



ACORN

Take Heart as You Soul-Fish

A couple of weeks ago as I prepared my *Soul-Fishing* message to you based on the Master Fisher’s example to us from John 4, I was freshly encouraged by Jesus’ words, “The harvesters are paid good wages, and the fruit they harvest is people brought to eternal life. What joy awaits both the planter and the harvester alike! You know the saying, ‘One plants and another harvests.’ And it’s true. I sent you to harvest where you didn’t plant; others had already done the work, and now you will get to gather the harvest.”

Jesus earlier said that the greatest satisfaction for Him in soul-fishing was engaging in the work God called Him to do (vs. 34). That ought to be our prime satisfaction as well – just to know, with or without visible results, that we have honored God by serving Him through communicating the good news to others. But there’s more!

Jesus also taught us that it is exhilarating to see God use us to guide another person across the line of faith into an eternal relationship with Jesus Christ. There are few greater spiritual highs than this. Unfortunately, for most of us, so much of the time, we don’t see that kind of result, and so we become disheartened. We then tend to pull back from courageously investing in others. Again, there is even more for us to grasp that will give us heart!

Jesus informs us that there are times we will invest without seeing any immediate result. Yet that investment is NOT a wasted effort. In God’s time, God will use someone else to move that person closer to Him, and then another and another, until someone else reels that person in. In eternity guess who is then rewarded by God and is full of rejoicing? It’s both the initial “planter,” the eventual “harvester.”

Take heart to soul-fish! Fish with earnest *prayer*, loving *care*, and courageous *share*. Do so with love for others, yet your greatest love for God. Furthermore, do so knowing that God will always reward your fishing. And finally, do so knowing that whether you were the initial “planter” or the eventual “harvester,” both of you, along with God Himself, will be celebrating throughout eternity!



~ Pastor Paul

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.



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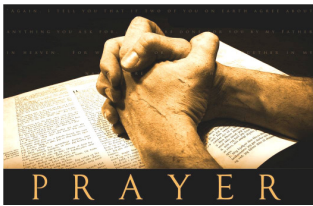
Congregational Meeting

This Sunday, March 18 we will be having an OCC Family Meeting right after the Worship Service. The meeting will begin by 12:00 PM and end no later than 12:45 PM. We also want to allow sufficient time for questions and comments from our church family.

As of this publication, there have been no requests for childcare. If you need childcare you must contact the Church Office by noon this Friday or there will be no childcare provided.

Church-wide Prayer Event

Beginning at 8:00 AM and ending at 5:00 PM on Saturday, March 24, Oakwood will be hosting its second church-wide prayer event of 2012 on the campus. Using an open-house-style format, the worship center will be arranged with six prayer stations inspired by the vision. Individuals can arrive at any time and stay as long as the Spirit leads, taking advantage of the stations. Prayer guides will be available.



Prayer Guide

Oakwood Community Church is *fueling* the new vision of **Expanding Our Territory, Together** united with **Love ~ Grow ~ Serve** in March. We will continue to pray the Prayer of Jabez, but this month's focus will be for much of the **leadership**. God can use our leadership in big ways to Expand Our Territory, Together, but it does take the involvement of us all, especially through the fuel of prayer! Pick up your copy of the March Prayer Guide at the Information Center or view it on our website.



Work Day

The deacons will be holding a work day on Saturday, March 31. The main focus of this work day will be improving the front of the worship center by laying sod in the areas that have died. There will be several other projects, both big and small. All are welcome and will have something to do.

Breakfast and lunch will be provided. Please RSVP to Ben Smith (bendsmith83@gmail.com, 813-968-4422) if you are able to help so that we can have an estimate for the food.



Community Group Olympics

Coming soon to Oakwood...the 2nd Annual Community Group Olympics. Mark your calendar for Saturday, April 28. Watch for details.

Upcoming Messages



Deliverance

March 25 & April 1

In just a couple of weeks, many Christ-followers throughout the world will be observing and celebrating Good Friday and Easter. As we approach the events of Jesus' crucifixion and resurrection, I will be guiding us to grasp more clearly just what Jesus' deliverance secured for us. It is so remarkable, that our souls fill with gratitude and praise. ~ Pastor Paul

Jesus said, "Remember Me." On Good Friday, we will focus on doing just that with devotion. In our special time of worship together we will listen to selected Scripture readings from the last week of Jesus' earthly life, which is often referred to as *Passion Week*. We will also connect with Jesus in a special way through our participation in *The Lord's Supper*. Come to affirm and refresh your faith and also purpose to touch His heart with your gratitude. ~ Pastor Paul



Come Alive This Easter!

At Easter, people gather to celebrate Jesus' coming back alive from the dead. Did you know Jesus promised that you can come alive too? In fact you can come alive this Easter to a better life than you knew was possible! What is that better life Jesus offers and how can you experience it? Come, bring a friend with you, and find out! Oh, also come expecting to celebrate! ~ Pastor Paul



Life Stories

For the encouragement of other, we are beginning to post the Life Stories that we hear on Sunday mornings on our website. The first post is from Gary Long on the impact that going to the Czech Republic had on his life. You can hear his story at <http://www.oakwoodfl.org/2012/02/23/outreach-english-camp-brno-cz/> - scroll down to the picture and beside it are the words "Listen to a past team member's experience [here](#)."

Tribute from Bob & Ann Henriques

Our missionaries serving in Guatemala, Bob and Ann Henrique, recently said goodbye to Ann's mother as she departed to heaven. Bob and Ann have written a brief summary of her extraordinary life for Christ.

In our home in Guatemala City, Marjorie Watson, Ann's mother, quietly passed into the presence of the Lord on March 1, 2012. She is survived by two sons, Joel and Mike, and her daughter Ann. For almost 10 years she valiantly struggled with Alzheimer's as she slowly lost her memory and ultimately the control of critical areas of her body.

She and her husband Bert were the quintessential pioneer missionaries. They invested 35 years ministering among the Campas, a primitive tribe in the Peruvian jungles. Using his unique building skills, Bert constructed their house elevated on columns along side of an Amazonian tributary. Basic supplies were flown to them over the jungle or came up river by boat; Ann's brothers, accompanied with Indians, hunted for animals to provide a meat source and Ann was in charge of raising the chickens. Bert cultivated a vegetable garden and from "scratch" Marjorie cooked delicious meals. Most importantly, they translated Scriptures into the Campa language.

With the help of local Campas, Bert would walk the jungle trails to make contact with scattered Indian families. A church was founded and the first pastor was the tribe's witchdoctor, Tampinari, an elderly, nearly blind and unlettered fellow who had been divinely wrenched from the demonic evils of Satan. Bert would recite whole portions of scripture to him and Tampinari, with a prodigious memory, hid the Word in his heart and pastored his flock. Ultimately a Bible Institute was founded to prepare future leaders of the tribe.

Ann's enduring memory of her mother, which will be forever etched in her heart, is a picture of a woman profoundly in love with her Bible and her beloved Jesus. Every morning before anyone else was up Marjorie was awake reading the Word and praying. At her feet Ann learned the Bible and became a believer.

To the many who prayed and donated to their ministry rest assured that the Watson legacy forever lives on. Can you imagine the homecoming parade in Heaven prepared for Marjorie, her reunion with Bert and other family members, fellow missionary colleagues who preceded them and, above all, see her surrounded by the many Campa Indians who came to a saving knowledge of Christ through the Watson family ministry? All of this was possible because the church in America nurtured the missionary vision and sent these faithful servants into the Peruvian jungles!



Opportunity to *Serve The Church & World*

Many of you know that we provide a ministry for single moms in the gray house. It is our *Naomi's Daughters* ministry 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.

Currently, this ministry opens once a month, typically on the 3rd Saturday of the month, for any single mom in need. ***We have now added a small food pantry of non-perishables for the moms as well.*** 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. There are bins provided along with tax deductible forms. 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.

Exciting News from the Czech Republic

In response to Pastor Paul's enthusiastic update on Oakwood/Candlewood's beginnings of seeing a team come together for this summer's Czech English Camps, the elder at Brno Evangelical Fellowship, Petr, provides us with this very encouraging ministry update. Here is an edited version of his email:

Paul,

Thank you for such wonderful news! ... At the moment, we have here a pre-taste of this summer's English Outreach Camps. It involves former Oakwoodians, Chris Lehmann and Dean Johnson. Last weekend we started a series of concerts performed by Chris, Dean, Zdenek, Kuba and Danny. The first one was in a Christian center Majak in Brno-Lesna. There was wonderful atmosphere, great music. About 200 people came. Both Chris and Dean shared their faith during the concert. Pastor Jirka was excited by so many people hearing gospel.

The second concert was in Ceska next to Lelekovice. Again, about 150 people came, the place was almost full. I made a few video tracks on my camera. You may watch this at the following link:

http://www.fit.vutbr.cz/~matousp/tmp/Chris_and_Dean2012/. You can see many local people (middle age) who clapped their hands and waved in rhythm. It seems that such music attracts people enormously. We informed our concert guests about this summer's English Camps, our Logos Classes and other activities. It seems that Camps will be nearly full :).

This week we plan to have another two concerts - in Klobouky and in Sokolnice (where Mirek and Emili Padaliks live). It is great that also local people offered their help with preparation. Our church is very enthusiastic about this - we are active in inviting people. The people we are inviting are our friends, colleagues, relatives, neighbors, local people and also our friends from previous English Camps. Chris and Dean are really active in staying with people and sharing their lives. Some of the concert guests came also to our Sunday service. I think that such concerts is a great way to invite people to our outreach English Camps!

Now, we pray for Kuba who plays percussions. After the last concert, he had swollen leg and his doctor recommended to him that he rest his leg. So he is struggling if he is to play or not. We pray for his recovery and wisdom to make good decision.

Thank you for your partnership with us. Without so many years of our partnership together with the English Camps, there would not be these concerts now. And I believe that God still has new, exciting ways to serve together in the sharing of the gospel. Please, give our thanks and regards to your congregation!

In Christ,

Petr

Petr,

Thank you for sharing about the work that God is doing in Brno-Lesna, Klobouky, Sokolnice, and in Ceska. I am reminded of Jesus' words in John 5:19 when Jesus said "the Son can do nothing by Himself. He does only what He sees the Father doing. Whatever the Father does, the Son does also." Reading your account about the crowds at the concerts, about the gospel being shared, about all of your friends, neighbors, colleagues, and family who plan to attend this year's English Camp: Hearing of all these things shows me that our Father is at work right now in your midst. And Team Tampa wants to join you in this work that we see the Father doing!!!

Thanks for this exciting update. We can't wait to join in!

- Rob Weyand
Leader, Team Tampa

Team Tampa XIII

English Camp in the Czech Republic ~ July 7-14, 2012

Would you like your life to be changed?

Consider serving with Team Leader Rob Weyand and his wife, Kelsey, as one of the 12 members of Team Tampa XIII - 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 7-14. Travel dates will likely be July 2 or 3 through July 17.

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. 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>



PowerHouse Schedule

- March 18—Movie Night**—movie about the life of Joseph
- March 25—PowerHouse Food Bag Fundraiser** following Worship
Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Sent by God, Reluctant To Go*
- April 1—Regular Youth Group Meeting**—*Speaking on God's Behalf*
- April 8—Easter**—No Youth Group Meeting tonight
- April 13-15—Spring Retreat @ Camp Geneva**
- April 15—No Youth Group Meeting** due to the retreat

PH Food Bag Fundraisers

PowerHouse teens can raise money for summer mission/conference trips by participating in our monthly Food Bag Fundraisers typically on the third Sunday of each month. Due to the student Spring Break Mission trip, our next Food Bag Prep fundraiser is **Sunday, March 25**, 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, March 23. Meet at the Save-A-Lot on Bearss Ave at 5:00 PM if you want to help. For more

Food Bag Delivery Drivers Needed

Our PowerHouse students have a monthly fundraiser assembling food bags that are distributed to medical clinics in Tampa, Lakeland and Haines City. We are in need of people who can help with delivery of these food bags, especially to Lakeland and Haines City. The food bags are usually assembled on the third Sunday of each month, and need to be delivered on the Monday or Tuesday following assembly.

If you can help with delivery or would like more information, please contact Sandy Clarke at 813-931-0668.

Spring Retreat

**PowerHouse
Spring Retreat
April 13—15
Camp Geneva**

All Middle & High School students—mark your calendar for the Spring Retreat. Watch for details coming soon.





Carol Kuykendall has written several books, including [*A Mother's Footprints of Faith*](#) (Zondervan). A vice president at MOPS (Mothers of Preschoolers) International in Denver, Colorado, she has three grown children and is enjoying her "empty nest" with her husband, Lynn. "Celebrating the Empty Nest," by Carol Kuykendall, was originally published in *Virtue*. Used with permission

Celebrating The Empty Nest—Part 1

Carol Kuykendall

As the mother of three growing children, I used to dread the thought of living in an "empty nest." The term sounded so dismal and empty, as if my purpose in life would be over once our children had flown the coop.

Today, I'm happy to report, my perspective's changed. My husband, Lynn, and I have entered our third year as "empty nesters," and we've discovered life can be surprisingly good! There are the unanticipated benefits, such as coming home at the end of the day to find our house in the same order we left it that morning. Or having the freedom to be more spontaneous about when we eat, what we eat, and how long we pray before we eat. We have more time for friends, each other, and God. Despite a period of adjustment, our empty nest no longer feels empty.

Statistics tell us that, chances are, more than one-third of our lifespan still awaits us when we enter the "empty nest." Its arrival shouldn't surprise us; it's hovered on the horizon since our children's births. Yet many of us enter it in a state of shock.

But there are ways we can tweak our lifestyle to help us minimize the emptiness and focus instead on the fullness.

Tweak Your Attitude

Of course, I grieved each time one of our children left for college. I missed their physical presence. I missed having their friends around. I even missed things I thought I'd never miss—piles of junk in the front hall or the constant sound of music I didn't choose *and* didn't like.

Though some grieving is normal, I knew I faced a choice: I could continue to wallow in nostalgia and dwell on the past—or embrace the future.

As I prayerfully tackled this choice, I discovered a spiritual serendipity. Our empty nest afforded me increased time for prayer. And as I spent more time with God, he transformed my attitude, changing the way I responded to this new season in life. By the time Kendall, our youngest, left home, I had a better handle on my attitude. Instead of planning to grieve this major milestone, Lynn and I took our first-ever trip to England with another couple.

We rented a flat for a week in London, then checked into a bed and breakfast in the Cotswolds, where we leisurely roamed the countryside. We slowly began to fine-tune our definition of "family," rediscovering the priority of our marriage relationship. That trip helped us focus on the exciting potential of this new time in our lives.

Tweak Your Setting

After our children left home, I felt the emptiness most at dinnertime, when Lynn and I sat alone at our long wooden kitchen table where most of our family meals had been eaten. The vacant chairs were a constant reminder of our downsized family. So we gave the table to our son, who now lives in an apartment, and replaced it with a smaller oval table with comfy swivel chairs. Colorful new placemats and candleholders transformed the space into a cozy, just-right-for-the-two-of-us space.

I began changing our nest in other ways as well. For years, our need for new sheets or towels fell to the bottom of the list of budget priorities; we had to get the kids' school clothes or update their bedroom wallpaper as they grew up. So Lynn and I simply settled for worn-out sheets and towels.

But now I began investing in us. I purchased some new towels for our bathroom and new sheets and a comforter for our bed. Since we no longer needed the VCR in our family room, we moved it to the bedroom, a much warmer spot in the winter. We converted the kids' phone line to a FAX number, which made working from home more convenient.

Although we didn't transform their bedrooms into a sewing room or home office, as many people do, we took a few posters off the walls and made their rooms more comfortable for guests. This change gave us a whole new opportunity to invite people into our home, offering them the privacy of a bedroom instead of a sofa bed in the family room.

Watch for Part 2 of this article in the next issue of *The ACORN*



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 - Mary-Lynn Reilly

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



Mar 18—Compassion Offering
 Congregational Meeting following Worship
 Mar 24—Prayer Event??
 Mar 25—PowerHouse Food Bag Fundraiser
 Mar 31—Work Day



Apr 1—Palm Sunday
 Apr 6—Good Friday Service
 Apr 8—Easter
 Apr 13-15—PowerHouse Student Spring Retreat
 Apr 15—Compassion Offering
 Elder-led Prayer Time following Worship

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...
Mar 23	Mar 28	Mar 31—Apr 13
Apr 6	Apr 11	Apr 14—Apr 27

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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