



Oakville Presbyterian Church  
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# The Oakville News

Winter 2015

## John's Jots

If you try to point out something to a dog, the dog will often look at your finger instead of the object you are trying to point to. This is frustrating, but it illustrates a natural mistake we make from time to time.\* It is a mistake I see quite a bit in regard to Christmas.

We so easily get caught up in the traditions, activities, symbols and decorations of Christmas that we focus on them instead of what they point to—Christ. I have often heard people say, “Christmas just wouldn’t be the same without...”—(you fill in the blank): a Christmas tree, Christmas lights and decorations, Christmas Carols, the Christmas parade, gifts, eggnog, going to a Christmas Eve service, etc.

Traditions and symbols are important, because they are a signpost, a reminder; they point to something deeper. But when we put too much emphasis on the symbols, traditions, and experiences, then we can lose sight of the deeper meaning and story to which they point.

God is all too familiar with our tendency for this. He calls it idolatry: worshipping something that is created rather than the Creator. We worship that which is most important to us – that which preoccupies us. God’s chosen people got caught up in the trappings of religion and lost sight of God and the life He called them to. The festivals and rituals and even the laws became an end in themselves. That which was designed to draw them closer to God became a distraction and barrier to their relationship with God. They also got distracted by looking at the cultures around them and were drawn to their pagan practices and worldly ways.

Their story is our story.

During this Advent and Christmas season I encourage you to participate in all of the traditions and festivities that point to Christ (such as the ones mentioned in this newsletter). Enjoy the symbols and the decorations and the special treats. However, participate in these in the way that points to the true meaning of Christmas: the story of God becoming flesh and dwelling among us, the story of the birth of our Savior who offers abundant life here and now and through eternity.

Between the activities, take time to read the Christmas story from the gospels several times throughout the season. You may encounter the One at the center of all those celebrations.

Let us share this life-renewing, world-transforming message with all we come in contact with. Share in words, in songs, acts of kindness, and deeds of service. Let us invite others to Christ-centered festivities and away from other influences in the world. Let us proclaim and live out the themes of Advent – of Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace.

In the name of the Prince of Peace,  
Pastor John

**Oakville Presbyterian Church**  
Founded in 1850  
29970 Church Drive, Shedd, Oregon 97377  
**(541) 758-0647**  
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Pastor: John S. Carpenter  
**Worship Times Sept - May 11:00 a.m.**  
(June - Aug - 10:00 a.m.)  
**Sunday School for all ages Sept - May 9:45 a.m.**  
Church secretary: Samantha Gobba

**\*Please let us know if you would like to be added or removed from this mailing.**



## Christmas Poinsettias

*Advent season is approaching, and Oakville Church once again will adorn the sanctuary with poinsettias!*



To order a poinsettia in memory or in honor of a loved one, please fill out the form below and mail it to the church with a check for \$8 for each person you wish to honor, or you can email the information below to [email@oakvillechurch.org](mailto:email@oakvillechurch.org) and pay online through the church website, [oakvillechurch.org](http://oakvillechurch.org).

Checks can be made out to: **Oakville Presbyterian Church**

Please write **Poinsettia** on the memo line. Thank you!

*\*The number of poinsettias in the sanctuary does not necessarily correspond to the number of donors. All proceeds beyond cost will benefit the **Deacon's Fund**.*



Donor Name: \_\_\_\_\_

In honor of (or) in memory of (please circle one): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

# Upcoming Events

## THANKSGIVING SERVICE

**Thursday, November 26 at 10 a.m.**

Come for a brief, casual worship service as we remember to be thankful for the blessings from the Lord and for the liberty to enjoy them.

## CHRISTMAS CRAFT NIGHT

**Sunday, November 29, 5 – 7 p.m.**

Get ready to glue, glitter, tie and color! Come enjoy an evening of Christmas crafting in the Fellowship Hall. Bring a potluck finger food item to share.

## HANGING OF THE GREENS

**Sunday, December 6 at 11 a.m.**

On this second Sunday of Advent, we will decorate during our worship service with the symbols of Christmas, reflect on their meaning, and prepare once again for the coming of the Christ Child.

## CHRISTMAS CAROLING

**Sunday, December 13, 4 – 7 p.m.**

We will meet at the church and carpool to sing carols that celebrate Christ's birth. Concludes in a warm home for hot drinks and yummy treats.

## CHRISTMAS PROGRAM

**Sunday, December 20 at 6:00 p.m.**

We will reflect on past Christmas pageants and celebrate the good news of our Savior's birth once again through music and drama.

## CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE

**Thursday, December 24 at 7:30 p.m.**

In a solemn, reflective service, we light candles, read scripture, and sing hymns in anticipation of the coming of the Christ child.

## OPEN HOUSE

**Thursday, December 24**

Immediately following the Christmas Eve Service, the Carpenter's invite you to come to their house for Christmas goodies and time for fellowship.



## SENIOR LUNCHEON

Oakville Church caters a delightful luncheon to any senior in the community at noon on the second Wednesday of the fall, winter, and spring months. This November, our deacons served a record number of seniors: **110!**

The meal included turkey, stuffing, gravy, mashed potatoes, and pumpkin pie. All the food was scrumptious.

**The next luncheon will be held on December 9. Come join us for a lovely Christmas-themed event!**



(Above) From left: Karen Fruetal, Cheryl Pugh, Ingrid Margason, Maryanne Wirth, Katy Harmon, Mary Carpenter serve food at November's luncheon. (Right) Diners enjoy fellowship and fine fare.

*'Tis the season...*

**SPOTLIGHT:**

**Oakville mission giving 2015**

*...for giving*

## Church Giving\*

### JON AND KAYLEE WILLIAMSON

As missionaries to Oregon State University's campus, Jon and Kaylee Williamson coordinate Bible studies and Christian outreach for college students.

### FISH of ALBANY

Provides clothing, food, medicine, transportation, and shelter to the needy.

### HABITAT FOR HUMANITY

Shelters the needy in "simple, decent, affordable housing."

### LOVE INC of LINN COUNTY

Connects the needy members of a community with churches to provide their basic needs, counseling, and budgeting training.

### MEDICAL TEAMS INTERNATIONAL

Responds to disasters, conflicts, and poverty around the world by providing swift shelter and medical services.

### MID-VALLEY FELLOWSHIP

Counsels those who struggle with sexual brokenness, pointing them to the grace and healing of Christ.

### OPTIONS PREGNANCY CENTER

Provides compassion, medical information, and pregnancy tests to those with unplanned pregnancies.

### STANDUPGIRL.COM

Provides a supportive online community to girls afraid to face unplanned pregnancies.

**\*Oakville Church appropriates mission funds each year to local Christian ministries.**

## OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD

Samaritan's Purse delivers millions of shoeboxes filled with gifts to children in over 150 countries and territories. This year, Oakville Church family members donated enough supplies for

**113 shoe boxes!**



## CHRISTMAS GIVING TREE

The Giving Tree will be in the church Fellowship Hall beginning on the first weekend of December. Take a tag or two and return it with your wrapped gift by Thursday, December 3. Sharing Hands of Brownsville, a local nonprofit, will distribute the gifts.

## HOLIDAY FOOD DONATION

Bring your non-perishable food items to Oakville this holiday season, and help us fill the food donation box in the Fellowship Hall. The deacons will see that the food is distributed to needy families in our community.

