



D.R.I.V.E.

MOMENTUM FOR LIFE

The First United Methodist Church
103 Monmouth Road, Oakhurst, NJ 07755
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Oakhurst.umcchurches.org

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CCLI #1588788

***The First United Methodist Church of Oakhurst
Is a community of faith committed to Christ,
seeking to learn the needs of our members,
friends, and neighbors, and responding with Christian love.***

Fourth Sunday After Epiphany

January 28, 2024

9:30 a.m.

*Congregation is invited to rise if able and comfortable.

Readings in **BOLD** are to be read in unison.

Hymnals: UMH is Red or Purple-TFWS is Black-W&S is Green

Please note that this service is being recorded and viewed on social media.

WE GATHER

PRELUDE

GREETING AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

WELCOMING THE LIGHT OF CHRIST

UMH 185, vs. 1

When Morning Gilds the Skies

When morning gilds the skies my heart awaking cries:

May Jesus Christ be praised!

Alike at work and prayer, to Jesus I repair:

May Jesus Christ be praised!

*CALL TO WORSHIP

In your heart, Wondrous God,

you wrote the vision of creation, and gifted it to us.

Prophets came, your vision written on their hearts,

your voice standing behind their words,

bringing us back to you.

In your heart, Forgiving God,

you wrote the vision of redemption, and sent Jesus.

Disciples came, your vision written on their hearts,

your Son standing behind their mission,

a ministry to share your love and grow your church.

In your heart, Blessing God,

you wrote the vision of community,

and provided the Holy Spirit to give us forward momentum.

We came, your vision of a community written on our hearts,

your dreams uniting us all as brothers and sisters,

building your kingdom here on earth together.

*HYMN OF PRAISE

Shout to the Lord

TFWS 2074

CENTERING PRAYER

Vision making God, we gather in this community to quiet the chaos in our minds and center our hearts, as we strive to see and know you more each day. Send your Spirit that we might dream your dreams. Help us to envision your kingdom and bring that vision into reality. Guide our thoughts and actions. Smooth the path before us, removing the roadblocks that detour us from seeing the way forward. Take us out of our complacency and give us the momentum to shift from 'park' to 'drive' for a life wholly devoted to your beautiful name. Amen.

ANTHEM

+ *What a Beautiful Name*
Praise Team

Fielding

PROCLAIMING THE WORD

LESSON FROM THE HEBREW SCRIPTURES

Habakkuk 2:2-3

Pew Bible, OT 872

EPISTLE LESSON

Philippians 3:12-16

Pew Bible, NT 198

For the Word of God in Scripture
For the Word of God among us
For the Word of God within us

Thanks be to God

HYMN OF RESPONSE *Leaning on the Everlasting Arms* UMH 133

PSALTER OF ASCENT

Psalms 122:1-2

Pew Bible, OT 571

SERMON

Rev. Jill Hubbard-Smith

Momentum for Life: Visioning the Future

RESPONDING TO THE WORD

SHARING OUR PRAYERS

During this time, you are invited to name your prayers for the congregation.
After each prayer request, the congregation will respond...

Lord, Hear Our Prayer

PRAYERS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

LORD'S PRAYER

OFFERING OF TITHES AND GIFTS TO THE KINGDOM OF GOD...

Offering plates are available at each door as you depart.

You may also give online or by mail to the church office.

MISSION MINUTE

CHURCH WORLD SERVICE BLANKET SUNDAY

*PRESENTATION

UMH 94

Praise, God from Whom All Blessings Flow

**Praise God, from whom all blessings flow;
praise God, all creatures here below:**

Alleluia! Alleluia! Praise God, the source of all our gifts!

Praise Jesus Christ, whose power uplifts!

Praise the Spirit, Holy Spirit! Alleluia! Alleluia! Alleluia!

*PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Rev. Mary Nelson Abbott

Move among us, Spirit and take our lives, our loves, our ideas, our questions, our speech, our silence and unite us as your people. Receive and bless the tithes and offerings we bring as an act of worship and give us the gifts of perception and understanding, so we might dream your dreams, see your visions, and be able to witness to your presence in our momentum for life. Amen.

*HYMN OF DEDICATION

Spirit Song

UMH 347

*SENDING FORTH

*LIGHT OF CHRIST LEADS US INTO THE WORLD

UMH 666

Shalom to You

**Shalom to you now, shalom, my friends.
May God's full mercies bless you, my friends.
In all your living and through your loving,
Christ be your shalom, Christ be your shalom.**

*POSTLUDE

*Please join us in Fellowship Hall for refreshments and fellowship.
Adult Sunday School can be found in Wesley Hall downstairs.*

***Our Service of Worship Has Ended
Our Worship Through Service Begins***

ALTAR FLOWERS:

Given in loving memory of Mae & Harry Duerrler by Kitty Amato.
Given in celebration of the birthdays of Alice Timms (1/28) & her son, Scott (1/29)

ALTAR ROSE:

Given by the Henderson family in honor of Jaxon Liam Henderson's 2nd birthday.

Our Leadership Team Serving Us This Morning

ACOLYTE: Mallory Mitchell

COUNTERS: Mary Bailey, Cheryl McLoughlin, John Montgomery

USHER: Gerry Busfield

GREETER: Jim Scisco

LAY READER: Bob Crowther

PRAISE TEAM: Meg Macan, Lydia Smith, Mike Haider, Rob Crowther, John Tocci, Jack Coleman

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS: Judy Gorra & Soon Hur

Words of Welcome

Welcome to this service of worship. We pray this service offered an opportunity to engage with the Divine. If we can be of service to you in any way, please let us know. If you are looking for a church to call home, please consider joining together with us, where we help each other grow in faith, love, and service.

For Your Information

- There are **hearing devices** to assist you to experience the service more clearly with our streaming team in the rear of the sanctuary. Feel free to pick one up.
- A **rocking chair** is available for the comfort of parent and baby in the rear of the sanctuary, behind the pews.
- To access the **restrooms**, please exit the side door to the right of the lectern/chancel area. In the hall, make a left into Fellowship Hall and follow the signs.
- There are **infant changing tables** available in the restrooms.

MERCY CENTER is currently requesting the following items: canned meat, spices, peanut butter, rice, cookies, & canned beans. Please put your donations in the receptacles in the church foyer.

WOMEN'S COVENANT GROUP is inviting all women to join them each week as they pray for those in need of prayer. They also use the *Upper Room Discipline* for Bible study before prayer time. Please speak with Shirley Bailey for information or if you'd like to join. The WCG meets every Tuesday morning at 8:30 in the library.

PRAYER GARDEN MEMORIAL BRICKS: If you'd like to dedicate a brick to the Prayer Garden, please fill out a form located on the sanctuary entrance tables or in the rack by the 2nd floor elevator doors. Deadline for the form and payment is 2/25.

LITTLE FREE PANTRY-donations ebb and flow during the week. The pantry will always take items to put in reserve if the bench is full. Right now the pantry could use crackers.

FELLOWSHIP HOSTS are still needed for Sunday mornings. Please prayerfully consider volunteering. See Bonnie McNamara for information or sign up in the upstairs kitchen.

TOY COLLECTION: Wesley Nursery School is still collecting toys for pediatric cancer patients ages 0-2. Please place your donations in the church office.

JANUARY'S COMMUNION OFFERING benefits the Pastor's Discretionary Fund. Please place your donations to this fund in the LOVE envelopes found on the sanctuary entrance tables.

TSEDALECH TESFAYE, is our World Vision Child from Ethiopia. If you would like to sponsor her for a month during 2024, please call the church office. 732-531-1150. Your \$39 donation also helps her parents and village.



This Week We Hold In
Prayer...

The families of Anthony Bilotta
& Bobbie Merce

Our homebound and hospitalized: David Miller, Jean Gillette,
Virginia Haydu, Bob Sproat,
Bertha Ahrens, Cary Carlisle, Carol Allen, Bob Cleary,
Priscilla Smith, Elaine Bilotta, Connie Bruckmann

**The church has a team of prayers, known as the Prayer Chain. If you have a prayer need, please contact the office.

**If you know someone who is in need of pastoral care, please contact Jill Hubbard-Smith 732-209-4563 or revjmhs@gmail.com.

Please Join Us In Mission and Ministry

Sunday, TODAY

Service of Worship In Person & Online	9:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School - Downstairs	9:30 a.m.
Fellowship Time – Fellowship Hall	10:30 a.m.
Adult Sunday School – Wesley Hall	11 a.m.

Monday, January 29

AA – Wesley Hall	7:30 a.m.
Alanon – Wesley Hall	10 a.m.
Carillon Bell Training – Sanctuary	6 p.m.

Tuesday, January 30

Women's Covenant Group – Wesley Hall	8:30 a.m.
Naranon – Wesley Hall	11 a.m.
Scouts – Fellowship Hall	7 p.m.

Wednesday, January 31

AA – Wesley Hall	7:30 a.m.
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Thursday, February 1

Alanon – Wesley Hall	10 a.m.
Chancel Choir – Sanctuary	6:30 p.m.

Friday, February 2

AA – Wesley Hall	8 p.m.
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Sunday, February 4

Service of Worship In Person & Online	9:30 a.m.
Children's Sunday School – Downstairs	9:30 a.m.
Fellowship Time – Fellowship Hall	10:30 a.m.
Adult Sunday School – Wesley Hall	11 a.m.

Vision...The act of seeing or the ability to see; a picture formed in the mind; imaginative foresight; a supernatural apparition.

"We live in a time of exponential and revolutionary change. If our life's work is to be an honorable, excellent offering to God, we can't ever afford to become content or comfortable staying where we are." What are your thoughts to this statement?

Power of Vision: "The essence of faith is vision."

- Hebrews 11:1-2, 10 – showing people of God stretching forward. Faith is living a forward focus. In faith we partner with Jesus to re-imagine God's purpose for Earth.
- Life is a journey of forward ascent with the power of vision.

Life Picture: Vision sequence - receive, conceive, and achieve.

- Read Jeremiah 1:11, 13. What do you see?
What life picture is God showing you to put into action?
- How do you view life?
Microscopic: focusing on problems (John 6:5-7) OR
Telescopic: focusing on possibilities (Mark 10:27).

Vision Focuses on Destination: As we work toward God's promised destination, it pulls us upward to bolder life actions.

Vision Inspires Perseverance: Joshua 1:3-4

- What Joshua and all God's people need to do is keep stepping forward. Keep walking toward the vision God gives.
- You will never reach God's vision if we keep starting over.
- Don't base a decision on seeing, feeling, and hearing.
- Focus on God's preferred future. What resistance are you facing? Where are you tempted to quit?

Vision is Nurtured in Community:

- Who are your traveling companions who help nurture your vision?
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Articulate an Attitude of Determined Faith:

- Our words emerge from our attitudes to create realities.
- Vision empowers us to sing songs of faith in the face of discouragement and resistance. We speak faith and hope based on God's promise not on the circumstances of the moment.
- How can you articulate an attitude of determined faith in the midst of current circumstances? (Ps. 124:1, 125:1, 126:2).

Initiate Strategic Actions:

- "Vision empowers us to initiate strategic actions that result in picturing a better future. Vision empowers us to initiate life-changing action. God is looking for people who will faithfully act on whatever God places in their minds despite fear and reservations. God entrusts vision to those who will faithfully execute it. God will not give vision that exceeds the size of the faith-steps we are willing to take."
- What Strategic Action Plan might you set for yourself this year; including self-health, relationships, work, and mission? Keep it simple and well defined.
- "Life is too short to live for anything less than fulfilling, fruitful, and faithful purpose. Take time to dream God's dream for your life and God will provide a great vision if you're willing to take great action!"

"God is looking for people who will take their lives out of park and shift them into drive." How does this statement apply to your Visioning for the Future?

**Sermon and Study Resource: *Momentum for Life* by Rev. Michael Slaughter. Abington Press, 2008. Pages 73-88.

***Spiritual Entrepreneurs: Six Principles for Risking Renewal* by Michael Slaughter, Abington Press, 1995. Pages 109-111.

+ What a Beautiful Name (chorus)

What a beautiful Name it is, what a beautiful Name it is
The Name of Jesus Christ my King
What a beautiful Name it is, nothing compares to this
What a beautiful Name it is, the Name of Jesus

Pastor: Jill Hubbard-Smith

Secretary: Joy More

Director of Music: Gary Farquhar

Sexton: Lisa Costello

Streaming Team: Chip Stoll, Rob Crowther, Johnny Tocci

Director of Wesley Nursery School: Noel Worthington