

Saints Alive!

Volume 18, Issue 10
December 2020
“Friends in Christ, Serving
Together with Love”



First Sunday In Advent, November 29th—This Little Light of Hope
I Believe in the Sun: Hope for Tomorrow

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*Second Sunday in Advent, December 6—Sacrament of Communion*  
*This Little Light of Love*  
*I Believe in Love: Daring Right Relationship*

**Bring an ornament to church from 11:30-1 (read Tarra's message)**

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Third Sunday in Advent, December 13—This Little Light of Joy
I Believe in God: Ode to Joy

4pm church members will safely carol together (read Worship & Spiritual Life message)

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*Fourth Sunday in Advent, December 20—This Little Light of Peace*  
*I Believe in the Light: Illuminating Peace*

*Christmas Eve, December 24—We Believe, Even Now*

**5:00 Family Service led by Tarra Oppewall**

**Drive through “Path of Light” with your family to see hundreds of luminaries surrounding our Church (read Worship & Spiritual Life message)**

**8:00 Traditional Service, led by Pastor Charlie, Handbells and Chancel Choir**

## FROM THE PASTOR/ Charlie Swartz



*Dear Friends,*

Out of the entire series, “Constructing Contentment in an Uncertain World,” the best verse for this time is Philippians 4:8.

*“Finally beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” (Philippians 4:8).*

That is what helps all of us now. It is so easy to complain ten months into the pandemic, and bemoan what is not. It takes a divine kind of endurance to keep on keeping with hope and kindness as this pandemic enters the eleventh month in our state.

That is especially true as we are heading into the Thanksgiving and Christmas season. Those are the days which are most laden with the freight of tradition. In a way, we are more flexible with disruptions in February or July or October. Yes, those were hard to accept, but at least they did not mess with our traditional holidays. It is a bitter feeling to contemplate Thanksgiving without out of town guests, or Christmas without all the community events. This is not the Yuletide we ordered.

I will miss the Thanksgiving gathering a lot. Like you, it has always been one of my favorite times of the year. When my mom and dad lived in the farmhouse in southern Ohio, my siblings and I and all our children would gather from all ends of the country to see each other. Along with eating too much good food, and comparing all the pies, were leisurely walks in the farm hills, and late night fireplace conversations. Not this year, of course. Even though my sister lives in Mansfield, we will not be combining families. It is a massive disappointment for so many of us.

COVID is dragging on and on, and it is truly terrible. So what are we going to do about it, and the unhappy feeling that comes with cancelling cherished events? Years ago, I was talking with several kids during a children’s sermon. Looking for a specific compassion centered answer, I asked the question, “When you are sick, what does your daddy say to you?” They were quiet as I waited. One little girl, with a squeaky high voice, blurted out, “Suck it up!” Her dad laughed as hard as anyone at her unexpected response. Sometimes that is the best advise, sometimes we just have to, “Suck it up.”

Rather than lament that Christmas is not like it was, I invite you to do as Paul says and focus on what is good. Rather than mourn that we are not in the pews wishing good cheer, take advantage of what God has given us and join your friends online Sunday morning. Wish them good cheer in the comments on Facebook live. Join in the online Advent worship and you will be surprised and thrilled how our church is celebrating an authentic Advent. True worship, Jesus says in the gospel of John, is not dependent on where you are but how you are. Jesus says, “God is spirit, and those who worship him must worship in spirit and truth,” (John 4:24). He is with us.

Look at it this way, this will be a memorable Christmas season that you will never forget. Thirty years from now, family members will be saying, “Remember back in 2020, how we celebrated Christmas in the COVID time?” Let them say how we celebrated in faith and joy, not because of what we did not have, but because of who we do have - Jesus Christ. Be creative as you find different ways to share the Christmas joy. We can do this! And your church will be helping you to celebrate the birth of Jesus through new and unique ideas. Read through the newsletter to learn of some of them.

Like Paul tells us, we will think on those things that are true and pure and pleasing. We will be counter-culture and commend when others criticize, praise when others complain. We will let the contentment in Christ expand in our hearts and minds as we find new ways to revel in His incarnation this COVID year.

In His love and peace, Pastor Charlie

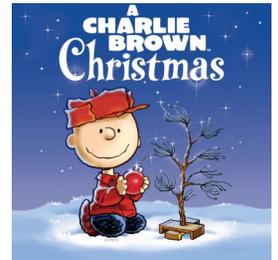


# From our Children's Ministry Director/Tarra

*Greetings ALPC families!*

Today I am writing with an eye on Advent, which is right around the corner. While it will be different to celebrate and worship from home, we are working hard to find meaningful ways to engage families of all ages in the spirit of the season. Our homes will become our decorated sanctuaries as our inner lights of hope, love, joy, and peace shine brighter each week until Christmas Day. We have several opportunities for your family dig deeply into the Christmas spirit:

- \* Advent Film Festival: Follow along in our Family Friendly Film Festival as we look for Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace in the classic movies *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas* (1966), *Frosty the Snowman*, and the *Muppet Christmas Carol*. Using the reflection questions and prayers provided from ALPC, this is an opportunity to gather in your home and turn your Christmas movie tradition into a more reflective experience.
- \* Pictures: Please send family Christmas pictures to [alpctarra@gmail.com](mailto:alpctarra@gmail.com) to be shared on our Facebook page and Christmas Eve Service.



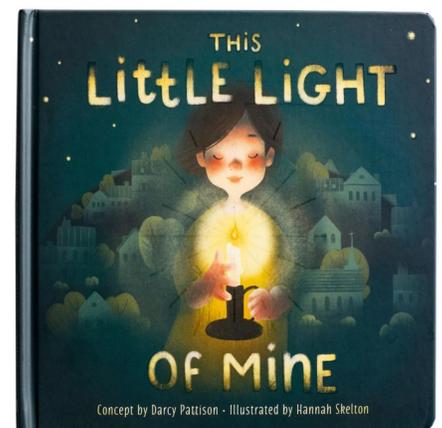
Ornament Collection: December 6<sup>th</sup> we are organizing an ornament drop off, please bring an ornament to church from 11:30-1 to be added to our ALPC family tree (at that time, we will give you real or electric candles to light on Christmas Eve in your home). This simple act will fill our tree with the symbolic presence of the treasured members of our church family. If you are unable to drop one off during the collection event, you are welcome to drop it off anytime.

- \* Christmas Caroling: December 13<sup>th</sup> at 4pm church members will safely carol together, caravanning in family units and "singing" through the use of recorded music and signs.
- \* Christmas Eve Family Service: On December 24<sup>th</sup> we will have a family service available online at 5pm. In the spirit of Christmas at Home we encourage you to gather your family together and enjoy our recorded service in the safety and comfort of your home. Join the chat on Facebook and connect with Ms. Tarra while we watch together.
- \* Christmas Eve Path of Light: Luminaries, luminaries! After the family service take a drive with your family to see hundreds of luminaries surrounding our Avon Lake Presbyterian Church. Let the beautiful lights remind you and your children to carry the light of Christ within you and shine it wherever you go. Luminaries will be on display Christmas Eve beginning at 5pm. If your family would like to help set up the luminary display join volunteers in the church parking lot at 2pm.

In addition to the opportunities listed above, I will be delivering an advent activity bag to our families with young children to help bring Sunday school straight to your home.

Friends, this Christmas season will surely be different, as everything in 2020 has been. Together, we can seek the good and find new ways to let our little light shine in our families and communities. Let's celebrate Jesus together; a precious gift to a tired and weary world so long ago and a gift to our tired and weary world today. Shine lights of hope, love, joy and peace wherever you are this Advent season.

Peace and love, Tarra Oppewall



# Worship & Spiritual Life



## I believe Even When...

Happy Holiday wishes from the Worship & Spiritual Life Committee! When you read this we will be in the midst of celebrating Thanksgiving. That may be a bit different than in years past, but our gratefulness to God is the same! We hope you enjoyed the fantastic fall worship series Charlie developed on "Building Contentment in an Uncertain World." It was fitting for our very uncertain world and hopefully provided some reassurance and insight to our current situation.

*We have many wonderful plans to help us celebrate Advent and Christmas. We have adjusted these plans to make this as safe as possible, with guidance from our COVID Advisory Group, but please note that we may have to modify or cancel some of these activities as the situation in our county and state is changing rapidly. Please help us by staying flexible and know that any changes will be made with love for all.*

Appropriate to our current situation, our 2020 Advent and Christmas Eve worship series is called "I Believe Even When...Fill the Night with Music and Light." It is based on the fact that human history is filled with fear and pain, and, often, our human response often leads to hurt, oppression and violence of one people against another. Jesus was born into this world and through his teachings challenged and called us to transform ourselves from the inside out. The recurring message of this series is that we are called

by Jesus to transformation and reconciliation through hope, love, joy and peace. We know that 2020 has been a very difficult year for many reasons. By focusing on beautiful music and the light that Jesus brings, we affirm and act on the reasons we can still believe, especially when we are discouraged.

We are again organizing a caroling evening for homebound members of our congregation...but this year with a twist! Even though we cannot sing, we can share music and love and warm smiles behind our masks. Please join us on Sunday evening, December 13, at 4 PM in the church parking lot, masked and in your car. We will be caravanning (no carpooling) to various homes, and sharing carols via cell phones, our love and best wishes via poster board signs. This event will be outside only, entails no actual singing, and we will be masked and socially distant throughout. Please contact Cindi in the church office if you would like to join us, or if you would like a visit from our cell phone carolers. Cell phone carolers are encouraged to dress yourselves and your car as festively as possible with lights, Santa hats and reindeer antlers!

We would like all members of our congregation to have real or electric candles to light on Christmas Eve in their homes. In conjunction with the Deacons, you may pick up your family's candles when you drop off an ornament for our Family Tree on Sunday, December 6, 11:30 am—1:00 pm. If you cannot make it to the ornament drop-off, we will have boxes in the entryway for pickup beginning December 7, or you can call the church office to request delivery. Please return the candles in January, if possible, to boxes in the entryway. We would also like everyone to have access to bibles and hymnals. You can sign these out from the church office, or call to request delivery. These can be kept for the duration of remote worship.

In conjunction with CE, we would like to invite you to participate in our Advent Film Festival. This is described elsewhere in this newsletter, but we will look for Hope, Love, Joy, and Peace as we watch the classic movies *A Charlie Brown Christmas*, the original *Dr. Seuss' How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, *Frosty the Snowman* and the *Muppet Christmas Carol* from our own homes. An applicable bible verse and thoughts for discussion will be available in weekly emails or mailings.

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## Worship & Spiritual Life (continued)

We plan to set up luminaries around the church grounds beginning at 2:00 PM on Christmas Eve so that you can participate in a drive-through "Path of Light" at church from about 5:00 PM until the candles go out about midnight. It may not be the traditional way that we have come to church on Christmas Eve, but we hope it will be a meaningful symbol of how the light of Jesus came into this world. If you are interested in helping set up luminaries, please call the church office. We can accommodate up to 15 people, outside, masked and socially distant. Please bring a candle lighter if you have one.

Two recorded services will be provided on Facebook and YouTube, one at 5:00 PM that is focused on children, youth and families, and one at 8:00 PM that will be a traditional candle lighting service. These can be viewed from anywhere on phones, tablets or computers. If you wish to listen from the church parking lot, please keep others in mind and park out of the way of the luminaries, turn off your engines and lights, and stay in your cars.

On the Sunday after Christmas, we will be worshipping with other congregations in the Synod of the Covenant (our Presbytery is a member of this Synod). The service will be broadcast on Facebook and YouTube at our normal time, 10:00 AM. This is a gift of grace for our worship staff and volunteers. Pastor Charlie will be on vacation during the last week of 2020, including Sunday, January 3, 2021. The Rev. June Begany will lead us in worship that day, which will include Communion from home.

Recordings and broadcasts of our service have been going fairly well lately and continue to improve. WSL volunteers are beginning to learn the new system. We continue to thank Jay Knox for his dedication in helping to provide the recorded services. As always, your feedback is much appreciated as we seek to provide meaningful online services. On behalf of ALPC, WSL applied for, and was awarded, a monetary grant from the Presbytery's Vitality Committee to help pay for our current, and hopefully future expanded, video ministry.

Many members and groups have been thinking about other ways to get our Sunday services out to folks that cannot, or prefer not, to watch online. In conjunction with the Evangelism committee, we have now entered into an agreement with the City of Avon Lake to broadcast our services through Avon Lake Community TV and our cable providers' public access channels (1024 for Spectrum and 22 for WOW!). Sunday services will begin showing the following Wednesday, and then show periodically throughout the week. We hope this will start in time for our first Advent service, but stay tuned for more information.

At this time of Thanksgiving, we are grateful for Pastor Charlie, for the music ministry led by Rick Fortney and our wonderful choirs, and Tarra Oppewall, as well as everyone behind the scenes for providing us wonderful ways to hear and worship God.

Submitted by Margre Lind Mills

## From Our COVID Advisory Group



### New COVID Restrictions

Our Session, advised by our COVID Advisory Group, continues to respond to the real time realities of the COVID pandemic. As we all know, the number of cases is skyrocketing in our state and local community. Our preschool has needed to go online for two weeks as has the Avon Lake High School and Intermediate school. We have had to take a step backwards for church engagement, as the Session determined November 16 that for the time being, group activities are no longer safe. Any activity, if at all possible, needs to be online. For instance, staff meetings which had been in person the last two months, are back on Zoom. Youth group, which had so enjoyed gathering outside, will not be meeting. This will continue until the community environment changes positively, a situation that is continually monitored by our COVID Advisory Group. If you have a question about whether your activity is allowable under these new guidelines, contact Pastor Charlie and he will help you figure it out.

## Music and Arts Ministries



*O Come All Ye Faithful* (ADESTE FIDELES) has been sung throughout Advent and on Christmas Eve ever since it was written in 1743 by John F. Wade. It is taken from Luke 2:15:

*“And it came to pass, as the angels were gone away from them into heaven, the shepherds said one to another, “Let us now go even unto Bethlehem, and see this thing which is come to pass, which the Lord hath made known unto us.”*”

This obviously is a different Advent / Christmas season as we fight off this 9-month pandemic. 9 months! Many of us are living in a bubble and are being very cautious as to who we have in our inner circle to connect with on a weekly basis. I realize it is difficult not having in-person services at the Church, but we have gone to great lengths trying to keep all engaged, active and safe. I praise God that Avon Lake

Presbyterian Church is setting an example for others in being responsible and accountable to our current situation. That being said, know it grieves our soul and we long for the day we can all worship together under one roof. It is my prayer that this season will be extra special as we find new ways of communicating with each other, in worshipping, and in relying upon and spending quality time with the One whom we celebrate!

This Advent/Christmas season will feature our Handbell Choir, Chancel Choir and a number of soloists including: Doug Day, Clayton Dusek, Joan Wojcicki Fortney, Barbara Graves, Cathy Graves, Ed Homer, Susan Richardson, Sherry Spencer, Sarah Waggoner, and many others. I thank each for their dedication and open heart in the sharing of their time and talent. It is truly a joy to be sharing in ministry together. I would be amiss not to mention our A/V team led by Jay Knox. Jay spends hours upon hours recording and editing, making our worship a reality where we can be together in our individual homes while still worshipping corporately. Thank you, Jay, for your vision, heart, and dedication of time and talent.

In addition to our Worship Services on Sunday morning and Christmas Eve, we have put together a couple more opportunities to assist in your worship and celebration throughout the month.

- ◆ On December 13, 4:00 p.m., we are going Christmas Caroling! If you would like to join us please let Cindi or myself know. And ... if you would like us to visit your home or a loved one, please let us know! We hope to visit all shut-ins and those who possibly have not been able to stay connected with our church family during this pandemic.
- ◆ We will NOT be singing and we will Not be car-pooling. Instead, we will be in a car caravan. Please decorate your car, bring signs, bring smiles! We will have pre-recorded music that we will play, possibly sign-language to a piece, but primarily be there to smile, show support, and share Christ's joy this holiday season.
- ◆ We have put together two YouTube links for you which will be made available December 13 through Facebook and our website:
  - ◇ One is a Family Life video of a couple dozen Christmas Carols for you to enjoy as you spend time with your kids, or possibly as you are washing the dishes! Many are one to two verse carols and a number of Children's Christmas songs which will aid you in your family worship and fun time this December!
  - ◇ The other video features a number of soloists, Chancel Choir and our Bell Choir sharing their joy of music with our church family for the Advent / Christmas season ... enjoy!
- ◆ Finally, our website will be updated in the weeks / months ahead highlighting the music ministry with all the recorded Gathering Music/Preludes and Postludes; Hymns; Choruses; Solos; Handbell Anthems; Chancel Choir Anthems; and Kid's Songs. We have recorded everything and felt we should make it available as you personally worship throughout the week.

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## Music Ministries (continued)

Finally, as we prepare for Advent and submit articles for the December Saints Alive, we are personally preparing for Thanksgiving Weekend. I love that Advent begins with a time of Thanksgiving! I am thankful for my new position at Avon Lake Presbyterian Church. I wish we could work together, rehearse, and share in worship all under one roof, but I know that day will come. I am so thankful in the musical foundation laid through Muriel Homer and her 50 plus years of ministry; I am thankful for the soloists, Handbell Choir and Chancel Choir whom I have had the opportunity to work with thus far. I'm thankful for our Worship and Spiritual Life Committee who is such a support and encouragement in all we do. I am thankful for our staff, each who has become such good friends. Last, but certainly not least, I am grateful for each of you. I look forward to what lies ahead. Merry Christmas everyone! Joan and I plan on worshipping Christmas Eve, at both the 5:00 and 8:00 p.m. worship services, in the parking lot of Avon Lake Presbyterian Church, watching the services from our phones, surrounded by luminaries representing the light of Christ. It will be beautiful ... a new tradition! Hope to see many of you there as we wave to each other through our windows ... wishing each of you peace, joy and a truly Merry Christmas!

Rick Fortney, Music and Arts Ministries Director  
[rick@alpcmusicministry@gmail.com](mailto:rick@alpcmusicministry@gmail.com)

## Ornament for the Church tree



Would you like to place an ornament on the Christmas tree in the foyer to represent you and/or your family? You can craft an ornament to represent you! On Sunday, December 6, you can drop off an ornament at the church between 11:30 and 1:00 and you will be given real or electric candles to light on Christmas Eve in your home. Also, if you cannot drop it off, one of the Deacons can pick up your ornament from you and give you your candles.

May you have a blessed Christmas!

Deacon Sherry Thompson

## Thank You

*I want to thank all the folks in the congregation  
who have sent me messages.  
It's good to be remembered.*

*Ruth Weeks*

Many thanks to all our church family for their faithful prayers for George's recovery. After being hospitalized for more than ten days with acute pneumonia, George is finally home. He is on the slow road to recovery, but is making progress daily. George is enjoying the many cards and good wishes, and the delicious meals prepared by members of our church family. We feel so very blessed!" God bless, Sue Scott



# Session Highlights

## MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



The Session met on November 16. Highlights of their meeting were:

- \* The audit of the 2019 budget has been completed and everything found in order.
- \* The formwork to obtain forgiveness of the Paycheck Protection Program loan was filed.
- \* The COVID Advisory Group presented several recommendations, which were all approved as ALPC policy.
- \* Cornerstone Preschool went to remote learning only for two weeks following one positive COVID test and others in quarantine.
- \* Scheduled the Confirmation class to be examined by Session and presented in worship.
- \* The elders, deacons and staff will be calling all members to check up on how everyone is doing after several months apart.
- \* Session will adopt a customized version of the Call to End Racial Injustice statement released by the Presbytery.
- \* Pastor Charlie will be attending the denomination's mid-council training for Presbytery moderators.
- \* Additional benefits were secured for our part-time (over 20 hours/week) employees at no additional cost to the church.
- \* The Synod of the Covenant is graciously providing pre-recorded services to the churches, and we will use the one for December 27, to give the volunteers a break during such a busy time.
- \* We received a vitality grant of \$3,000 to cover worship equipment upgrades.
- \* Our services will be broadcast weekly on the Avon Lake Community TV cable channel.
- \* Next Step Ministries will be asked to use another facility this coming summer while our restroom renovations are being done.
- \* Evangelism is encouraging members to invite their friends to our online services.
- \* Mission reports the scholarship fund for the girls in Guatemala is doing well, but setbacks have occurred due to COVID and hurricanes.
- \* Budget scenarios are being developed around returning to in-person worship at different times in 2021.
- \* Hopefully a lot of mailed stewardship pledges will arrive in time for Pastor Charlie to present in worship on Nov. 22.

Elizabeth Shoemaker, Clerk of Session

## Earth Angels

If I may I'd like to tell you about my recent experience of being hurt in a terrible bike fall. My fervent prayer would be that everyone everywhere would have the kind of support you at ALPC gave me. The love through your prayers, dinners, flowers, cards and chores performed gave me the endurance I needed, right when I needed it! Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Love is the best pain relief technique that exists! Seeing you act as God's hands and feet reminded me everyday to revel in God's promises. You might have experienced times like that in your own lives, where the power of encouragement filled you with strength and kindness. The whole year of 2020 has been such a trying year for everyone so it meant so much to me that you took that time, thought and effort to encourage me in my struggles.

I still have some healing and rehabilitation left, but those will be tackled day by day. Importantly, you've taught me how to be a vessel of Christ. I look forward to paying it forward to you in your "hour of need." I'm so grateful for the many blessings of the angels on earth in this church. *Gratefully yours, Michele Cold*



# Mission

*“Enjoy the little things, for one day you may look back and realize they were the big things.”  
Robert Brault*

Thank-you to everyone that participated in recent mission events including Socktober, thanks to military and front line workers, Peacemaking (PCUSA and Valor home) LCM pasta dinner and the Thanksgiving financial and food donations. It is amazing what we have been able to do by working together and thinking about things in a different way.

Leon has expressed his gratitude for all the donations of bedding and clothing this fall. His church St. John UCC, in Lorain has postponed clothing donations until further notice.



## CHRISTMAS JOY

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

CHURCH LEADERS—PAST, PRESENT, AND FUTURE

In December, we will be participating in the annual Christmas Joy offering beginning December 20th. [Christmas Joy](#) is an opportunity to help current and retired "church workers" with emergency and overwhelming expenses. The link will help explain in detail the many ways you may help.

Our Christmas Eve offerings will be going to [Guatemalafamilydevelopment](#). This is an opportunity to help Guatemalan families educate their children while dealing with extremely challenging obstacles. Yes these are some of the same kids we helped last Christmas. Please take a moment to go the website to learn the stories of these determined people. Special thanks to Kathy Leopold and Michele Cold for sharing this story with us. Please keep the people of Guatemala in your prayers. As always, with special donations, you can simply mark your check, envelope or electronic payment with the various mission name like Christmas Joy or Christmas Guatemala.

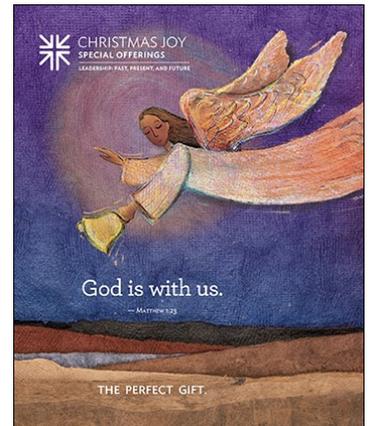
We have been sharing mission related information with a group of Westside churches in Cuyahoga County. They sent a special request that we pass on this information. As is the case with many groups, donations are not at the usual level. The link provides all the information needed for making a donation. [Socks in the city](#) They work to provide socks, shoes, school clothes, etc. for children in the Cleveland area. They have a special focus on students in temporary housing to help them stay in their home school.

What will January bring? How about hats, mittens and scarves. Information will be in the January *Saints Alive!*

We are grateful for the encouragement and support we receive from our church family and the Cornerstone staff and students, Tarra and the youth ministries.

We will miss seeing you this Christmas.

**Merry Christmas and a Healthy New Year, Kathy L, Kathy H, Kathy N, Beth J, Jenni S, Jen G, Marian C, Michele C, Jackie D, Sue M, Cris T and all the members of the Prayer Shawl Ministry.**



## Annual Meeting of the Congregation

**Sunday, January 31, 2021 on Zoom**

The purpose of the meeting is

- to vote on the Pastor's "terms of call"
- to elect Elders, Deacons and a Trustee
- to elect the 2021-2022 Nominating Committee.
- to review the reports of all the committees
- To review the 2020 Annual Report

# Property Committee

Just to be safe, I would like to make sure everyone knows that by the time they get this article a lot could have changed, but you never know.

This Saturday, a few of us spent the morning cleaning off as many leaves as well as we could. It's a pretty long area on the north side of our church but it looked very good when we finished. Thanks to Gary Uhl, Jeff Spenzer, and Paul Butrey. Hmm good thing we had a wind storm Sunday!

I have spoken with Todd Gehmann who represents Next Step Ministries. I explained to Todd that we expect to renovate our bathrooms in late May or early June. Session will decide on Monday 11-16 if we ask Next Step to postpone their mission work at our church until 2022. ( Also, that we do not have a date for the opening of our church to the public) This has been discussed with the Property Committee and it was felt that the renovation would make Next Step's visit very uncomfortable. Todd told me that he understood and would just like to find out as quickly as he can so he can arrange an alternative site. Please call me with any thoughts you may have.

I have spoken with a representative of Constellation. They are a broker who will try and get a good price for gas and electric businesses. At the time of this article, we do not have any quotes yet but expect them in the next few days. I find that a bit interesting but all I really want do is save our church some money.

Just so everyone knows, I have spoken with four construction companies who told me they would work up a quote for the bathroom renovation. They all say the quote would not be final but a close estimation of costs. There is the possibility that there may be some surprises in regards to the individual work that is needed. We will start with a quote and go from there.

The coat closets in the foyer did not include a space for banners. Banners were being stored in the sound room. Storage for sound room equipment was needed. There is also space for coats in the entryway.



We are still looking for a painter for the sanctuary. We would like to have the painter arranged when we get the go ahead to begin the work. Please contact me if you have any painters you know of that may want the job.

We will end with a puzzle, of sorts:  
Who is shown on the \$100.00 bill?

The first person that knows and calls me wins a prize (as soon as I can figure out what it is).

Be Well, Jim Janis  
522-9496

*Cornerstone Preschool Registration for 2021-2022 School year*  
*ALPC families—November 23*  
*Current Cornerstone Students—November 30*  
*General Public—January 4*

# Deacon News

Hello ALPC,

So, it's almost December already. 2020 will go down as a memorable year for sure. The year has been trying for all of us, but I can't say it has been all bad. Yes, it disrupted many Deacon functions like Family Feud, Easter and Christmas breakfasts and other fun stuff, but it made me appreciate how good I had it with free visitation with my family, friends and church family. I won't take that for granted (hopefully) in the future. Think about Christians worldwide who have to worship in isolation every day of every year.

Learning new things can be exciting. We had a joint Deacon/Session meeting to look at new ways to deal with being isolated. We brainstormed the idea of a community Christmas tree in the ALPC foyer where church members can put a family ornament on the tree as a way of feeling connected. As you probably heard, before this newsletter went out, Deacons will help by picking up ornaments from isolated members and families who want to contribute and delivering candles. Sherry Thompson will be heading this up for the Deacons.

Deacons continue to reach out to shut-ins. If you need anything, contact any Deacon listed below or the church office.

Mike Reighard, Sybil Wendling, Cathy Graves, Mike Ciarrone, Shawn Brunner, Joy Harris, Jeff Spenzer, Craig Shoemaker, Sherry Thompson, Sandy Seib, Nancy Baldwin, Madeline Waggoner

As we approach this Christmas season, maybe isolation is a blessing in disguise. We can take this opportunity to simplify the season. Instead of rushing around getting things done, we can write a note to a friend or call them. Revisit the Bethlehem story in different ways or just sit back and look at the Christmas tree enjoying its beauty. It will be a different Christmas Eve worship but watching the service in front of a warm fire in the fireplace has some appeal to it.



I wish you the best for the season and remember:

“Let your hope keep you joyful, be patient in your troubles, and always pray” (Romans 12:12).

Sincerely, Mike Reighard, Deacon Moderator

## Nomination for Church Officer

It's that time of the year when we look for candidates for church leadership, which includes Elders, Deacons and Trustees. We have a Nominating Committee who will meet to talk about the leadership positions that will be coming available in 2021.

*Help the nominating committee with your prayerful **recommendations of promising candidates** for church leadership using the following criteria:*

**Christian Faith**—A personal relationship with God – Evidence of grace and compassion and regular attendance at worship.

**General Churchmanship**—A member in good standing – Participation in church activities.

**Christian Living in Daily Life**—Within the family – At work – In the Community.

**Personal Characteristics and Skills**—Cooperativeness – Willingness to learn – Ability to follow through on assignments – Openness to new ideas – Maturity of judgment.

**Email your suggestions to [alpresby@avonlakepc.org](mailto:alpresby@avonlakepc.org).**



# Cornerstone Director, Julie Erker



*On the first day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*A Jet Pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the second day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the third day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the fourth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the fifth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the sixth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the seventh day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*7 stressed out teachers, 6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the eighth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*8 bottles of Lysol, 7 stressed out teachers, 6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the ninth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*9 misplaced masks, 8 bottles of Lysol, 7 stressed out teachers, 6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the tenth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*10 muffled chapters, 9 misplaced masks, 8 bottles of Lysol, 7 stressed out teachers, 6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the eleventh day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*11 zoom malfunctions, 10 muffled chapters, 9 misplaced masks, 8 bottles of Lysol, 7 stressed out teachers, 6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

*On the twelfth day of Christmas the corona virus sent to me...*

*12 rolls of toilet paper, 11 zoom malfunctions, 10 muffled chapters, 9 misplaced masks, 8 bottles of Lysol, 7 stressed out teachers, 6 feet apart, 5 hand washings a day, 4 temperature takers, 3 portable sinks, 2 latex gloves and a jet pack J-u-l-i-e*

**Where did the food go? Did the turkey gobble it all up?**



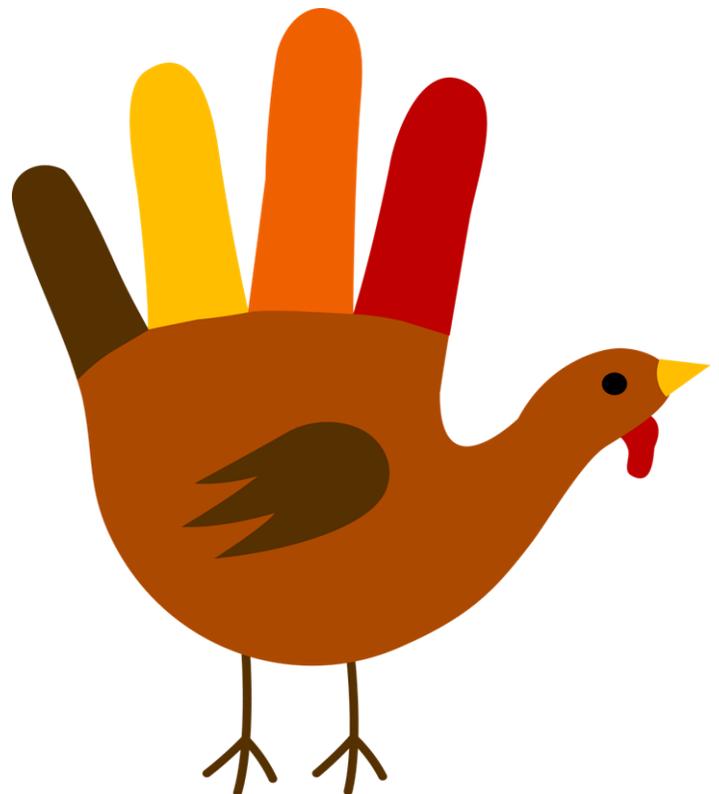
**Lots of the food taken to C.R.S. to be shared with more families from our neighborhoods.**



**No, the turkey did not gobble up the food. Some was shared with our friends that needed some extra food.**



**Happy Thanksgiving!**



## From Deacon Nancy Baldwin

This monthly ALPC newsletter is a great communication tool that seems to work for everyone. Children too! No special technology is required so all can be included. We would like to add a new “share your story” page to the newsletter. Missing being close while we are apart due to the pandemic has been hard for our church family, and of course we all have stories to tell.

To create this “share your story page,” a topic will be selected for the upcoming month prior to printing the newsletter.

**SHARE  
YOUR  
STORY**



This doesn't mean that phone calls, email, and real mail should be curtailed. It's an addition to communication not a subtraction from our toolbox of ideas for keeping in touch.

Steps to accomplish:

- ⇒ To start, a topic will be printed in the January newsletter.
- ⇒ Responses that tell your story can be emailed, mailed or dropped off in the church office.
- ⇒ The responses should be received in the church office (alpresby@avonlakepc.org) by January 14<sup>th</sup> in order to be printed in the February **Saints Alive!**
- ⇒ Regarding the scheduled topic, responses can be written in the style of a journal entry, a personal experience, reflections on a sermon series, pictures you have drawn, etc.

**Topic for February:** *What is your favorite name for Jesus?*

**Example:** Jesus: our Savior, Shepherd and Redeemer

Three roles, three names, and yes, Jesus has so many more names. My favorite name is Shepherd.

**John 10:27** “My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me:”

Jesus the Good Shepherd, spoke to His sheep. But in order to follow, sheep must listen. He will call them to green pastures, but what if the wind is blowing or there are other louder noises competing for their attention? If contact is lost, a sheep can become one of the lost sheep that the Shepherd is bound to seek out. The Shepherd walks in front of His sheep so He may also be followed by sight. But, what if it's foggy or the sheep are backed up because of an obstruction along the way? Or worse yet, what if these sheep have minds of their own and go their own way? He will no doubt rescue the lost ones. The Shepherd meets all the needs of the sheep. He finds water, food, safety, and even does shearing. It does make you wonder why sheep would even consider being anywhere but with the Shepherd. Shepherds had a somewhat low social standing and they were often cared for by the youngest son in a family. In the case of Jesus, as the only Son, He humbles Himself to do this loving task of caring, and in our case guide us back to dwell in the presence of the living God.

**John 10:11** “The Good Shepherd lays down his life for the sheep.”

**1Peter 5:4** “And when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will win the crown of glory that will never fade away. “

**Dear Jesus, Thank you for being our Shepherd. We are grateful for your use of parables to teach us. You are the name above all names. Amen**

**Topic for March will be “What is an experience you have had that connected you to God in nature?”**

*Nancy Baldwin*

## Information

### Saints Alive Articles due to Cindi at [alpresby@avonlakepc.org](mailto:alpresby@avonlakepc.org):

January issue due on Tuesday, December 15  
 February issue due on Friday, January 15  
 March issue due on Monday, February 15  
 April issue due on Monday, March 15  
 May issue due on Thursday, April 15  
 Summer issue due on Saturday, May 15



## ALPC Birthdays

*We thought you would like to know whose birthdays fall in December, so these are the members that we know. If you have a birthday in December and you aren't listed here, please let Cindi in the church office (440-933-6240) know and you will be put on the list for next year!*



|                  |             |
|------------------|-------------|
| Ellie Doran      | December 1  |
| Kathy Navarro    | December 1  |
| Laura Callahan   | December 3  |
| Noel Peel        | December 3  |
| Rusty Beck       | December 5  |
| Marcy Uhl        | December 9  |
| Jenni Stryczny   | December 12 |
| John Mills       | December 12 |
| Adam Mills       | December 13 |
| Grace Knox       | December 15 |
| Trent Waggoner   | December 20 |
| Gary Uhl         | December 24 |
| Georgia Weeden   | December 26 |
| Ann Lee Loescher | December 27 |
| Sheryl Dickey    | December 28 |
| Megan Barnes     | December 29 |
| Lee Lohr         | December 30 |

## Our 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.

## Church Office Hours

### The church office will be closed

Every Friday,  
Christmas Day and  
Monday, December 28

### Sunday Worship 10:00 am

[www.Facebook.com/avonlakepc](http://www.Facebook.com/avonlakepc)—For the Live service  
Search YouTube for Avon Lake Presbyterian Church Worship  
for the video after the service

**(440) 933-6240**

Church email address: [alpresby@avonlakepc.org](mailto:alpresby@avonlakepc.org)

Church website: [www.avonlakechurch.com](http://www.avonlakechurch.com)

|                                   |                        |              |
|-----------------------------------|------------------------|--------------|
| Pastor                            | Rev. Charles E. Swartz | 440-522-5484 |
| Custodian                         | Carl Douglas           |              |
| Director of Children's Ministries | Tarra Oppewall         | 440-915-5817 |
| Director of Music Ministry        | Rick Fortney           | 440-724-7189 |
| Director of Preschool             | Julie Erker            | 400-933-7646 |
| Financial Secretary               | Lynn Morway            |              |
| Lock-up Custodian                 | Ed Homer               |              |
| Maintenance                       | Phil Stryczny          |              |
| Office Administrator              | Cindi Dansizen         | 440-231-3528 |
| Treasurer                         | Marcy Uhl              | 440-724-7000 |