



AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Midweek

Wednesday, April 1, 2020

I did not know until yesterday (March 31st) that Tom Brady was leaving New England and going to Tampa Bay. With everything else going on in the world, I somehow managed to miss this fact. Granted, the whole deal to get Brady to the Buccaneers is not life and death, and the debate over who will wear number 12 (it will be Brady) is not crucial to the situation the world finds itself in. But still, I would have thought that something this big in the world of sports would have made it on to my radar screen.

It made me stop and think about what else I was missing because I focused so heavily on the pandemic. As I sit in front of my television watching the numbers of national and global cases climb, catch the news stories on the Navy hospital ship arriving in NY, and then focus on the articles about whether the prevailing wisdom is to wear masks to the grocery store or not, I am getting so caught up in the virus that I “don’t see” much of anything else.

So yesterday when I was out driving, I didn’t play my radio to get the latest information. After I got home, I made sure we didn’t turn on the television news. I even put my phone down, refusing to check it for stories about the coronavirus outbreak.

Stepping away from the constant barrage of data and updates made all the difference. As I was driving down 113 allowing my mind to go in a different direction, I saw two bald eagles flying above the trees. I seriously doubt I would have noticed them if I had been intent on the broadcasters discussing the

spread of the pandemic. I watched a movie from a few years ago that was completely entertaining and it felt really good to just smile and laugh over something that had nothing to do with current events.

Proverbs 4:23 tells us “Above all else, guard your heart for everything you do flows from it.” In other words, don’t focus on the negative. Our minds can only think about one thing at a time so when the fear and anxiety of Covid 19 threatens to take over, it’s beneficial to redirect our thoughts.

The best thing to focus on is the Lord and the Word. That is where our strength and peace comes from. It also helps to think about our blessings, which even in these days of trial are too numerous to count. It is also beneficial to find a distraction that is entertaining.

We are going to get through this nightmare but it does no good to keep constant attention on the virus situation. So look away from the bad and see the good. Turn off the television and radio, stop obsessing over the statistics, and find the beauty and peace of the world around you. And always give God the honor and glory.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Pastor Henry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, looping initial 'H'.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP ON SUNDAY: Join us on **Sunday at 10:00 a.m.** on Facebook Live as we gather to worship and pray together. If you cannot watch at 10:00 a.m., the video will remain up on our Facebook page. Join us at www.facebook.com/avenueumc

You can also share the live stream on your page, inviting others to worship with us.

EASTER AT HOME: Join us on **Sunday, April 12th at 8:00 a.m., 9:30 a.m. and 11:00 a.m.** for our Easter Services on our Facebook page. We will gather in our homes around the state to celebrate the resurrection and the new things that God is doing in our midst. There will be a "Watch Party" on our Facebook page scheduled to begin at our normal worship times. This will allow you to interact with others who are watching and worshipping with you. You will also be able to watch and worship later on in the day.

EASTER VIDEO REQUEST: Pastor Steve would like to gather short 30 second videos from members of our congregation of what God has been doing "new" in your life during the 'shelter-at-home' order. Please record yourself on your phone answering this question "What has God been doing new in your life." If possible, you can start your short testimony by saying, "Something new that God is doing in me is...[share your testimony]. This could be new spiritual practices, additional time with kids, calling on your neighbors, increased faith, etc.

Please send your videos to srlamotte@avenueumc.com or text them to 302-393-1003. Videos need to be received by Thursday, April 9th and may be shown during the Easter Worship broadcast.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT: We want to thank everyone who has continued to give as an act of worship and support over the last several weeks. We know that many of our financial futures are up-in-the-air as jobs are shut-down and routines are disrupted. Your support means that Avenue Church can continue to serve the Milford community through this crisis. If you are able, you can send your gift through the mail to our church office (20 N. Church St. Milford, DE 19963) or by giving online at www.avenueumc.com/give, or by texting 'avenueumc' to 77977. Thank you, again, for your continued support.

PASTORAL CARE: If you know someone who is in need of prayer or a phone call, please call the church office at 422-8111 or contact one of the pastors directly. We are doing limited face-to-face pastoral care visits during this time, but want to make contact any way we can.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: Those infected by the coronavirus and the medical teams who are seeking to contain and heal it, the family and friends of Irma Chico, the family and friends of Jerry Zeveney, the family and friends of Russell Carlisle, the family and friends of Katherine Traute, the Beilstein family, Jennifer Miller and husband Chris, Larry Hughes, Joe, Donna and Keith Coverdale, Dottie and Jerry Jackson, Ellie Lauckner, Jean Layton, Barb Decker, Jan Perkins, Bill and Marty Brereton, Ed Bailey, Joe and Mary Jo Lear, Craig, Sammy, Bella, Linda Breedlove, Charlie and Barbara Fleetwood, Esther LaMotte, Chris, Laurel Pastor, Tori Nelson, Betty and Ramie Ziesel, Dean Johnson, Jack and Zelda McDuff, Janice Abbott, Luisa and Billy Combs, Joan Wadman, our nation and its leaders, all those dealing with financial issues, everyone feeling alone and isolated.

Rejoice with: Everyone who has been blessed by God.

FOOD FOR THOSE IN NEED: This time of change creates a lot of food anxiety for those families and individuals who do not have enough. School closings highlight the reality that school is more than reading, writing, and arithmetic- it is a place where our children can be fed. There are several resources available for those who are hungry:

FOOD FOR CHILDREN @ BANNEKER, MISPILLION, AND MORRIS SCHOOLS 11:00 am-12:30 pm Monday-Friday. Drive through and every child in the car will be given lunch and a breakfast item for the next day.

MY SISTER'S FAULT: Is offering no-cost meals to kids Wednesday-Friday from 9:00 am until 4:00 pm. One meal per kid in the car that pulls up in front of the bakery. They have a limit of 200 meals a day.

SOCIAL SERVICES: Receive a Food Voucher for the Food Pantry. We are open on Tuesday & Friday from 9:30 a.m.—3:00 p.m.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITIES DURING CORONA OUTBREAK: There are several opportunities to share the light of Christ during the next several weeks of our new reality.

- Volunteer to help prepare meals at Banneker Elementary School. Contact the church office at 422-8111.
- Donate Money to the schools or two one of the restaurants who are providing meals. They providing out of their bottom line and this is an opportunity to rally around them.
- Check-in on your neighbors who may be lonely, shut-in, or at-risk. Be safe about it, but don't give up on the community.
- Do a grocery run for someone who may have trouble getting out.

GENERAL CONFERENCE POSTPONED - With the spread of the Coronavirus worldwide, The 2020 General Conference, scheduled for May 5th-15th in Minneapolis, MN, has been postponed until 2021. General Conference is attended by over 800 delegates and Bishops from four continents. This decision comes at a time where our denomination was facing questions about a possible split as well as other major decisions around budget reductions and new elected leaders. The body of the General Conference is the only body that can set church doctrine and polity. The Discipline (our church doctrine and polity) set at the called Special General Conference of 2019 is the current church law within The United Methodist Church.

As of this time, there are no new dates for General Conference 2021. As part of The United Methodist Church, we continue to pray for our Bishops, leaders, and delegates who guide our denomination and churches.

Mid-week Update by SPRC Associate Pastor

The Staff Parish Relations Committee (SPRC) began the process in earnest in February to fill the vacancy that is being created by Pastor Wendy's reassignment to the Millville UMC on July 1st. We first worked to identify the primary ministerial needs of our church. The two areas noted as the primary needs were: (1) the ministry of pastoral care and visitations, and (2) the ministry of discipleship and connections. The SPRC is in the process of finalizing the responsibilities and qualifications in the Job Description(s) for this position or positions.

When the District Superintendent met with our committee in early February she informed us that there are very few candidates available for "appointment" as an Associate Pastor. If you recall, Pastor Wendy came to Avenue as a "direct hire" and was not originally appointed by the Conference. After considerable discussion by the SPRC, it was a consensus to pursue the "direct hire" route to fill the vacancy created by Pastor Wendy's reassignment. The SPRC also entertained considerable discussion as "how best" to proceed to recruit candidates via the direct hire process. Due to the somewhat limited resources available to the SPRC members, it was determined that the correct approach to attract the best quality candidates was to utilize a recruitment firm. Discussions have been in place with such a firm, The Shepherds Staff. We were literally within a day of executing the contract and scheduling our "discovery visit" by The Shepherds Staff personnel when the travel restrictions were implemented. The SPRC met via a video/audio conference call last week and have voted to place the recruitment process on a temporary hold until this pandemic allows us to proceed. We fully recognize that this delay will likely create a void in our ministerial staff from the time that Pastor Wendy leaves our church family and a new hire has been completed. No one knows for certain the events that are yet to come. However, I do believe that we as the laity of the Avenue Church Family will have an opportunity, and most likely the need, to become more involved in the ministries of our church to one another.

SPRC will do our best to keep our church family fully informed as we proceed in the days and weeks ahead. I would ask that if you have any questions regarding this process/procedure to contact me.

Thank you,

Lloyd Webb
SPRC Chair

30 DAYS TO SLOW THE SPREAD

Listen to and follow the directions of your **STATE AND LOCAL AUTHORITIES**.

IF YOU FEEL SICK, stay home. Do not go to work. Contact your medical provider.

IF YOUR CHILDREN ARE SICK, keep them at home. Do not send them to school. Contact your medical provider.

IF SOMEONE IN YOUR HOUSEHOLD HAS TESTED POSITIVE for the coronavirus, keep the entire household at home. Do not go to work. Do not go to school. Contact your medical provider.

IF YOU ARE AN OLDER PERSON, stay home and away from other people.

IF YOU ARE A PERSON WITH A SERIOUS UNDERLYING HEALTH CONDITION that can put you at increased risk (for example, a condition that impairs your lung or heart function or weakens your immune system), stay home and away from other people.



For more information, please visit
CORONAVIRUS.GOV

DO YOUR PART TO SLOW THE SPREAD OF THE CORONAVIRUS

Even if you are young, or otherwise healthy, you are at risk and your activities can increase the risk for others. It is critical that you do your part to slow the spread of the coronavirus.

Work or engage in schooling **FROM HOME** whenever possible.

IF YOU WORK IN A CRITICAL INFRASTRUCTURE INDUSTRY, as defined by the Department of Homeland Security, such as healthcare services and pharmaceutical and food supply, you have a special responsibility to maintain your normal work schedule. You and your employers should follow CDC guidance to protect your health at work.

AVOID SOCIAL GATHERINGS in groups of more than 10 people.

Avoid eating or drinking at bars, restaurants, and food courts — **USE DRIVE-THRU, PICKUP, OR DELIVERY OPTIONS.**

AVOID DISCRETIONARY TRAVEL, shopping trips, and social visits.

DO NOT VISIT nursing homes or retirement or long-term care facilities unless to provide critical assistance.

PRACTICE GOOD HYGIENE:

- Wash your hands, especially after touching any frequently used item or surface.
- Avoid touching your face.
- Sneeze or cough into a tissue, or the inside of your elbow.
- Disinfect frequently used items and surfaces as much as possible.

CORONAVIRUS.GOV

School operations can accelerate the spread of the coronavirus. Governors of states with evidence of community transmission should close schools in affected and surrounding areas. Governors should close schools in communities that are near areas of community transmission, even if those areas are in neighboring states. In addition, state and local officials should close schools where coronavirus has been identified in the population associated with the school. States and localities that close schools need to address childcare needs of critical responders, as well as the nutritional needs of children.

Older people are particularly at risk from the coronavirus. All states should follow Federal guidance and halt social visits to nursing homes and retirement and long-term care facilities.

In states with evidence of community transmission, bars, restaurants, food courts, gyms, and other indoor and outdoor venues where groups of people congregate should be closed.

Steps to help prevent the spread of COVID-19 if you are sick

FOLLOW THE STEPS BELOW: If you are sick with COVID-19 or think you might have it, follow the steps below to help protect other people in your home and community.

Stay home except to get medical care

- **Stay home:** People who are mildly ill with COVID-19 are able to recover at home. Do not leave, except to get medical care. Do not visit public areas.
- **Stay in touch with your doctor.** Call before you get medical care. Be sure to get care if you feel worse or you think it is an emergency.
- **Avoid public transportation:** Avoid using public transportation, ride-sharing, or taxis.



Wear a facemask if you are sick

- **If you are sick:** You should wear a facemask when you are around other people and before you enter a healthcare provider's office.
- **If you are caring for others:** If the person who is sick is not able to wear a facemask (for example, because it causes trouble breathing), then people who live in the home should stay in a different room. When caregivers enter the room of the sick person, they should wear a facemask. Visitors, other than caregivers, are not recommended.



Separate yourself from other people in your home, this is known as home isolation

- **Stay away from others:** As much as possible, you should stay in a specific "sick room" and away from other people in your home. Use a separate bathroom, if available.
- **Limit contact with pets & animals:** You should restrict contact with pets and other animals, just like you would around other people.
 - Although there have not been reports of pets or other animals becoming sick with COVID-19, it is still recommended that people with the virus limit contact with animals until more information is known.
 - When possible, have another member of your household care for your animals while you are sick with COVID-19. If you must care for your pet or be around animals while you are sick, wash your hands before and after you interact with them. See COVID-19 and Animals for more information.



Cover your coughs and sneezes

- **Cover:** Cover your mouth and nose with a tissue when you cough or sneeze.
- **Dispose:** Throw used tissues in a lined trash can.
- **Wash hands:** Immediately wash your hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. If soap and water are not available, clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand sanitizer that contains at least 60% alcohol.



Call ahead before visiting your doctor

- **Call ahead:** If you have a medical appointment, call your doctor's office or emergency department, and tell them you have or may have COVID-19. This will help the office protect themselves and other patients.



Clean your hands often

- **Wash hands:** Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds. This is especially important after blowing your nose, coughing, or sneezing; going to the bathroom; and before eating or preparing food.
- **Hand sanitizer:** If soap and water are not available, use an alcohol-based hand sanitizer with at least 60% alcohol, covering all surfaces of your hands and rubbing them together until they feel dry.
- **Soap and water:** Soap and water are the best option, especially if hands are visibly dirty.
- **Avoid touching:** Avoid touching your eyes, nose, and mouth with unwashed hands.



Avoid sharing personal household items

- **Do not share:** Do not share dishes, drinking glasses, cups, eating utensils, towels, or bedding with other people in your home.



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cdc.gov/COVID19

- **Wash thoroughly after use:** After using these items, wash them thoroughly with soap and water or put in the dishwasher.

Clean all “high-touch” surfaces everyday

Clean high-touch surfaces in your isolation area (“sick room” and bathroom) every day; let a caregiver clean and disinfect high-touch surfaces in other areas of the home.



- **Clean and disinfect:** Routinely clean high-touch surfaces in your “sick room” and bathroom. Let someone else clean and disinfect surfaces in common areas, but not your bedroom and bathroom.
 - If a caregiver or other person needs to clean and disinfect a sick person’s bedroom or bathroom, they should do so on an as-needed basis. The caregiver/other person should wear a mask and wait as long as possible after the sick person has used the bathroom.
- High-touch surfaces include phones, remote controls, counters, tabletops, doorknobs, bathroom fixtures, toilets, keyboards, tablets, and bedside tables.
- **Clean and disinfect areas that may have blood, stool, or body fluids on them.**
- **Household cleaners and disinfectants:** Clean the area or item with soap and water or another detergent if it is dirty. Then, use a household disinfectant.
 - Be sure to follow the instructions on the label to ensure safe and effective use of the product. Many products recommend keeping the surface wet for several minutes to ensure germs are killed. Many also recommend precautions such as wearing gloves and making sure you have good ventilation during use of the product.
 - Most EPA-registered household disinfectants should be effective. A full list of disinfectants can be found [here](#) external icon.

Monitor your symptoms

- **Seek medical attention, but call first:** Seek medical care right away if your illness is worsening (for example, if you have difficulty breathing).
 - **Call your doctor before going in:** Before going to the doctor’s office or emergency room, call ahead and tell them your symptoms. They will tell you what to do.
- **Wear a facemask:** If possible, put on a facemask before you enter the building. If you can’t put on a facemask, try to keep a safe distance from other people (at least 6 feet away). This will help protect the people in the office or waiting room.
- **Follow care instructions from your healthcare provider and local health department:** Your local health authorities will give instructions on checking your symptoms and reporting information.



If you develop **emergency warning signs** for COVID-19 get **medical attention immediately**.

Emergency warning signs include*:

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent pain or pressure in the chest
- New confusion or inability to arouse
- Bluish lips or face

*This list is not all inclusive. Please consult your medical provider for any other symptoms that are severe or concerning.

Call 911 if you have a medical emergency: If you have a medical emergency and need to call 911, notify the operator that you have or think you might have, COVID-19. If possible, put on a facemask before medical help arrives.

How to discontinue home isolation

- People with COVID-19 who have stayed home (**home isolated**) can stop home isolation under the following conditions:
 - **If you will not have a test** to determine if you are still contagious, you can leave home after these three things have happened:
 - You have had no fever for at least 72 hours (that is three full days of no fever without the use medicine that reduces fevers) AND
 - other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND
 - at least 7 days have passed since your symptoms first appeared
 - **If you will be tested** to determine if you are still contagious, you can leave home after these three things have happened:
 - You no longer have a fever (without the use medicine that reduces fevers) AND
 - other symptoms have improved (for example, when your cough or shortness of breath have improved) AND
 - you received two negative tests in a row, 24 hours apart. Your doctor will follow CDC guidelines.



In all cases, follow the guidance of your healthcare provider and local health department. The decision to stop home isolation should be made in consultation with your healthcare provider and state and local health departments. Local decisions depend on local circumstances.

More information is available [here](#).

Additional information for healthcare providers: [Interim Healthcare Infection Prevention and Control Recommendations for Persons Under Investigation for 2019 Novel Coronavirus](#).