

March 2025

OAK GROVE CHURCH
A Global Methodist Church

The Old Is New News

KEEPING OUR CHURCH FAMILY CONNECTED AND INFORMED.

...A WORD FROM OUR PASTOR...

As I was contemplating this month's newsletter article, I wanted to zero in on the season of Lent since it begins only a few days after this edition of *The Old Is New News* releases. And wouldn't you know it, just this morning as I prepared to write, I received an email from a close friend who had just written a summarized analysis of Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, *The Cost of Discipleship*. If you aren't familiar with it, suffice to say that it is one of the premier works on God's grace, the very cornerstone of the Christian faith.

The first thing my friend, Jon Russo, noted was the contrast Bonhoeffer makes between cheap grace and costly grace, saying that "Cheap grace is grace preached without requiring repentance or discipleship. It is grace that justifies sin rather than the sinner, [and is] characterized by forgiveness without repentance, baptism without discipline, communion without confession, grace without the cross, and Christianity without Christ." He went on to say that Bonhoeffer criticizes cheap grace as "a shallow and self-serving way of accepting God's mercy without transformation."

If you find yourself thinking some of that sounds familiar, it's probably because that's pretty much how our former denomination taught grace. I hate to harp on what is past, but sometimes it is necessary to look backwards in order to get a clear vision of what lays ahead. Keep that in mind when you hear me preach what may seem like a tough message, and before accusing me of being hardcore or leaning fundamentalist. Where we came from and the preaching too often offered, was steeped in promises amounting to basically universal salvation and an easy, non-committal form of Christianity that costs little and offers less. That is not Christianity friends, and I love you too much not to tell you the truth about what genuine faith really looks like.

By contrast, my friend Jon talked about costly grace being grace that calls the believer to follow Jesus in true discipleship. He said, "It is costly because it demands a life of obedience to Christ, cost God the life of His Son, requires personal sacrifice and commitment, and is inseparable from the cross and true discipleship." And as he reflected on Jesus's call to "take up your cross and follow me," (Matthew 16:24) he noted that "Bonhoeffer insists that costly grace is the only true grace because it involves a transformed life of faith, obedience, and sometimes suffering for the sake of Christ." Jon closes by quoting one of Bonhoeffer's more famous lines to sum it all up: "When Christ calls a man, he bids him come and die."

John Wesley, the founder of Methodism, would definitely agree with that quote. He is famous for having said of his beloved movement, "I am not afraid that the people called Methodists should ever cease to exist either in Europe or America. But I am afraid lest they should only exist as a dead sect, having the form of religion without the power. And this undoubtedly will be the case unless they hold fast both the doctrine, spirit, and discipline with which they first set out." I think if Wesley were alive today, he would come to the conclusion that that's what happened to the UMC and warn that the same could (and would) happen to any faith that preached anything less than the necessity for all Christians to "come and die" to Christ.

That's the whole idea behind Lent. It is a time for reflecting on what it really means to surrender fully to Christ and die along with Him who gave everything for us, even to death on the cross so that we could "have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) In response to this awesome gift, Christians have designated Lent as a season of giving up things important to them (fasting) as a sign of their willingness to die to Christ and draw closer to God. If you have never participated in this practice, I highly recommend it as a great way to grow in your faith and bettering your understanding of the concept of sacrifice. There are many ways to fast, too many to cover within the confines of this article, but I would be glad to discuss them with you at any time. My door is always open, and you are always welcome.

Happy Mardi Gras everyone! May your Lenten season be one of renewal and growth in your relationship with the One who gave it all so that the only thing of real importance (eternal life) would be made available to you.

Pastor Ted



...IN THE KNOW...

FIRST SUNDAY BREAKFAST

The Men's Club invites you to a complimentary breakfast the first Sunday of each month from 8-9:45 am in the Family Life Center. March 2 is the first Sunday, so come enjoy a delicious breakfast and fellowship before Sunday School and Worship.

MEN'S CLUB

All men are invited to Men's Club on Monday, March 3 at 5:30 pm in the Family Life Center.

THE GROVE @ OGC MOMS GROUP

Ministry of Mothers Sharing (MoMS) is a ministry that offers friendship and support to all mothers through praying, faithsharing, wonderful conversations, and support. A MoMS group meets the first Friday of each month (March 7) at OGC from 9:30-11:00 am. Childcare will be provided. For more information, contact Tish Edwards or April Brewer.

CANCER COMPANIONS

Cancer Companions (CC) is a brand new support group to OGC tailored specifically for cancer patients and their caregivers. CC will meet twice a month on the second and fourth Friday at 10:30 am. In March we will meet March 14 and 28. If you know someone suffering from this awful disease, be sure and pass the word to join us.

NURSING HOME VISITATION

Congregational Care will be visiting the area nursing homes on Saturday, March 15. They invite you to join them at the church at 9:30 am to go.

FIFTH SUNDAY POTLUCK LUNCH

Sunday, March 30 is a fifth Sunday. Join us after worship in the FLC for a delicious potluck lunch and fellowship. Bring your favorite dish to share.

MES CIRCLE

All ladies are invited to MES Circle on Monday, March 31 at 6 pm in the Family Life Center.

Debbie Pimm shared her artistic talents with MES Circle in February. The ladies had a fun time learning to paint winter birches and red birds on glasses.

We want to extend a Happy One Year Anniversary to April Brewer, our Youth and Family Minister. You have been such a blessing to our youth and our church. OGC, let April know how much she is loved and appreciated.

Ash Wednesday

MARCH 5

5:30 PM SERVICE

6:30 PM FELLOWSHIP MEAL



FORTY STEPS ON THE ROAD TO RESURRECTION

LENT BEGINS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 5

DEVOTIONAL BOOKS AVAILABLE IN FOYER \$10

LISTEN TO HIM CLASS BEGINS WEDNESDAY, MARCH 12 @ 6:30 PM IN FLC

OAK GROVE CHURCH SPRING

BLOOD DRIVE

Sunday, March 16

8:30 am - 12:30 pm



Valentine's Day Luncheon



...CHILDREN...

I cannot believe how fast time flies! It is once again time for our Annual Pancake Dinner Fundraiser. It will be this Tuesday, March 4. We will begin serving at 5:30 and our entertainment will begin around 6:00 p.m. **You will not want to miss this!** I promise a fun night filled with lots of laughter. Tickets are on sale now, but you can also buy them at the door. They are \$10 for adults/youth and \$5 for children. Also, if you want to vote for the best talent act then bring some extra \$\$\$. The performance that receives the most money will win the talent show! So come on out and support our children with this fun fundraiser. Proceeds will go towards sending our children to Camp Wesley Pines. (Parents don't forget that the **deadline** for registering your kids for camp is **March 15.**)

Prayer cards will be available to pick up at the Ash Wednesday service. We ask that all adults take a card and commit to praying for that child during Lent. It is such a special blessing for our kids to know they are loved and prayed for by their church family.

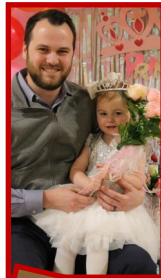
Mark your calendars for Sunday, March 30th. Our children will be leading us in worship so make plans to be in church that day. It is always a special treat and blessing for the children to lead us in worship.

It will be time for VBS before we know it. So, get ready for another opportunity to share the love of Jesus and spread the Good News to not only our children but other children as well. Please start praying now for a dynamic VBS where the children will grow closer to God and stronger in their faith.

Thanks for all that you do to love and support our children. Continue prayers for our children's ministry. I am so grateful to be a part of this loving church family.

In His Service,

Kaycee



Princess Ball

Thank you to everyone who made our 2025 Princess Ball such a fun time for all of our Princesses! To those who provided food, music, photography, decorations, set up, and clean up, we thank you. All of our princesses and their escorts were treated to an unforgettable special evening.



...YOUTH...

Lent starts with Jesus being in the wilderness away from the disciples, crowds, and things that he encountered in His everyday life. I think wilderness is a perfect metaphor for today's youth experience. Jesus was in the wilderness to be tempted and to overcome the temptation through His reliance on God and using God's word. Jesus knew who He was and what He had to do.

Today our youth are trying to find out who they are and what they believe in a world that is constantly tempting and pushing them to choose it over God. Our youth are struggling with questions like Is God real? Does God really

care about me? If God is real, then who is He to me? Who is Jesus? Does it really matter what I believe and do? Why is there evil in the world? What is confirmation and do I want to be confirmed?

We have started confirmation classes on Sunday Night and have assigned mentors to each youth. We are answering these questions during confirmation. With Lent starting soon we will begin a Lenten devotion that we will primarily be doing on Wednesday nights. I will also be posting in GroupMe a daily devotion and prayer throughout the Lenten Season.

Lent is an incredibly special time where we honestly look at ourselves and our lives and evaluate what sin or distractions are keeping us in a wilderness from God and His grace,

love, and mercy? What sin do we need to ask for prayers for? What distractions do we need to give up? I want to encourage all parents to encourage your youth to be at church and youth group every opportunity they can. Have your youth check GroupMe every day for daily devotion and prayer. Encourage your youth to give up something (social media, tv, etc..) that is keeping them from having a deeper relationship with God and encourage them to take something on (Daily prayer, reading the Bible, etc..) that will strengthen and grow their relationship with God.

With Love,

April Brewer

Youth and Family Minister

2025 GUIDEBOOK

The 2025 Guidebook has been published. Grab your copy today. As with any publication, we find that information is constantly changing and mistakes can be made.....So, each month there will be a Guidebook update sheet printed and placed in our information center by the Family Life Center and by the Sanctuary doors. Grab one of these sheets to keep your Guidebook up to date!

WEDNESDAY NIGHT

MEAL 5:30 PM

**ADULTS \$7 CHILDREN \$3 FAMILY PLAN \$20
CLASSES AND CHOIR 6:30 PM**

March 5 (Meal at 6:30 pm)

Menu: Loaded Baked Potatoes, Chili, Garden Salad, French Bread, Assorted Desserts

Children's Menu: Pizza and Salad

Shoppers: Tish Edwards/Susan McQueen

Class to Serve: Youth

Desserts: Shannon Sterling, Lori Terrill, Brenda Walker, Gloria Watkins, Peggy Woodruff, Nancy Amacker

March 12

Menu: Hamburger Steak w/Onions & Gravy, Mashed Potatoes, Seasoned Green Beans, Tossed Salad, Rolls, Assorted Desserts

Children's Menu: Hamburgers/Tater Tots

Shoppers: Laura Baird/Peggy Woodruff

Class to Serve: Youth

Desserts: Esther Attkisson, Beth Bankston, Pat Bennett, Jane Boudreaux, Trista Boudreaux, April Brewer

March 19

Menu: Chicken Spaghetti, Broccoli, Garden Salad, Texas Toast, Assorted Desserts

Children's Menu: Pizza and Salad

Shoppers: Fred/Jane Boudreaux

Class to Serve: Youth

Desserts: Judy Brown, Peggy Bullion, Joann Burks, Gloria Bynum, Suzell Cain, M.J. Cain

March 26

Menu: Beef Tips w/rice, English Peas, Carrots, Garden Salad, Biscuits, Assorted Desserts

Children's Menu: Fish Sticks/FF

Shoppers: Kaycee Hairston/Lori Terrill

Class to Serve: Youth

Desserts: Felecia Carpenter, Chris Camacho, Mary Ann Cox, Grace Dickerson, Noel Dickerson, Paula Duren



ANNIVERSARIES

- | | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|------------------------|
| 7 Perry & Kay Arnold | 8 Grady Aultman | 22 Noel Dickerson |
| 8 Larry & Gloria Harms | 8 Fred Boudreaux | 23 Riley Barber Spiers |
| 13 Grady & Jane Aultman | 8 Rosie Brewer | 24 Heather Richardson |
| 13 Josh & Megan Mathias | 8 Landon Frazier | 25 Chris Camacho |
| 23 John & Laura Hojem | 10 Roland Pimm | 25 Ellison Frazier |
| 29 Craig & Trista Boudreaux | 10 Patrick Smith | 26 Roxy Barber |
| | 12 Dempsey Amacker | 26 Betty Entrekin |
| | 12 Lath Hairston | 26 Jacob Hammond |
| | 12 David Oubre | 26 Anna Oubre |
| | 15 Leigh Shelton | 27 Vickie Durant |
| | 18 Cindy Oubre | 29 Randy Webber |
| | 20 Hopyy Bennett | 31 Eva Ratliff |
| | 21 Robert Hammond | 31 Ryan Grace Wesley |

BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Jimmy Carpenter
- 2 Jamie O'Quinn
- 3 Sarah Findley
- 3 Bowen Terrill
- 4 Jeanette Breland