



The Midweek

Wednesday, December 20, 2017

From the desk of our Pastors . . .

At the Milford hospital, in the lobby and in the waiting room just up the ramp, are Christmas trees that have been decorated by different departments in the hospital. There is a beautiful tree full of beach related decorations. There is one with a Harry Potter theme. My favorite is a funny tree that is based on the Grinch. Depending on your personal preference, there is sure to be a tree that you would like.

But most importantly, the trees are a bright spot in what could be a difficult or troubling situation. Most people coming to the hospital are there for medical issues that require treatment and especially at this time of year, that can be rough. But the trees, which would be found only at this time of year as well, are a welcome distraction from the concerns of the patients and their families. They bring moments of joy into a time of distress.

That is what Christmas does as well. It brings great joy into lives that don't always know happiness and contentment. Luke 2: 10-11 says, "And the angel said unto them, Fear not for behold, I bring you tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people."

That great joy is Christ himself. Jesus did indeed come for all people.

So, no matter what you have found yourself dealing with this past year,

whether it has been a wonderful year, the worst year of your life, or something in between, Jesus is here for you and just His presence alone brings great joy. As we prepare to celebrate Christmas, let's focus on the gift that the Lord is. A source of great joy for all people.

I wish you and your family and friends a merry and blessed Christmas. Thank you all for being an amazing gift to me every day of the year.

And in all ways, at all times and in all places, to God be the glory forever and ever.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Henry". The signature is written in a cursive style.



From the desk of our Bishop.....

Reproach of Women

During the Advent season we often study the life of John and Baptist and his godly parents, Zechariah and Elizabeth. During her pregnancy with this holy child Elizabeth exclaimed “Thus the Lord has done for me in the days when he looked on me, to take away my reproach among people.” (Luke 1:25). What was her reproach? Elizabeth was unable to conceive and she was disdained for this by her society. The worth of a woman in her world and in many cultures depends on their ability to bear children. In some societies male children are the ones that count the most so not even a female baby is good enough. A woman who has no children is at fault for some reason, even though modern medicine has proven that the husband can also be the cause of the family infertility. In the Bible we read of a few other women who faced reproach and were desperate for a child: Sarah, Rebekah, and Hannah to name a few.

In our society women are not under the same depth of condemnation if they do not conceive. Women have careers and many kinds of other interests than motherhood. However there is still unhappiness and social pain when a couple who want children cannot conceive for some reason.


Reproach of women is not lost on our society. The practice of sexism is a form of reproach. Still today women get paid less than men for the same work, most corporations have men as their CEO's, and sexual abuse and domestic violence mostly happens to women. I have seen this in our church. At least once every year, someone who knows that their pastor is leaving will call my office and say, “don't send us a woman pastor.” I have handled numerous complaints of sexual misconduct and harassment by clergy and lay people during my tenure in this area. Many fine women pastors have had difficulties in ministry, not because of their lack of skills or calling but because some in the church (men and women) cannot accept their authority or the unique gifts that they bring. Some even use the Bible to justify their discrimination against a woman pastor.

What do we do about our modern day reproach and sexism? We talk about it!

Time Magazine announced last week that their “Person of the Year” was not a person but a group of women known as the “Silence Breakers.” This is a group of women who came forward and told the story of sexual abuse at the hands of men in positions of power. As more and more women come forward to tell their stories things can get better.

I remember as a young adult I experienced sexual abuse two times. Once a co-worker at the school where I taught pushed me against a wall and kissed me. On another occasion the father of the groom at a family wedding found me in a quiet corner proceeded with some inappropriate touching. I never told anyone about this and that is how the practice of abuse continues. When abused women (and sometimes men) keep silent the abuse is somehow condoned and safe. Sometimes when they do speak out they are demonized, not believed and ostracized, making them the victim a second time.

The church needs to have honest conversations about these issues and strive to live in more healthy ways as we continue the work of ministry. First steps include talking, teaching, and creating safe spaces for people to share their stories. In that way we can fulfill the words of Elizabeth and take away the reproach of women (and all those abused) among the people.

 Peggy A. Johnson

GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Herman and Edna Argo by Doug and Kathy Kutz
Grover and Orpha Ashton by The Webb Family
James C. Bailey Jr. by Margaret Bailey, Christine Reece and Matthew Bailey
Steven Billings by Bob and Joyce Voshell
Steven Billings by Annette Billings
Carolyn A. Brown, Isabelle Bill and Charles Gill by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Lyle Bunville (my father) by Kathryn Welch
Lynn Byer by William Byer
E.A. Carlson by Tita Lewis
Cal Clendaniel by Ginny
Cal Clendaniel by Joyce & Bob Voshell
Dale Clifton, Sr. by Rick & Carol Sherwood
John David Clifton by Rick & Carol Sherwood
Parents Chester and Florence Coffin by Their Family
Grace Conway by Dave & Sherrie Morris
Our Daughter Jennifer Crabb by Richard and Crabb
John A. Darpino, Jr by John and Christine Darpino
Marian Dickerson by Joyce and Bob Voshell
Mr. and Mrs. Charles E. Douglas by Richard E. Douglas
Mrs. Marcella Evangeline Douglas by Richard E. Douglas
Our Grandparents by The Wellers
Billy Green by Faye and Bill Byer
Our Daughter: Amy Hanna-Hagopian by Al and Linda Hanna
Our Parents by Gene and Alva Hemshrot
Dike and Lib Hitchens by The Hitchens Family
Francis E. "Hump" Holleger by Helen Holleger
Richard J. Holleger Sr. by Hilda Holleger and Family
Steven A. Holleger by Helen Holleger
Doris & Jr. Hobbs by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Bill Jackson—My Beloved Husband by Ginger Jackson
"Dad" Bill Jackson by Tom and Tanja Payton
Dad and Pop Pop (Bill Jackson) by Paige and Crystal Lynch and Jeremy, Jessica and Jayce Lynch
"Pop Pop" Bill Jackson by Richard and Brynn
"Dad" Bill Jackson by Ed and Wanda
Pop Pop and Pop (Bill Jackson) by Adam, Chrissy, Gabe and Michael
"Pop-Pop" Bill Jackson by Tavor, Ashlee, Leila and Kinsley
Walton A. Johnson Jr by Poncho, Lisa and Colby Johnson
Walton A. Johnson Sr by Poncho, Lisa and Colby Johnson
Daughter, Nancy Lauckner Sereno and Husband, Al Lauckner by Ellie Lauckner
Don H. Lewis by Tita Lewis
My Parents by Tita Lewis
Ralph and Claire MacMurtrie by The Sharp Family
David M. Marvel by Linda M. Marvel
Margaret & Alton Maull by Arlene and David Wilkerson
Barbara Kutz Mercer by Doug and Kathy Kutz

GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF (CONT.)

Lucille Mercer by Ann and Kaye
Beatrice Miller (sister) by Linda M. Marvel
James and Earlene Morris by Dave & Sherrie Morris
Edith May Nelson by Ferd Nelson
Edith Nelson by Barbara French
Edith M. Nelson by Linda & Tom Spiegel
Debbie Serpa by All The Peters Family
Betty and Herman Sharp by Annette Billings
Marion Sherwood by Rick and Carol Sherwood
Rev. V. Paul Sherwood by Rick & Carol Sherwood
Gardner Shugart, Jr by Joyce and Bob Voshell
John and Frances Simon by The Sharp Family
Jodie Smyth by Jo Wood
Raymond W. Spicer by Lisa, Poncho and Colby Johnson
Marge Steiner by Joyce & Bob Voshell
Hazel Swain by Mike and Gerald Swain
Harold and Charlotte Tucker by The Hitchens Family
Our Aunt Kay Webb by The Webb Family
L. Robbins Webb by Kathryn and Children
Mr. & Mrs. Lucius C. Webb by Their Family
Katie & C. Van Nuis Wilkerson by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Elizabeth & Charles Wilkerson by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Guy and Evelyn Winebrenner by Gene, Debbie, Matthew and Kellie Topolski
Albert Wright by Ray Wright
Carl Wright by Ray Wright
Mr. & Mrs. George Wright by Ray Wright
Charles by Olive Wuenstel
Our Parents – John and Louise Roosa, Karldon and Ruth Van Tine
by John and Ginny Van Tine
Doris Veasey by Dave & Sherrie Morris

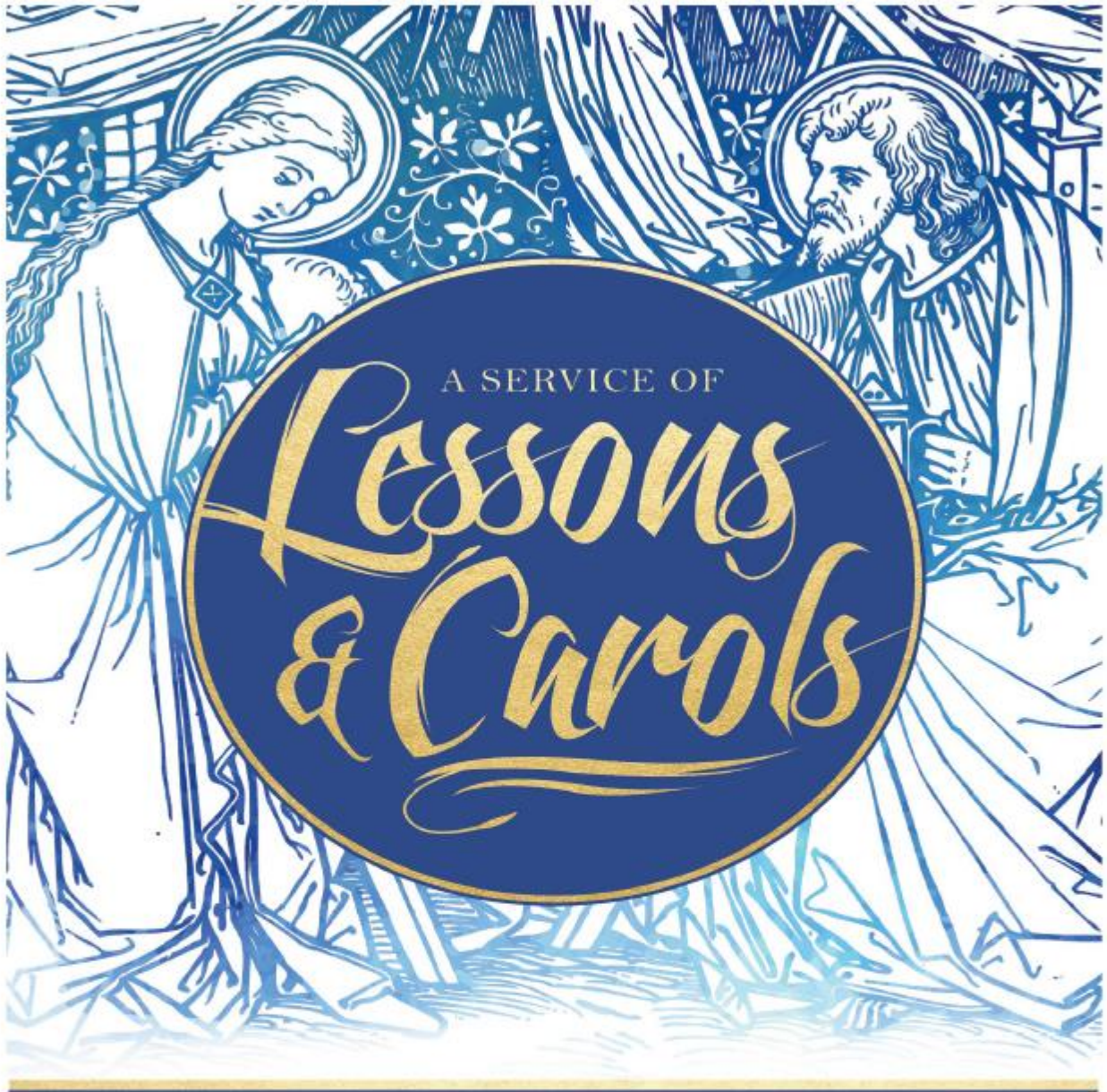
GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN HONOR OF

Barbara French & Marty Brereton by Ferd Nelson
Bob Clendaniel by Erin, Becky, Bryan, Stefi, Rob and Issac
Ms. Cynthia Louise Fritz by Richard E. Douglas
Our Parents by The Wellers
My children, grandchildren and great grandchildren by Ginger Jackson
Joe and Mary Jo Lear by Ferd Nelson
Robert Mercer by Ann and Kaye
Ferd Nelson by Barbara French
Ferdinand C. Nelson by Linda and Tom Spiegel
Ferd Nelson by Marty Brereton
Katie, Bethany, Donny & Sammy by Tom & Sarah Pasmore
All the Peters Family by All the Peters Family
Our Children – Lynne and Peter by Ginny and John Van Tine

GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD IN LOVING MEMORY AND HONOR OF

All Sarah Circle Members past and present by Sarah Circle

AVENUE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH



**FEATURING THE FESTIVAL CHOIR AND STRINGS
SUNDAY DECEMBER 24TH AT 10:30AM**

**20 N. CHURCH STREET | CHILDCARE WILL BE PROVIDED
PLEASE JOIN US | FREE & OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

At the first Christmas, angels proclaimed good news of great joy for all people. We invite you to join us at Avenue United Methodist Church to celebrate that joy with others in the community.

Sunday, December 24th

- 9:30 AM Children's Christmas Pageant
- 10:00 AM Refreshments and Fellowship
- 10:30 AM Festival of Lessons and Carols
- 3:00 PM Family Service with a Children's Message, Organ and Carols
- 5:00 PM Family Service with a Children's Message, Organ and Carols
- 7:00 PM Contemporary Service with Praise and Worship Team
- 9:00 PM Contemporary Service with Praise and Worship Team
- 11:00 PM Traditional Service with Choir, Organ and Carols

**All evening services will include candlelight and Holy Communion.
Child Care provided for the 3:00, 5:00 and 7:00 Services.**



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 Milford Plant, Flower and Garden Shop at (302) 422-4961. Flowers are placed in the altar vases up by the cross.

PRAYER CONCERNS PAST WEEK: The family of Neil Parker, Alan & Beth Parker's brother, who passed away on Saturday, The family and friends of April McIntyre who passed away on November 30, Joe and Grace Irish, Tom Price, Ron Payne, Elizabeth Frampton, David Sockrider, Holly, Charles, Brian Reph, Brenda Beissel, Linda Brittingham, Lillie Brittingham, Jean Stevenson, Julia, Alan Parker, Janice Abbott, Collen Dunham, Marilyn Bowe, Bill & Jill Gustin, Kirsten Pearce, Bonnie Shea, Arthur, Beth Judy, Bobby Walls, Dot Sophos, Andrew and Sylvia Tuttle, Matt Lewis's mom, Mary Jane Tester, The Hannah family, Diana Hopkins, Craig, Beverly Auckland, Chuck & Sandy Culotta's daughter-in-law, Babbie, Chuck & Sandy Culotta's daughter-in-law, Kalle, Ryan Hurka, All of our Code Purple guests and volunteers.

Recently hospitalized: Howard Sipple, David Sockrider and Brenda Beissel.

Rejoice with: Us, as we give thanks for the ultimate gift of Jesus, For the beauty of snow, For blessings in unexpected places and for cell phones that ring at the right time.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: Family and friends of Joan Schaible, Tiffany Joseph and her family in the loss of her brother, Johnny & Amy Howard and family in the passing of Johnny's dad, The Begley family in the passing of Mary Jane, Little brother who is antagonizing the family, Jo Wood, Joe and Grace Irish, David Sockrider, Elizabeth Frampton, Brian Reph, George and Lorraine Reph's son, Linda Brittingham, Jean Stevenson, Josh Willey's cousin, Julia, Alan Parker, Janice Abbott, Colleen Dunham, Gail, June, and Family, Marilyn Bowe, Bill & Jill Gustin, Kirsten Pearce, Faye Schnell, Arthur, Joyce Bonnoni's father, Beth Judy, Bobby Walls, Dot Sophos, Andrew and Sylvia Tuttle, Steve Sylvester, Matt Lewis's mom, Mary Jane Tester, The Hannah family, Diana Hopkins, Craig, Jeanette Shearer, Carol Ritter, Beverly Auckland, Chuck & Sandy Culotta's daughter-in-law, Babbie, Chuck & Sandy Culotta's daughter-in-law, Kalle, and all of our Code Purple guests and volunteers.

Rejoice with: Us, as we give thanks for the ultimate gift of Jesus, Brenda Beissel, home from rehab, Lillie Brittingham, and Drew Fox and Kellie Topolski who graduated from DSU on Saturday, and for their upcoming marriage on December 28th in Arizona.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Russ and Harriett Davies who will celebrate their 57th anniversary on **December 24th**.

WEEKLY MUSIC REHEARSALS:

♪Handbells

Mondays, at 6:30 p.m., Sanctuary

♪MomentUM Praise Team

Tuesdays at 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary

♪Misphion 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

♪AveNotes

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

A WORD ABOUT WHITE PARAMENTS

Why White?

White is the symbol of purity and holiness. It is used for the **Christmas** season as a sign of respect and reverence for the birth of our Lord.

What do the symbols represent?

On the altar cloth, the three petaled arms of the fleur-de-lis (lily) crosses symbolize the Trinity. The smaller ones flank the large cross with the I H S initials, mean "In His Sign".

The crown above the crosses on the lectern and pulpit represents the Son of God, the Prince of Peace.

(Adapted from The meaning of Colors and Symbols by Dennis Bratcher)

SUNDAY SCHOOL CHRISTMAS PROGRAM will be practicing on **December 23rd** from 10:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. Pizza will be served for kids after practice.

SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES/MINISTRIES

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

TUESDAY MORNING SISTERS' BIBLE STUDY: On **January 9th** we will be starting *Is This The End* by David Jeremiah. Please join us at any time. Contact 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 will meet in the Grier Room at 10:00 a.m.

WEDNESDAY DISCIPLE CLASS meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Holzmueller Room. On **December 20th** we will continue exploring the Bible. To register, please call Josh Willey at (302) 422-8952.

SUNSHINE ADULT BIBLE STUDY: The Sunshine Bible Class will be studying "The Early Church Proclaims Faith in Christ" for the month of December. December 24th, "Faithful Seekers of the King," based on Matthew 2:1-12; and December 31st, "Faith to Unite" based on Ephesians 4:1-16. The Sunshine Class meets each Sunday at 9:30 a.m. in the Grier Room and all adults are welcome.

EXPLORING FAITH BOOK will meet on January 28, 2018 at 12:15 p.m. in the Grier Room. We shall continue our study of the "Screwtape Letters" by C.S. Lewis by looking at letters 15 through 21.

VBS: Vacation Bible School is looking for a Kitchen Coordinator. Please be praying about this role. If you are interested please contact Sarah Pasmore. We would also like to thank Carol Evans who has been our VBS Kitchen Coordinator for many years. We appreciate all that she has done to make VBS such a success for our children.

SAFE SANCTUARY TRAINING: Interested in helping out with our children's ministries? Already volunteering with our youth? Please plan to attend ONE of the following trainings for Safe Sanctuary: **Wednesday, January 17th** from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. or **Thursday, January 25th** from 6:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m. Both meetings will be held in the Grier Room. Anyone is invited to attend (even if you aren't sure you want to volunteer). If you have questions or want to know more – please contact Sarah Pasmore at (302) 841-3143.

OUTREACH

AVENUE PRESCHOOL REGISTRATION FOR THE 2017-18 SCHOOL YEAR. Registration is ongoing for a limited number of spots for the 2017-18 school year, which is the preschool's **50th** year providing early education services in the community. To be eligible, a child must be at least 36-months old on or before August 31st, unless entering our new "Young Beginners" program--see next section for those details. Registration must be done in person. Contact the Preschool Director, Paula Yeich, and 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.

AVENUE PRESCHOOL NEW-OFFER: Children who will turn 3 after August 31st but before December 31, 2017 are now able to register for our beginners program. They will be in our 2 day program that is on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 9:00 a.m.-12:00 p.m. Children must be potty-trained before the first day of school. Children in our preschool program are actively involved in a curriculum that stresses the social, emotional, physical and academic aspects of their development. For further information please see the contact details in the Avenue

Preschool section above.

PARADE OF TREES - AVENUE PRESCHOOL: Avenue Preschool is sponsoring a “Purr-Fect” Haven Rescue tree in the Milford Grotto Pizza restaurant's Parade of Trees to benefit Purr-Fect Haven Rescue. The event runs now until January 1, 2018. The tree that collects the most charitable contributions will win an additional \$250 for their charity at the end of the event. Check out the beautiful tree Avenue Preschool decorated

CODE PURPLE

Remember those scruffy shepherds that God invited to His birth??? Well He invites them every night to Avenue!!! Come be apart of bringing Jesus to our “shepherds.”

Our shelter remains small currently making it easier to talk and interact with our guests, so if you are bringing dinner, only make enough for 12-15 people.

Every morning, we give the guys, “to-go bags.” We give out 8-9 per night times 7 days a week. In them we include, bottled water, a protein like spam, individual packs of tuna and Vienna sausage. Small packs of crackers of 6-8, individual servings of applesauce, granola bars, pretzels, silverware, and a napkin. We include this, and sometimes more, in a gallon freezer bag. We need ongoing donations of these kinds of foods, freezer bags and silverware. Other Needs: Coffee, large black trash bags, foods listed above for “to-go” bags, Gallons bottles of unsweetened ice tea, half gallons of milk. But the greatest need right now are men’s gloves. What we have are children’s or women’s gloves. We also need men’s sweatpants and fresh fruits.

Right now, we have many bottles of salad dressing and tubs of butter. So, for now hold off. It is so nice to see people who bring dinner, sit down and strike up a conversation with our men. They laugh and talk! What a gift! Often, we help people by just accepting them where they are and treating them as equals.

Thanks to everyone who gives anonymously... like our scarf fairy who dropped of mufflers etc. To those who bring food donations and supplies without being noticed. Thank you, thank you!!! You are channels of grace!

We are extremely in need of overnight volunteers. We are now using women volunteers in pairs, to do overnights. A few of our current volunteers stay overnight 3 nights a week just so we don’t have to close our doors. But that’s just too many nights! Call me if you want to know how easy overnights are.

May God bless each of you greatly in this season of Jesus’s birth into our world!!! Nan Ruhl (302) 604-2619

COMMUNITY

PARADE OF TREES - CODE PURPLE: Downes Insurance Associates, INC. is sponsoring a tree

in the Milford Grotto Pizza restaurant's Parade of Trees to benefit Code Purple Sussex County. The event runs now until January 1, 2018. The tree that collects the most charitable contributions will win an additional \$250 for their charity at the end of the event. Check out the beautiful tree Downes Insurance Associates, INC decorated on our behalf last night, and let's see if we can win that additional \$250!

Thank you to Gary Downes and his team for all their support of Code Purple and thank you to Grotto Pizza for this fun event!

LAST WEEK AT AVENUE

Attendance:	2016	2017
8:00	86	63
9:30	210	190
Sunday School	96	81
11:00	108	86
<u>FUSION</u>	<u>55</u>	<u>68</u>
Total	555	448

CALENDAR

SUNDAY 12/24 ~ Christmas Eve

- 9:30 a.m. Sunday School Christmas Program,
Fellowship Hall
- 10:30 a.m. Lessons & Carols
- 3:00 p.m. Traditional Worship
- 5:00 p.m. Traditional Worship
- 7:00 p.m. Contemporary Worship
- 9:00 p.m. Contemporary Worship
- 11:00 p.m. Traditional Worship

MONDAY 12/25 ~ Christmas

Office Closed

- 11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Room 206

TUESDAY 12/26

Office Closed

- 7:00 p.m. Central Delaware Chess Club,
Room 206
- 7:00 p.m. Praise Team Rehearsal,
Sanctuary

WEDNESDAY 12/27

Office Open 12 p.m.—3p.m.

- 5:00 p.m. Women's Emmaus Reunion,
Room 202
- 7:00 p.m. Disciple 1 Class,
Holzmueller Room

THURSDAY 12/28

Office Open 12 p.m.—3p.m.

- 8:30 a.m. Men's Reunion Group,
- 11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
- 2:30 p.m. Women's Emmaus Reunion,
Room 202

FRIDAY 12/29

Office Open 12 p.m.—3p.m.

- 8:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

SATURDAY 12/30

- 7:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

SUNDAY 12/31 ~ New Years Eve

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