



AVENUE  
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

## *The Midweek*

*Wednesday, June 29, 2022*

### ***What Jonah and *Roe v. Wade* Teach Us About Loving Others***

The divide in our nation was highlighted this past week as the Supreme Court overturned *Roe v. Wade*. For some, this decision has brought celebration in the protection of an unborn baby. For others, it is cause for lament at the loss of choice and protection for women. We have seen outrage online, demonstrations in our communities, and great anger towards the people who think and believe differently on the Supreme Court's decision.

We have been saying for weeks that the story of Jonah is much more than just a fish tale. Many of us have grown up knowing nothing more than Jonah spending three days in the stomach of great fish. The story of Jonah centers around a 'prophet of God' who would rather die than see the people of Ninevah experience God's mercy. Jonah gets angry with God when God chooses to spare Ninevah from destruction. Because they look differently, speak different, worship differently, and live different, Jonah thinks they are fit for destruction. God, on the other hand, sees that they are created in his image and loved.

We can be tempted to think like Jonah.

We see "the other" and believe that since they look, speak, worship, and live differently from us that they are somehow "less than." We see this in a global scale of how nations look at other nations, but we also see it in the ways with which we speak and treat those who are different from us. We may believe the worst about immigrants. We may fail to stand with the oppressed because we

believe that they have done something to deserve the way they are being treated. In the case of the Supreme Court's decision, I've seen many Christians name-calling and ending friendships with those who think differently. Whether we realize it or not, we are treating brothers and sisters like "the other" rather than part of our Christian family.

Christians are not monolithic in our beliefs. While we likely agree on more than we disagree on, we also have a wide range of beliefs and understandings. This is why we have so many denominations. As Christians, we are all part of the family of God. Our unity is not found in our political or social beliefs, it is found around the Gospel of Jesus. We are called to love those we disagree with. The twelve disciples, who spent three years with Jesus, did not agree on everything. Levi, the tax collector, and Simon the Zealot likely had a lot of interesting conversations. Levi worked for Rome and would have been seen as a traitor. Simon the Zealot was part of a nationalistic group seeking to overthrow Rome (and probably seen as terrorist in our vernacular). Jesus brought them together to show that our differences must be set aside to fulfill the mission of the Gospel.

As we live in an ever increasingly polarized world, let us not forget the words of Paul in 1 Corinthians 13.

If I speak in the tongues <sup>n</sup> of men or of angels, but do not have love, I am only a resounding gong or a clanging cymbal. <sup>2</sup> If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing. <sup>3</sup> If I give all I possess to the poor and give over my body to hardship that I may boast, <sup>u</sup> but do not have love, I gain nothing.

If we cannot love one another, then our faith and our good works will be meaningless. In all that we do, let us humbly seek to show the sacrificial love of Jesus Christ to both our friends and those who might be described as our enemies. Let us rejoice in God's mercy for all who receive it. Let us find our unity in Jesus and the mission that Jesus has given us in the world.

Sow Much Love,

*Pastor Steve*

## Reminder!!!

Blood Pressure Screening will be held in Fellowship Hall on **Sunday, July 3<sup>rd</sup>** between church services.

Blood pressure screening is not just for the elderly. Remember they lived to be elderly.

High blood pressure can start as early as age 16.

Do not wait for symptoms. Start checking your blood pressure early as the numbers slowly creep up. Find ways to prevent high blood pressure so you too can live to be elderly.



“...do you know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit within you, whom you have from God? You are not your own, for you were bought with a price. So glorify God in your body.” ~ I Corinthians 6:19-20

## 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 (302) 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 COUNCIL MEETING:** The Church Council will meet on **tonight at 6:30 p.m.** in the Sanctuary. Our primary purpose for meeting will be to gather as a Church Conference to elect a new class of leaders. We will also be having some other conversations as we prepare for the Fall.

**MINISTRY RESTART—USHERS AND GREETERS:** We believe in creating a warm, welcoming, and expectant worship environment where members and guests are excited to gather, to worship, and to grow as a community of faith. To assist with this, we are looking to restart *the ministry of ushers and greeters*.

Ushers and Greeters are servants who have the gift of hospitality and are able to remove barriers that keep people from encountering the presence of God during worship. Greeters operate outside the sanctuary to create a warm welcome, answer questions, and assist where needed. Ushers minister inside the sanctuary to receive the offering, assist with seating, and to provide assistance when needed. Both roles are vital to help worshippers get better connected to our Discipleship Pathway to become fully devoted followers of Jesus Christ, and both roles will work with our Connections ministry to that end.

If you would like to serve as an Usher or Greeter, email Kelly at [churchoffice@avenueumc.com](mailto:churchoffice@avenueumc.com).

**RIVERWALK FREEDOM FESTIVAL OUTREACH:** Milford’s *Riverwalk Freedom Festival* is scheduled for **Saturday, September 17<sup>th</sup>** in downtown Milford. Avenue will be present to meet with community members, share information about our church, pray with those who need it, and to have a great time! We are creating a team to envision our booth and to serve the day of the event. If you would like to be part of the outreach team, please contact Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com).

**FALL KICK-OFF PLANNING HAS BEGUN:** We will be holding our Fall Kick-Off on **Sunday, September 18<sup>th</sup> at 10:00 a.m.** under the tent. This will be an all-church worship time with a family meal afterwards. We are looking for those who want to make this an unforgettable day of worship and family fun for our entire Avenue Community. If you are interested in helping to

plan this event, please contact Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com).

**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 call (302) 422-8111 or send an email to [healthministry@avenueumc.com](mailto:healthministry@avenueumc.com).

**MILFORD COMMUNITY PANTRY:** The Pantry can always use cereal and soup, canned fruit is also good. **Our big news is a transition of leadership. Tita and Diane are retiring and their replacements are in training.** Diana LeDonne is taking on the role of Coordinator. Nancy Czerwinski, a very active Milford Lion, will be handling the inventory. They will appreciate your continued support of the Milford Community Pantry. The Avenue congregation is so generous and helpful. Your help allows us to continue our efforts to reduce food insecurity.

**ADULT FUSION LEADERS NEEDED:** As the school year winds down and we begin transitioning into summer, we are looking to add to our Adult Fusion Ministry Team. We are looking for adults who love Jesus (first) and who also love teenagers, and who can make a one-year commitment to serving on Sunday evenings and special events. While we often think of younger adults as the prime candidate, research shows that older adults can also be effective Student Ministry Leaders.

If you would like to learn more about Fusion and becoming a Fusion leader, please contact Pastor Steve at [srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com).

**NEXT GEN - Introducing Christina Trager:** The Staff-Parish Relations Committee is excited to introduce Christina Trager as our newest staff member. She will be the Next Generations Pastor serving our teenagers and young adults. This is a full-time position.

Christina comes from Mariner's Bethel United Methodist Church in Ocean View, Delaware where she has over a decade of youth ministry experience. Most recently, she served as their full-time Middle School Coordinator. Christina has a Master's of Arts in Youth Ministry with a certificate in Child and Youth Ministry and Advocacy from Wesley Theological Seminary in Washington D.C. She has also served as a missionary in the States through the Global Board of Ministries.

Christina plans on starting her ministry at Avenue in mid-July. Please keep Christina in your prayers and do all you can to make her welcomed at Avenue!

**CONTEMPORARY WORSHIP - FAVORITE WORSHIP SONGS:** Avenue will be holding a "hymn sing" on Sunday, July 31<sup>st</sup>. It will be an opportunity to sing our favorite songs in each service. The 9:00 a.m. service will be given the chance to request their favorite hymn during worship. At 10:30 a.m., we are taking a different approach and requesting that you email Pastor Steve ([srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com)) your favorite praise song, chorus, or hymn. The Praise Team will be putting together the service from these requests. We look forward to worshipping with you on July 31<sup>st</sup>.

**SERMON SERIES HELP NEEDED—ASKED/ANSWERED:** In August, we will begin a new sermon series called ASKED/ANSWERED where you will have input on the sermon content. We want to know what questions you have about the Bible, God, Faith, and Theology. For four weeks, we will look at our questions and build a sermon that addresses one or more of the questions you have. It will be an opportunity to have a little more participation in worship.

Got questions? You can email your questions to Pastor Steve ([srlamotte@avenueumc.com](mailto:srlamotte@avenueumc.com)) with the phrase ASKED/ANSWERED in the subject line. Your questions need to be received prior to August 1<sup>st</sup> to put the series together.

## GROWTH GROUPS    **KNOW . . . GROW . . . GO**

Growth groups are groups where we learn, grow, and do life together. They meet once a week and are a great way to get to know each other and be challenged to grow in our spiritual journey.

### SUNDAYS

**10:15 a.m. @ Church** Summer Sunday School led by Rev. John Van Tine, retired plus others is meeting in the Grier Room at 10:15 a.m. The study for July is “The Work of the Church.” The lesson for July 3<sup>rd</sup> is “A New Community of Believers” based on Acts 4:23-31; July 10<sup>th</sup> lesson is “Faith Transcends Culture” based on Acts 8:26-39; July 17<sup>th</sup> lesson is “The Quest for Inclusive Fellowship” based on Acts 11:1-18; July 24<sup>th</sup> lesson is “The Jerusalem Council’s Mandate” based on Acts 15:1-21; and July 31<sup>st</sup> lesson is “Mission Without Walls” based on Acts 16:25-34. Please join us in the Grier Room for these exciting lessons.

It has been a complete joy to work in the kitchen this year with the team that was there. Listening to their stories, working along side of them, and laughing at the simple things made the work effortless. The kindness, love, and fellowship I experienced was priceless.

I want to thank all those that made VBS possible and to all those that came as well. A special thank you to the United Methodist Women for sponsoring pizza night. It was a big hit!

Blessings,  
*Melissa Wilcox*

**BIRTHDAY GREETINGS TO:**

- **Ginny Clendaniel** who will celebrate her **91<sup>st</sup>** birthday on **July 1<sup>st</sup>**.

**ANNIVERSARY GREETINGS TO:**

- **Robert and Marie Bradley** who will celebrate their **63<sup>rd</sup>** anniversary on **July 11<sup>th</sup>**.
- **Rev. John & Ginny Van Tine** who will celebrate their **52<sup>nd</sup>** anniversary on **July 18<sup>th</sup>**.

**PLEASE KEEP IN YOUR PRAYERS:**

- Those affected by the COVID-19 Pandemic.
- 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.
- Pray for peace in Ukraine and other areas of conflict around the world.
- Keep in prayer the UMC pastors who are preaching in their new church for the first time this week.

**PRAYER REQUEST:**

Marty Brereton  
Charlene Johnson Cannon  
Roland Cohee  
Mike and Judy Conflitti  
Dana  
Barbara Fleetwood  
Dan Williams Gaskill Sr  
Tom Glenn  
Niki Gustafson  
Sam Hanna  
Beverly Harrison  
Quinn Humes  
Jerry Jackson  
David Johnson  
Dean Johnson  
Kirsten Lewis and family  
Diana Lubitz  
Martha Marani

Jack & Zelda McDuff  
Joanne McKay  
Jean Murphy  
David and Judy Passwaters  
Ron Payne  
Marshall Rea  
Alyshia Redmond  
Millie Remick  
George Reph Jr.  
Jackie Rippe  
Ron Semmont  
Sandy S.  
Seth Spencer  
Glen Stevenson  
Joan Wadman  
Dr. Charles "Chuck" Wagner

# CALENDAR

## WEDNESDAY 6/29

- 4:30 p.m. Praise Team Practice, Sanctuary
- 6:00 p.m. Alpha Group Dinner, Fellowship Hall
- 6:30 p.m. Church Council Meeting, Sanctuary

## THURSDAY 6/30

- 11:00 a.m. AA, Century Club
- 5:30 p.m. Zumba, Fellowship Hall

## FRIDAY 7/1

- 7:00 p.m. AA, Century Club

## SATURDAY 7/2

- 9:00 a.m. Haitian Church, Century Club
- 7:00 p.m. AA, Century Club

## SUNDAY 7/3 ~ Communion

- 9:00 a.m. Traditional Worship
- 10:15 a.m. Adult Sunday School Class, Grier Room
- 10:30 a.m. Contemporary Worship
- 10:30 a.m. Sunday School
- 7:00 p.m. Haitian Church, Century Club

## MONDAY 7/4 ~ Church Office Closed

- 11:00 a.m. AA, Century Club
- 7:00 p.m. Harmonizers, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Sermon On the Mount, Holzmueller Room

## TUESDAY 7/5

- 5:30 p.m. Zumba, Fellowship Hall
- 7:00 p.m. Central Delaware Chess Club, Grier Room
- 7:00 p.m. Milford Al-Anon Group, Century Club

## WEDNESDAY 7/6

- 4:30 p.m. Praise Team Practice, Sanctuary
- 6:00 p.m. Alpha Group Dinner, Fellowship Hall