



The Midweek

Wednesday, December 23, 2020

The Worst Best Christmas Ever

Indie musician Sufjan Stevens has released over 100 Christmas songs during his acclaimed career. One of those songs is called *That Was the Worst Christmas Ever*. The lyrics are sad and talk about a father throwing gifts into a furnace and yelling at the kids. While that is not my experience of Christmas morning, I suspect that there are plenty of Christmas' that would be better to forget.

I know that we would like to forget much of 2020. There have been so many negative things that have taken place. We continue to feel the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic in our world and our community. This week, the pandemic is hitting close to home. After much conversation and prayer, **we will be cancelling all our in-person Christmas Eve services and worshipping online on December 24th. We will also meet virtually for the December 27th and January 3rd Worship services.** This is not something that I take lightly. Our staff has worked hard to create space each Sunday to worship safely. We are monitoring situations that prevent us from believing we can provide that with in-person worship this week. If Sufjan was writing his Christmas song today, it might include the cancelling of Christmas Eve service. It is certainly not what I was hoping for at Christmas.

Thankfully, Christmas is more than candles and carols. It is more than wrapping paper and ornaments. Its meaning is more transformational than Santa Claus and eight tiny reindeer. As we gather for Christmas online and

with our families, our Christmas celebration is a declaration that *God is With Us*. God is with us through a pandemic. When we feel isolated and alone, God is with Us. In the midst of financial questions, God is with us. Through our fears and anxieties, God is with us. When we are self-aware of our sinfulness and feel unworthy of God's love, God is with us!

At Christmas, we celebrate the birth of Jesus, Emmanuel. The word, Emmanuel, means *God with us*. This is not some impersonal, remote or distant understanding of God. God came to us in the person of Jesus. St. Athanasius wrote, God became man so that man might become God. God became like us in order to show us the way to life with God! This is only possible in the person of Jesus.

This Christmas may feel like the worst Christmas ever. The message of Christmas is that ***God is with us*** *no matter what we are going through. This is the best gift we could have received. May God bless you and your family this Christmas.*

Pastor Steve

ANNOUNCEMENTS

WORSHIP ON SUNDAY: Worship is held each Sunday in-person or online at 9:00 a.m. (Traditional) and 10:30 a.m. (Contemporary). We are streaming the morning worship services on our Facebook (facebook.com/avenueumc) and Youtube (youtube.com/c/avenueunitedmethodistchurch) pages.

PAUSING THE 6:00 P.M. WORSHIP SERVICE: The Staff has made the decision to pause the 6:00p.m. evening service for the winter months. Our plan is to bring the service back when the weather gets warmer. Thank you to everyone who has served at the worship service and to those who have attended. We look forward to seeing you on Sundays at 9:00 a.m., 10:30a.m. or online!

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

GIVING ENVELOPES FOR 2021: The finance team has issued giving envelopes for those people who give primarily by envelope. They are on a table in Fellowship Foyer. Please pick them up when you come to church or at your earliest convenience when the church office is open. If you are able to deliver envelopes for a friend or neighbor who is fairly shut in, it would be most helpful. If we did not issue a set for you and you would like to have them, please call Kelly. We have extra sets. *Harriet and June*

OFFICE OPEN- DOORS CLOSING: With the increase in cases of COVID-19 in our area and in an effort to limit traffic in the church, we will be keeping the main entrance doors locked during the week even while the office remains open for the short-term. There is an intercom available at the main entrance should you need to get inside the church. We encourage everyone to utilize email and phone calls, when possible, to limit the need to come to church. We thank everyone for helping to keep our staff and volunteers safe during this time. **Church Office Hours are Monday—Friday 9:00 am—3:00 pm.**

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 prayer@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.

HELP WANTED! AVENUE GREETER TEAM: The Avenue Greeter team needs your help. We're inviting you to join and help serve in this ministry. No experience needed, just a friendly smile and some of your time (a few Sunday mornings throughout the year). If you're interested, please call John Horsman at (302) 222-6642.

DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUNDAY SCHOOL FOR ADULTS: The Sunshine Bible Class for adults led by Rev. John Van Tine, retired is meeting in the Wesley Room at 10:15AM. Our study for December is “God with Us.” The lesson for December 27th lesson is “The Father Dwells in Jesus” based on John 14:8-14. Feel free to join us in the Wesley Room for these exciting lessons.

ADVENT MISSION STUDY: Pastor Steve will finish up the Advent Study on **Wednesday, January 6th at 10:30 a.m.** in Fellowship Hall. We will look at how Advent prepares us for Jesus’ Second Coming and how our understanding of that prepares us to truly live into Christmas



CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- **Russ and Harriet Davies** who will be celebrating their **60th** anniversary on **December 24th**.

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

- Those affected by the COVID-19, Medical Staff, and those working on a vaccine
- The arrival, safety, and effectiveness of the recently approved COVID 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:

Bob Cage
Lydia Castro
Brittany and Baby Naomi
Bill Clark
Jennifer Clarke
Pat Clearly
Jack & Denny Collins
Luisa & Billy Combs
Donna and Keith Coverdale
Julie Dally
Josiah Davis
Joanna Denney-Turner
Carolyn Evans
Veronica Evans
Faith
Fay Farissier
Ken Fechter
Charlie & Barbara Fleetwood
Craig Hanna
Dave Harris
John Horsman
Pat Hudson
Doris Isele

Karl Isele
Dottie & Jerry Jackson
Alvin Jarrell
Dean Johnson
Linda Kemp
Doris Koon
Rhoda & Greg Kurz
Jean Layton
Lauren Lee
Nancy Lee
Brittany Poore Little
Lyn
Jack & Zelda McDuff
Ricki McGuire
Frank Mentusky
Jennifer Hughes Miller
Orville Mills
Kathryn Avery Mitchell
Tiffany Mitchell
Stan Moody
Jason Neall
Alex Oliveras, Sr.
Alex Oliveras, Jr.

Adriel Oliveras and family
Mary Ellin Parsons
Laurel Pastor
Jan Perkins
Millie Remick
Roy Rigby
Lorna Rosella Rulona
Phil Saint
Char Sandifer
Richard Sapp
Alice Sellers
Leo Shew
Roland Simms
Racheal Simesak
Gary Simpson
Linda Singleton
Bob Susen
Ann Sutcliff
Teresa
Joan Wadman
TJ Webb
Betty Ziesel

GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Grover and Orpha Ashton by The Webb Family
Loved Ones by Annette Billings and family
Linda Breedlove by Pat Fisher
Husband Charles Brown by Ruth Brown
Lynn Byer by William Byer
Lyle Bunville by Kathryn Welch
Mildred Chalmers by Caryn Chasanov
Cal Clendaniel by Ginny, Bob, Jane and Families
Fran and Patt Culotta by Chuck and Sandy Culotta
Her Parents, John and Alberta Dougherty, by Linda and Al Hanna
Ed, Frances and Ted Fisher by Don and Pat Fisher
Duane T. Fox, Sr. by Connie Fox and family
Lucius & Hazel Fox by Connie Fox and family
Carolyn A. Brown, Isabelle Gill & Charlie Gill by Arlene and David Wilkerson
Joann Glenn by Thomas Glenn
Bill Green by Faye Byer
Her Sister, Jill D. Grzybowski-Shumate by Linda and Al Hanna
Their Daughter, Amy M. Hanna-Hagopian by Al & Linda Hanna
His Parents, Norman and Evelyn Hanna by Al & Linda Hanna
Dike and Lib Hitchens by The Hitchens Family
Richard J. Holleger Sr. by Hilda Holleger and Children
Doris & Jr. Hobbs by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Peggy Hughes by Diane Dolan
Lynne's fiancé Bill Johnson by John, Ginny, Lynne and Peter Van Tine
Marvin Johnson by Arlene and David Wilkerson
N. Joe Lear, Sr. by Diane Dolan
My Saints in Heaven by Tita Lewis
George Logan by Steve Andrea, Abbie, Chloe, Malachi and Caleb LaMotte
Bud, Sally and Peter Macky by Don and Pat Fisher
Kathy Malago by Donovan, Noble, Malago & McBroom Families
Jannie Martin by Kaye Majoch
Violet Marvel by Randy and Linda Marvel
Alton and Margaret Maull by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Robert and Lucille Mercer by Ann and Kaye
Cindy McBroom by Donovan, Noble, Malago & McBroom Families
Earlene Morris by David and Sherry Morris
Ferd and Edith Nelson by Barbara French
Norman Remick III by Norm & Millie Remick
Norma Ann Frank by Norm & Millie Remick
Paul G. Rimmer by Bonnie Glenn
Marge By Ed Steiner
Marge Steiner by Joyce and Bob Voshell
Hazel Swain by Mike Swain
Harold and Charlotte Tucker by The Hitchens Family
Skip Veasey by David and Sherry Morris

Tom and Verna Walls by Chuck and Sandy Culotta
Aunt Kay Webb by The Webb Family
Robbins Webb by Kathryn Webb
Mr. & Mrs. Lucius C. Webb by Their Family
Our Pop Pop, Steve Welch Sr by Jacob and Michael Welch
Charles V. Wilkerson by Arlene and David Wilkerson
C. Van Nuis & Katie Wilkerson by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Elizabeth & Charles Wilkerson by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Burton and Hazel Willis by Connie Fox and Family & Susan Harvell and Family
Dawn Willis by Brie and Lance Wyatt
Nana Dawn from the boys.
Jo Wood by Joyce & Bob Voshell
Our Parents by John & Ginny Van Tine

GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN HONOR OF

Blessings and love to all by Sarah Circle
Ed Bailey by Diane Dolan
Ruth Brown by Caryn Chasanov
Grandson, Conner Chasanov by Ruth Brown
Kevin B. Chamberlain by The Handbell Choir
The Lighting Crew – Thanks by Diane Dolan
Chuck and Sandy Culotta by Diane Dolan
Larry Hughes by Diane Dolan
Hunt Families by Tom and Rachel Susen
Tita Lewis by Diane Dolan
Projection Team by Diane Dolan
Gary and Marti Seal by Diane Dolan
Dave and Linda Sockrider by Diane Dolan
Susen Families by Tom and Rachel Susen



Ideas for Creating New Holiday Traditions After a Death

In God's time he calls each of us home. That does not mean the ones left behind must forget. Cherish the wonderful memories you made together. Start by creating new holiday traditions.

1. Make your loved one's favorite food
2. Listen and sing to their favorite song
3. Make a holiday tablecloth. Invite guests and have a plain tablecloth with sharpies. Let your guests write on the tablecloth their favorite memory of the loved one.
4. Light a battery-operated candle at the beginning of the holiday season and let it stay lite all season.
5. Have a candle lighting ceremony the night before the holiday. Give everyone a candle and let them light it in memory of the loved one.
6. Read a poem that reminds you of your loved one
7. Give to your favorite charity or give a gift to make someone smile
8. Tell stories about your loved ones
9. Add an extra plate at the table
10. Put an empty box out for family and friends to write down a memory of your loved one. You can read them throughout the year.
11. Place a memory tree up with your loved one's favorite season or hobby ornaments on it
12. Write down any regrets and burn them in a fire

<https://whatsyourgrief.com/creating-new-tradition-after-a-death/>



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"This I recall to my mind, therefore have I hope. It is of the Lord's mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not. They are new every morning: great is they faithfulness."

Lamentations 3:21-23



A hand is pointing towards a glowing hexagonal grid. One hexagon in the center-left contains a stylized 'F' logo. The background is a dark teal color with a grid of glowing hexagons.

**FUSION IS GOING
VIRTUAL**

**ZOOM MEETINGS
ARE COMING**

**IF INTERESTED CONTACT
PASTOR WILL
LEISTERWILLIAM@AVENUEUMC.COM**

MINISTRIES AND FUNDRAISING EVENTS SUPPORTED BY AVENUE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

Missions



Spain Pecometh Camp Scholarship

Parish Purse

Fusion Youth Ministries

Code Purple

Matthew Project

Bayhealth Foundation

The Way Home Ministry

Volunteers in Mission

Home of Hope Women's Ministry

Camp New Hope

KenCrest Group Homes

Baker Congo Partnership Project

ARC of Delaware Pizza Party

Christ Episcopal Church Seamen's Ministry

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