



Oak Branch January 2024



Oak Hills Presbyterian Church
Rev. Rachael Huntley

Beloved Family,

A new year is upon us, and you may be busy making resolutions of things to do more of (or less of) in 2024. As your pastor, may I be so bold as to suggest making a commitment to read the Bible more often? I'm not even asking you to commit to a whole year; simply give January a try and see how it goes. If you don't have a Bible at home, you can go online to read, or stop by the church and I will happily give you one. If you are looking for some guidance, here is a list of the most popular Bible passages on Bible Gateway (a site I use often). I've put a line below each reading...an encouragement to write a word or phrase that comes to you after reading the passage. Even though there are 31 days in January, I've not listed 31 passages... because we are all human and likely to miss a day here and there. Happy reading!

1 Corinthians 13 _____	Philippians 4 _____
Psalms 23 _____	Psalms 1 _____
Genesis 1 _____	Psalms 139 _____
John 3:16 _____	Ephesians 4 _____
Romans 8 _____	1 Corinthians 1:31 _____
Psalms 91 _____	Romans 1 _____
Matthew 5 _____	John 3 _____
John 1 _____	Ephesians 1 _____
Matthew 6 _____	Ephesians 5 _____
James 1 _____	Luke 1 _____
John 14 _____	Matthew 1 _____
Romans 12 _____	1 Peter 1 _____
Jeremiah 29:11 _____	Choose your own! _____

Inside this issue:

- Sunday Worship 2
- January Events 3
- Bible study 3
- Session 4
- Finance 4
- OHPC in Mission 4
- Music Notes 5
- Christmas Dinner 6-7
- Membership 8
- Thank You 8
- Calendar 9

Wishing you all the best in 2024...Happy New Year!

With love,
Pastor Rachael



Sunday Morning Worship, 10:30 a.m.



Epiphany: a moment when you suddenly feel that you understand, or suddenly become conscious of, something that is very important to you. Within the church, Epiphany celebrates the revelation of Jesus, the Son of God, to the world. In this season of Epiphany, use these lectionary texts to guide your reflection of the wonderful gift God bestowed on us all, Jew and Gentile alike, through the birth of Jesus.

January 6: The Epiphany of the Lord

Isaiah 60:1-6

Arise, shine; your light has come; the glory of the Lord appears.

Psalms 72:1-7, 10-14

May the king reign forever and deliver the needy.

Ephesians 3:1-12

An ancient mystery is revealed; Gentiles are fellow heirs in Christ.

Matthew 2:1-12

Following a star, the wise men visit Jesus and bring him gifts.



January 7: Baptism of the Lord

Genesis 1:1-5

Over the deep and formless waters, God speaks: Let there be light.

Psalms 29

Give glory to God; the voice of the Lord is over the waters.

Acts 19:1-7

Paul baptizes new believers in Jesus' name; they receive the Spirit.

Mark 1:4-11

Jesus is baptized; the Spirit descends; a voice says: This is my Son.



January 14: Second Sunday After Epiphany

1 Samuel 3:1-10 (11-20)

The boy Samuel hears God calling and replies: Speak, Lord.

Psalms 139:1-6, 13-18

O Lord, you search me and surround me; I praise you.

1 Corinthians 6:12-20

Your body is a temple of the Spirit; you were bought with a price.

John 1:43-51

Jesus calls Philip; Philip in turn calls Nathanael: Come and see.



January 21: Third Sunday After Epiphany

Jonah 3:1-5, 10

God sends Jonah to Nineveh; the people repent and God forgives.

Psalms 62:5-12

My soul waits in silence for God: God is my rock and salvation.

1 Corinthians 7:29-31

The present world is passing away; let go of earthly attachments.

Mark 1:14-20

Jesus calls four fishermen: Simon, Andrew, James, and John.



January 28: Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

Deuteronomy 18:15-20

The Lord says: I will raise up a new prophet to speak my word.

Psalms 111

Praise the Lord; fear of God is the beginning of wisdom.

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Concerning food and idols: knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.

Mark 1:21-28

Jesus casts out an unclean spirit; all are amazed at his authority.

Happy New Year!



AFTER THE HOLIDAYS

The songs have been sung, the gifts have been given, and we've all drunk a cup of good cheer. Now, before the Grinch absconds with them all, we need your help packing up all the lovely Christmas decorations to store them for next year.

Thursday, January 4 at 10 AM

Come one, come all!



Begin the New Year with us!

On Thursday, January 18, we will be discussing *West with Giraffes* by Lynda Rutledge. When he learns giraffes are going extinct, 105 year-old Woodrow Wilson Nickel recalls the unforgettable experience of an incredible 12-day road-trip to deliver Southern California's first giraffes to the San Diego zoo. Inspired by actual events, this emotional tale weaves fictional characters with real-life figures.

Upcoming books:

February 15: *Lessons in Chemistry* by Bonnie Garmus

March 21 *The Frozen River*, by Ariel Lawhon

Bible Study

Come to the Waters

A new Bible study—coming in January

Water plays a central role in the stories of scripture, from the chaotic waters of creation to the River of Life in Revelation. This study turns to some of the water stories and images in the Bible to enable us to learn more about God and how God would have us live our lives. Water and the Word work together to quench the thirsts of our bodies and our souls.

Beginning January 10, we will meet in the library at 5:30 PM on alternate Wednesdays

Contact Donna Amonett at damonett@gmail.com.

SESSION NOTES

- Session approved the continuation of the current budget into January 2024.
- The directory will be updated after the holidays.
- An apron and skirting will be placed around our shed as part of an Eagle Scout project.
- The Girl Scouts will build a raised bed along the back parking lot in the spring. The harvest will be donated to the church or needy families.
- Session agreed to raise our payment to the Presbytery from \$9.80 per person to \$20 per person. Sally Watson will be invited to address the congregation about the use of these funds.

Donna Amonett, Clerk of Session

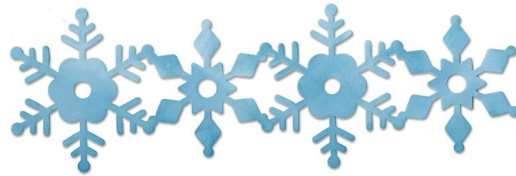


FINANCIAL NEWS

Season's Greetings! We appreciate those of you who have turned in your pledge cards. Given the challenges that we anticipate, we are preparing a very conservation budget for 2024. The pledges we have received to date will cover about 71% of our proposed budget. The bad news is—with the large air conditioning unit repairs and replacements of the past year, we have been depleting our reserves. Thanks to your generosity in our Fifth Sunday Campaigns, we have been able to cover a portion of the costs.

Thank you for your continued support!

P. Jack Henson, Treasurer



OHP in Mission



Our Angel Tree yielded gifts for 10 children currently residing at Presbyterian Children's Home (left). We also provided gifts (below) for 40 children being served by Bexar County Family Services.

Thank you for your generosity!



Music Notes

HAVE YOURSELF A MERRY LITTLE CHRISTMAS

Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Let your heart be light.
Next year all our troubles will be out of sight.
Have yourself a merry little Christmas
Make the Yuletide gay.
Next year all our troubles will be miles away.
Once again, as in olden days,
Happy golden days of yore,
Faithful friends who are dear to us,
Will be near to us once more.
Someday soon we all will be together,
If the fates allow,
Until then we'll have to muddle through somehow. . .
So have yourself a merry little Christmas now!

“Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas” has its own story, like the multitude of popular Christmas songs we sing and hear each year. Written during the depth of WW II, the piece reflects the melancholy of the era. Composed by songwriters Hugh Martin and Ralph Blaine for Judy Garland’s 1944 movie, “Meet me in St. Louis,” the song began with a wonderful melody, but the authors produced a lyric that was just too sad.



In the movie, the mythical Smith family was set to relocate from St. Louis to New York City, a move that was truly a downer. Their distraught child, Tootie, worried that Santa Claus would not find her family if they departed St. Louis. So, her sister Esther sang “*Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas.*”

The lyrics and the lovely melody reflected the times. V-E Day was still a year away, and uncertainty gripped the United States and the world, rapidly tiring from the Great War.

But Judy Garland, set to sing the song, objected to the ponderous lyrics. She persuaded Martin to modify the words to suit the great diva, materially improving the song. It was a blockbuster hit in the 1944 movie, and Judy Garland’s natural vibrato voice produced a hit for all times.

But that was not the last edit. One of the finest recordings of the song occurred in 1957 with Frank Sinatra’s rendition. Ole Blue Eyes asked Martin to make the song a bit happier in 1957. Frank advised, “The title to my album is “A Jolly Christmas”; do you think you could jolly up the line “muddle through somehow”? Marin obliged, and for the 1957 recording, he changed that phrase to “Hang a shining star upon the highest bough.”

And Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas Now!

Gregory A. Nussel
Organist and Music Director
December 20, 2023



Our annual Christmas dinner was blessed with the visit of several popular Christmas characters:



Chef Santa directed the fabulous Kitchen Elves, who prepared a delicious dinner of salad, ham, sweet potatoes, and green beans, followed by a scrumptious chess pie, which was enjoyed by about 70 diners and kitchen staff!





Entertainment was provided by the Whoville Singers, led by the Grinch himself!



Our first silent auction, directed by the Head Elf herself, brought in over \$2000!



LET'S GET TO KNOW EACH OTHER BETTER

This month, the Membership Committee is highlighting another member of our long-time members, Michael Jenson.

Michael and his family have been members of OHPC since he was a small child. He says he has memories of being in church here when he was four years old. Michael was born and raised in San Antonio. He is the second of four children. He has an older brother and two younger sisters. Michael graduated from Marshall High School and then attended Texas State University in San Marcos for several years but decided to return home to work with his dad, Jim Jenson, in the family business, Alamo Loan Company. He has been with this company since 1988. He returned to finish his degree in political science at UTSA in 1992.



Michael raised his daughter, Alison, as a single dad. She now lives in Houston with her husband Brian and their two sons.

Michael describes himself as a “simple guy: who was raised by the best parents, Jim and Ginger Jenson. He was taught to work hard and do what’s right. He has been an active member of our congregation throughout his life. Michael is currently an Elder on our Session but has served as an elder a number of times over the years. He was the co-chairman of the church garage sale this past September and did an awesome job along with Heather Ebert. For the past 14 years, Michael and several friends have brought a hearty meal to homeless folks once every two months through the Under the Bridge Ministry.

Michael enjoys most outdoor activities including scuba diving, hunting, and fishing as well as camping, hiking and kayaking. He loves music and often sings with our choir. Traveling is also another love and he made a trip to Africa this past fall.

Oak Hills is blessed to have wonderful, faithful members like Michael!



A heart-felt thank-you to all who worked so hard to make this year’s Christmas Dinner such a success! Robert Stall and his faithful Fellowship Committee blessed us with a wonderful meal. Greg Nussel and the choir set the tone for the season with their rendering of familiar Christmas songs. And Peggy Hudson, along with the Stewardship Committee, organized our first (and most successful!) silent auction. It was truly an event to bring our members together in the spirit of the season!

January 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Office closed 	2	3 7 PM choir 7 PM AA	4	5	6 Epiphany 1-3 PM Girl Scouts
7 10:30 AM Worship 4-6 PM Guide Dogs	8	9	10  5:30 PM Bible Study 7 PM choir 7 PM AA	11	12	13
14 10:30 am Worship	15	16	17 7 PM choir 7 PM AA	18  11 AM Book Club	19	20 1-3 PM Girl Scouts
21 10:30 AM Worship 11:30 AM Session and Elder Training 4-6 PM Guide Dogs	22	23	24  5:30 Bible Study 7 PM choir 7 PM AA	25	26	27
28 10:30 AM Worship	29	30	31 7 PM Choir 7 PM AA			

A Good Quote to begin the New Year:

"For last year's words belong to last year's language
And next year's words await another voice."

—T.S. Eliot—

Birthday blessings to:

- 1/2 Dick Pettit
- 1/5 Ginger Jenson
- 1/7 Britton Clifton
- 1/14 Terri Slonaker
- 1/16 Chris Myers
- 1/22 Din Janvier
- 1/30 Cindy Tschirhart
- 1/31 Mia-Paris Bache



Happy Anniversary!

- 1/3 Cannon & Amy Clifton
- 1/25 Tom & Joan Oei
- 1/28 Dick & Kathy Pettit



Oak Hills Presbyterian Church

6739 Callaghan Road
San Antonio, Texas 78229

210-342-0271

Email: oakhills@oakhillspresbyterian.com

Web Site: www.oakhillspresbyterian.com



PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

Return Service Requested

Oak Branch January 2024

