



AVENUE  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, January 10, 2018*

*From the desk of our Pastors . . .*

It has now been two weeks of Sunday services with no heat. I trust that the ancient system which is causing so many headaches will be fixed soon. It seems as one problem gets fixed, another one comes up.

I can see how it could happen for one week, but two? It makes me wonder what God wants us to think about or take notice of. It sure seems that the Lord wants to get our attention about something.

It would be very tempting to express my thoughts on what this may mean. Should we be looking at doing something different with the services? Does God want us to get closer to each other? I don't mean just sitting closer together but I did see conversations take place that had not happened in the past, especially in the 8:00 and 11:00 services. Do we simply need to upgrade our heating system? Or is it possible it's just what it seems – a bad couple of weeks of poor heat?

Scripture tells us in Isaiah 7:11, "Ask a sign for yourself from the Lord your God, make it deep as Sheol or as high as heaven." Maybe in our case, it's supposed to be as long as two weeks.

What do you think this means, if anything? Is this the time to be changing our worship times, formats, locations, or any other aspects of Sunday services? Let me know what you think. I would love to hear from you. You can email me at [wendyowen@avenueumc.com](mailto:wendyowen@avenueumc.com)

To God be the glory forever and ever.

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

## Upcoming Meetings

- **Trustees Meeting** on January 15<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m in the Grier Room
- **Safe Sanctuary Training** on January 17<sup>th</sup> at 6:30 p.m. in the Grier Room
- **SPRC Meeting** on January 18<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in the Holzmueller Room
- **Safe Sanctuary Training** on January 25<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 p.m. in the Grier Room.



*From the desk of our Conference Director.....*

## Entertain Angels

*By Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith*

Many years ago, I married a young couple several months earlier than we had planned. They had run into a crisis which sped up the timeline and I was happy to assist. The young man had been stopped for speeding, and then detained as an illegal immigrant. He had been brought to the United States from Mexico as a months-old baby, and the U.S. had been the only home he had ever known. They released him for a couple of weeks while they processed his return, and during those weeks, I married the couple, instead of waiting until the summer.

Several aspects of that wedding remain firmly in my memory, as we combined the traditional U.S. Christian wedding ceremony with some traditions from their province in Mexico. In these provincial Mexican weddings, the family surrounds the bride and groom with a lasso, symbolizing God's eternal love as the bond that holds them together. Then, they invite the bride and groom to kneel while members of the family pray over them. What beautiful additions to our traditions!

A week after the wedding, immigration officials sent the man "back" to a country where he had never lived. He no longer had any relatives in that place, so he had no place to live and no job to support himself. Imagine being taken from the only home you know and sent to a place with no family or friends or place to stay or work. Imagine that your only "crime" had been a speeding ticket. He remained in Mexico for 18 months as immigration officials processed his "marriage" paperwork and the couple has been reunited. But, what an incredible trial for the two of them and their families!

This young couple served as my introduction to the challenges of people called "Dreamers." The DREAM Act stands for "Development, Relief, and Education for Alien Minors." (You may also have heard the term DACA, which stands for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals.) Dreamers have been brought to this country as young children, with no control over their circumstances. They have attended schools here, gotten jobs here, established family and friends here, with few or no memories of their birthplace. These acts seek to create a pathway for them to become "legal" immigrants, after passing background checks, able to work and go to school, and live freely and legally in the U.S. While we can agree that our immigration system needs revamping, we do not have to punish the young people who came here not of their own volition.

Scripture clearly gives direction on how God calls us to treat immigrants. Leviticus 19:33-34 reads: “When immigrants live in your land with you, you must not cheat them. Any immigrant who lives with you must be treated as if they were one of your citizens. You must love them as yourself, because you were immigrants in the land of Egypt; I am the Lord your God.” Notice how God calls us to healthy relationships through empathy—by remembering we were once immigrants in the land of Egypt, and through covenant with God—reminding us that God is our Lord.

For those of you who might argue that God spoke to Israel in the book of Leviticus, Jesus also reminds us that when we welcome the stranger, we welcome him. (See Matthew 25:35.) And the writer of Hebrews encourages us to welcome the stranger: “Don’t neglect to open up your homes to guests, because by doing this some have been hosts to angels without knowing it.” Not only do we welcome Jesus when we welcome the immigrant, but we also “host angels,” or messengers of God. I believe that the Mexican family in the wedding I conducted served as angels, by offering a gift of prayer from the family as a witness to their faith. How awesome would it be if we incorporated that practice into our weddings, inviting family members to pray over the newlywed couple!

So, how can you host these angels? First, as God teaches us, relationships with immigrants and our covenant with God serve as the foundation of how we respond. Where in your neighborhood do you see immigrants? How might God be calling you to offer them hospitality? Carlos Reyes, the Coordinator of Hispanic Latino Ministries here in the Conference Resource Center, tells of establishing relationships with local business owners, just by walking in and visiting. Through these “drop-ins,” he has gotten to know an immigrant couple from Colombia and Pakistan, who have opened up to him in relationship simply because he offered them his presence and hospitality.

Second, as you get to know immigrants or at least listen to their stories and challenges, take the time to speak up for them on their behalf. Join the Conference Rapid Response Team (email Carlos Reyes at [carlospendel@gmail.com](mailto:carlospendel@gmail.com)) to get more timely information on how to advocate for these people of God who have no voice in our government. Join with other churches to sponsor a “Justice for our Neighbors” legal clinic (go to [nijfon.org/our-services/legal-clinics](http://nijfon.org/our-services/legal-clinics)). Call Congress. Call BEFORE January 19 for a Clean Dream Act -No budget for wall building attached to it- at [\(888\) 704-9446](tel:8887049446). Give your zip code. Say that you demand a Clean Dream Act. Or, if you prefer, write to your representative at <https://www.umcjustice.org/what-you-can-do/advocacy/take-action/protect-daca>.

Finally, as we build relationships and get to know our neighbors, pray that we will **Connect** with them and the wider community, **Act** on their behalf for justice, empower them to **Lead**, and **Love** them as the neighbors God commands us to love. Then we will be living our mission: “Cultivating Christ communities through our CALL—Connecting, Acting, Leading, and Loving.”

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

## 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:** Jerry Jackson, the family and friends of Roger Alexander, Christopher, everyone affected by violent crime, all those impacted by the recent house fires throughout the area, Kitty Chen, Chester, Silvia Tuttle, the family and friends of Jean Stevenson, Steve, the Knight family, Josiah, Brother, Junior, Sister Ruth, Kalle Culotta's father, Liz, Craig, Kay Green, Leah Faber, Susan, Zachary Lloyd, Bobby Walls, Alyssa, Ariel, Cathy Strouse, Janet Talbot and family.

**Rejoice with:** Chuck and Sandy Culotta

**PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK:** Jerry Jackson, Travis Moorman and family, the family and friends of Chris Lundy, Everett and Lee Tyrrell, the family and friends of Maddison Remmick, Sister Ruth, Charlie Fleetwood, Raechel Pfier, Luise Combs, and Christopher.

**Rejoice with:** Sylvia Tuttle

### **SYMPATHY TO:**

The family and friends of Madison” Remick, III, who passed away on January 6, 2018.

The family and friends of Chris Lundy who passed away on January 3, 2018. Chris joined Avenue on April 14, 1991.

Everett and Lee Tyrrell, in the passing of his brother “Junior” (Marvin Quentin Tyrrell).

### **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

### ♪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)

**A HEALTHIER YOU CLASS:** In this class you will learn weight loss, eating to avoid cancer, diabetes, Alzheimer’s, detoxing and spiritual fasting. Class will be taught by Bonnie Glenn on **January 17<sup>th</sup> at 9:30 a.m.—12:00 p.m. in the Grier Room.**

**LAITY SUNDAY** is on **January 21<sup>st</sup>.**

**BAPTISM:** If you are interested in being baptized, please contact Pastor Tom at (302) 422-8111 or tapasmore@avenueumc.com.

## SMALL GROUP OPPORTUNITIES/MINISTRIES

**ALZHEIMER’S SUPPORT GROUP:** The Alzheimer’s Caregiver’s Support Group will meet the **2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of each month.** The next meeting will be **February 12<sup>th</sup>** at 4:00 p.m. in the Grier Room.

**TUESDAY MORNING SISTERS’ BIBLE STUDY:** We will continue our study *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 on **January 16<sup>h</sup>.**

**WIDOW/WIDOWERS/LOST AND FOUND GROUP** our next meeting **today** at **2:00 p.m.** in **Pastor Wendy's Office**. Come join us. Contact Pastor Wendy at (302) 422-8111.

**WEDNESDAY DISCIPLE CLASS** meets at 7:00 p.m. in the Holzmüller Room. On **January 10<sup>th</sup>** we will continue exploring the Bible. To register, please call Josh Willey at (302) 422-8952.

**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.

**SUNSHINE BIBLE STUDY** will be studying "A Living Faith in God" during January. January 14<sup>th</sup>, "A Bold Faith" based on Daniel 3:19-23, 26-28; January 21<sup>st</sup>, "A Prayer for an Obedient Faith" based on Daniel 9:1-9; and January 28<sup>th</sup>, "A Strong Faith" based on Daniel 10:10-19. The Sunshine Bible Class meets on Sunday mornings at **9:30 a.m.** in the Grier Room. All are welcome.

**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 17<sup>th</sup>** from 6:30 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. or **Thursday, January 25<sup>th</sup>** 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 **50<sup>th</sup>** year providing early education services in the community. To be eligible, a child must be at least 36-months old on or before August 31<sup>st</sup>, 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](mailto:office@avenuepreschool.org). Be sure to visit our Facebook page and website at: [www.avenuepreschool.org](http://www.avenuepreschool.org).

**AVENUE PRESCHOOL NEW-OFFER:** Children who will turn 3 after August 31<sup>st</sup> 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.

## **CODE PURPLE**

Greetings Friends! Our winter has certainly arrived and with the frigid temperatures, our Code Purple Sussex County shelter here at Avenue UMC has served 36 men so far this season. We have averaged 12-14 recently and we have been blessed with the support of

community members and our church family. You may notice, we have placed a chalkboard in the lobby to note specific needs, as we discover shortages in supplies throughout the week. We are so grateful for the rapid response to last week's requests of jeans and sweat pants.

One way community groups and clubs can work to support Code Purple Sussex County, is to prepare GO BAGS for the shelter. Our guests can take a GO BAG in the morning as they leave for the day. This time of year, GO BAGS are best stocked in a large zip lock bag and include a water bottle, a protein, such as a pop top hearty soup or package of tuna, crackers, fruit cup, or applesauce, napkins, and a spoon/fork. A note of encouragement is always a blessing, as well.

We also invite you to join us in fellowship any evening. 7:00 -8:30 is a great time to come and play games, share testimony, listen with an open heart to another man's story, and be a loving presence during this difficult time in our guests' journeys.

## **COMMUNITY**

**MILFORD COMMUNITY PANTRY:** We are in need cereal (not pre-sweetened please). Thank You!

### **LAST WEEK AT AVENUE**

| Attendance:   | 2017      | 2018       |
|---------------|-----------|------------|
| 8:00          | 0         | 31         |
| 9:30          | 0         | 135        |
| Sunday School | 0         | 42         |
| 11:00         | 0         | 37         |
| <u>FUSION</u> | <u>65</u> | <u>49</u>  |
| <b>Total</b>  | <b>65</b> | <b>294</b> |

\*\* Church Services were cancelled due to snow.



## CALENDAR

### SUNDAY 1/14

- 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
- 4:30 p.m. Confirmation Class, Grier Room
- 6:00 p.m. FUSION, Fellowship Hall and Wesley Room

### MONDAY 1/15

#### **Church Office Closed**

- 9:00 a.m. Hospital Aux. Meeting, Grier Room
- 11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
- 6:30 p.m. Handbell Choir, Music Room
- 7:00 p.m. 1st State Harmonizers, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Room 206
- 7:00 p.m. Trustees Meeting, Grier Room

### TUESDAY 1/16

- 9:45 a.m. Sarah Circle meet at Mary Jo Lear's residence
- 10:00 a.m. Sister's Bible Study, Grier Room
- 1:30 p.m. Mary/Martha Circles, Room 207
- 6:00 p.m. MomentUM, Wesley Room
- 6:30 p.m. Mispillion Children's Chorus, Music Room
- 6:30 p.m. Webelos Den, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Central Delaware Chess Club, Room 206
- 7:00 p.m. Praise Team Rehearsal, Sanctuary

### WEDNESDAY 1/17

- 9:30 a.m. A Healthier You, Grier Room
- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Group, Grier Room
- 1:30 p.m. Food Pantry Task Force Meeting, Conference Room
- 2:00 p.m. Lay Laurette Meeting, Holzmueller Room
- 3:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir, Music Room
- 6:00 p.m. AveNotes, Music Room
- 6:00 p.m. Civil Air Patrol, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Arrow of Light Den, Wesley Room
- 6:30 p.m. Safe Sanctuary Training, Grier Room
- 7:00 p.m. Disciple 1 Class, Holzmueller Room

### THURSDAY 1/18

- 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
- 6:30 p.m. Bear Den Meetings, Wesley Room
- 6:30 p.m. Troop Committee Meeting, Grier Room
- 7:00 p.m. SPRC Meeting, Holzmueller Room

### FRIDAY 1/19

- 6:00 p.m. Pinewood Derby (setup), Fellowship Hall
- 8:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

### SATURDAY 1/20

- 8:00 a.m. Pinewood Derby, Fellowship Hall
- 10:00 a.m. Concert Series: Music School Recital, Sanctuary
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

### SUNDAY 1/21 ~ Laity Sunday

- 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
- 3:00 p.m. Concert Series: Music School Recital, Sanctuary
- 6:00 p.m. FUSION, Fellowship Hall and Wesley Room