



ACORN

I Wish We'd All Been Ready – Larry Norman 1969

I have had the privilege over the last year to be in a directed study with Pastor Paul on the EFCA Statement of Faith. As some of you may recall, several years ago, Pastor Paul brought a series of excellent messages on each article of the statement. In the last year, I have been able to read a good bit about each article and then flesh out on paper my belief on each one. The most recent article of the Statement of Faith talks of Christ's return. I have been challenged in my thinking about how I view this world. Some of us have come through a generation where there was much talk of the end times. "The Late Great Planet Earth," along with many other books about Christ's imminent return, was a big seller in the Christian book stores back in the day. That seems to have diminished. But do we (or I) have the right perspective on this issue? I have appreciated reading many passages from the Bible that talk about the time of Christ's return. Jesus gave one of His lengthier teachings on future events in Matthew 24 & 25. The Apostle Paul also wrote of our conduct as we wait for Jesus to come. In Titus 2, he tells us "we should live in this evil world with wisdom, righteousness, and devotion (**love**) for God." The Apostle Paul also tells us in Hebrews 10:25 that we should "not neglect our meeting together, as some people do, but encourage one another, **especially now that the day of His return is drawing near.**" I think a part of our "**Growing in Community**" is to encourage one another to stay the course so that we will be ready when the Lord returns. In that same passage in Hebrews 10, we are told to "think of ways to motivate one another to acts of love and good works." We are to **serve** those in our world and encourage each other to the same.

In our study this week, Pastor Paul pointed out some verses that I have read many times and not thought about. In 2 Peter 3, the apostle gives his perspective on this. He says in verse 13, "We are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth He has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. And so dear friends, while we are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in His sight." Do you give much thought to the new heavens and new earth, where those who are following Christ in this life will spend eternity? Do you (or I) get as excited about our forever home as we do some of the things that we are blessed with on this temporary earth?

Easter in two Sundays! It is my favorite time of the year, even better than Christmas. The reason we get to be in the new heavens and new earth is because of the simple message of the gospel that Jesus died for our sins and rose again so that we might have eternal life. That's it. Who is it on your Soul Fishing list that needs to hear this good news? I have a couple of folks I am asking to come to our Easter service. Only the Lord knows what will happen. Lord, help me to be your hands, feet and mouth in letting others know of your great love for them.



That's all I'm 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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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



Childcare will be provided for children up through 5 Years Old.

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

There are no Youth or Adult Education classes at 9:15 on Easter Sunday, but we will have childcare and our full TreeHouse Children's Ministry during the 10:30 Service.



Work Day

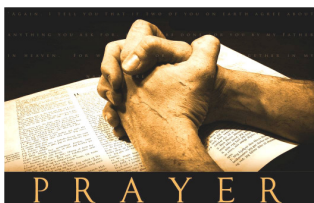
The deacons will be holding a work day **this Saturday, March 31, 8:00 AM—3:00 PM**. The main focus of this work day will be improving the front of the worship center by laying sod in the areas that have died. There will be several other projects, both big and small. All are welcome and will have something to do. We will be ending around 3:00 for those that are interested in coming later in the day.

Please bring the following supplies if you have them: Steel garden rake, Leaf rake, Leaf blower, A-frame ladder

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.

Elder Led Prayer Time

The leadership of Oakwood laid out a vision plan that we can accomplish with the Lord's guidance. That guidance will come as we seek Him in prayer more diligently this year. The Elders are committed in leading us in this effort. On Sunday, April 15, there will be an Elder-led prayer time right after the morning worship service. The prayer time will last for 30 minutes and will be focused on the challenges of our goals for this year and next. Please join us as we ask God for great things and expect that He will answer.

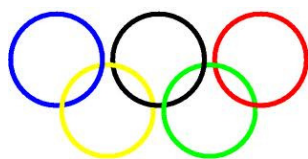


Sunday Morning Prayer

Another opportunity to pray begins April 1st. Every Sunday morning from 10:30 - 10:50 in the Worship Center kitchen 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**. April finds us celebrating the resurrection of Jesus. This gives us the perfect opportunity to focus on "Loving God" for the first part of the month by praying the names of Jesus. Then, we can spend the second part of the month "Loving God" by praying the names of the Holy Spirit. By May, we can move into praying the attributes of the Holy Spirit and how that affects how we "Serve the Church in the World." Pick up your copy of the April Prayer Guide at the Information Center or view it on our website.



Community Group Olympics

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

Hospitality Team



Hospitality Ministry

Our Hospitality Team is in need of additional team members to help on Sunday mornings. This team provides light snacks and makes coffee each Sunday morning. Team members would be responsible for one Sunday per quarter. A sign-up sheet is in the Information Center in the lobby. For more information call Dave Dorsey in the office or email dave@oakwoodfl.org.

CRU Outreach @ USF

CRU (Campus Crusade for Christ) at USF is having an outreach on April 12 with guest speaker Dr. Harold Finch speaking on “Unlimited Success – Discover the Secrets to Achieving More.” Dr. Finch is a NASA Apollo Project Director, Founder #1 Business Training Firm, Author and College Pioneer.

This event will be held in the Oval Theater at USF at 8:00 PM. Would you partner with CRU by praying for this event, attending the event, and even inviting those who are on your “Fishing” card to attend with you?

Also, we would like to have teams from Oakwood come to USF once a semester (or more) to walk around the campus and pray for the students, faculty, and staff. If this is something you would be interested in, please contact John Schneider @ 813-732-5963.

**UNLIMITED
SUCCESS**
DISCOVER THE SECRETS TO
ACHIEVING MORE

NASA Apollo Project Director • Founder, #1 Business Training Firm
Internationally Acclaimed Speaker • Inspiring Author • College Pioneer

DR. HAROLD FINCH
OVAL THEATER AT USF
APRIL 12 AT 8PM

FREE PIZZA!

PLUS: Everyone who attends this seminar will receive a free copy of Dr. Finch's inspiring book *The Keys to Great Success*. (100,000 copies published in five languages.)

Life Stories

For the encouragement of other, we are beginning to post the Life Stories that we hear on Sunday mornings on our website—www.oakwoodfl.org. You will find these on our home page under “Church News” - click Life Stories.

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.



PowerHouse Schedule

April 1—Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Speaking on God's Behalf (Moses)*

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

April 22—Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Firm Conviction (The Spies)*

April 29—Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Equipped and Exalted (Joshua)*

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, April 22**, 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, April 20. Meet at the Save-A-Lot on Bearss Ave at 5:00 PM if you want to help. For more details contact Sandy Clarke at 931-0668.

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 are encouraged to participate in our Spring Retreat. Registration brochures will be available in PowerHouse and the Information Center this Sunday, April 1. Cost is \$100 if registered by April 8.





Celebrating The Empty Nest—Part 2

Carol Kuykendall

In the last issue of *The ACORN*, we had Part 1 of this article which included the points:

Tweak Your Attitude

Tweak Your Setting

If you missed Part 1, you can read it on our website—www.oakwoodfl.org. Scroll to the bottom of the home page and click Newsletters.

Tweak Your Family Traditions

I've always relished family traditions. When our children were young, I pulled the same predictable decorations out of storage every Thanksgiving, Christmas, Valentine's Day, Easter, and Fourth of July. We celebrated in traditional ways, too. Though the number of faces around our Thanksgiving table varied each year, our family of five formed the nucleus of this celebration of feasting. We spent the day preparing food. We got out the fancy white tablecloth, good china, and silverware, and the kids made place cards for our guests.

I dreaded our first Thanksgiving alone, because I feared their absence would magnify the emptiness of this new season of life. So we accepted an invitation from friends, and for the first time in 20 years, I didn't cook a turkey. I anticipated withdrawal symptoms, but to my surprise, I enjoyed the freedom from responsibility! Now Lynn and I look forward to all the new ways we can celebrate—such as serving turkey to the homeless at our church, or taking a cross-country ski trek—thanking God not only for food, but the blessing of his creation.

On our first Valentine's Day as empty nesters, we realized going out for dinner alone was no longer unusual. So we invited a single mom to share dinner with us at

home. Our first Mother's Day and Father's Day alone also felt a bit odd, so Lynn and I began to honor each other for the role we played in our children's lives, instead of depending on them to set the pace. As we learn to hold our children more loosely, we're growing closer and opening ourselves up to what God has in store for us in the future.

Tweak Your Time for God

The Bible tells us there are many seasons to our life. For years, I've lived in the hectic, demanding, childrearing season of life. But in our quieter empty nest, Lynn and I are enjoying the tranquility of more stillness. Other than getting involved with some mentoring relationships with younger people, we haven't rushed to fill our extra time with lots of outside activities. Instead, we're relishing the opportunity to have more time for thinking, reading, or praying, without inconveniencing anyone else.

I especially enjoy having more time to ponder some of the memories I've stored in my heart over the last 20 years. As I journal them and reflect on them, they become tangible reminders that God, who has so richly blessed us in the past, surely will continue to bless us in this season of the empty nest.

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

Kids Corner



Make a special Easter treat for your family and friends.

You will need:

- Cookie cutters in the shapes of Easter symbols – butterfly, cross, flower – or other shapes.

- 4 small boxes or 2 large boxes of gelatin dessert, such as Jell-O®. Pick your favorite flavor.

- 2 1/2 cups boiling water. (Ask an adult to help.)

- Large mixing bowl.

- 13" x 9" pan.

How to make the treats:

- Pour boiling water into a large bowl.

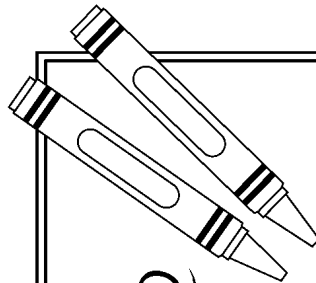
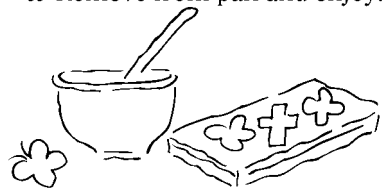
- Add gelatin mix and stir for 3 minutes.

- Pour into a 13" x 9" pan.

- Put into the refrigerator until firm – about 3 hours.

- Cut the gelatin into Easter shapes with the cookie cutters.

- Remove from pan and enjoy!



Just for KIDS

Easter Surprises!



Connect the dots to find 2 symbols of Easter. Write the words in order on the lines below.

17 • 18 • 19 • 20 • 21 • 22 • 23 • 24 • 25 • 26 • 27 • 28 • 29 • 30 • 31 • 32 • 33 • 34 • 35 • 36 • 37 • 38 • 39 • 40 • 41 • 42 • 43 • 44 • 45 • 46

righteous
holy
The
loving
Son
His
God
Christ
Jesus
gave
us
day
Easter
He
He
rose
us
save
again
one
to
died
sin
from
all

2	4	6	8	10	'	12	14	'
16	18	'	20	22		24	"	
26	28	30	33	35	37	38	39	'
40	41	42	43	44	45	46	"	

Answer: God gave us Jesus Christ, His Son, the holy, loving, righteous one. He died to save us all from sin, and on Easter day, He rose again!



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 - 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 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
 Apr 22—PowerHouse Food Bag Fundraiser

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...
Apr 6	Apr 11	Apr 14—Apr 27
Apr 20	Apr 25	Apr 28—May 11

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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