



Worship Schedule

Sunday, December 7:

Second Sunday in Advent

Join us for worship at **9:30 and 11:00 am**

Sunday, December 14:

Third Sunday in Advent

Join us for worship at **9:30 and 11:00 am**

Greetings from The Heart ... Living Christmas Cards **6:00 pm**

Read more about our Christmas Program on pg. 7

Sunday, December 21:

Fourth Sunday in Advent

Lessons and Carols **11:00 am**

Please note just one morning service.

Christmas Eve —Wednesday, December 24:

Family Service **6:00 pm**

Beau Dansizen, Interim Youth Director, and the Confirmation Class will bring the message of Christmas to the children*.

Traditional Candlelight Service

8:00 & 11:00 pm

Rev. Robinson will lead the services.

Sunday, December 28:

Dr. Malcolm Peel will preach at **11:00 am**

Please note just one morning service.

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*Our new Youth Director, Beau Dansizen, will be working with Pastor Tom and Muriel to develop the Christmas Eve family service at 6 pm on December 24th. This service will help us worship our Lord using gifts that God has bestowed on our youth right here at ALPC. It will include piano and vocal performances from our youth, and the Confirmation Class will take part in the preparation and the readings. Beau will gather the attending children up front and tell a Christmas story in his special way. Beautiful music and an evening with our youth should prove to be a fun way for us all to worship God on the eve of this most glorious holiday!

Message from Pastor Tom

Over the next several weeks we will receive many cards, letters and packages from friends and loved ones. It is a great time of year to re-connect, to hear from people we haven't heard from since, well, last Advent-Christmas time.

When this happens, it is like these people break back into our lives again. Maybe they are family, maybe they are long-time friends, maybe they are folks you went to school with and haven't seen since. They have drifted out of your life. But now they are planted back into it again, and I hope that your experience is like mine when that happens: It is always a delight to hear from them, to let their love touch me again.

In these days leading up to Christmas, there are many words that we use to describe what we are doing – preparation, anticipation, coming (what the word 'advent' means). One word that also describes what this time of year is all about, but which we very rarely use, is the word incarnation.

We think of incarnation as having something to do with God. During our annual Lessons and Carols service, the very last lesson is titled "St. John unfolds the mystery of the Incarnation." In that lesson, we read the first 18 verses of the first chapter of John's gospel, the wonderful words that tell us that "...the Word became flesh and lived among us...full of grace and truth." (John 1:14)

Another way of looking at incarnation is in the name Emmanuel – God with us. This is the time of year when we celebrate God

coming to us, and dwelling in our midst in the life of one person, Jesus the Christ. It is God breaking into our worlds, dwelling fully, taking on every part of the human experience, and blessing it with God's love and grace.

In my work of listening and discovering ways that a new understanding of the church is 'emerging' from our culture, one term that is used a lot is the term incarnation. This is especially true for those who embrace the church's call to be missional, to be 'sent out' with the good news of Jesus Christ. The thought is that the church is called to incarnational – to be the means by which God still dwells among the people God has created, and blessing them with the grace and truth of Jesus Christ.

What does that mean in these days of Advent, leading up to the Christmas season? It means living out the love of Christ, even as we go elbow-to-elbow with other shoppers; it means looking at the future with hope, even in the midst of an economic crisis which dominates the headlines and our attention; it means loving even those with whom we have issues – our neighbors, our family members, our co-workers, those in authority over us, those who look to us for authority.

As we journey through Advent, I pray that you will not only look for incarnation, ways in which God is present through Christ in your lives; I also pray that you – and I – will be the means by which God's love in Christ touches the world, and all those who live in it.

What better Christmas present could there be?
Grace and peace,

Tom

Mission Matters

Reminder!

The bags for the Lorain County Paper Products which were passed out on Sunday, November 30th, should be returned on Sunday, December 7th. Thank you for your help.

As I write yet another paragraph for another much deserving charity, I feel a bit overwhelmed. This time of year, in particular, is a time when many of us feel we would like to share our gifts with others. The blessings of our families, homes and jobs seem more precious when we compare ourselves to others that have so little. It seems unfair when we think of children without Christmas toys, families without holiday dinners and folks in the cold as winter arrives. It is also a time of year that can bring feelings of guilt and obligation.

Well, I hope that you can think of it more in the way of choices. Whether you are able to donate a little or a lot, the idea is for it to be something that touches your heart. Maybe you can manage to add some groceries to the food boxes, or write a check to help out retired Pastors, or donate your time to Family Promise, whatever you do, it should be about what you are able to do with a touch of joy. If you have questions about any of the special offerings, you may contact Beth Janis 933-5621 for Mission Matters.



Christmas Joy Offering

December 14th

Fifty percent of the donations made to the Christmas Joy Offering are distributed to the [Board of Pensions](#) for assistance programs that provide support to retired and active church workers and their spouses and families

The other fifty percent supports [Presbyterian-related racial ethnic education](#) through the National Ministries Division of the General Assembly Council. This includes schools like Knoxville College, Knoxville, TN, Stillman College in Tuscaloosa, AL and Menaul School in Albuquerque, NM. Checks may be made payable to ALPC with "Joy Offering" noted on your check. There are envelopes you may use for this special contribution in the pews.

The Christmas Offering

December 21st

will once again go to Family Promise. This is the Lorain county branch of the Interfaith Hospitality Network that our church embraces. Not only can we help by providing a safe place for families to stay but we can help with the many programs Family Promise offers to the families to find their way to housing. Checks for this special offering may be made to ALPS with Family Promise in the memo portion.

STEWARDSHIP CORNER

Thank you to everyone who participated in this year's pledge campaign. Even though we typically emphasize financial gifts during our pledge campaigns, the pledge cards also include an opportunity to pledge time and talent. The Stewardship Committee designed the cards this way because we believe that Christian stewardship involves giving our whole selves to God. In this issue of *Saint's Alive!* you will find many opportunities to participate in the life of the church through service, fellowship and worship. We encourage you to take advantage of these opportunities to connect with other members of the congregation as well as with God. As we grow in relationships, we grow in faith and strengthen Christ's church. Please commit yourselves to participating in at least one or two of the opportunities offered as you read *Saints Alive!*

Reminder: You may give your financial pledge through on-line banking. After logging in, have your gifts sent to:
Avon Lake Presbyterian Church
Attn: Church Treasurer
32340 Electric Blvd
Avon Lake, OH 44012
If you need more detailed instructions, contact Lee Lohr (934-6757) or Chris Chase (930-2928).

**Thank you to everyone who has made a pledge for 2009.
If you haven't yet turned in your pledge, there is still time.
Extra pledge cards may be found in the pews.**

Mil Gracias!

My trip to Estelí, Nicaragua was wonderful! Thank you so much for the opportunity to represent ALPC. Our team of 17 flew from Cleveland to Houston to Managua and then had a three hour bus ride north on the Pan American Highway to Estelí. Shalom Presbyterian Church welcomed us with open arms. Throughout the week, we worked on Pastor Emerson Wilson's new home-I hauled my share of lava rock! Most of our time was spent in the barrios-neighborhoods-with the children and their families spreading the Good News. It is amazing to see how poor the Nicas are: but they are so very rich in spirit.

My main mission representing ALPC was to deliver the books you so generously donated to Shalom Presbyterian. I was able to purchase many more books at two book stores in Estelí. Your donations were able to provide almost 200 books for their new church library. They are also having made, with your help, a nice bookcase in which to secure the books. They were truly overwhelmed by your awesome gift. It was my pleasure to deliver it. Thank you again for your loving contributions to this project. I hope ALPC will be able to add to their library in the years to come.

I am looking forward to reporting to our congregation about this mission trip.

Con Carino,
Kathy Leopold



Advent Materials for the Whole Family

We have two family activities to choose from this year. They will both be on the table in the foyer beginning November 23rd. Feel free to take as many copies as you can put to use and have a very blessed Advent!

Preparing for Jesus – an Advent calendar
In Thy Dark Streets Shinneth – a book of sticker fun

Library Update

Unplug the Christmas Machine – Ways to make Christmas more meaningful and less commercial are proposed. Ways to enjoy Christmas with changes in family structure or no family at all are also discussed.

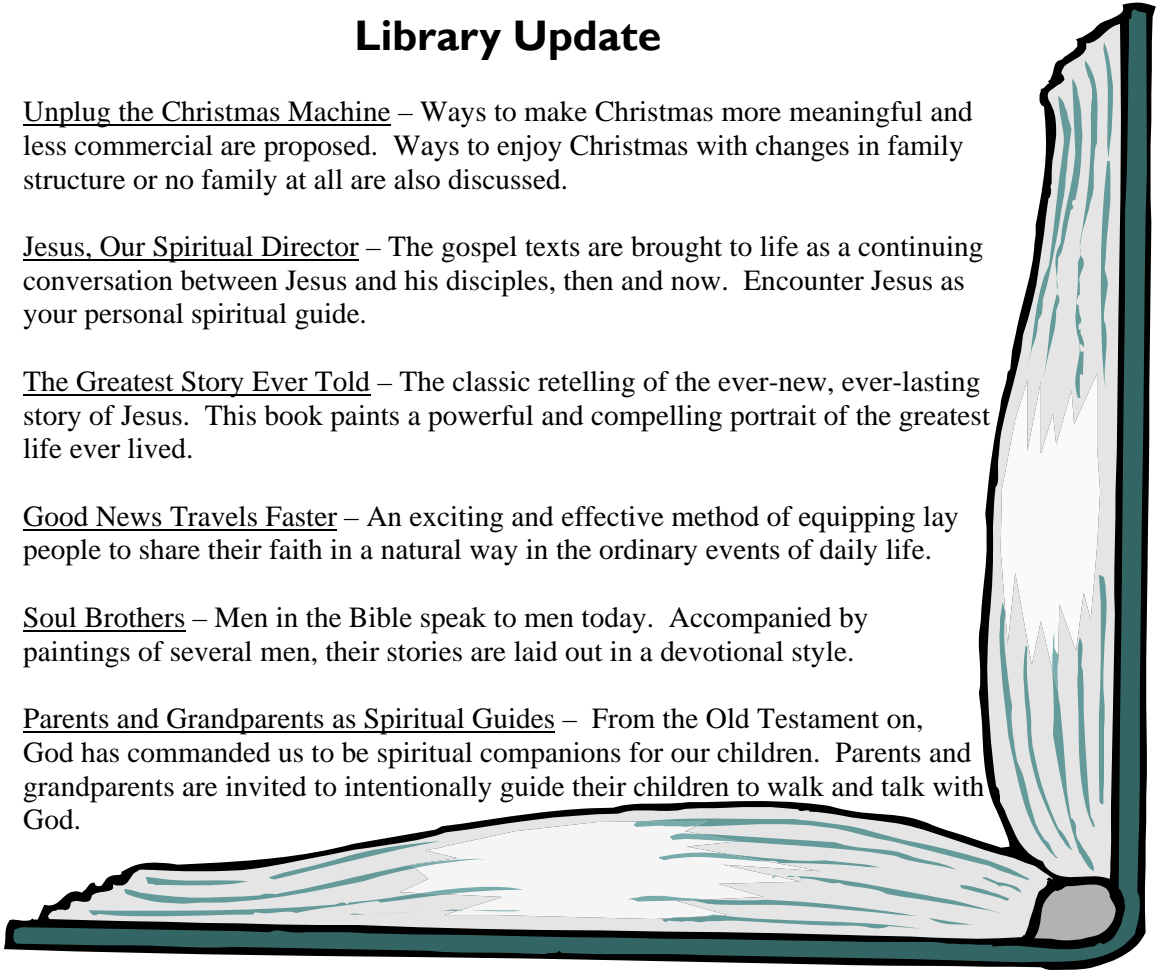
Jesus, Our Spiritual Director – The gospel texts are brought to life as a continuing conversation between Jesus and his disciples, then and now. Encounter Jesus as your personal spiritual guide.

The Greatest Story Ever Told – The classic retelling of the ever-new, ever-lasting story of Jesus. This book paints a powerful and compelling portrait of the greatest life ever lived.

Good News Travels Faster – An exciting and effective method of equipping lay people to share their faith in a natural way in the ordinary events of daily life.

Soul Brothers – Men in the Bible speak to men today. Accompanied by paintings of several men, their stories are laid out in a devotional style.

Parents and Grandparents as Spiritual Guides – From the Old Testament on, God has commanded us to be spiritual companions for our children. Parents and grandparents are invited to intentionally guide their children to walk and talk with God.



**THANK
YOU**

**WE SEND OUR THANK YOU FOR ALL THE PRAYERS AND CARDS THAT
WAS SENT DURING BOB'S TEST AND SURGERY.**

**IN CHRISTAIN LOVE,
JOYCE AND BOB NICOLA**

Advent

1st Sunday in Advent is November 30

It is a tradition during Advent for families to light the Advent candles at the beginning of the 9:30 and 11:00 worship services, as well as the Christmas Eve services. Each family is given a short script to read as they light the candles. The parts can be divided up any way the individual families want to divide them. We also would like to include unique family groupings such as Circles, Sunday school classes, a group of friends, or any combination of people who would like to share this experience together. If you are interested, please call Carolyn Dzuro at 933-6240 (at church) or e-mail her at cjdzuro@peoplepc.com.



Poinsettias are used to decorate our sanctuary during the Christmas season. If you would like to help out by purchasing a poinsettia, please use the order form that will be in the church bulletins for the next two weeks. Plants may be taken home after worship services on Christmas Eve.



Greetings from the Heart... Living Christmas Cards

This year's Christmas Program will be on Sunday, December 14th at 6:00 pm in the sanctuary. This program will feature children, teens and adults participating in a variety of stop action Christmas card scenes featuring holiday celebrations and the special Bethlehem night when Jesus was born.

While viewing "snap shots" of Christmas with holiday cards that come to life, the audience can also get involved as they sing a variety of Christmas carols. Please mark the date on your calendar and plan to attend this special event as we celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Financial Report

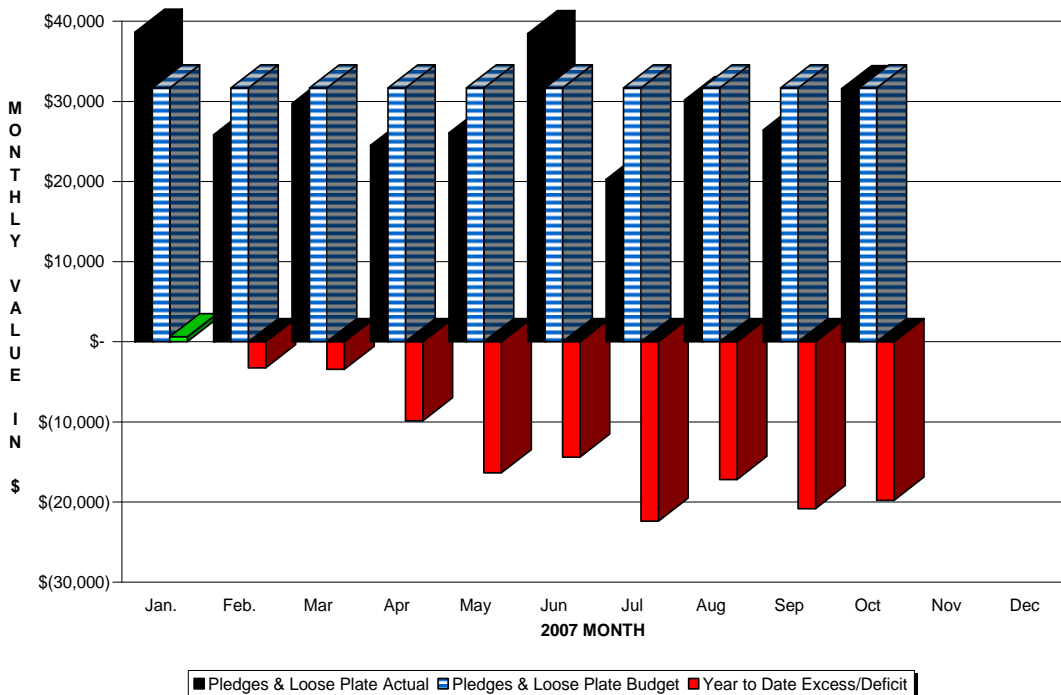
October ended with giving at almost budget level and our deficit being reduced by just over \$1,000. This performance was made possible by a large donation by one of our congregation in loving memory of a family member. In these very difficult financial times God reaches out to help us through the generosity of this special lady. We can choose to concentrate on the negative news of the world or we can put our faith in God. If we believe, he will provide for us.

Please join me in the faith that the Lord will provide if we trust in His power and accept and share His generosity.

As always, if you have any questions or suggestions, please see me at church or give me a call.

Bob Ralston
Finance Committee

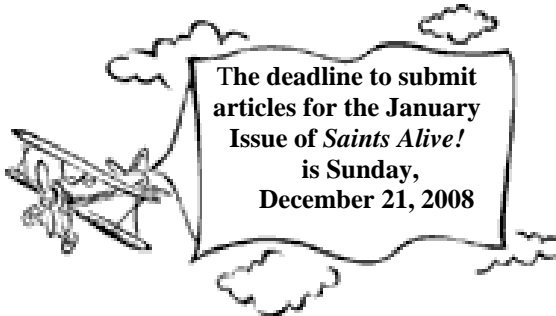
2008 ALPC FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE





2009 Budget

Copies of the Avon Lake Presbyterian Church proposed 2009 budget are on the table in the foyer if you would like to take one. If you have questions, ask Bob Ralston.



An invitation to all who want to sing Christmas carols:



Join your Avon Lake Presbyterian Church family Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 7, from 4:30—7:30 pm. The Deacons will have hot chocolate, hot cider and cookies when you get back to the church.

If you would like our ALPC Carolers to come and sing for you, or if you know of anyone who would enjoy it, please contact the church office at 933-6240 by Friday, December 5.



Children's Sermon

Would you like to make an eternal investment in the lives of the children of ALPC? We have a crew of people who enjoy sharing their faith with the children at the 9:30 worship service, but we're looking for more of you to volunteer. There's no scheduled commitment. You can give a sermon once a month or once a year - it's entirely up to you! So, if you think you might be interested, or have any questions, contact Carolyn Dzuro at 933-6240.

We welcome into our church family the following new members:

By Letter of Transfer:

- Mary Esther Barnes from Avon Lake United Church of Christ, Avon Lake, OH
- Albert Collins from Chapel Lane Presbyterian Church in Midland, MI
- Sheri Kellner from Bay Village Presbyterian, Bay Village, OH
- Ruth Riha from United Church of Christ, Sheffield Lake, OH
- Lisa Roberts from North Presbyterian Church, Williamsville, NY

By Reaffirmation of Faith:

Megan Barlow and Jenni Blomstrom

By Profession of Faith:

Lindsay Diehl

Please take the time to check out their pictures on the wall in the church foyer and make it a point to welcome our new members personally!



Nominations for Church Officer

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—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.

Please call the church office for a nomination form 933-6240.

Session Highlights November 17, 2008

Learned that:

- 152 persons received Communion in October.
- The Deacons are contacting members who have not been in worship for a while to say we miss them and offer help for any needs they have.
- The Annual Caroling Night will be on Dec. 7.
- 8 new members joined ALPC on Sunday, Nov. 16.
- The 2007 Audit of our finances was completed by Bryan Bridgett, who found everything to be in order.
- Our website is currently being updated.
- The Christmas Kids Musical/Theatrical will take place on Dec. 14.
Its title is "Greetings from the Heart...Living Christmas Cards."
- Pledges are continuing to come in, but we are still considerably below our budget goals.

Approved:

- Communion being served on the first Sunday of Advent, November 30, rather the first Sunday of December.
- Two "floating holidays" for the ALPC professional staff, to be scheduled before December 23.

Heard:

- From Carol Nussle that, by request of the Worship and Spiritual Life Committee, well over 100 ALPC families have been called and invited to be ushers, greeters, coffee servers, worship assistants, sound room technicians, and communion servers. The response was overwhelmingly positive; and, beginning in January, we will have an exciting, over-abundance of volunteers for these tasks. All will receive training.
- That Cornerstone will be using an additional room for one day a week.
- That the Human Resources Committee has put together a Need-Assessments Task Force to discern matters of staffing and lay leadership. This committee will serve in an advisory capacity to the Session.
- From Kathy Leopold about her Mission Trip to Estelí, Nicaragua. She will share its excitement with the congregation after the first of the year.
- From many Session Elders, an awareness of a new and growing vitality in ALPC.

Shirley Hook, Clerk of Session

Our Youth!

Youth Net

Youth Net continues in the month of December on an abbreviated schedule due to the upcoming holiday season. We have had a great month of November! Two weeks ago, the youth went out on a local mission to help some of the church members who could use a little assistance raking leaves. Here is the rest of the schedule:

November 23rd had us helping with the church's annual Hanging of the Greens.

November 30th there will be NO YOUTH NET.

December 7th we will be going along with some of the other church members to sing Christmas carols to those who could use a little extra Christmas cheer this holiday season.

December 14th is this year's Christmas Program, No regular Youth Net.

December 21st will be a great scavenger hunt around Avon Lake and the surrounding communities.

December 28th there will be NO YOUTH NET.

Senior High Bible Study/Discussion Group

In addition to the regular Youth Net, which is for Jr. High and Sr. High, there will be a bible study/discussion group for Senior High only. This group will meet on Tuesday evenings in different places around Avon Lake. Tuesday, November 25, we will meet at the Rio Cafe in Avon Lake at 7 pm. Discussion topics will be more in-depth than those during the regular Youth Net group meetings.



Confirmation Class

Confirmation class will **not** meet November 30th, December 21st or December 28th.

Presbyterian Women

PW Coordinating Team Meeting

December 18 — E-mail meeting

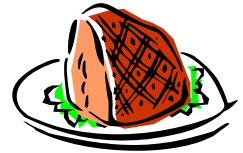


Presbyterian Women Giving Tree



This year's Giving Tree will be in the foyer from November 30—December 14. The Giving Tree will be set up in the foyer with one card for each person at Faith House. On the back of each card will be the first name of the child or adult, gender, age and the items on their Christmas Wish List. The items on each person's Wish List should not exceed a total of \$35. All you need to do is pick a card from the tree, and sign your name, phone number and Giving Tree card number on the Tracking Sheet next to the tree. Then, anytime between November 30 and December 13, purchase and wrap the items on the list. Please make sure that all gifts are at the church no later than Sunday, Dec. 14. Thank you for helping to give a little bit of Christmas magic to these families in need! Any questions, please contact Carolyn Rose at 933-0606.

Presbyterian Women will be selling Honey Baked Hams again this year for Christmas. Orders will be taken December 7 and 14 in the foyer. Delivery will be Tuesday, December 23. Please see Kathy Navarro or call 440-233-6214 if you have questions.



Snow Shoveling Help Needed

Fun for the whole family! We are looking for volunteers to sign up to be responsible for shoveling the snow from our sidewalks and doorways during the winter months. There is a sign up sheet in the foyer (or call the church office at 933-6240). You will need to bring your own snow shovel and have the sidewalks cleared by 8am Monday through Friday, by 10:30 am on Saturdays and by 8:30 am on Sunday mornings.



Coffee Servers



- Dec. 7** The Till Family
14 The Doughtry Family
21 Arlene Strauch and Ruth Weeks
28 We need you!
- Kathy Hamilton schedules our coffee servers. Please call her (933-2511) to volunteer for the last worship service of the year!



Faith House Mitten Tree THANK YOU!!

A very warm "THANK YOU" to all of those in the congregation who donated hats, gloves and scarves to the Faith House Mitten Tree! When I delivered the items to Faith House, they were overwhelmed with the generosity of our congregation.

Thank you so much for helping the families at Faith House to stay warm this winter!

Carolyn Rose
PW Mission Coordinator



Worship Assistants

- Dec 7** 9:30 Kathy Navarro
 11:00 Virginia Curlanis
14 9:30 Joe Bales
 11:00 Alan Wainscott
21 11:00 Lessons & Carols
28 11:00 Cheryl Dean



Sound Room Technicians

- Dec 7** 9:30 Gary Alshouse
 11:00 Scott Seipel
14 9:30 Mike Richardson
 11:00 John Early
21 11:00 Tony George

Christmas Eve:

- 6:00 pm To be announced
 8:00 pm Todd Galloway
 11:00 pm Gary Uhl

- 28** 11:00 Gary Uhl

**Gary Alshouse (933-5337)
schedules for the sound room.**

Prayer Concerns

Serving in our Armed Forces:

Derek Fabry, Jennifer Homer, Matt Homer, Jeff Leopold, Jamie Waddell, Derek Weeden, Wes Wiblin, Aaron Angel (Scott Hay's niece's husband), Brandon Abrams (son of a co-worker of Marian Conn), Bill Brown III (Sue Tompos' nephew), Ben Donberg (a nephew of the Monjots), Robert Glover (Carol Egna's brother), Patrick Harris (Betty Harris' grandson), Richard Hebert (father of Waverly, Grace and Mallory), Ian Houston (a friend of Scott Simmons), Todd and Brett Kirwan (friends of the Wiblin's), Scott Mahnke (Kristen Haynal Mahnke's husband), Michael Marron (Dina Doughtry's son-in-law), Mike Medvic (friend of Becky Betts), Mark and Cheryl Monjot's nephew, Brenda Reynolds (Sue Mabe's daughter), Kyle Reynolds (Lois Bayley's great nephew), Ryan and Kevin Tinsley (Nancy McBride's grandsons), Adam Usher (Kay Usher's grandson), Brad Wagner, Ryan Randal (friends of Sara Jungermann) and Stephen Yoda (Nick Yoda's brother).



Avon Lake Presbyterian Church
32340 Electric Blvd.
Avon Lake, OH 44012
Return Service Requested

Non Profit Organization
BULK RATE
U.S. Postage
Avon Lake, OH 44012
Permit No. 29

Sunday Worship
9:30 & 11:00 am
(440) 933-6240
www.AvonLakePC.org

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| Pastor | Tom Robinson |
| Pastor Emeritus | Alfred A. Hart |
| Dir. of Music | Muriel Homer |
| Dir. of CE | Carolyn Dzurro |
| Financial Secy | Sharon Pervo |
| Int. Youth Dir. | Beau Dansizen |