

# THE LIGHTHOUSE

*Your quarterly newsletter featuring recent highlights in the life of your church.*

SUMMER 2025

## “ON THE ROAD” VBS 2025



It was another successful Vacation Bible School (VBS) program hosted by ALUCC, centered around a theme of adventure and exploration. Led by the ALUCC Drama Team, volunteers, and featuring Scout, the adventurous pup, the program took kids on exciting journeys to biblical destinations, emphasizing the message that **“God is always with us wherever we go”**—a lesson reinforced by Joshua 1:9.



The VBS theme, **“Road Trip Adventure”**, focused on teaching children about God’s constant presence, love, and guidance through music, art, science, interactive games and Bible stories.



Children learned lessons that showed how God is with us on our journeys; near and far; when we are lonely; when we are joyful; and when we go offcourse.



This August a group of church members spent the morning at **Second Harvest Food Bank** sorting through donated items from local food drives. The task was to use the DID method to determine if a product was safe. We checked for (D) damaged goods, checked for the (I) ingredient labeling and made sure the (D) date of the item was within safety guidelines.



## HAVEN CENTER MEALS

Once a month members of the church prepare hot meals for the Haven Center Shelter. In August, **Mary Pease, Patricia Bel Castro, Sharon Korney and Russ and Dorothy Henderson** prepared the meal that served **60 residents**.

This month's menu was Chicken Salad, rolls, fruit salad and dessert.

Thank you to all who donated the dessert items.



## GOOD KNIGHTS BEDDING DRIVE

On behalf of **Good Knights of Lorain County**, we want to extend our gratitude for the support of ALUCC in this years bedding drive. Through the amazing generosity of the ALUCC congregation, we collected the following items: *60 sheet sets, 14 comforter/sheet sets, 6 comforters, 11 twin throws, 4 blankets and 1 pillow.* In addition to the items above, Good Knights will also be receiving a check from **monetary donations of \$1880.00** which can be used toward mattresses and additional sheets. Again, we thank all of the members of ALUCC for supporting our mission that "Every child deserves a good night". — **Kurt Zbin**, Mission team liaison and Good Knights, Vice chairman of the board.





On Sunday, June 1, we recognized **21 young people** during worship for their graduation from high school. We had students from several different high schools represented. We wish all of these young people all the best success as they begin this new chapter of their life.

# CONGRATULATIONS



## APPALACHIA SERVICE PROJECT

This June a group of **85 high school students and 31 adults** from our church family, traveled to Charleston, West Virginia to spend a week serving with **Appalachia Service Project**. Over the course of the week, our team worked on nine different jobsites, bringing hope and real tangible change to the lives of so many people in this community. Our SH Service Trip is a focal point of our youth ministries and meaningful and life-changing week for so many young people.



At the end of the week, our team spent their Saturday, whitewater rafting down the New River with Adventures on the Gorge. Our students led worship and shared about their experiences on Sunday, July 13.



## SPORTSCAMP

At the end of June, a **group of close to 70 students and adults** attended SportsCamp at **Camp Christian** in Marysville, OH. This was our first summer at Camp Christian and it was another phenomenal week of camp. SportsCamp is in its 53rd year and continues to be a favorite among our young people.



## WASHINGTON UCC SERVICE TRIP

This July, our **JH students** traveled to Cincinnati, to spend a week serving with our friends at **Washington U.C.C.** Our team of **22 students and 9 adults** spent the week serving at various agencies in Greater Cincinnati, assisting with Washington U.C.C.'s summer children program and learning about things like homelessness, the cycle of poverty, gentrification, privilege and more. Our students shared their trip experiences in worship on Sunday, July 27.

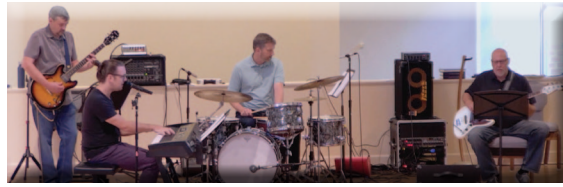


## SENIOR HIGH EXCURSION

At the end of July, a group of **ten graduated high school seniors**, attended our Senior Excursion in the Allegheny National Forest. This four day adventure includes kayaking, hiking, exploring, campfires and so much more. Our Senior Excursion serves as a capstone experience for our young people and their youth group experience. We spent intentional time discussing the themes of relax, reflect, renew and recharge.

# SUMMER MUSIC

Summertime is an opportunity for folks to participate in the choirs without a long committment. Thank you to all the bands and choirs for providing us with the gifts of music.



# SUMMER BIBLE STUDY

## בְּקֶר טוֹב

Learning Biblical Hebrew opens the door to reading Scripture in its original language, offering deeper understanding beyond translation.

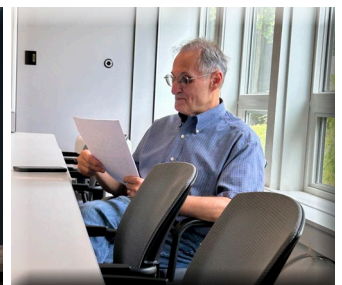
During our 10-week Summer Bible Study, taught by **Lou Suarez**, students were introduced to Biblical Hebrew. We began by learning the Hebrew alphabet and its sounds, then progressed to forming words, reading sentences, and exploring early Hebrew biblical texts. These passages revealed layers of meaning, poetry, and nuance often lost in translation.



Absent from group photo: Hal Wherley



For the final project, each student selected a biblical passage and read it aloud in Hebrew to the class. On the last day, students honored Lou with a sage ceremony, complete with a proclamation, a stole, a gift and a prayer read in Hebrew.





## ALL CHURCH PICNIC

It was a beautiful day for our community gathering, filled with laughter, joy, and connection. Families and friends mingled, the youth enjoyed the games, and everyone shared in the spirit of togetherness that makes our church family so special.



Hot Dogs, beverages and paper products were provided by our Membership Team.

Big thanks to Good Neighbor Thrift Shop for sponsoring the bounce house!



## MORTGAGE BURNING CELEBRATION

On Sunday, August 24 the congregation celebrated paying off the church's mortgage! It certainly is cause for celebration and recognition. A mortgage burning ceremony was held at the Buoy firepit. **Lynn Green** (Moderator 2007-08) and **John Rice** (current Moderator) burned the document. **Pastor Mark** and **John Rice** addressed those that gathered after worship. Thank you to Membership Team for the great weather and cake!



How was the mortgage was paid off?

The Legacy Fund paid down the mortgage by \$115,000  
The remaining balance in May was \$215, 088

To pay down the balance we used:

- an additional \$15,000 in Legacy Funds
- a bequest gift from Shelly Marsh of \$100,000
- memorial gifts from Thelma Morningstar of \$17,000
- other unrestricted fund of \$83,000

AVON LAKE

United Church of Christ



SAVE THE DATE

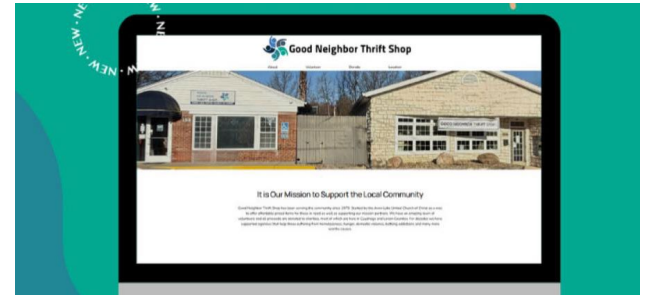


SAVE THE DATE

## GOOD NEIGHBOR THRIFT SHOP'S NEW WEBSITE

We are very excited to announce the launch of our website! Check out the site to learn more about donating, volunteering, yearly mission giving and more.

[GOODNEIGHBORTHRIFTSHOP.ORG](http://GOODNEIGHBORTHRIFTSHOP.ORG)



## SINCE THE LAST ISSUE OF THE LIGHTHOUSE...

### Births

**Abigail Elizabeth White**, parents are Anne & Kyle White.  
Grandparents are Kelly and Doug Brill. 7/25/25

### Baptisms

**Isabel June Greaige**, parents are Sarah and Justin Greaige.  
8/3/25

**Easton Lawrence Paradis**, parents are Ashley & Owen Paradis. 8/31/25

### Wedding Celebrations

50th Wedding Vow renewal: **Tom & Susan Stuber** 6/21/25

We mourn the passing of the following members  
of our church family:

**Dean Kelble** 6/1/25

### Podcast:

### ALUCC Fellowship Hall

Sponsored and produced by the ALUCC Men's Ministry group the ALUCC Fellowship Hall podcast shares a tapestry of stories that weave through our congregation and journey together through the diverse experiences, fun stories and journeys of church leaders and our fellow members.

Special thanks to **Jasin Kessler** and **Bill Calkins** for producing Fellowship Hall. New episodes will be released **every two weeks through September**.

You can listen to Fellowship Hall via our website at

<https://avonlakeucc.org/community#Podcast>

or subscribe via  
Apple Podcasts  
or Spotify.

Episode 21:  
**Rev. Mark Pettis**  
Senior Minister



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