

Saints Alive!

Volume 18, Issue 2
February 2020
"Friends in Christ, Serving
Together with Love"



This is an Invitation to All Church Members and Visitors for the annual soup sale next Sunday, February 2. This is to raise money for youth missions. We encourage you to bring a crock pot of warm soup to donate to our youth mission and then purchase a \$5 container to fill with someone else's soup. It's that easy! Sign up in the church foyer today!

Spaghetti Dinner & Art Show

Fundraiser

Wednesday, February 5

5:00-7:00 PM

\$8 Adults

\$5 Children

Cornerstone Preschool

Advance/Reserve Tickets Sale

Contact Julie Erker at director@cornerstonepreschoolal.com, or 933-7646

To raise funds for the Teachers of Cornerstone to go to training for their Step Up to Quality state requirements

There will be a 50/50 Raffle at the dinner

The students of Cornerstone will display their artwork
Down the hallways and in the Christian Education foyer



Family Funday will be Sunday, February 9 after worship

[Read more on the Christian Ed page](#)

Book Bank Donations February 9—17

[Read more on the Mission page](#)

The Church office will be closed on Monday, February 17

Deacons' Sponsored Bowling, Saturday, February 29

[Read more on the Deacons' page](#)



FROM THE PASTOR/ Charlie Swartz

Dear Friends,

This is a good time for our church. Following the outcome of our renewal journey, we have joyfully set upon the new directions that the Lord has given us. Our community life feels energized by the creative power of worship, a worship that has been transformed through our adaption of a multi-sensory planning resource (WDS). Following our successful "Living the Vision" event in October, an evening that signaled the end of our renewal process and the beginning of simply living it, we all have had clarity about our purpose.

God's Spirit hovered over me during sabbatical. Jesus drew my attention to the challenge and gift of death in those three months. A vision of a book written to help the reader to experience God's grace in the midst of sorrow came to me. I researched the subject by poring over the Bible and re-examining my life experiences with death and grief. The certainty of heaven was made clear to me by the Holy Spirit, as well as the need to find ways to educate people on this hope. My brother-in-law's death in the middle of the summer brought all these matters very close. I was aware of all these things as I did his funeral a few miles from our cabin. I returned with new skills to serve our members when they are challenged by the intrusion of death.

The unique and rare gift of church life is what we all share. Apart from our congregation for three months, it became obvious to me that I was apart also from life-giving conversations that only occur when we are participating in a church. What are those conversations? They are the talks we have about how we actually live the stuff Jesus teaches. People do not have these discussions outside of church. Jesus says, "Teach my words!" and in Christian Education meetings we talk about how we do that with our children, our teens, our adults. Jesus says, "Welcome the stranger, make disciples!" and in the Evangelism committee we strategize how to invite people into our church and love them when they come. The psalmist says, "Make a joyful noise unto the Lord, worship Him with gladness!" and the eight members gathered around a table at the worship committee meetings make plans to do just exactly that. Paul the apostle says, "Care for one another," and our Deacons engage their minds in making a structure that helps us do exactly that. Participating in our church enriches our lives and embeds the mind of Christ actively in our own minds.

One of the purposes of a sabbatical is so that a pastor returns with a deepened well of creative and spiritual capacity. I have been drawing enthusiastically upon those waters as I have been working with our fantastic worship committee and musicians to make our first three worship series come alive. "It's a Wonder-Full Life," "Heaven and Nature Sing: Joy to the World," and now "Who Are You?" have required me to develop a new set of writing skills along with more dramatic arts for the successful production of these services. It has been a wonderful team effort like we have not seen before. I am so glad we are doing this and I am so thankful we have the talent in our church to create these beautiful, innovative worship services. It is gratifying to work so hard on something that brings so much God to people.

Anna Allen Ruoff had a vision to continue her support for this church after her death. Over the years, she set aside money for the church in an IRA. In her will, she gave those invested monies to the church. We received the funds at the end of December. Anna put no stipulations on the funds, leaving it to the Session to use the money as best serves our vision. At the same time, her children communicated that if a portion can be used to assist youth to travel on mission trips it would fit her passion for youth. Thank you, Anna, your love lives on.

We are living our vision, and it is great! The key ministry areas are ever before us, as we live in a way to enlarge them. Forget them? They are: Faithful, Obedient, Forgiving, Compassionate, Serving, Welcoming, Inclusive, Learning. Please join me in a personal prayer that incorporates this vision into your and my life.

Dear Jesus,

In all things we **trust** you and follow you. **Forgive** us as we forgive others. In **compassion**, open our hearts to other's pain that we might **serve** as your hands and heart. Give us courage to **invite** strangers to your house, and love to **welcome** them as friends. Open our eyes to the forgotten and those unlike us that we might **include** them. By the power of the Holy Spirit, **teach** us to live as your loving church. Amen.

Your pastor, The Rev. Charlie Swartz



Christian Education

Greetings ALPC Families! Every time I begin to write a *Saints Alive!* update, I always take a moment to consider what a blessing it is to be working with your children. I reflect on our moments in Sunday School over the past month, the great questions the kids ask, the way they make me and the other children laugh, and how sincerely I hope that they enjoy coming to class as much I love having them there. It is my greatest desire that every child visiting ALPC feels loved and treasured during the time they are here. I pray that as they grow up, their positive church experience points them to a God who loves and cares for them deeply and always. I am always looking for ways to make Sunday School meaningful, personal, and engaging. If you have suggestions on what works best for your child, I am all ears.

We are having so much fun with Family Funday. I hope you will keep blessing us with your presence each month, the more families- the more fun! Our theme in January was Uniquely You! We read Max Lucado's wonderful book You are Special. Children rotated through stations of fun science experiments and crafts to reflect on God's amazing wonders. I am so thankful for the help of teachers Sybil Wendling and Susan Reighard; Family Funday would not run as smoothly without them! Please mark your calendars for our next Family Funday February 9th, our theme that week will be "Love."



In the spirit of love and loving your neighbor, we are partnering with the Mission Committee to host a book drive. Sunday February 9th through Sunday February 16th we are collecting books for the Cleveland Kid's Book Bank. Please bring new or gently used children's books to the collection bins located in the church entry way or children's foyer. This service opportunity is a great way to talk to your kids about sharing with others. The books they share will get to the hands of kids who need them. If you are not familiar with the Kid's Book Bank, you can learn more about this wonderful organization at Kidsbookbank.org.

Finally, I want to thank Beth Janis for her amazing work repainting the puppet theater and sewing a new curtain for it as well. Our puppet theater looks wonderful and will be enjoyed by the Cornerstone preschoolers each month during chapel. Thank you Beth!

Thank you for sharing your family with our church, your presence brings so much joy.
Tarra Oppewall

Coffee House Worship



Coffee House Worship
Takes place in the Christian Education Foyer
Every Sunday at 10:00 am
(the same time worship is going on
in the Sanctuary)
Tell your friends that
this is a great way to experience
a new way of worshipping at our church!

Saints Alive Articles due to Cindi
at alpresby@avonlakepc.org:
March issue due on Saturday, February 15



Deacons' News

Hello ALPC,

I hope everyone had a nice holiday with family and friends. January brings a new year and new exciting activities. We will kick off the New Year with the annual Chili and Soup Cook-off following the Congregational Meeting on January 26. There is a signup sheet in the foyer.

Deacons are working on restructuring the Congregational Care Ministry to better fit the needs of ALPC. Some items have been implemented, but it is a work in progress. We are working with the individuals involved to get feedback. More to come next month!

Deacons have several functions planned this winter to chase the cabin fever way. On Saturday, February 29, we will leap into a bowling event in the afternoon. There will be a sign-up sheet with more details in early February. A new event will be a Family Feud night at the church. We are working out the details but we will ask the congregation for input to some fun questions. Like the game, we will have teams competing by providing responses to surveys from church and game questions. The teams can be families or groups (circle, youth, choir, etc.). We are working with the youth group to organize a dinner as a fundraiser for their mission trip. The event will be Saturday evening, April 4. More details to follow.



Sincerely, Mike Reighard, Deacon Moderator

Finance

As we begin the year, I would like to give a final report on last year and look ahead to the coming year. We ended 2019 with a deficit of \$8,255 that was covered by unencumbered savings. The Session has approved a 2020 budget projecting a deficit of \$9,825. If we all keep our pledges current for the year, we can avoid dipping into our savings for any more than this amount.

A way to help reduce the deficit projected for 2020 is to pay your "per capita". This amount is \$32.41 for every confirmed member of your family that is on our membership roll. Generally, we receive less than half of what we are obligated to pay out. If every confirmed member paid their per capita we would reduce the deficit in our budget by about \$6,000! We know there are some members that are financially unable to pay this amount and we welcome additional per capita payments from others who might help defray this expense.

	Dec YTD Actual	2019 Budget	2020 Budget
Income:			
Congregational Giving	\$304,397	\$327,481	\$303,012
Other Income	<u>13,092</u>	<u>12,500</u>	<u>22,700</u>
Total Income	\$317,489	\$339,981	\$325,712
Expense:			
Worship & Spiritual Life	\$131,631	\$129,741	\$126,391
Christian Education	1,853	8,625	8,125
Stewardship & Mission	5,645	5,800	5,100
Property	48,079	42,649	46,355
Support Staff & General Expenses	121,000	137,828	129,110
Youth Mission Trip	5,285	4,000	8,000
Other Expenses	<u>12,251</u>	<u>13,006</u>	<u>12,456</u>
Total Expense	\$325,744	\$341,649	\$335,537
2019 Excess Expenditures	(\$8,255)	(\$1,668)	(\$9,825)

If anyone has any additional questions about our finances you are welcome to ask Marcy Uhl, Treasurer or myself at any time.

Cheryl Dean, Finance Committee Chair

Worship & Spiritual Life

Happy New Year! After a very meaningful Advent and Christmas season, we have kicked off a wonderful year of worship in 2020!

As you know, we have subscribed to a worship resource called “Worship Design Studio” (WDS). This tool provides an overall worship methodology, as well as a host of resources for worship, such as ideas for sermon topics, decorations, dramatic arts, poetry, hands-on activities, children’s sermons, bible studies and music that revolve around a central theme. The methodology marries a basically traditional worship experience with modern technology to provide a more sensory-enriched, multi-layered, visual worship experience. Each element in the service should flow from one to another with music or words or art, allowing each worshiper to more deeply engage with the Holy Spirit. We began to use the tool when we celebrated All Saints Day, and used the idea of butterflies, both in the Charlie’s sermon and in our sanctuary decorations. We used two “fully scripted” series in November (It’s a Wonder Full Life”) and December (“Joy to the World, Let Heaven and Nature Sing”). A fully scripted series is one that provides prayers, responsive readings, scripture introductions, dramas, original music, decoration ideas and more. We used some of these as provided, adapted others to fit our congregation, and dropped others that didn’t fit either us or our time frame. There is also a Facebook page for WDS, and even sub-group pages for specific worship series that offer ideas and encouragement, and even a place for pastors to pose questions or post ideas for sermons. While “sermon fodder” is provided, including books and other resources, all the sermons are fully and creatively developed by Charlie.



Who Are You? Sunday 10 am

We are now midway into our first “non-scripted” series (“Who Are You”), which emphasizes the connection between who we are and whose we are, and strives to help us discover what amazing things could happen if we lived into our best, most passionate, loving self. A non-scripted series is one that provides guidance and general ideas, but all scripts, music, readings, art, decorations, and of course the sermon, are developed “in-house.” This has required us to adapt our planning routines with a lot of discussion and thinking about the entire 8 week series very early on. We are still learning and adjusting and encountering a few bumps along the way,

but we hope that you feel a new energy on Sunday mornings, are filled with the Holy Spirit, and that you are better able to engage in true worship with our church family.

Our Lenten Series will be another fully-scripted series, “Entering the Passion of Jesus” running from Ash Wednesday (February 26) through Good Friday (April 10). In this series, we will focus on the events of Christ’s Passion, which take place during the last week of Jesus’ life. Throughout the six weeks of Lent, we will “freeze-frame” moments in Holy Week so we might put ourselves in the picture, thereby opening ourselves to deeper conviction for our role in its ongoing message. Be on the lookout for more information!

Thank you to all who continue to dedicate their time and talents to make our worship run smoothly. You have probably noticed that by using WDS ideas, we have a lot more opportunities for everyone to participate. We welcome all to participate in any way that they are comfortable, or even if you would like to try something outside your comfort zone! As always, we welcome your suggestions and feedback to make the worship experience the best it can be. Please contact any member of the Worship & Spiritual Life Committee.

Written by Margre Lind Mills, on behalf of the committee: Donna Bradley, Dave Brunner, Muriel Homer, Margre Lind Mills, Beth Shoemaker, Jeff Spenser, Pastor Charlie, Cris Till, Marcy Uhl, Sarah Waggoner and JoAnn Wainscott.

Our Church Mission Statement

Avon Lake Presbyterian Church Mission Statement

In awe, we Receive God’s Grace and Gospel.
In gratitude, we Respond with Worship and Servanthood.
In love, we Represent Jesus Christ
as we minister to transform lives
in family, community, and the world.

Property Committee

Since I'm not a writer I would like to start with a random thought. I'm sitting at home thinking the Buckeyes should be playing for the national championship tonight. I will stop now or this would turn into a book.



Starting off with the good news. Thanks to Russ and Joan Beck, we now have our own riding mower. The mower is in the shed ready to go. We would like to have volunteers help with the mowing maybe once per month if we get enough volunteers. Please think about it and let me know.

Thanks to John Weeden, we got rid of the river rock that had been piled up in the northwest corner of our parking lot. This was pretty much an eye sore or a sore eye if you prefer.

We have received quotes for painting the interior of our church, for flooring in the library, and for heating and cooling services. We now have to go through the quotes and try and decide what fits our church best. We also spoke with one remodeler in regard to the oldest bathrooms. That's going to be the tough one. Any thoughts or ideas please contact someone on the Property Committee.

Please remember the work request sheets can be filled out by anyone when they feel something is in need of repair or replacement. Please don't presume the committee "already knows about it."

Finally, we met a father and son team recently that were looking for work doing asphalt repair in the parking lot. They fixed all the pot holes as well as cleaning up the area by the dumpsters. This included getting rid of the loose asphalt by the dumpsters.

Peace be with you,
Chairperson: Jim Janis 440-522-177

Recycle at Church

Everyday each of us throws away over one pound of recyclable office waste. This paper ends up in a landfill and is not environmentally friendly. We need your help to protect our environment and natural resources.

We have a paper recycling bin outside next to our dumpster. We need not only items from our church, but from your homes. Bring any of the following to church on Sundays and throw it in our green recycle bin. If you need help getting your recycling products out of your car, we will have a member on hand to do that for you.

Items **accepted** in our new recycling containers are:

|Newspapers | Mail |Phonebooks |Office and School Paper | Magazines
| Catalogs | Brown Paper Bags | Hard & Soft Bound Books | Cardboard

Items **not accepted** in our new recycling containers:

Any type of Plastic (bottles or bags) Styrofoam
Glass Metal Trash Aluminum



Avon Lake Presbyterian Church

32340 Electric Boulevard
Avon Lake, OH 44012

**Sunday Worship in the Sanctuary
and Coffee House Worship in the Christian Education Foyer
10:00 am
(440) 933-6240
www.avonlakechurch.com
www.facebook.com/avonlakepc
alpresby@avonlakepc.org**

**Pastor
Custodian
Director of Children's Ministries
Director of Music
Director of Preschool
Financial Secretary
Lock-up Custodian
Maintenance
Office Administrator
Treasurer**

**Rev. Charles E. Swartz
Carl Douglas
Tarra Oppewall
Muriel Homer
Julie Erker
Lynn Morway
Ed Homer
Phil Stryczny
Cindi Dansizen
Marcy Uhl**