

LOVING GOD...

CHANGING LIVES

Oak Leaves

May your Home be warm,
your Holidays grand,
& may your Heart be
held gently in the Lord's hands.

A Publication of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church

Bloomington, Minnesota

Advent/Christmas Worship Schedule

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Deadline for the January 2018 Oak Leaves is **December 15** - Articles may be edited for space and/or content.

December 2017



December 3 Pastor Bill will lead worship and Holy Communion on the 1st Sunday of Advent.



December 10 8:15: Pastor Bill leads worship.
10:45: The **Children's Christmas Pageant**. Come hear the ancient story of Jesus' birth told by our youngest members!



Tuesday, December 12, 7 PM. Service of Remembrance. This service of worship is open to all, yet created especially for those who experience the holiday season with a bit of anxiety, dread or sadness. It is a service of respite and renewal, of light and life in a busy season. The service will include music, scripture, and readings as well as time to light a candle in memory and in hope.

Sunday, December 17 8:15 Pastor Mary leads worship
10:45: Chancel Choir presents, "**Let There Be Christmas**," a cantata by Joseph Martin. This cantata has traditional carols, original anthems, congregational singing and narration in a joyous celebration of hope and peace for the season. Our Hand Bell Choir and a small instrumental ensemble will accompany. Come and be inspired!



Christmas Eve, December 24
10:45 am Pastor Bill leads 4th Sunday in Advent worship

4:00 pm: Pastor Mary leads family worship. **Children and youth!** If you would like to sing, play an instrument or read for this service, please contact Mary (mkoon@oakgrv.org or 952-888-4621).



10:00 pm: Candlelight Service, Pastor Bill preaching

Sunday, December 31 Only one service at 10:45. Pastor Bill leads worship.



Sunday, January 7, Baptism of Our Lord. Back to two services. We encourage members considering baptism for their child/children to choose this date. Please contact one of the pastors to talk about baptism.

Upcoming All-Church and Group Events

Adult Events

Tuesday, Dec 5, Noon, Burger 'n' Brew Men's Fellowship at Zeke's. Bring someone who is not able to drive and share in fellowship with others. No need to RSVP!

Thursday, Dec 7, 2:00 pm, Caregivers' Tea and Respite Care — for all caregivers and their loved one(s) to share experiences and have a small time of respite.



Sunday, Dec 10, Caroling at the Masonic Home! Rainbow Fellowship is once again hosting our annual caroling at the Masonic Home in Bloomington. All are welcome to join in — we'll meet in the narthex at 12:15 pm and carpool as needed. Come for a wonderful time of bringing holiday cheer to the residents and staff!

Thursday, Dec 20, 11:00 am, Lunch Bunch Respite Care. Bring your loved one and give yourself a little break to run errands or enjoy coffee with a friend.

Mature Singles (and any mature adults who enjoy fellowship):

>**Monday, Dec 11, 5:00 pm** we will meet at Zeke's for dinner and fellowship. No need to call, just show up and enjoy!

>**Monday, Jan 1, 4:00 pm, New Year's Potluck and Game Day** at Iris Karow's home. Call Jody Milton at 952-831-7325 to RSVP or for more info.

Presbyterian Women (PW) have two study circles that meet from

September to June — **Evening Star Circle** (contact Connie Nesbitt, 952-935-3810) meets Tuesday evening, Dec 5 at 7 pm at the church; and **Goodrich-Nord Circle** (contact Joan Stanko, 952-888-7577) meets Wednesday, Dec 13 at 9 am for Bible study and then at 11:30 they will meet for lunch at Taste of Scandinavia. All women of the church are welcome to join a circle. **Next Coordinating Team Meeting** will be Monday, January 8, at 1:30 pm at the church. All women who are members of the church are welcome to attend.

PW Bake Sale — Our bake sale on October 29 was a huge success. We raised over \$900 for our mission projects. Thanks to all who baked and those who purchased our baked goods.

Presbyterian Women's Knit Tree PW once again has a Knit Tree in the narthex from November 19 — December 3. Thank you for donating mittens, hats and scarves for Cornerstone.

**OAK GROVE PRESBYTERIAN**

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Office Hours

Monday—Thursday
8:30 am—5:00 pm
Friday—8:30 am - 3:00 pm

Oak Grove Staff

Ministers: **the 505 members**

Pastor **Bill Chadwick**
bchadwick@oakgrv.org

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Mary Koon

mkoon@oakgrv.org

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Treasurer: **Sue Greimel**
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Clerk of Session:

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Lacey Jones

Part-time Custodians: **Tim Dubis**
MartinAlan Smith

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Deb DeMeester
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2017 Per Capita is \$33.75
2018 Per Capita is \$34.50

Dear Friends:

*Let it be to me according to your word.**

*My soul magnifies the Lord, and my spirit rejoices in God my Savior...God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly: God has filled the hungry with good things, and sent the rich away empty.***

*But Mary treasured all these words and pondered them in her heart.****

Mary, the mother of Jesus, was perhaps 14 or 15 years old when these events took place. What a remarkable young woman—a woman of faith and faithfulness.

Advent is a gift to the Church of time, a time for *pondering*. This Advent I desire to ponder the words and wisdom of this amazing young woman, that they may inform my own adoration and commitment to faithful discipleship.

Peace, Pastor Bill

*Mary, responding to the angel's announcement that she would conceive and bear a son, who will be called Son of God, Luke 1:38.

**From the Magnificat, Luke 1.

***One of my top three all-time favorite verses of scripture, following the shepherds' announcement to Mary of the promise made by the angel, Luke 2:19.

Congratulations to one of our sister churches, Chain of Lakes in Blaine, which was "chartered" on November 11! They were required by the presbytery to have 85 members and they currently have 101! It was a wonderful and uplifting service, and astonishingly short, considering that the service included the chartering of the congregation, the ordination and installation of the first elders for the congregation, and the installation of Paul Moore as pastor. (And the participation of seven clergy.) Oak Grove was WELL-REPRESENTED, with about two dozen Oak Grovers who made the trek to Blaine. Thanks! Following the service, one of the COL members said to me, with tears in her eyes, "Oak Grove came through for us at just the right time. I literally don't know what we would have done without your help." (Over the past several years Oak Grove shared with Chain of Lakes \$35,000 out of the interest from our special funds. In addition, we have shared leadership training, retreats, and preacher exchanges. [Insert joke here, Rich Miller.])

We have been greatly enriched from this partnership between presbytery's newest congregation and the presbytery's second oldest congregation. (First Pres Stillwater is older than we are by six years.)

Annual Minnesota Homeless Memorial March, Thursday, December 21 at 5:00 pm

The Oak Grove Social Justice Committee invites you to join us. The walk begins at the Hennepin County Government Center and ends 2.25 miles later at Simpson United Methodist Church. A service of remembrance and community meal follows the walk. Even if you are unable to participate in the walk, you are encouraged to attend the service.

During the service, a candle is lit as each person's name is read. It is a moving tribute to those who have died. In addition, marchers carry individual signs with the name, age, and hometown of every person being honored.

The march originates from Simpson staff and volunteers seeking to remember a Vietnam vet named Eric who was found beaten to death. Shortly after he was found, Eric's family members gathered to honor his life, and the lives of a few other people they knew who had died that year. It was an important moment for all, including his family.

The Minnesota Coalition for the Homeless (MCH) heard that Simpson had held the service and proposed that it become a larger event, including names of as many people as they could gather. In December, 1984, the first official Minnesota homeless memorial was held, launching the collaboration between Simpson and MCH that exists to this day.

Sign-up and carpool sheet is in the narthex or contact Ron Dubis (612-868-9194; rojiti@aol.com), or simpsonhousing.org for more information.



*submitted by
Supportive Housing Mission*

More families in Minnesota than ever before are homeless. The Supportive Housing Committee once again asks for your generous support of the *GIVING*

TREE event for those families who are part of **Families Moving Forward** and **Keys to Success** programs, services of Beacon Interfaith Communities. This is the third year for our community to partner with St. Stephen's Episcopal Church in Edina and Westminster Presbyterian in Minneapolis to give parents in these two programs opportunity to shop for and then *wrap* age and gender appropriate gifts for their children. Visit the GIVING TREE in the narthex and open your hearts to help bring holiday joy to the children in these families! We'll accept gifts through December 10.

It's Time... To Talk About Housing in Bloomington

On Thursday, December 7, from 6:30-8:30pm the Bloomington Housing Coalition and the Bloomington Housing Redevelopment Authority will meet at the Schneider Theater in City Hall. We will be hosting a conversation on affordable housing with opportunities to hear from local renters, city officials, concerned citizens, and community leaders. Come to listen, learn, share, and connect with your neighbors around what we can do to make sure that you and everyone else in Bloomington have safe, dignified, and affordable places to call home.

Peacemaking Offering is Shared with the Dar Al Farooq Islamic Center in Bloomington

The 25% that Oak Grove gave toward the Peacemaking Offering was \$445.00. The Social Justice Committee voted to add enough to make the check \$500.00. During the Islamic Center's open house, Marsha Pridgeon, Social Justice Committee Chair, and Pastor Bill presented the check to them.

TECH CORNER *submitted by Technology Committee*

We are making progress!! Earlier this year, our technology moved from analog to digital, enabling us to have better interface with smartphones and I-pads, and better color and resolution for images projected on the screens each Sunday morning. At the same time, we bought a pro-consumers switcher unit enabling the console person to go from Power Point (written word) to video and back again depending on the bulletin sequence of events. Although part of our goal was achieved, we were disappointed in the slowness of the switching, the jitter and the occasional blue/green screens that disputed the flow. Our audio/video vendor suggested upgrading to a commercial pro-level unit which we tried out earlier in November. WOW!! All the jitter and transition delays disappeared. Besides smoother transitions, console operators can now utilize pre-sets enabling them to move between items in the bulletin seamlessly with a single push of a button. **It took ten months, but the plan is to install the new unit by the end of the year.**



Mary Koon & Gramps



Cece Klueh & Jessi McKinnon

Oak Grove Cabaret



Hannah Ervin



"Hair"

Creative People!

Join the Creative Hands Across the River Crafters

No matter what your interest, bring your projects and join our friendly monthly meetings alternating between Oak Grove and Presbyterian Church of the Apostles (PCA — 701 E. 130th St, Burnsville). On December 9 from 9:00—Noon, we will meet at PCA. It is a fun way to get to know folks from PCA & Oak Grove and to get some work done on your crafting projects.

Plus, we have treats!

December 9 - PCA

January - attend the Women's Retreat

February 3 - PCA

March 3 - Oak Grove

April 7 - PCA

May 5 - Oak Grove

Questions? Dawn Baddeley dawnrn90@comcast.net (PCA) or Yvonne Dodge yvonedodge@hotmail.com (Oak Grove).

A partnership activity between PCA and OGPC.

Adult Faith Formation LOVE GROWS HERE

Love is from God. Love is of God. God is love. As we learn more about God as revealed in scripture and more about the world around us, we pray that the spirit will open our hearts to greater possibilities to share love in this place and time.

Sundays in December

December 3 – Mission Gift Fair between services. Shop for Christmas, enjoy conversation and fresh cinnamon rolls as we raise money for the Presbyterian Mission Board. A lovely way to begin Advent!

December 10 – ‘Where’s Santa in the Gospels?’ Mary Pol will lead a Bible Study comparing Jesus’ birth narratives in the Gospels. Each Gospel writer tells the story in a different way and one says nothing at all about Jesus’ birth.

December 17 – Christmas Sharing. Come with a plate of cookies to share as we enjoy coffee, cookies and conversation. Mary Koon will invite us to share an Advent or Christmas memory. This will be a warm, relaxed hour between worship services.

December 24 and 31 – No Faith Formation these Sundays – one service at 10:45.

Wednesdays December 6 & 13 continue the Discipleship 101 series.

The Children’s Ministry curriculum this year for both Wednesday and Sunday is “Love in a Big World: Building Character and Hope in Kids.” Through scripture, good children’s literature, service and activity, we’ll explore themes of love, humility, fairness, organization, responsibility and more.

Dates to remember:

Sunday, Dec 3: 3rd – 5th graders are invited to help Sue Greimel in the kitchen to make cinnamon rolls to sell at the Gift Fair. *Please arrive at 8 am.* We will break for Pageant practice at 10 am.

Wednesday, Dec 6 (WoW!): “Almost” dress rehearsal for the Christmas Pageant. This is a very important rehearsal and we encourage all participants to be here!

Saturday, Dec 9: 9:30 – Noon – Rehearsal and Parents’ Day Out. We will begin the morning with a dress rehearsal for the Pageant, and then the children are welcome to stay for gift-making, cookie decorating, play and lunch. Deacons and senior high youth will chaperone the morning, and a donation toward the senior high youth trip to Guatemala (\$20.00 suggested) will be appreciated!

Sunday, Dec 10: Children arrive at 10 am for the Christmas Pageant. The pageant will take place during the 10:45 am worship service.

Wednesday, Dec 13: Last WoW! before the Christmas break.

Sundays Dec 17, 24 and 31: No Faith Formation for Children

Sunday Dec 24: 4 pm Family Service – If your child or youth would like to be a part of the service in any way (sing, speak, dance), please let Mary know.

Whew! What a month! Looking ahead to 2018 ministries:

Saturday, Jan 20, 4:30 – 6:30 pm -- All Ages go to **Feed My Starving Children** in Eagan

Friday, Feb 9 – Family Pizza Night and Talent Show

Sunday, Feb 11, Intergenerational Faith Formation with musician Richard Bruxvoort Colligan

Friday, Mar 9, Gaga Lock- in

Through Oct 31	2017		Act vs Budg	2016
	Actuals	Budget	Fav/(Unfav)	Actuals
Income YTD	\$545,086	\$565,874	(\$20,788)	\$554,009
Expense YTD	\$586,114	\$629,110	\$42,996	\$573,348
Income – Exp	(\$41,028)	(\$63,236)	\$22,208	(\$19,379)

A big thanks to everyone for helping us beat our October budget!! Now let's see what we can do in November and December! While we're still running at a deficit, it's much better than we expected, and we have reserves to cover a possible shortfall. Oak Grove has much to be thankful for – mostly for you!!

End of Year Financial Info

submitted by Financial Secretary, Meghan Dooley

Final Year 2017 Offering: All contributions credited for tax year 2017 **must be postmarked or received by no later than December 31**. Please note the office will close at Noon on Friday, December 29.

Stock Donation: If you are considering donating stock to the church for the 2017 tax year please do so by Tuesday, December 26, 2017. For more information please contact Meghan.

Do you have Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) from your retirement account(s)? Do you want to avoid taxes *and* extend the mission and ministry of Oak Grove? Some of our faithful members have chosen to support Oak Grove Church by requesting that checks from the account(s) be sent directly to the church (2200 W Old Shakopee Rd, Bloomington 55431) for use as needed most. These amounts are in addition to the normal pledged giving. If you would like to do this, please contact your financial planner now to avoid end of year taxes. Contact Meghan for info on where to have funds sent.

December Birthdays

(If you don't see your birthday, we either don't have that information or you requested that it not appear.)

*Important birthday (1-21) ** Significant birthday (85+)



- | | |
|---|--|
| 1 Logan Henderson*19; Andrew Hess | 15 Sarajane Myers |
| 2 Catherine Dukelow*20; Tom McNutt | 16 Ryan Knapp |
| 3 Marisol Freeberg (Robles)*15; Ken Freiborg;
Carolyn Hamilton; Livia Knapp*1;
Nancy Lamberger; | 19 Cathy Colborn; Jake Krentz |
| 4 Debbie Dukelow | 20 Dorothy Sorensen |
| 5 Candy Alman; Jim Pickard**92 | 21 Mary Boateng |
| 6 Mattie Hawley; Matthew McNutt | 23 Judy Olson |
| 8 Evelyn Gebhard | 25 Susanne Knutson |
| 9 Hannah Ervin*14; Dianne Lawson | 26 Bev Carlson**85; Arlyn Grussing |
| 10 Bill Chadwick; Darlene Thronson;
Bob Ulwelling | 27 Karen Diller; Lydia Traeder*18;
Katrin Wenz*10 |
| 11 Nancy Bergwick; Kris Jacobson | 28 Jill Dubis; Ron Nail |
| 13 Nick Benz; Warren DeMuth; Terry Taylor | 29 Dexter Freiborg; Larry Pearson |
| | 30 Ignatius Esele; Amelia Kearney*5 |
| | 31 Derek Flanagan*18 |



**Golden Harvest
Dinner**

Thanks, Condolences, Congratulations!

Thank You, Oak Grove

Thanks to all those who sent me cards, called, and visited me after my recent knee replacement surgery. At times like these, I am so grateful to be a part of such a caring community. *Mary Jones*

Dear Ones, Your gifts of prayer, calls, cards, visits and food have sustained Mac and me over the last four months. I didn't realize that compression fracture in the spine was so serious, and recovery would take months in an upper body brace. To the wonderful volunteers who took over my Thursday afternoon spot as "office girl" I am truly grateful. I'm beginning to wean myself from the brace, and will begin physical therapy shortly. Thank you for all you have done for us. You filled many needs. Blessings to all. *Leslie Davis*

Condolences to family and friends of:

- Rob**, Lily Dodge's step-father died October 20.
- Dorance Bowman**, Stephen Jones' grandmother, died October 24.
- Bill Aberman**, father of Rick & Karen (Parker), died November 2.
- Taryn Budd**, granddaughter of Harry Lichy & niece of Paige Ferguson, died November 18.

Congratulations!

Baby "Plum" was born Sunday, November 19, to Leah Uvodich and Jon Moch. Proud grandparents are **Frank & Paula Uvodich**. Baby "Plum" will be named officially in the near future.



**Golden Harvest
Dinner**

Help decorate the church for Christmas!

You have the opportunity to help decorate the church by donating money in honor of, in memory of or in celebration of a special event.

Your contributions allow us to provide flowers and greens for the sanctuary with the remaining donations going to VEAP. Sign up on Sundays, December 3 and 10. While you're at it, order chancel flowers for Sundays in 2018!

If there is a particular Sunday you prefer, call Penny Nesbitt at 952 941-6166.



River Heights Chorale will again present their Christmas Concert "Carols with a Twist" in our sanctuary on **Sunday, Dec 17 at 3:00 pm**. The Chorale is a volunteer choir committed to sharing quality choral music with the community and helping students, through scholarships, achieve their musical goals beyond high school. No tickets are needed. Free-will donations are accepted. Much of the donations go directly to fund student scholarships. Please come and enjoy an afternoon of beautiful holiday music.

On Sunday morning, December 3 at the 10:45 worship service, some of the members of River Heights Chorale will join with our Chancel Choir to sing two anthems.

Women's Retreat -- Nurturing Your Creative Side January 12-14 at Clearwater Forest

If you are interested in connecting with other women and getting to know the women you see every Sunday, if you like to eat, if you like to run, if you like to hike, if you like to do puzzles/games, if you like to sleep, if you like to read, if you like to knit, if you like to learn, if you like to be creative, or if you just need a break and time to relax then this is the weekend for you. Please consider joining a fabulous group of women. Sign up at (<http://bit.ly/OGwomensretreat>) or sign up at church.

Food will be a little different this year. Friday night dinner will be on your own (as usual), Saturday breakfast and lunch will be at Leaning Tree and Saturday dinner will be in the mess hall. If you would like to help by making/bringing a baked egg dish (for breakfast) or a soup (for lunch) please let us know on the registration. The cost this year is holding steady at \$120. More info will be sent after the registrations are collected. Contact Karen Gerdes (bkgerdes@comcast.net) or Mary Koon (mkoon@oakgrv.org) with immediate questions.



**Save the Date
Men's Retreat,
Feb 2--4**



Watch upcoming announcements and the January Oak Leaves for more info. Coordinators are **Warren Christopherson and Stephen Jones**.