



ACORN

Seeds for Growth

No Mess – No Ministry

Recently in the midst of a ministry challenge, someone shared with me an insightful proverb, 14:4. Before I quote it, let me remind of you a similar common expression in our day. “There are pros and cons to everything.” We are choosing and acting wisely when we first weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the options that are before us and then proceed with persistent determination in the light of those factors.

God through Solomon expresses this life principle to an agrarian culture in this manner: “Without oxen a stable stays clean, but you need a strong ox for a large harvest” (Proverbs 14:4, NLT). It is uncertain whether the Hebrew intends to communicate that the stall is clean or that the feeding trough is clear of grain. However, the application is much the same. In order for the farmer to have a productive harvest, it will require that he invest time and money to feed and clean up after his oxen. More crassly stated, the farmer must be willing to endure the sight and the smell of an unclean stable, and shovel out the mess if he is to have the prospect of a fruitful harvest.

The broader application means that the “pro” of beneficial results in any realm of life, requires the “con” of inconvenience, sacrifice, and hard work. Derek Kidner states we must have the willingness “to accept upheaval, and a mess to clear up, as the price of growth.”

In the realm of Christian ministry, as Pastor Ken Whitten recently stated, *where there is no mess, there is no ministry*. No ministry endeavor at Oakwood will run smoothly without any flaws, hard work, setbacks, conflicts, obstacles, hurt feelings, offenses, and more. We strive to avoid these “cons,” yet we are not to be surprised by them. With prayer, we also seek to remedy these cons where we can, yet we do not cease active engagement when we encounter them. Where there is no mess, there is no ministry. Yet where there is ministry there is the prospect of eternal dividends that brings God’s healing and transforming life to many.



~ Pastor Paul

Oakwood Community Church
 11209 Casey Rd
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The mission of
 Oakwood is to...

Transform ordinary people
 into fully devoted followers
 of Jesus Christ.

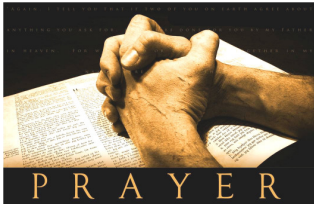
Oakwood is a member of
 the Evangelical Free
 Church of America.



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Prayer Guide



Oakwood Community Church is fueling the **love ~ grow ~ serve** vision with prayer in 2013. Our continued focus on prayer is leading us to include two memory verses along with the prayer guide. The **first memory verse is designed to pair with the prayer focus of the month.** The **second memory verse is the same verse the TreeHouse children are learning in their curriculum.** Our hope is to continue to grow in the context of the vision as family members as well as Oakwood family in the body of Christ, further seeking His will.

February: We will **love God** by praying the **prayer of Jabez every day for this month.**

You can find a copy of the February Prayer Guide at the Information Center or on our website.

Volleyball

Interested in participating in some regular recreational volleyball on the Church grounds? La Verne Cluff is interested in organizing games if there is enough interest. Contact La Verne @ (813) 968-8784 for more details and to indicate your interest.



Congregational Meeting

On Sunday, February 24 we will be having an OCC Family Meeting right after the Worship Service. The meeting will begin a few minutes after the end of the Worship Service and will last no longer than 45 minutes. The Elders want to allow sufficient time for questions and comments from our church family.



Childcare will be available for those who sign up at the Welcome Center in TreeHouse or at the Information Center in the Worship Center lobby.

C.S. Lewis Dramatization

Carrollwood Cultural Center is hosting two events on the life of writer C.S. Lewis. David Payne, an internationally known British actor who specializes in drama inspired by C.S. Lewis will perform February 16 & 17 in:

An Evening with C.S. Lewis—reminiscing about his career, path to Christianity and how he found love. Known for his novels and essays, C.S. Lewis was a scholar, lay theologian and Christian apologist. Performances are February 16 at 2:00 & 8:00 PM. For more details and to order tickets click the link below:

http://www.carrollwoodcenter.org/ai1ec_event/an-evening-with-c-s-lewis/?instance_id=1113146

Prisoner of Passion—The apostle Paul, under house arrest in Rome, speaks to Luke about what has happened in the past and his hope for the future. This performance is February 17 at 2:00 PM For more details and to order tickets click the link below:

http://www.carrollwoodcenter.org/ai1ec_event/prisoner-of-passion/?instance_id=1113152

Carrollwood Cultural Center is located at 4537 Lowell Rd., Phone: 813.269.1310.

Financial Peace University



13 week class

Begins Thursday, February 21

6:30 - 8:30 PM

Church library

Cost: \$60/family unit

Contact Bob Mendenhall

email: mendenhall_r@earthlink.net

Phone: 813-920-3140

Team Tampa XIV

English Camp in the Czech Republic ~ July 6-13, 2013

Would you like your life to be changed?

Will you consider serving with Team Leader Rob Weyand as a member of Team Tampa XIV - an outreach English Camp team from Oakwood and Candlewood Community Churches. Since 2000, Oakwood has partnered with the Brno Evangelical Fellowship in the city of Brno, Czech Republic, by providing English teachers for their outreach English camps. Candlewood Community Church, a daughter church of Oakwood, has participated since its birth in 2007. The teachers have been people like you who stepped out of their comfort zones in order to serve fellow Czech Christians as they witness to their family, friends, coworkers, and neighbors.

The camp dates are July 6-13. Travel dates are being determined.

But I'm not a teacher

Few of us are teachers, let alone teachers of English as a second language. For this reason, all lesson materials are already prepared. Team members only need to gather the teaching aids (such as pictures, objects, and so on) and practice teaching. Team members will have training meetings between March and July. During these meetings, we will learn about the Czech Republic, learn about the Biblical basis of short-term missions, practice teaching to each other, prepare an evening evangelistic program, and grow together as a team.

The cost of the trip

Depending on travel costs, the cost of each team member going is between \$1500-2000. Team members are expected to provide for some of the cost from their own resources and from fund-raising letters. Both Oakwood and Candlewood will hold special collections for the English Camp trip. A valid passport is required.

Signing up

Pick up an application packet at the Information Center and return it to the Church Office by February 10. The application process will involve writing about your reasons for being part of the team, writing about yourself (the gifts and experiences you bring to the team). You will also need to write a short description of your faith journey and provide a recommendation from someone who knows you and your spiritual life well—a pastor, community group leader, accountability partner, and so on. Submit your application to the church office or place it in the drop box located by the doors as you exit the worship center. Applications are also available on our website. <http://www.oakwoodfl.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2012/02/English-Camp-Application-Form-PDF.pdf>

Opportunity to *Serve The Church & World*

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 & 3rd Tuesday each month in PowerHouse and TreeHouse. If you would like to volunteer some time, please contact Beth Ross at (813) 879-5231



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, paper goods, personal care items.

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 our doors.

In Search Of...

LOST

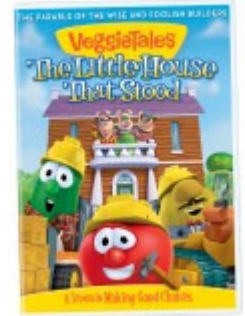


The TreeHouse laminator has been misplaced. If you know of its whereabouts, please contact the Church Office. Thank you.



Family Fun Night

Join us Friday, March 1 at 7:00 PM in The TreeHouse for a Family Fun Night. We will be showing a premier of the newest VeggieTales movie, *The Little House That Stood*. There will be food available for purchase for a nominal fee, and, as always, lots of fun for all. This is always an easy way to invite family and friends to church with you. Information fliers will be available at the Welcome Center in TreeHouse.



Blood Pressure checks

Blood pressure checks Sunday, March 3, 2013 in the kitchen following the Worship Service. Don't miss this important health screening.



Blood Mobile @ Oakwood

Thank you for your help with our recent blood drive. Our goal was 7 units and with your help we got 16!

We will have the Blood Mobile at Oakwood again in April. Watch for details.



PowerHouse Schedule

Feb 3—Super Bowl Party—Connors home—5:30—10:30 PM

Feb 10—Regular Sunday evening—5:00—7:30 PM

Feb 15-17—*Be Last*—PH Winter Retreat in Orlando

Feb 24—Regular Sunday evening—5:00—7:30 PM

Mar 3—Regular Sunday evening—5:00—7:30 PM

Mar 9-15—Tennessee Mission Trip

Winter Retreat



PowerHouse youth will participate in the *Be Last* Student Life Conference February 15-17 in Orlando. The cost is \$75 per person and includes the conference (Fri-Sat), hotel for 2 nights, and breakfast for 2 mornings. Sunday will be spent at Universal Studios.

For more details and a registration form, pick up a flier in PowerHouse. **Registrations due this Sunday, Feb. 3.**

Food Bag Ministry

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, February 24** 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, February 22. 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.

Spring Break Ministry Trip

March 9—15
Cedine Ministries
Spring City, Tennessee

Middle and High School students can spend their Spring Break helping get Cedine Ministries, a Christian Camp/Conference Center, ready for summer campers. Cost is \$80 per person.

For more details contact Luke Piazza @ (813) 451-4265.

There is a need for drivers to transport the students to and from Tennessee. If you can help, please contact Luke.



Building A Divorce-Proof Marriage—Pt 1

Tips from what we learned—the hard way

Tammy Darling



The desire was understandable. The expectation was not. When I married my childhood sweetheart 23 years ago, my desire for a lifetime of wedded bliss was understandable; expecting my husband to make it happen was unrealistic.

Consequently, the first six years of our marriage were hell on earth. I literally wanted to kill him; my sweetheart had turned sour right before my very eyes. Molten days turned into smoldering nights—and not because we were igniting the fires of our passion for one another.

As life-sapping as it was however, we never considered divorce. In our eyes, divorce was not an option. We agreed before taking our vows that no matter what, divorce would not be mentioned.

We did eventually wear ourselves—and each other—down to the point that we knew we had to do something more to divorce-proof our marriage or we wouldn't have the fortitude to hold fast to our promise.

Because our marriage was so damaged, we sought Christian counseling. If our home had been destroyed by a tornado, we would have sought help from a professional; we knew our marriage had suffered no less damage than if an F5 had ripped through it.

My husband and I learned the hard way that marriage is not a one-time "I do" and then living happily ever after. Marriage takes work and involves daily choices.

We live in a day when commitments are taken lightly, when divorce can take place with a John Hancock. Sign your name; go your own way. The marriage covenant isn't taken as seriously as it once was.

But it should be.

Since God is the one who instituted the marriage relationship, it makes sense that he is the one who holds the keys to a lasting marriage. God has put forth spiritual laws for us, which lead to good or bad results, depending on the choices we make.

The following are some choices my husband and I made that turned our marriage around. These choices can do the same for you. And if you consider your marriage already to be good, these choices can make it even better.

Choose to make peace. The battle has to end sometime; it might as well be today. Making peace requires humility—a virtue we don't easily embrace. But those who enjoy a happy marriage realize that humility takes precedence.

It's hard for me to admit when I'm wrong, so this is still a difficult choice for me to make at times. But I've learned that if I am wrong, it's best to genuinely admit it, apologize if necessary, and then move on. Peace enters the relationship when one person humbles himself or herself to restore balance.


"Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone" (Romans 12:18).

See part 2 of this article in the next issue of the *ACORN*.

Tammy Darling is a freelance writer living in Three Springs, Pennsylvania.

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Kids Corner



Biblical Couples

Here are some couples found in the Bible. The husbands' names are given. Find the wives in the list. Use the verses to help.

Hannah	Rachel	Mary	Rebekah
Zipporah	Bathsheba	Sarah	Elizabeth
Drusilla	Priscilla	Sapphira	Eve

<p>Adam + _____</p> <p>Genesis 3:20</p>	<p>Abraham + _____</p> <p>Genesis 17:15</p>	<p>Isaac + _____</p> <p>Genesis 24:67</p>
<p>Jacob + _____</p> <p>Genesis 29:28</p>	<p>Moses + _____</p> <p>Exodus 2:21</p>	<p>Elkanah + _____</p> <p>1 Samuel 1:8</p>
<p>David + _____</p> <p>2 Samuel 12:24</p>	<p>Joseph + _____</p> <p>Matthew 1:18</p>	<p>Zechariah + _____</p> <p>Luke 1:5</p>
<p>Ananias + _____</p> <p>Acts 5:1</p>	<p>Aquila + _____</p> <p>Acts 18:2</p>	<p>Felix + _____</p> <p>Acts 24:24</p>



Oakwood Community Church
 11209 Casey Rd
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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

Edson Bustamante
 Pete Kluck
 Paul Phair
 Eric Pratt

Our Deacon Team

Nan Duncan
 Matt Fucarino
 Bob Mendenhall
 Ray Ross
 Ben Smith
 Dave Young

Calendar at a Glance



Feb 3—Blood Pressure checks
 Winter Retreat Registrations due
 Feb 5—Naomi’s Daughters dinner/Bible study
 Feb 10—Czech Team Applications due
 Feb 15-17—PowerHouse Winter Retreat—Orlando

Feb 17—Compassion Offering
 Board Meeting for elder & deacon teams
 Feb 19—Naomi’s Daughters dinner/Bible study
 Feb 21—Financial Peace University begins
 Feb 24—Congregational Meeting
 PowerHouse Food Bag Ministry

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...
Feb 8	Feb 13	Feb 16—Mar 1
Feb 22	Feb 27	Mar 2—Mar 15

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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