

The Midweek

Wednesday, April 26, 2017

From the desk of our Pastors . . .

On the news this morning there was a story about the flooding in North Carolina. One of the women who was being interviewed said to the reporter that there was nothing she could do about the water in her home except wait for it to go away and pray. I don't disagree with her perspective but there was something in the way she said she would pray as if it were the politically correct things for her to say. From the tone of her voice is seemed as if she didn't really have much hope that prayer would work or be answered.

My heart broke for her. While I was concerned about the damage in her house I was more concerned about her seemingly lack of faith or hope in the power of prayer. To be honest, I may have gotten it completely wrong. She may be so distraught that just saying she would pray was as close as she could come in that moment to any form of hope. She may have more hope and belief in the power of prayer than anyone in that town but it sounded like she was on her last nerve and didn't have much confidence in anything.

I know I will be praying for her and everyone else in that town. I hope you will do the same. As the saying goes, when you are down to the end of your rope, God is up to something.

Sometimes prayer is "all" we have. I dislike writing it that way because it sounds as if praying is a last resort or the final action we can undertake when

nothing else has changed our situation or circumstances. Prayer should always be our first step and the power in which we have hope and faith.

Scripture tells us over and over what the power of prayer can do for us and how much God wants us to come to the Creator in prayer. We are told to "pray without ceasing" in 1 Thessalonians 5:17. Philippians 4:6 reminds us that we should "not be anxious about anything but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God." And from my favorite Gospel comes my favorite verse about prayer in Mark 11:24, "Therefore I tell you, whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received it and it will be yours." If you Google "scripture about prayer" you will find amazing Bible verses about the power of prayer.

Rather than just giving prayer lip service, let's really pray with the belief that all our prayers that reflect God's will shall be answered <u>because they will!</u> Our belief and trust in God shall come to fruition through the power of prayer. To God be the glory forever and ever.

Pastor hay



From the desk of our Conference Director.

Getting Unstuck

As we returned from our bike ride on the C and O Canal towpath along the Potomac River, we had to carry our bikes up a spiral staircase to cross the bridge to the other side. When we reached the top of the stairs, we heard a scraping sound and turned to see a rental moving truck get stuck under the bridge. The road under the bridge curved around a point of land, making the truck approach the bridge underpass at an awkward angle. The driver tried to lower the suspension of the truck and made it under the first pass only to get completely stuck under the second. By that point, several hikers approached to try to help. They decided that even if they deflated the tires some, they would not make it under the second bridge. So they cleared the road behind the truck and helped the driver back up and turn around to find another path.

Riding back, I wondered about that driver. Did he not know the height of his truck? Had he not seen the sign warning of the height of the underpass? Did he think the measurements were more like guidelines than actual rules? Or was he distracted with many other things on his mind? Once he got stuck under the first span, what made him press forward? We could clearly see from the vantage point of the bridge that he could not make it under. But it took scraping the top again for him to be convinced.

I also wondered about the people who stopped to help. Several cars piled up behind the truck, and although they did not beep their horns, no one got out to help. Hikers, however, climbed over the fence to the underpass to help the driver out. Maybe when we are in the comfort of our vehicles, we forget that we are all connected. Hikers, however, know our human vulnerability and often stop to help others along the path.

Of course, the more I reflected on my ride back, the more I saw parallels with the church, and in particular, with the church practicing evangelism. Evangelism comes from the Greek meaning "messenger of good news." Often we, in the church, forget the "good" of this good news. Instead, we become so comfortable (or distracted) driving the truck of our faith that we fail to notice the signs warning us that our context has changed. Our old methods of sharing the good news, in which we tell of a glorious afterlife, no longer appeal to this generation. People today want to know if there is life BEFORE death, not life after death. Like the truck, it will do us no good to try to force our faith through our current context. Instead, we need to find another path, and we need help getting unstuck, turning around, and finding that new

path.

Often, the people who can help us most come from outside the traditional vehicles of faith. Because these "outsiders" critique our methods of forcing our message through, we often either dismiss what they have to say or become defensive. Either of those choices, however, leave us stuck. To become unstuck, we need to connect with our communities and really listen.

My doctoral research project involved trying facilitators to create safe places for groups of people who considered themselves "spiritual but not religious," to explore their faith. We had four groups, with two facilitators each, plus one online group. These facilitators designed questions to get the conversations going, and their main job involved listening. After eight weeks of listening, during the evaluation phase, three of the four groups asked the facilitators why they followed Jesus and attended church. They expressed that they felt they had been heard, which evoked in them an openness to hear others. These responses shifted our understanding of evangelism to listening and relational evangelism, where followers of Jesus offer the gift of non-judgmental listening to others until they come to a place of wanting to hear the good news.

This Saturday, April 22, from 9-noon at Calvary UMC in Milford, we have created an opportunity to explore Evangelism in the 21st Century. Heather Lear, from the General Board of Discipleship, will bring us some new practices to try as we continue to seek to share the good news with others. We invite you to join us for this conversation! We trust that we will discover ways to get unstuck and new paths to forge as we live into the realm of God together. Come journey with us, as we seek to be "Connected Christians offering the hope of Jesus Christ to today's world!"

Blessings on the journey,

Vicki

Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith Director of Connectional Ministries

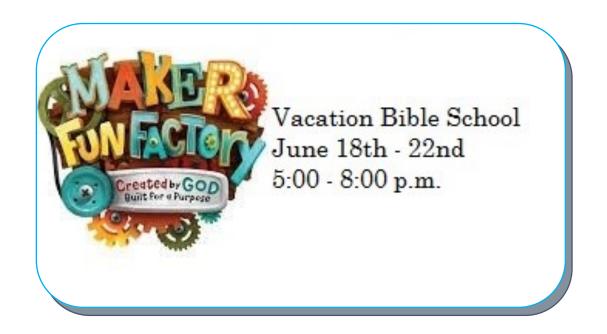
Upcoming Meetings and Information

- There will be a Sunday School meeting on **Thursday**, **April 27**th, at 6:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall to discuss plans for next year's Sunday School. All interested members, parents, and grandparents are encouraged to attend. We are in the process of revamping our current Sunday School practices and would love your input in the process. Please come out and support Christian Education here at Avenue Church.
- Sunday, April 30th, during each of our worship services, we will celebrate the life of Ralph Spain. As part of the celebration we will be taking a special offering to support the Spain Grant program at Camp Pecometh. Let's send as many kids as we can to camp in Ralph's memory. Please help us by contributing to this special offering. Your love and care of Ralph and his family will be appreciated for years to come through your giving on April 30th.
- 2017 class of Confirmation students will be on **May 7**th at the 9:30 a.m. worship service.

Click the link below to register for your spring photo session: https://booknow-lifetouch.appointment-plus.com/9r52t450/



Photo Dates: May 11th, 12th, 13th, 16th, 17th, 25th, 26th and 27th



AVENUE PRESCHOOL

ONLY \$35.00

It's beginning to look like SUMMER!!!

Get in the spirit by coming out to paint

(on a wooden palette)

this beautiful picture and help support

Avenue Preschool



Wednesday, April 26 ~ from 6:30 - 8:00
in Fellowship Hall - Avenue United Methodist Church
Doors will open at 6:00
for more information please contact
Belinda at 302-422-8775 Avenue Preschool or
302-422-0448 Home

This is a borrowed picture so our painting will not be exactly this ~ will use as an example. Everyone will leave with a beautiful creation that is completely their original.





THE MISPILLION CHILDREN'S CHORUS

Sharon Starling, director
Kevin B. Chamberlain, assistant director/accompanist

presents 3rd Annual Spring Concert

"One Song... Many Voices"

Friday, May 19th 7:00 p.m.

Fellowship Hall
Avenue United Methodist Church
20 N. Church Street ~ Milford, Delaware

Come Hear..."Why We Sing!"

NO ADMISSION, Free-will offering accepted, Plenty of parking, Handicap accessible

Information: (302) 422-2785



ANNOUNCEMENTS

HOSPITAL VISITS: Please help the pastors by calling the church office at (302) 422-8111 when someone from the church is hospitalized.

ELECTRONIC GIVING is being offered at Avenue Church. An *Information Sheet with Authorization Agreement* is available on the table in Fellowship Foyer. Simply fill out the authorization agreement and return it to the church office.

ALTAR FLOWERS: If you want to reserve a Sunday please call the church office then call Country Flowers. Flowers are placed in the altar vases up by the cross.

PRAYER CONCERNS PAST WEEK: The Clough family, Charlie, McKenzie Betts, Katie, Joan and Bill Dudley, Martha Landon, Debbie and Bob, Tim, Jake Slater, April McIntyre, Kim Webb, Al, Alex and family, the LGBT community in Russia, Amber Scott and mother, Jay and Martina Williamson, Charlie Harding, Abrue family, Pastor Wendy, Scott's daughter and her unborn twins, Gabbie and her unborn baby, Colleen Dunham, Marion Jarrell, Bill Gustin, Rose Willcutts, Brian, Jack Eisenbrey, Sharon, Karen Moore, Dave and Sharon Dawson, Colleen and family, a son, the Fannin family, Lillie Brittingham, Kirsten Pearce, Bailey, our nation and its leaders, Howard Haverkamp, Art Blanchet, Betty Ziesel, Bill Gaskill, John Siegrist and family, Janice Abbott, Jesse, Christopher, Pam Wilkerson, Alice, George, Malachi Hostedler, Martha Simpson, Jacob Robertson, Ariana, Bill Salvin, Luisa Combs, Erica and family, Butch Warren and Pete Rossing.

Recently hospitalized: Peggy Hughes.

Rejoice with: Ruth Peters, Jesus who died for us all, a warm sunrise service and God who loves us so much.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: The Clough family in the death of their daughter Susie, Abby Carmine and family in the passing of her grandmother on Easter Sunday, Mack, Rick's father-in-law, Stacy & Kevin Craig and Mark Wilson, in the passing of Kevin and Mark's grandmother, Charlie, Gary Downes, Katie, Joan and Bill Dudley, Martha Landon, in the passing of her brother Calvin Adams, Debbie and Bob, Tim, Jake Slater, April McIntyre, Kim Webb, Al, Alex and family, Amber Scott and her mother, Jay and Martina Williamson, Charlie Harding, Paul Russell, Abrew family, Colleen Dunham, Marion Jarrell, Rose Wilcutts, Brian, Jack Eisenbrey, Sharon, Karen Moore, Dave and Sharon Dawson, Colleen and her family,Lillie Brittingham, Kirsten Pearce, Our nation and its leaders, Howard Haverkamp, Art Blanchet, Betty Ziesel, Bill Gaskill and family, John Siegrist and family, Jesse, Christopher, Alice, George, Malachi Hostedler, Jacob Robertson, Bill Salvin, Erica and family, Butch Warren and Pete Rossing.

Recently hospitalized: Peggy Hughes, Jo Wood and Gary Downes.

Rejoice with: Jesus, who died for us all, Pat Craig for being named Lion of the Year for the Milford Lions Club, God who loves us so much, Katie as she prepares for her upcoming wedding and for all who were on the last Emmaus weekend.

ANNIVERSARY:

Parker & Maxine Turner who will celebrate their 54th anniversary on April 28th.

WEEKLY MUSIC REHEARSALS:

Handbells

Mondays at 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

MomentUM Praise Team

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Mispillion Children's Chorus

Tuesdays at 6:15 p.m., Music Room

♪Praise Team

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Sanctuary Choir

Wednesdays at 3:00 p.m., Music Room

JAveNotes 1

Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

Do you like to sing? Do you play an instrument? If you are interested in using your musical gifts here at Avenue Church please contact Kevin Chamberlain, kbchamberlain@avenueumc.com or (302) 236-1276.

UPCOMING

SPAIN GRANT PROGRAM—CAMP PECOMETH on Sunday, April 30th, during each of our worship services, we will celebrate the life of Ralph Spain. As part of the celebration we will be taking a special offering to support the Spain Grant program at Camp Pecometh. Let's send as many kids as we can to camp in Ralph's memory. Please help us by contributing to this special offering. Your love and care of Ralph and his family will be appreciated for years to come through your giving on April 30th.

SCHOLARSHIPS: Avenue offers a number of scholarships each spring. Graduating Seniors can get applications from the church office by emailing Kelly Hudson at churchoffice@avenueumc.com or they can be downloaded from the webpage. Then complete the applications on your computer and return them to Mrs. Hudson. Handwritten applications will not be accepted. **Please keep these two dates in mind:**

- May 1st, 3:00 p.m. deadline to return all Avenue Scholarship applications to the office.
- May 21st, 9:30 a.m. is when scholarships will be awarded, along with gifts and recognition for all the Class of 2017. **Please plan to join us.**

ALASKA MISSION TRIP 2017 is scheduled for June 10th-17th.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN: A new mission project for people in the Congo, Africa. There is a need for more soft, fabric eyeglass cases for those people who are having cataract surgery at one of Jonathan and Donna Bakers eye missions. You can make these cases from fabric or buy them from drug or dollar stores and bring them into Avenue. United Methodist Women are working on this and welcome donations from the Avenue and greater Milford community. Lets

help these folks have a safe place to keep their glasses. Please, no hard cases, only fabric. Look for the donation box in Fellowship Foyer during April and May. Thanks so much.

COMPASSION SUNDAY—May 21st your opportunity to make a difference in the life of a child and be the hands and feet of Jesus.

SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES/MINISTRIES

A NEW STUDY FOR SISTERS' BIBLE STUDY: On May 2, 2017, we will start a new study *IF* "Trading your *IF* only regrets for God's What *IF*" possibilities by Mark Batterson will be led by Pastor Wendy. We meet at 10:00 a.m. in the **Grier Room**.

WIDOW/WIDOWERS/LOST AND FOUND GROUP will meet on May 3rd at 2:00 p.m. in the Heritage Room. Come join us. Contact Janice Abbott at (302) 422-1863.

ALZHEIMER'S SUPPORT GROUP: The Alzheimer's Caregiver's Support Group will meet the 2nd Monday of each month. The next meeting will be May 8th at 4:00 p.m. in the Grier Room

EXPLORING FAITH BOOK CLUB meets on the third Sunday of the Month at 12:15 in the Holzmueller Room. Our next study is **May 21, 2017**. We will be finishing up the book "The Will of God" by Leslie Weatherhead and hearing a taped sermon called "The Real Thing" by him. All are welcome.

OUTREACH

AVENUE PRESCHOOL: Registration for the 2017-18 school year. Registration is now taking place for current and former Avenue Preschool families for the 2017-18 school year. Please contact the school as noted below if you are a former family interested in enrolling your child. Registrations must be done in person. Space is very limited. To be eligible, a child must be at least 36-months old on or before August 31st. You can contact the preschool office at (302) 422-8775 for information or send an email to: office@avenuepreschool.org. Be sure to visit our Facebook page and website at: www.avenuepreschool.org.

COMMUNITY

ARC OF DELAWARE is holding a 5K/1 Mile Run, Walk and Roll event at Wild Quail Golf and Country Club on **May 6th** at 9:00 a.m.. Sign up on sheet in foyer to donate or participate. Funds raised support Arc's programs.

Homeless school children are in need of personal care items and school supplies at this time of year. Please consider donating soap – any types, shampoo, deodorant, pencils, pens, lined paper, 1" and 2" binders, highlighters and book bags. A donation box is available in Fellowship Foyer. Let us all reach out and make a child's day better.

MOTHER'S DAY is just around the corner and we are accepting donations for carnations in loving memory or honor of our mothers. Special Mother's Day envelopes are in the pews and the Church Office. Carnations are **\$5.00** per stem. Proceeds will benefit the Parish Purse. All

orders need to be placed no later than ${\bf May~9^{th}}$ so the names can be listed in the worship folder on Mother's Day. If you have any questions call Elaine Willey at (302) 422-8952.

LAST WEEK	AT AVI	ENUE
Attendance:	2016	2017
8:00	77	68
9:30	214	154
Sunday School	96	67
11:00	75	62
FUSION	0	37
Total	462	388

CALENDAR

SUNDAY 4/30		WEDNESDAY 5/3		
8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	10:30 a.m.	Writing Group, Grier Room	
9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship	1:30 p.m.	Knitting Group, Grier Room	
9:30 a.m.	Sunday School	3:00 p.m.	Sanctuary Choir, Sanctuary and	
11:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	•	Music Room	
6:00 p.m.	FUSION, Fellowship Hall and	5:00 p.m.	Women's Emmaus Reunion,	
0.00 p.m.	Wesley Room	1	Room 202	
	Wesley Room	6:00 p.m.	AveNotes, Sanctuary	
MONDAY 5	/1	6:30 p.m.	Cub Scouts—Webelos 1,	
11:00 a.m.		2.22 P	Wesley Room	
	AA, Wesley Room		11 02109 1000111	
6:30 p.m.	Handbell Choir, Sanctuary	THURSDAY 5/4		
7:00 p.m.	First State Harmonizers,	11:00 a.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
7.00	Fellowship Hall	2:30 p.m.	Women's Emmaus Reunion,	
7:00 p.m.	AA, Room 206	2.00 p.m.	Room 202	
7:00 p.m.	Boy Scouts, Wesley Room	6:30 p.m.	Boy Scouts—Wolves, Wesley Room	
MILEODAN F		0.00 p.m.	Boy Bedaus Workes, Wesley Woolin	
TUESDAY 5		FRIDAY 5/5		
10:00 a.m.	Archives Comm. Meeting,	8:00 p.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
10.00	Archives Room	0.00 p.m.	Thi, Westey Woolii	
10:00 a.m.	Sisters Bible Study,	SATURDAY 5/6		
10.00	Grier Room	1:00 p.m.	Compassionate Care Hospice,	
12:00 p.m.	Card Ministry, Grier Room	1.00 p.m.	Sanctuary	
1:00 p.m.	UMW Board Meeting, Room 207	5:00 p.m.	Confirmation covered dish dinner,	
6:00 p.m.	MomentUM Praise Team	5.00 p.m.	Fellowship Hall	
	Rehearsal, Wesley Room	7:00 p.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
6:15 p.m.	Mispillion Children's Choir,	7.00 p.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
	Music Room	SUNDAY 5/	7	
6:30 p.m.	Cub Scouts—Bears, Fellowship Hall	8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	
7:00 p.m.	Central Delaware Chess Club,	9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship	
	Room 206			
7:00 p.m.	Praise Team Rehearsal,	9:30 a.m.	Sunday School	
	Sanctuary	11:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	
7:00 p.m.	Leadership Team Meeting,	2:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Comm. Meeting,	
	Carpenter Room	0.00	Grier Room	
		3:00 p.m.	Girl Scout Troop 272, Heritage Room	
		6:00 p.m.	FUSION, Fellowship Hall and	
			Wesley Room	

"A Dynamic Faith Community Growing in Hope, Love and Service"