



ACORN

Seeds For Growth

Random Thoughts

Here we go! The race to get everything done before Christmas! Some of you completed your gift shopping weeks ago. You people drive me crazy!! Some of us still have some things to get. Then the wrapping and shipping. There is also the food prep for the family events. We also try to squeeze in some other Christmas stuff such as driving around to see the lights and decorations that others have spent hours putting up. One of the things Martha and I enjoy doing is going to Dade City for the Church Street Christmas. It is every year on December 21, 22 and 23. All the churches are open and there are singers and musicians in the churches and on the street playing traditional Christmas carols that help us with the spirit of the season. One church will have a live nativity scene and another church will be presenting the Gospel of Jesus for those passing by. It is great to see a small town that remembers the real reason for the season.

In a number of the recent ACORNs, you have been reading a good bit about our vision process, Love~Grow~Serve. Pastor Paul wrote some excellent articles about the importance of loving God by worshipping together with your church family. He also communicated the significance of growing in community by participating in one of our Community Groups. We will be hearing more about this in the first part of 2013. I was privileged to write about serving the church and the world. In the last article, there was a lot of information about how Oakwood is moving forward with the new Missions Strategy and how we will be engaging more personally with our missionaries and their work. There are also many opportunities for ministry right here on campus as we serve the Oakwood family. There are some volunteer opportunities listed further down in the ACORN. I would appreciate your prayerful consideration of one of these positions.

In TreeHouse, our kid’s ministry, the theme this month is “The Big Give.” We are learning the meaning of compassion. Compassion is caring enough to do something about someone else’s need. God saw our need long before we knew we had one. In His compassion, He sent His Son to live in the world He created and to die for us. We messed it up big time. BUT “God loved the world so much that He sent His one and only Son. Anyone who believes in Him will not die but will have eternal life.”



This is one of the first verses I am sure many of you learned as a child. It would be great for all of us to appreciate the truth of Ephesians 3 more and more. “May you have the power to understand, as all God’s people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love is.” I wish that for me and you this Christmas season.

That is all I am saying today.

Dave Dorsey
Director of Ministries

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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.



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Christmas at Oakwood



Make this a Christmas you'll remember for your family, your friends, and yourself. Focus in on the four-part message series that I will present. It begins December 9 and will continue through to Christmas Eve. Ask God to connect you to Him more closely before each Sunday's service. Also invite others to join you in considering along side of you, just how special this Christmas can be. ~ Pastor Paul

Messages in this series include:

- December 9—*The Other Child of Christmas*
- December 16—*The Story Behind the Christmas Story*
- December 23—*Powerful Baby Names*
- December 24—*All I Want For Christmas*

Christmas Eve Bonfire Service

An outdoor service under the stars—Monday, December 24 @ 6:00 PM

A candlelight service filled with Christmas music. Wear your jeans and bring your own lawn chair and a personal flash light (for reading lyrics)

The service will be located just east of the Teen Center

Ushers will be available to guide you to our location

Contingency plan will be in the worship center (but not a candle light service)



Schedule Change for December 23 & 30

**MERRY
CHRISTMAS**

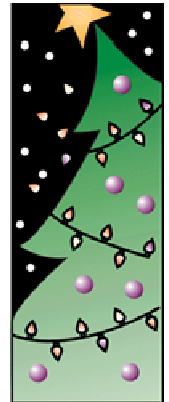
We will have our regular 10:30 AM Worship Services on **Sunday, December 23 and Sunday, December 30**. We will not have education classes for teens and adults, first hour TreeHouse or Nursery at 9:15 on these two Sundays. We will have our regular nursery care for children birth through 23 months and full TreeHouse Ministry for 2 year olds through 5th Graders during the 10:30 service.

Sunday, January 6 we will resume our regular schedule with Education Classes for all ages at 9:15 AM and our Worship Service and TreeHouse ministry at 10:30 AM.

Opportunity to *Serve The Church & World*

Be An Angel

You can help supply the Pregnancy Care Center with items needed for babies and their mothers. Please take an angel from the tree in the lobby and purchase the item written on the back. Place the unwrapped gift under the tree by December 23. Pregnancy Care Center is supported through the Missions giving of Oakwood Community Church.



Naomi's Daughters



This holiday season the Oakwood family has the opportunity to bless the single moms involved with Naomi's Daughters. This year we will be collecting non-perishable food items to build up the food pantry which is the latest addition to the ministry. We will have collection bins in the lobby of the Worship Center and in TreeHouse. The collection will go through Sunday, December 23.

We will also be collecting some personal items for the moms that they may not have the extra budget for, but would be appreciated as well. Thanks for the support of this wonderful ministry.

Pantry Needs

Stuffing mix
Canned veggies (all types)
Cookies
Cereals
Beans
Rice
Oatmeal/Grits
Pasta
Tomato Sauce
Canned Tuna/Chicken

Peanut Butter
Jelly
Crackers
Soups
Foil
Plastic wrap
Hamburger Helper mixes
Water/Juices
Fruit Cocktail

Items for Moms

Shampoos
Conditioners
Toothpaste
Toothbrushes
Lotions
Scented Candles
Gas cards
Gift cards
Stationary
Razors



How will you *Serve The Church* in 2013

In several of the past issues of the Oakwood ACORN, the lead articles have focused on Oakwood's three-step mission process—*Love ~ Grow ~ Serve*. There are many opportunities to minister right here among our own Church family.

Below you will see a number of ways that you can *Serve* at Oakwood in 2013. If you are interested in serving in any of these areas, unless otherwise noted, please contact the Church Office and we will connect you with the appropriate person to help you get started.



PowerHouse (student ministry)

Snack Bar help—serve on a rotating schedule on Sunday evenings. Contact La Verne Cluff to sign up.
Small Group Leader—Men and women needed to meet with teens in small groups on Sunday evenings
Senior High teacher—needed for Sunday mornings. Contact Pastor Paul.

Worship Arts

Slide Tech—serve by running the slides on Sunday once a month. Some computer knowledge is needed. Rehearsals on Wednesday nights are necessary.
Lighting Tech—Run lights during the service.

Usher/Greeter Team

Greeters—have a smiling face to greet those coming to our services on Sunday AM.
Ushers—Hand out the weekly Worship Program, take up offering and assist latecomers in finding seats.

Hospitality Team Members

Providers—help provide light snacks on a rotating basis for the Sunday AM hospitality table.
Servers—Set up and clean up the Sunday AM hospitality table

Food Bag Ministry

Delivery Team—once a month help deliver Food Bags to clinics in Tampa, Lakeland, Winter Haven and Haines City for the PowerHouse Food Bag Ministry Fundraisers.

Handy Person

Under the direction of the deacons, assist with various projects around the church property—property maintenance, painting, etc.

Naomi's Daughters

Childcare—help on a regular basis with childcare the 1st & 3rd Tuesday night of the month during the Single Moms ministry meetings.

TreeHouse (kids ministry)

TreeHouse Greeter—a smiling face to greet people as they come to TreeHouse and help direct new people to the correct location.
Front Desk help—register new children and register attendance in the computer.
Resource Person—collect needed materials for crafts, etc., for Small Group Leaders
Small Group Leader—Lead one of the Small groups of children to reinforce the weekly lesson.
Nursery volunteers—workers needed to help with our youngest attendees—needed one service per month. Contact Lilliam Vera.

Voting results



On Sunday, December 2, members of Oakwood approved the recommendations from the elders to received Laurissa Corrales and David Fowle as new members, approved the recommendations for the renewal of terms for Pete Kluck to serve on the Elder team, for Nan Duncan, Ray Ross, Ben Smith and David Young to serve on the Deacon team and approved Proposed 2013 Budget.

Members vote—December 23

On Sunday, December 23, members of Oakwood will be voting on the recommendation from the elders and deacons on two new Board Members.

Elder Team:

Edson Bustamante—1st Term

Deacon Team:

Matt Fucarino—1st Term

Ballots will be available on Sunday morning for members to vote, or you can vote via email to office@oakwoodfl.org. Emailed ballots must be received by 2:00 PM on Friday, December 21.



Holiday Office Schedule

Due to the holidays and staff vacations, the Church Office hours the week of Christmas are limited. If you need to come to the office, please call before you come to make sure someone will be there.



Blood Mobile @ Oakwood

The Blood Mobile will be at Oakwood on Sunday, January 20, 2013 from 9:00 AM – 12:30 PM. If you are at least 16 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds, are in good health and haven't donated in the last eight weeks, you are eligible to donate.

Did you know that only 37 % of the U.S. population is eligible to donate blood yet, less than 10% do annually. This is why repeat donors are so vital to our blood supply. January is a critical month for blood donations as blood supplies run low after the holidays.

Will you roll up your sleeves and help us get 7 unites donated for this worthy cause?

Blood Pressure checks

Blood pressure checks Sunday, January 6, 2013 in the kitchen following the Worship Service. Don't miss this important health screening.

Year End Giving Opportunity

On behalf of your entire elder team, deacon team, and staff, I want to express to you our gratitude for your significant partnership in God's gospel ministry through Oakwood. The Apostle Paul expresses this so well when he writes,

This service that you perform is not only supplying the needs of God's people but is also overflowing in many expressions of thanks to God (2 Corinthians 9:12, NLT).

When you give, needs are supplied, God's people are strengthened in faith, our "territory is expanded" for the gospel, and God is glorified. When you give, you help accomplish our mission of *transforming ordinary people both near and far into fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ.*

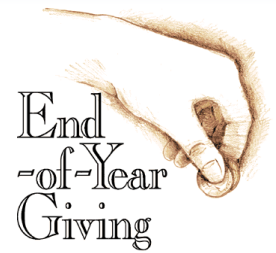
To date within this year, we have had to tap into our modest reserves by approximately \$17,000. Would you please consider helping Oakwood with an extra gift as we enter this season of giving and praise?

You make a difference! I praise God for you - and together we all rejoice in partnering for the gospel as God's grace flows through us. Your tithes and offerings, including a special end of the year gift, are very important for our closing out our year in a healthy financial position and entering into the New Year with vitality.

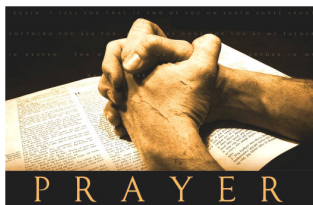
Serving with you in joy,

Pastor Paul

P.S. To be credited by the IRS for a 2012 tax deduction, all year end gifts need to be received or postmarked no later than Dec. 31, 2012. You may also give online by clicking on this link - <https://secure.etransfer.com/ecom/donation/donation1.cfm?d2org=OakwoodCC&d2tool=donate> - or going to Oakwoodfl.org and click on "Give Online" box in the upper right hand corner of the page. This will take you to a secure web page for online giving at Oakwood Community Church.



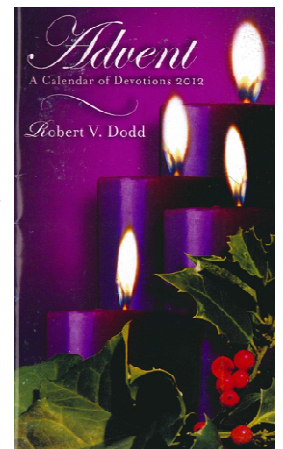
Sunday Morning Prayer



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/Devotional Guide

As we enter into this Christmas Season, we encourage each family unit to pick up a copy of the Advent Calendar of Devotions from the Information Center, and use it as your December Prayer Guide to explore the hope that God gives us, especially as it is communicated through the events anticipating and surrounding the birth of Jesus Christ. God's solution to the world's problems is to share in our humanity through the birth of his Son and to infect us with God's contagious love and righteousness.



Notes of Thanks

From EFCA TouchGlobal

“Now he who supplies seed to the sower and bread for food will also supply and increase your store of seed and will enlarge the harvest of your righteousness. You will be made rich in every way so that you can be generous on every occasion, and through us your generosity will result in thanksgiving to God.”

2 Corinthians 9:10-11



We thank you for your giving and partnership to respond to the needs of people's lives impacted by Hurricane Sandy. Your investment will help to bring the hope of the gospel and express God's love in tangible ways. We appreciate your heart to help the hurting and reach the lost through the long-term, holistic ministry of TouchGlobal! Our sincere Thanks.

Oakwood's offering for hurricane relief to TouchGlobal was \$2,040.

From the Oakwood staff

Dear Oakwood Church Family,

We, your vocational ministry and support staff, express to you our sincere thanks for your special Christmas gift to each of us. That was kind and generous of you. We know it is an expression of your love for us. We are so very thankful to God that you are our special family who fellowships and partners with us, and loves us.

With our love,

Paul & Bev, Dave, Andrew, Martha, Melanie, and Audrey too

Oakwood Mill

The Oakwood Mill is the Adult Education Ministry of Oakwood Community Church.

New class beginning on January 27—*The Five Love Languages of Children*

Just when parents think they have “got the parenting thing down,” children tend to hit a new stage, leaving parents reeling and wondering how best to love on each different child at each different stage. Join Terri Johnson and Adrienne Smith for a new Oakwood Mill class to explore “The Five Love Languages of Children” from popular Christian authors Gary Chapman and Ross Campbell, M.D. This resources will be paired with “Boundaries with Kids” by doctors Cloud and Townsend to further explore and discuss how to help the children in your life to feel loved.

We know many of you are busy with your children, so the class will be light on homework but heavy on application by practicing loving on your children throughout the week! The class begins January 27 at 9:15 AM during the Oakwood Mill hour. If you are interested, please sign up at the Information Center or email Adrienne (adriannediane@gmail.com) so we can account for accurate materials.

Continuing classes are:

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





PowerHouse Schedule

Dec 16—Christmas Party

Dec 23—No Meeting

Dec 28 (Friday) - Holiday Lock-In

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



Christmas Party

Sunday, December 16
5:00 PM

Gift exchange



**party
games**

free food

Lock-In

Come join the fun and games

**Friday, December 28—7:00 PM
'til
Saturday, December 29—7:00 AM**

Cost \$25

Mystery field trip involved!



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, December 16** 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, December 14. 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.





A little compromise can go a long way in a marriage.

What About Our Money?

Christy Scannell

A couple months before Rich and I were married, I received a startling phone call from our pastor.

"I got the results of your FOCCUS inventory," he said. "You guys have a lot of issues that need to be worked out. We're going to have to set aside some time to talk these over before your wedding."

I was dumbfounded. Had Rich not been honest with me about his feelings? Or did I not believe the way I thought? Was one of us an impostor?

Pastor Tom interrupted my racing thoughts. "Uh, oh, wait a minute," he muttered. I could hear papers shuffling. "Ah, there it is. I had the wrong couple's results."

I breathed a sigh of relief.

"Good news!" he said brightly. "You only have one issue that you really differ on: finances."

Those results were no surprise, but hearing that the test had validated our opposite attitudes toward money did gnaw at my already stressed-out bride's tummy. From day one it had been evident that Rich and I were in different camps when it came to spending and saving—he was barbecuing filet and drinking cabernet in Spender Forest while I was roasting marshmallows (from an economy-size bag purchased with a coupon) at Saver Canyon.

Yet even though we recognized our individual approaches, it wasn't much of an issue while we were single and handling our own money. In fact, I'd rather enjoyed how Rich treated me to the finer side of life during our dating years.

But now we were headed to the altar—and I feared that might be a short stop on the way to the poor house.

We needed a strategy. But what? Our family histories weren't much help. Rich's parents had always kept separate accounts; mine shared everything equally. Both couples had faced significant financial problems along the way. So when I tried to convince Rich

my parents' way was "right," he countered that it hadn't been successful for them. And when he promoted his mom and dad's system, I made a similar argument. We couldn't agree on either arrangement as a winning solution.

Ultimately our money melee could only be resolved with one course of action: compromise. To satisfy Rich's need for independence, we decided he would keep a separate checking account into which he would have a small part of his paycheck deposited each month. The rest would go into our joint account, which I'd manage in addition to paying the bills—a control that gave me the peace of mind I needed.

Has the plan gone off without a hitch? Well, no. There have been times when one of us thought the other had money for groceries or gas, and neither of us did. I've continued to question his need for a private account, and he occasionally wonders why I'm so compelled to pay off credit cards. But after seven years, I'm accustomed to his spending quirks and he's sensitive to my savings routine. We try to respect the boundaries and not allow money worries to rule what is otherwise a terrific marriage.

Meanwhile, he's persuaded me that sometimes upgrading to the nicer hotel really is worth those extra dollars, and I've shown him how much more fulfilling a vacation paid in cash can be. And we're both right.

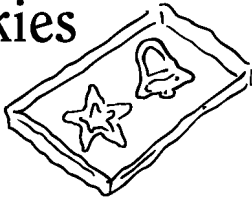
But I do still wonder about that poor couple who had the completely incompatible test results. Hopefully they discovered the benefits of compromise too!

Christy Scannell, freelance editor and writer, is co-author of Katt's in the Cradle (Howard Books/Simon & Schuster). She and her husband, Rich, live in Southern California. <http://www.ChristyScannell.com>

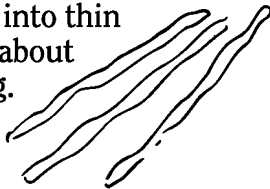
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Kids Corner

Bake "Stained-Glass" Cookies



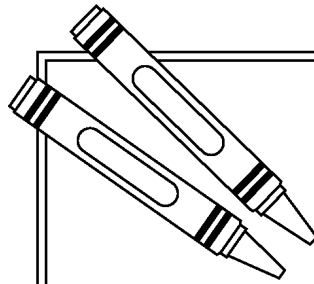
1. Mix your favorite cutout cookie recipe.
2. Chill overnight.
3. On waxed paper, roll dough into thin ropes, about 6" long.



4. Shape ropes into holiday symbols – stars, bells, etc.
5. Crush hard candies to make 2 cups.
6. Place shapes on well-greased cookie sheets.
7. Fill the openings with hard candies.
8. Use a toothpick to poke a hole in the top of each if you want to hang them.
9. Bake for 8 minutes, or until candy melts.
10. Cool completely before removing from cookie sheet.



11. Tie a loop of thread through hole if desired.



Just for KIDS

The Christmas Story

Each line below contains the letters to form a word that is part of the Christmas story. But each group of letters has 1 that is extra! Unscramble the words and write the extra letter on the lines at the bottom. What did we all receive at Christmas?

- ① TGLBEHHEME _____
- ② NEAGLO _____
- ③ NRMEDAG _____
- ④ ODEKSNY _____
- ⑤ AMGYR _____
- ⑥ OHESJIP _____
- ⑦ EFJSUS _____
- ⑧ ITEENMSW _____
- ⑨ SPHHDSREEO _____
- ⑩ EMCFAL _____
- ⑪ TLSRA _____
- ⑫ CSSNUEO _____
- ⑬ HEVSPE _____
- ⑭ ENIN _____

“ _____ ”
 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

 9 10 11 12 13 14

Gods gift of love

Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (I), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E)



Oakwood Community Church
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 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



Dec 16—Compassion Offering
 PowerHouse Food Bag Ministry
 Dec 23—No Education Hour – Worship @ 10:30
 Dec 24—Christmas Eve Bonfire Service
 Dec 25—*Christmas Day*
 Dec 30—No Education Hour – Worship @ 10:30



Jan 6—Blood Pressure checks
 Jan 13—Board Meeting of elders & deacons
 Jan 20—Compassion Offering
 Blood Mobile @ Oakwood

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...
Dec 28	Jan 2	Jan 5—Jan 18
Jan 11	Jan 16	Jan 19—Feb 1

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.

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