

VITAL CONNECTION

Official Newsletter of Oak Forest United Methodist Church
April 2024

Congregational Meeting Follow-Up

BY CAROLYN SHOAF

We want to thank the many of you who attending the congregation meeting on 2/18/2024. Many questions were asked; most answers being reflected in the letter that was mailed out to the congregation.

As promised, we are sharing questions and answers that were not part of the initial letter here in this newsletter.

Q. For churches that did disaffiliate using paragraph 2553 of the UMC Book of Discipline, what were they required to do and/or pay?

A. Churches had to present a written desire to disaffiliate signed by church leadership. Provide certain legal, financial and archival documents to the conference. Create disaffiliation resolution documents.

Direct Costs:

- By the 12/31/23 deadline pay the Annual Conference of any unpaid apportionments for the 12 months immediately prior to the disaffiliation date and an additional 12 months of apportionments.
- Pay all unfunded pension obligations as determined by WesPath
- Pay vitality grants received from the district or conference for the past 10 years. (Oak Forest has none)
- Pay all legal costs involved and hire an attorney.

Indirect costs:

- The expense of changing signage on vehicles and buildings.
- Changing property insurance.
- Gain a new federal tax ID number and apply for tax exemption
- Take on Pastor health insurance and pension costs on our own.
- Expense of hiring a new pastor. (Loss of a guaranteed appointment of a trained and board-certified pastor. Advertising, recruitment, training, etc)
- Setting up policies and procedures for the organization. Protect from liability and set organizational structure.

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- Loss of connectionism (UMCOR, Methodist Church Camps, Wesley foundations at college campuses, Continuing Education for Pastors and Youth leaders, Methodist resources for Christian Education, support from the District and Conference for skill sets that assist our church such as legal advice, risk management, childcare advisors, personnel matters, etc. and sharing of best practices.) Also lose the connection for Clergy health insurance and retirement plans that we would now have to fund ourselves.

The exact dollar amount we would have been required to pay is unknown as Wespath would have determined the pension amounts and the additional final amounts determined with the Conference. Some churches of our size throughout our conference have had to pay between \$200,000 - \$300,000.

Q: Can we still disaffiliate now?

A. The deadline for the disaffiliation agreement under paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline was 12/31/2023. At this time there is not a current available disaffiliation path. The General Conference will hear some proposals that may allow another opportunity. This is unknown if any of these proposals will pass.

Q. When did the disaffiliation activities shift from progressive churches leaving to conservative churches leaving?

A. Paragraph 2553 of the Book of Discipline was initially intended as a short term opportunity to allow progressive congregations who could not agree to current language in the Book of Discipline re: human sexuality to exit the UMC.

* The “Protocol for Reconciliation” was compiled as a solution by a mix of conservative, moderate and progressive leaders. This Protocol was anticipated to pass at the 2020 General Conference.

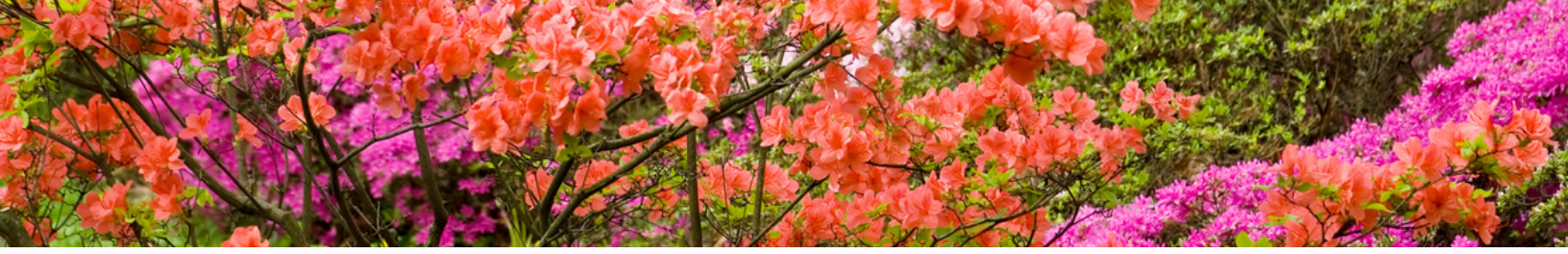
* Once General Conference was postponed due to Covid, the progressive leaders of the Protocol stated they would not support it any longer. Only a few progressive congregations used paragraph 2553 to exit.

* As the deadline approached to submit for disaffiliation, some conservative congregations felt the need to make a decision in order to protect assets due to the General Conference not extending the deadline; which caused a panic effect.

Q. How is curriculum decided for instructing children/youth within Oak Forest UMC? Will any changes to the UMC General Conference change the curriculum?

A. Oak Forest UMC selects the curriculum ourselves. UMC Cokesbury and Group curriculum is available but not always used. The curriculum taught at Oak Forest UMC has always been selected by the Sunday School teachers and Youth/Children leaders. Lay persons teaching Sunday School and Bible Studies are appointed by the lay leadership. Hired staff report to the Staff Parrish Relations Committee (SPRC). The After School Program, Preschool and Summer Camp curriculum is determined by the Director, who reports to the After School Board, which are lay persons at Oak Forest UMC. Parents are always welcome to give input to church curriculum and instruction.

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Q. What are the exact proposals that will be voted on at General Conference?

A. The UMC has a website set up specifically for General Conference information.

All of the final proposals up for consideration are compiled in a formal document that can be reviewed online. This includes proposals to be considered to update the Book of Discipline (which is binding for ministers and church leaders) such as Regionalization proposals, as well as “The Social Principles” document which is not legally binding – but is considered a statement of guidance. NOTE: No proposals are put forth to alter the foundational beliefs of the United Methodist Church regarding Jesus, the Holy Trinity, salvation, baptism, scripture, etc.

Delegates are representatives selected by vote within their Annual Conferences. Delegates participate in official Committees.

All proposals will be reviewed by various Committees. Each committee will spend the first week of General Conference reviewing the proposals and the Committees will determine exactly what goes to the floor for vote by all of the delegates of General Conference (representatives around the globe from many countries).

Because the Committees have not made their final decisions yet – we cannot give you with certainty exactly what proposed language is up for vote.

IF you would like to view the same information provided to all Delegates, you can do so online. All proposals can be found in a document:

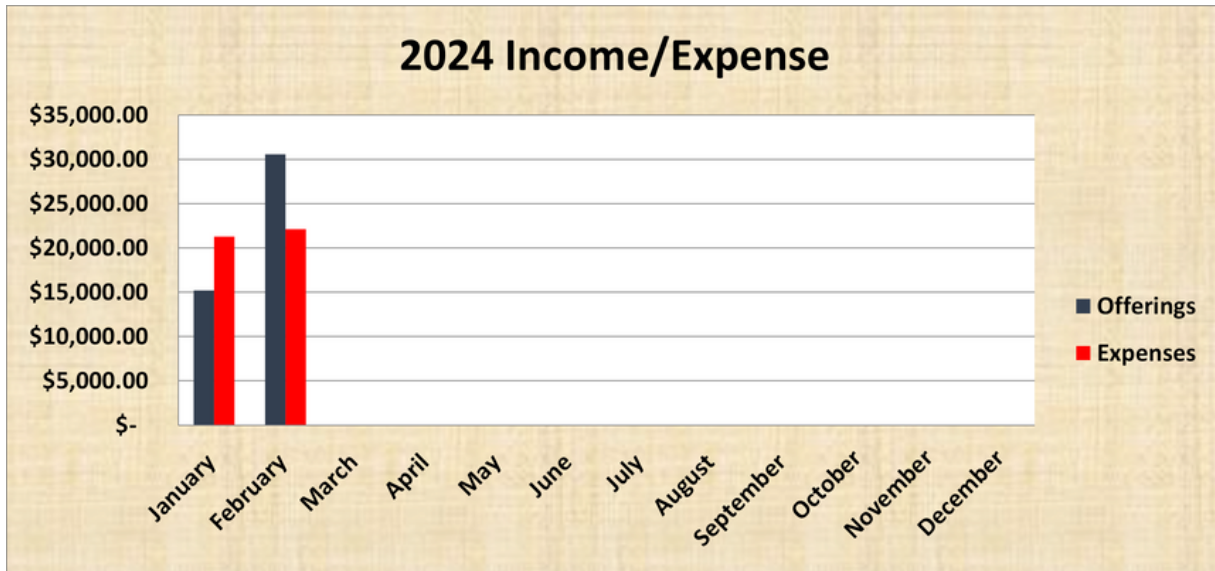
Advance Daily Christian Advocate <https://www.resourceumg.org/en/content/general-conference-2020-advance-daily-christian-advocate>

The Resource UMC website has an abundance of General Conference information including brief videos: <https://www.resourceumc.org/en/churchwide/general-conference-2020/resources>



Finance Report

Finances for the month of February 2024. Income from tithes and offerings was \$30,597.69 and our expenses were \$22,140.10. Total cash flow for the month was positive \$8,457.59.



Total cash flow for the year is positive \$2,358.26.

Oak Forest received 2 annual giving contributions in February to help our revenue. We also occurred some yearly subscription fees for some of our financial services.

Automated, Consistent, Recurring Giving (ACRG)

Last month I spoke about Automated, Consistent, Recurring Giving (ACRG) as a means of giving to the church. I hope some of you had an opportunity to check with your financial institute (bank, credit union, etc.) about setting up this method. If your financial institute does not offer this service, our partnership with Vanco can provide auto drafting services at no charge.

Remember – The Church is here on Sundays even if you are not able to attend.



Building Fund Report

Balance as of February 29 is \$16,651.98.

Endowment Report

The current value of the Endowment Fund as of February 29 is \$138,494.91 The funds are currently invested in a diversified portfolio with 70% of the investments in equity and 30% in fixed income. The United Methodist Foundation of the Western North Carolina manage the Endowment Fund. The beginning value in January 2024 was \$134,251.15.

Development Fund

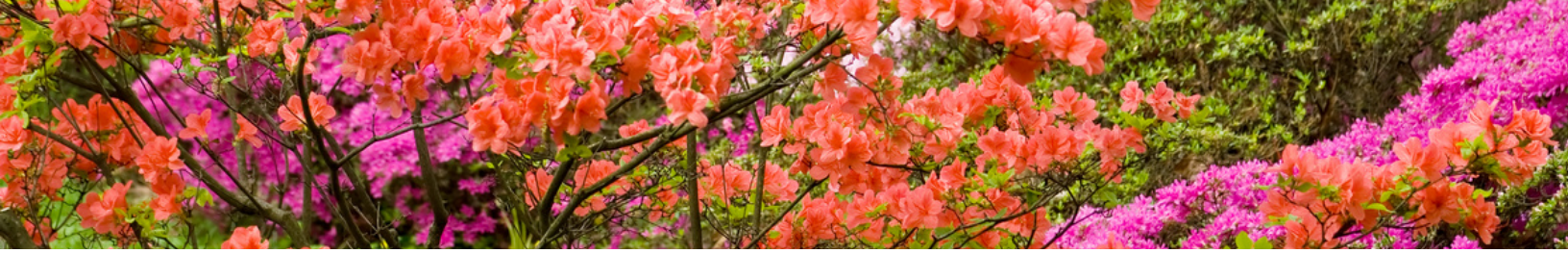
The United Methodist Foundation Development Fund account is a preferred option for funds Oak Forest would otherwise place in a commercial savings account, certificate of deposit, or money market. The Development Fund is a low-risk, no-fee place for Oak Forest to save, have easy access to funds, and provide funds for qualified churches and organizations to receive low-interest loans. Starting in January 2024, the current investment rate will increase to 4.5% (up from 3.5%). This is an annualized rate which is compounded monthly. The current value of the fund as of February 29 is \$53,121.30. (Investment rates are reviewed quarterly by the Foundation and are subject to change depending on the current Federal Reserved rates).

Ways To Give

- In person on Sunday morning.
- From our web site - ofumc.org - *Giving On Line.*
- Direct payment from your financial institution.
- Using the Vanco Mobile Faith Encouragement app.



Scan code to give
On line



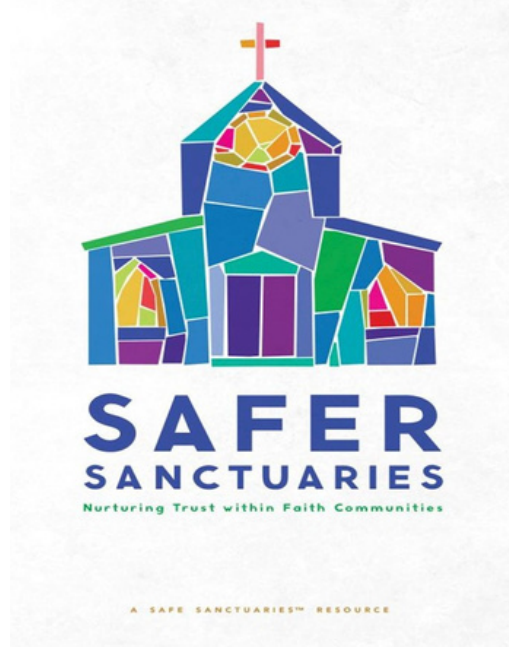
Children's Ministry

Check out the kids ministry Facebook page, **Oak Forest UMC Children's Ministry** for information about all our kids activities and special events coming up soon! Email ben.roop@ofumc.org to be added to our group email list.



The next weekly Bible Class for Elementary Age kids begins Wednesday, April 17th from 6:00-7:30pm.

We hope your student can join us!



The NEW Safe Sanctuary resource book is available for check out. Please contact Ben Roop for more info or to check out the resources.

Thank you to everyone who donated candy or helped at the Easter Egg Hunt! It was greatly appreciated!!!!



We will offer an Elementary Age Summer Program from June 10th until August 23rd, 2024.

Summer Registration begins:

- April 1st for current After School Program enrolled families
- April 8th for our past program families and Oak Forest UMC church members
- April 15th for the general public
- Contact Ben Roop for more info or check out our website at www.oakforestasp.org

- Elementary & Middle School Programs will be **OPEN** for full-day childcare 7am-6pm on **April 1st through April 5th.**
- Preschool Program will be **CLOSED April 1st through 4th.**

PRESCHOOL

Preschool School Year 2023 - 2024

8:00am - 12:00pm

Monday - Thursday

through May 23rd





Youth Ministry



The next weekly Bible Study for Middle/High School begins Wednesday, April 17th from 6:00-7:30pm.

We hope your student can join us!



We offer an Elementary Age Summer Program and Middle School Summer Program from **June 10th** until **August 23rd, 2024**. Summer registration begins:

April 1st for current ASP enrolled families.

April 8th for our past program families and Oak Forest UMC church members.

April 15th for the general public.

Contact Ben Roop for more info or check out our website at www.oakforestasp.org

- Elementary & Middle School Programs will be **OPEN** for full-day childcare 7am-6pm on **April 1st through 5th**.

For info and updates of upcoming Youth activities:

Sign up for our **Youth text group for Students** by texting **@db9fec** to the number **81010**.


Sign up for our **Youth text group for Parents** by texting **@2347k4** to the number **81010**.

Or **email** ben.roop@ofumc.org to be added to our email list.

Please follow along with Oak Forest Youth Ministry online on our social media pages:

 <https://www.facebook.com/OakForestYouth/>

Follow us on Instagram:

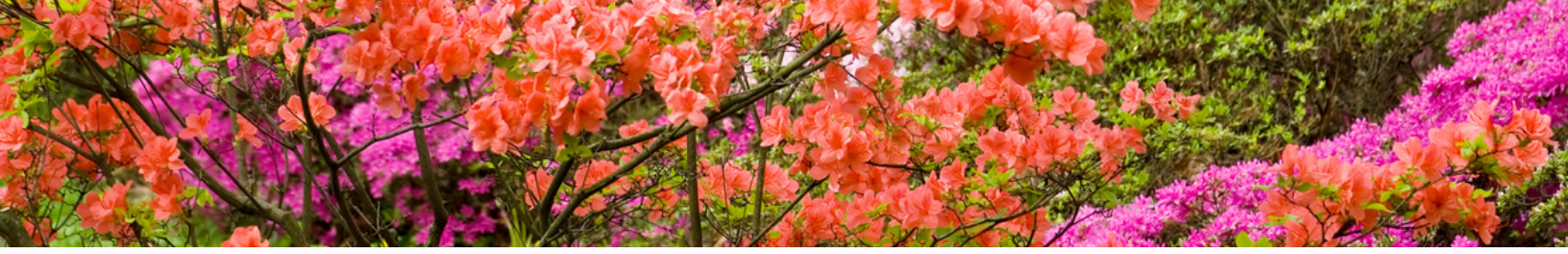
 <https://www.instagram.com/OakForestYouth>

Don't let
anyone
 look down on you
 because you are
young,
 but set an example for
 the believers in
speech,
 in conduct,
in love,
 in faith
and in purity.
 1 Timothy 4:12

Financial Peace Class. If you are a High School Student or Young Adult and are interested in participating in a **FREE** 9 week "Financial Peace" class, contact Ben Roop to RSVP or for more info.



2023-2024 Middle School & Elementary Age
2:00pm - 6:00pm
Monday - Friday
through June 7th



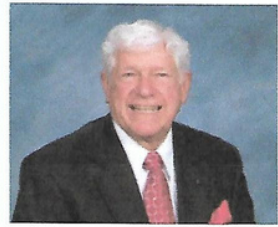
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Congratulations

Congratulations to the 2023 Division of Aging and Adult Services (DAAS) Award Recipient!

Reverend Dwight Cartner is receiving the 2023 Elizabeth Welch Award, which recognizes an older adult who has effectively advocated for the needs of other older adults.



Like the person for whom the award is named, Reverend Dwight Cartner continues to serve by "reinvesting his time" to focus on the needs of older adults. He has led with unwavering dedication and commitment to the well-being of aging adults in Davidson County by serving in numerous advisory and advocacy capacities. Through his service on the Davidson County Department of Senior Services Advisory Board (2013 to present, chair since 2020), Rev. Cartner has advised the Director of Senior Services on multiple projects and initiatives. Other areas of service include the Davidson County Planning Committee (2011-2022, chair 2021-2022), the NC Senior Tar Heel Legislature (2013-present, speaker 2018-2019), board member for the Life Center of Davidson County, member of the City of Lexington's Human Relations Committee, and ten-year coordinator for the Methodist Church - Yadkin Valley district's older adult program.

DAAS will present recipients with their awards at the time and location of their choosing. DAAS will begin accepting nominations for 2024 awards in early December.

to
 Pastor Dwight Cartner
 on this well deserved
 award.

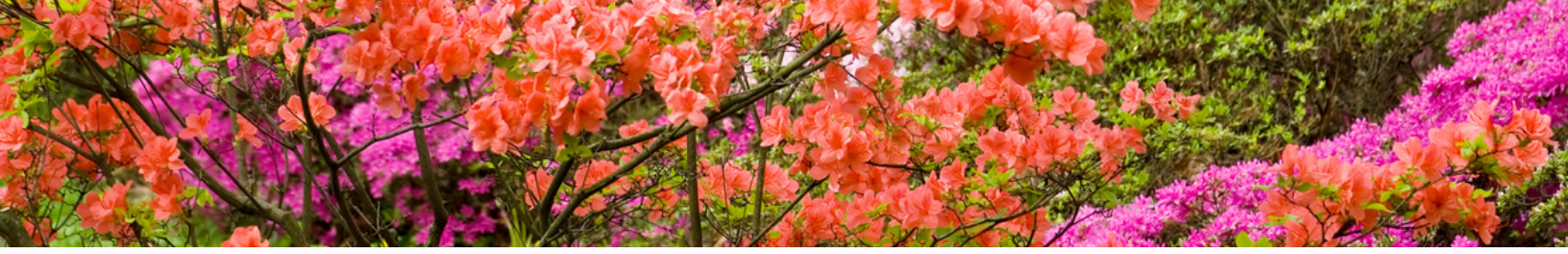


Oak Forest Handbell Choir

performing on Palm Sunday for the first time in five years!

Photos by Stacey Roop





Cemetery News

Yes, the mowing season has arrived! The mowing is done weekly by volunteers who mow the cemetery and the church yard. To help and assist those volunteers, please DO put flowers in the flower holders but DO NOT put solar lights, toys, or any hard shell items on or around the grave markers. If the volunteers have to stop and move items out of the way, then mow and trim around the markers, then put those items back, it is easy to see the delay this causes. Please help us keep those volunteers with happy faces. We would like to shout out a great big “thank you” to all of them for the excellent work they do.

Dennis Anthony,
Chairman, Cemetery Committee



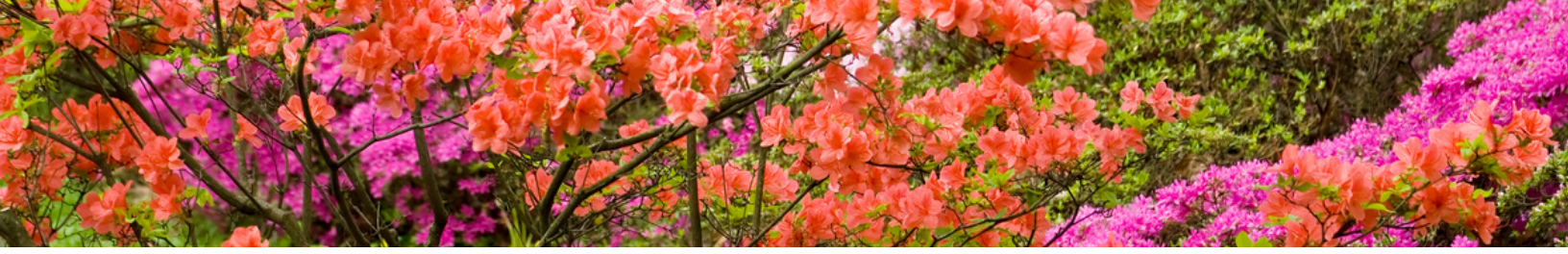
Oak Forest UMM 2024 Mowing List

Larry Cromer*	Tyler Caldwell		3/24	5/19	7/07	8/25	10/13
Carla Dry*	Matt Dry	Carlos Mancilla	3/31	5/26	7/14	9/01	10/20
Raymond Smith*	Jay Vannoy	John Vannoy	4/07	6/02	7/21	9/08	10/27
Johnny Morgan*	Mike Morgan	Tom Mackay	4/14	6/09	7/28	9/15	11/03
Gil Hill*	Jay Deweese	Chris Wall	4/28	6/16	8/04	9/22	11/10
Johnny Johnson*	Dennis Anthony	Glenn Hughes	5/05	6/23	8/11	9/29	11/17
Doug Powell*	Jay Draub	Scott Shoaf	5/12	6/30	8/18	10/06	11/24
	Charles Ramsey						

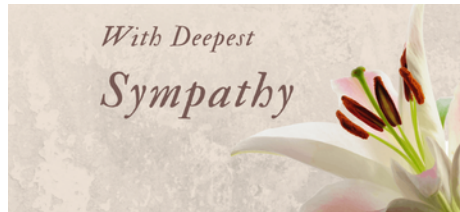
***Captain**

Mowing to be completed by the Sunday listed.

For equipment problems, contact Doug Powell at 336-442-1470 or Larry Cromer at 336-655-5321



We will be featuring a new page with Sympathy to family members of Oak Forest as well as Donations in Memory or in Honor of our Oak Forest family. If we leave a family member off, please let us know.



Theresa Sykes & Jeannette Lanier at the passing of their brother, Rocky Lanier on February 28th.
Larry Cromer and family at the passing of his mother's cousin's son, Dale Smith on March 6th.
Jason Ferrell and family at the passing of his father, Jerry Ferrell on March 18th.

In memory of Virgie Snyder
by Katrina Blankenship

In memory of Virgie Snyder
by Charles & Ann Farler



Thank you for everything you have done and meant to mom. She loved her church family.

The Virgie Snyder Family

Dear Oak Forest,

Our family would like to express our gratitude for your thoughtfulness following the death of our brother, Boulder (Rocky) Lanue Lanier. Thru you, we had a new opportunity for experiencing God's care. Each prayer, card, call or text was so appreciated.

God has blessed us with our special Oak Forest Family. Please continue your prayers as we adjust to our new normal.

Joy, ,Love & Blessing,
Jeannette Lanier & Gene & Theresa Sykes

A special thank you to those who helped with the Cross Walk events:

Ben Roop, coordinator; Gil Hill, sound; Tom MacKay, bus driver; Dwight Smith, water bottles;
and the UWF for making sandwiches.

Without them, this community event would not be possible.



Devotions by Dwight...

I am always happy when April arrives and see evidence of Spring all around us. I particularly enjoy the ancient phrase/proverb "April Showers bring May Flowers."

Historians believe this phrase may date back to a 1610 poem, which contained the lines "Sweet April showers, do spring May flowers." A longer phrase, "March winds and April showers bring forth May flowers," has also been traced back to 1886.

April also brings many special days and dates such as All Fools Day on the first, Tax Day on April 15 and The Worldwide General Conference of the United Methodist Church meets right next door in Charlotte NC beginning April 23 through May 3. Many prayerful decisions will be discussed, and resolutions will be debated and acted upon.

United Methodists from all over the world are traveling to attend the General Conference in Charlotte, NC from April 23 to May 3, 2024. You are invited to serve as part of our Welcome Team during the General Conference and offer gracious hospitality to our guests. Join us in weekly prayers during this historic Conference.

The coming General Conference is to have 862 voting delegates — 55.9% from the U.S., 32% from Africa, 6% from the Philippines, 4.6% from Europe, and the remainder from concordat churches that have close ties to The United Methodist Church. Half are to be clergy and half lay. Bishops preside at General Conference sessions but do not have a vote.

Many are asking what we can do during this turbulent time as we face many issues that will help us fulfill the great commandment as we move forward as United Methodists all around the world.

Together let us pray for...

(Monday) the people of this congregation...

(Tuesday) those who suffer and those in trouble...

(Wednesday) the concerns of this local community...

(Thursday) the world, its people, and its leaders...

(Friday) the church universal - its leaders, its members, and its mission...

(Saturday) the communion of saints...

(Sunday) As we worship, we can Give thanks to God for Blessings and Challenges.

Have a great April and anticipate a beautiful and invigorating May.

J. Dwight Cartner



April Events

Oak Forest UMC



Fish Fry

Saturday—April 20
4:00—7:00 pm

Menu: Flounder, Baked Potato, Slaw,
Hush Puppies & Drink
Eat-in or Carry Out!

Come support the United Methodist Men!

Upcoming Events



Celebrating Mothers
2024

Mother's Day
May 12th



June 20th - June 23rd
Lake Junaluska, NC



Appreciating Dads
2024

Father's Day
June 16th

Grain Offering update for February:

We collected 56 units of flour and sugar on March 3rd. Thank you to everyone who donated!

Announcements

Ushers

April 7 - Team #4
April 14 - Team #5
April 21 - Team #6
April 28 - Team #7

Children's Time

April 7 - Dave Kelley
April 14 - Casey Mancilla
April 21 - Dwight Cartner
April 28 - Betty Hughes

10:30 Worship Leaders

April 7 - Dwight Cartner
April 14 - Casey Mancilla
April 21 - Casey Mancilla
April 28 - Casey Mancilla

Nursery Volunteers

April 7 - 9:00 - Ben & Stacey Roop
10:30 - Kathy Myers & Dianne Johnson
April 14 - 9:00 - Susan Hester
10:30 - Heather Drab & Nancy Spence
April 21 - 9:00 - Ben & Stacey Roop
10:30 - Nancy Hiatt & Carleen Hill
April 28 - 9:00 - Megan Finney
10:30 - Jane Vannoy & Michele Grissler



Many Ways to Give to Oak Forest:

In person on Sunday mornings with a check or cash.
Using the Vanco Mobile Faith Engagement app. (*Vanco Mobile*)
From our web site – www.ofumc.org
(Select – **Ways to Give** from the bottom of each webpage)
Using your banking institute's check writing service to automatically send a weekly or monthly check to the church.
Send a check to the church office through the mail.

Greeters

April 7 - 9:00 - Dawn Sanders
10:30 - Mike Chapman & Kelly Plott
April 14 - 9:00 - Rhonda Dillon & Tracy Powell
10:30 - Jay & Jane Vannoy
April 21 - 9:00 - Ron & Debra Chandler
10:30 - Bonnie Baker
April 28 - 9:00 - Cathy Messinger & Dawn Sanders
10:30 - John & Louise Thompson



The Wednesday Weekly Prayer service at 6:15pm until 6:45pm in the church sanctuary.

This service is led by members of our congregation. April leaders are below. This will be a time of praises and prayer requests.

Speakers for Wednesday Night Prayer Services for the month of March

April 3 - Tim Bryan
April 10 - Dwight Cartner
April 17 - Donna White
April 24 - Kathy Myers

F.Y.I.

Finance Committee & Church Council meet on the 2nd Sunday of every other month at 5:30 & 6:30pm in the FLC

United Women in Faith (UWF) Meetings
2nd Monday of every month at 6:30pm in the Fellowship Hall.

United Methodist Men (UMM) Meetings
2nd Monday of every month at 6:30pm in the FLC Sunday School Classroom

Trustees will meet every 1st Thursday night at 6:30pm in the FLC Sunday School Classroom

Men's Bowling

The men of Oak Forest will meet at Creekside Lanes for bowling every Wednesday at 10:00am.

Women's Bowling

The women of Oak Forest will meet at Creekside Lanes for bowling every Tuesday at 10am.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

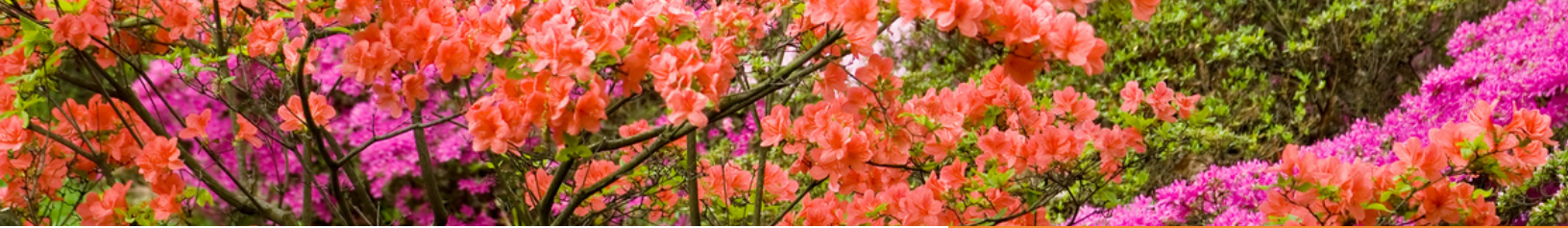
1. Mason Hicks, Cynthia Davis
4. Deborah Sorenson
5. Justin Brooks
8. Casey Mancilla, Victoria Brooks
9. Shannon Lindsay
12. Gordon Gentry
13. Butch Barber, Tina Gregory
14. Zachary Wall
15. Janet MacKay, Donna White
16. Bowden Sullivan
18. Mark Hutson, Emily Beach, Patt Tucker
21. Scott Shoaf
22. Carolyn Grimm
23. Megan Finney, Whitley Freeman
24. Kayla Joyce, Louise Thompson, Sylvia Sink
25. Janice Cagle, Greg Schiro
26. Bruce Harris
30. Billie McGuire



If you have a birthday that isn't listed, please let the office know.



Announcements for the Vital Connection are due on the third Friday of the month.



Connect with us!

Meet our Staff!

Rev. Rick Carter

Contact at Office: (336) 764-2949

Cell: (336) 457-4316

Email: rick.carter@ofumc.org



Ben Roop

Director of Children & Youth Ministries,
Church Treasurer, After School & Summer
Camp Director

Cell: (336) 225-2382

ASP Office: (336) 764-2991

Email: ben.roop@ofumc.org



Stacey Roop

Assistant Director of Children & Youth
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Email: stacey.roop@ofumc.org



Kim Barnes

Administrative Assistant

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YADKIN VALLEY DISTRICT STAFF

Rev. Dr. Samuel Moore

District Superintendent

smoore@wnccumc.org

Office: (336) 725-4502; Fax: 336-723-6341



<https://www.facebook.com/oakforestumcnc/>



<https://www.instagram.com/oakforestumcnc/>



<https://www.flickr.com/people/oakforestumcnc/>



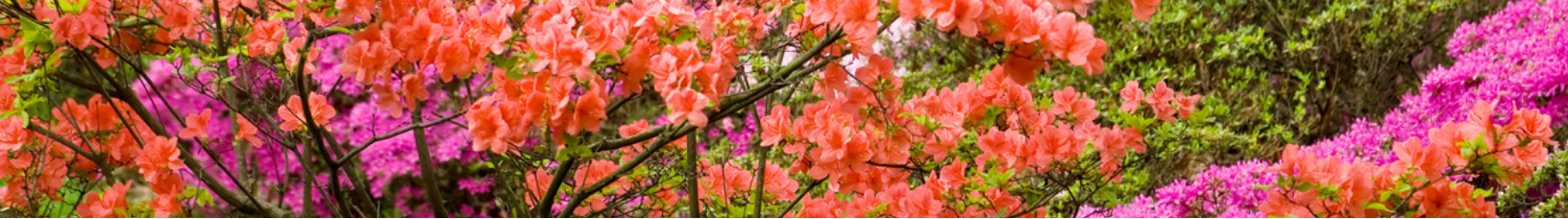
<http://www.ofumc.org/>



"For where two or three
gather in my name,
there I am with them."

Matthew 18:20





Calendar of Church Events for the month of April 2024

Tuesday, April 2

- 10:00am Women's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:30pm SPRC Meeting - FLC large classroom
- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Wednesday, April 3

- 10:00am Men's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:15pm Wednesday Night Prayer Service - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Praise Band Practice - FLC

Thursday, April 4

- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Sunday, April 7

- 9:00am Adult Sunday School Class - Builder's classroom
- 9:00am Children's Church
- 9:00am Contemporary Worship Service - FLC
- 9:50am Sunday School Class - FLC large classroom
- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
- 5:00pm Handbell Practice - Fellowship Hall

Monday, April 8

- 6:30pm United Methodist Men - FLC large classroom
- 6:30pm United Women in Faith - Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, April 9

- 10:00am Women's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Wednesday, April 10

- 10:00am Men's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:15pm Wednesday Night Prayer Service - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Praise Band Practice - FLC

Thursday, April 11

- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Sunday, April 14

- 9:00am Adult Sunday School Class - Builder's classroom
- 9:00am Children's Church
- 9:00am Contemporary Worship Service - FLC
- 9:50am Sunday School Class - FLC large classroom
- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
- 5:00pm Handbell Practice

Tuesday, April 16

- 10:00am Women's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Wednesday, April 17

- 10:00am Men's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:15pm Wednesday Night Prayer Service - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Praise Band Practice - FLC

Thursday, April 18

- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Saturday, April 20

- 4:00pm UMM Fish Fry - FLC

Sunday, April 21

- 9:00am Adult Sunday School Class - Builder's classroom
- 9:00am Children's Church
- 9:00am Contemporary Worship Service - FLC
- 9:50am Sunday School Class - FLC large classroom
- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
- 5:00pm Handbell Practice - Fellowship Hall

Tuesday, April 23

- 8:00am Preschool Pastries For Parents - FLC
- 10:00am Women's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:30pm Refit - FLC

Wednesday, April 24

- 10:00am Men's Bowling at Creekside Lanes
- 6:00pm Easter Egg Hunt - FLC & Baseball field
- 6:15pm Wednesday Night Prayer Service - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Choir Practice - Sanctuary
- 7:00pm Praise Band Practice - FLC

Thursday, April 25

- 6:00pm Never Too Old Club Game Night - FLC large classroom
- 6:30pm Refit

Sunday, April 28

- 9:00am Adult Sunday School Class - Builder's classroom
- 9:00am Children's Church
- 9:00am Contemporary Worship Service - FLC
- 9:50am Sunday School Class - FLC large classroom
- 10:30am Traditional Worship Service - Sanctuary
- 5:00pm Handbell Practice

Tuesday, April 30

- 6:30pm Refit - FLC



Oak Forest United Methodist Church
11461 Old US Hwy 52
Winston-Salem, NC 27107