

# PARENT'S MORNING OUT

## Out with the OLDer...

By Leslie McKnight | PMO Founder, Director Emeritus

Being in my “young” 60’s, I realize LIFE truly does come at us fast! Our PMO (Parents’ Morning Out) Program, the first faith-based weekday program in the Chagrin Valley for the very young (12 months - not yet 3 years), is the longest running (note, I didn’t write “oldest”) ministry/outreach effort/mission here at the United Methodist Church of Chagrin Falls!

Created with God upon the culmination of a year-long Disciple Bible Study led by the Reverend Dr. Adriel Thrash, PMO opened its doors to 12 children (10 of whom were children of CFUMC members) in September of 1992. Children were divided into two groups by age with the youngest learners (6-18 months) in the “Crib Room,” and the “big kids” (18 -35+ months) in “Room 101.” And then we grew, and grew, and grew! Today, PMO serves 52 children each week! There are three Toddler (12 - 22 months) classes, three Twos (23 - 35+ months) classes, and one Enrichment (older Twos) class in session for 31 weeks, mid-September - mid-May, and the waiting list goes out to 2025/2026 with “baby due” dates. What a blessing this is!

As co-founder and Director for the past 31 years, I have had the rare pleasure and joy of working with 28 teachers, many of whom were/are CFUMC members (**Patti Hlavin, Linda Frazier, Ellen Ferrone, Linda Darrow, Jane Mazak, Margery Layman, Cherie DeMarco, Anne Korenowski, Cindy Snider, and Kim Johnson**); 11 substitutes, four of whom became teachers, and more than 1000 children and families from the Chagrin Valley, Twinsburg to Willoughby. I’ve collaborated with **5 pastors, 2 associate pastors, 8 administrative assistants/secretaries, 5 Christian Education Directors, 4 Finance/Accounts Payable Managers, 4 Custodians, 2 SPRS reps, countless Trustees, and 6 Preschool Directors.** Whew! No wonder it’s time to retire! I’ve been super blessed! My deepest and most sincere thanks to ALL involved, and especially to the **current PMO teachers - Kim Johnson, Chantel Michalek, Julie Musarra, Meghan Russell, and music teacher Karen Spisak** - for the precious gift of remaining in their posts to ease the transition to a new director and carry on the two-fold mission of PMO: **(1)** To expose, engage and enrich our youngest learners in ways that share God’s love so that they may come to know that Jesus loves them, no

matter what, and (2) To give parents/caregivers an

opportunity to re-charge, relax, run errands, re-group, etc, knowing their child is well-cared for in a safe, clean, nurturing, engaging environment.

I am very grateful for the privilege of serving as PMO Director, where I found my “significance” as I raised our family and answered the call to serve. I am also thankful for my husband Jon, whose dedication to his career allowed me to do so. My Daddy told me, “If you like what you do, you’ll never work a day.” I can honestly say, I’ve not “worked a day” in 31 years. LOL. I could just keep on “not working,” but I’ve more to do, more to see, more to learn, more to give, more to share, and more sources of significance to be led to...Lord willing.



## ...and in with the YOUNGER

Welcome Mrs. Vickie Mesec! PMO will open its doors this September and kick-off its 32nd year under the direction of Mrs. Vickie Mesec, mother of two Kenston High Schoolers, member of Holy Angels Catholic Church in Bainbridge, and one of the more positive, friendly, outgoing people I’ve met.

“Miss” Vickie has explored several different career paths over the years. She has worked in the business world as an office administrator, in the education field as a preschool teacher, camp counselor, tutor, and PSR (Parish School of Religion) teacher, and in education administration as a customer service rep. She holds a real estate license, but is not practicing, and has held several volunteer positions with the Kenston Schools PTO. “Miss” Vickie completed the Ohio Child Development Associate training for infants, toddlers, and preschoolers earlier this year, making her an excellent candidate for a director position.

I believe God used all of these experiences to lead “Miss” Vickie to the PMO position at the Chagrin Falls United Methodist Church! She is qualified; she is excited, and she is ready! Thanks be to God! (And, she’s 10 years younger than me!)

~ Leslie McKnight:~)

