

# The Activator

December 2018

A monthly newsletter from the United Methodist Church of Hudson

Mission Statement of the Church:

***As followers of Jesus Christ we want to lead our community to a growing faith.***

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Mary Rekers, editor  
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PASTOR OFFICE HOURS: Wednesday beginning at 8:00 a.m.**

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## Mike's Musings

Christmas is a time when we want to be quietly inspired. I was going through my files and found this article by one of my favorite writers, Dave Kindred, who used to write for the *Sporting News*. It is a little dated, 2006, but the message is still priceless.

### **HEROES CAN COME IN PINT-SIZE PACKAGES**

Here's a story about a strikeout and a small boy in tears. It's not a sad story. It's a hero's story. It begins in the night when his mother heard the boy awake.

"A screaming headache," she said.

Whatever was wrong, it was back and worse. For a while, the boy had been vomiting in the mornings. He'd had headaches so severe he had to lie down. But all that had gone away until that night. Out of bed, teetering unbalanced, he walked into a wall.

Two days later, a neurologist told the mother, "Your son has a malignant brain tumor."

Romney Oaks was 4 years old.

On March 28, 2001, surgeons removed the tumor. Then came radiation, five times a week for 45 days.

Because treatment disrupted his brain's normal mechanisms, a shunt was implanted in the boy's body to move cerebral spinal fluid from his head to his abdomen. He also had an adrenal insufficiency, caused by damage to his pituitary gland (in time his mother would carry a syringe and medicine to games in case the boy was injured.) Radiation left him bald and skeletal. His father said, "He looked like a Holocaust victim."

During these treatments in Los Angeles, Romney Oaks became a sports fan. His cancer doctor wrote on the boy's arm, in purple ink, "Go Lakers." Soon, with his nasogastric juice tube taped behind an ear, the boy began playing basketball. "We wanted him to have the experience," his father said, and here Marlo Oaks' voice turned a shade softer, "in case he didn't make it."

Now, five years later, living in Bountiful, Utah, the boy has asked his doctors if they can't raise his dosage of human growth hormone because at this rate – he's 4-foot-6 and weighs 63 pounds – he'll never be big enough to be what he wants to be: an NBA player.

The Oakses have no television because they think nothing is worth watching. So Romney catches the NBA on radio and, if he has done his chores, visits a neighbor with a TV.

"Every morning Romney gets the newspaper and reads the whole sports section," his father said. "He memorizes Lakers statistics, knows about Shaq and Kobe. He's got his own world there. It's what childhood is supposed to be."

He didn't play basketball this year, choosing for the first time to play baseball. It's a 9- and 10-year-olds league where the idea is to have fun learning. Everybody bats, even if there are 15 players on a team. If you score four runs, the other team comes to bat. Outfielders chase butterflies as often as they chase fly balls. Only the grown-ups get gnarly about who's winning.

Romney Oaks had fun. In a dozen games, his mother said, "He got two hits. One was a triple." A pause..."The triple was due to so many errors. He hit the ball and just kept running."

Which is the happy way it goes in 10-and-under.

Which makes it so disheartening to learn what happened when Romney's team played for the league championship.

Last inning, two outs. His team a run behind. The tying run at third. His team's best hitter up, Romney on deck.

The other team's coach ordered the good hitter walked. They could pitch to Romney, who's a beginner, who hadn't hit the ball in this game, who's weak because there's just so much medicine can do. Later, the local paper, the *Davis County Clipper*, criticized the coach; *The Salt Lake City Tribune* joined in, followed by *Sports Illustrated* and MSNBC television, all ripping the coach for picking on the poor little kid who had cancer.

Romney Oaks did strike out and did it with tears in his eyes. "He told me, 'I felt the pressure,'" his father said.

OK, whatever rips came, the coach earned. It's a kids game, not the freakin' World Series.

But look.

Five years ago, Romney Oakes had a monster in his brain.

This summer, still fighting it, he played baseball.

A boy who might not have made it, made it.

"That night in bed," his mother said, "we talked about Kobe and Michael Jordan. I told him they had important games when they missed 3-point shots at the end and lost. I said he had two choices 'You can quit baseball. That's OK with us. Or you can work to improve your batting and try again next year.'"

The next morning, Romney came to the kitchen. Elaine Oaks, who once heard screaming in the night, now heard her son say, "Mom, I made my decision. Next year, I'm going to play basketball again – and baseball."

Romney Oaks, my hero.



Yep, Romney Oaks is a hero. Some people wanted to make a big deal out of the other team's manager picking on a sick kid. That is not the message. The message is courage on the part of a special young man. Where is Romney today? He is a student at Brigham Young University in Utah. You rock, Romney!

As you are inspired by Romney, have a blessed, joy filled and peaceful Christmas.

I'm praying for God's richest blessing for you.

Pastor Mike





## & Birthdays Anniversaries in December

### BIRTHDAYS

- 2 - Tyler Patterson
- 4 - Lila Epling
- 16 - Lorelie Armstrong
- 21 - Jan Petry
- 26 - Catherine Armstrong
- 31 - Sharon Coonrad
- 31 - Millie Mehman

### ANNIVERSARIES

- 4 - Ron & Dee Bowers
- 14 - William & Faye Munchoff



REMEMBER  
TO PRAY FOR...

**Becky Lundberg Nook** -  
treatment for health issues.  
**Sue Roberts**  
**Carol Ann Cowling**  
**Carolyn Mumm**  
**Mike Waters**  
**Diane Roberts**

Our shut-ins:

**Mel Bartels**  
**Margaret Mumm**  
**Barb Doughty**  
**Richard & Dee Vandenberg**  
**Lila Epling**

Don't forget to check out the Church  
Library



### MEDIA OPERATORS FOR DECEMBER



December 2 – Dave Tolander  
December 9 – Jean Clausen  
December 16 – Mavis Floss  
December 23 – Dave Tolander  
December 24 – Mavis Floss  
December 30 – Nancy Patterson



## Food Bank Sunday December 2, 2018

*"If you offer your food to the hungry and satisfy  
the needs of the afflicted, then your light shall  
rise in the darkness. -- Isaiah 58:10 (NRSV)*

We continue to request your support of the  
Northeast Iowa Food Bank by donating non-  
perishable food and non-food items and money  
through the church. The first Sunday of the  
month, December 2<sup>nd</sup>, will be designated "Food  
Bank Sunday".

Congratulations to:

- The board of the Northeast Iowa Food Bank for receiving the Gift of the Heart award in celebration of National Philanthropy Day.
- Waterloo Christian, Hudson, and Cedar Falls High Schools for winning their respective divisions of the Student Food Drive. A total of 66,172 meals were collected.
- Northeast Iowa Food Bank for ranking 19<sup>th</sup> best in the country.
- HUMC for donating 20 pounds of food and 15 pounds of personal care items.

There is a container in the entryway for your  
donations of food and non-food items. If you  
prefer to give a monetary donation, make your  
check payable to the church with a notation that  
it is for the Food Bank. Your donation will show  
on your statement of giving to the church.

For every \$10.00 the food bank receives, they  
can provide approximately 40 meals. Your  
donations do make a difference. Can you help  
this month?

*Focus on Christ  
this Season*





for **November 2018**

**Offering:**

<b>November</b>	4	1,535.51
	11	995.00
	18	1,213.00
	25	695.00
		\$ 4,438.51

**Also received:**

Apportionment:	\$	30.00
Lions' Club		25.00
Food Bank		25.00
Thanksgiving Baskets		166.00
Poinsettias		55.00
Rent		1,000.00
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$</b>	<b>1,301.00</b>



There is an order form on the back page if you would like to provide a poinsettia to help decorate the sanctuary. Please e-mail or call the office Monday, December 3<sup>rd</sup>, if you are putting a check in the mail.

**ANGEL TREE MISSION 2018**



This year we plan to personally greet ten of our Hudson neighbors. Holiday gifts and gift cards from Randall's and/or Hudson Utilities will be taken to those we've selected. Through Sunday, December 16<sup>th</sup>, special envelopes will be distributed during worship. Envelopes may be placed in the offering plate or put in a designated box in Fellowship Hall. Designated checks may also be mailed to the church.

Thanks for your consideration,  
Annette, Diane, and Jean



Approved 2018 budget:	\$84,947.00
Approved budget through November:	\$77,868.00
Apportionments due for 2018:	\$12,582.00
Apportionment payment per month:	\$ 1,048.50

	<u>Monthly</u>	<u>YTD</u>
Giving towards budget:	\$ 4,438.51	\$49,840.23
Budget Expenses:	\$ 4,595.00	\$61,263.00
Giving Apportionments:	\$ 30.00	\$ 2,500.00
Apportionment Payments:	\$ 0	\$ 4,405.00



Wednesday morning Bible study of the book of Mark continues each week at 10:00 a.m. in the Memorial Room at the church. It's never too late to get involved.

December 5<sup>th</sup> at 11:00 a.m. will be Greet, Eat, and Meet. Join in a rousing game of dominos or cards or bring a project to work on. We will have Chicken Casserole for lunch. We had 10 for lunch in November. There is always great conversation. Invite a friend. Hope to see you there!



Family Night Ministries, adult Bible study and children's activities, will be held December 5<sup>th</sup> and 12<sup>th</sup> at 6:15 p.m.

**December Preaching Schedule**

2	Mothers of God	Luke 1:27-29
9	Believing the Impossible	Matthew 1:20-21
16	Laboring in Vain	Isaiah 49:6
23	Nothing is Impossible with God	Luke 1:26-38
30	Divine Anger	Ephesians 4:25-5:2

The Red Hattitudes' Christmas Party will be Thursday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at 11:30 a.m. at Caraway Café in the Jorgensen Plaza, 5307 Caraway Lane, Cedar Falls. All UMC women are welcome! RSVP to Diane by Monday December 10<sup>th</sup>, at (319) 231-7790. Dessert and fellowship after lunch at Lila Epling's apartment.



Everyone is invited to an All-Church Christmas Party on Wednesday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, at 5:30 p.m. at the church. Appetizers and desserts will be provided. Watch the bulletin, media, and your e-mail for more details.



Our church's contribution for the annual Thanksgiving Ingathering, held November 3<sup>rd</sup>, in Cedar Falls totaled \$958. This consisted of \$264 given in kits and \$694 in cash. We want to say thank you to all who contributed by giving and helping put the kits together.

Jan Petry  
Mission Chair



Christmas Eve Service of carols and readings will be at 4:30 p.m. on Monday, December 24<sup>th</sup>.

The men will meet for breakfast on Saturday, December 29<sup>th</sup>, at 8:00 a.m.



Each year, the East Central Iowa Co-op furnishes turkeys to all the area churches in Hudson to distribute to local families at Thanksgiving. This

year, through the generous donations of those in our congregation, we put together food items, purchased at Randall's Stop N Shop, to provide a meal for four families in our community. A big thanks also to Randall's as they delivered all the food items to the church for us to assemble for the families. Two of the four families live in the Hudson School District and have children attending Hudson




School. Meals were also delivered to homes where senior citizens live. One of these seniors has no automobile so appreciates the food items and also



expressed thanks for dropping by and having conversation with her.

*"Giving is not just about making a donation, it's about making a difference."*  
– Kathy Calvin. Thanks for making a difference Hudson United Methodist.





### The Christmas Story

Each line below contains the letters to form a word that is part of the Christmas story. But each group of letters has 1 that is extra! Unscramble the words and write the extra letter on the lines at the bottom. What did we all receive at Christmas?

①	TGLBEHHEME	_____
②	NEAGLO	_____
③	NRMEDAG	_____
④	ODEKSNY	_____
⑤	AMGYR	_____
⑥	OHESJIP	_____
⑦	EFJSUS	_____
⑧	ITEENMSW	_____
⑨	SPHHSREEO	_____
⑩	EMCFAL	_____
⑪	TLSRA	_____
⑫	CSSNUEO	_____
⑬	HEVSPE	_____
⑭	ENIN	_____

" \_\_\_\_\_ , \_\_\_\_\_

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
" _____							
9	10	11	12	13	14		

God's gift of love

Bethlehem (G), Angel (O), Manger (D), Donkey (S), Mary (G), Joseph (I), Jesus (F), Wise men (T), Shepherds (O), Camel (F), Star (L), Census (O), Sheep (V), Inn (E)

