



AVENUE
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

The Midweek

Wednesday, August 18, 2021

A Pathway to Discipleship

Last week, I shared some basic definitions for discipleship and a disciple. A **disciple** is someone who is in the process of becoming like Jesus. **Discipleship** is the intentional process of becoming like Jesus Christ. The Church is to be in the disciple-making business. We are to be intentional in providing opportunities for worship, spiritual growth, and service. We see this as a pathway that looks like this:

Know (God) → Grow (In Christ) → Go (In the Spirit)

Everyone who is intentionally seeking to become a disciple will engage these three areas.

Know (God): They will be an active participant in growing their knowledge of who God is and what God has done for them. This is most clearly seen in worship. There are other areas where we grow in our knowledge of God.

Grow (In Christ): As we grow in our knowledge of God and what God has done for us in Jesus, we will desire to grow in our relationship with Christ. This means disciples will engage in individual spiritual practices that allow us to grow in our faith such as prayer and personal Bible Study. Disciples also participate in communal disciplines such as worship, prayer, study, and service.

Go (In the Spirit): Disciples are not just “book smart” through study, they put

the teachings of Jesus into action. A growing disciple at Avenue Church will “go,” empowered by the Holy Spirit to serve God’s people and to share the Good News in our world. Disciples seek to replicate themselves by inviting others on the pathway to discipleship.

The Discipleship Pathway at Avenue Church is a tool for everyone looking to intentionally grow in their faith and know what discipleship looks like. In the coming weeks and months, there will be opportunities to “Know, Grow, Go” for the entire congregation. This pathway is an exciting journey as it calls us to build our lives in the shape of Jesus and the Cross. I hope you will join us on the path!

Grace and Peace,



Pastor Steve

Avenue Church Family,

I have been overwhelmed and so very, very thankful for the generosity and love showed by this precious, loving Avenue Church family. Thank you for food, flowers, e-mails, calls, visits, prayers, equipment, and beautiful cards full of scripture and words of comfort. Please know how much they all meant. A big sincere thank you. *Beth Parker and family.*

A Time to Keep and a Time to Cast Away



The often quoted verses about time, in chapter three of the Book of Ecclesiastes, come to mind as I prepare to retire and leave this beloved Philadelphia Area. Throughout the past 13 years I have experienced many of the times that are listed in this litany of life's passages, among them: planting and plucking up, killing and healing, breaking down and building up, weeping and laughing, mourning and dancing, speaking and remaining silent.

At this moment, as my living room runneth over with cardboard cartons full of books and personal belongings, the words “a time to keep and a time to cast away” seem timely. There have been many trips to the dumpster and Goodwill, as I sort and discard things I no longer need.

I carefully pack tangible things I want to keep and bring to our new home in Virginia. However, there are non-tangibles—some to keep and some to cast away—that are more important now. I share them with you now.

Things I need to cast away include my disappointments and lack of wisdom at times, moments when people have been hurt because of my decisions. The need to protect the system was not always in sync with my heart. Nor was the interpersonal “grist” of disagreements, misunderstandings and compromises for the sake of peace. To those who have been wounded, I offer my sincere apologies.



The Johnson Family, from left: Gabriel, Peggy, Peter, Michael

I give these things to God, who “works all things together for good” in the midst of human frailty. As the hymn “This is a Day of New Beginnings” (UMH, #383) reminds me,

*Then let us, with the Spirit's daring,
step from the past, and leave behind
our disappointment, guilt and grieving,
seeking new paths, and sure to find.*

Casting away is a life-giving part of moving on. The things that I will keep are vastly more in number, and they will remain with me for the rest of my life:

- The memories of vital ministries, large and small.
- The faithful, sacrificial clergy and lay people, men and women, young and mature, gifted and diverse.
- The many, hard-won victories in the struggle for justice and inclusivity.
- The rich legacy of history and that “cloud of witnesses” who have been cheering us on from above.
- Christmas Eve candlelight services at Barratt’s Chapel every year.
- The outstanding music in our churches: choirs, pipe organs, pianos, praise bands, soloists, brass ensembles, drums, strings, harps, flutes, hand-bells.
- The amazing geographical diversity of this area: big cities, farmlands,

orchards, mountains, suburbs, ocean resorts, and even an island in the middle of the Chesapeake Bay.

- The rich cultural diversity of African American, European American, Latino/Latinx, Korean, Asian-Indian, Native American, Haitian, Pennsylvania Dutch, coal miners, watermen, and the Deaf (who are a culture unto themselves).
- The many who received their “call to ministry” at our ordination services, and the young people who found Christ for the first time at our camps, youth rallies and other events.
- The wonderful camping ministries that have modeled Christian community for people who may never come to our churches
- The life-changing mission trips to: South Africa with Mission of Peace; the Democratic Republic of the Congo; India; Haiti; Spirit Lake, North Dakota; and Red Bird Mission in Kentucky.
- The ever-faithful appointive and extended cabinet members, conference staff and administrative assistants who have worked and laughed and cried with me.
- The gift of deep conversations with ecumenical and interfaith partners in leadership.
- The multi-talented extension ministry pastors serving here and in places all over the globe.
- The dynamic colleges, universities and seminaries with their rich cultural and theological diversity.
- The church anniversaries, homecomings, building dedications, charterings and potluck dinners, especially with that strawberry Jello, cream cheese, pretzel salad!
- The generous and overwhelming expressions of love and farewells sent my way in recent months.
- My wonderful spouse, Michael, who served a total of 18 churches (part-time) in both conferences (appointed and interim) wherever there was a need. He wrote numerous liturgies and prayers for every occasion, taught many workshops and Mission U courses and helped others as a certified spiritual director.

**"THUS SAYS
THE LORD OF HOSTS,
RENDER TRUE
JUDGMENTS, SHOW
KINDNESS AND MERCY
TO ONE ANOTHER, DO
NOT OPPRESS THE
WIDOW, THE
FATHERLESS, THE
SOJOURNER, OR THE
POOR, AND LET NONE OF
YOU DEVISE EVIL
AGAINST ANOTHER IN
YOUR HEART."**

Zechariah 7:9-10



These are some of the many things I will keep. And as I remember them, I will give thanks to God for the profound blessings you have shared with me. As I was packing boxes in the attic the other day I found a box labeled "Election." In it were various memoirs of the day I became a bishop, July 17, 2008. Among the various letters of congratulation, pictures and programs was a little scrap of yellowed notebook paper with a scripture passage on it. I remember writing these words on my first day in the Philadelphia Episcopal Area on September 1, 2008. These words from Zechariah 7:9-10 were like a mandate from God for what I needed to do here:

"This is what the Lord Almighty says: administer true justice, show mercy and compassion to one another, do not oppress the widow or the fatherless, the alien or the poor. In your hearts do not think evil of each other."

I will keep these words in my heart and in my future life; and I leave them with you to follow as well. Never cast these words away, but keep them close always. And if you do these things, you will truly be the church that God intends and desires.

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 download and use our “Avenue Church DE” App on your smart phone

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.

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS: The Church Office is open Monday-Friday from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. We asked that you use the main entrance to access the office during business hours. All guest will need to buzz in on the intercom to be let in.

CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY DREAM TEAM: As we prepare for the Fall and the discipleship that is taking place in our congregation, we want to invite those who are passionate about children’s and family ministry to join our Dream Team. This team will spend time in prayer and dreaming about how to best disciple our children and make our families the primary place of discipleship. If you are interested in learning more, please email Pastor Steve at srlamotte@avenueumc.com.

SUMMER KICS: Summer KICS will take place during the 10:30 a.m. worship service for kids ages 4 through 4th grade (Kids 5th grade and up can remain in the sanctuary and worship as a family). KICS Kids will be released to Wesley Room prior to the sermon for a Bible Lesson and activities. They can be picked up in the Wesley Room after worship.

Kids will be socially distanced and must wear a mask while in KICS. Activities will be appropriate for the time and there will be at least two adults helping with KICS. If you have questions about SUMMER KICS, please email our Sunday School Superintendent, Patty Shockley at pws210@comcast.net. **Next class is on Sunday, August 22nd.**

SUNDAY SCHOOL VOLUNTEERS: We are looking for teachers/teacher assistants/youth helpers for Sunday School this year. All teaching materials and supplies are provided each week, all you will need is to bring your enthusiasm and desire to make a positive impact in the lives of the children at Avenue UMC. Sunday School is held during the 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Service and you can choose what week(s) you are available to help. We hope to have enough volunteers to ensure we have a pool of teachers/teacher assistants/youth helpers to serve on a rotating basis. If you feel led to help with the children's ministry, please contact us at: sundayschool@avenueumc.com. *“Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it”* (Prov. 22:6)

MILFORD LIONS CLUB: Milford Lions Club is collecting used eyeglasses. There is a donation box in the coat closet.

MEAL TRAIN AT AVENUE: Health Ministries is looking for folks in the Avenue family who like to cook and would like to prepare meals for those who are sick, who have had loved ones pass, or who have had new babies as a way to care for one another. We are using the website mealtrain.com to allow members to sign up. If you would like to receive emails when we need meals, you can email Sharon at sharonclendaniel@msn.com.

AVENUE PRESCHOOL: Avenue Preschool has an opening for a teacher in the beginners program. You must be certified in early childhood education to apply. The hours are Monday - Friday from 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m. with summers off. Please email your resume to office@avenuepreschool.org.

SERVICE OPPORTUNITY | CHURCH TREASURER: If you have gifts in finances and accounting, Avenue is looking for a new church treasurer to begin the upcoming year. The person must be knowledgeable in double entry accounting. There will be the opportunity to work with the outgoing Treasurer for training and assimilation. If you are interested, please contact Pastor Steve at srlamotte@avenueumc.com.

EVENING WORSHIP SERVICE SUSPENDED: The staff has made the decision to suspend the outdoor evening worship service, beginning this week. As our summer has progressed, participation at the evening outdoor service is lower than it was last July/August. We will continue to watch our local COVID numbers to determine whether or not to resume the worship service at a later date.

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS: AUGUST 29TH: We will have a special time Blessing the Backpacks, students, and teachers during the 9:00 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. services on August 29th. We encourage all our students, from the youngest to our seniors, to bring their backpacks as we pray for the upcoming school year. We will also recognize teachers and those who help make education possible. Come join us on August 29th.

PRESENTATION OF THIRD GRADE BIBLES (3RD AND 4TH GRADERS): Avenue will be presenting Bibles to our 3rd Graders on **Sunday, September 19th at the 10:00 a.m.** at the Fall Kick-Off worship service. We realize that, because of COVID, we were unable to present Bibles to last year's 3rd Graders. If you have a 3rd or 4th Grader who would like to receive a Bible, please contact the church office with their name, grade, and what school they are attending by emailing Kelly at churchoffice@avenueumc.com

SUNDAY SCHOOL BEGINS SEPTEMBER 12TH (REGISTER NOW): We are so excited to have Sunday School up and running for the Fall as we help our children grow as disciples of Jesus. We will be using a similar model to SUMMER KICS where all students will meet and learn together. As the class grows, we will create additional classes based on age. To be consistent with our policies, unvaccinated children (and adults) should wear a mask while in the building and in Sunday School.

To help us with numbers (and determine if we need additional classes) please pre-register by emailing Patty Schockley at sundayschool@avenueumc.com.

JOIN OUR RIVERWALK OUTREACH TEAM: Milford's Riverwalk is on for September 18th and Avenue will be there. We are looking for a team of people to help plan our booth and be present to reach out to the community. Our goal is to meet our neighbors and share information about Avenue with them. If you would like to be involved, please contact Pastor Steve at srlamotte@avenueumc.com

AVENUE FALL KICK-OFF IS SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 19TH: After a one-year absence because of COVID, we are planning a church-wide worship gathering and picnic on Sunday, September 19th under the tent in the lawn. Worship will begin at 10:00 a.m. and will be followed by a picnic outside. Mark your calendars and we'll provide more information in the coming weeks.

HELP FOR HAITI: If you're like us, you've been praying for the nation of Haiti since Saturday's devastating earthquake. There is the opportunity to give to UMCOR in order to support the relief efforts underway there. UMCOR stands for The United Methodist Committee on Relief. UMCOR is a long-standing agency providing excellent relief work and financial accountability. Local churches provide all the administrative costs of the organization, meaning 100% of your designated giving goes to where it is sent. UMCOR is often one of the first on the ground after a disaster and one of the last organizations to leave.

There are several ways that you can donate to UMCOR. You can go on our website and use our online giving option. Choose the "UMCOR-HAITI" fund in order to donate. You can also give to Avenue through a check with "UMCOR- HAITI" in the memo. Avenue will collect the funds and make the donation to UMCOR. You can also go to www.umcmission.org and give directly to UMCOR and the relief effort in Haiti.

DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES

SUMMER SUNDAY SCHOOL: Summer Sunday School for adults led by Rev. John Van Tine, retired plus others, is meeting in the Grier Room at 10:15 a.m. The study for August is "The Five Stages of Job." The lesson for August 22nd is "Angry Despair" based on Job 30: 16-23; August 29th is "Acceptance" based on Job 40:1-5, 41:1-10, 42:1-6. Please join us in the Grier Room for these exciting lessons.



Blueberries represent our 6th Fruit of the Spirit “Goodness”. We use blueberries because they are considered a super food packed with “Goodness”.

Blueberries are a good source of fiber to help with the digestive system. They also contain vitamins and minerals. Vitamin K1, is one vitamin and is used by the body for blood clotting. Vitamin C helps maintain healthy skin and a healthy immune systems. It also contains manganese that is used to help metabolize fats, protein and carboyhdrates in our body.

Blueberries are also rich in antioxidants such as anthocyanin and quercetin which help to protect against heart disease. Myricetin is another antioxidant that helps prevent cancer and diabetes.

Blueberries are a superfood representing “Goodness” and goodness is a super way we can demonstrate God’s love. <https://www.healthline.com/nutrition/foods/blueberries>

**“We know that in everything God works for good with those who love him, called according of his purpose.”
Romana 8:28**

**“Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven.”
Matthew 5:16**



ANNIVERSARY GREETING TO:

- **Harry & Carolyn Humes** who will celebrate their **61st** anniversary on **August 27th**

PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:

- Those affected by the COVID-19, Medical Staff, and distributing the vaccine.
- Our local, national, and world leaders
- Our District Superintendent (Rev. Joseph Archie), Bishop Peggy Johnson, and The United Methodist Church
- The Pastors, Staff, and Leadership of Avenue United Methodist Church
- Pray for Haiti as they recover from Saturday's earthquake.
- Pray for the people of Afghanistan.

Prayers for the Fusion Mission Team as they serve this week at Embrace Family Camp in Pennsylvania: Karla Carlisle, Hannah Carlisle, Lilly Carlisle, Ed Evan, Will Evans, Braden O'Brien and Aiden Wyatt.

PRAYER REQUEST:

Frank & Frances Beebe	Justin	Racheal Simesak
Brenda Beissel	Linda Kemp	Gary Simpson
Bob Cage	Doris Koon	Linda Singleton
Charlene Johnson Cannon	Rhoda & Greg Kurz	Samuel Smith
Jack & Denny Collins	Jean Layton	Dave Stratton
Luisa & Billy Combs	Jean Layton's Grandson	Joan Wadman
Lauren Connell	Nancy Lee	Lloyd Webb
Susan Cooper	Brittany Poore Little	TJ Webb
Linda Cottrill	Jack & Zelda McDuff	Betty Ziesel
Craig	Reagan McGovern	
Rick Crump	Sonny Meck	
Sandy Culotta	Tiffany Medlin	
Julie Dally	Frank Mentusky	
Joanna Denney-Turner	Susie Miller	
Michael Dougherty	Orville Mills	
William Ernst	Kathryn Avery Mitchell	
Ken Fechter	Tiffany Mitchell	
Charlie & Barbara	Stan Moody	
Fleetwood	Susan Morgan	
Jayne Frank	Jason Neall	
Gail & Jeffrey	Ariel Ownes	
Alina Guido	Laurel Pastor	
Matt Hall	Millie Remick	
Al Hanna	Roy Rigby	
Dave Harris	Dick Roberts	
Beverly Harrison	Lorna Rosella Rulona	
Cindy Horsman	Phil Saint	
Karl Isele	Richard Sapp	
Ron Ivory	Alice Sellers	
Dean Johnson	Roland Simms	