



ACORN

What Is Most Dear?

Do we view follow Christ as an elective or is it a calling? Do we consider our life’s happiness as dear to us, or our fulfilling Jesus’ calling upon our lives?

If we consider our lives dear to us, yet profess faith in Jesus, then we will serve Him from time to time if it doesn’t cost us too much of those things that are most valuable to us, such as our time and our money. However, if we view our lives has having been bought by Jesus’ own blood, we know we owe Him our full and loving devotion with all that we are. We don’t weigh choices against what it will cost us; we only weigh them in the light of what we perceive to be God’s calling upon our lives (which include family, vocation, ministry, and more).

I found the apostle Paul’s statement quite challenging to me; in the midst of his being warned regarding his upcoming sufferings, imprisonment, and possible execution, he states, “... none of these things move me; nor do I count my life dear to myself ...” rather it is “finishing the work assigned me by the Lord Jesus ... (Acts 20:24, NKJ & NLT).” Then Paul reminds those to whom he is speaking, that they too need to fulfill God’s calling upon their lives even though the task is daunting.

I ask you the questions I am freshly asking myself. Is your service to Christ an elective or is it your highest calling? Is your life’s fulfillment or happiness most dear to you, or is it to fulfill the calling Jesus has upon your life? Are you a partially devoted follower of Jesus or a fully devoted follower of Jesus? Hmm. What’s your prayer going to be right now? In addition, what will now be the primary pursuit of your life? What decisions will this affect for you right now?



~ Pastor Paul

The following story, from the true life experience of Max Lucado, is a great encouragement for when our soul-fishing efforts seem to fail. Click the link below to read the story:

<http://www.christianity.com/devotionals/upwords-max-lucado/11627442/>

Oakwood Community Church
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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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TreeHouse Volunteers needed

We have a number of TreeHouse volunteers who give of their time every week to minister to our wonderful children. We like to give this team of workers a break for the summer. Will you give us a hand and teach for a week, a month, or the summer? Please contact Dave Dorsey at 813-969-2303 or dave@oakwoodfl.org if you are interested in volunteering your time.



PROMOTION SUNDAY

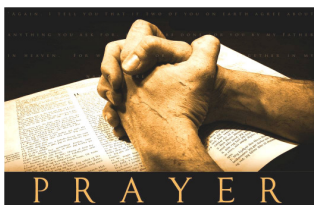
Move Up Sunday

Move Up Sunday is June 10 for all children of the TreeHouse. What is *Move Up Sunday*? All children will move up to the school grade that they will be in this August. This allows them to develop relationships with children that they will be worshipping with through High School.

Graduating 5th Graders will be recognized during the Worship Services on June 10. They are welcome to join us in TreeHouse and PowerHouse throughout the summer.

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—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.



New Message Series



This Sunday, April 15, I will present a message entitled, *Keeping Your Cool Inside & Out*. This comes from a section of very practical exhortations from the Apostle Paul to the Ephesians in chapter 4, verses 30-32. I am picking up where we left off in our Ephesians series approximately two years ago. ~ Pastor Paul

Recycle Bin at Oakwood

Did you know that your newspapers, magazines, junk mail, etc., can earn money for Oakwood? Because of your generous donations, we have already gotten over \$300!

Collect your recyclable items during the week and bring them when you come to church and drop them in the blue Mixed Paper Recycling Bin. Please break down any boxes to help conserve room in the bin. Thanks for doing your part to help earn extra funds for Oakwood.



Acceptable items:

Newspaper & inserts, phone books, white paper, colored paper, glossy paper (without food residue), junk mail & envelopes, catalogs & magazines, cereal & cake mix boxes (liners removed), computer & plain fax paper, NCR paper, paper reams wrappers, construction art paper (less than 50% painted), paper egg cartons, non-metallic gift wrap and greeting cards, manila folders, hanging files, shredded paper, paper bags, self-stick notes, paperback books, frozen food boxes/cartons (no food residue), shoe or clothing boxes, store receipts, thermal fax paper or carbon paper, hardback books, tyvek mailing envelopes, padded envelopes.

Not Acceptable items:

Food contaminated paper, plastic or foil; milk, soy, juice cartons or pouches; film plastic (e.g., plastic bags, bubble wrap); beverage cups, coffee cups, donut boxes, fast food cups, take out containers/wrappers, foam egg cartons, foil, food and candy wrappers, snack or potato chip bags, ice cream cartons, paper covered with paint or pet waste, pizza boxes, tissues, paper towels, paper plates.

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.



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.

National Day of Prayer

The 61st Annual National Day of Prayer will take place Thursday, May 3, 2011. Millions will unite in prayer at thousands of events from coast to coast. The theme, **“One National Under God”**, is based on the verse from **Psalm 33:12** which states: “Blessed is the nation whose God is the LORD.”

Join us at Oakwood on May 3 for an hour of prayer from 12:00 noon – 1:00 PM.



Beach Baptism



We will have a baptismal service at Pass-a-Grille Beach (St. Petersburg) on Sunday, June 3, 4:00 PM.

If you desire to be baptized at the beach, please contact the Church Office by May 25. Information about baptism is available on our website at www.oakwoodfl.org – go to the “About Oakwood” tab, choose Reference Documents, then scroll down to the Special Observances section and choose the age appropriate information on Baptism. If you don’t have web access, contact the Church Office and we will provide you with the information.

Watch for more details on directions and where we will meet at the beach.

Thank You for Your Partnership in Advancing The Gospel

Oakwood (and now Candlewood too) has had a special relationship with Brno Evangelical Fellowship Church in the Czech Republic. For the 13th wonderful year, we are preparing to send a team to partner with them in an outreach English Camp. Just a few weeks ago, two of our former members, also partnered with them in outreach music concerts that were very beneficial in many ways. The following link is a letter from the congregation’s pastor. It is filled with wisdom, insight, and great encouragement to us.”



<http://www.oakwoodfl.org/site/wp-content/uploads/2012/03/ThankForConcerts.pdf>



Community Group Olympics

Coming April 28 to Oakwood...the 2nd Annual Community Group Olympics. If you missed the Olympics last year, you missed a lot of fun. There were games, there was laughter, there was fellowship, there was food, there were prizes! Below is a sample of the events.



Everyone is invited

If you aren't in a Community Group, you will be placed with a group for the evening. You don't want to miss this year's competition so mark your calendar.

Contact Eric Pratt—espratt28@gmail.com— to RSVP



PowerHouse Schedule

April 13-15—Spring Retreat @ Camp Geneva

April 15—No Youth Group Meeting due to the retreat

April 22—Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Speaking on God's Behalf (Moses)*

April 29—Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Firm Conviction (The Spies)*

May 6—Regular Youth Group Meeting—*Equipped and Exalted (Joshua)*

May 13—Mother's Day—No Youth Group Meeting

Graduate Recognition



We would like to honor our graduates – whether from High School or College. Please loan us five or so pictures of your graduating student from infancy to graduation and a short bio of their future plans. These will be part of a graduation recognition video presentation on June 3. Pictures are due in to the Church Office no later than May 6. If you prefer, you may email them to marylynn@oakwoodfl.org or put them in the “Church Office” mail slot in the Worship Center kitchen.

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.



Your Gift or Mine? - Pt 1

Kirsetin K. Morello

After my husband and I faced each other, took a deep breath, and said, "I do," we joined a warm and welcoming church in the Seattle area. There, we connected with a group of other newlyweds for social events and Bible studies. As we got to know our new friends, someone asked us about our spiritual gifts. Spiritual gifts? Although both of us grew up attending church, neither of us was familiar with this term.

During the next few years, we not only learned what spiritual gifts were, but we also discovered ours. I came to understand that natural abilities and spiritual gifts can be different. All of us have natural abilities we can use for many good purposes. But spiritual gifts—like hospitality, mercy, giving, and teaching—are given to each of us by the Holy Spirit specifically so that we can minister to others in the body of Christ. The Apostle Paul describes it this way: "If the whole body were an eye, how would you hear? Or if your whole body were an ear, how would you smell anything? But our bodies have many parts, and God has put each part just where he wants it" (1 Corinthians 12:17-18). And so it is with us: each member of the body of Christ has a purpose in edifying other believers. Further, as husbands and wives, we have the privilege of encouraging our spouses to reach, teach, and minister to the Christian community through their gifts.

Start at the Beginning

If you're newly married and you've never determined your spiritual gifts, now is the time. By beginning this process together, you set the stage for a lifetime of encouraging one another to grow in faith through serving.

- *Begin with prayer.* Ask God to help make you aware of your gifts. Ask him

to reveal areas where you could effectively use them. Read about the spiritual gifts in Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:8-10; Ephesians 4:11-12; and 1 Peter 4:11.

- *Be receptive.* Listen carefully to feedback you receive in your everyday interactions. Are you incredibly moved to give to the needy? Do you feel compelled to help others understand God's Word? These types of urges can be clues to your gifts and how you can use them. In addition, you may have gifts that push you beyond your comfort zone. You might discover that you have the gift of hospitality, for example, even though you're not sure how to pull off a meal for six student ministry leaders with kids afoot. Remember, when God called Moses to lead his people out of Egypt, Moses protested. "Lord, please! Send anyone else" (Exodus 4:13). But God used Moses and he can use you, too.
- *Analytical assessments.* To help people identify their spiritual gifts, many churches use a questionnaire-type tool. An Internet search for "spiritual gifts assessment" will result in more questionnaires than you can count. Here are three online assessments you can use in conjunction with other tools:

Ephesians Four Ministries
Evangelical Lutheran Church
Gifted 2 Serve

[Editor's note – Oakwood has a Spiritual Gifts Assessment tool. Contact the office for more info.]

Look for Part 2 of this article in the next issue if the *ACORN*.

Kirsetin K. Morello
is a writer who lives
in Michigan. She is
the author of I Want
to Teach My Child
About Media
(Standard Publishing).

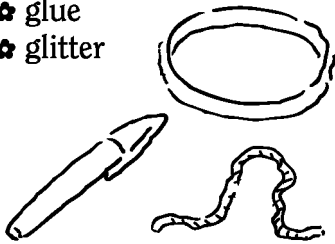
Used with permission

Kids Corner

Make a "Son" Catcher

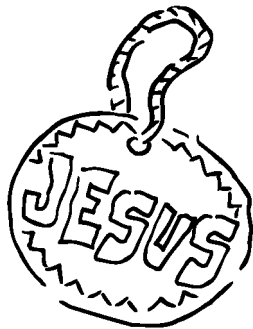
You will need:


- ✿ round, clear plastic, food container lid
- ✿ hole punch
- ✿ yarn
- ✿ permanent markers in a variety of colors
- ✿ glue
- ✿ glitter



How to make it:

- ✿ Using the markers and glitter, decorate the lid with the name of Jesus and some bright colors and shapes.
- ✿ Punch a hole in the top.
- ✿ Put a piece of yarn through the hole and tie it to make a hanger.
- ✿ Hang in a window to catch the sun.





One of a Kind

The scrambled words and phrases below are all found in the Bible. They all have something in common. Find what that is. First, unscramble the words. Next, transfer the circled letters in order to the lines at the bottom of the page.

- 1) eiVn _ _
- 2) ilLy fo teh elaVly
_ _ _ _ _
- 3) abLm fo dGo _ _ _ _
- 4) estMar _ _ _ _
- 5) eJuss _ _ _ _
- 6) okRc _ _ _
- 7) rdBea fo eiLf _ _ _ _ _
- 8) higLt fo hte dorWl
_ _ _ _ _ _ _
- 9) voaSir _ _ _ _
- 10) doLr _ _ _
- 11) ishCrt _ _ _ _
- 12) ehSprhed _ _ _ _ _
- 13) Teh doWr _ _ _ _
- 14) rncPie fo cePae
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

What do all these words have in common?
" _ _ _ _ _ , _ _ _ _ _ ."

Answers: Vine; Lily of the Valley; Lamb of God; Master; Jesus; Rock; Bread of Life; Light of the World; Savior; Lord; Christ; Shepherd; The Word; Prince of Peace; Names of Gods Son.



Oakwood Community Church
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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



Apr 13-15—PowerHouse Student Spring Retreat
 Apr 15—Compassion Offering
 Elder-led Prayer Time following Worship

Apr 22—PowerHouse Food Bag Fundraiser
 Apr 28—2nd Annual Olympics
 Apr 29—Board Meeting

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 20	Apr 25	Apr 28—May 11
May 4	May 9	May 12—May 25

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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