

Avon Lake Presbyterian Church

www.avonlakechurch.com

“Friends in Christ, Serving Together with Love”

Fourth Sunday in Lent

10:00 am

March 19, 2023



“Grant me the serenity to accept the things
I cannot change, the courage to change
the things I can, and the wisdom to know
the difference.”

- unknown

 Hearing assistance available: FM receivers and earpieces stored near AV room near the right-side door to the sanctuary. See sound technician in AV room with questions.

Coffee House worship available in CE Foyer in the education wing. Sanctuary worship live streamed in a smaller, more casual environment. Coffee available.

PRELUDE

My Shepherd Will Supply My Need (RESIGNATION)

Mark Hayes
And Douglas E. Wagner

Come, thou Fount of Every Blessing (NETTLETON) Traditional American Melody
John Wyeth

Sherry Spenzer, bassoon

CHORAL INTROIT

And the Father Will Dance

Mark Hayes

“Awake my soul and sing... my spirit rejoice in God!”

WELCOME

THRESHOLD MOMENT

I Have Decided to Follow Jesus

Folk Melody from India
Arr. Mark Hayes

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: You have come to a community of love and hospitality.

All: Here, God entreats us to see strangers as angels in disguise.

One: You have come to a community of worship.

All: Here, praising God is more important than puffing ourselves up.

One: Here, you are God’s honored guest.

OPENING PRAYER

All: Here we are before you, God, either poor in pocket or poor in spirit – confidently, unashamedly here, because you invited us. Here we are God, knowing firsthand what it is like to be maimed and handicapped by life, yet welcomed in your presence. Here we are again, God, like John Newton, once blind but now able to see. For your invitation to be part of your family and part of this family, we thank you. May we be eager to extend the same welcome, and the same hospitality, to others in your name. Amen.

PRAYER OF CONFESSION *(please take a moment of silence for personal reflection)*

All: God, we come to you today confessing our love of the first chair. The seeds of “healthy competition” sown in childhood have borne misshapen fruit in adulthood. We love the best seats, bask in recognition, and covet the “edge” that brings us honor. Forgive us, God, when our competitiveness yields more pride than excellence. Forgive us, God, when we forget that we work for you, and not for ourselves. Forgive us, God, when we forget that humility and hospitality are close relatives, and that those who would be your disciples are called to hold hands with the stranger. Make us less eager to fight for power and position and more willing to make room for those who have neither name nor strength. Amen.

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: Those who exalt themselves will be humbled, but those who humble themselves will be exalted. In faith, you have made your humble confession before the living God who continues to offer us forgiveness through Jesus Christ, who is the same yesterday, today, and forever. In the name of Jesus Christ, you are forgiven. Amen.

***PASSING OF THE PEACE**

One: We, who have received mercy, should offer mercy to others. With clean hearts and renewed spirits, let us rejoice in God’s peace as we share the peace of Christ with each other. May the peace of Christ be with you all.

All: And also with you.

CHANCEL CHOIR ANTHEM

The Artist

Craig Courtney

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

Create in Me a Clean Heart, Oh God

Keith Green

All: Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me,
Create in me a clean heart, oh God
And renew a right spirit within me.
Cast me not away from Thy presence, oh Lord
And take not Thy holy spirit from me,
Restore unto me the joy of Thy salvation
And renew a right spirit within me. (2x)
And renew a right spirit within me.

LORD’S PRAYER *(as borrowed from Bethany Presbyterian Church)*

All: Awesome, Loving, Creator God who is always available to us.
We give thanks for your grace and many blessings.
Help us to align our will with Yours, and be open
to receive the many blessings You shower upon us.
Make us instruments of Your peace that we may
always treat others the way we desire to be treated.
Help us to reconcile our wrongs and offer
reconciliation to those who have wronged us.
Help us to relinquish our burdens and lift us up.
In times of trial, let us be aware of Your presence and support.
May we always live in ways pleasing to you. Amen.

SCRIPTURE READING

[Hebrews 13:1-8, 15-16; Luke 14:7-24](#)

Margre Lind-Mills

SERMON

“Again, It’s About Choices”

Pastor Rick Stein

***OFFERING/DOXOLOGY**

Praise God, from Whom All Blessings Flow

No. 606

***OFFERTORY PRAYER**

HANDBELL ANTHEM

O Sacred Head, Now Wounded

Hans Leo Hassler
Arr. Arnold B. Sherman

*"They...twisted together a cross of thorns and set it on Him."
Mark 15:17*

BENEDICTION

One: Each week we remind ourselves

All: to go out into the world. Return no one evil for evil, strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, and honor every person. Every person. And rejoice in the Lord always.

One: And now may the grace of our Lord, Jesus Christ, the love of God, and the fellowship of the Holy Spirit, be with each of you, all your loved ones, and all your concerns, now and forever. Amen.

BENEDICTION RESPONSE

And the Father Will Dance

Mark Hayes

"And He will joy over you in song... God rejoices over you in Song!"

POSTLUDE

How Firm a Foundation (FOUNDATION)

Setting by Sam Batt Owens

**Please stand if you are able.*

Welcome to Avon Lake Presbyterian Church!

*"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."*

As you join us for worship at Avon Lake Presbyterian Church, we hope that you will sense God's presence, be caught up in joyful praise, be challenged by God's Word and leave strengthened to live for Christ in the world. In the event you need to step out of the Sanctuary, speaker systems are in both the foyer and the nursery so that you may listen to the worship service. When leaving the Sanctuary during the service, take care to close the door softly.

If you feel you would like a call or visit from Pastor Rick, please contact the church office (440-933-6240).

Please silence cell phones during our worship services.

Offerings may be given through SimpleGive and are always appreciated. Scan this code with your smartphone to easily access SimpleGive.



A recent train derailment in northeastern Ohio traumatized some residents and exposed a subject that many people don't think about from day to day: What hazardous chemicals are traveling through my community? The Rev. Fritz Nelson, who pastors [First United Presbyterian Church-East Palestine](#) and [First Presbyterian Church-Columbiana](#), has felt the unease among residents after the train derailment in the East Palestine area. Not just coping with leaving their homes but the unease about perceived reality and official statements about their safety coming back. Churches, such as the ones that Nelson pastors, and organizations, such as [The Way Station](#), banded together to provide assistance, including gift cards, microwave-friendly meals, a community dinner, and a giveaway of cleaning supplies and water, Nelson said last week. Also, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance awarded an initial assistance grant to help. "We are working with [Presbyterian Disaster Assistance](#) to think about long-term response and what that will be," Nelson said. (Paraphrased from the PCUSA website) Any mission committee member will be happy to assist with this offering. Donation envelopes are available on the offering table.

One Great Hour of Sharing: Our donations to One Great Hour of Sharing are used in many ways. Avon Lake Presbyterian Mission Committee chose to highlight two areas. The first is the [Presbyterian Hunger Program](#). More than \$1.2 million in grants were distributed in 2022 to address hunger and its root causes, from Florida to Madagascar. The grants, which will benefit organizations and projects in about 22 countries, including the United States. This funding will enable community gardening projects large and small, clean water systems and sustainable food programs worldwide. You may use envelopes from the offering table for your donations. Any mission committee member will be glad to assist you.

A New Thing: What does that mean for us personally, as we navigate through Lent, and as a church, as we discern our future path and new leadership? What wonderful changes are ahead as we rededicate our lives to Christ, both in our thinking and in our doing? On Sunday, March 26th, Pastor Rick's sermon is titled "A New Thing". Our "new" thing that day will be a mission opportunity in the narthex during our fellowship time. We will all have an opportunity to pack hygiene bags and prepare cards of love for homeless veterans at Valor Home and Haven Center Homeless Shelter. Please join us as we become Christ's hands on earth in service to others. For this event, we have pre-purchased hygiene items.

Another New Thing: We plan to continue to collect needed items that we will be passing on to the Front Door Ministry and other spots serving the homeless in Lorain. For that, we will be collecting small/sample-size containers of hygiene products (shampoo, bar soap, sunscreen, toothbrushes, toothpaste, sanitizing wipes, deodorant, etc. (No razors please) Donations may be left in the basket at the foot of the narthex cross. Questions? Please see Beth Janis or any member of the Mission team.

Jim and Sharon Smucker have moved! Their new address is: 545 Shuford Circle Drive, Newton, NC 28658

Join us for a group hike! Sunday March 26th at 2:00pm. We will meet in the French Creek Nature Center parking lot for fellowship and fresh air. The address is: 4530 Colorado Ave, Sheffield.

Volunteers needed! If you are interested in baking cookies for future memorial services, please contact Kathy Navarro at (440-670-3210). She is putting together a list of people to be called upon when the need arises.

Joan Metzger has moved! Her new address is 33200 Health Campus Blvd. #267, Avon, OH 44011

A memorial service for Donna Bradley will take place Monday, March 20 at Busch Funeral Home in Avon Lake. Visitation will precede the service, beginning at 3:00pm, also at Busch. The service will begin at 6:00pm.

Join us for Easter Breakfast! Sunday, April 9 at 9:00am (8:30am for choir members). Join us in Hart Hall for egg casseroles, fruit, donut holes, juice, and coffee before the Easter worship service. Please RSVP on the sing-up sheet in the narthex or contact Kenzi in the church office.

Please keep in your prayers this week...

All those who have been affected by cancer, either personally or through loved ones. Pray for Joyce Bihary's daughter, **Brenda**, and Eddie Lou Bush's daughter, **Betsy**. Pray for Pastor Rick's brother, **Kent**, and Susan Richardson's niece, **Jeananne**.

The family and friend of **Donna Bradley** who will pay their respects and say their final goodbyes. Donna went home to the Lord on March 10, 2023.

This Week at the Church

- Monday:** Walking Group meets at the church at 8:30am. Visiting hours for Donna Bradley will begin at 3:00pm at Busch Funeral Home in Avon Lake, followed by a memorial Service at 6:00pm.
- Tuesday:** The church staff will meet at 10:00am. Ruth Yarn Ministry will meet at 11:00am in the narthex.
- Wednesday:** Walking Group meets at the church at 8:30am. Handbell choir will practice in the sanctuary at 6:30pm, followed by Chancel Choir at 8:00pm.
- Friday:** Walking Group meets at the church at 8:30am.
- Saturday:** OSL will meet 9:00am-12:30pm at the church.
- Next Sunday:** Worship begins at 10:00am. Articles for Saint's Alive! are due.
- Birthdays:** Andrew Butrey, 3/20; Carter Knox, 3/20; Barb Hall, 3/22; Terry Vine, 3/23; Joe Cockburn, 3/25; Gail Kucharson, 3/25

Chancel Choir

Dave Brunner
Ed Carter
Gail Carter
Doug Day
Jackie Day
Mike Dean
Clayton Dusek
Tammy Dusek

Joan Wojcicki Fortney
Barbara Graves
Cathy Graves
Jeff Hansen
Ed Homer
Marcia Lucietta
Sue Mabe
Jan Mackert
Muriel Homer, accompanist

Bob Palisin
Sharon Pervo
Susan Richardson
Beth Shoemaker
Linda Swartz
Marcy Uhl
Sarah Waggoner

Handbell Choir

Dave Brunner
Ed Carter
Gail Carter
Doug Day
Cheryl Dean

Joan Wojcicki Fortney
Barbara Graves
Cathy Graves
Muriel Homer
Jan Mackert
Kathy Navarro

Sharon Pervo
Beth Shoemaker
Sherry Spenzer
Linda Swartz
Sarah Waggoner

Volunteers Today

Greeters
Worship Assistant
Projections Team
Sound Board
Ushers

Nancy & Skip Albrecht
Margre Lind-Mills
John Mills, Beth Shoemaker
Mike Ciaronne
Shawn Brunner, Jim Hough

Church Staff

Transitional Minister
Director of Music Ministry
Director of Preschool
Treasurer
Office Administrator
Lock Up Custodian

Rev. Rick Stein
Rick Fortney
Julie Erker
Marcy Uhl
Kenzi Roberts
Ed Homer

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