



The Midweek

Wednesday, August 24, 2016

From the desk of our Pastors . . .

Now that the 2016 Olympics are over, the City of Rio de Janeiro is starting to get back to normal. Yes, the Paralympics will take place in September but not as many countries will participate because they simply can't afford it. That is a shame because the competitors are amazing and the competitions will be contested just as hard. I'm sure Brazil will be ready to handle these games as they were in August, but being smaller means that not as many people will be in town for the event. So slowly, Rio will get back to its usual rhythm and daily routines.

The touristy areas around Copacabana Beach and Ipanema will continue to be busy and the more exclusive neighborhoods of Rio will settle into the day-to-day business of living life. But in the favelas the goal will be to continue trying to get out of what are the improvised regions of the city.

A favela is a slum found within the cities of Brazil. With little to no infrastructure and less in the way of economic opportunities, the millions of people who live in the neighborhoods of the favelas find themselves merely existing at times. With the density of the population continuing to grow there is no way to expand out. There is no room for parks or green areas for the children to play so the most popular pastime forces the kids to look up. They participate in kite fighting.

If you drive along the highways of Rio and look at the sky above the favelas you can see a multitude of kites in an intricate dance around each other. The idea is to twist and turn your kites so that it cuts the string of an opponent's kite by using the line holding your kite. The tether that holds the kites is usually covered in a mixture of glue and crushed glass so that it can "saw" another line. Whoever cuts the line of their opponent first . . . wins. Sadly, cut hands and fingers are the usual side effects of this "game."

Brazil is not the only country where kite fighting takes place. It is also common in Pakistan, India, Korea and Afghanistan among other countries. But it takes on a special importance in Brazil where the children consider it a metaphor for raising themselves out of the current situation they are in with the hopes that someday it will be better for them.

How much better would it be for them to raise their eyes to the sky and hope in Christ? Acts 7:55 tells how Stephen "full of the Holy Spirit looked up to heaven and saw the glory of God, and Jesus standing at the right hand of God."

It is only through God that true hope will come. As we consider and pray for our brothers and sisters around the world, let us say a special prayer for the children of the favelas in Brazil. Let us pray that those kites are just that – a child's toy and not that thing on which hopes and dreams are projected. Our prayers lifted before God will hopefully include that all eyes as well as hearts and minds be lifted to the Almighty Lord who will bring these children and all generations out of oppression.

To God be the glory forever and ever.



Be Inspired ... Be Transformed ... Become



From the desk of our Conference Director Vicki . . .

The Olympic Spirit

Periodically this week, I have taken the opportunity to read about the Olympics in Rio and to watch the videos of a few of the events. We have certainly seen some poor sportsmanship among the athletes. From the public shaming of Gabby Douglas, to the Egyptian athlete refusing to shake hands with his Israeli opponent, to the constant replay of the diver's belly flop, the Olympics and the public reactions have showcased our human condition. When we train athletes from such an early age and pour inhumane expectations on them, we can forget that they are human beings and not machines. This aggressive culture breeds self-centeredness and a national zeal that lures us into forgetting that the Olympics are games, sports, fun contests of athleticism.

Yet, grace comes crashing into even the most competitive of moments. We witnessed that in the 5000 meter race. Two women, Abbey D'Agostino (USA) and Nikki Hamblin (New Zealand), collided sending both of them sprawling on the track. They had 2000 meters to go and the crash dashed their hopes of qualifying for the final event. But, in that moment, we witnessed a reminder of our common humanity. Abbey D'Agostino got up and began to run again when she noticed Nikki still on the ground. So, Abbey turned back. She gently helped Nikki to her feet and said, "Get up. We have to finish this." Nikki rose to start running and saw that Abbey had fallen again, so she returned to help her. After she completed her run, she saw that though Abbey had sustained a more serious injury, she still ran on. Nikki waited for her at the finish line and hugged this woman whom she had never met.

Later in an interview, Nikki described that event as the defining moment of her Olympic experience. She remarked that long after she forgot her time or her splits, she would never forget the kindness of Abbey. Declaring her a sign of the Olympic spirit, Nikki raved about her newfound friend, this "amazing woman" who demonstrated what the Olympics mean. She stated: "I'm never going to forget that moment. When someone asks me what happened in Rio in 20 years' time, that's my story . . . [Abbey] shaking my shoulder, saying 'Come on, get up'." Even though the two finished last, the Olympic officials will allow them to compete in the final race.

As I reflected on this story today, I remembered a Bible verse one of the Conference staff referenced in our weekly worship this morning. Romans 8:5 states, “People whose lives are based on selfishness think about selfish things, but people whose lives are based on the Spirit think about things that are related to the Spirit.” These two athletes definitely reflected the “things that are related to the Spirit.”

Of course, I also thought about the church. We all have a race that is set before us, a journey toward God which we run in community but also on our own. Hebrews 12:1 reminds us: “So then let’s also run the race that is laid out in front of us, since we have such a great cloud of witnesses surrounding us. Let’s throw off any extra baggage, get rid of the sin that trips us up...” Often sin trips us up as we run our race of faith. Yet, we do not run alone. We have other runners, “a great cloud of witnesses,” both those who live and those who have died in Christ, cheering us on, helping us to get up and finish our race.

Yet how do we treat people whose sins have tripped them up? We all know we have fallen because of sin, but some people’s sins seem so obvious to us, tempting us to say, “Well, at least I am not...” (You can fill in the blank for yourself.) I remember reading a story in *What’s So Amazing about Grace*, by Phillip Yancey, where a prostitute confessed to a pastor. When the pastor suggested she attend church, she replied: “I already feel horrible about myself! Why would I go there? They would only make me feel worse.” Ouch.

What would people in your community say about your church congregation? Do you sigh in relief that at least you remain on your feet for now? Do you keep running, oblivious of the pain of those around you? Do you focus so much on what feeds your needs that you miss the opportunity to assist others? How might God be calling you to stop, to see the pain of someone around you, to go to them (setting aside your own needs), to gently touch them and help them to their feet? Who is that injured runner in your life who needs your encouragement to get up and try again, even when sin has tripped them up? What sin tends to trip you up? How can your awareness of that sin help you remain humble and more willing to help others?

I pray that this Olympic story may remind us to live our vision as an Annual Conference to be “Connected Christians offering the hope of Jesus Christ in today’s world.” May our connection with the Spirit keep us aware of others around us who remain in pain and need the hope which only Jesus can bring. May each of us listen moment by moment to hear the Spirit’s invitation to encourage others on the journey of faith, whether they have not yet begun, or recently tripped, or are nearing the end. Let’s be that cloud of witnesses.

Blessings on the journey,

Vicki

Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

Director of Connectional Ministries



This year's Annual Back to School Bash will be on **Saturday, August 27, 2016 from 9:00 a.m. -1:00 p.m. in Milford, DE.** The event will take place in the area of the First State Manufacturing Plant located at 301 S.E. 4th Street, Milford, DE and the tentative agenda will be as follows:

- 9:00 a.m. - 10:00 a.m. ~ Free Clothing Giveaway
- 10:00 a.m. ~ Opening prayer and introduction of guest
- 10:00 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. ~ Vendors, Free Food and School Supply Giveaways, Fun and Entertainment
- 1:00 p.m. ~ Closing

Additionally, the event includes a large hosting of community resource and wellness vendors, fire truck rides, and tours of first responder equipment such as the Life Net helicopter. We are asking you and the rest of our congregation support this event again this year with an effort to make this a more successful event than ever before. We definitely would appreciate your involvement in the event to partner with us (Kingdom Life Family Ministries) and the other neighboring churches within the community.

Family Bonfire

Sunday Sept 4th

6-9pm

Bring Your
Family and a
Lawn Chair!

2600 Canterbury Road
Milford, DE

Benvenuto!

*Come, Join us to Bless & Celebrate
Sunset Cove's Tropical Oasis.*

Date:
September 5, 2016

Time:
2:00 P.M.

Address:
Sunset Cove, 3 Haven Lake Ave, Milford, DE 19963

R.S.V.P by:
August 29, 2016
302-422-1086

(We must have an accurate number of people attending.)

COMING THIS SEPTEMBER TO AVENUE **The Mispillion Children's Chorus**

All students AGES 6-12 years old
are invited to begin attending
rehearsals here at Avenue Church

BEGINNING SEPTEMBER 6th
Tuesday evenings 6:15-7:00 p.m.

Also available at the original rehearsal location:
The Milford Boys & Girls Club
Tuesday afternoons 4:30-5:30 p.m.

NO AUDITIONS!

NO FEES!

NO EXPERIENCE REQUIRED!



*Just a commitment from parents and
guardians that students attend regularly
and participate in performances.*

QUESTIONS

themispillionchildrenschorus@gmail.com

Kevin B. Chamberlain (302) 422-8111

Sharon Starling (302) 422-2785



GriefShare is a network of 12,000+ churches worldwide equipped to offer grief support groups.

The program is nondenominational and features biblical concepts for healing from your grief.

Learn more about GriefShare at www.griefshare.org

GriefShare

begins September 8th and runs thru December 8th
(barring any cancellation due to inclement weather)

Classes run from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m.

Meets in the Grier Room

Avenue United Methodist Church

20 N. Church Street

Milford, DE 19963

(302) 422-8111

www.avenueumc.com



Bishop's Dover District Day
September 15, 2016
Long Neck UMC
32051 Long Neck Road
Millsboro, DE 19966



Please plan on joining us as we welcome Bishop Peggy A. Johnson to the Dover District

Clergy Session - will start at noon with lunch and conclude at 3:00 pm

Lunch - \$7 per attendee

Note: this meeting takes the place of the September Clergy Gathering

Laity Session - 5:00 to 8:30 pm

includes dinner prepared by District Board of Laity



To assist in planning for this event, please respond to CMyers@Pen-Del.org by no later than Thursday, September 8th.

If you have any special dietary restrictions please let Cathy know when you respond.

Please specify if your response is for the **Clergy Session** or the **Laity Session** as we need headcounts for both sessions.



Be Inspired ... Be Transformed ... Become

God is Spirit and his worshippers must worship in the Spirit and in truth.
~ John 4:24

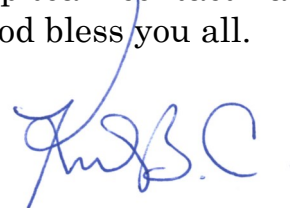
In the Spirit of the Lord, Avenue Church is getting ready to start a fourth worship experience. Beginning on September 22nd, this new service will be on Thursday evenings in Fellowship Hall. Start time is 6:30 p.m. and will last about 45 minutes.

So what's different about the Thursday program from Sunday worship and who is this for? It's for everyone! While we recognize that some people work Sundays or need public transportation that is not available on the weekend, this worship is not just for people who can't make it to church on Sundays. It's also for anyone who wants that midweek boost of spirituality and fellowship.

What makes it unique is that the service will be more introspective and reflective. The Word will continue to be at the heart of worship but the message will be contemplative. The music will be changing weekly and offer eclectic, new pieces. Some weeks may include acoustic piano and other services might have cultural aspects like instruments or melodies. It's also possible that the music will be a different type of genre altogether. There will also be plenty of time to pray.

Mark your calendars and come prepared to "be inspired . . . be transformed . . . become."

If you are interested in being part of the worship team contact Pastors Wendy or Kevin. Let any of us know if you have questions. God bless you all.



*Call to me and I will answer you
and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know.*

~ Jeremiah 33:3

PRAY, PRAY, PRAY

Saturday, September 24, 2016

9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Conley's United Methodist

The theme of the 2nd Dover District Revival Prayer Day will be "Why Pray?"

Why do we pray?

Do you pray to be restored?

Do you pray to reach out to the nations?

Let's gather to listen to God's answers!

This day-long prayer session will focus on praise, worship, the teaching on "Why Pray", practice of corporate prayers as we lift up the Church, our country, the world, and one another, along with the Holy Communion and anointing. You will experience the power of prayer and spiritual breakthroughs during this event.

Come, and be blessed to see the Holy Spirit at work in our midst.

All clergy and laity are welcome to attend.

REGISTRATION FORM

REGISTRATION FEE: \$5

Lunch will be provided by the Dover District Board of Lay Ministries.

Please enclose check, or money order and **return no later than September 17, 2016** to:

Dover District Office Attn: Cathy Myers, 30 Loockerman Plaza Dover, Delaware 19901

Please call the District Office with any questions at [\(302\) 526-2629](tel:3025262629)

Please print

Attendee's Name: _____

Church: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Please note any special dietary requirements: _____

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: The following dates are available in **2016:** December 4th, 11th. 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: Charlie Clendaniel, Sr., Barbara Vederose, Beth Parker, For the family and friends of Dianne Barnard who passed away last week, For the family and friends of Dorlene Fox who passed away Sunday morning, Ashley Wyatt, George Carey, PJ, Catherine Killen, Bud Tucker, Carol Hobert, Traveling Mercies for Steve and Oksana, Madalyn Foxwell, Sara Craig, Tracy Lear's sister and family, Jim Noles, Dotti, Bunny Simms, May God allow all of us to feel special, Jim Greenly, Collen Dunham, April McIntyre, David Thomas and Bill Gustin.

Recently hospitalized: Charlie Clendaniel.

Rejoice with: Blessing of the backpacks on August 21st and Susanne Smith.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: Barbara Vederose, The grandson of Mitch Carrara, Morgan Roberts, For the family and friends of Dorlene Fox, April McIntyre, Colleen Dunham, Jim Greenly, our world for peace & acceptance of our differences, Jean Murphey, The Harold Meyers family, Paul Russel, Stephen Parons, Ed, Randy, Sam Wylie, Dylan Hilligoss, Gary Seal, Anita Price, The family of Arlene Veith, The family of Dawn Marcelle-Seagrave, Samantha, Mike, Jeanie, Madalyn Foxwell and Bill Gustin.

Recently hospitalized: Charlie Clendaniel and Gary Seal.

Rejoice with: McKenzie Betts, Tristen Collins and her new daughter, Ava Lyn and Charlie Clendaniel.

BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO:

Dot Sophos who will celebrate her **93rd** birthday on September 1st.

MUSIC REHEARSAL SCHEDULES:

♪Handbells

Mondays at 6:30 p.m., Music Room
[rehearsal resume September, 12th.]

♪MomentUM Praise Team

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

♪Praise Team

Tuesdays at 7:00 p.m., Sanctuary

♪Sanctuary Choir

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

[rehearsal resume September, 7th.]

♪AveNotes

Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

[rehearsal resume September, 7th.]

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.

SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES/MINISTRIES

TUESDAY MORNING SISTERS' BIBLE STUDY

On **September 6th** we will view "The War Room". On **September 13th** we will begin a 6 week study "Anointed, Transformed, Redeemed" with presenters Priscilla Shirer, Kay Arthur and Beth Moore. Please call Ginny Van Tine (302) 422-4282, Brenda Powers (302) 422-8821 or leave a message in the church office if you would like to join us. We meet at 10:00 a.m. in the Grier Room.

UMW BOARD will meet on Tuesday, **September 6th**, at 1:00 pm in the Heritage Room, upstairs. Please plan to attend this meeting to get all the latest information to take back to your Circle.

WIDOW/WIDOWERS/LOST AND FOUND GROUP will meet Wednesday, **September 7th** at 4:00 p.m. in the Grier 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 **September 12th** at 4:00 p.m. in the Grier Room.

MONDAY NIGHT BIBLE STUDY will resume its study of God's Word on **September 12th** at 6:30 p.m. with *The Patriarchs – Encountering the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob*, by Beth Moore. We welcome and encourage anyone interested to join our group. Please call Cheryl Pusey (302) 381-2474 or the church office by August 28th to register.

GRIEF SHARE: Regardless of the circumstances, grief recovery is a difficult and painful process. If you are hurting from the loss of a loved one, please prayerfully consider attending Grief Share—a Christ-centered, biblically based support group for people grieving the loss of a loved one. This 13-week cycle begins on **Thursday, September 8th** from 6:30–8:30 p.m., in the Grier Room. Please call the church office for additional information or to register.

BOOK CLUB: We will be meeting on **September 18th** at 12:15 p.m. in the Grier Room. Bring your lunch. We will continue to read "Finding My Way Home" by Henri Nouwen. New to the

group read through page 85. If you were with us last year , then read pages 53-85. All are welcome.

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW) are ready to gather in small group Circle meetings and at large quarterly Unit meetings for the fall of 2016. If you are part of one of the Circles that meet on the third Tuesday each month in the morning, afternoon or evening, that is wonderful. If you would like to be part of a UMW Circle, please just come out to one of the meetings. We meet at 9:45 am (Sarah), 1:30 p.m. (Mary/Martha) and 7:00 pm (Esther).

Check the weekly calendar to find the Circle that best fits your needs. UMW is about mission and working to enhance the lives of women and children, in particular. UMW serves, educates, loves God and grows in relationship to Christ. Too busy for a meeting, then consider the electronic circle (e-circle). E-Circle members are informed about meetings, service projects and have an opportunity to be a part of activities when you are able. UMW will be working with the whole church to expand our commitment to our missionaries, Donna and Jonathan Baker in the Congo. We have a new exciting project to participate in. Come join us. If you have questions, contact the church office.

OUTREACH

THE MILFORD COMMUNITY PANTRY: The Milford Community Pantry is so thankful for the folks at Avenue who support us with gifts of food, gifts of time and gifts of money. The need has grown over the years and currently we feed over 100 families every month. We are okay right now with our volunteer help but I will put the call out if that changes.

Let's make August and September CEREAL months. If we serve 105 families that means we use at least 105 boxes of cereal! You were so helpful last time we asked so this is our wish for the next two months.

AVENUE PRESCHOOL has a limited number of openings for the 2016-17 school year. To be eligible, a child must be at least 36-months old on or before August 31st. We are a Star Level 5, Delaware Stars rated program offering a high quality early education experience. For more information contact office@avenuepreschool.org or (302) 422-8111. Be sure to visit our Facebook page and website at: www.avenuepreschool.org.

FIRST STATE HARMONIZERS: "An A Cappella Extravaganza IV" featuring the First State Harmonizers and The Pride of Delmarva Choruses. **Sunday, September 11, 2016 at 2:00 p.m.** the Milford Senior Center. For tickets call Harry Humes (302) 422-8620 or Chuck Culotta (302) 236-5211.

LAST WEEK AT AVENUE

Attendance:	2015	2016
8:00	71	60
9:30	229	194
Sunday School	47	0
11:00	65	71
Total	412	325

CALENDAR

SUNDAY 8/28

8:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
1:00 p.m. Boy Scouts Comm. Meeting,
Heritage Meeting

MONDAY 8/29

11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
7:00 p.m. 1st State Harmonizers,
Fellowship Hall
8:00 p.m. AA, Room 206

TUESDAY 8/30

10:00 a.m. Sister's Bible Study,
Grier Room
1:00 p.m. Staff Meeting,
Conference Room
6:00 p.m. MomentUM Praise Team
Rehearsal, Wesley Room
6:00 p.m. Covenant Discipleship Group,
Wendy's Office
6:30 p.m. Pack Meeting, Fellowship Hall
7:00 p.m. Central Delaware Chess Club,
Room 206
7:00 p.m. Praise Team Rehearsal,
Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY 8/31

10:30 a.m. Writing Group, Grier Room
1:30 p.m. Knitting Group, Grier Room
5:00 p.m. Women's Emmaus Reunion,
Room 202
6:45 p.m. Pride of Delmarva,
Fellowship Hall

THURSDAY 9/1

8:30 a.m. Preschool Staff Meeting,
Grier Room
11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
2:30 p.m. Women's Emmaus Reunion,
Room 202

FRIDAY 9/2

11:00 a.m. Wrap Around DE,
Holzmueller Room
8:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

SATURDAY 9/3

7:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

SUNDAY 9/4

8:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
9:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
9:30 a.m. Sunday School, Grier Room
10:00 a.m. Choir Rehearsal, Music Room
11:00 a.m. Traditional Worship