Lord,
we give thanks.

For our friends, O
Lord, we give thanks.
For our earth, O
Lord, we give thanks.
For each night and
day, we give thanks.
O, Lord,
we give thanks.

—Marie Senften

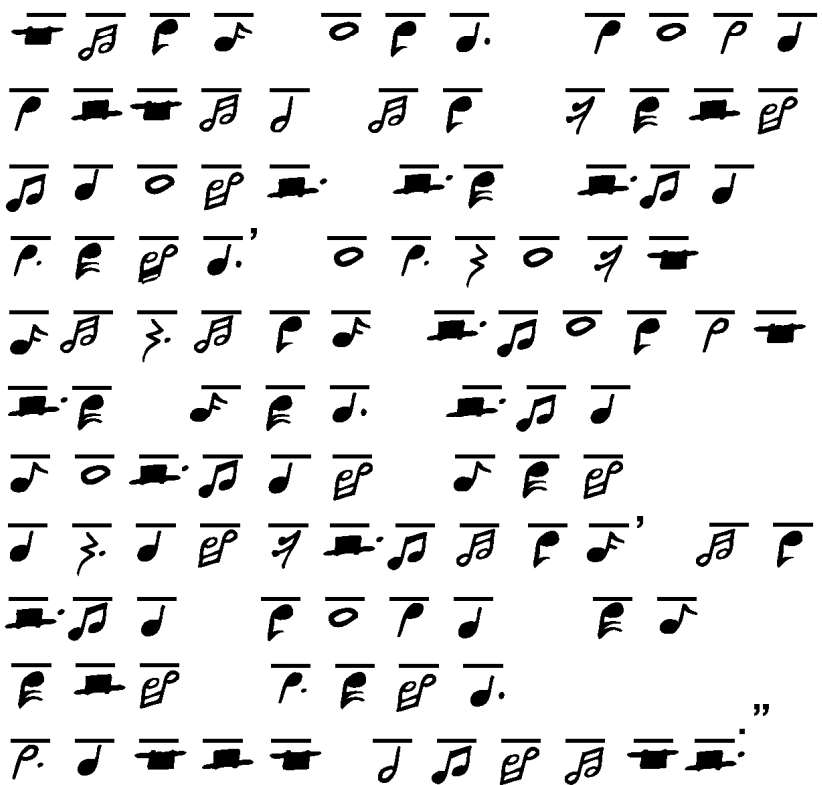


Just for KIDS

Ephesians 5:19b-20

Fill in the blanks using the code below.

“



”

CODE	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	L	M	N	O	P	Q	R	S	T	U	V	W	X	Y	Z
	o	d.	d	d.	d	o	d.	d	d.	p.	p	p.	p	p.	p	p	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪	♪

“Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”



Oakwood Community Church
 11209 Casey Rd
 Tampa FL 33618-5306
 813.969.2303
www.oakwoodfl.org

Our Staff

Lead Pastor - Dr. Paul B. Phair
 Director of Ministries - Dave Dorsey
 Director of Worship Arts - Andrew Reilly
 Coordinator of Youth Ministry - Dr. Paul B. Phair
 Coordinator of Children’s Ministry - Dave Dorsey
 Office Manager - Martha Dorsey
 Secretary—Melanie Hoglievina

Office hours:

Tuesday - Friday, 9:00 AM - 5:00 PM

Worship:

Sundays - 10:30 AM

Our Elder Team

Jose Cariaga—Chair
 Pete Kluck
 Paul Phair
 Eric Pratt

Our Deacon Team

Nan Duncan
 Arnie Mejias
 Bob Mendenhall
 Ray Ross
 Ben Smith
 Dave Young—Chair

Calendar at a Glance



Nov 10—Work Day
 Nov 11—Special “Sandy” Relief Offering
 Board Meeting
 Nov 17—Evening of Prayer & Praise
 Nov 18—PowerHouse Food Bag Ministry
 Congregational Meeting
 Nov 19 & 20—Serve @ Metropolitan Ministries
 Nov 22—*Thanksgiving Day*
 Nov 22-23—Church Office closed for holiday



Dec 2—Blood Pressure checks following Worship
 Dec 9—Board Meeting for elders & deacons
 Dec 11—PowerHouse Leaders Meeting
 Dec 16—Compassion Offering
 PowerHouse Food Bag Ministry
 Dec 24—Christmas Eve Bonfire Service

The Oakwood *ACORN* is a bi-weekly E-newsletter from Oakwood Community Church, published to keep our church family and friends informed about events and people at Oakwood. Articles may be submitted via e-mail to Office@oakwoodfl.org. Article deadlines and publication schedule is:

Deadline	Publication date	News for dates including...
Nov 23	Nov 28	Dec 1—Dec 14
Dec 7	Dec 12	Dec 15—Jan 4

Note—this is a 3 week edition

Do you know someone at Oakwood with a noteworthy achievement? Send the information to Office@OakwoodFL.org and we’ll include it in a future article.

If you have received this email in error or want to be removed from our e-newsletter distribution list, please hit the reply button and put “unsubscribe” in the subject line and you will be removed immediately.