



Beverly Heights  
Presbyterian  
Church

# scattered seeds.

THE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER

*March 2020*

## Renewing good things



## and holding fast to other good things.

Which things need to be renewed in our church and which should remain unaltered is a subject Pastor Nate Devlin and Session deal with regularly. In this issue of our monthly newsletter, we celebrate the renewal of one good thing: our new organ console. The old console served us well for 58 years but no longer functioned properly. Replacing it was a complicated task that required many steps which began last August with the sale of the manse and establishment of the Reserve Fund. Another complication was hooking up the new console. It took organ-maker Charles Kegg (pictured above, center, along with Fred Cramer and Jack Doyle) and an associate several weeks in February. We give thanks to God that the process has now concluded to glorious effect. Another good thing for which we give thanks is the benediction Pastor Nate recites at the end of every worship service. Begun by Pastor Emeritus Rick Wolling, Nate kept it unaltered. He explains why inside.

# Holding fast to a good thing

BY NATE DEVLIN

Amid the many changes we’ve experienced in the past year as a congregation, one notable fixture has remained. It’s the continuation of what I call the Beverly Heights benediction. And I know this pleases you. My evidence of this isn’t statistical but instead anecdotal. I see it in your faces every Sunday at the conclusion of each worship service.

As I walk down the aisle, declaring God’s marching orders for the church in the scattered dimension and conferring His blessing upon you, what I see are dozens and dozens of bright eyes and smiling faces that mouth these familiar words ... “Now go out into the world in peace and be of good courage ...” These are faces that communicate both reassurance and joy; faces in which I delight.

Some of you may be wondering why I decided to keep this benediction as a feature of my ministry here at Beverly Heights Church. I retained it because I want us as a congregation to “hold fast to that which is good” and I believe the benediction is exceedingly good. It’s good for four specific reasons, which I’d like to share with you.

**1** First, some may assume the benediction belongs to our Pastor Emeritus Rick Wolling, my predecessor, since he introduced it to Beverly Heights Church many years ago. In a sense it does belong to him, but only in a limited sense. It finds its liturgical origins in the Anglican Book of Prayer and later in the Presbyterian Book of Worship. In the fullest sense, the benediction belongs to God. It weaves together two texts of scripture, 1 Thessalonians 5:13-22 and 1 Corinthians 13:14. Every time I say the benediction, I have the opportunity to impart and send you out with God’s word. That’s a good thing.

**2** Second, words have power to confer an identity. This is true of proper names but also of the benediction. I’ve already suggested that the benediction does not belong to any particular pastor or tradition, but in another sense, it does belong to Beverly Heights because we have claimed it as our own. It has become a deep and integral part of who we are as a community and as the people of God in this place. I continue to say these words every Sunday in order to remind us of who we are, the church at Beverly Heights, and whose we are, the Lord Jesus Christ’s. That’s a good thing.

**3** Third, because I believe that “words build worlds,” I recite this benediction every week in order to build a world that each of you can stand on and live into by faith as you go out. It is a world where we strengthen the fainthearted, support the weak, help the afflicted, honor all men and women, love and serve the Lord. It is a world of peace and courage, that honors God and advances His Kingdom. That’s a good thing.

**4** Finally, I recite this beloved benediction, in love and admiration of the Lord, but also as a tribute to my friend and mentor, Rick Wolling. Rick taught me how to be a pastor and how to confer God’s blessing to God’s people and he gave me words, precious words, to speak. That’s a good thing.

It’s a privilege every Sunday to speak these words that bless the people, that honor my friend and the work that came before me, upon which I have the joy of building. Many traditions are worth preserving, upholding and cherishing. Our benediction is one of the best. It’s a good thing and a regular reminder of that to which we should hold fast.



Hannah Tyger created this montage of the Beverly Heights benediction.

# Making the stops that Liz now pulls

BY TOM O’BOYLE

Organ-maker Charles Kegg pulls out all the stops for his customers.

He also makes the stops, turning them out of wood on a lathe in his shop in Hartville, Ohio, near Akron.

“This will be on your console,” he says, above the din of the whirring lathe. After about 3 minutes, the computer-controlled machine spins a block of wood into a stop knob.

Charles plucks the ebony-colored creation from the machine, his face beaming. He then shows where the stop knob will be placed on the organ console he built for our church.

The knob is one of 65 at the control panel of our new organ, to the left and right of the three ascending keyboards. Organist Liz Peters is now pulling it and others regularly.

In the 90-year history of Beverly Heights, this is only the second time we’ve replaced the organ console. The last time was 58 years ago, in 1962, when the original was replaced.

A mustachioed master builder of organs, Charles Kegg has been doing this sort of unique custom work for nearly 50 years. Now 63, he gave me a tour of his 16,500-square-foot facility back in January, with all the flourish of a showman, before he came here to install our finished console in February.

It is in this facility where he and six employees build modern versions of the oldest keyboard instruments known to man. Indeed, the pipe organ is the granddaddy of all keyboard instruments, dating back thousands of years. The piano, by contrast, is just 300 years old.

Charles got into building organs in his adolescence. A self-described geek, who spends 7 minutes each morning grooming

## CHARLES SAW HIS FIRST PIPE ORGAN AT THE AGE OF 11. IT WAS LOVE AT FIRST SIGHT.

his distinctive handlebar mustache (he has timed it), Charles saw his first pipe organ at the age of 11. It was love at first sight.

“It was at the old Palace Theatre in Canton, Ohio,” Charles recalls. While other kids were visiting the Pro Football Hall of Fame nearby, he was fascinated by the weirdly

magical instrument he saw that day.

“Seeing all those buttons and switches and doodads, I went, ‘Wow.’ ” His life hasn’t been the same since.

By 13, he’d purchased his own pipe organ for \$50 through a Sunday school teacher. It had sat, unused and non-functioning. Soon, young Charles had it playing again in his basement.

He worked for other people in the organ business for 15 years until establishing his own company, Kegg Pipe Organ Builders, in 1990. Our project was the 63rd to which he has affixed his Kegg nameplate in the past 30 years.

Back in the 1920s, pipe organs were fashionable among the wealthy, including many tycoons in Pittsburgh. Charles has a Wurlitzer residential pipe organ in his shop from that era, vintage 1926, which he cranks up for visitors. Feeding a roll (from a collection of 120 rolls) into the organ, the sound pours forth like the merry go round at Kennywood.

“They only made 29 of these and this is the only one we believe that’s totally intact,” he says.

As mass-market organ producers like Wurlitzer and Kimball slowly went out of business, custom builders like Kegg



Charles Kegg ↑

populated what is now a cottage industry. It’s a business built on personal relationships, such as the one between Fred Cramer, of our congregation, and Charles.

They came to know one another when Charles worked on the pipe organ Fred once had at his Taylorstown home.

Charles is meticulous about every detail he builds into his machines. In our case, that means using a very straight grain pattern of oak called “rift sawn” to construct the console, matching the oak in our sanctuary, and mixing chalky green and white in several layered tints to get the same stain color on the wood.

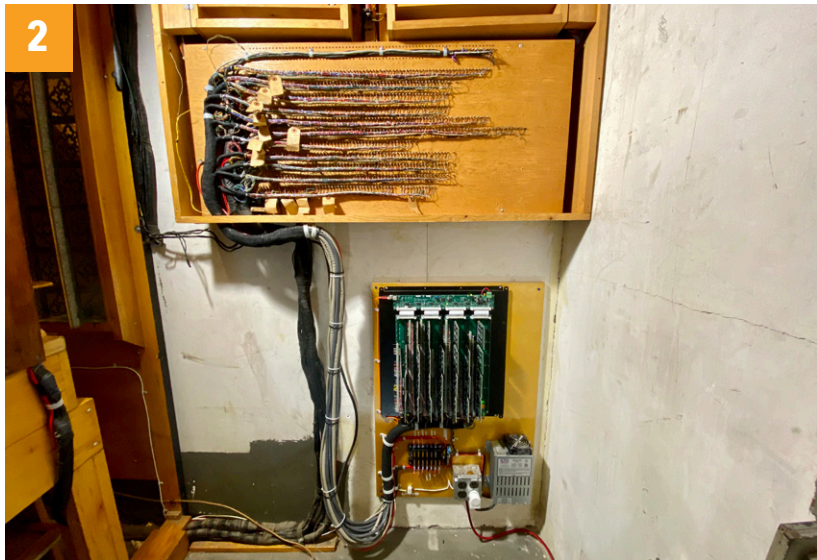
It took 475 manhours, and about six months, to build our new console cabinet and install and test the circuitry which make it so that the pedals, keys and stops control the correct pipes. The Kegg company was paid \$180,000 for the work (including installation and pipe voicing), a far lower price than the rival bidder.

While 1,746 individual pipes are in our organ, you can’t see them. They’re hidden behind the grillwork above the choir loft, to the right and left. The pipes connect to the console through wire relays, one for each pipe. Charles and a colleague arrived Monday, Feb. 17, and were here several weeks, making sure all the circuitry and relays to each pipe were wired correctly.

Building and installing organs is insanely complicated work, but Charles finds it satisfying. “It’s a crazy way to make a living but I love it,” he says.

Our organ stops begin as round wood blocks in the shop of Charles Kegg; are spun into finished shape on a lathe; and find a home on the console.





Our pipe organ is a complicated electro-mechanical and pneumatic device, like a car in some respects. When a driver turns the key in a car and presses the pedal, it zooms. When our organist Liz Peters presses a pedal or pushes a key on the organ, it booms. A switch inside the console closes (**photo 1**), triggering a sequence of events which produce sound. The switch closure sends the signal along fiber-optic cable to a switch box in each of two pipe rooms above the choir loft, to the right and left. The new switch box (lower in **photo 2**) connects to the wiring of the former system above and directs the current to the correct wire controlling an air valve on each pipe (**photo 3**). Our organ has 1,746 total pipes, half in each pipe room, each connected with an electrical wire. Which pipe emits air, and sound, is controlled by the stop (perhaps more accurately called the “start”) that’s pulled out on the console (**photo 4**). The phrase “pulling out all the stops” comes from the organ. When all the stops are pulled out, the maximum amount of air escapes (generated by a blower fan on B level), thus creating louder sound.

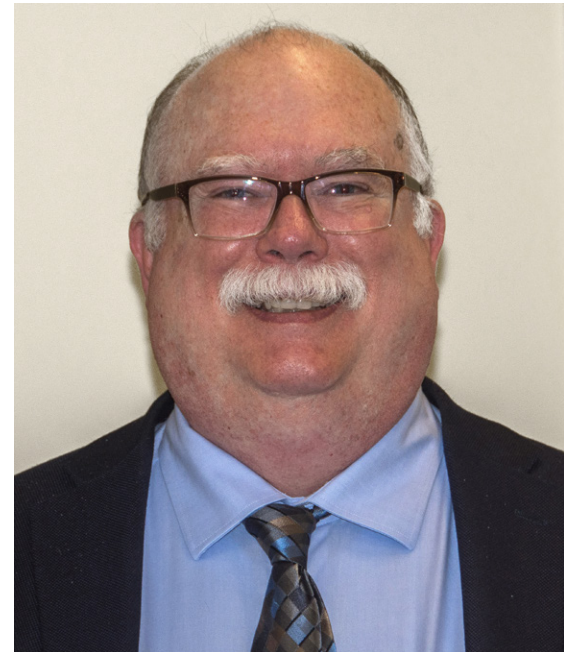
# How our organ works



# How a man of faith becomes faithful

THIS IS THE FIRST IN AN OCCASIONAL SERIES CHRONICLING THE CHRISTIAN FORMATION OF FOLKS IN OUR MIDST.

BY KATIE DOYLE



Our congregation has been described as “relentlessly relational.” This comes as no surprise to Art Flickinger whose path to Christ has been nurtured by relentless relationships forged here, while in turn ministering to others in our community.

Art and his wife Tracey have been members here for 35 years and have raised four children: Elizabeth, Katie, Jonathan and Mary Grace. Art has served as a deacon and is in his second term as a ruling elder. Art’s story shows how a man of faith becomes a man of faith: because of strong preaching, strong witness, strong role models.

Art was raised in a Catholic church-going family, but drifted away from regular church attendance while in high school.

As they awaited the birth of first child Elizabeth, Art and Tracey decided to find a church family. One Sunday they heard Dave Dorst, Beverly Heights’ senior pastor from 1979 until 1984, preach on what Jesus’ atonement on the cross and resurrection meant.

The gospel message became real to them, and they joined Beverly Heights. After Inquirers’ classes, they enlisted in a Koinonia group that included Wilma and Glenn Reinhart; Bette and Bob Thomson; and Sally and Dave Richards.

As the group hunkered down to Bible

study, Art found himself observing Glenn, Bob and Dave as they practiced their faith. As they taught him how to study the Bible, they also revealed Christian living: How does a Christian husband relate to his wife and family? How does he practice hospitality? What does he do that show him to be a man of faith? They became his role models.

Years later, Art and Tracey’s daughter Mary Grace was born with a defective heart. After undergoing surgery and contracting pneumonia, she was near death.

Pastor Rick Wolling called a prayer meeting and the congregation united in prayer. Within 24 hours, Mary Grace was on the road to recovery. Art and Tracey, both pharmacists, knew it was the healing hand of God at work.

Fast forward a few years when Art found himself in a Bible study group that met on Wednesday mornings. Art recalls having a panic attack one morning after the study. He sought medical attention, then began questioning what he believed and why.

The event intensified Art’s pursuit of biblical truth. He pored over Grudem’s Systematic Theology and books by R.C. Sproul, Jerry Bridges and Josh McDowell. What does it mean to be “in Christ”? How do we know the Bible is the word of God? Is Jesus mentioned in historical accounts

besides the Bible? As Art asked these questions and more, he found answers. It was his second “awakening.”

Soon afterwards, Scott Moore invited Art to join a Sunday morning men’s Bible study. He eventually became its leader.

Last summer Art coordinated the congregation-wide reading of Psalms. He wrote several of the commentaries for each week’s readings. This summer he’ll coordinate the reading of Genesis.

Art’s wide reading of current and cultural events compelled him to start a blog on our church website. In the year since he began the World•Views blog, Art has posted more than 100 articles to the site, material he has found as well as items suggested by members of the congregation. (To access Art’s blog, click on the Media tab on our website, then look for World•Views on the left side of the page.)

Art’s daily reading of scripture includes five Psalms and a chapter of Proverbs. When he finishes Psalms and Proverbs, he starts again.

Is Beverly Heights relentlessly relational? Yes! As we read in Matthew, “You will recognize them by their fruits.” We foster and nurture and minister to each other – and we’re all at once both giving and receiving.

# An organist faints and Rick steps in

I thought Mom's eyes would pop straight out of their sockets. As I peered down from my place in our church choir, I saw the look of horror on my mother's face that said at once, "Oh no!" and "Help!"

Janie, our church organist, was having one of her spells. Occasionally Janie would inexplicably pass out and keel over. During the prayer Mom looked down into the organ pit from her perch in the soprano section and saw that Janie was "about to fall over in a dead heap," as she would later explain. Janie was caught just before she fell off the organ bench.

The meaning of the maternal stares was clear. I slid down into the pit and onto the bench and as the pastor ended his prayer, I hit preset #3 and played the introduction to the "Gloria Patria." A glorious sound was heard as the congregation sang. The choir smiled and Janie regained consciousness. Crisis averted.

At age 15, driver's ed. was still two years in my future but sitting in front of those two manuals of keys with a full pedal board under my feet, I felt like I was sitting at the wheel of a Mack truck. I was hooked.

Our church organ on Long Island was a new, electronic Allen organ. It replaced an ancient dinosaur made by Wurlitzer that was played by my grandmother for decades. It had outlived its usefulness and had to go. Many congregants of German heritage thought it was beginning to sound like "an old squeeze-box," an instrument on which I did take lessons. The Wurlitzer led us in worship for decades but it was finished.



*Organist Liz Peters at the keyboard of our former Wicks organ console on its last day, Feb. 9, 2020. It served us and the Lord well since 1962. May it rest in peace.*

In my sophomore year of college, the West Gloucester Trinitarian Congregational Church advertised for a part-time organist. Much to the chagrin of my music major girlfriend (Mary), who was well aware of my musical limitations, I applied. I auditioned and got the job.

In all honesty the church was desperate. It helped that the level of musical ability of the choir director was not much greater than mine. Ours was the mutual admiration society of the incapable. But, to quote our former organist Katie Doyle, "The Lord was still worshiped!"

The organ at West Gloucester was a pipe organ and I had graduated from driving a Mack truck to flying a 747! Even when it is wheezing and coughing, there's no sound like that of a pipe organ. The folks at West Gloucester and at Beverly Heights know what a wheezing and coughing pipe organ sounds like.

Pipe organs are wonderful and they are wonderfully expensive. It takes quite a while to design, build and install one. My former

brother-in-law was a pipe organ architect and builder. For many years, he was the Aeolian-Skinner (the "Queen of Organs") Organ Company's regional representative in Western Pennsylvania. He has died and so has Aeolian-Skinner.

Many people don't want to put money into such an instrument and many congregations can't or won't do it in this age when contemporary worship too often becomes the sole style by which people worship the Lord.

Our pipe organ at Beverly Heights has given its last full measure of devotion to a congregation that has been led to the throne of grace by its glorious sounds for decades. Its sound has been heard at weddings, funerals, and worship services on Christmas, Easter and weekly Lord's Day celebrations. It accompanied choirs, soloists and ensembles encouraging those who could not carry a tune and comforting those who carried burdens and pain.

Like so many things in life, the old must make way for the new. I'm glad that we've gotten a new organ. I'm glad that it's a pipe organ. I'm glad that Liz will not need to beat our old one into submission every week and that, in the midst of an anthem or a hymn, it won't just keel over and faint like Janie used to.

But I'm grateful, too, for how Beverly Heights has been led in worship for almost a century by this instrument which has been a gracious provision of the God we worship and Who will continue to meet us with the sounds of a new song.

*Rick Wolling is pastor emeritus of Beverly Heights Church.*