



# *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, July 29, 2020*

Last week, the LaMotte family made our annual trip to Massanutten, VA for a time of recharging and relaxing. We had the opportunity to hike, canoe, swim, and read. With the slower pace, I was able to get to some books on my reading list. I want to mention one in particular that seems very appropriate for where we are in our world.

*Analog Church: Why We Need Real People, Places, and Things in a Digital World* is a book by Pastor Jay Kim. The book encourages churches to consider how they use technology to go about their ministry. Ultimate, technology is great for the transfer of information while relationships (analog church) is essential for transformation.

The COVID-19 outbreak has forced churches to embrace technology in ways they may never had imagined a year ago. Avenue has held worship, meetings, and Bible Studies online. Many of you have thanked the Staff for their hard work in putting our offerings online, there are others who have said, "It is not the same." This is true. Online Church/Worship/Bible Study is not meant to be a substitute for the real, in-person experience. We are the physical "body of Christ" at work in the world. There is something powerful and transformational when we gather.

This is not a guilt trip about participating during in-person worship, but it is a reminder about the nature of the church. As Christians, we cannot settle for

worship or Bible Study online. It may be necessary, for a time. However, we are created for relationship. We are created to live and move as the body of Christ. As you go through your week, let us “touch” real people with real conversation, real care, real prayer, and the real love of Christ.

Grace and Peace,

*Pastor Steve*

## 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

**SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS** led by Rev. John Van Tine, retired plus others is meeting under the shade tree on the New Century Property next to the Church at 10:15AM. The study for August is “A New Way of Life.” The lesson for August 2<sup>nd</sup> is “A Life Changing Encounter” based on Luke 19:1-10; August 16<sup>th</sup> lesson is “Who Is My Neighbor?” based on Luke 10:25-37; August 23<sup>rd</sup> lesson is “Great Faith” based on Matthew 15:21-28; and August 30<sup>th</sup> lesson is “Great Mercy” based on Mark 5:1-20. 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 Kevin Rydzewski, who passed away last 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  
Frank Beebe  
Bobby Bergez and family  
Bill and Marty Brereton  
Bob Cage  
Jeff Carmine  
Luisa and Billy Combs  
Kim Coulbourne  
Donna and Keith  
Coverdale  
Julie Dally  
Josiah Davis  
Barbara Dietrick  
Charlie and Barbara  
Fleetwood  
Craig Hanna  
Pat Hudson

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

Laurel Pastor  
Jan Perkins  
Bob Randolph  
Kathy Rumery  
Phil Saint  
Richard Sapp  
Vicki Schultes and family  
Chris Shultz  
Roland Simms  
Racheal Simesak  
Linda Sockrider  
Teresa  
Joan Wadman

## *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: Gerry Morris*

***“Train up a child in the way he should go, and when he is old, he will not depart from it.”***

I can't remember ever not going to church. My home church is Zion United Methodist Church in Roxana, Delaware. During my growing-up years, Roxana was a small town with one gas station, a fire department, a 3-room elementary school, and two churches. Most of the memories of my youth involve the church. The entire congregation was like an extended family (a good many of them were). My parents were the role models for my faith, and I am blessed to have been raised by them. They, along with the members of that small, country church, were the source of my spiritual development. My witness to faith does not involve an epiphany, a life-transforming event, or an “ah-ha” moment. My faith is intrinsic and instinctive. I was born into it, and by the grace of God, I have not waived (wobbled maybe) but never waived.

With that said, I believe that in order to be sustained, faith must be nurtured. As Christians, we are taught that to grow in faith, we must pray, study the Bible, and involve ourselves in Christian relationships. If you are like me, you rely on pastors and church leaders to instruct and guide.

More often than not, though, I feel closest to God in a very different arena – a small dock that extends about 15 feet into Cedar Creek located at the back of my house. Sitting at any time during the day or time of year on the dock allows me to be quiet, detach from myself, and connect to something greater than myself. I am reminded of a passage I once read in a book written by Emilie Barnes; it stated that quiet time is not a gift we give to God; it is a gift God gives to us – an opportunity to draw closer to Him. On the dock, I am able to witness undisturbed the magnitude and complexity, yet simplicity, of God's magnificent creation.

The first two chapters of Genesis, tell us how God created the Heavens and Earth. Paul, in Romans 1:20 tells that the universe declares the story of God, and the reason we exist is to see it, be awed by it, and glorify God because of it. Observing the transition from daybreak to twilight, the play of light and wind on the water, the melodious choir of birds, insects, and frogs, the rustle of a breeze in the treetops, and the occasional waft of wild magnolia soothes my senses. I am able to see my small world through God's eyes rather than my own. Without distractions, I can talk to Him, listen for His wisdom, pray, and simply feel His

presence. Invariably, I walk back to my house refreshed, restored, and humbled.

Much of the uncertainty in today's world is confusing and overwhelming. Complicated lives, political and social unrest, and isolation due to the Clovid-19 epidemic creates a need for reassurance and perspective. When I retreat to my little dock on Cedar Creek, I find clarity, peace, and sustenance in the presence of God.

Praise be to God. Gerry

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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





Our culture tends to value "toughness" over "true strength." Mental health is being challenged with the pandemic and unrest of the country. There is a difference between true mental strength and acting tough. A person with mental strength involves working to improve their character. "Mentally strong people are willing to be vulnerable and quite often, people confuse their openness and honesty with frailty." (A.Morin)

Listed are 10 signs of mental strength not weakness found in INC. Amy Morin, author.

1. Being kind. (Proverbs 31:26)
2. Changing your mind. We learn new things every day. What you think today will change with more information. This builds character. Every time you read your Bible you will learn something new. With the new knowledge you will change an idea or thought you had on a subject. Remember the Bible is the living word. (Hebrews 4:12)
3. Acknowledging your weaknesses. The Bible says, when we are weak we are strong. (2 Corinthians 12:10).
4. Being patient. (James 5:7)
5. Asking for help. We all need help sometimes. (Matthew 21:22)
6. Failing. There are times when you may not be successful, but that is ok. It is part of learning and growing. (Hebrews 12:15)
7. Expressing emotions. We need to express our emotions in a proper way. Let people know how you feel. (Philippians 4:7)
8. Walking away. Sometimes it is better to say nothing and walk away. (1 Corinthians 15:33)
9. Improving yourself. We should never stop growing, learning and trying to improve ourselves. (2 Corinthians 13:5)
10. Staying calm. This may be a hard one but one we must learn for good mental health. Let go let God. (Philippians 4:6)

Build Your Mental Muscles and read the article located on the web site below for more information.

<https://www.inc.com/amy-morin/10-signs-youre-a-mentally-strong-person-even-though-most-people-think-these-are-weaknesses.html>



**“Do your best to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who has no need to be ashamed, rightly handling the word of truth.”**

**2 Timothy 2:15**