



## *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, December 15, 2021*

### **Who Is Your One?**

We are just over a week away from our first Christmas Eve service. I'll admit, after having to go virtual last year for Christmas Eve, I am excited to gather with the Avenue community to celebrate and worship together.

Earlier this month, Avenue sent out 10,000 postcards to the Milford community and engaged in advertising our Christmas Eve services on social media. There are statistics that show that engaging in a mailing campaign has a low return, though historically, Avenue has had a good return. While a postcard or social media post are a good way to get our name, website, or worship services times out into the community, it is an impersonal way to invite people to church.

What should we do?

The most effective way to bring people to church is to invite our friends and family members who have no church. Lifeway Research had a statistic out a while back that said "71% of people said they would go to church with a trusted friend or family member." Seventy-one percent! Just like we follow the recommendations of family and friends when it comes to finding a new restaurant or plumber, we listen when a friend tells us about their church.

Since stores started playing Christmas music back in October, our friends and neighbors have heard about silver bells, jingle bells, and flying reindeer. They have also heard about drummer boys worshipping Jesus, about angels declaring

good news to shepherds, and that there is joy in the world. People's hearts and minds are primed and open to come to a Christmas Eve service and to hear about the HOPE that we have in Jesus.

Who is your one? Who are the family members and friends that you have who do not have a church that you could invite to a Christmas Eve service? When you do invite them, remember to meet them in the parking lot or the door so they don't have to walk in alone. Show them where the restrooms are. Help them with their communion cups or candles. When the service ends, thank them for coming and invite them back again for Sunday worship.

We cannot keep the good news about Christmas to ourselves. Let us make every effort to share God's love to everyone we meet. I look forward to seeing you and your friends on Christmas Eve!

Sow Much Love,

*Pastor Steve*

## **Staff Announcement: Please Welcome Pastor Neyda Albarran**



The Staff-Parish Relations Committee of Avenue Church is excited to announce the hiring of Rev. Neyda Albarran as our new Pastor of Discipleship. Pastor Neyda will be joining our team on January 2, 2021.

Pastor Neyda is a third-generation pastor. Her father and grandfather are United Methodist pastors. Neyda was ordained in The Wesleyan Church in 2005. She has been in ministry since 1992 and has served throughout the church as an Associate Pastor, Outreach Pastor, and Youth Pastor. Most recently, she was the Youth Pastor at First United Methodist Church in Winter Garden, Florida.

We are excited to add Pastor Neyda to our team at Avenue because we believe that she will be a great fit with our current staff and has gifts and talents to help take the ministries of Avenue to another level. Pastor Neyda is a gifted communicator. She loves to teach and brings energy and creativity into the spaces she inhabits. Pastor Neyda is fully bilingual in Spanish and English as her family is from Puerto Rico. This will be a great asset for our church as our community continues to have a growing Latino/a population.

As an Associate Pastor at Avenue, Pastor Neyda's time will be focused on developing and growing the discipleship ministries of our church. She will be helping people get connected to our Discipleship Pathway and to train laity to be disciple-makers inside and outside of the church.

Pastor Neyda has an 11 year-old son, Ian, who will be part of the Avenue family. Neyda's first sermon at Avenue will be January 23, 2022. If you would like to send a welcome note or Christmas card, please put it in the basket located on the Foyer table.

# THIS DECEMBER AT AVENUE CHURCH

12/5 **Family Advent Night** (5:00 p.m.)

12/12 **Miracle on Bethlehem Street** (4:00 p.m.)

12/16 **Blue Christmas Service** (6:30 p.m.)

12/24 **Lessons and Carols** (10:30 a.m.)

12/26 **Combined Worship** (10:00 a.m.)

# CHRISTMAS EVE AT AVENUE CHURCH

12/23 **Traditional Christmas Eve Worship** (6:30 p.m.)

12/24 **Traditional Christmas Eve Worship** (2:30 & 9:00 p.m.)

12/24 **Contemporary Christmas Eve Worship** (4:30 & 7:00 p.m.)

LET THE WEARY WORLD REJOICE  
AT THE BIRTH OF OUR SAVIOR!



## 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).

**TAI CHI:** Tai Chi is a great way to build up core strength and balance with decreased stress on joints. Please join us **Tuesday’s and Thursday’s at 9:00 a.m.—10:00 a.m. in Fellowship Hall**. No fees!

**MAKE YOUR CHRISTMAS PLANS AT AVENUE:** We are thinking about Advent and Christmas at Avenue and want you to join in during these special times of worship, study, and fellowship. Be sure to mark your calendars to get involved!

**December 16<sup>th</sup> - Blue Christmas Service at 6:30 p.m.**

- \* Not everyone is happy during the holidays. Many are grieving. A Blue Christmas Service is a time to acknowledge loss and grief amidst the holidays.

**December 23<sup>rd</sup> - Traditional Christmas Eve at 6:30 p.m.**

- \* Can’t make worship on the 24<sup>th</sup>? Experience Christmas Eve at Avenue a day early!

**December 24<sup>th</sup>— Traditional Christmas Eve at 2:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.**

**Contemporary Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m. and 6:30 p.m.**

- \* We have a great day of worship planned on Christmas Eve. Join us for Lessons in Carols at 10:30 a.m. when we hear the Christmas story through the Scriptures and music of our faith. In the afternoon and evening Candles, Carols, and Communion make this sacred night of worship meaningful as we celebrate the birth of our Savior.

**December 26<sup>th</sup>— Combined Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.**

- \* We will be meeting at 10:00 a.m. on December 26<sup>th</sup> for a combined worship service in the sanctuary. There will only be one service. Pastor Dan Holt will be leading the service as we continue into the season of Christmas. We look forward to worshipping with you.

**January 2<sup>nd</sup>—Combined Worship Service**

- \* We will also be meeting at 10:00 a.m. in the sanctuary on January 2, 2022. Pastor Steve will be leading *Wesley’s Covenant Renewal Service* as we recommit our lives to following Jesus in the new year. Start your year off on a good foot by joining us for worship.

**NEW MEMBERS CLASS** will be held on **Sunday, January 16<sup>th</sup> from 11:45 a.m.—1:00 p.m.** in the Grier Room. This class is for those interested in learning more about Avenue Church, what it means to live as a Christian through the church, and to pursue becoming a member of

Avenue. Please RSVP by emailing Kelly at [churchoffice@avenueumc.com](mailto:churchoffice@avenueumc.com).

**WELCOMING AND CONNECTING WITH THE CONNECTION TEAM:** Last week, we unveiled a new ministry team at Avenue Church. The Connection Team serves to welcome guest and attenders and assist them in getting connected to the ministries of Avenue Church. Over the last several months, we have been working to develop a dedicated space for the Connection Team. That space is the newly renovated stone wall with the TV's in the foyer. This will be space where people can ask questions, fill out a connect card, and learn more about the ministries of the church.

If you would like to participate in the Connection Team, you can contact Karen Schneider at [careercounselorde@gmail.com](mailto:careercounselorde@gmail.com).

**COFFEE NOW IN FELLOWSHIP HALL:** We are excited to be able to offer coffee, tea, and hot chocolate on Sunday mornings. You can find these refreshments in Fellowship Hall. We are thankful for Donna Hill and her service to Avenue in providing this act of hospitality each week.

**JOB OPENINGS - NURSERY WORKERS:** We are looking to re-open our nursery and are in need of additional nursery attendants. Interested parties must be available on Sundays from 8:30 a.m. through Noon. Attendants must complete a background check. CPR certification is recommended. This is a paid position. Please email your resume and a cover letter to [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com)

**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 January** 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.

**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.

**MILFORD COMMUNITY PANTRY:** The holiday season is upon us. As you shop on Amazon you can help the Milford Community Pantry. Use [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) and select your charity. Enter Milford Community Pantry, Milford, DE and then everything you shop through Amazon Smile we will receive a small credit. It is easy and cost you nothing. We receive a check and are very grateful. True is true ... ***Remember the reason for the season.*** No matter where you shop

we celebrate the gift of Jesus. **The food pantry needs cereal.**

**UNITED METHODIST WOMEN (UMW) REQUEST:** The eyesight issues in the Congo (DRC) are very serious. Often poor eyesight is caused by lack of clean water and lack of medical attention. Jonathan and Donna Baker, retired missionaries to DRC, are going back to the Congo to help those in need and asked for our support. We have glasses!! They have shipped 850 sunglasses and reading glasses to us, but we need cloth, soft pouches/cases to protect the glasses during shipping and later. **PLEASE help make them or buy them** and put in container in office. We need these the first week in January so please look for them now. Some ladies are making pouches with a tie string top, some secured by Velcro piece and others just the traditional cases. Please consider helping us with this. UMW also needs a few hard backed suitcases, preferably large ones to protect the glasses during the flight. Please contact Beth Parker at [bparke42@comcast.net](mailto:bparke42@comcast.net) if you can help. Thank you.

**Sarah Circle will be meeting at Sharon Brown's residence on December 17<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 a.m. Please bring a covered dish.**

**CHRISMON- BRING JOY TO CHILDREN THIS CHRISTMAS:** As for many years, children of The Milford School District are the recipients of your generous gifts for Christmas. Due to this year's societal circumstances, we are asking for Monetary Donations. Gift cards will be purchased for children. Last year you provided for 152 children – 63 families and a few adults. In addition, at the request of Pastor Steve hats and gloves for children, women or men will gladly be accepted, unwrapped and may be placed beneath the Sanctuary Chrismon Tree.

**UNITED METHODIST MEN PANCAKE BREAKFAST—** United Methodist Men are proud to serve their first pancake breakfast in over a year. Mark your calendars for **January 16<sup>th</sup>**. This year you will be able to dine in or carry out. Donations will be very much appreciated.

## **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 December is "Wait for It." The lesson for December 19<sup>th</sup> lesson is "Waiting for Prophecy to Be Fulfilled" based on Luke 2:25-38; and December 26<sup>th</sup> lesson is "Jesus is Waiting" based on Revelation 3:20-4:11. Plan to join us in the Grier Room for these exciting lessons.

**SISTERS BIBLE STUDY:** We start a new study "Angels" by David Jeremiah in January. Join us and bring a friend. We will meet on **January 4<sup>th</sup>** at 10:00 a.m. in the Grier Room, so please be a few minutes early.

**CODE PURPLE:** CODE PURPLE provides shelter for homeless men and women during the winter months. This will be the fifth year that Avenue has been a CODE PURPLE site for homeless men in the Milford area. Avenue provides shelter in the Wesley Room from December 1<sup>st</sup> through March 15<sup>th</sup>. We desperately need male volunteers to be overnight host at Avenue Church. Each shift is from 8:15 p.m. until 7:00 a.m. Arrangements can be made in the morning if you need to leave earlier than 7:00 a.m. If you are interested in serving, please contact Tom Chilton at [chilto@aol.com](mailto:chilto@aol.com)

**SMALL GROUPS—ADVENT STUDY:** Rev. John Van Tine, Retired, will continue to lead an Advent Study on Wednesday, December 15, 2021, in the Holzmueller Room at 6:30 p.m. The study is “The Heart That Grew Three Sizes: Finding Faith in the Story of the Grinch.” This study will help you rediscover and reinvigorate your Christian faith this Advent and Christmas season and look at this familiar classic through the lens of faith. All are welcomed.



## Our Lord provides us comfort...

*Jesus wept.*

**John 11:35**

It's a repeated reminder in the counseling room.... To stay healthy, we need to exercise both. Because God gave us our emotions, we feel, and because we live in a physical world, we feel attachment to the people and the things in our life experience. This is not wrong or inappropriate, but understandable. Remember, God did not create us as robots, but flesh and blood, with feelings. That said, it is healthy to make emotional attachments to those we connect with in this brief life; we give and we receive through our connections; we love and are loved. We gain from our connections and we lose when our connections are no more. It is as if a part of us is missing when we lose that special person from our lives.

A picture that often comes to mind with loss is that of a hot air balloon, anchored by ropes to remain secure on the ground, and then one of the important tethers is broken, a connection is lost, and the balloon, formerly secure and grounded, is now off-kilter, unbalanced, and struggling to find its bearings. A life that appeared certain and understood is now in flux and unpredictable. We have experienced loss and we are hurting, sad, broken, and confused. Jesus wept, and so do we.



Only Jesus can represent both the human and sacred all in one scene, and He did just that for Mary and Martha, His good friends; He does the very same for you and me as well. Aside from His tears, Jesus gave His friends the solid strength of His presence, a comfort to the hurting, as Mary and Martha began to look at life for the first time without their brother Lazarus. In essence, where the solid rope of Lazarus was gone, it was Jesus, who in normalizing their tears with His own, rebalanced their world while they began to grieve the loss of their irreplaceable brother. Our Lord doesn't remove our need to grieve. This is a human requirement as vibrant, thoughtful creatures who live and love in the course of life. Our Lord merely brings the balance, the strength....the comfort we so desperately need as a new chapter of our life story unfolds. Through our tears that both cleanse and relieve our hurt inside, may we "have the eyes to see and the ears to hear"; to sense the Lord's comforting presence which brings new balance to our journey ahead....Amen

[www.daybreakcounseling.org](http://www.daybreakcounseling.org)



After being silenced  
for a full year...

# THE MILFORD COMMUNITY BAND

*Is back and stronger than ever!*



**Come out and enjoy live holiday music:**

**Sunday, December 12, 2021, 3:00 PM**

Milford High School Auditorium  
1019 N Walnut Street, Milford, DE

**Saturday, December 18, 2021, 3:00 PM**

First Baptist Church of Dover  
301 Walker Road, Dover, DE

• Free Admittance • Donations Welcomed

**For more information about the MCB, visit  
[www.MilfordCommunityBand.org](http://www.MilfordCommunityBand.org)**



This organization is supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on [www.DelawareScene.com](http://www.DelawareScene.com).

# POINSETTIA ORDER FORM

The Sanctuary is never prettier than it is when the poinsettias arrive for December. Placing poinsettias in the church in memory or honor of loved ones is a beautiful and cherished tradition.

This year we will again only be ordering 6.5" pots of poinsettias at **\$7.50** each. The Altar Guild has requested that we only order 100 pots of flowers and in **RED** only. All additional funds will go to the Parish Purse.

Sponsor's Name \_\_\_\_\_

Memory of \_\_\_\_\_

Honor of \_\_\_\_\_

The cost for each Poinsettia is: 6.5" pot \$7.50 \_\_\_\_\_

The Altar Guild has requested that we order only **RED** Poinsettias this year.

**Please Print Clearly**

**Please use a separate order form for each name**  
**in memory of or honored**

Names of sponsors and those remembered and honored will be in the Worship Folder on December 19<sup>th</sup> and Christmas Eve.

Please make checks payable to Avenue United Methodist Church

**Orders MUST be in no later than Wednesday, December 15<sup>th</sup>**



**ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS TO:**

- **Russ and Harriet Davies who will be** celebrating their **61<sup>st</sup>** anniversary on **December 24<sup>th</sup>**.

**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:**

- Those affected by the COVID-19, Medical Staff, and distributing the vaccine.
- The arrival, safety and effectiveness of the recently approved COVID vaccine.
- Our local, national, and world leaders.
- Our District Superintendent (Rev. Joseph Archie), Bishop LaTrelle Easterling, and The United Methodist Church.
- Our Pastors, Staff, and Leadership of Avenue United Methodist Church.

**PRAYER REQUEST:**

Frank & Frances Beebe	Beverly Harrison	Roy Rigby
Brenda Beissel	Karl Isele	Dick Roberts
Dale Brandon	Ron Ivory	Lorna Rosella Rulona
Charlene Johnson Cannon	Jerry Jackson	Phil Saint
Lydia Castro	David Johnson	Richard Sapp
Adriel Castro and family	Dean Johnson	Vicki Schultes
Alex Castro and family	Joie	Alice Sellers
Mary Charnick	Justin	Lexi Silicato
Ginny Clendaniel	Chris K.	Roland Simms
Jack & Denney Collins	Katie and family	Racheal Simesak
Luisa & Billy Combs	Linda Kemp	Linda Singleton
Lauren Connell	Doris Koon	Samuel Smith
Susan Cooper	Rhoda & Greg Kurz	Carrie Sullivan
Craig	Jean Layton	Brenda Thompson
Rick Crump	Nancy Lee	Marvel Tice
Jim Crystle	Brittany Poore Little	Joan Wadman
Joanna Denney-Turner	Jack & Zelda McDuff	TJ Webb
William Ernst	Reagan McGovern	Josh Willey
Ken Fechter	Donna Meck	Danny Wine
Charlie & Barbara	Sonny Meck	Dorothy Yates
Fleetwood	Tiffany Medlin	Betty Ziesel
Jayne Frank	Megan	
Jason, Joanna & Garrett	Susie Miller	
Franklin	Orville Mills	
Todd French	Stan Moody	
Gail & Jeffrey	Jean Murphy	
Tom Glenn	Jason Neall	
Connie Grieship	Larry Passwaters	
Alina Guido	Laurel Pastor	
Nikki Gustafson	Ron Payne	
Al Hanna	Walt Peters	
Sam Hanna	Patty R	
Dave Harris	Millie Remick	