

Oak Leaves

FEBRUARY 2022

Celebrate Black History Month

February is Black History Month. Black History Month offers us the opportunity to learn and celebrate the Divine in all. Below you will find statements made by the leadership of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, as well as links for more information on ways to celebrate and honor Black history and lives.

Racial Justice Statement

On Sept. 22, 2020, the Session and Deacons passed the following statement of Racial Justice:

We, the Elders and Deacons of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church, stand in solidarity with you, our Black, Indigenous, and Brown siblings of color. We acknowledge that our experiences have often blinded us to your cries for justice. We acknowledge your experiences of discrimination and violence as truth. We commit to listen and seek to understand and will not hide behind a right to comfort when the conversations are hard. We commit to holding ourselves and others accountable, to become and continue to be anti-racist for “as you use steel to sharpen steel,

so one friend sharpens another.” Proverbs 27:17 (The Message by Eugene Peterson).

Black Lives Matter Statement, August 2020

Oak Grove is an open and welcoming community. We share this value with our neighbors as we clearly display our Rainbow and Transgender Flags. A few years ago, Session approved a Black Lives Matter sign to be put in front of the church. That sign was promptly stolen. Following the death of George Floyd, Oak Grove once again displayed a Black Lives Matter sign. The church has received two calls and the pastors had an anonymous email questioning the appropriateness of the sign from people who are not members of the church. The callers disparaged the Black Lives Matter organization. The following are portions from the Presbyterian Church (USA) article, “*Why we say: Presbyterians affirm Black Lives Matter.*”

This article may help each of us articulate our own values and that of Oak Grove’s.

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BLACK LIVES MATTER



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Loving God... Changing Lives

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OAK LEAVES

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2022 Per Capita is \$36.50

Why are we saying that “Presbyterians Affirm Black Lives Matter?” Simply put because black lives do indeed matter. They/we matter to God, which mean they/we should matter to God’s people.

But don’t all lives matter? Saying unequivocally that “Black Lives Matter” is not that all lives do not matter. It is rather an acknowledgment that many lives—specifically Black lives—are systemically devalued.

As a community that tries to follow Jesus, we proclaim that such a devaluation of our siblings is an affront to the Living God. Specificity toward Black lives is necessary, particularly in this moment, so that we may acknowledge and address the inequities that prevent the whole community from living as if all lives matter.

Does that mean we are claiming affiliation with the Black Lives Matter organization?

As an organization, the Presbyterian Church (USA) has no affiliation or official status with the Black Lives Matter Movement.

I am sorry but I can’t agree with supporting the Black Lives Matter organization. We understand that there are those in our community who do not agree with positions of the Black Lives Matter Movement as they understand them. Presbyterians have always been invited to use discernment in matters of

faith and practice, understanding that ‘God alone is the Lord of the conscience.’

I fear that the Presbyterian Church (USA) is getting too political. Presbyterians have long been ‘political.’ Civic engagement has always been part of the life of the church... Christianity is inherently political. The word ‘political’ has its root in the Greek word for ‘people.’ Jesus commanded us to love God and neighbor. Our faith can never be extricated from our concerns for people.

Affirming that Black Lives Matter is very much in line with who we are as Presbyterians, and while the gospel of Jesus Christ is political, it is not partisan. It is not in service to any one political party or leaning but challenges all of us to have righteous relationships with one another.

We believe that justice for the oppressed is not and should not be a partisan value. Justice is a gospel value, one that all who claim Jesus as Lord should hold. We may have different ideas of how to live into the value, but as Christians we are beholden to it.

Additional Resources and Links

- <https://www.oakgrv.org/racial-justice/>
- <https://www.pcusa.org/racial-justice-resources/>
- <https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/pt-0121-black-history/>

Chancel Flowers for 2022

Every week beautiful flowers grace the Sanctuary. Contributing flowers is a way to glorify God and beautify the chancel area. The contribution can be in honor of someone, in memory of someone who has died, in celebration of milestone events (birthdays or anniversaries), or as thanksgiving for friends and family. Your dedication will appear in the Sunday bulletin for your chosen date.

There are two arrangements available each Sunday at a cost of \$30 each. Contact Sharon Fields at urbanfields2.1@q.com or 952-831-0504 (landline) to sign up and reserve your special date.



Welcome New Members!

We welcome these new members and look forward to meeting them in person in the future and finding out more about them!

Frank & Mary Hedgcock

Frank and Mary moved to Founders Ridge in Bloomington last October from their home of 50 years in Waukesha, Wis. They have three married sons and six grandchildren, ages 8–16.

They chose Oak Grove as their new church home because of our commitment to mission and justice ministries and the beautiful worship music. We look forward to having you in worship!



Mike & Courtney Ramirez

Mike and Courtney have been married for six years and have owned a home near Dwan Golf Course. Mike works for the city of Brooklyn Park as a Recreation Supervisor overseeing youth and adult athletics, and Courtney is a middle school teacher for Wayzata Public Schools as a reading interventionist.

They love traveling, going on hikes, going to see plays, and visiting new restaurants. Their more Covid friendly and sedentary hobbies include playing cribbage, crocheting, and curling up to watch a movie. We're delighted that you chose Oak Grove as your worshipping community!



Welcome New Members!

Tammy Love and Anne Campbell

Anne and Tammy are former members and feel very blessed to be part of this loving and caring congregation once again.

They are still living and working in Grand Rapids, Minn. Oak Grove gives them joy, love, and hope for all things. We are thrilled that you are back!



Judy Kingery

Judy is a former member of Oak Grove. She had a loving marriage of 60 years to her husband Larry, who died in October 2020. Judy has three grown children, 14 grandchildren and will, in May, be a great grandmother! She is a former piano teacher.

Now in retirement she sings with the *Bloomingtones*, a local group. Covid has restricted that at present. She is planning on singing in the choir once we have in person worship again. Great to have you back!



Sharon Solomon

Sharon is returning to Oak Grove after living in Arizona for about eight years with her husband, Bing. She has a grown married son, and one granddaughter who will be living with Sharon and Bing this coming fall as she finishes her clinicals to become a physical therapist. Sharon stays busy with knitting, reading, quilting, and enjoying music. Wonderful to have you back!



Give to our February ‘Per Capita’ Challenge!

'Per capita' is a set amount of money per member that each congregation pays to the larger Presbyterian Church. Because every Presbyterian shares in the benefit of the Presbytery's system of government, the expenses associated with coordinating and performing the functions of that system are shared by everyone.

We're celebrating this relationship with our 'Per Capita' challenge this February. We would like to challenge all members to pay their individual per capita amount (\$36.50). Oak Grove is part of a larger church family

reaching out beyond our community to continue our ministry.

Although our total per capita payment exceeds \$18,000, our goal is to collect \$8,000 in per capita payments in 2022. Please take part in our 'Per Capita' challenge this month and make a 'per capita' payment of \$36.50 for each confirmed member of your family who attends Oak Grove. You can make a Per Capita payment online or drop off a check at the church. Thank you for being part of our Oak Grove family!



General Assembly:	\$8.98
Synod:	\$5.50
Presbytery:	\$22.02
Total:	\$36.50

Thanks, good neighbor!

Let's make some new connections! The Friendship Committee invites you to help us celebrate those who work hard to make our community safe and welcoming and loving! We invite Oak Grove members and friends to submit names of organizations in our community that model the concept of being a good neighbor.

Our committee will randomly draw from the entries each month and will deliver a note and token of thanks from Oak Grove. For example, perhaps organizations like a school, Covid-clinic staff, a station's firefighters, etc. would be identified and we'd deliver some small snacks, pens, etc.

In these challenging times, we know there are all kinds of groups who go above and beyond to be community supporters. We envision this as a



way to spread encouragement and to build each other up. As Mister Rogers would say: let's be looking for the helpers!

Nominate an organization in our community by filling out this form: <https://bit.ly/3tVbaLW>

or by calling the church office and sharing your idea for the volunteer to place in the Friendship Committee's mailbox. **Thank you!**

Dear Oak Grove Family,

I hope the sincerity of my words will be felt by all. The cards I received overwhelmed me. Everyday my daughters arrived with more. They contained words of encouragement for the journey and good wishes for my health. Many of you kept up the encouragement with additional notes.

The first two weeks in ICU were like a nightmare, until I heard Mary's wonderful voice in my ear. At that moment I pictured her wearing a blue scarf. It was then I knew I was in a safe place and not involved in some conspiracy meant to involve my daughters as well. Thank you, Lord for sending her to me.

Since my return home on Dec. 1, I have continued to make great progress according to my doctors and therapists. I walk around the house usually unaided and take the cane when I leave home. I'm looking forward to beginning the process to wean from my "turtle shell". Then it is continued healing and developing stamina.

Aileen and I have appreciated and enjoyed many meals brought to us by, and made by, various church members. I have been able to prepare these dishes to help Aileen after her day at work. They have been delicious treats for the body and food for the soul as well. I Thank You, Thank You, Thank You all!

Many of you met my daughters through the [CaringBridge site](#) they created to keep family and friends informed. They did a great job. It is only by the miracle and grace of God, the abilities of my doctors, the care from my daughters and the support of my Oak Grove Family that I have survived to THANK YOU one and all.

So Sincerely,
Sue Cavanaugh



Clearwater Forest Capital Campaign

Thanks to the generosity of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church members, the Clearwater Forest Capital Campaign raised \$5,255 (including \$2,955 from the Alternative Christmas Marketplace). A matching donation from the session resulted in a check for \$10,255 being sent in January to Presbyterian Clearwater Forest!

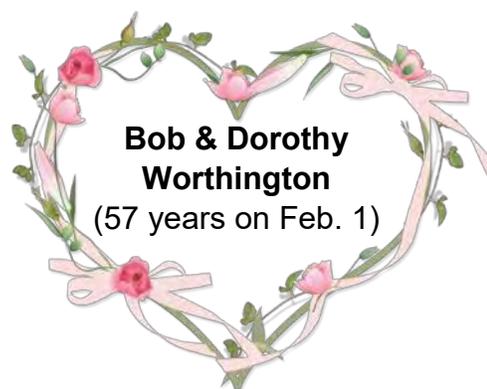
In 2020, our session committed to donating \$30,000 over three years to the Clearwater Capital Campaign. After the initial donation of \$10,000, the congregation was challenged to raise \$5,000 over each of the next two years to be matched by an equal amount. With the success last year, we are now starting the third and last year of our efforts. We will again ask Oak Grove people to share their Clearwater stories each month in the Oak Leaves.



The theme for our local campaign is again "Tell Us Your Clearwater Story". Contact committee members Larry Pearson, Carrie Wilkens, Don Alman or the church office if you have a story to share. Please consider helping Oak Grove reach its commitment by making another donation again this year by going to oakgrv.org and clicking on the red "Donate" button. Thank you!

Significant Anniversaries:

1, 5, 10, 20, 25, 30+ years



Financial\$

Submitted by Sue Greimel, Treasurer

Through December 31	2021		Act vs Budg	2020
	Actuals	Budget	Fav/(Unfav)	Actuals
Income YTD	\$711,434*	\$802,188	(\$10,541)	\$714,168**
Expense YTD	\$753,977	\$802,188	\$48,211	\$746,701
Income – Exp	(\$42,543)	(\$0)	\$37,670	(\$32,533)

* Before investment gains transferred (\$80,213 planned).

** Before investment gains transferred (\$68,128 planned).

Financial Summary: December Income was \$8.73K lower than budget, while expenses were over by \$9.2K (Mission \$6.1K, Building & Ops \$3.1K). The overall yearly deficit of \$42,543 is \$37,670 better than expected and will be covered by previous years' surpluses and Operating Reserve investment gains. Received 100.1% of pledged income!

Condolences to Family and Friends of:

Milissa Carter's aunt Linda's husband, **Fred**, died late December.

Kay Lancette's dear friend, **Connie Schiffert**, died Dec. 26 at 76 years.

Amy Lefebvre's grandmother, **Carolyn Duffy**, died Jan. 6 at 93 years in Amana, Iowa.

Marsha and Mark Pridgeon's cousin, **Ray Gilmore**, died Jan. 9 at 73 years in Gaylord, Mich.

Lynn Severson's cousin, **Mark Jacobs**, died early January.

Arlene Jullie's mother, **Faith Graves**, died Jan. 16 at 105 years in Bradenton, Fla.



February Birthdays

If you don't see your birthday, we either don't have that information or you requested that your name not appear. Important (1–21) and significant (85+) birthdays are listed in parentheses.



- | | |
|---|--|
| 3: Tiffany Davidson | 16: Sharon Meier |
| 4: Jim McCarl (90), Erin Wenz | 17: Douglas Duvall |
| 5: Grace Diller (6), Christian Soderlund (1) | 19: Bev Heise, Joyce Morrison |
| 6: Sharon Nolte | 20: Theodore Sundal (7) |
| 7: Jim Rogers (89) | 21: Elizabeth Longrie, Annalisa Pearson |
| 8: Mike Glasser, Mark Rysavy, Ed Schmidt | 23: Zach Orr (9), Arlene Jullie |
| 10: Pat Boehne (89), Sue Greimel, Ashley Johnson | 24: Jim Clyde, Stephen Jones, Sunny Snyder |
| 11: Maya Leonard (1), Ellery Oslund (1), Yvonne Erickson (93), Katie Johnson | 25: Jeri Anderson, Steve Lang, Penny Nesbitt, Lisa Stanford |
| 14: Emma Lang (16) | 27: Randy Dop |
| 15: Yvonne Dodge | 28: Nancy Hoaglund |

Adult *Faith* Formation

SUNDAYS: 11:15 am to Noon

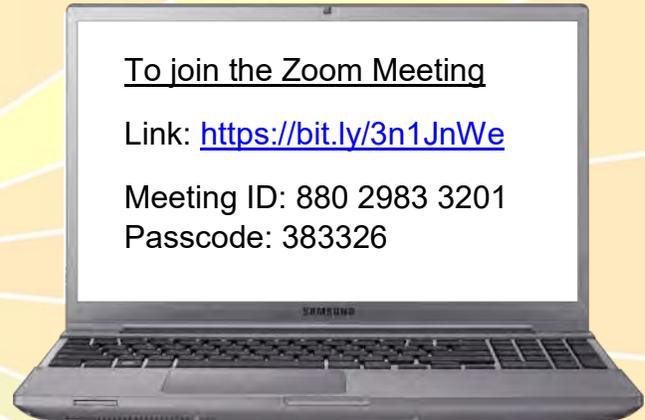
Please join us each Sunday morning for interesting and informative presentations designed to expand our minds and grow our faith.

Feb. 6: Update on our partner family from Afghanistan.

Feb. 13: TBD

Feb. 20: Andrew Snyder will catch us up on heart care technologies..

Feb. 27: Annual Congregational Meeting followed by virtual coffee hour.



For audio only, call 312-626-6799 and use the ID and Passcode.



Children meet regularly with each other and their teachers on Zoom every Sunday morning and Wednesday evenings.

SUNDAY MORNINGS

Please join us for 30 minutes of story, prayer, fellowship and activities. Meeting together on Sunday mornings is an important way to continue to nurture the faith of our children and promote relationships in the church. Links are on the Oaks & Acorns Facebook page!

- Preschool (3–5 year-olds) will meet with Karen, Linda & Marleen (9–9:30 am)
- Kindergarten–2nd graders will meet with Laura Orr (9:30–10 am)

- 3rd–5th graders will meet with Sue Greimel (9:30–10 am)

WEDNESDAYS: (6:30–7:00 pm)

Preschool–5th graders will have a fun time with Anne and Cece Klueh singing, playing games and learning more about God's love for us.

Zoom link: <https://bit.ly/3pZ872Y>

Family Sledding Party: Feb. 26

Join us at Brookside Park (10:30–11:30 am). Bring a sled and prepare to have a great time!



Fellowship Opportunities

Here at Oak Grove, there are lots of ways to engage with fellow members on a regular, monthly basis.

Men's Fellowship: Feb. 1

First Tuesday at Noon

Join us for "*Burgers 'n' Brew*" at Zeke's Place (7700 W Old Shakopee Rd). This event pairs young(er) and old(er) men for a time of fellowship while enjoying lunch. Pick up someone who needs a ride and develop new friendships.

Singles Fellowship: Feb. 14

Second Monday at 5:00 pm

Singles Fellowship is a group of single adults who get together at Zeke's Place (7700 W Old Shakopee Rd) for socialization and support. No need to RSVP.

Questions? Please contact Jane Jacobson at 612-267-9068.

Soul Sisters:

Second Monday at 7:00 pm

Souls Sisters will take a break for the month of February. Please join us on March 14 instead.

Questions? Call or email Pastor Mary.

Ladies Who Lunch: Feb. 16

Third Wednesday at Noon

Join us (via Zoom) this month to discuss the book "*The Third Life of Grange Copeland*" by Alice Walker.

Questions? Call or email Pastor Mary.

Men's Mentor Group: Feb. 17

Third Thursday at 8:00 pm

Join Pastor Bart and other men of Oak Grove (via Zoom) this month for a time of discussion and fellowship. We will spend a little time catching up with one another and discussing topics for future meetings.

Questions? Call or email Pastor Bart.

Girl Talk: Feb. 27

Fourth Sunday at 3:00 pm

Join us (via Zoom) this month. No agenda, just time to be together, catch up, share concerns and support one another. We always welcome new faces. No RSVP is needed.

Questions? Call or email Pastor Mary.

Men's Prayer Breakfast

Every Thursday at 7:30 am

Join other Oak Grove men for a time of fellowship while enjoying breakfast. The group meets weekly at Denny's (4209 American Blvd W, Bloomington 55437).

Clearwater Forest Memories

Submitted by Dorothy Beattie

Reading the stories and memories of other folks at Clearwater made me think of my own. It all started in '74 when Pastor Dave Kachel came to Oak Grove from a South St. Paul church the year before and he told of the fun times the SSP kids had at Clearwater, and we should take a group this year. A planning meeting was scheduled, and several came to volunteer. A few I can remember were Roger Parker, Ralph James, Nancy Bogart, Jean McCarl and Lou Cooper.

In those days we had to bring all of our staff including a nurse: Ruth Goodrich (Jane Jacobson's mom), Regina Kelly our naturalist, lifeguards, counselors, and cooks. I said I could help in the kitchen and before the meeting was over, I was the cook who had never cooked for more than four!

Clearwater was new to me and as we drove in past the Gatehouse you could see all of the forest damage from the tornado the year before. Osprey House (boys' dorm), Eagle Lodge (girls' and cooks' dorm), director's house, nurse's cabin and dining hall had all been spared.

Staff arrived on Saturday to get organized, and parents brought 3rd–5th grade children the following Sunday afternoon. We had 80 in camp; Rosie Johnson and Nancy Kachel had 20 more 6th–8th graders in tent camp.

Ruth Parker, Barb Ritchie and Bettie Egeberg joined the kitchen staff, and we were off and running! Our day started at 6 am to get grills/ovens hot. Meals were served family-style and each table had a "runner" that served the table from the kitchen and after the meal a "scraper" took dishes to the dishwashing room where a high schooler we had brought with us, did the dishes. Each afternoon the tent campers canoed over to share treats and the day ended with vespers around a campfire.

One day we needed an item from the store in Deerwood and the craft folks needed more Plaster of Paris. At our stop in the hardware store, the clerk noticed our name tags and asked where we were from and upon telling him we were cooks at Clearwater, we got a strange look!

In early 2000, Dave again suggested a group go to Clearwater but this time "retirees" for R&R. Clearwater is beautiful year-round, but in the fall, it is in its glory! Leaning Tree Lodge had been built a few years earlier and is ideal for groups of 30. Activities included walks to Loon Point, bocce ball on the lawn, puzzles, cards, talks with food for thought, and sitting in front of the fireplace visiting with friends, new and old.

Two years later we added a spring trip that would be a work camp. We removed, cleaned and stored storm windows from Eagle Lodge, hung ceiling fans in Leaning Tree, repaired needed items, built benches around trees and of course lots of cleaning. Cooking was different but fun and all helped. After six years we found it not so easy to continue and so we left the chores to younger folks, but we took our memories with us.

Oak Grove provides lots of opportunities at Clearwater: Men's and Women's retreats, Woodchopping, Fine Arts camps and camperships. Put Clearwater on your "Bucket List" to attend one or just a day visit. It needs you and your support.

Whenever you go there is always time to admire God's beauty: a walk to Loon Point in the spring to see spring coming from the forest floor, deer families, eagles, and ospreys, and looking across the lake in the fall to see the beautiful foliage. As the hymn says "This is My Father's World" and it truly is.