



The Midweek

Wednesday, January 20, 2021

Today, Joe Biden will be inaugurated as the 46th President of The United States of America. There are many in our community who will celebrate the incoming President. There are many others who would've liked a different outcome. As Americans, we have the opportunity to come together in unity to work towards a better future for all people in our country for future generations.

As Christians, we are "aliens and strangers" in this world (1 Peter 2:11). Our primary citizenship is in the Kingdom of God, which is why we are not beholden to a political party, platform, or leader. But we are called to work and pray for the good of this temporary home where we currently reside.

The prophet Jeremiah was operating in the time that Israel was exiled to Babylon. This meant that much of the population had to make the long journey to Babylon to work (as slaves) for the Babylonian empire. You can probably imagine that the people of Israel would rather have gone home and seen the Babylonian empire fail. But God speaks through Jeremiah saying,

*"But seek the welfare of the city where I have sent you into exile, and pray to the LORD on its behalf, for in its welfare you will find your welfare."
Jeremiah 29:7*

God tells Israel to "seek the welfare of the city." The city was Babylon. The city was the great enemy of Israel. But the people of God are to seek the welfare of the city of Babylon while living as aliens and strangers there. They are to "build houses," "plant gardens," "eat produce," and "get married," and "multiply, not

decrease. (Jer. 29:5-6).” Why are they to do this? *Because if Babylon thrives then the exiles will thrive.*

Paul tells Timothy,

“I urge, then, first of all, that petitions, prayers, intercession and thanksgiving be made for all people—for kings and all those in authority, that we may live peaceful and quiet lives in all godliness and holiness.”

1 Timothy 2:1-2

Paul’s advice to believers is to pray for our leaders in such a way that their leadership would lead to peaceful and quiet lives in godliness and holiness. This is instructions for us today regardless who our President, governor, mayor, or pastors are. We pray for our leaders that they may lead in such a way that leads to peaceful and quiet lives for all people. We pray that they would lead with godliness and holiness. We pray that as they succeed, so will all the people in our nation succeed.

I ask that you would join me today, and in the days to come, to pray for the welfare of our nation, our leaders, and our church that in their flourishing would lead to flourishing for all people. Where we see those who do not flourish or are left out, let us work as the hands and feet of Christ to lift those up who have been left behind.

Grace and Peace,

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.

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

PLEASE MAKE YOUR WORSHIP RESERVATION: As we continue to adapt our worship services to meet the State guidelines and best practices in the midst of a pandemic, **we are asking each person/family planning on attending worship to make a reservation.**

On Thursday mornings we will be sending out an email with the reservation link. By following the link, you can make a reservation for service you plan on attending (9:00 a.m. or 10:30 a.m.) and you will be able to choose to sit in the sanctuary or in overflow seating in Fellowship Hall. You can access the link at: <https://avenueumc.thersvpapp.com>

If you do not make a reservation, it is possible you will be seated in Fellowship Hall if the sanctuary has reached capacity. You will need to do this every Sunday you plan on attending worship. Please call the church office at 422-8111 if you cannot make the reservation online.

ASH WEDNESDAY PLANNING: The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday, and it is just around the corner (**Wednesday, February 17th**). Lent is a season of prayer and repentance that leads and prepares us for Easter. Avenue is planning several ways that you can mark the beginning of Lent through Lenten practices.

The sanctuary will be open from 7:30 a.m. - 9:00 a.m. for prayer on Ash Wednesday. Pastor Steve will be available to impose ashes as you begin your day. That night, we will gather at 6:30 p.m. in the sanctuary for our Ash Wednesday service. There will be “Ash Wednesday Take-Home Kits” available for pickup starting **Sunday, February 14th** for those who are unable to attend or uncomfortable gathering in the sanctuary. It will have everything you will need to participate from home with the livestream of the service. We look forward to observing the season of Lent and the work that the Holy Spirit will do in and through each of us.

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 a.m.—3:30 p.m.**

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.

CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING: Church Council meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, January 27th at 7:00 p.m. via ZOOM**. Please register your intent to participate by emailing the Church Office (churchoffice@avenueumc.com) so that we know who to send the ZOOM link out too.

HELPING THE HOMELESS- MISSION PROJECT: Within our own community, we have a population of men and women who do not have permanent homes and who either sleep out in the elements or find a bed at the Code Purple Shelter at Avenue or the Milford Church of the Nazarene. Avenue will be collecting items to be made available as To-Go Kits for the homeless in our community through the Code Purple Shelters as well as Brandywine Counseling. If you would like to contribute to the To-Go Kits, please consider donating one or more of the following items by bringing it to the church lobby by **January 24th**.

Items Needed

- * Bottled Water
- * Canned or pouched meat
- * Nuts
- * Breakfast bars
- * Drink flavor packets
- * Snacks
- * Crackers
- * Shelf stable microwavable meals
- * Hand warmers
- * Deodorant
- * Razors
- * Personal items such as small bottles of shampoo, conditioner, soap or body wash
- * Hand cleaner

There are also larger items that can be take directly to Brandywine Counseling Center (969 E. Masten Circle, Milford), which would benefit the homeless in our community as well.

- *
- * Tents
- * Tarps
- * Blankets
- * Sleeping bags
- * Mylar Thermal Emergency Blankets

COVID VACCINES AVAILABLE FOR PHASE 1B: Governor Carney announced this week that those in Phase 1B are now able to receive the COVID-19 vaccination. Phase 1B includes all individuals 65 and over, and frontline essential workers including: fire, police, correctional officers, teachers and education staff (including child care providers), U.S. postal workers, food manufacturing, agriculture, transportation, and grocery store workers. Efforts will also continue to vaccinate Phase 1A health care personnel and nursing home residents and staff who have not yet been vaccinated.

These vaccination events are **by appointment only**. Delawareans who are 65 or older can register at de.gov/covidvaccine. Registration will open at 8:30 a.m. Wednesday, January 20th. *(This information was gathered from <https://news.delaware.gov/2021/01/19/governor-carney-dph-announce-transition-to-vaccinate-phase-1b/>).*

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 10:15 a.m. Our study for January is “The Good News.” The lesson for January 24th lesson is “Nothing Can Separate Us From God’s Love in Christ” based on Romans 8:31-39; and January 31st lesson is “The Outcome of It All” based on Revelation 21:1-8; 22:12-15. Feel free to join us in the Wesley Room for these exciting lessons.

HEALTH MINISTRIES: Would you like to volunteer one Sunday morning to take temperatures or document names? Click on the following link to sign up. <https://tinyurl.com/yyg2uhek>

If you have any questions, please email Cindy Horsman at healthministry@avenueumc.com.

VIRTUAL PASTOR’S BIBLE STUDY - THE SERMON ON THE MOUNT: Pastor Steve will be leading a Bible Study via Zoom on The Sermon on the Mount. We will be going deeper than we are able to go on Sunday mornings on Jesus’s Master Class on Discipleship and focusing on how we can live out The Sermon in our everyday life. Please sign up by emailing churchoffice@avenueumc.com. We may look into a book/workbook to guide our conversations. **Study begins Wednesday, February 3rd at 7:00 p.m.**

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: Shelby McKenzie

I accepted Janice Abbott's request to send in a written testimony about my faith. There are not enough words to write on how much I love the Lord, I love the bible, I love hymns and praise/worship music -they are a part of my everyday life.

I do not have a life changing salvation story to tell. I cannot even remember the year I was saved. I do remember coming home from a summer day camp and I told my Dad they talked about becoming a Christian and I wanted to ask Jesus into my heart; and I sat on his lap and he prayed with me. I was probably around 5 or 6 years old.... And to be honest, as a teen I prayed it again just to make sure.

I was born in Staten Island, NY, lived in Baltimore and we eventually moved to Milford in the fall of 1975. I'm very grateful for parents who have dedicated their lives in keeping their faith important, they made sure we went to church wherever we were and still do.

The Lord is my constant friend, my confidence, my redeemer, my savior, always there for me. My Grandfather has rubbed off on me because I hear songs relating to past situations or bible verses. Lamentations 3:22-24 Because of the Lord's great love we are not consumed, for his compassions Never fail. They are new every morning, great is your faithfulness. I say to myself, the Lord is my Portion; therefore I will wait for him". I love this verse and I hear the song Great is thy Faithfulness" ...all I have needed thy hand hath provided... I have learned over and over He is all that I need.

My husband Scott and I were married at Calvary Wesley Church in Harrington

in 1990. We had our son Dallas's baby dedication there as well. We were members there for several years and decided to find a church closer to home where Dallas would be able to see familiar faces from our community -and we did at Avenue. Dallas was in the 5th grade and his Sunday School teacher was Vaughn Webb. Vaughn told us Dallas would sit right beside him. It was so touching and knew we made the right move. And he was blessed to go through youth group and confirmation with Pastor Steve. And, in Sept. of 2018 Dallas married Becca Guyer. It was so appropriate because her parents were married at Avenue 30 year ago. Scott and I have loved the home bible studies at Avenue, we have helped with Vacation Bible School, Youth Group, and Scott absolutely loves fixing eggs for the Pancake breakfasts.

The home bible studies took my faith and reading the bible to a higher level which I am so thankful for. And I enjoyed getting to know other Avenue members and discussing our bible lessons each week. I depend on God's word daily. I've been learning to do my best and let God do the rest. "I can do all things through Christ who give me strength". When I start to worry, I try to turn it around quickly and fight the devil with God's word and repeat bible verses. Be anxious for NOTHING but in everything with prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God and the peace that Surpasses All Understanding shall Guard your Heart in CHRIST JESUS. He will guard our hearts – HE is More than Wonderful to me! He shows up every time!

There was a situation that took 13 years of praying and God took care of it in His time. Times like these keep you in the bible. Dallas is the Asst. Chief at Carlisle and every time the whistle blows, I am praying. When the pandemic hit, I started to worry because Scott is self-employed painter. And I thought no one will want him to come to their house – he'll be out of work. I couldn't see how this was going or how I could help it and I stopped myself and said God you've got this one! God hears us, sees us, loves us... Don't you know Scott was kept busy doing outside work! Every day my statement needs to be God you've got this!

So, I don't have one miraculous story of how God changed me. It's a daily story for me and I know nothing is impossible with God. I'm eternally grateful to Him for my family and Avenue Church. I love reading each one's story -you are all so inspiring to me. And I know for 2021 we need to tell that mountain just HOW BIG OUR GOD IS! And I'm looking forward to hearing all of us sing together in church and worshipping.

CONGRATULATIONS TO:

- **Gilbert and Joan Emory** who will be celebrating their **68th** anniversary on **January 31st**.

SYMPATHIES TO:

- Joan Wadman and family for the passing of Larry Wadman on Saturday, January 16, 2021. Larry joined Avenue on November 23, 2003.

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:

Marian
Sharon Brown
Bob Cage
Lydia Castro
Brittany and Baby Naomi
Jennifer Clarke
Pat Clearly
Jack & Denny Collins
Luisa & Billy Combs
Donna and Keith Coverdale
Julie Dally
Joanna Denney-Turner
Diane (not in congregation at Avenue)
Carolyn Evans
Fay Farissier
Ken Fechter
Charlie & Barbara Fleetwood
Chick Glanden
Bonnie Glenn
Dave Harris
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
Jennifer McNamara
Frank Mentusky
Erin Miller
Jennifer Hughes Miller
Orville Mills
Kathryn Avery Mitchell
Tiffany Mitchell
Stan Moody
Jason Neall
Alex Oliveras, Sr.
Alex Oliveras, Jr.
Adriel Oliveras and family
Alan Parker
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
Jon Zaimas
Betty Ziesel



Health Ministry



2021 New Year's Resolutions

RUNNING THE PANDEMIC MARATHON

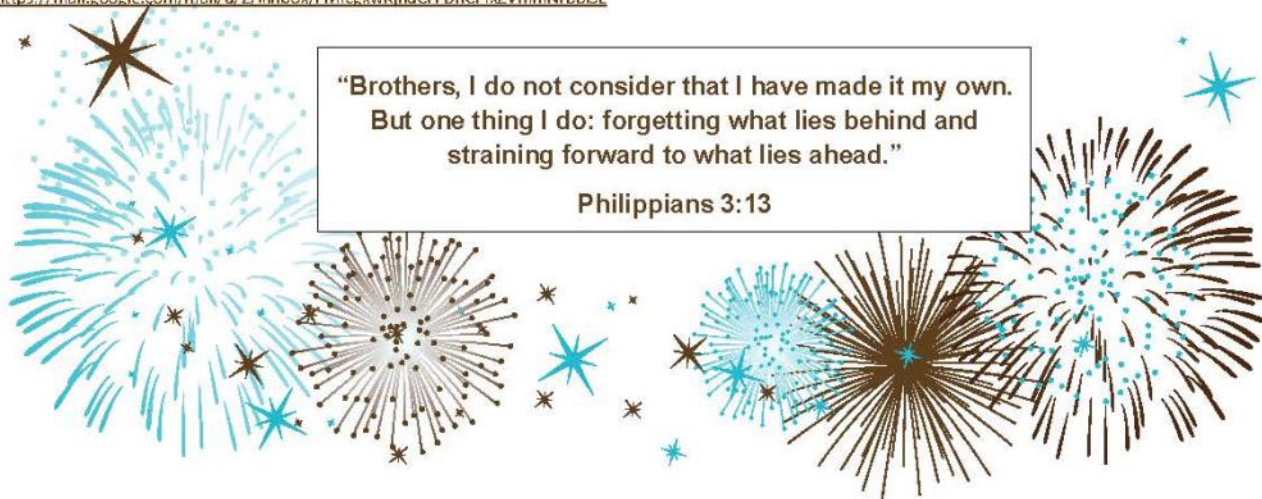
One of our New Year's resolution should be to help each other make it through this pandemic marathon. A well-known saying among marathoners is that "There are two halves to every marathon—the first 20 miles and the last 6.2." While not mathematically accurate, this saying is correct in that it takes as much effort to complete the first 20 miles as it does the last 6.2.

Below are specific recommendations for the "second half" of a marathon.

1. **Hydrate and refuel often.** Know what boosts our spiritual, emotional, and physical energy and we need to intentionally consume as much of that as possible right now.
2. **Stop at every aid station and get medical attention if needed.** Aid stations in a pandemic can be a phone or Zoom call with a friend or loved one, a walk around the block, meditation/prayer, or participating in an online offering that boosts our spiritual and emotional well-being. Create our own aid stations, being proactive, and spacing them more closely together. And if you do need to visit the medical tent because you are in pain, know that it is a sign of wisdom and strength to reach out for support from someone trained to help, such as a therapist, clergy person, or medical professional.
3. **Slow down and walk when necessary.** Listen to what your body, heart, and soul are telling you. Feeling exhausted? Slow down. Take a break. Learn to rest, not quit.
4. **Focus on short-term goals, rather than just the finish line.** Some runners make it their goal to just make it to the next aid station or mile marker. Others focus on running for two minutes and then walking for two minutes. Right now during COVID take a shower and get dressed every day. I applauded that goal. We are thrilled to read the good news about vaccines, and we so very much want the finish line to be just around the next corner. Right now, though, we need to focus on shorter-term goals and merely putting one foot in front of the other because letting our guard down now could risk not making it to the finish line or preventing others from not getting there.
5. **If you see another runner struggling, stop, and offer support.** Many people cheer for and help each other along the way. When others are struggling stop and walk with them. Offer encouraging words, it makes a difference.

This pandemic is an endurance event like no other we have experienced. We don't know exactly how much longer we have to go, and the second "half" is likely to be every bit as challenging as the first. So let's remember these marathon tips and do all we can to help each other get across the finish line, arm in arm, together.

<https://mail.google.com/mail/u/2/#inbox/FMfcgxwKindCFDhCPfxZVmhNnBBISL>



Facts about COVID-19 Vaccines

Updated Jan. 4, 2021

Now that there are authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines in the United States, accurate vaccine information is critical.

Can a COVID-19 vaccine make me sick with COVID-19?

No. None of the authorized and recommended COVID-19 vaccines or COVID-19 vaccines currently in development in the United States contain the live virus that causes COVID-19. This means that a COVID-19 vaccine cannot make you sick with COVID-19.

There are several different types of vaccines in development. All of them teach our immune systems how to recognize the virus that causes COVID-19. Sometimes this process can cause symptoms, such as fever. These symptoms are normal and are a sign that the body is building protection against the virus that causes COVID-19. It typically takes a few weeks for the body to build immunity (protection against the virus that causes COVID-19) after vaccination. That means it's possible a person could be infected with the virus that causes COVID-19 just before or just after vaccination and still get sick. This is because the vaccine has not had enough time to provide protection.

After getting a COVID-19 vaccine, will I test positive for COVID-19 on a viral test?

No. Neither the recently authorized and recommended vaccines nor the other COVID-19 vaccines currently in clinical trials in the United States can cause you to test positive on viral tests, which are used to see if you have a current infection.

If your body develops an immune response—the goal of vaccination—there is a possibility you may test positive on some antibody tests. Antibody tests indicate you had a previous infection and that you may have some level of protection against the virus. Experts are currently looking at how COVID-19 vaccination may affect antibody testing results.

If I have already had COVID-19 and recovered, do I still need to get vaccinated with a COVID-19 vaccine?

Yes. Due to the severe health risks associated with COVID-19 and the fact that re-infection with COVID-19 is possible, vaccine should be offered to you regardless of whether you already had COVID-19 infection. CDC is providing recommendations to federal, state, and local governments about who should be vaccinated first.

At this time, experts do not know how long someone is protected from getting sick again after recovering from COVID-19. The immunity someone gains from having an infection, called natural immunity, varies from person to person. Some early evidence suggests natural immunity may not last very long. We won't know how long immunity produced by vaccination lasts until we have more data on how well the vaccines work.

Both natural immunity and vaccine-induced immunity are important aspects of COVID-19 that experts are trying to learn more about, and CDC will keep the public informed as new evidence becomes available.

Will a COVID-19 vaccination protect me from getting sick with COVID-19?

Yes. COVID-19 vaccination works by teaching your immune system how to recognize and fight the virus that causes COVID-19, and this protects you from getting sick with COVID-19. Being protected from getting sick is important because even though many people with COVID-19 have only a mild illness, others may get a severe illness, have long-term health effects, or even die. There is no way to know how COVID-19 will affect you, even if you don't have an increased risk of developing severe complications. Learn more about how COVID-19 vaccines work.

Will a COVID-19 vaccine alter my DNA?

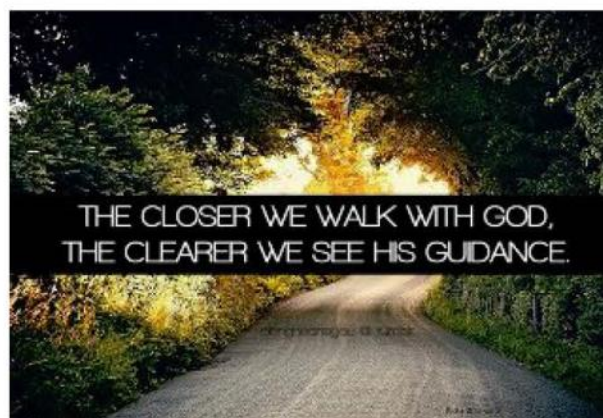
No. COVID-19 mRNA vaccines do not change or interact with your DNA in any way. Messenger RNA vaccines—also called mRNA vaccines—are the first COVID-19 vaccines authorized for use in the United States. mRNA vaccines teach our cells how to make a protein that triggers an immune response. The mRNA from a COVID-19 vaccine never enters the nucleus of the cell, which is where our DNA is kept. This means the mRNA cannot affect or interact with our DNA in any way. Instead, COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work with the body's natural defenses to safely develop immunity to disease. Learn more about how COVID-19 mRNA vaccines work. At the end of the process, our bodies have learned how to protect against future infection. That immune response and making antibodies is what protects us from getting infected if the real virus enters our bodies.

https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/vaccines/facts.html?CDC_AA_refVal=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.cdc.gov%2Fcoronavirus%2F2019-ncov%2Fvaccines%2Fvaccine-benefits%2Ffacts.html

Please go on the CDC site for further information about COVID-19 and the vaccine.

“And the Lord will guide you continually, and satisfy your desire with good things, and make your bones strong; like a spring of water, whose waters fail not.”

Isaiah 58:11



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 in various shades of blue and green.

**FUSION IS GOING
VIRTUAL**

**ZOOM MEETINGS
ARE COMING**

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