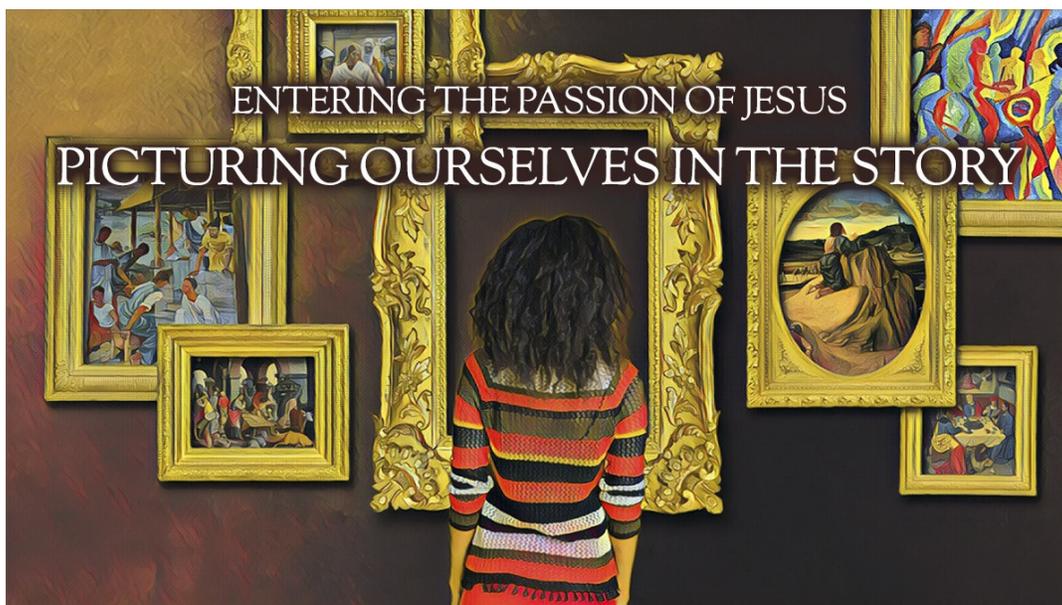


Saints Alive!

Volume 18, Issue 3
March 2020
"Friends in Christ, Serving
Together with Love"



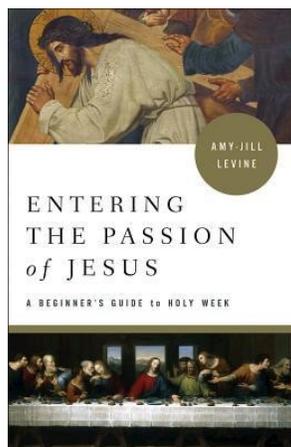
LENTEN BIBLE STUDY



**Beginning Tuesday, March 3rd
at 7:00 pm**

**Desserts hosted by the CE Committee
at 6:30 pm**

Sign up for this 6 week Lenten Bible Study





FROM THE PASTOR/ Charlie Swartz

Dear Friends,

One of the key ministry areas in our Renewal is “forgiveness.” In light of that, I have been thinking about the things that break up relationships between friends in or out of the church. More often than not, our connections are most commonly strained by the stress of a disagreement.

Most of us are uncomfortable when we do not agree with someone. It is very easy for us to judge someone as “wrong” or “sinful” if they have an opposite thought on how to approach a problem. We distance ourselves with the ultimate transgression of converting a friend to an enemy or stranger.

This seems to happen naturally within the minds of good Christians and is seen in the church at Corinth. Paul says in the beginning of the letter (I Corinthians 1:10-13), “I hear you are divided by factions. Some say, “I like Paul,” others, “I like Peter,” or, “I like Apollos,” or “I like Jesus!” Be united.” He saw how his people judged those with different ideas as wrong and sinful and stopped loving each other. He points out that their preference for different leaders is not sinful, but their judging their brother and sister was a destructive sin. Jesus is talking exactly about this sin of calling the thoughts of those we disagree with as evil when he taught, “Do not judge your neighbor or you will be judged,” Matthew 7:1.

Just as in Paul’s church, when we dislike our friend’s political or religious thoughts, we are tempted to judge them as sinful and then take the easy step to condemn our friend as wrong. The fact is that it is uncomfortable to disagree. It was in Paul’s day and it is in ours. We tend to think that there is a right or wrong to every decision. In that mode, to disagree is to state the other is wrong, or to assume that the other is saying I am wrong. To reconcile, we need to believe in the value in different approaches to solving problems. When I can accept that there is inherent value in different responses to the same challenge, then I can be comfortable in disagreement. And if I can be comfortable in disagreement, then I no longer feel the need to separate from those who differ from me.

Our Presbyterian polity is a model to help us find peace while disagreeing. The basis of our decision making is the wisdom that God’s will is found through open discourse, through the belief that the wisdom in a group is greater than the wisdom of one. When a challenge is presented, we seek open disagreement and seek understanding through curious questions so we can truly discover the perspective of one whose view is at odds with mine. At the end, it is crucial to accept that we will disagree and yet support the decision made by the group.

In our families, we have to avoid condemning when we just do not agree. We need to realize that we do not have to be right, we do not have to be listened to, we do not have to see life the same way for us to gather in love. As peacemakers we can be the ones to focus on the dignity and goodness of each other instead of our divergent opinions. And then love flourishes!

I hope this helps.

In peace, Pastor Charlie



Presbyterian Women

calligraphy
AND
handlettering
FOR BEGINNERS

The Coordinating Team of Presbyterian Women (PW) is planning several upcoming events and all women of the church are invited. On Thursday, March 12 we are hosting a free “Introduction to Calligraphy” class from 7 – 8:30 pm in Hart Hall. Deb Gantz will teach the basics and you will be able to take home your project, so bring your favorite Bible verse, saying or short poem. Sign up in the foyer by March 8th.

On May 2 we will be having a Spring Luncheon, with salad and/or dessert potluck. More details will be announced soon. If you have any questions, please contact Kathy Navarro, kn Navarro5@hotmail.com.

Christian Education

Greetings ALPC Families and Friends! I hope this update from Children's Ministry finds you enjoying the final weeks of winter with the hope of spring on the horizon. Whether it is hot or cold outside, we are always having a great time in Sunday School, enjoying the warmth of growing friendships and deepening awareness of God's love for us.

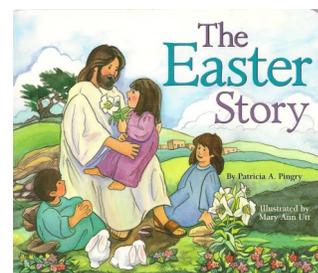
In February we enjoyed a wonderful Family Funday centered on the theme Love. The highlight of this event for me was working with the kids to create cards to mail to 20 of the members of our church, many of whom have not been able to be physically present for some time. It was great to talk to the children about loving God, self, and others- and then put that lesson into action.

If you are not familiar with Family Funday, please stop by Hart Hall after worship on the Second Sunday of the month. Enjoy a delicious treat and the good company of our young children, their families and friends. All are welcome!

February 29th Moms of Children's and Youth Ministries will meet at 9:00am at Café Melissa in Avon Lake. Please let me know if you can make it so we can save you a seat for breakfast!

Our next Family Funday will be March 8th, where we will use our activity centers to teach the children about the important days of Holy Week. Learning about Holy Week through discussion, crafts, and activities will give the children a surface awareness of the Easter Story that you can build on at home as well.

As we approach Lent and Easter some children may have questions about Easter. There are great resources online to guide age appropriate discussion For 3-6 year old children I highly recommend the book The Story of Easter by Patricia A Pingry. I am very excited about the sermon series we are doing for Lent. Each Sunday, as the adults in worship rediscover the important events of Holy Week, we will do the same in Sunday School. It will be an education and meaningful season for all of us!



Thank you so much for sharing your children, grandchildren, and friends with us each week. It is an honor to partner with you to teach the youngest members of ALPC about the unconditional love of Jesus.

Tarra Oppewall

Worship Committee

It is the wonderful month of March and although we never can know what the weather will bring (Snow? Sunshine? Rain? 20° or 50°?) We know what God brings to us. This Lenten season "Entering the Passion of Jesus" continues with a somber, but beautiful perspective on the steps Jesus took leading up to Holy Week.

- Week 1 **The Parade: Risking Reputation** will show us the implications and consequences of Jesus' ride into Jerusalem. We will take stock of all the players, including the role the city itself played.
- Week 2 **The Temple: Risking Righteous Anger** will teach us what we may be able to do to reassess our own actions when frustrated and angered in our own corner of the world (our Temple). How can we make our lives a more welcoming place for all people?
- Week 3 **The Teaching: Risking Anger** places us in the crowd this week as we are moved and motivated by Jesus as he confronts the authorities. What would we have seen, heard and felt?
- Week 4 **The First Dinner: Risking Rejection** shows us what true devotion can be. Are we moved by simple moments of generosity, or do we feel uncomfortable with it in the face of Jesus' death? It all begins with a little alabaster jar.....

The Anthems for each service will carry the theme of each message. We look forward to each service providing a meaningful experience that we can use in our everyday walk with Christ. Thank you to all who have participated in making this an expressive Lenten Season, Worship and Spiritual Life could not do it without you. As always, we welcome your suggestions and feedback.

Written by Dave Brunner, 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.

Deacons' News

Hello ALPC,

Sometimes we can look at something a hundred or more times and never really notice it or think about it. I was on the Worship Committee from 1995-2000 and one of our tasks was developing the stained glass window in our sanctuary at the apex of the cross. Did you ever wonder how that was created? We commissioned Kevin McKelvey (spelling may not be right), a member of our church, to create the glass because he made stained glass windows as a hobby. If you look at it, each quadrant has three rings representing the trinity. Before this project, I never knew the colors in Christianity, but the colors were chosen for symbolic reasons. Red represents the blood of Christ. Green is for everlasting life. Purple is the color of royalty and Jesus as king. Blue is also a color of royalty but represents the baptismal waters in this creation. I know this has little to do with Deacons but thought I'd share it anyway. The next time you are at a party, feel free to use this bit of trivia!

The Deacons are working on an improved way to help us care for each other that will replace our former Congregational Care ministry. This new program builds on the successes and lessons learned in that program. While we understand that many members do these things, our new caring ministry will provide appropriate training to help us all serve to our best abilities.

The new Congregational Caring Ministry creates two teams to focus on different kinds of needs in our congregation.

Long Term Needs Team

- Care for those dealing with isolation due to chronic illness, injury, or mobility issues
- ALPC currently has about 20 members who need the church to come to them in the form of a caring individual.
- We envision a ministry in which those with long term needs are connected with a caring member of our congregation who will get to know them as valuable individuals and share Christ's love through regular visits.

Acute or Emergency Needs Team

- Care for those dealing with a short duration or acute situation that is traumatic or celebratory (a birth, a graduation, a new job, an accident, a diagnosis, a death, etc.)
- We envision a team of people who might visit at the hospital, make a phone call, send a card at the right time, do a Facebook check-in or a visit in the home. We expect these interactions to be short term, but relationship building.

Thank you to all who are or were involved in our Congregational Care ministry. As we begin the transition, we would love to have you serve in whatever capacity brings you joy. Look for more details this spring!

Deacons have several functions planned this winter to chase the cabin fever way:

ALPC Bowling Party!

All are invited to come together for Fellowship, Food & Bowling on Saturday, February 29th from 3-5PM at Spevock's Nautical Lanes in Avon Lake. Cost: \$15.99 per bowler. Cost includes: 2 hours of unlimited bowling, rental shoes, pizza and soft drinks. Not a bowler? No problem! \$4.50 per non-bowler entitles you to food and beverages. Sign up in the Foyer. Money will be collected at the door at Spevock's on the day of the event. Last day to sign up is Sunday, February 23rd. Come One, Come All...Let's Have a Ball!

Family Feud Night

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



Session Minutes

The Session met on Feb. 24. Highlights of their meeting were:

- * Learned about forgiveness from Pastor Charlie, how it is usually a disagreement that breaks up friendships, rather than sin, and how that affects relationships in church. Discussed the value of disagreeing and the challenge to remain calm and comfortable.
- * Half the Deacons are involved in fellowship, and half in outreach. They will soon announce how they will structure the Congregational Care Ministry.
- * The Stated meetings of the Presbytery now issue a summary afterward which is useful for reporting back to church Sessions.
- * The budget is currently balanced due to early pledge giving from some required minimum distributions from IRAs.
- * A “Living the Vision” gathering will be scheduled for all congregation groups to share their updates on their Renewal goals on Monday, April 27, from 6:30—8:30.
- * Pastor Charlie will work on his book from home during his upcoming Study Leave, April 13-19.
- * Pastor Charlie’s compensation was shown to be consistent within our Presbytery for our church size, with the per member cost being far below average.
- * Plans are developing for Muriel Homer’s retirement party and how to fill her position.
- * The Worship & Spiritual Life Committee appreciates patience while new video volunteers are trained to record the services.
- * Color samples for painting the church interior were presented. Painting plans are in progress.
- * An architect will be brought in to create plans for the old restrooms.
- * Our cable contract was upgraded to quintuple our bandwidth speed for only \$4/month more.
- * The contract with Path to Faith has been renewed for another year. They will hold services at ALPC four times and provide tickets for church members.
- * ALPC members are welcome to participate in the Rise Against Hunger event at John Knox Presbyterian Church at 5:30pm on March 4.
- * Plans from the Safety Committee were discussed.

Elizabeth Shoemaker, Clerk of Session

Library Update



You may not realize our church has a working library! It’s down near the main kitchen, on the way to Hart Hall.

It was recently refurbished, thanks mainly to Jay Knox, with built-in shelving, window seat storage, and newer furniture. While there are still some finishing touches yet to be made, it’s comfortable and functions as a library. Did you know, the library renovation began as a learning opportunity for the youth planning their mission trip, to prepare them for all the drywall installations they had to do? Now that it is nearly complete, it has turned into quite a lovely space.

We use an old-fashioned system for checking out the books: writing your name on the card in the pocket in the back of the book! This time-honored system works pretty well. If you check out a book, please place the card with your name on it in the box in the library, or on the shelves in the foyer. Many of the cards in the books are recycled and hand-written. Please use them as you normally would. Someday I will refresh them with newly printed cards.

Though the shelves in the foyer remained unchanged during the time of the library renovation, the books on display there **now** are being rotated out on a fairly regular basis again. We have quite a variety of books, from relationship topics to personal devotions to Bible references to church history to healing ministry to biographies and fiction! I try to put a good sampling out on the foyer shelves to attract your interest. Please do browse these books and see them as an invitation to visit the full library sometime!

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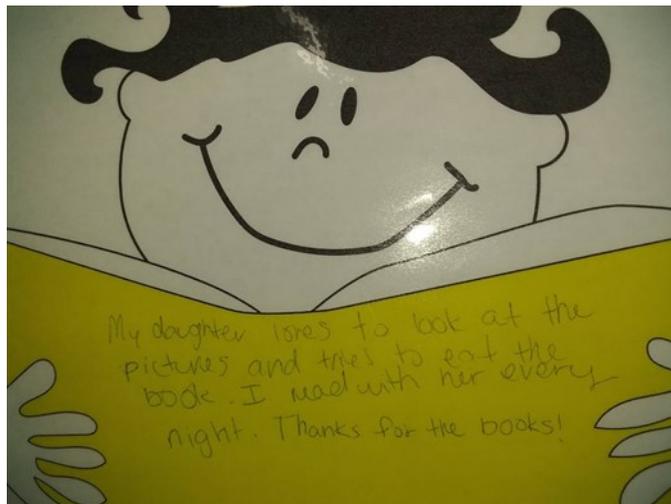
Mission Matters

"Books are a uniquely portable magic." Stephen King

Yay! We were able to provide so many great books for the Cleveland Kids Book Bank. If you ever have a few books you would like to share, there are Little Libraries' cupboards in Bay Village at Westerly Elementary, 30301 Wolf Rd. and Fairview Park, at Gilles-Sweet Elementary, 4320 W 220th St. near the front entrances. There are similar book sharing cupboards on the Kopf path near Bell Road and at Redwood Elementary School in Avon Lake. Also, there are volunteer opportunities available along with more information at this link. <https://www.kidsbookbank.org/>.

One Great Hour of Sharing special offering is April 5th, Palm Sunday. This offering is a way to join with others to "Share God's love with our neighbors in need around the world. How?

1. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance: Often the first to arrive and the last to leave, PDA works in communities hit by natural or human caused disasters.
2. Presbyterian Hunger Programs.
3. Self-Development of people. "Invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, poverty and injustice and educate Presbyterians about the impact of these societal ills."



I saw this Thank you on the wall at the Kids Book Bank. We were able to add approximately 400 books to the bank. Volunteers are welcome!

The Easter offering on April 12 will be donated to The Haven Center Homeless Shelter. This shelter serves as the only 24 hour, 365 day emergency shelter for men, women and children in Lorain. They offer a full service, 68 bed facility that provides meals, toiletries, laundry and clothing, as well as connections necessary to transition into independent housing. Neighborhood Alliance has been a part of Lorain since the 1920's! To learn more go to <https://myneighborhoodalliance.org/index.php/shelter/>

***The mission committee has decided to try meeting during the day.
We will be meeting the first Wednesday of the month at 1:30 at ALPC.
Everyone is welcome to attend.***

Are you caring for someone with mental illness? There is information on the foyer table about an organization called Courage to Caregivers. www.CourageToCaregivers.org is their email but you can also find them on Facebook and Instagram or call 216-536-7699.

Don't forget: Lunch Bunch lunch is March 19th at 11:30-1:00. Join the fun and help out on Wednesday, March 18th at 1:30 or beginning at 9:00am on the 19th. Everyone is welcome to dine with our guests. P.S. Thank you to the families that donate dessert every month.

Tips to Share: You can take your clean empty yogurt containers marked 5 to Whole Foods on Detroit in Rocky River. No purchase needed or expected. The bin is just inside the area with tables and chairs in the front of the store. You can also [mail your #5 plastics to Preserve](#). [PRESERVE-GIMME5-BIN 2012-225X300 0.JPG](#).

Questions or comments are welcome. Mission committee members: Marian Conn, Kathy Leopold, Carol Madson, Sue Mabe, Beth Janis or Jenni Stryczny are glad to help.

Meet Joy Harris



Nelda, AKA Joy, was born in Macfarlan, West Virginia in a 27 room boarding house on July 14, 1938. When she was born, they didn't think she would live to be a one-year-old because of her drop foot and nerve damage. She has had problems with her foot all her life. When she was 6 years old, she was playing hide and seek in a barn loft and fell (there wasn't hay in the barn like there usually was to soften the blow) and broke both of her arms. It was 27 miles to the doctor. She thought she would get out of a test at school because she had her arms in casts, but the teacher made her stand next to her and answer orally! Joy said that church and youth group was always a safe place for her. It is on Joy's Bucket List to go back to West Virginia someday.

Joy moved to Cleveland when she was 23 years old and lived with her sister, Trella for 7 years. During that time, she worked for a while at the Cleveland Indians Stadium in concessions, worked at Mills Cafeteria, and then worked at Industrial Wire in the factory. When she was 29 years old, a friend said they knew a "hillbilly man" that worked at Union Carbide and Joy said, "Well, bring him around or shut up!" When "Bud" Harris met Joy, he said "You're it." Bud and Joy were married on June 30, 1968 at Bethany Presbyterian Church. They lived in Sheffield Lake and had a son, Raymond on July 11, 1969. Bud died on July 27, 1977 from complications from COPD. Bud was baptized in his hospital bed with Betty Lou Wallace present. The last 5 years Joy was his nurse. Bud didn't say much, but he did say his best years were when he was married to Joy. After that, Joy became a state certified nurse's aide and worked in that field for 10 years.

Joy got breast cancer in 2013, had an operation and chemo therapy. She finished her cancer meds in the summer of 2019...she is now cancer free for 6 years! It's a mission of Joy's to help anyone who is going through cancer treatments any way she can.

Joy lived in Sheffield Lake until 2015 when she moved to Beach Park Towers, or as Joy calls it, "Peyton Place." She became a Deacon of our church in 2018, attends Pastor Charlie's Bible study, is a member of Hope Circle, is a Congregational Care friend, is the ambassador to Path to Faith, is a faithful Lunch Bunch greeter and attends all functions of the church. On December 20, 2020, Joy will be a member of Avon Lake Presbyterian Church for 50 years and wants to buy a cake to celebrate with everyone at ALPC!

OSL

You are invited to an annual conference of
Christian Healing.

*Connecting with the
Healing Love of Jesus*

March 20-21 at Avon Lake Presbyterian Church



Back by request, our speaker Saran Warne will both teach and provide practice on how to connect with the healing love of Jesus. Hands-on practice with prayer tools will include visualization, meditation,

speaking with scriptural authority, and claiming God's promises for our lives. Listening skills, intentional blessing, and prayers of protection will also be taught and practiced.

The West Shore Healing Community of OSL meets at our church twice monthly and supports ALPC's healing prayer ministry. Look for registration brochures in the foyer, or contact Beth Shoemaker (327-5523) or Cris Till for more information.

Presented by the local healing community of the Order of St. Luke.

Library Update continued

We are regularly graced by donations of books to the library, coming from the homes of members who are moving or otherwise clearing their collection. I keep what I think the library can use and donate the rest to the church rummage sale. I also periodically cull our collection if it is becoming too large with too many old and dated volumes sitting around gathering dust. I try to keep the collection fairly fresh.

While we have a modest library budget, we welcome monetary donations. Last year, we were given a gift card to Barnes and Noble, and I used it to select three wonderful looking books for the library: *Boundaries* by Drs Henry Cloud and John Townsend; *The Rock, the Road, and the Rabbi* by Kathie Lee Gifford; and *Miracles from Heaven* by Christy Wilson Beam. A hearty "thank you" to the anonymous donor!

I regularly read book reviews in Christian publications and add titles to the Amazon.com wish list I maintain for the library. It is called "ALPC Church Library" and is a public list. You are welcome to search it out and look at the titles in there. I also welcome suggestions from you!

..Beth Shoemaker, church librarian

**Saints Alive Articles due to Cindi
at alpresby@avonlakepc.org:
April issue due on Sunday, April 15**

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.

**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**