



## *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, October 13, 2021*

### **What is the Testimony of Our Witness**

In March 2021, a Gallup poll showed that 47% of Americans hold “membership to a church, synagogue, or mosque.” This is down from 50% in 1999 and the lowest number in the eight decades that Gallup has been keeping track of such things. Just for comparison, in 1937, 73% of Americans were members of a church, synagogue, or mosque. This number remained steady until the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

Why are people less likely to attend and join a church today than they did previously? I’ve heard a lot of opinions on this (travel sports seem to be the primary culprit, according to many), and there is a lot of solid research done on the subject. One of the fundamental challenges is considering what we can do about it in our context here in Milford.

I recently heard Rev. Tara Beth Leach, the pastor at Christ Church of Oak Brook (Chicago), speak on the decline of the American Church. She said that our tendency within the Church was to “*point our fingers at all the things of the world rather than look at our witness.*” Ouch! I think she has an excellent point. We can be quick to point at travel teams, schedules, politics, the media, and all sorts of other reasons for the decline of the Church without ever examining and looking at the deficiencies in our witness. What about our witness (and the witness of our churches) invites and inspires people to align themselves with the Church, and more importantly, to Christ?

Rather than pointing our fingers at the world, let us take time to examine our

witness. Do people see Jesus in our words and deeds? Do they experience the sacrificial love that puts others ahead of their own beliefs and preferences? Do people see us serving those around us in the way that Jesus washed his disciple's feet? Are our relationships being restored? Do we live with joy and gratitude because of the salvation we've received? These are just some of the questions I wrote down while listening to Rev. Leach's sermon as I thought about my witness.

When our lives testify to the power of God and people see the fruit of the spirit, Avenue church will begin to fully live into our calling as a church. Let us seek to live as witnesses who point others to Christ.

Sow Much Love,

*Pastor Steve*

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## Masks Required for Unvaccinated Persons

We have received some questions over the last couple of weeks about masks and participation at Avenue. Over the course of the pandemic, we have worked diligently to provide a safe space for people to come and to worship. This has meant following the guidelines of DPH and the CDC. In some cases, we have taken extra steps, such as installing ultraviolet light filters on our air handlers that kill viruses. While the State of Emergency has been lifted, Avenue is still committed to ensuring the safest gatherings we can. As we head into Fall, flu season is just around the corner. This means:

- Masks are *required for all unvaccinated persons* at Avenue Church. This applies on Sunday morning worship and coming into the building during the week for any event.
- We are following our school district when it comes to children and youth. This means that all children who are unvaccinated must also wear masks. These masks should be worn in worship and Sunday School.
- We continue to encourage the practice of social distancing. We should not assume that someone else wants a handshake or a hug.
- Hand Sanitizer stations are throughout the building. We invite you to use them as needed.

These procedures are not in place because of fear, but out of love for our neighbor. When we wear a mask, it is not so much to protect ourselves but to protect those around us. As Christians, we give up our individual preferences and replace them with care and concern for others out of the sacrificial love that Jesus showed each of us. We thank you for your continued diligence as we continue to learn how to live in Christian community during this season of the pandemic.

Dear Avenue Church Family,

September 28, 2021

We thank our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ for the abundant blessings we continue to receive, even during the challenges we face as a nation, community, church, and individuals. One specific blessing we wish to recognize is our church staff, led by Pastor Steve. We have seen our church begin to reopen ministries, including our outreach, music, and children's programs. Most recently we enjoyed gathering as a church family for our Fall Kick Off outside worship service. These would not be possible without the entire staff of Avenue.

October is typically the month that we take the opportunity to recognize and demonstrate our appreciation to our pastor(s). Like last year, we wish to use October to express our gratitude to our entire staff: Pastor Steve, Kevin, Dan, Kelly, and Curtis.

We will have a basket in our church Fellowship Foyer during October for cards you may wish to give as an expression of thankfulness.

Additionally, if you wish to provide a personal gift of appreciation to any of our individual staff members, please feel free to do so directly. You may also wish to make a monetary Love Gift that will be shared by our staff.

For the Love Gift to be tax-free to our staff members, IRS rules state you cannot claim it as a tax deduction. For this reason, your Love Gift Offering will not appear as a contribution on your financial statement from Avenue Church. Any of the following methods can accomplish gifts of appreciation:

- You can deliver your gift to the church office
- You can mail your gift to: 20 N. Church St. Milford, DE 19963
- You can give online through the red "give" button on our homepage (Choose the fund "Staff Appreciation 2021")
- You can download and use our "Avenue Church DE" App on your smartphone

If you are planning to offer a monetary gift of appreciation, please do so by **October 29<sup>th</sup>** so we can distribute your gifts to the staff on the final Sunday of October. Thanks for your continued support and prayers for the ministries at Avenue.

With gratitude,



Lance Wyatt

Staff Parish Relations Committee Chair

## 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](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 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 by contacting Dan Holt, our *Pastor of Congregational Care*. You can email Pastor Dan directly at [dholt@avenueumc.com](mailto:dholt@avenueumc.com).

**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.

**AVENUE T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE FOR PURCHASE:** We have super soft T-Shirts with the Avenue logo on them available for purchase in the church office. We have adult sizes available that range from S-XXL. Each shirt is \$10. Stop by the office during the week, or email [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com) to reserve your shirt.

**CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING:** There will be a Church Council meeting on **Thursday, October 21<sup>st</sup> at 6:30 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. The goal of this meeting will be Charge Conference preparations, which include approving the 2022 Budget, Pastor's Compensation, and a few other items requiring Council approval. If you have something for the agenda, please email Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com).

**CHARGE CONFERENCE:** Our yearly Charge Conference meeting will be held on **Sunday, October 24<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. This gathering is a time to worship and celebrate what God has done in our congregation, as well as time to focus on some of the business of the church. This will be our first opportunity to meet our new District Superintendent, The Rev. Joseph Archie. Charge Conference is open to anyone, but you must be a member of Avenue to vote. Appointed leaders of Avenue should make every effort to attend. Please contact Pastor Steve with any questions regarding Charge Conference.

**CONFIRMATION 2022 | A FIRM FOUNDATION:** We are calling out to all 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students as we prepare to begin a new year of Confirmation Classes. Confirmation is a journey for 7<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> grade students to explore what it means to be a Christian and to have the opportunity to claim their faith on their own and becoming a member of Avenue United Methodist Church.

**Classes will begin in November** and we will meet at least once a month on Sundays at 5:00 p.m. Confirmation students are expected to attend all classes (there is some grace) and be a

regular participant in worship. Students will have some work to do during the process, and we'll have a good time while we are at it. Students will be confirmed on June 5, 2022, which is Pentecost Sunday.

Please email Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com) to register for Confirmation Class 2022.

**SUNDAY SCHOOL:** 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 register by emailing Patty Shockley at [sundayschool@avenueumc.com](mailto:sundayschool@avenueumc.com). You can also register at <https://bit.ly/3BNpaYQ>.

**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. If you would like to receive emails when we need meals, you can email Sharon at [sharonclendaniel@msn.com](mailto:sharonclendaniel@msn.com) or call at (302) 390-6368.

**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](mailto:office@avenuepreschool.org).

**MILFORD COMMUNITY PANTRY:** We will open at **11:00 a.m. and close at 2:00 p.m. on Tuesday and Thursdays**. We have not been busy on Fridays so we will see if the Thursday works for more folks than Friday. We are so appreciative of the help we get from everyone at Avenue; help with food, money and volunteer hours.

Thank you for all the support you give The Milford Community Pantry. Some of you ask what our needs are and right now they are: cereal, peanut butter and size 6 diapers (we have plenty of all the other sizes). **Thank you for the paper bags but right now we have plenty. We do need plastic newspaper bags.**

**HOLIDAY FAIR AND HOW CAN YOU HELP:** Looking for donations: China, Crystal, Framed Art, Seasonal and Home Décor, Crafts, Jewelry, Gently used & new Holiday gift items.

The days and hours for dropping off items to sell are:

Saturday, October 16<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.

Monday, October 18<sup>th</sup> - Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

The Bake Sale will also return and Bonnie Carmine is heading up the sale. She will also be



asking for baked goods.

Anyone who would like to volunteer please show up on any of the collection days or the sale days Friday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> (1:00 p.m. – 7:00 p.m.) and Saturday October 23<sup>rd</sup> (8:30 a.m. – 3:00 p.m and cleaned up afterwards).

For information contact:

Sandy Culotta — [swculotta@gmail.com](mailto:swculotta@gmail.com) or (302) 258-5787

Judy Struck — [judystruck@comcast.net](mailto:judystruck@comcast.net) or (609) 319-8082

**NEW PEW BIBLES:** Scripture and the oral tradition of reading Scripture in Christian worship has been around since the early church of the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> centuries. United Methodists share with other Christians the conviction that Scripture is the primary source and standard for Christian doctrine. **Through Scripture the living Christ meets us in the experience of redeeming grace.** We are convinced that Jesus Christ is the living Word of God in our midst whom we trust in life and death. The biblical authors, illumined by the Holy Spirit, bear witness that in Christ the world is reconciled to God. The Bible bears authentic testimony to God's self-disclosure in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ as well as in God's work of creation, in the pilgrimage of Israel, and in the Holy Spirit's ongoing activity in human history. The Bible is sacred canon for Christian people, formally acknowledged as such by historic ecumenical councils of the church. Our doctrinal standards identify as canonical thirty-nine books of the Old Testament and the twenty-seven books of the New Testament.<sup>1</sup>

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Over the past two years, Pastor Steve has been encouraging us to open and read our Bibles in worship. Do not just read the words on the screens, but fully immerse ourselves in the text of the printed Word. The translation of the pew Bibles over the past 30 years has been the Revised Standard Version [RSV], but the translation that Avenue Church has been orally reading for the past 15 years has been the New Revised Standard Version [NRSV]. In an effort to bring the printed pew Bible in line with the oral tradition of Avenue Church, we need your support and help. The Pastoral Staff is looking to replace the pew Bibles with the NRSV. If you would like to help with this, please contact Kevin Chamberlain. The total project will cost \$1,500 (\$10.50 each).

<sup>1</sup> The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church 2016. Copyright 2016 by The United Methodist Publishing House. Used by permission.

**UMW—UPDATES:** Avenue United Methodist Women want to **Thank you** everyone for the tremendous response in collecting items for **UMCOR Hygiene Kits**. We have more than expected and we know that the people going through floods, hurricanes and other disasters will use them and be grateful for them. We are not quite finished yet. We need to “properly” assemble them according to UMCOR directions to make sure that they are acceptable. On **Saturday, November 6<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 a.m. to noon we will be working on the kits.** Everyone is invited to participate in this hand-on activity in Fellowship Hall. Just show up!

There will be **two United Methodist Women** circle meetings this month. Esther Circle will meet on **Wednesday, October 13<sup>th</sup> at 7:00 p.m. in Fellowship Hall** and Sarah Circle will meet on **Wednesday, October 20<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m. at the Century Club**. If you think you might be interested in being part of a mission minded group of women, please plan to come to

## **DISCIPLESHIP OPPORTUNITIES**

**SUNSHINE BIBLE CLASS:** The Sunshine Bible Class for adults led by Rev. John Van Tine, retired, is meeting in the Grier Room at 10:15 a.m. Our study for October is “Into the Future.” The lesson for October 17<sup>th</sup> lesson is “The Church as a Discerning Body” based on Matthew 16:13-19; October 24<sup>th</sup> lesson is “The Need for Spiritual Renewal” based on Revelation 3:1-6, 14-20; and October 31<sup>st</sup> lesson is “Covenant Renewal” based on Deuteronomy 29:10-29. Plan to join us in the Grier Room for these exciting lessons.

**SISTERS BIBLE STUDY:** We will continue our study of Elijah with Priscilla Shirer on **October 19<sup>th</sup>**. Join us and bring a friend. Study begins at 10:00 a.m. in the Grier Room, so please be a few minutes early.



Flu season is upon us again. Please get your flu vaccine and remember the difference between a cold and the flu!



<https://www.cdc.gov/flu/symptoms/coldflu.htm>

## Emergency Warning Signs of Flu

### In children

- Fast breathing or trouble breathing
- Bluish lips or face
- Ribs pulling in with each breath
- Chest pain
- Severe muscle pain (child refuses to walk)
- Dehydration (no urine for 8 hours, dry mouth, no tears when crying)
- Not alert or interacting when awake
- Seizures
- Fever above 104°F
- In children less than 12 weeks, any fever
- Fever or cough that improve but then return or worsen
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions

### In adults

- Difficulty breathing or shortness of breath
- Persistent dizziness, confusion, inability to arouse
- Seizures
- Not urinating
- Severe muscle pain
- Severe weakness or unsteadiness
- Fever or cough that improve but then return or worsen
- Worsening of chronic medical conditions

**“My son, be attentive to my words; incline your ear to my sayings. Let them not escape from your sight; keep them within your heart. For they are life to him who finds them and healing to all his flesh.”**

**Proverbs 4:20-22**



# *Thanksgiving Blessings*

You can *bless a family*  
in our church or community  
this year with a complete meal  
for Thanksgiving.

Our GOAL for 2021 is 85 Thanksgiving meals.

Here are 3 different ways you can donate:

\$20 (turkey)

\$30 (non-perishable items)

\$50 (complete meal)

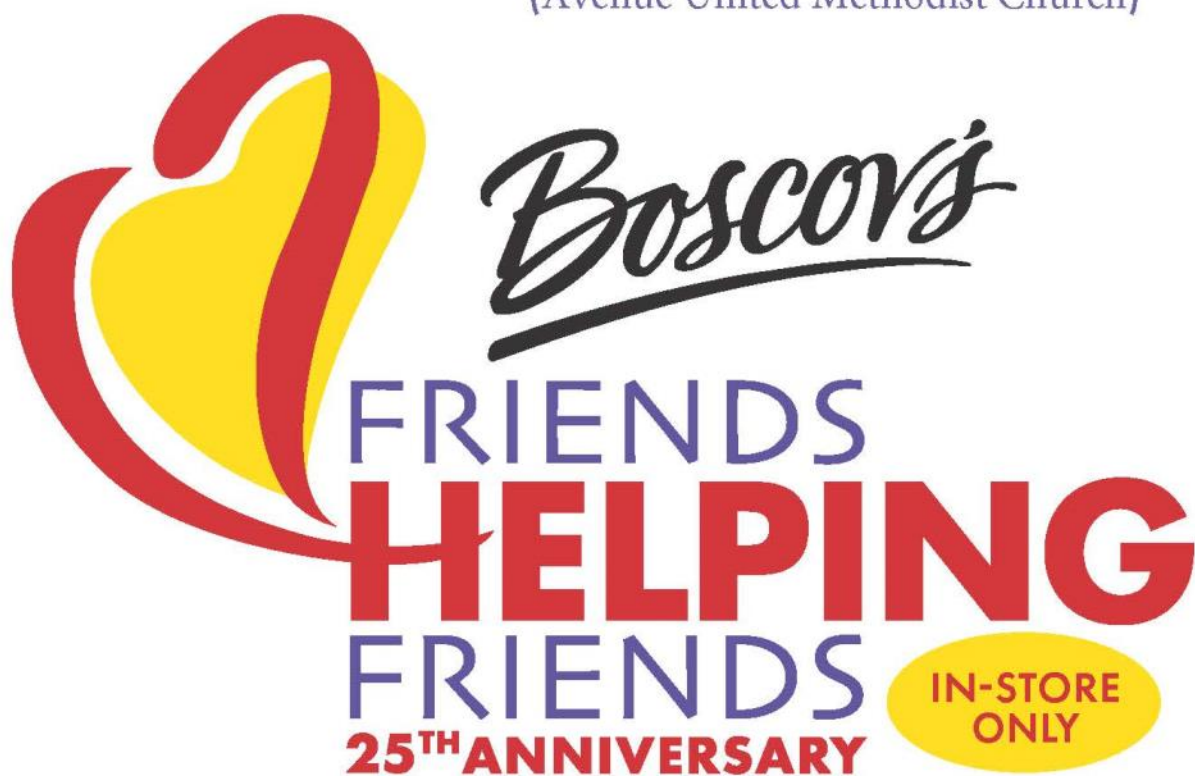
Simply mark a check or an envelope  
“Thanksgiving Blessings” or designate donation.

Funding is needed by

Sunday, November 21<sup>st</sup>



**HELP SUPPORT** BSA Troop 186 - Milford, DE  
(Avenue United Methodist Church)



**ONE DAY ONLY - OCTOBER 20, 2021**  
**SHOP 8AM - 11PM**

.....

**DONATE \$5 AND ENJOY:**

- **25% OFF** DISCOUNT SHOPPING PASS
- **REGISTER TO WIN** A \$100 BOSCOV'S GIFT CARD  
At every Boscov's store

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**100% OF YOUR DONATION GOES TO OUR ORGANIZATION**

For Shopping Passes or information, contact:

**Sharon Collins (302) 242-6310**

For more details visit [boscovs.com/friendshelpingfriends](https://www.boscovs.com/friendshelpingfriends)



# Miracle on Bethlehem Street

*A Musical for All Ages*

**OPEN TO THE COMMUNITY**

**Multi-generational participation:**

**Families with children . . .**

**youth . . . single adults . . . senior adults . . .**

**ONLY 4 REHEARSALS**

**Learn your music at home with mp3 files**

**PRESENTATION**

**Sunday, December, 12<sup>th</sup> at 4:00PM**

**For more information, contact Kevin Chamberlain [KBChamberlain@avenueumc.com](mailto:KBChamberlain@avenueumc.com)**





## **AVENUE METHODIST HOLIDAY FAIR**

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR!**

**Friday, October 22<sup>nd</sup> from 2 p.m. – 7 p.m.  
(\$1 early bird fee)**

**Saturday, October 23<sup>rd</sup> from 9 a.m. – 3 p.m.**

China, Crystal, Framed Art,  
Baked Goods, Amish Sharp Cheese,  
Seasonal and Home Décor,  
Crafts, Jewelry,  
Gently used & new Holiday  
gift items.



**ANNIVERSARY GREETING TO:**

- **Charlie and Barbara Fleetwood** who will celebrate their **52<sup>nd</sup>** anniversary on **October 18<sup>th</sup>**.

**CONGRATULATIONS TO:**

- Tim and Kally Dennison on the birth of their daughter, Hayden Jean Dennison on September 30, 2021.

**SMYPATHIES TO:**

- The Burd family on the passing of Brian Burd on October 5, 2021.

**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 LaTrelle Easterling, and The United Methodist Church.
- The Pastors, Staff, and Leadership of Avenue United Methodist Church.
- Pray for Haiti as they recover from Saturday (8/21) earthquake.
- Pray for the people of Afghanistan.

**PRAYER REQUEST:**

Rachel Ballard	Tom Glenn	Jean Murphy
Frank & Frances Beebe	Alina Guido	Jason Neall
Brenda Beissel	Matt Hall	Larry Passwaters
Dale Brandon	Al Hanna	Laurel Pastor
Bob Cage	Dave Harris	Patty R
Charlene Johnson Cannon	Beverly Harrison	Millie Remick
Lydia Castro	Karl Isele	Roy Rigby
Adriel Castro and family	Ron Ivory	Dick Roberts
Alex Castro and family	David Johnson	Lorna Rosella Rulona
Mary Charnick	Dean Johnson	Phil Saint
Jack & Denny Collins	Justin	Richard Sapp
Luisa & Billy Combs	Linda Kemp	Alice Sellers
Lauren Connell	Doris Koon	Roland Simms
Susan Cooper	Rhoda & Greg Kurz	Racheal Simesak
Craig	Jean Layton	Gary Simpson
Rick Crump	Jean Layton's Grandson	Linda Singleton
Julie Dally	Nancy Lee	Samuel Smith
Joanna Denney-Turner	Brittany Poore Little	Jacqueline Stokes
Michael Dougherty	Jack & Zelda McDuff	Dave Stratton
William Ernst	Reagan McGovern	Tamara
Ken Fechter	Donna Meck	Brenda Thompson
Charlie & Barbara	Sonny Meck	Joan Wadman
Fleetwood	Tiffany Medlin	TJ Webb
Jayne Frank	Megan	Josh Willey
Jason, Joanna & Garrett	Susie Miller	Dorothy Yates
Franklin	Orville Mills	Betty Ziesel
Todd French	Stan Moody	
Gail & Jeffrey	Susan Morgan	