



AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Midweek

Wednesday, February 7, 2018

From the desk of our Pastors . . .

This week I am sending you an article that my dear friend Pastor Heidi from Kansas wrote for her monthly newsletter. As we prepare for Lent, I invite you to consider giving up happiness as Heidi plans to do. For those of you wondering if she has lost it completely...read on.

I don't like New Year's resolutions. Have you ever been able to keep a New Year's resolution? As January passes and we head toward the Lenten season, I have to confess that I have never been able to keep a New Year's resolution beyond a few weeks. Giving up or taking on something for Lent, however, has had lasting results. I have given up worry, impatience, and last year, I gave up procrastination and took on being more deliberate about observing Sabbath time.

This year I intend to give up happiness, and take on joy-fullness. Before you ask, "Why would you do something like that?" Let me explain. Over 50 years ago, my father gave a sermon on happiness versus joy. Choosing Christ's joy over happiness made sense, but it shocked me think about giving up happiness. As a ten-year old, my mind went immediately to "What happens to 'Happy Birthday'? and 'Happy New Year?' and 'Happy Valentine's Day'?"

I began to realize that happiness is fleeting, time-bound, and framed by all those not-so-happy moments. Happiness is briefly pleasant, but quite

finite. Joy is for the here and now. God's faithfulness will see us through the good times and the difficult periods, like Jesus' trials in the wilderness. The joy of God's faithfulness is deeply rooted in our beings, and wildly soaring to places beyond our imaginations. Christmas is a time when we celebrate joyfully with the angels, shepherds, and Wise Men, the birth of Jesus: the great gift, the Light of the World. As Peter writes, "Without having seen him you love him; though you do not now see him you believe in him and rejoice with unutterable and exalted joy" (1 Peter 1:8 RSV). In accepting God's gracious gift of Christ, our hearts overflow with joy; through our faith in God's faithfulness, we have hope in our joy-full futures, whatever obstacles may be in God's plan for us; and through this faith, hope, and joy, as Jesus instructed, we learn to love our neighbors as ourselves.

In another expression of joy, Jude writes: "Now unto him to is able to keep you from falling, and to present *you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy*" (Jude 24 KJV). *Through this beautiful benediction, we are reminded that joy is for all our present times, all the journeys in our lives, and until all the ends of our earthly lives. The God that we embrace with such joy-fullness will not forsake us.*

And 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 with a large, sweeping initial "P".



From the desk of our Conference Director

Your Mission? To Serve

By: Rev. Dr. Vicki Gordy-Stith

Earlier this week, I had the opportunity to gather in Atlanta with other Directors of Connectional Ministries throughout the United States, and two from Central Conferences of Liberia and Zimbabwe. One morning, our schedule included a visit to Coca Cola. I wondered what type of “leadership” presentation we would hear, but remained open to what God had in mind. Four representatives from Coke stood at the front of the room and gave testimonies about living as a Christian in the corporate world. They came from different departments and different levels and they reflected gender and racial diversity. Yet, their message sounded in unity. They each saw their work place as their mission field.

They spoke of praying for their co-workers daily before work. One woman shared about being led to begin a prayer chain at work. (She asked the Coke executives, who allow them to use their work email to communicate prayer concerns.) Another woman told of leading a weekly Bible study at work, in a room that Coke provides. Each of them related how they respect other people and other religions, and remained open to sharing about their own faith. They allowed their lifestyle evangelism to create opportunities for building relationships and eventually sharing their faith.

One of our group members asked about their “lifestyle” evangelism and each shared some of their character traits that the Holy Spirit has developed in them. Each one spoke of humility and the importance of being teachable. They spoke of servant leadership and actively looking for opportunities to serve those who work for and with them, and those who work above them. No matter what position they found themselves in, they intentionally looked for ways to serve others throughout their day. One man described how he took time to invest in other people as a way of serving them. He tried to care as much about them as Jesus would. Another man told us that he “takes off his judgement hat” every time he walks through the door, so that he can remain open to serve others.

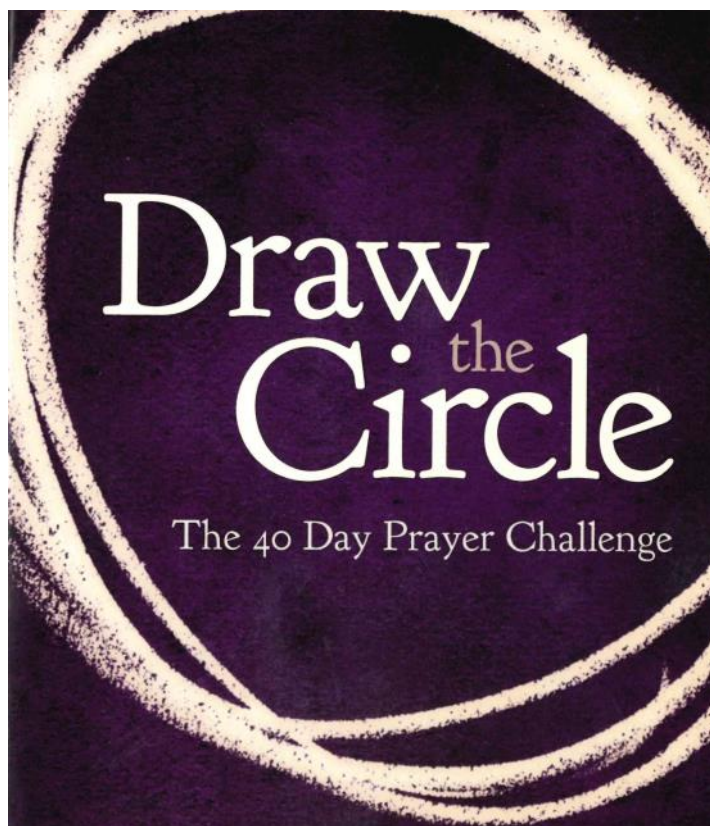
At the end of the sharing time, one of the men related the following story. He had been working with a woman originally from a Monrovia who worked for him. Her family followed Islam, but she did not practice. A single mother, she had two young children who began asking questions about God and faith. One day, after developing a safe relationship with him, she asked him what he believed. We all laughed at the “softball” God had thrown him.

He shared his testimony with her, how Jesus had changed his life and how the Holy Spirit continued to change his life. He reported that she walked away, but returned several weeks later with some additional questions. Eventually, he invited her to go to the weekly Bible study and to come to church with him, which she did. They developed a friendship through their church and work. A year later, doctors diagnosed the woman with terminal cancer. The man and his family and his church walked that journey with her, providing support and care for her along the way. When her family came to visit her, they felt overwhelmed by the generous love given to her, by people they considered “strangers.” She asked to be baptized with her family present and a year later, she died surrounded by members of that new church family.

Our group of Directors of Connectional Ministries left the Coca Cola headquarters filled with hope for God’s mission for the church in the world. We affirm frequently that God calls all of the baptized people to ministry. But, often we hear people say: “I could never run my business like a Christian.” Or, even more frequently, we hear: “We should run the church like a business.” Yes, the church can learn from business principles. AND, business can learn from Christian principles. Can you imagine if everyone began their day asking God to reveal opportunities to SERVE others? Sadly, as Christians, we often expected to BE served. We want schools to cater to us. We want the courts to cater to us. We want businesses to cater to us. And, we want the right to speak the gospel without the hard work of establishing relationships.

Yet, Jesus called us all to servanthood in our relationships. In his final meal with his disciples in John, he put a towel around his waist and washed the disciples’ feet. He served them and commanded them to serve others. How is your church doing at serving the community around you? (Notice I asked how are you serving not how are you providing services for your community. Serving requires a relationship, but providing services does not.) In what ways would your community identify your church as serving the good of the community as a whole? And, what about you? In what ways do you serve others throughout your day? How can you keep your eyes open to opportunities to serve?

No matter what goes on around us, Jesus lives! We can continue to see his presence as we intentionally serve others. Your mission, should you choose to accept it? Go and serve. Not only will you offer others the love of God as you serve, you also will meet Jesus in that place. Together, we will become “Connected Christians offering the hope of Jesus Christ in today’s world!”



Lenten Bible Study starting February 18th

Sundays—6:00 p.m. in the Grier Room

Mondays—10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall

Wednesdays—Poncho & Lisa Johnson's residence.

Dinner at 6:00 p.m. and study at 7:00 p.m.
(registration required)

Lenten Organ Recitals

February 15, 2018 – 12:05-12:35 PM

Kevin B. Chamberlain,

Avenue United Methodist Church, Milford

February 22, 2018 – 12:05-12:35 PM

Taylor Harvey,

Salisbury, Maryland

March 1, 2018 – 12:05-12:35 PM

Herb Parks,

Christ Episcopal Church, Milford

March 8, 2018 – 12:05-12:35 PM

T. J. Thomas,

St. Peter's Episcopal Church, Lewes

March 15, 2018 – 12:05-12:35 PM

Ned Perwo,

Newark United Methodist Church, Newark

March 22, 2018 – 12:05-12:35 PM

Kevin B. Chamberlain,

Avenue United Methodist Church, Milford

All recitals are held at Avenue Church.

A luncheon of homemade soup and bread will be served in the Fellowship Hall immediately following the recitals.

All are invited.

Lenten Organ Recitals are part of the Concert Series of Avenue Church.

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

Sunday, March 18, 2018 @ 3:00 p.m.

Dover Downs Rollins Center

Route 13, Dover

Spring Classical Concert

Featuring

Beethoven's Violin Concerto

Performed by **Stefan Xhori**

Shostakovich's Overture Festivo

Grieg's Peer Gynt Suite &

Sibelius's Finlandia



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

Dover
Symphony
Orchestra



Delaware
Division of the
Arts



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.

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.

END OF THE YEAR FINANCIAL STATEMENTS are on the Foyer table.

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: Bill & Julia Creasey and family, Family and friends of Susan DelleDonne, Family and friends of Lisa Wyatt, Howard Sipple, Jo Wood, Charlie Fleetwood, Dale Cawby, Karen Haug, Kaye Green, Christopher, Stephen Parson, Craig, Kirsten Pearce, All Code Purple guests and volunteers, Karen Williams, World Peace, Bill and Jill Gustin, Colleen Dunham, Pat Murray, Family and friends of George Parsons who passed away 20 years ago this week, Pat Lilly, Curtis Griffith, Bonnie Carmine, John Steward, Bobby Bergez's dad, Richard, and upcoming Boys' and Girls' Chrysalis Weekends.

Recently hospitalized: Dick Crabb and Shirley Jester.

Rejoice with: Tita Lewis and Diane Dolan, being named Lay Laureate for their work with the Food Pantry, Praise God for each new day, Praise God for our outside greeter teams, inside greeters and ushers, and those who help every Sunday with coffee and hospitality and Praise God for those who show God's love every day.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: Marti & Gary Seal, Jo Wood, Howard Sipple, Bonnie Carmine, Colleen Dunham, Missy Wilcox, Joyce Bononi, Charlie Fleetwood, Christopher, Lorraine Donovan, Bill & Jill Gustin, Bill Medhurts, Alan Parker, William Gaskill, the victims of the train accident in South Carolina, Helen Maloney, Julianne, Sue, Craig, Fran Tebbutt, Tom Stayton, Code Purple guests and volunteers, Mason, C.J. Sharp, Pat Desharoon, Jack Simon, Kathy, Chris, Derek, Norm Remmick and Rick Hughes and family.

Recently hospitalized: Dick Crabb

Rejoice with: Melody, Stephen Hearn and Alex March, everyone blessed by a new day.

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

VIM MEETING: On Sunday, **February 11th at 12:30 p.m.** we will be meeting about our upcoming VIM Florida trip. We will be meeting in the Grier Room.

NEW MEMBER ORIENTATION: Everyone interested in becoming a member of Avenue Church is encouraged to attend the next New Member Orientation on **Sunday, February 11th from 12:30 -1:30 p.m.** We will meet in the Carpenter Room where you will get to know the Pastors better and receive an orientation on the heritage, values, mission, and vision of both The United Methodist Church and Avenue. If you would like to attend, please email or call the church office at churchoffice@avenueumc.com or (302) 422-8111.

THE 40-DAY PRAYER CHALLENGE

Starting on February 14th, the Avenue staff invites everyone to join in the 40-day prayer challenge through the season of Lent. We will be using the book *Draw the Circle: The 40 Day Prayer Challenge* by Mark Batterson. There will be optional opportunities to meet periodically to pray and discuss our experience reading the book. There will be various Bible Studies and worship services throughout the entire season. The book is available at church and can be picked up for a suggested donation of \$10. It's also available for Kindle and other digital platforms if you would prefer. We are also looking forward to a 40-day prayer vigil. Signup sheets will be available closer to Lent. If you have any questions or would like more information about Bibles Studies or worship times, please call the church office at 422-8111.

A WORD ABOUT GREEN PARAMENTS

Why Green?

Green symbolizes the promise of new life. It is used during Ordinary Time, a period where there is no special season. This includes the period between Epiphany and Lent, as well as the season between Pentecost and Advent. We will be using green paraments starting this Sunday until Ash Wednesday.

What do the symbols represent?

The three-petaled arms of the fleur-de-lis crosses are symbols of the Holy Trinity: Father, Son and Holy Spirit. The crown motif represents Jesus Christ, the Son of God, who is our heavenly leader or king.

UNITED METHODIST MEN (UMM) are proud to serve their third Pancake Breakfast of the year on **February 11, 2018**. Pancakes, sausage, scrambled eggs, orange juice, coffee and tea will be **served immediately after all three services. A free-will offering will be accepted.** Funds from this meal will help provide a Boy Scout college scholarship to a high school graduate from Troop #186. Other mission projects will also be funded. Join us for a most excellent breakfast and fellowship.

LENT: Until Easter the Church is in a season of self-denial and self-examination called Lent. During Lent we recommend these special services. The season of Lent begins on **Ash Wednesday, February 14th**.

ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE will be held at Avenue at 7:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary with the imposition of ashes and Holy Communion. Child care will be provided.

COMMUNITY LENTEN SERVICES are held each Wednesday at noon followed by a soup luncheon at various churches.

The schedule is:

- February 14th, Calvary UMC
- February 21st, Higher Ground Ministries
- February 28th, Mt. Enon Baptist Church
- March 7th, Church of the Nazarene
- March 14th, New Life Christian Church
- March 21st, Avenue UM Church

MILFORD INTERDENOMINATIONAL LENTEN SERVICES are held each Wednesday at 6:45 p.m. at various churches. The schedule is:

- February 14th, Wesley Chapel
- February 21st, My Father's House
- February 28th, Upper Room
- March 7th, Bethel A.M.E.
- March 14th, Word of Life
- March 21st, New Beginnings
- March 28th, Faith, Hope & Love
- March 29th, Mt. Enon

LENTEN ORGAN RECITALS

All recitals are held at Avenue Church each Thursday from 12:05-12:35 p.m. during Lent. A soup luncheon held in the Fellowship Hall immediately following all recitals. All are welcome.

The Schedule is:

- February 15th, Kevin B. Chamberlain
- February 22nd, Taylor Harvey
- March 1st, Herb Parks
- March 8th, T.J. Thomas
- March 15th, Ned Perwo
- March 22nd, Kevin B. Chamberlain

Avenue will be hosting the **DOVER DISTRICT LEADERSHIP TRAINING** classes on **February**

24th from 8:30 a.m. -12:00 p.m. If you would like to learn more about the following committees or ministries please contact the church office.

Staff /Parish Relations

Lay Leaders

Trustees

Finance

Nominations and Leadership Development

Evangelism

MissionInsite

Worship

Prison Outreach

Race Reconciliation

Connectional Giving for Mission

Children's Ministry

Prayer and Healing Ministries

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 **February 12th** 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 **February 13th** .

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

EXPLORING FAITH BOOK will meet on **February 18, 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 21 through 31.

SUNSHINE BIBLE STUDY: During the month of February the Sunshine Bible Class will be studying "Self-Controlled, Upright, and Godly Faith." The lesson on February 11th, "A Disciplined Faith" based on James 3:1-12; February 18th, "Faithful Disciples" based on Acts 9:36-43; and February 25th, "The Good Fight of Faith" based on I Timothy 6:11-21. The Sunshine Bible Class meets on Sunday mornings at 9:30 a.m. in the Grier Room. Please come and join us.

KNITTING GROUP: We are currently having a reprieve in the weather, but it will change. The Code Purple and the homeless families in our community need scarves to ward off the chill. Some of Avenue's knitters have donated yarn and started several scarves using very basic garter stitch, but knitters are needed to finish each one. Will you volunteer to complete one? The "kits" will be in the Church office for pick up and return the finished product.

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.

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 a previous request for jeans and sweat pants.

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 of **cereal** (not pre-sweetened please). Thank You!

LAST WEEK AT AVENUE

Attendance:	2017	2018
8:00	60	63
9:30	168	168
Sunday School	80	64
11:00	107	72
<u>FUSION</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Total	415	367

CALENDAR

SUNDAY 2/11 ~ Pancake Breakfast

- 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
- 12:30 p.m. New Member Orientation,
Carpenter Room
- 12:30 p.m. VIM Meeting, Grier Room
- 3:00 p.m. Explaining Christianity with Dan
Nelson, Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. FUSION, Fellowship Hall and
Wesley Room

MONDAY 2/12

- 11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
- 4:00 p.m. Alzheimer's Support Group,
Grier Room
- 6:30 p.m. Handbell Choir, Music Room
- 6:30 p.m. Tiger Den Meeting,
Holzmueller Room
- 7:00 p.m. 1st State Harmonizers,
Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Room 206
- 7:00 p.m. Boy Scouts, Wesley Room

TUESDAY 2/13

- 10:00 a.m. Sister's Bible Study, Grier Room
- 1:00 p.m. 4H, Wesley Room
- 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 2/14 ~ Ash Wednesday

- 1:30 p.m. Knitting Group, Grier Room
- 3:00 p.m. Sanctuary Choir, Music Room
- 5:00 p.m. Women's Emmaus Reunion, Room 202
- 6:00 p.m. AveNotes, Music Room
- 6:00 p.m. Civil Air Patrol, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Arrow of Light Den Meeting,
Wesley Room
- 7:00 p.m. Ester Circle, Room 207
- 7:00 p.m. Disciple 1 Class, Holzmueller Room
- 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service, Sanctuary

THURSDAY 2/15

- 8:30 a.m. Men's Reunion Group,
Conference Room
- 9:00 a.m. DCOM, Heritage Room and
Holzmueller Room
- 11:00 a.m. AA, Wesley Room
- 12:05 p.m. Lenten Recital, Sanctuary
- 12:35 p.m. Lenten Luncheon, Fellowship Hall
- 2:30 p.m. Women's Emmaus Reunion,
Room 202
- 6:30 p.m. Bear Den Meetings, Wesley Room
- 6:30 p.m. Lenten Taize, Sanctuary
- 7:00 p.m. SPRC, Holzmueller Room

FRIDAY 2/16

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

SATURDAY 2/17

- 7:30 a.m. Civil Air Patrol, Fellowship Hall
- 4:00 p.m. Ambassador Club, Grier Room
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Wesley Room

SUNDAY 2/18

- 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
- 12:15 p.m. Exploring Faith Book Club,
Grier Room
- 3:00 p.m. Explaining Christianity with Dan
Nelson, Fellowship Hall
- 6:00 p.m. FUSION, Fellowship Hall
and Wesley Room
- 6:00 p.m. Lenten Bible Study, Grier Room