



# *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, July 22, 2020*

This is the 20<sup>th</sup> week of the Coronavirus outbreak being a reality in America. Twenty weeks since we first stopped worshipping in-person and began to stream worship experiences online. While we have started back up with in-person worship, there are things that we are learning in the process. The Barna Group, an organization that does research in the church and culture just came out with some eye-opening statistics (Hang with me)

- 35% of practicing Christians are only “attending” their home church during COVID-19.
- 18% are viewing multiple churches online since COVID-19.
- 14% have switched churches since COVID-19
- 32% of practicing Christians have STOPPED attending any church since COVID-19

These numbers are really telling. The number that is the most telling is that 3-in-10 of *practicing Christians have stopped attending any church since COVID-19. Barna says that this could be partially accounted for by older generations not being able to access the internet, however, they also write that they believe this is a statistically insignificant number.*

As we think about what ministry looks like in the next 6-12 months (and beyond), what does it mean for the church that one-third of our attenders have just stopped participating? What does this say about the nature of the Church? What does this say about how we are discipling those in our community? These are big questions, but they are questions we will have to answer.

Paul writes in 1 Corinthians 12:12-29 that believers comprise the Body of Christ.

There is something particular about who we are as the Church- we are an embodied people. This is why online worship, while a great service, is not a substitute for in-person worship. We are the Body of Christ in the world. When we are missing people from the Body, the Body is affected. This is one reason why it is important to be connected and committed to a local church, so that the church can effectively represent Christ to the world.

As we continue forward in this new world, consider what the nature of the church is. We are more than a worship service. We are more than programming. We are the physical representatives of Christ to Milford and beyond. As we gather in-person and online ask yourself, "Who is missing from the body?" Let us care for one another in order to be the healthiest church we can be.

Grace and Peace,



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## Pastor Steve on Vacation

Pastor Steve will be on vacation **July 20-27, 2020**. As a way to recharge, Pastor Steve will not be responding to emails, phone calls, or text messages. He will begin returning messages on Tuesday, July 28<sup>th</sup>. During that time, if you need Pastoral Care, please call Kelly in the church office at (302) 422-8111 or email [churchoffice@avenueumc.com](mailto:churchoffice@avenueumc.com) and she will either connect you to a staff person to assist you, or put you in contact with a local pastor who is on-call to care for emergencies.

If you have a prayer request, please call the office or email [prayer@avenueumc.com](mailto:prayer@avenueumc.com) to have your request distributed to the prayer team.

## What You Need to Know for Avenue's Reopen

All are welcome to attend who are willing to follow the guidelines below. It is recommended that those whose age or health conditions make them at-risk of contracting COVID-19 consider worshipping at home through our livestream to protect themselves and others. If you have come in contact with someone who is COVID-19 Positive or if you are running a fever and showing flu-like symptoms, please refrain from attending worship in-person.

**New Times:** We have new worship times! Traditional Worship will be held at 9:00 am and Contemporary/Modern Worship will take place at 10:30 am. Both services will be in the sanctuary. The Fellowship Hall will be available for overflow, if needed based on social distancing guidelines.

**Evening Service:** There will be a 7:00 pm Contemporary/Modern Worship service on the lawn along Front Street on Sunday evenings. This service will be dependent on the weather. Bring your own chair or blanket and enjoy worshipping as the Body outdoors. Social distancing must be maintained during our outdoor worship service.

- ♦ **Masks Are a Must**
- ♦ **Sanitize or Wash Your Hands**
- ♦ **Singing is Limited**

**Procedures, Procedures, Procedures:** We are trying to think intentionally about how to keep our community safe as we approach our reopening. Here are the steps to take to attend worship.

- *One Way In/One Way Out - The Main Entrance (by the church office) is the only door that will be unlocked on Sunday morning. This helps us with cleaning between services. You will need to enter and exit through this door. Our Greeter Teams will be available to assist you if you need to use another entrance because of mobility issues.*
- *Check-In - In order to help keep account of who attends (for traceability when it comes to COVID-19), you will sign-in upon enter the Fellowship Foyer with a volunteer. This will involve your name and having your temperature taken by folks from our Health Ministries Team.*
- *Every Other Pew - You'll notice upon entering the sanctuary that we will be sitting in every other pew. We will also be asking separate households to keep six feet of social distance between themselves and others in the pews.*
- *Carry-In/Carry-Out - To help eliminate the passing of materials, we ask that if you pick up a worship folder and/or communion cup that you dispose of them yourself*

*in a trash receptacle at the church or at your home.*

- *Giving - There will be Giving Boxes in the chapel and at the back of the sanctuary for you to receive your tithes, gifts and offerings. We also highly encourage you to use our safe and secure online giving platform to eliminate the need for our money counters to touch paper money and checks. You can access our online giving at [www.avenueumc.com/give](http://www.avenueumc.com/give)*

As a staff, we believe that these procedures and guidelines will enable us to gather safely for worship. We will continue to monitor guidelines from the State and our Bishop, as well as the information about any rise in hospitalizations. We look forward to seeing you on Sunday.

Grace and Peace,

*Avenue Church Staff*

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## **Worship Service Update**

We have been back to in-person for three weeks now and it has been a joy to see the faces of those who have been able to attend. Traditional Worship, at 9:00 am, has had 40-45 people in worship. The 10:30 am Contemporary service has been around 25-30. Our outdoor evening service (now 7:00 pm) has been around 45-55. Those numbers are well off our “usual” averages, but we realize that we live in a different world and there is an uneasiness about returning to group settings.

You are invited to come and join us in-person in the sanctuary on Sunday mornings. If outdoor worship is more appealing, join us at 7:00 p.m. Just be sure to bring a chair, hat, sunglasses, and some water! There is plenty of space in the yard, seating on the pavement for those who cannot safely walk across the yard, and a few parking spaces where you can remain in your vehicle and worship with your windows down.

Thank you to everyone from our greeter teams, health ministries, and music ministries who are doing an excellent job of making worship meaningful each week. Thank you to our Audio/Video Team for making our livestream available to all!

## ANNOUNCEMENTS

**WORSHIP ON SUNDAY:** Worship is held each Sunday in-person or online at 9:00 am (Traditional) and 10:30 am (Contemporary). Through the warmer months, we are holding an outdoor evening worship service at 7:00 pm. We are streaming the morning worship services on our Facebook ([facebook.com/avenueumc](https://facebook.com/avenueumc)) and Youtube ([youtube.com/c/avenueunitedmethodistchurch](https://youtube.com/c/avenueunitedmethodistchurch)) pages.

**GIVING AT AVENUE** is possible through multiple ways.

- You can give your offering in-person
- You can snail mail your gift to: 20 N. Church St. Milford, DE 19963
- You can give online through the red “give” button on our homepage
- You can text “avenueumc” to 77977 and follow the prompts
- You can download and use our “Avenue Church DE” App on your smart phone

**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:** The Church Office will be open on **Tuesday, Wednesday, and Fridays** from 9:00am until 3:00 pm during the month of July. We do ask that you consider using a phone call or email if you are able to accomplish your business before coming into the office.

**PASTORAL CARE:** If you or someone you know is in need of pastoral care, please call the church office at 422-8111 or contact a staff person directly. You can also email [prayers@avenueumc.com](mailto:prayers@avenueumc.com) to have your name added to the prayer chain. We are doing limited face-to-face visits during this time, but would be happy to make contact any way that we can.

**MILFORD COMMUNITY FOOD PANTRY** is available to assist Avenue Families on Sunday mornings. If your family needs assistance with food and/or diapers, please come to the Food Pantry, which is located on the first floor of the educational wing, and one of their volunteers will assist you. Please contact the church office at 422-8111 for more information.

## DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

**ADULT SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL** is led by Rev. John Van Tine, retired, is meeting under the shade tree on the New Century Club property next to the church at 10:15 a.m. The study for July is “A New People.” The lesson for July 26<sup>th</sup> lesson is “Forgiving, Merciful, Compassionate” based on Nehemiah 9:9-17, 32, 33. Feel free to join us under the tree for these exciting lessons. Please bring your own chair!

**THE COLOR OF COMPROMISE:** Pastor Steve will be leading a book club during the month of August on Jamar Tisby’s book, *The Color of Compromise. It is a compelling look at the Church’s complicity in racism in America and provides opportunities for Christians and Churches to become anti-racist. We are looking to start at the beginning of August on Wednesdays at 7:00 pm through ZOOM. If you are interested, please email Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com).*

**PRAYER TEAM:** We are overhauling our prayer team and creating opportunities for Prayer Gatherings as we cover our church, community, and world in prayer. This will include weekly times of prayer. Down the road, we would like to have a prayer team active at each worship

service. If you feel God nudging you to go deeper in prayer as we seek revival in our community, contact Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com).

**SYMPATHIES TO:**

- The family and friends of Kitty Chen who passed away on Monday, July 13, 2020. Kitty joined Avenue on April 15, 1973.
- The family and friends of Kevin Rydzewski, who passed away this week.

**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:**

- Those affected by the COVID-19, Medical Staff, and those working on a vaccine
- Our local, national, and world leaders
- Our District Superintendent (Rev. Dr. Kyung-Hee Sa), Bishop Peggy Johnson, and The United Methodist Church
- The Pastors, Staff, and Leadership of Avenue United Methodist Church

**PRAYER REQUEST:**

Ed Bailey  
Bill and Marty Brereton  
Bob Cage  
Jeff Carmine  
Luisa and Billy Combs  
Donna and Keith  
Coverdale  
Julie Dally  
Josiah Davis  
Charlie and Barbara  
Fleetwood  
Craig Hanna  
Pat Hudson

Doris Isele  
Karl Isele  
Dottie and Jerry Jackson  
Dean Johnson  
Rhoda and Greg Kurz  
Esther LaMotte  
Ellie Lauckner  
Jean Layton  
Mary Jo Lear  
Nancy Lee  
Dan & Jennifer Nelson &  
family  
Jack and Zelda McDuff

Laurel Pastor  
Jan Perkins  
Bob Randolph  
Kathy Rumery  
Phil Saint  
Chris Shultz  
Roland Simms  
Racheal Simesak  
Linda Sockrider  
Joan Wadman

## SPRC Update

The Staff Parish Committee is striving to keep the congregation abreast of what is taking place within our staff members. First, let me say thank you for all of those that were able to participate in the “ride-by” for Pastor Wendy on the last Sunday in June. While much different than our typical send-off, it was an opportunity for all to share their appreciation and love for the six years that Pastor Wendy spent with us. Second, I want to make everyone aware that the SPRC committee regretfully accepted the resignation of Matt McCreary, our Praise Team Leader, at our June meeting. Matt’s commitments to his young family, his full-time job, and the on-going upheaval created by the COVID-19 Pandemic all were contributing factors. Also, Youth Pastor Will Leister and his wife Sam are expecting the birth of their daughter in mid-August. He is expected to be on leave for a couple of weeks.

The Committee is continuing to fine tune job descriptions and review the current status of staffing needs as they correspond to the ministry needs of our church; especially with respect to the current decline in giving. This is an opportunity for us (you & me) to actively become involved in serving in the ministries of Avenue UMC. For example, the ministry of caring for one another and staying connected as a church family are areas that we all can participate in. Please contact our pastoral staff as you feel led to participate. Please know that we as a committee appreciate your thoughts, concerns or comments and ask that you would forward them to me or any of committee members.

*Lloyd Webb*  
SPRC Chair

## *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: Debbie Spence Cromer*

Since I was a little girl, I can remember always loving Jesus. He loved me and I knew it because I could always hear our Sunday School class singing “Jesus Loves Me” with our little voices. As time went by, I prayed at bedtime and at dinner time and raised my children going to Sunday school, MYF and participating in youth groups, like we do. I was so moved at times in church and especially during Christmas and Easter services. I knew I was feeling the Holy Spirit, wishing for a better relationship with our Lord Jesus.

So, I got involved with some Bible studies through a few special friends. My walk had begun . . . It really was amazing to study and learn to recognize God working in my life. I was always looking outside myself for strength and confidence. Finding out that it comes from within and it has always been there was so exciting. God is always with you! So, each morning I try to say, “Thank you God for this beautiful day, hope to please you in every way”.

I got sick last May and now live with a condition called CIDP (Chronic Inflammatory Demyelinating Polyneuropathy) diagnosed by Penn Hospital in Philadelphia. It was a neurological attack on my nerves leaving me with neuropathy in all my limbs. I asked God to heal me and I asked for miracles to walk again and use my hands. I was admitted to the Physical Rehab Center at Good Shepherd (a beautiful, ironic name) in Philadelphia. My stay lasted four months and during that time, I started talking to Jesus throughout each day. I was alone and needed to have faith and believe that God was with me and had been all along. The fear I had, started to disappear and I could feel the relief as I let God take it. Fear is a negative, cast it out! Faith is a positive that helps that helps us receive good from God. He has an amazing destiny for us and our fears can prevent it. I opened my heart and started to share my story there at Good Shepherd, I prayed with some of the therapists. It became a comfort and I needed that.

Many of the patients related to me. I prayed for them. The Holy Spirit seemed to come out everywhere during my days in therapy. I believe you have to watch and listen for the Holy Spirit. So many patients enjoyed our short prayers and reacted to mentioning Jesus’s name. Seeing smiles come on the faces of cancer patients in so much pain, amputees, organ transplants, and neurological problems . . . the ones that had not smiled before was so awesome!! I believe God was with all of us and he will carry us through everything on our path through life. God was working in my life as I spread my message to the patients....he was working through me, I could feel it! I was beginning to walk but was still in a



wheelchair. My son, Wes and his wife, Abbey, found a ranch home two doors from them that was for sale. It was a miracle! We moved in the day I was released, the timing was perfect with help from the doctors. My family and dear friend, Karen, packed and moved us from Bethany Beach. Everything fell into place so my hopes and prayers were answered. Everything was God! At the end of the four months in Good Shepherd, I was being called “the mayor”!! We all brightened each other’s day in Rehab with smiles and believing that miracles do come true. Remember, with God . . . all things are possible!!

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Dear Avenue Friends,

Every Sunday we would arrive at the eight o’clock service, Joe in a suit and sometimes funny socks.

We loved the church ministers, wonderful organ music, all the programs, bazaar, yard sale and special events. We loved it all.

Avenue Church was a vital part of our lives.

Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

*Mary Jo Lear*

New address:

7330 McClure Avenue  
Unit 11  
Pittsburgh, PA 15218



With the Heat index in the 100's we need to think about staying cool and hydrated in order to prevent heat exhaustion that can lead to heat stroke.

- Try not to be too active, and take breaks when you exercise.
- Drink enough fluids, such as water or sports drinks, so you do not feel thirsty. But don't force yourself to drink very large amounts in a short time, and don't drink so much that you feel uncomfortable. This can be harmful.
- Do any exercise early in the day, before it gets too hot out.
- Wear loose, lightweight clothes. Don't wear too many layers.
- Avoid being in a hot car.

You should also watch for symptoms of heat cramps or heat exhaustion. Heat cramps cause painful muscle cramps. Heat exhaustion can cause headaches, dizziness, nausea, or vomiting. It can also make you thirsty or tired.

If you have symptoms of heat cramps or heat exhaustion, you should cool your body down right away to avoid getting heat stroke.

To cool your body down, you can:


- Spray yourself with cool water and then sit in front of a fan.
- Move into the shade, or go into an air-conditioned building or car.
- Take a cool shower or bath.
- Drink water or a sports drink. Do **not** have a drink with alcohol or caffeine.
- Take off any extra clothing you are wearing.
- Put a cold pack or cool cloth on your neck, armpits, and groin.

<https://www.uptodate.com/contents/heat-stroke-the-basics>

**“It will be for a shade by day from the heat, and for a refuge and a shelter from the storm and rain.”**

**Isaiah 4:6**

HEAT EXHAUSTION	HEAT STROKE
<b>Symptoms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Faint or Dizzy</li><li>- Headache</li><li>- Profuse Sweating</li><li>- Irritability</li><li>- Weak, Rapid Pulse</li><li>- Shallow Breathing</li><li>- Pale, Cool, Clammy Skin</li><li>- Nausea or Vomiting</li><li>- Muscle Cramps</li></ul>	<b>Symptoms</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Absence of Sweating</li><li>- Pulsating Headache</li><li>- Hot, Red, Dry Skin</li><li>- High Body Temp: Above 103</li><li>- Nausea or Vomiting</li><li>- Strong, Rapid Pulse</li><li>- Confusion</li><li>- Convulsions</li><li>- May Lose Consciousness</li></ul>
<b>Treatment</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Have victim lie down in a cool shaded area or air conditioned area.</li><li>2) Drink water if victim is conscious.</li><li>3) Use caution when victim stands up, apply cold compresses.</li></ol>	<b>Treatment</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) <b>DIAL 911</b></li><li>2) Take action to cool victim by any means. Place victims in a cool area, wrap in wet towel, sponge victim with cool water.</li></ol>

 **TRAILMOB.COM**

Info Source: MayoClinic.org