



The Midweek

Wednesday, December 22, 2021

And Made His Dwelling Among Us

The Real Estate market has been blowing up for most of the last year. I don't know all the reasons for it, but I do know that I have several new neighbors. My parents have talked about downsizing from their 35-acre, two-story farmhouse into something smaller for their retirement years. The question we've talked about is this: Where would you want to live?

Andrea and I enjoy watching House Hunters International on HGTV. It is the show we watch when we just need to unwind for 22 minutes. There have been more than a few locations where we have said, "I could live there." As you might imagine, each of those spots was warm, near the ocean, and looked like it would be an adventure living there.

In the Christmas story that seems so familiar is this profound truth: God became like us and lived among us. Emmanuel, God-with-us, pitched his tent right where we are and moved into our neighborhood in order to reveal how much we are loved. It is so easy to skip over this part because we've heard it so much. God loved us so much that God came to where we are.

This means that God is with you at the holiday gathering that you really don't want to be at. It means that God is with you as you navigate your first Christmas without a loved one. God is with you when the kids have spent too much time together. God made his dwelling place among us. As we

celebrate Christmas, let us give thanks to God who has come to us in order to show us love and a better way to live!

Sow Much Love,

Pastor Steve

Holiday Office Hours

The staff will be working a modified schedule during the week between Christmas and January 3rd. In case of an emergency, you can contact the office at 302-422-8111. The schedule will be:

December 27th: Office Closed (Christmas Holiday)

December 28th: 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m.

December 29th: 9:00 a.m.- Noon

December 30th: 11:00 a.m.- 2:00 p.m.

December 31st: 9:00-Noon

January 3rd: Office Closed



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) and Youtube (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.

WELCOME CARDS FOR PASTOR NEYDA: We are collecting welcome cards for Pastor Neyda in the foyer at Avenue. There is a basket out to place your cards in. These cards need to be received by Christmas Eve as Pastor Neyda will arrive this weekend. Be in prayer for Pastor Neyda and her son, Ian, as they transition to Delaware.

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 23rd - Traditional Christmas Eve at 6:30 p.m.

- * Can't make worship on the 24th? Experience Christmas Eve at Avenue a day early!

December 24th— Traditional Christmas Eve at 2:30 p.m. and 9:00 p.m.

Contemporary Christmas Eve at 4:30 p.m. and 7:00 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 26th— Combined Worship Service at 10:00 a.m.

- * We will be meeting at 10:00 a.m. on December 26th 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 2nd—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.

CHRISTMAS EVE OFFERING: Avenue is a generous community and we want to continue that generosity during the Christmas season. Just as the Magi brought gifts as they worshiped the Christ-Child, we want to invite you to come to Christmas Eve ready to give a gift to bless others. We will be receiving one offering and splitting between **Embrace Delaware** and **Delmarva Teen Challenge**.

Embrace Delaware is a ministry to families of children with special needs based in Dover, Delaware. They provide monthly respite nights where trained volunteers watch their special needs children (and their siblings) by providing dinner, games, and a Bible lesson while the parents can go on a date, grocery shop, or take a nap. **Delmarva Teen Challenge** is a faith-based drug and alcohol recovery program based out of Seaford, Delaware.

If you would like to contribute, please put “Christmas Eve Offering” on the memo line of your check and place it in the giving boxes in the sanctuary. To give online, go to www.avenueumc.com/give where you can select “Christmas Eve Offering” as the fund of your choice. Cash gifts on Christmas Eve will support the Christmas Eve offering. You can make an end of year contribution to the church budget by writing “General Budget” on the memo line or select it on the online giving platform.

Thank you for your generosity in 2021 and making the ministries of the church possible!

WESLEY’S COVENANT RENEWAL SERVICE (SUNDAY, JANUARY 2, 2022): In 1775, John Wesley introduced the Covenant Renewal Service to the Methodist societies. This service was an annual opportunity for self-examination, reflection, and surrendering ourselves completely to God. On **Sunday, January 2nd at 10:00 a.m.** we will join with the people called Methodist over the years who have committed themselves to discipleship.

Participants are encouraged to read through the covenant ahead of time so they can say the covenant whole-heartedly. There are many places to find this, but one place is from my friend, Dr. Jonathan Powers, who wrote an article and an updated liturgy. You can find the link here: <https://seedbed.com/john-wesleys-covenant-renewal-service-today/>

TORNADO RELIEF FOR KENTUCKY THROUGH UMCOR: The United Methodist Church Committee on Relief (UMCOR) is on the ground providing assistance in Mayfield, Kentucky, and other areas devastated by the recent tornadoes. The best way to help at this time is through monetary donations rather than physical items. 100% of your designated gift to UMCOR goes to where you direct it. If you would like to help, please make your check payable to Avenue United Methodist Church with "Advance #901670" in the memo line. You can also give online by selecting the Fund "UMCOR-Kentucky."

NEW MEMBERS CLASS will be held on **Sunday, January 16th 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.

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!

WELCOMING AND CONNECTING WITH THE CONNECTION TEAM: 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.

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

CONFIRMATION 2022 | A FIRM FOUNDATION: We are calling out to all 7th and 8th grade students as we prepare to begin a new year of Confirmation Classes. Confirmation is a journey for 7th/8th 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 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 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 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 if you can help. Thank you.

UNITED METHODIST MEN PANCAKE BREAKFAST— POSTPONED: Due to the latest outbreak of the COVID virus (Omicron), the Methodist Men pancake breakfast is being moved to a safer time, hopefully in the spring. Stay tuned!

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 26th 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 4th** 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 1st through March 15th. 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

SMALL GROUPS—ADVENT STUDY: Rev. John Van Tine, Retired, will finish up our Advent Study on Wednesday, December 22, 2021, in the Holzmüller 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 offers us companionship....

I no longer call you servants, because a servant does not know his master's business. Instead, I have called you friends, for everything that I learned from my Father I have made known to you.....John 15:15

When folks enter the counseling room for the first time, it is certainly not a social call or a coffee conversation moment. Folks are coming in because they are struggling, to some degree, with a life matter, or sometimes just life itself. In reflecting on the many conversations over the years, the feeling that I have heard most often, the feeling that has been the source of so much pain, has been loneliness. Certainly the biggest contributor to the feeling of loneliness is the experience of loss. Who I am, where I am going, what really matters to me anymore...the questions abound. It's as if there is a tint now shading the lenses of my glasses; everything seems cast in a shadow; the clarity and vibrancy of life has been irreversibly altered. Life just doesn't make sense anymore.

In the gospel of Luke, chapter 24, we are given a glimpse into the discouragement, perplexity and loneliness of two friends as they make their way to the town of Emmaus from Jerusalem. As we know from the story, these two early followers of Christ have just witnessed the devastating crucifixion of their Lord and the mystery of the empty tomb. Their world has just been turned upside down. In their confusion and wonderment, they embark on the short trek to Emmaus, trying to make sense of what has just happened; struggling to understand what happens next. In the midst of their questioning steps, a stranger comes along side, a companion joined them on their path and in their conversation, and over the course of their subsequent steps, brought a sense of clarity to their confusion, and like a dimmer switch, the friends eventually recognize that this stranger, this companion along the way, is their Lord. It was the Lord who joined them in their time of distress. It was the Lord who brought order to their broken thoughts and feelings. It was the Lord who secured their steps along an unfamiliar path. The two friends finally recognized Jesus as He broke the bread for the meal that evening. Their eyes were opened to the presence of their companion, their Lord and friend. Like the two friends on their way to Emmaus, in spite of the loneliness brought about by our losses, may we keep walking with our eyes open, for the Lord, our companion, is... *with us always, to the very end of the age...Amen*

www.daybreakcounseling.org



GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Lydia V. Abbott by David and Arlene Wilkerson
Elmer Arnwine by Henault Family
Natashia Artigliere by Henault Family
Grover and Orpha Ashton by Webb Family
Our Parents Alan & Janet Boltz by Anita, Cheryl, Judy and Nancy
Linda Breedlove by Pat Fisher
Lynn Byer by William Byer
Lyle Bunville by Kathryn Welch
Cal Clendaniel by Ginny, Bob, Jane and Families
Cal Clendaniel by Joyce and Bob Voshell
Rose Jean and Woodall Cochran by Howard and Kay Webb
Mr. and Mrs. Glen V. Cool by Jim and Shelly Fennemore
Fran and Patt Culotta by Chuck and Sandy Culotta
Her Parents, John and Alberta Dougherty, by Linda and Al Hanna
Mr. and Mrs. Jackson Fennemore by Jim and Shelly Fennemore
Our sister, Kathy Fig by Karen and Tom Schneider, Nancy & Larry Geiger
Ed, Frances and Ted by The Don Fisher Family
Russell French by Joyce and Bob Voshell
Duane T. Fox, Sr. by Connie Fox and family
Lucius & Hazel Fox by Connie Fox and family
Kathleen Friedline by Bonnie Glenn
Carolyn A. Brown, Isabelle Gill & Charlie Gill by Arlene and David Wilkerson
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
Ed and Louise Henault by Henault Family
Dike and Lib Hitchens by The Hitchens Family
Frances E. "Hump" Holleger by Helen Holleger
Steven A. "Stevie" Holleger by Helen Holleger
Doris & Jr. Hobbs by Arlene & David Wilkerson
Peggy Hughes by Diane Dolan
Jean Hutchman by Sunshine Sunday School Class
Bill Jackson – Love of my life by Ginger Jackson
Bill Jackson – Dad, Pop Pop and Pop by Tanja, Tom, Tavor, Ashlee, Leila and Kinsley
Bill Jackson – Dad, Pop Pop and Pop by Crystal, Paige, Jeremy, Jessica, Jace and Jeslyn
Bill Jackson – Dad Pop Pop and Pop by Wanda, Ed, Adam, Chrissy, Gabe, Michael, Bryan and Richard
Bill Johnson by John and Ginny Van Tine
Marvin Johnson by Arlene and David Wilkerson
James Lacinski by Lacinski Family
Joe and Mary Jo Lear by Diane Dolan
Mary Jo Lear and Janet McCall by Sarah Circle
Loved Ones by Pat Crabb
Loved Ones by Dan and Marty Holt
Loved Ones by Kathleen E. Russell
Loved Ones by Barbara and David Rutt
Sue Lewis by Ken Lewis
Bud, Sally and Peter Macky by Don and Pat Fisher and Family
Harvey and Violet Marvel by Randy and Linda Marvel
Alton and Margaret Maull by Arlene & David Wilkerson

Robert and Lucille Mercer by Ann and Kaye
Earlene Morris by David and Sherrie Morris
My Parents by Linda Rogers
Ridge Murray by Aunt Kaka
Ferd and Edith Nelson by Barbara French
Mr. & Mrs. Charles Postles, Sr. by Lloyd and Nancy
George Reph Sr by Lorraine Reph
My Mother Janice Rudy by Alison
Debbie Serpa by Donna Hill and All of My Family Peters
Marge Steiner by Joyce and Bob Voshell
Harold and Charlotte Tucker by The Hitchens Family
Doris and Donald Veasey by David and Sherrie Morris
Skip Veasey by David and Sherrie Morris
Tom and Verna Walls by Chuck and Sandy Culotta
Our daughter Sarah Kathleen by Lloyd and Nancy
Aunt Kay Webb by her family
Robbins Webb by Kathryn and Family
Lucius and Alice Webb by Their Family
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
Guy and Evelyn Winebrenner by Gene and Debbie Topolski
Jo Wood by Joyce & Bob Voshell
Our Parents by John & Ginny Van Tine

GIVEN TO THE GLORY OF GOD AND IN HONOR OF

Pastor Neyda and Ian Albarran
All of My Family, Burton, Endes and Ryans by Donna Hill
All the volunteers of Milford Comm. Pantry by Tita Lewis
Ed Bailey by Diane Dolan
Rick and Rita Bennett by Diane Dolan
Don Fisher by Pat, Cathy, Julie and Cara
Barbara French by Diane Dolan
Karsyn James Helmick by Eugene and Holly Helmick
Noah Patrick Helmick by Eugene and Holly Helmick
River Christine Helmick by Eugene and Holly Helmick
Pastor Dan and Mary Holt
To the Glory and Honor of God for our "Christmas Miracle" by The Hanna Family
Jack Newark by Diane Dolan
Walt and Ruth Peters by Donna Hill and all of my family
Lorraine Reph by Ken Lewis
Sunshine SS Class and John Van Tine by Tita Lewis
Karen Williams by Diane Dolan

ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS TO:

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

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
Brenda Beissel
Dale Brandon
William Byer
Charlene Johnson Cannon
Lydia Castro
Adriel Castro and family
Alex Castro and family
Mary Charnick
Ginny Clendaniel
Jack & Denney Collins
Luisa & Billy Combs
Lauren Connell
Craig
Rick Crump
Jim Crystle
Joanna Denney-Turner
William Ernst
Ken Fechter
Charlie & Barbara
Fleetwood
Dan and Dawn Forsyth
Jayne Frank
Jason, Joanna & Garrett
Franklin
Todd French
Gail & Jeffrey
Tom Glenn
Connie Grieship
Alina Guido
Nikki Gustafson
Al Hanna
Sam Hanna

Dave Harris
Beverly Harrison
Raymond Hughes
Terry Hughes
Karl Isele
Ron Ivory
Jerry Jackson
David Johnson
Dean Johnson
Joie
Justin
Chris K.
Katie and family
Linda Kemp
Doris Koon
Rhoda & Greg Kurz
Jean Layton
Nancy Lee
Brittany Poore Little
Jack & Zelda McDuff
Reagan McGovern
Donna Meck
Sonny Meck
Tiffany Medlin
Megan
Susie Miller
Orville Mills
Stan Moody
Jean Murphy
Jason Neall
Larry Passwaters
Laurel Pastor
Ron Payne

Walt Peters
Patty R
Millie Remick
Roy Rigby
Dick Roberts
Lorna Rosella Rulona
Phil Saint
Richard Sapp
Alice Sellers
Lexi Silicato
Roland Simms
Racheal Simesak
Linda Singleton
Samuel Smith
Carrie Sullivan
Brenda Thompson
Marvel Tice
Joan Wadman
TJ Webb
Josh Willey
Danny Wine
Dorothy Yates
Betty Ziesel