

The Midweek

Wednesday, May 3, 2017

From the desk of our Pastors . . .

My friend Jennifer likes to joke that the employees at the Hallmark store love to see me coming because it means they will make their sales goals for the week. I like to send cards and when I get to Hallmark I tend to stock up on everything I need or think I need. (For some reason I have enough nephew birthday cards for the next decade.) Then there are the cards that simply tickle me in one way or the other and I buy them for that "just in case" moment.

Some cards get used right away. There are others however that I have had for years and I get tired of looking at them every time I rustle through my collection. It's those cards that I wonder if I should just find a reason to send them.

Over the years I have learned that trying to force a circumstance to fit the sentiment on a card does not work. The wording and visual of a greeting card needs to be appropriate for whatever is happening in the life of the recipient. The few times that I have put something in the mail that "kinda sorta" fit the situation always turned out to be a bad idea because inevitably I found myself needing that exact card just a short time afterwards.

The lesson from my card experience is that everything will make itself clear at the right time. I'll buy the card when it becomes available in the store and then when it's the proper time to send it, that will become apparent. Giving in to impatience and tossing something into the mail because

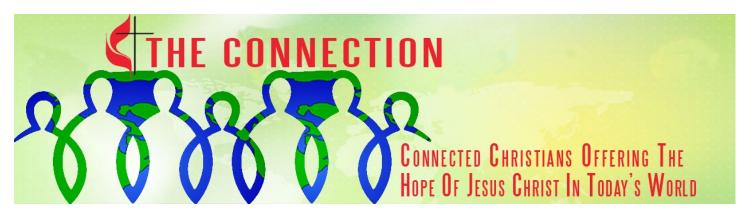
it got on my nerves meant that when the time came for it to be truly relevant I had blown it.

This little example reminds me that God also waits for the perfect time in our lives to send His messages to us. How many times do we try and force God to answer our prayers because we want it on our terms, in our time, and with our preferred outcome? Lamentations 3:25 reminds us that "The Lord is good to those who wait for him, to the soul that seeks him."

As we continue to travel this journey we call life, we need to seek God in all we do. But there will be times when we ask things of God and the Creator seems quiet. Let us remember that the Lord is waiting for the perfect timing and will respond with the perfect answer according to His will.

In this way, all glory and honor will belong to God forever and ever.

Pastor hay



From the desk of our Conference Director.

"Game" of faith

Last week, Bo and I camped in Harper's Ferry. We had a beautiful week, and we hiked and ran and cycled every day except the last. The last day began with rain and we read until the sun came out. Then we took our dog, Wesley, to the mini-golf course at the campground. He had been cooped up all morning, so he needed the walk. Since no one else was on the course, we decided to play.

We selected our clubs and balls and began at the first hole. We did not anticipate that Wesley would think the game was for him. I hit the ball (very close to the hole, I might add) and Wesley ran after it and picked it up. Wagging his tail, his face said, "This is a fun game!" Bo and I wisely decided not to keep score as Wesley continued to pick up the balls. We tried to put them back close to where we thought we hit them, but sometimes we gave ourselves a "Wesley-assist." Bo and I laughed through the whole game, which only served to encourage Wesley even more.

Later, as I reflected on our game, I realized how similar it is to the situation we find ourselves in as a church. We all know how to be the church, right? So we show up to the game thinking we have the right tools and the right practices and even the right beliefs about how the "game" of faith works. We have been "playing this game" for a long time. We know how we came to faith. We know how Sunday School worked for us. We know how we could just open the doors to the church and people would come. We know how previous generations returned to church when they started a family. We know the "rules" of faith and how people should behave in church and outside the church as followers of Jesus.

But the people outside of the church today often act more like Wesley. They have their own ideas about how the "game" of faith is played. They either do not know the rules or they simply do not follow them. And, in fact, the rules of the game have changed. People no longer just come to church if we open the doors. They no longer want to sit by and watch ministry happen; they want to participate in the ministry and mission. Many activities take place on Sunday mornings now, like travel sports, so families do not have as much time on weekends in general and Sundays in particular.

And it seems to me like we have a choice to make. We can either get angry that the rules of the game have changed. Or we can continue to play the game by our old rules, regardless of the impact on those outside the church. Or, we can throw out our rules and create a new game with

those outside the church. In other words, we can play "Wesley-golf." Our ultimate goal at the mini-golf course was to have fun. So even though we did not play a traditional game, we still accomplished our goal.

The ultimate goal of church involves "making disciples for Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world." But, the rules have changed. This past Saturday, we held an Evangelism workshop, with a leader from the General Board of Discipleship, Heather Lear. Our Peninsula-Delaware Conference pays 100% of our apportionments to The United Methodist Church, which supports events like this one which then cost the conference nothing. If you missed it, Heather shared her material with us, so you can contact Rev. Paul Sherwood, the conference Evangelism Chair for the information. (Thank you, Paul, for organizing this event!)

I remember reading where the discipleship process to membership used to move from believing to behaving to belonging. If you held the right beliefs and practiced the correct behavior, then you could belong to the church. People today long for a sense of belonging before they believe. The pattern of discipleship has flipped to belonging to behaving to believing. People want to belong first. Then they learn how to behave through watching the community. Finally, they live into believing the story. Heather shared a similar understanding Evangelism today. She used the head, heart, and hands to explain that some people start with right beliefs or the head knowledge. But others start with spiritual transformation or the heart. And others start the process with mission or hands. So, evangelism, to be effective, must include all three parts, head, heart, and hands.

And evangelism, or making disciples, must be part of everything we do as a church. How do your various ministries help to make disciples or transform the world? How does your budget demonstrate your commitment to evangelism? How do your United Methodist Women's or Men's groups make disciples? What about your chicken dinners? I invite you and your leadership to make a list of all of your ministries and see how each one contributes to making disciples for the transformation of the world. If you cannot answer that question, then maybe it's time to start some new ministries. If disciple making really is our main goal, can we the courage to change our game plan?

Many of our churches and members watch with anticipation to see how the Judicial Council will rule this weekend on the consecration of a lesbian bishop in the Western Jurisdiction. And while this case contains many important matters of faith to wrestle with, we cannot let it distract us from our main goal of making disciples for the transformation of the world. The world already knows how to tear each other down. Can we demonstrate how to build one another up, even in the face of disagreement? That action, living together and working toward a common mission even in the midst of disagreement, may be one of the best witnesses we can give to a watching world. Perhaps then we will truly 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

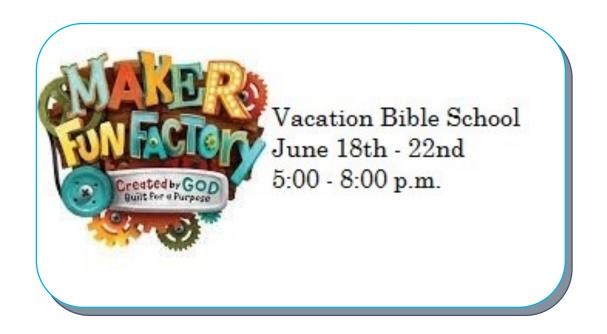
Upcoming Meetings and Information

- Our 2017 class of students will be confirmed on **May 7**th at the 9:30 a.m. worship service.
- Nominations meeting is on May 9th at 7pm in the Grier Room.
- Trustees meeting is on May 15th at 7pm in the Grier Room.
- SPRC meeting is on May 18th at 7pm in the Holzmueller Room.
- May 21st, 9:30 a.m. is when scholarships will be awarded and recognition for all the Class of 2017. **Please plan to join us.**
- If you know of anyone who is graduating, please get that information to the church office as soon as possible.

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





UNDER THE DIRECTION OF DONALD BUXTON, we proudly present...



Sunday, May 7, 2017 @ 3:00 p.m.

Dover Downs Rollins Center

Route 13. Dover

Prices are:

Adults - \$20

Seniors/Students/Military/

First Responders - \$15

Young people under 18 free with a paying adult

Tickets can now be purchased online at

www.doversymphony.org



Or Call 302-270-1903

This program is supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency,

In partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts

The Division promotes Delaware arts events on

www.DelawareScene.com.

Delaware
Division of the







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 in the death of their daughter Susie, Abby Carmine and family in the passing of her grandmother on Easter Sunday, Mack, Rick's fatherin-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.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: The family and friends of Delaware State Police Cpl. Stephen J. Ballard, all law enforcement who responded to Middletown last for the standoff, All first responders, may God keep them safe, Gary Downes, ,Katie, Tim, Ray, Bill Gaskill and family, John Siegrist and family, Janet Dill, MacKenzie Betts, the family and friends of Don Meyers who passed away on April 27, Eric Porter, Pat Bell, Jr., Folks staying with the Winklers, Mark, Faye Green, Karen and Harold Sheets, Dave and Sharon Dawson, Kevin, Mary Ann Draper, Ashley Bonnoni, Joyce, Bonnoni, more help for the homeless and Peggy Hughes.

Recently hospitalized: Jo Wood.

Rejoice with: Malachi Hostedler, Pride of Delmarva Babershop Chorus, 2nd place finish at regional competition and Lynne and Larry Pusey have a new niece, Molly.

ANNIVERSARY:

Richard and PJ Greene who will celebrate their 56th anniversary on May 5th.

WEEKLY MUSIC REHEARSALS:

Handbells

Mondays at 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

IMomentUM Praise Team

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

JMispillion 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

IAveNotes

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

ALASKA MISSION TRIP 2017 is scheduled for June 10th-17th. Please be on the look out for stock sales in the Foyer after worship on Sunday.

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

TUESDAY MORNING SISTERS' BIBLE STUDY: We will continue our study *IF* "Trading your *IF* only regrets for God's What *IF*" possibilities by Mark Batterson will be led by Pastor Wendy. We will meet on **May 9**th, 10:00 a.m. in the **Grier Room**.

WIDOW/WIDOWERS/LOST AND FOUND GROUP will meet today 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 **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 AVE	ENUE
Attendance:	2016	2017
8:00	85	72
9:30	185	193
Sunday School	75	72
11:00	87	74
FUSION	0	39
Total	432	450

CALENDAR

SUNDAY 5/7		WEDNESDA	WEDNESDAY 5/10	
8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	1:30 p.m.	Knitting Group, Grier Room	
9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship	3:00 p.m.	Sanctuary Choir, Sanctuary and	
9:30 a.m.	Sunday School	0.00 p.m.	Music Room	
11:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	5:00 p.m.	Women's Emmaus Reunion,	
2:00 p.m.	Boy Scout Comm. Meeting,	0.00 p.m.	Room 202	
	Grier Room	6:00 p.m.	AveNotes, Choir Room	
3:00 p.m.	Girl Scout Troop 272, Heritage Room	6:30 p.m.	Cub Scouts—Webelos 1,	
6:00 p.m.	FUSION, Fellowship Hall and	Wesley Room		
	Wesley Room	6:30 p.m.	Pre Conference Briefing—Dover	
		0.50 p.m.	District, Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary	
MONDAY 5/8			District, Fellowship Hall & Sanctuary	
11:00 a.m.	AA, Wesley Room	THURSDAY	5/11	
4:00 p.m.	Alzheimer's Support Group, Grier Room	9:00 a.m.		
5:00 p.m.	Girl Scout Troop 140, Heritage Room	9:00 a.m. 11:00 a.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
5:00 p.m.	Women's Emmaus Reunion,		Life Touch Pictures, Grier Room &	
1	Room 202	1:30 p.m.	·	
6:00 p.m.	Cub Scouts -Tigers, Fellowship Hall	0.00	Nursery	
6:30 p.m.	Handbell Choir, Sanctuary	2:30 p.m.	Women's Emmaus Reunion,	
7:00 p.m.	First State Harmonizers,	0.00	Room 202	
<u>.</u>	Fellowship Hall	6:00 p.m.	Girl Scout Leaders Meeting,	
7:00 p.m.	AA, Room 206	0.90	Heritage Room	
7:00 p.m.	Boy Scouts, Wesley Room	6:30 p.m.	Dover District Board on Church Loc. &	
<u>.</u>		7.00	Bldg, Holzmueller Room	
TUESDAY 5/9		7:00 p.m.	Scholarship Comm. Meeting,	
10:00 a.m.	Sisters Bible Study,		Carpenter Room	
	Grier Room			
1:00 p.m.	4H, Wesley Room	FRIDAY 5/12		
6:00 p.m.	Brownie Troop, Nursery	11:00 a.m.	Wrap Around DE, Holzmueller Room	
6:00 p.m.	MomentUM Praise Team	1:30 p.m.	Life Touch Pictures, Grier Room &	
P	Rehearsal, Wesley Room	0.00	Nursery	
6:15 p.m.	Mispillion Children's Choir,	8:00 p.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
0.10 p.m.	Music Room	~ . 	- 40	
6:30 p.m.	Cub Scouts—Bears, Fellowship Hall	SATURDAY 5/13		
7:00 p.m.	Central Delaware Chess Club,	9:30 a.m.	Life Touch Pictures, Grier Room &	
7.00 p.m.	Room 206		Nursery	
7:00 p.m.	Praise Team Rehearsal,	7:00 p.m.	AA, Wesley Room	
7.00 p.m.	Sanctuary			
7:00 p.m.	Nominations Meeting, Grier Room		4 ~ Communion	
p	Trommation Mooning, Office 100011	8:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	
		9:30 a.m.	Contemporary Worship	
		9:30 a.m.	Sunday School	
		11:00 a.m.	Traditional Worship	

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