

AVON LAKE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

CELEBRATING *Muriel*



50

YEARS

**of dedicated service
to the church and community
as ALPC's Music Director**

 **Saints
Alive!**

SUMMER 2020

Volume 18, Issue 6



FRIENDS IN CHRIST, SERVING TOGETHER WITH LOVE



FROM THE PASTOR | *Charlie Swartz*

Dear Friends,

Change is the only constant in this COVID time. Last Monday evening, we had a fantastic Session meeting, on Zoom, of course. The presence of Christ was in our midst, even as we were gathering through those little squares on the computer screen - like a tile of four face cards on your phone, or like the opening credits of the "Brady Bunch" if you are on a tablet or computer. Jesus was in our midst, and I have to give credit to the Holy Spirit for making it happen. The Holy Spirit takes the technology we have, and uses it to connect us in love and faith. Even though this is a unique time with special challenges, tremendous hardships, and unparalleled suffering, the joy and community of the Lord lifted us up and gave us laughs again and again.

I am very proud of the way we in this church are responding to the difficulties and disruptions with faith, with hope, and with love. One of the questions put to us when we are ordained as deacons, elders and pastors is, "Will you pray for and seek to serve the people with energy, intelligence, imagination, and love?" Our whole leadership - officers and staff - have been exhibiting those qualities so well that we have figured out how to be the church in this new time. And not just the leadership, but each and every one of us has been doing just an exquisite job of caring for one another, of listening to Jesus, of finding the right ways to serve in this odd time. By the way, our elected deacons have been trained, will be examined by the Session, and will be ordained and installed in the June 14th service. We will do the questions and answers on Zoom, record it, and then play it back in the service.

Our presbytery leadership has drawn up a set of recommendations to guide congregations like us, as we think about returning to being physically present with each other. The session reviewed them, and will be guided by them. In general, we will continue to have all meetings (worship, committees, groups) done electronically, and will until the session decides otherwise. If you are in the church building, you need to have a mask on and practice social distancing. If you forget your mask, we have them on hand for you to take and wear.

One of the new realities is the understanding that singing is by its very nature, unfortunately, one of the best ways to spread the coronavirus. We probably will not return to worship in the sanctuary before the fall, and when we do, probably there will not be congregational or choir singing for quite a while, some think not until a vaccine is distributed.

While you have been away from the building, the narthex has been painted. It is beautiful! Phil Stryczny, our maintenance man, is now painting the hallways. Jay Knox has finished removing the library carpet and installing a wood-like vinyl planking. Building and Grounds has hired an asphalt firm to repair, resurface, and re-stripe the parking lot. And if all that improvement does not make your head spin, we hired an architect to draw plans for how we can expand and modernize the dingy west bathrooms. Currently, contractors are studying the plans to give us quotes on how they might do the project. If we proceed with that job, the session will be soliciting funds for it.

In these last three months, we have learned how to change from a wonderful "in person" worship, to an excellent online service. We have tried many different things, and have settled in on a format that works for us. Thank you for your patience as we continue to learn. The results of the survey show that we members are worshipping regularly online, and are pleased with the streaming service. We are now looking to the future, when we will both be in the sanctuary and at home, and asking appropriate questions on how we can do both at the same time. We are researching to see if we will need additional infrastructure to succeed. We all owe a debt of gratitude to Jay and Carter Knox to their creativity, "know how," and dedicated hours of service to see that our streaming worship is authentic, and we also are indebted to the many wonderful servants on the worship committee that have been engaged week in and week out working passionately to see that our worship meets our spiritual needs.

Our dear and talented music director, Muriel Homer, retires May 31. Please see the article I wrote about her unique ministry. We have engaged the gifts of two of our own, Doug Day and Barbara Graves, to provide organ and piano music over the summer. A search committee has published the job description and will be interviewing applicants over the summer, with the goal of that person starting work before the fall. One caveat is that it will be a year or more before the next music director will actually work with the choir, because of COVID19. Please pray that God will bless us with excellent applicants and that we can hire one before September.

Be Wise! Love God! Love your neighbor! Pastor Charlie

Psalm 100:1-2 "Make a joyful noise to the Lord, all the earth. Worship the Lord with gladness; come into his presence with singing!"

How can a church follow the Lord's injunction to, "Come into his presence with singing," without someone leading them to make music? A church needs a musician to help the people worship Christ with the fullness of their souls and body. Muriel Homer, for over fifty years, has been the person who has equipped this congregation to praise God, to petition God, to feel God's presence through music. What a leader in our church she has been!

Through six pastors, each with differing gifts for leading worship, she has been the constant. How we have been taken up to the heavenly heights with the beauty and grandeur of her organ playing! For five decades it has been her skillful hands on the organ that have led us in hymns, that have brought out from each of us the singing that pleases God and pleases our neighbor.

Behind the scenes, Muriel worked tirelessly to see that the worship Sunday morning was inspiring with excellent music. Each week, she and I would meet to plan the musical elements of the service. I was always impressed with her sensitivity to which hymns the congregation could sing and which ones were better left unsung. Her keen insights into the poetry of the lyrics were coupled with a profound mastery of the accompaniment challenges of each hymn, together a knowledge which helped the pastor choose hymns which worked beautifully with the scripture, the sermon, the themes of the season and service.

A few times over the years, I asked Muriel to accompany my singing. I have never sung with an accompanist who made me sound so good! Her sole focus was to follow me, and to help me sing to the best of my ability. This gave me insight to how she brings out the best in all singers.

As the choir members know, she has a tremendous gift for empowering singers to sing to their maximum potential. Kind and encouraging, she makes the musicians feel great about themselves as she leads them to make great music. And she is fun!

Laughs are the hallmark of her leadership style. Wherever she is, people are smiling and they have a good time. "Make a joyful noise," is what happens when she is in charge.

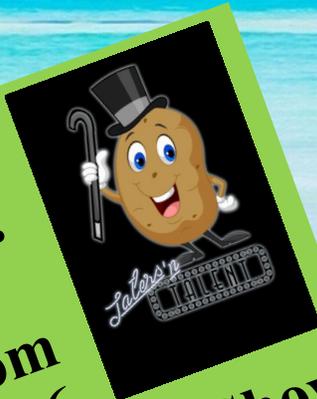
Muriel, we will all miss you in your role as music leader, for we have all been deeply enriched by your musical leadership. May you find joy in your retirement and may you find new inspiration in your vantage point not from the organ bench, but from a congregational pew!

With deep gratitude,
Pastor Charlie

**ON THE
COVER:**

**Picture
taken from
the 4/23/16**

Taters 'n Talent Show





Hello ALPC family!

I thought I would use this opportunity to let you know the journey of children's ministry over the last 2 months. When schools and church buildings were closed in March, the first question I asked myself was, "What does a Children's Ministry Director do when there are no children?" I spent time wondering what children's ministry could look like at this time and I reached out to other directors in the area. This has been a season of prayer and contemplation for all of us, but through that time, we have managed to find new and meaningful ways to connect.

The first idea I had was to send mail weekly to 16 families whose young children have attended Sunday school this year. While selecting little gifts to send and writing messages to our church children, I have felt uniquely mindful of all the little ones in our care. On a typical Sunday before quarantine 6-10 children might attend Sunday School- now I am reaching out and connecting with over 30 children each week. In that way I am more consistently involved in our families lives now than I was ever able to be before the pandemic. An unexpected blessing to me is the feedback I have received from our families and children. I am so grateful for the cards children have made me and the encouragement from parents.

The next change made for children's ministry was to put children's sermons online. Each week I prayerfully write and record a sermon to be shared in our online Sunday service. I also e-mail this sermon separately to families on Sundays, often with corresponding activity ideas. I am grateful to Jay Knox who offered to enhance the videos with additional images and videos. It has been so nice to see how Jay has used his talents to help level up the videos I record.

On May 8th, rather than sending mail to our Sunday school attending families I delivered packages of activities to their homes. This was such a joyful experience as I was able to see and talk to 11 out of our 16 families. Those safely distanced minutes to catch up, smile and laugh meant so much after being apart for so long! I am not sure what the future holds for returning to Sunday school. We continue to follow the recommendations of the governor and I am monitoring the rules for childcare so that we can use that to guide our time with your children. I am so confident that God is meeting us where we are, his spirit is so present through this time. Outside of the church building connections are still being made, seeds are still being planted, love and kindness are being shared all around.

Love and Peace,
Tarra Oppewall, Director of Children's Ministries

Even though the church office doors are locked, Cindi's office hours will change in the summer—beginning Tuesday, May 26 through Tuesday, September 8, Cindi's office hours will be:

Mondays, Tuesdays, Wednesdays, 8:00 am until 4:00 pm

Thursdays, 9:00 am until noon

Fridays, the church office will be closed.

Mondays July 6 and September 7, the church office will also be closed.

Call the church office if you need anything! 933-6240



Mission Matters!



"You oughta be thankful a whole heaping lot for the people and places you're lucky you're not." Dr. Seuss



The mission committee has been meeting creatively including email, texts and phone calls.

You might be interested to know:

Lunch Bunch is on hold. We honestly feel it will be a few more months before we can consider hosting a meal as we are seeking advice from LCM members and Second Harvest as well as our state guidelines.

In the meantime, ALPC Lunch Bunch has donated non perishable food to CRS and \$500.00 toward food pantries in Lorain that are still providing TOGO meals. We feel that if we cannot serve a community meal the second best choice is help others provide food to people in need.



Speaking of food...summer time means kids are home for lunch. We are again joining other Avon Lake churches to help CRS provide extra snacks for the families they serve in our community. We are going to order enough snacks to fill 50 bags with about 12 snacks. We are seeking monetary donations this year considering the current shopping challenges. If you would like to help, please send donations to church or electronically making sure to mark **Snacks** somewhere on your envelope or transfer notation. Please call Beth Janis (440-522-1771) or Marian Conn (440-933-3456) if you need additional information.

One of the ways the Presbytery suggests we can help is to continue to save our change for Cents-ability. This program known as 2¢ a meal at ALPC goes directly to hunger programs in place. We hope to gather our coins as soon as it is safe to attend live Sunday services. If you would like more information, please go to [Cents ability](#)



"Local Mission Fund" - Since the beginning of time, ALPC has set aside a small amount of money for the Local Mission. It's used when our Pastor learns of someone that has an urgent need. What is needed is passed on confidentially. For example: Gas bill paid, a tank of gas until payday, groceries until assistance is in place. The funds have been needed this spring for reasons we all can imagine. If you would like to help by donating toward this fund, please send a check or transfer to the church with the memo, Local Mission.

Questions or suggestions, please call
Beth Janis, Kathy Leopold, Marian Conn or Sue Mabe.



Your Worship & Spiritual Life committee has been diligently paying attention to all the details surrounding our live-streamed services. We compare the various changes made each week to see if there is improvement. We're paying attention to the health safety of the situation, avoiding having too many people together at one time, and reading up on ideas and recommendations for working in groups, singing together and returning to in-person worship someday. What we truly hope for is that you, the worshiper, will sense the presence of the Holy Spirit as you worship with your church family from home. May you sense God's blessings and Jesus's presence with you in your living room!

Supporting Pastor Charlie in his endeavors to make worship meaningful is a big task. He works intently with Muriel Homer and Doug Day, and Jay and Carter Knox, and helps the various readers and musicians manage recording their parts. It has to be strange preaching to a nearly empty sanctuary, but this is his calling for this time. Thank you, Pastor Charlie!

How do you feel about taking Communion remotely in your home? Some people have shared pictures of their special cloth, sacred decoration, plate and cup. Do you have a special setup? Do you have a bread and drink special for this? Whatever we use, whether similar or very different from our regular elements, God will bless and use to nourish our spirits.

Summer worship will continue remotely via live-streamed video until further notice. We are working to find substitute pastors for the Sundays Pastor Charlie is away on vacation. It might be strange for them, too, leading an online service! We also have a team arranging for the musical accompaniment and special music for the summer services. If you have a musical offering to share, please contact the committee, and we will schedule you for a Sunday!

This week, our committee made their farewells to Muriel. She has always served on this committee as Music Director. It is hard to imagine what it will be like not having her at our conference table (or Zoom session). The stay at home order came shortly after the last choir rehearsals, and at the time the choir members did not know that would be their last time with Muriel as their director. Under normal conditions, the choirs would naturally have had their own celebrations, with hugs going around! It's strange to think that didn't happen. However, plans are afoot to celebrate Muriel's career on May 31 and again later after we can gather in person, so stay tuned!

Submitted by Beth Shoemaker on behalf of the Worship & Spiritual Life Committee: Donna Bradley, Muriel Homer, Margre Lind Mills, Beth Shoemaker, Jeff Spenser, Pastor Charlie, Cris Till, Marcy Uhl, Sarah Waggoner and JoAnn Wainscott.

Muriel Homer, Director of Music



For many years at this time in May, writing a thank you to the choir has been a rite of passage into summer. It's difficult to wrap my head around the fact that this is the last time I will write, due to my upcoming retirement. It is also so strange to think back to how things have changed from a little over two months ago when we were having rehearsals on Wednesday evening and singing and ringing for Worship on Sunday morning.

Fortunately, we have a treasure of videos and audio recordings that we have drawn upon to provide anthems for you on Sunday morning. My job has changed greatly from planning, directing and playing to searching, listening and trying to find videos that are complete enough to present on Sunday morning. I have gained new appreciation for just how good our choir is. Hopefully, these have enhanced your worship experience as a congregation.

Now....back to the choir. They have worked especially hard this year. The new Worship Design Studio way of worshipping stretched them with a greater amount of music to learn on Wednesday nights and a greatly increased number of things to remember to do on Sunday mornings. They rose to the occasion beautifully.

Thank you, choir members, for all your intense practice, your musical abilities and your playful sense of humor and for your flexibility. Directing the choirs has been the most enjoyable part of my music ministry. Many times when I was feeling really tired on Wednesday night you gave me a big boost.

Thanks to those of you who have given your time to record music in the church or long distance to help to give a choir experience to our hymns on our Sunday Facebook Live worship. And thanks to our resident technician, Jay Knox, who has been learning new skills that he never imagined before in order to blend the voices.

A very special thank you to Doug Day who brings a high level of musicianship and co-operation to everything he does whether it is playing the piano for gathering music or difficult accompaniments for anthems that need that special touch. I have no idea what we would do without him.

Thanks to all who have provided special music or accompaniments or will do so in the summer: Ed and Gail Carter, Barbara and Cathy Graves, Susan Richardson, Sherry Spenser, Arlene Strauch, Sarah and Madeline Waggoner and to Gail Carter for taking care of the music bulletin board and to Jackie Day for filling and caring for our music library. And last, but not least, Gary Uhl and his assistant, Jim Janis, for taking care of all our bell paraphernalia. It has been a joy to work with all of you.

Finally, thanks for your congregational support. It is a thrill to hear you sing or see your smiling faces when I turn around to direct you when you sing with an anthem. And we appreciate your warm comments. I am going to miss you.

With love and gratitude, Muriel

CHANCEL CHOIR

SOPRANO

Marian Conn
Jackie Day
Tammy Dusek
Sue Mabe
Susan Richardson
Sharon Smucker
Marcy Uhl
Sarah Waggoner

ALTO

Gail Carter
Deb Gantz
Barbara Graves
Ruth Ann Peel
Sharon Pervo
Elizabeth Shoemaker
Linda Swartz

TENOR

David Brunner
Clay Dusek
Jeff Hansen
Jim Smucker

BASS

Ed Carter
Doug Day
Mike Dean
Ed Homer
Mack Peel

HANDBELL CHOIR

David Brunner
Ed Carter
Gail Carter
Doug Day
Cheryl Dean
Barbara Graves

Cathy Graves
Kathy Navarro
Sharon Pervo
Sherry Spenser
Linda Swartz
Elizabeth Shoemaker, substitute

Masks and Retreat

The Youth Opportunities organization needs masks This link will explain more about this organization. [Youth opportunites](#) The goal is 1,000 masks by June 22nd.

Lee Lohr is keeping track of how many people can commit to making masks, so if you are willing to make some, please let Lee Lohr or Kathy Leopold know with an estimate of how many. A certain style is not required. What you have made for yourself or family is fine. Anyone that needs a pattern, can get one from [joann.com](#) or [uhhospitals.com](#) (in the COVID-19 information section).

Lee Lohr, on behalf of PW of the Presbytery of the Western Reserve 440-396-6593
or Kathy Leopold at 242-5086

Beulah Beach Church Retreat Update

The ALPC Church retreat committee, after prayerful consideration, has decided to cancel the annual fall church retreat this year. We look forward to a time when we can once again gather together in that beautiful setting and celebrate Christ's love with our church friends. We will meet this fall to evaluate our options for having our next church retreat.

In His Love,

Craig Shoemaker
Chairperson ALPC Church Retreat
Committee

Property Committee



As before, I hope everyone is doing well. It's hard to believe how much has changed in the past few months. Let's all help each other when we can and we will get through this.

I would like to announce that we have one of the pieces of the puzzle put together. When you enter the church via the main door, you will see a new look. The painting is finished in the entryway foyer, narthex and kitchenette. Many of the items have been returned to their place on the wall. Also, the painting has been moving west as progress heads down the hall. There is a lot more to do, but it has been a pretty good start.

The library is almost completed with the flooring the last thing to do. Most likely, when you get this newsletter, this room will be done. Once we are able to get back to our church, this room will be a comfortable place for small group gatherings including circles and book studies.

Thanks to Jay Knox, Phil Stryczny and Carl Douglas for all their work to prepare our church for the next chapter. Also thanks to the property committee members for pitching in to spruce up the landscaping and shed area.

Another project we hope to have done in June is the parking lot. It was decided to do asphalt repair as well as sealing the entire lot. We chose to go this route for just under \$7,000.00 instead of tearing up the lot and basically starting over for around \$65,000.00.

Finally, we hope to have a spring work day in early June. We need to keep those weeds away so maybe I'll be calling for volunteers.

Be Well To All,
Jim Janis

OUR CHURCH'S FINANCIAL HEALTH




A big thank you to everyone for continuing your financial support! Through April, our income is ahead of budget and our expenses are below budget. However, since several people have already paid their yearly pledge, giving will be still anticipated to level out as the year progresses. During this uncertain time of the covid-19 virus, our expenses continue even though we are doing what we can to save where possible. Our staff is still being paid and are doing a great job at staying connected with our members through email, Facebook and Zoom. If your bank already sends your pledge payments, we will continue to receive them as usual. For members who usually place their pledge payments in the offering plates, we request that you continue to mail your giving to the church or pay through the Simple Give link on our web page while we are meeting virtually. Above all, stay safe and healthy so we can all return to worship together when the time is right!

	April YTD Actual	YTD Budget
Income:		
Congregational Giving	\$123,526	\$101,004
Other Income	6,506	10,900
Youth Mission Income	<u>9,775</u>	<u>0</u>
Total Income	\$139,807	\$111,904
Expense:		
Staff Expense	\$71,410	\$76,034
Worship & Spiritual Life	455	1,933
Christian Education	186	2,541
Stewardship & Mission	1,761	1,700
Property	18,334	15,452
General Expenses	8,005	10,017
Youth Mission Trip	6,250	4,000
Per capita Expense	<u>11,506</u>	<u>11,506</u>
Total Expenses	\$117,907	\$123,183

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 (email – dbm_games@yahoo.com)

SESSION MINUTES

Session held a meeting on May 18, 2020:

- ◆ Giving has continued to keep our budget in the black, thanks to our faithful members keeping up on their pledges.
- ◆ We received a Payroll Protection Program loan, which will be used to support staff salaries and utilities during May and June.
- ◆ Cornerstone Preschool has had to cancel their summer camps, but fall registration is going well.
- ◆ Laurie and Tom Callahan were examined and welcomed as new members.
- ◆ The Deacons are concerned with keeping our members without the Internet connected with our church family.
- ◆ Guidelines for Church Reopening are being written by the Presbytery.
- ◆ Visitors and staff in the church building should wear masks at all times when not alone in offices.
- ◆ Our online services have started to feel part of our “new normal” during this time of separation.
- ◆ Pastor Charlie will be installed as Moderator of the Presbytery on May 27 during the online Presbytery meeting.
- ◆ Plans for honoring Muriel have been made and are being implemented.
- ◆ The job description for Director of Music Ministry has been posted several places and one possible candidate has applied.
- ◆ A tech team to support Jay Knox in running the online services is being assembled.
- ◆ Summer music coverage is being arranged.
- ◆ The foyer and kitchenette have been painted, and painting of other areas has begun.
- ◆ The Property Committee is recruiting volunteers for a Spring Work Day and for refreshing the front of the church.
- ◆ The old restrooms at the west end are being redesigned.
- ◆ A contractor is being hired to refresh the asphalt of the parking lot and driveways.
- ◆ Fairy hearts and “Don’t Give Up” signs are being distributed by the Evangelism Committee.
- ◆ Donations are being accepted for the Local Mission Fund, which is used to meet local needs.
- ◆ Tarra Oppewall has visited all the children of the church and given them craft and activity packages.

Elizabeth Shoemaker, Clerk of Session

DEACONS

Leading through Serving.

Hello ALPC,

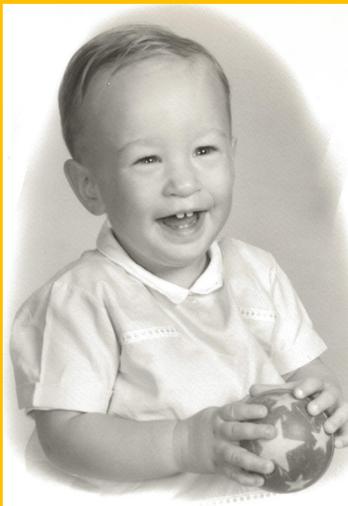
Last month, deacons reached out to many church members by phone to see how they were doing and if they needed anything. We hope to continue that if this quarantine continues. If you need anything or just want to talk, please reach out to a deacon. If you are unsure of who we are, I put a list of the Deacons below. To make it more fun, I combined our list with a game you can play at home. I'm including baby pictures of deacons who

submitted pictures. (And yes they had cameras when we were babies.) You can match the deacon to the picture. Answers will be in the next newsletter.

Deacons with baby pictures below:

Sybil Wendling, Mike Reighard, Cathy Craves, Joy Harris, Jeff Spenser, Carolyn Rose

Deacons not pictured: Shawn Brunner, Mike Ciarrone, Bernie Barnes



We will be having a changing of the guard with deacons this month. I want to thank Carolyn Rose and Bernie Barnes who have completed 5-6 years of deacon service and Will Wendling and Carter Knox who completed 1-2 years of youth deacon service. They were a great asset and will be missed. We welcome Craig Shoemaker, Sherry Thompson, Sandy Seib, Nancy Baldwin and Madeline Waggoner as new deacons.

Sincerely, Mike Reighard, Deacon Moderator

Our graduating seniors will be recognized in a worship service later this summer at a date still to be determined.



Kyle Ciarrone graduated from The University of Akron with an Honors Aerospace/Mechanical Engineering degree. He was the recipient of the Trajectory Award Scholarship this past month. This award is given to students who gave great service to others, as well as an Honors degree with grades. He has been all over the country interviewing and spent a week in California. He finally accepted a job as a Special Warfare Expeditionary Specialist (Mechanical) Engineer with the US Navy in Bloomington, IN at the Crane Special Warfare Naval Center. It is the 3rd largest Naval Installation in the world.

Carter Knox has greatly enjoyed his time in the Avon Lake schools. He has been an active member of the Orchestra, playing the violin for 8 years. He served as Secretary for String Orchestra his senior year. His sophomore year he co-founded the ALHS Robotics Club and served as Co-President for three years. His team qualified to participate in the Vex World's Championships this year. His junior and senior years Carter was responsible for managing the school bell and PA System. Carter has been an active member here at ALPC, this summer would have been his eighth his mission trip. He volunteers his time in our sound room for worship, doing lighting and slides. He has also spent the last year serving as a Deacon. He will be attending Ohio Northern University in the fall to study Computer Engineering.

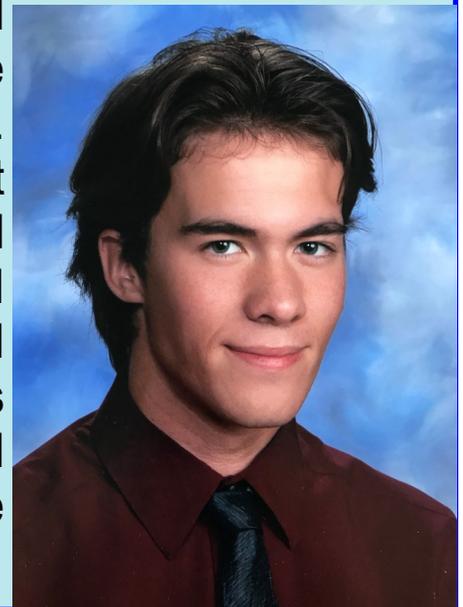




Natalie Waggoner will be attending Kent State University this fall as an Exploratory major in the Honors College. She is interested in studying journalism, art, fashion and design. While at ALHS, Natalie was active all four years in both the band and choir programs. She played trumpet in Symphonic and Marching Band and sang soprano in Chorale and Merples. Natalie was honored to have been a member of the Homecoming Court for three years, including Queen her senior year. Natalie joined art club in her last year at ALHS as her passion for painting began to develop. Her style in painting focuses on pop art and bold colors. She hopes to use the skills that she has acquired in art

class this past year to explore possible career paths. Natalie kept busy during the summers and during the school year babysitting on a regular schedule for several different families. She will continue to take care of these families this summer as well. In her spare time, Natalie enjoys her art, walking different metro parks, playing her ukulele, spending time with friends and family, and shopping. Natalie is proud to be a graduate of ALHS and looks forward to the future!

Will Wendling is graduating from Avon High School. William is an athlete. In track, as a sophomore, he led his 4x200 relay team to set a new school record. However, a torn hamstring as a junior and quarantine as a senior have prevented him from breaking his own record. In soccer, Will was a midfielder on Avon's 2019 District champion soccer team. William is also an outdoorsman and scout. He enjoys fishing, earned his Eagle scout in 2019, and has backpacked over 50 miles on both the Appalachian trail and Laurel Highlands trail. William has gone on ALPC's mission trips to New York, Houston, and New Mexico, and loves Youth Group. In the fall, William will attend the University of Toledo and study Chemical Engineering.



Church Administration

Human Resources ►

Once upon a time, the Vocal Music teacher at Erievew Elementary School in Avon Lake was a young woman named Muriel Ellen Ramsey. Miss Ramsey also taught at Westview and eventually Redwood Elementary schools. One day, Betty Lou Wallace called Muriel to ask her to accompany her kids on piano at a contest. Muriel accepted, and continued to play piano at kids' lessons for years for Betty Lou's kids and others.

Miss Ramsey was also a member of the MGP (Mighty Goliath Players). With that group, she became friends with Dave Wallace, who was an Elder at Avon Lake Presbyterian Church. (At the time, Muriel was a member of the Methodist Church.) Never-the-less, in the fall of 1965, Dave Wallace offered Muriel the position of Choir Director for ALPC (which had only been built 8 years earlier!). Already busy with teaching and piano accompaniment, Muriel reluctantly accepted the position – how much time could it really take?

A few years later, Muriel had a first date with Ed Homer in March of 1968. After that, Ed disappeared for a while – but Muriel kept busy with the choir and the schools. When Ed returned later in 1968, Muriel learned that Ed had gone to Michigan to help take care of his dad, who had passed away that summer. Ed joined Avon Lake Presbyterian Church on May 26, 1968 and Muriel joined the ALPC on May 25, 1969.

On June 21, 1969, Ed and Muriel were married by Rev. Al Hart – only the 2nd couple that he married! Shortly after, Muriel took 4 years off to have two sons, Matt and Chris. After her 1st was born, Muriel tried working as a substitute teacher, but decided that the last-minute nature of subbing didn't suit her.

In addition to directing the ALPC choir, Muriel spent a semester as Music Director for Lakewood Little Theatre (now Beck Center). For many years, she was the piano accompanist for Avon Women's Chorus. Muriel spent a summer as Music Director at Huntington Playhouse and played the part of a Nun in the Sound of Music. Furthermore, after supporting practice and accompanying the MGP for over 20 years, and serving 2 years as Music Director, Muriel is in the Mighty Goliath Players' Hall of Fame.

A true pillar of ALPC, Muriel has worked with Rev. Bob Swanson, Rev. Al Hart, Rev. Jim Butler, Rev. Tom Robinson, Rev. Nick Yoda, Bill Lindeman, Rev. Dennis Zimmerman and Rev. Charlie Swartz.

Muriel is a key figure in the lives of countless church members' milestone life events. She provided music for weddings, memorials, celebrations of life, and a variety of other occasions. Muriel displayed a keen aptitude for the selection of music appropriate to the liturgical calendar, and skillfully added a variety of instrumental accompaniments to the church's choral music. She has been a staple of Christmas Eve and Easter services, where she devoted thousands of hours to preparation, rehearsals, and the worship experience. She recognized and harnessed the gifts and talents of other musicians, all to the benefit of the church's music program.

On May 31, Avon Lake Presbyterian Church will wish Muriel Homer a long, happy retirement after over 50 years of service to our church. ALPC will honor Muriel Homer with a series of Covid19-appropriate events, as well as a future in-person gathering when permissible. The congregation will parade past Muriel's home after worship on May 31 at 11:30 AM. Members will meet in the church parking lot and drive by her house on Lake Road, turning around in Erievew's north drive and passing by Muriel's house again before ending the parade.

While the entire congregation will miss her dearly, the choir and bell ringers will feel her absence the most. Her greatest legacy will be the memories with which she leaves them, and the joyful stories that they will share well into the future.

Sunday Worship on Facebook Live at 10:00 am
Tune in on Sunday to www.facebook.com/avonlakepc
Search YouTube for Avon Lake Presbyterian Church Worship
for the video after the service

(440) 933-6240

Website: www.avonlakechurch.com

Email: 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

Cari Douglas

Tarra Oppewall

Muriel Homer

Julie Erker

Lynn Morway

Ed Homer

Phil Stryczny

Cindi Dansizen

Marcy Uhl

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.