



The Midweek

Wednesday, June 17, 2020

I give credit to Marti Seal for giving me this one quite some time ago, but it has been on my heart this week so I'd like to share it with all of you.

Divine intervention? A man is struggling to find a parking space on a rainy day and says, "Lord, I can't stand this. If you open up a space for me, I swear I'll go to church every Sunday." Suddenly the clouds part and the sun shines on an empty parking spot. Without hesitation the man says, "Never mind. I found one."

We have all been guilty of something similar. Praying for a job and then assuming our credentials were what got it for us. Asking God for the right person to be in relationship with, and then thinking we were lucky to be in the right place at the right time, or we thank our friend for introducing us. All of us have our personal examples.

But the Lord is not on the sidelines just cheering us on. God is part of every one of us, and with Him in us, we can trust in Him to lead us to the right people, the proper places and all at the right time. John 14: 16-17 says, "And I will ask the Father, and he will give you another helper to be with you forever, even the Spirit of truth, whom the world cannot receive, because it neither sees him nor knows him. You know him, for he dwells with you and will be in you."

So when we pray to God, we can and should expect Jesus to respond and not with answers of our doing but with the help and guidance of the Spirit. God deserves the credit for our varied and ongoing blessings and gifts. And for all that He has given us, we should give Him the glory and honor forever and ever.

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

'The Signs of the Times'

A Pastoral Letter from Bishop Peggy A. Johnson



I don't often take to the streets and participate in peaceful protest marches. However, recently I joined with faithful people in a number of communities to physically show support for the "Black Lives Matter" movement. In recent weeks this has captured the imagination of the entire world and is a powerful and Spirit-filled moment like none other.

As your episcopal leader, I wish to begin by echoing the important words of the Council of Bishops recent letter. I confess to the sin of racism and White privilege in my life and vow to renew my baptismal covenant to "resist evil, injustice and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves." I also wish to challenge more of the people called Methodist in the Eastern PA and Peninsula-Delaware annual conferences, the very cradle of Methodism, to take some action.

As I was marching last week in the streets there were various signs and protest cries shouted as we walked along. Together they offer "signs of the times" that can give us some practical "next steps."

1) Name the Name:

Again and again the marchers named the names of the black people who have most recently been murdered at the hands of law enforcement officers and other assailants: George Floyd, Almaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor. Individual lives are important and precious. "We all bleed red" as one protester said.

All of us are part of the family of humanity under one God. God knows each one of us by name. I challenge my sisters and brothers in the White community to **build relationships with Black neighbors**. That includes people in your neighboring churches, coworkers and community members. I did a survey of my close friends a few years ago, and I could see that they were all White. In recent years I have worked on building personal relationships with people of color and it has opened my eyes to much of what our White supremacist society has inflicted on the families of Black people. Build relationships, listen to hearts and hear the experiences of Black people who have had to endure a thousand pin pricks of discrimination and much, much abuse, grief and sorrow.



2) “Black Lives Matter”

Many of the posters, t-shirts and chants at the protest march included these familiar words. Some well-meaning but misinformed White people sometimes try to correct this and say, “All lives matter.” But that is missing the point. To say, “Black lives matter” is a recognition of the fact that for centuries in this country Black lives have been treated as a commodity, as “less than,” as deserving of suspicion, discrimination and disregard by the dominant White culture.

Studying the Word of God from the perspective of God’s favor upon all people is vitally important. Through it we learn what it means to respect the giftedness of the vast diversity of humanity. I encourage churches to gather in intentional Bible studies and prayer meetings to study what God will say to us at this important time. There are many good books that can be discussed on this topic as well. Top on my list right now is *How to be Anti-Racist* by Ibram X. Kendi.

Also, as the Council of Bishops requests, let us pray at 8:46 every morning and evening, praying for 8 minutes and 46 seconds, the length of time of the police officer fatally pressed his knee down on George Floyd’s neck.

3) “No Justice, No Peace”

This street chant is likely the most difficult but the most important. This calls us to **actively engage in dismantling the systems of oppression**. This includes, but is not limited to, holding law enforcement accountable, improving economic opportunities, changing the “mass incarceration” prison system, raising the quality of schools, insisting on equal opportunity in housing, working for fairness in health care systems, and decrying voter suppression.

Individually we cannot do everything but each of us can do something. As a connectional United Methodist Church we can do all kinds of networking, programming, political advocacy and education.

I promise in the months to come to work with conference leaders to engage us in these vitally important ministries of justice. Without justice for everyone there is no peace. The truth that White people often fail to see is that justice for all means healing the wounded-ness of racism. Unless everyone is whole and a part of the beloved community, humanity continues to suffer collectively.

We can learn a great deal at a protest march on the streets. However, I urge White people to take to the streets of your hearts and build relationships, prayerfully study the Word of God and other timely resources, and become involved in advocacy. There just might come a day in the future when we will achieve peace with justice.



Avenue to Re-Gather for Worship on July 5th

Many of you have been asking when we will hold worship services again in the midst of the COVID-19 crisis. Avenue is planning to regather for worship on Sunday, July 5th. There are some changes that have been made to help keep our community safe as we come back together.

First, we have adjusted our worship times in light of feedback of decreased numbers coming to worship and to reduce the amount of cleaning that is required to take place between services. Our **new worship times beginning July 5th** are:

- 9:00 a.m. **Traditional Worship**
- 10:30 a.m. **Contemporary Worship**
- 6:00 p.m. **Outdoor Contemporary Worship**

Churches around the country are reporting decreased attendance of 40-50% as they reopen. Our own survey of our congregation showed 30-40% of our congregation feels unsafe coming back to worship and is taking a “wait and see” approach to coming back to worship. We will continue to livestream our services at their new times. Those who are 65 and older, or have medical conditions that make them more susceptible to infection are recommended to worship from home through our livestream.

The outdoor service will run through the summer and will be one way to spread out the congregation that identifies with our contemporary worship service, while reaching out to new people who cannot attend on Sunday morning. However, the service is open to everyone. Those who attend will be asked to bring their own chair or blanket to sit on during the service.

Worship will look different when we return. Masks must be worn inside the building at all times. Six feet of space must be kept between non-related households or persons. There will not be congregational singing. There will not be hymnals or Bibles in the pews. The pew cushions have been removed (bring your own!). Offering will be given on your way in or out of the sanctuary. Communion will be prepackaged and taken seated rather than through intinction at the prayer rail. You'll need to sign in when you attend so we can trace back to everyone who attended in case of someone attended who test positive for COVID-19. While we wish we didn't need to change our worship, we still believe in the importance of gathering and worshipping God together.

Lastly, we want to be clear that our plans to regather are tentative and can change quickly. We are closely watching the infection rates, hospitalizations and the guidance of our Bishop and State officials. We want to keep our community safe and will go back to “worship at home” if it becomes necessary.

We look forward to gathering for worship with you and pray God's blessing in your life!

Avenue Church Staff

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP ON SUNDAY: Join us on Facebook Live as we begin streaming our worship services at their new times. Traditional worship will be available on the Avenue Facebook page at 9:00 a.m. Contemporary Worship will be available on our Facebook page beginning at 10:30 a.m. You can find our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/avenueumc.

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.

AVENUE CHURCH APP NOW AVAILABLE: You can now download the Avenue Church App on your smartphone and stay up-to-date with the latest news, videos, and events happening at Avenue. The app is updated regularly and you will have the ability to give to Avenue directly from the app. The app is available for iPhone (IOS) and Android (Google Play) devices.

To download the app, click this link from your phone:

[iPhone \(IOS\)](#)

[Android \(Google Play Store\)](#)

You can also search "Avenue Church DE" in your App Store.

CAN YOU HELP LIVESTREAM? We are looking for those who are interested in exploring digital ministry by providing some leadership in our Livestream worship services. We are looking for members to learn the recording and editing process, to manage our Youtube uploads, and to help with Social Media. As we are learning, this kind of ministry will be essential moving forward. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Steve at srlamotte@avenueumc.com.

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 PAST WEEK: Those infected by Covid-19 and the medical teams who are seeking to contain and heal it. For all those in this country who have experienced racism and/or abuse by those in power of any type, all the communities impacted by looting, arson and other destruction, the healing of the nation, Pat Hudson, Sherena Chilton, Chris Schultz, Bonnie Carmine, Nancy Lee, Josiah, Tita Lewis, Racheal Simesak, Bobl Cage, Joe, Donna and Keith Coverdale, Janice Abbott, Julie Dally, Rhoda and Greg Kurz, Dottie and Jerry Jackson, Ellie Lauckner, Jean Layton, 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, Betty and Ramie Ziesel, Dean Johnson, Julie Eppers, Doris Isele, Karl Isele, Kathy Rumery, Jennifer Weaver, Jack and Zelda McDuff, Luisa and Billy Combs, Joan Wadman, our nation and its leaders, everyone dealing with financial issues, all who are feeling lonely and isolated.

Rejoice with: All those who have been blessed by God.

PRAYER CONCERNS CURRENT WEEK: The family and friends of Joe Lear, the family and friends of Linda Breedlove, the family and friends of Shirley Sells, Lloyd and Nancy Saba, Ann Varey. Those infected by Covid-19 and the medical teams who are seeking to contain and heal it. For all those in this country who have experienced racism and/or abuse by those in power of any type, all the communities impacted by looting, arson and other destruction, the healing of the nation, Pat Hudson, Helen, Sherena Chilton, Chris Schultz, Bonnie Carmine, Jeff Carmine, Nancy Lee, Josiah, Tita Lewis, Racheal Simesak, Bob Cage, Joe, Donna and Keith Coverdale, Janice Abbott, Julie Dally, Rhoda and Greg Kurz, Dottie and Jerry Jackson, Ellie Lauckner, Jean Layton, Jan Perkins, Bill and Marty Brereton, Ed Bailey, Mary Jo Lear, Craig, Sammy, Bella, Charlie and Barbara Fleetwood, Esther LaMotte, Chris, Laurel Pastor, Betty and Ramie Ziesel, Dean Johnson, Doris Isele, Karl Isele, Kathy Rumery, Jack and Zelda McDuff, Luisa and Billy Combs, Joan Wadman, our nation and its leaders, everyone dealing with financial issues, all who are feeling lonely and isolated.

Rejoice with: All those who have been blessed by God.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

Rob & Pat Craig will celebrate their **52nd** anniversary on **June 22nd**.

Dave & Judy Passwaters will celebrate their **62nd** anniversary on **June 28th**.

SYMPATHY TO:

†The family and friends of **N. Joe Lear, Sr.** who passed away on June 13, 2020. Joe joined Avenue on December 8, 1974.

The family and friends of **Linda Breedlove** who passed away on June 13, 2020. Linda joined Avenue on April 11, 1976.

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.

has jumped in with me to organize groups to support the staff and residents with food.

Please bring your letters to the church, we have a basket in the Fellowship Foyer.

BEGINNING JULY 5 NEW WORSHIP TIMES

9:00AM | TRADITIONAL
10:30AM | CONTEMPORARY
6:00PM | OUTDOOR CONTEMPORARY

SEE MIDWEEK AND FACEBOOK FOR MORE INFO

**BACK TO
CHURCH**



Witness to Our Faith

Each week in the Avenue Midweek, members and friends of Avenue UMC will be sharing their own personal witness of faith. This column will be coordinated by Janice Abbott who will be seeking volunteers and writers who are willing to share their stories. Each article is due one week in advance and should be sent to Kelly at the Church office so there will be time to add it to the newsletter. It will appear the following week. It will be inspirational to read each week how God has blessed each person/family today and through the years. If you would like to contact Janice to volunteer, please call her at (302) 943-7278.

From: Sue M. Hatfield

Several years ago I was given a rose bush by the name of “Mr. Lincoln” which bloomed and thrived many summers producing the most beautiful red roses with an aroma that could not go un-noticed. However, as the years passed it was crowded out by other plants, shrubs too much shade and not enough sun and also I had neglected to care for it as I should. Last October I found this once beautiful rose had turned brown and withered away without much hope except for a tiny green spot on the lower part of a stem.

Knowing the past history of what it had once been I was moved to make an effort to revive it. So with a big pot and a bag of potting soil, I replanted, moved the pot inside to a south window with plenty of sunlight and began my daily watch for signs of growth. During the first several weeks there were no signs of anything at all. I had some quizzical looks from family members and once overheard “did you know that grandma has a brown twig in a big pot of dirt?” “What is it?”

Finally after a few more weeks I noticed a tiny leaf had emerged from the tiny green spot on the stem. This just made my day and as the old saying goes “it warmed the cockles of my heart”. I think this is an **Irish quote and I am not exactly sure of its true meaning** but for me it is an expression of joy and thankfulness. Also, this daily vigil was helpful in the first days of dealing with the stay home policy due to the virus. It kept me focused on the gifts of nature, and Matthew 6:26-29 from KJV version of the scripture.

As the days passed more leaves grew until the entire pot was full of new stems and growth. A tiny bud seemed to appear overnight and grew a little every day. I watched it carefully as I did not want to miss anything. This bush was really growing so much that I had to prop it up without injury to the forming bud.

All activity was taking place during Lent and Holy Week. My spirits were low due to the absence of church services and the celebration of Easter.

Well I am happy to report the rose bud opened up to a full bloom on Easter morning! The aroma filled the room. It was a tear-inducing moment and a gift from God. Never give up hope! Never give up believing!

I was reminded of a quote by Mother Teresa, “Never let anything fill you with sorrow or

worry as to make you forget the joy of Christ Risen.” (from the book God’s Treasury of Virtues, a collection of quotes, hymns and poems)

I am also glad to report that this rose bush is not five feet tall and outgrowing it’s sunny spot by the window. As soon as the days turn warmer it will be moved outside to grow and hopefully cherished for many more years. I will not forget the pleasure of seeing this rose on Easter morning of year 2020. This beautiful creation that grew from a tiny green spot from a brown stem touched me and lifted my spirits. It is a memory I will forever treasure.

These past months of coping with the limitations imposed by Covid-19 has slowed me down and at times been stressful. Somewhere in the archives of my past I remember the late Rev. Frank Lucia, in one of his sermons, saying the endurance of worries, concerns, troubles etc. create stepping stones to take the next step toward the top of the mountain. Life is a journey and every step to be savored. As I remember this I add a P.S. as a reminder to myself—to reach out, take God’s hand and hold on tight!

My faith is a daily part of life. I can not measure it with words. But this much I know throughout the years, through grief, troubles, and heartaches, as well as joys and happiness, I have felt God’s presence. I am humbled by His goodness. My blessings are many and my heart is grateful.

Blessings and Best wishes to all,

Sue M. Hatfield

2020 Graduates



Bethany Pasmore will graduate as Valedictorian of the Sussex Technical High School's Class of 2020. Her accomplishments are many and varied. From being one of the only female Sousaphone players in the Raven Nation Marching Band to being part of a 2nd Place World Finals team for Odyssey of the Mind to President of National Honor Society and Key Club to her state win in the Educator's Rising Speech competition to her volunteer work in Sunday School at Avenue UMC and singing with the Praise Team at Asbury UMC, Bethany has worked hard and enjoyed the many opportunities available to her in high School. Next year she plans on majoring in Elementary and Special Education with a minor in Spanish at the University of Delaware. Bethany is the daughter of Tom and Sarah Pasmore.



McKenzie Betts will be graduating from Sussex Tech and attending University of Lynchburg to study nursing and swim for the University swim team. McKenzie is the daughter of Bobby and Dianne Betts.



Chad Reichhold is graduating from Milford High School class of 2020. Chad will be attending the University of Delaware on a Baseball Scholarship and majoring in Business. Chad is the son of Kevin and Leann Reichhold.



Anna Humes – Anna is graduating from Sussex Tech High School and will be attending University of DE in Newark. She is the daughter of Tom and Sandy Humes.



Kennedy Humes - Kennedy is graduating from Worcester Prep in Berlin, MD, and will be attending James Madison in Harrisonburg, VA. She is the daughter of David and Jennifer Humes.



Wesley Humes – Wesley is graduating from Sussex Tech High School, and will be attending U of D in Newark. He is the son of Alan and Tayna Humes.



Keith Stevenson is a senior at PolyTech High School. He plans to attend Delaware Tech (University of Delaware Seed Program) in Georgetown in the Fall. He has not decided on his major but he is interested in Environmental Science, Entomology or the Culinary Arts) He is looking forward to fishing and crabbing this summer. Keith is the son of Todd and Christy Stevenson.

Rebecca Lane—Rebecca will be graduating from Poly Tech high school. She plans to attend Elizabethtown University in Pennsylvania where she will study to become a Pediatric Physician's Assistant. Rebecca is the daughter of Joseph and Deborah Lane.



Liam Noah Gardner Bowler – Liam Noah Gardner-Bowler is the son of Daniel Gardner and Rose Bowler. He is an Eagle Scout, a member of Youth in Government and was selected for Delaware's Boys State and the 4-H National Leadership Conference. Noah served as the Vice-President and President of this 4-H club Create~2Learn & 2Lead and was a Jr. leader for STEM, Service Learning and Art / Photography. He is a 360 Multiply Good Recipient and Jefferson Award State Finalist.

Noah is graduating this June from Innovative Learning Academy. He has completed his first semester of college at Delaware Tech with a 4.0 GPA. Noah plans to complete his Associate Degree in Visual Art at Delaware Tech and then transfer to Wilmington University to earn his Bachelors of Science in Animation and 3D. Noah is the son of Dan and Rose Gardner-Bowler.



Mackenzie Kirkpatrick - Mackenzie is graduating from Sussex Tech. She will be attending Delaware Tech College in the fall majoring in Elementary education. She's the daughter of Jim and Bobbie Kirkpatrick



Hannah M. Burbage – Hannah is graduating from Cape Henlopen High School. She was in the national honor society, swim team, drama and will be attending University of Delaware in the fall for Elementary Education. Hannah is the daughter of Graham and Kasey Burbage, granddaughter of Gerald and Joanne Burbage.



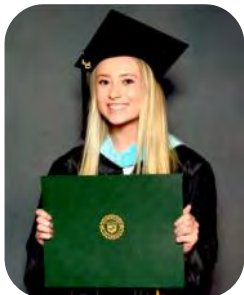
Sherena Chilton Graduating from Rutgers University Majoring in Biology. Sherena is the daughter of Tom and Henrietta Chilton.



Dylan Hilligoss - Dylan will be graduating from the University of Delaware with a Bachelor of Science in Physics and a concentration in Astronomy and a minor in Mathematics. Dylan has since been recommended to the Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education for admission with funding into the Master of Science Program in Physics and Astronomy at the University of Delaware. He has been awarded a Teaching Assistantship with a stipend of \$21,200 and a tuition waiver for the Fall 2020 and Spring 2021 semesters. Dylan is the son of Mike and Tina Hilligoss.



Adrianna Nicole Nelson – Adrianna graduated from University of Delaware with a BA in Art History, Minor in educational studies (Photo from study abroad Spring 2019 Rome, Italy Spanish steps) My dream job is to do children's programs in art museums. Adrianna is the daughter of Yvonne Nelson.




Megan Kirkpatrick – Megan graduated from Wilmington University with a bachelors degree in Science/Elementary Education. She is now at the Milford School District as a 5th grade teacher at Mispillion Elementary. She is the daughter of Jim and Bobbie Kirkpatrick.



Samantha J. Isom – Samantha is graduating from University of Delaware with a Bachelor of Science in Fashion Design and Product Innovation with a Minor in Business. She has a job working for W.L. Gore & Associates in Elkton MD. Sam is the daughter of Dana and Glen Isom, and the granddaughter of Jim and Sharon Clendaniel.



Korey Mitchell – Korey is a 2020 University of Delaware Graduate, Department of Engineering with a BS in Computer Science. Korey is the son of Kevin and Kim Mitchell.



*Come Celebrate
Avenue's Graduates*

@Avenue U.M.C.

June 24, 2020/6:00 PM

20 N. Church St Milford, DE

19963

R.S.V.P. with the church office by June 21

AVENUE UNITED METHODIST MEN SCHOLARSHIP

Presented to

Eagle Scout Stephen Hynes

Stephen has held numerous leadership positions within Boy Scout Troop 186 over the years. He had a good relationship with all of the scouts, and especially the younger ones. They looked up to him. He demonstrated excellent leadership skills. His Eagle Scout project was to build several tables, including charging stations for Sussex Tech High School, in Georgetown, in the Commons Area.

His activities include:

- Raven Nation Marching Band 2016-2020
- DFRC Blue-Gold All Star Band 2017-2019
- National Honor Society 2017-2020
- National Technical Honor Society 2018-2019
- National Spanish Honor Society 2018-2019
- Sussex Tech Baseball 2016-2018
- Skills USA-Quiz Bowl
- Wreaths Across America
- S.T.X –Press Drumline 2016-2020

The Methodist Men are very proud to present this scholarship to Stephen because he represents the leadership and academic qualities typical of the recipients through the years.



Recreational Boating: Stay Safe on the Water

With more than 11 million recreational vessels registered in the U.S., millions of Americans are enjoying time on and in the water. In 2017, the U.S. Coast Guard reported 4,291 boating incidents that resulted in 658 deaths, 2,629 injuries... Stay safe by being prepared and using the appropriate equipment, whether enjoying a ride on a motorized boat, paddling a kayak or wakeboarding.



Life Jackets Are Essential

Life jackets are at the core of safe boating, whether using a motorized or non-motorized vessel. The U.S. Coast Guard reports 76% of boating deaths in 2017 were due to drowning, and 84% of the victims were not wearing a life jacket.

The National Safe Boating Council promotes boating safety by encouraging boaters to wear life jackets any time they are on a boat, motorized or non-motorized.

Good swimmers still need life jackets. When people fall off a boat, they may become disoriented, injured or unconscious. Life jackets can keep victims' heads above water so they can breathe and be rescued more easily. Every child should wear a life jacket at all times when boating.

Choose the right life jacket for the activities you will be doing. Double check to make sure the life jackets are U.S. Coast Guard approved and fit correctly:

- Make sure the jacket is a proper fit for your size and weight
- Make sure the jacket is properly fastened
- Hold your arms straight up over your head, ask a friend to grasp the tops of the arm openings and gently pull up; make sure there is no excess room above the openings and that the jacket does not ride up over your chin or face

Exercise Good Judgment

- Respect your limits and keep within your limits to avoid injury
- Don't drink and drive a boat; alcohol affects judgment, vision, balance and coordination
- Once on the water, use common sense; in a split second, a situation can arise or the weather can turn
- If you notice storm clouds, a sudden temperature drop or wind speed increasing, play it safe and get off the water

<https://www.nsc.org/home-safety/tools-resources/seasonal-safety/summer/boating>

“And he got in the boat with them and the wind ceased. And they were utterly astounded.”

Mark 6:51

