



Winter 2015

## **The Dove Express**

*The First United Methodist Church of Avalon*

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The Reverend Dr. David Montanye, Pastor ~ (609) 967-4290

## The Pastor's Corner

Dear Friends,

Statisticians tells us that many New Year's Resolutions fail. So instead of making New Year's resolutions that fail, I have chosen to begin each year by selecting a word to reflect on for the entire year. The word that I choose becomes a word that I think about and try to integrate into all that I am doing and all that is happening in my life.

It's a great American tradition to do this. Ben Franklin as a young man used to chart his progress weekly in exhibiting a number of values that he thought were important such as humility, temperance, order, and industry. Similarly, George Washington reflected on a list of virtues that he thought would make him a better person as he grew older and they did. Washington often used his list to control a fierce temper.

This year, I will be focusing on the word "gratitude." Gratitude is something that preachers tend to talk about only at Thanksgiving time. However, I think that in 2015, I want to make gratitude a more important part of my daily life.

At this time of year we are bombarded with thoughts of all the things that are wrong with us. Do we need to lose some weight? Are we as good-looking as we would like to be? What I want to suggest is that instead we might take the time this year to focus on not what is missing in our lives but what is present.

A number of years ago, the author Spencer Johnson talked about what he called "the precious present." It was not a gift in a traditional sense like a Christmas present or birthday gift but rather it was the ability to focus on the here and now and not be overly concerned about the future or trapped in the past. Instead, he suggested that people have the courage to live in the precious present.

I want to daily ask myself the question: What am I grateful to God for today? Who is teaching me something new or surprising me with a beautiful moment. Long ago the Psalmist wrote: "This is the day that the Lord has made. We will rejoice and be glad in it (Psalm 118). That's good advice for 2015.

May God be with you and those that you love in this New Year and may God fill our hearts with gratitude. I'll see you in Church.

Grace and peace,

*Dave*

Pastor Dave

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# The First United Methodist Church of Avalon

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Our snow birds have headed south!  
Listed below are those that we wish a  
warm winter break:

## SNOWBIRDS

Rita Bedford  
Dottie and Dave Brennan  
Bev and George Coleman  
Barbara & Bill Graham  
Ted Mozer  
Audrey Smith  
John Van Horn  
Doris Walters

Please contact the Church Office if we  
have missed a snowbird that has  
already traveled south and Brenda, our  
secretary, will add them to the list.  
Warm wishes for the winter break!

## Keeping in Touch Keeping in Touch

Have you moved or changed your mailing  
address, home address, home phone, cell  
phone, or email address? Please send an  
email to [avalonmethodist@hotmail.com](mailto:avalonmethodist@hotmail.com)  
or call the church office at (609) 967-4204.  
Thanks!

## Many Thanks

A *Thank You* goes out to all who  
participated in the Old Fashioned Christmas  
Bazaar 2014, which was held on December  
6, 2014. A *Thank You* also goes to all the  
Christmas Bazaar crafters which met  
regularly and created the many creative and  
wonderful Christmas ornaments that were  
sold at the Bazaar. This year's Old  
Fashioned Christmas Bazaar provided over  
\$4,820.30 in support of the mission and  
ministry of this congregation. *Thank you*  
Nancy Doell, Wilda Richardson, and Dee  
Phillips and many others for providing the  
leadership to make it all happen.

## Devotions for Any Day

*One of the principle rules of faith is to  
lose no occasion of serving God. And,  
since he is invisible to our eyes, we are to  
serve him in our neighbor, which God  
receives as if done to God in person,  
standing visibly before us.*

*— John Wesley*



## **How To Express Appreciation for Others**

The season between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day is the time when many people experience the love and appreciation of others. In turn, it is time when our care and compassion is offered to our families and our friends and those in need. But wouldn't it be great to experience that level of joy and appreciation everyday of the year?

How can we begin to express our appreciation for others? We can begin by making expressing gratitude a habit – a regular part of our daily lives. Expressing appreciation on a daily basis will provide multiple health benefits and helps us live longer.

For your appreciation to hit the mark, keep in mind that there are three different kinds of appreciation – auditory, visual, and kinesthetic. These are three ways that our brain takes in information. With a little practice, it's easy to match the type of appreciation with the person you wish to honor.

Auditory people like to hear appreciation. Expressing thanks verbally is the best way to let people know how much we appreciate them. Auditory people can be sensitive to the tone that we use in thanking them. Speaking in a caring voice can be helpful.

Visual people like to receive things that they can see. Flowers or an attractive card or a picture are perfect ways to honor people who approach life like it's a movie.

Kinesthetic people like to feel appreciated with the emphasis on feelings. Sometimes a hug or a slap on the back or a fist bump can communicate to a person the strong feelings of appreciation that you might have.

As we begin to build the habit of appreciation, it helps to always look for new people to whom we can express appreciation. Each day brings new opportunities to appreciate others. We all know that we literally could not survive without the help of other people. No one pumps their own gas in New Jersey. The food we eat is produced through the efforts of many people before it gets to our tables. There are countless others who serve us in significant ways by doing their part in keeping our world functioning. Whenever possible, they deserve our thanks. Our community improves when we take the time to say thanks and make it a habit of appreciating the good that others do.

*This article was adapted from material written by Jack Canfield, the author of the Chicken Soup for the Soul series and a leading authority on peak performance and life success. For more information on how to improve your life, see [www.jackcanfield.com](http://www.jackcanfield.com)*



# The First United Methodist Church of Avalon

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## The Breakfast Club

The Breakfast Club will be meeting on Thursdays at 8:30 am.

Schedule:

January 15th	Dino's Rt. 50, Seaville (Near CVS)
January 22nd	Dino's Rt. 50, Seaville (Near CVS)
January 29th	Court House Diner, 218 N. Main Street, CMCH, NJ
February 5th	Court House Diner, 218 N. Main Street CMCH, NJ
February 12th	Court House Diner, 218 N. Main Street, CMCH, NJ
February 19th	Southville Corner, 780 Rt. 47N, CMCH "Dennisville"
February 26th	Southville Corner, 780 Rt. 47N, CMCH "Dennisville"
March 8th, Sunday, 12:30 pm	The Link's Restaurant <i>Last Get-together for Winter 2015</i>

For more information, contact Albie Stratford at 609-861-5891 or email:  
[al.and.joan.stratford@gmail.com](mailto:al.and.joan.stratford@gmail.com).

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## Confirmation Class Begins on Sunday, February 22, 2015

The confirmation class will begin on Sunday, February 22, 2015 at 9 am - 9:45 am for six weeks until March 29, 2015. Classes will be held in the Pastor's Study. During March, April, or May, the class will go on two field trips to significant places that will provide a more experiential learning experience about our United Methodist heritage. Those who decide to be confirmed will be inducted into full membership of the First UMC of Avalon on May 24, 2015 during the Worship Service. If you know of a young person who would like to be confirmed, please contact Pastor Dave or call the Church Office.



# *The First United Methodist Church of Avalon*

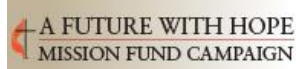
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## **A Future with Hope Mission Fund Campaign Continues**

The second anniversary of Hurricane Sandy marked a significant day in the history of a Future with Hope, Inc. The Future with Hope, Inc. is the non-profit that was organized by the Greater New Jersey Conference to help rebuild the Jersey Shore. On that day, the long-term recovery organization announced that it had completed the rebuilding or restoration of its 100<sup>th</sup> home. A Future with Hope, Inc., has involved over 8,500 volunteers and has a goal of rebuilding between 300 and 500 homes that were damaged by the storm.

On October 29, 2014, Chad and Angie Lorenzo and their children were joined by New Jersey First Lady Pat Christie and Bishop John Schol to celebrate the completion of their newly restored home in Toms River and to send out a reminder that there are still thousand more people who have not returned to their homes. Over 100 vounteers worked on the Lorenzo home with some coming from as far away as Nebraska. The volunteers performed approximately 2,300 hours of construction work.

How can we help? By making a contribution to The Future with Hope Mission Fund, we can help bring other families back to a normal life. During the first year of this 3 year campaign, our members and friends pledged over \$2,175.00. At the end of 2014, our congregation has contributed over \$2,933.00 to the Fund. Offering envelopes for this special project are available at Church.



Thank you for supporting the “A Future With Hope Mission Fund.”  
Your gifts to this effort are very much appreciated.

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## ***District- wide celebration of the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of UMCOR*** ***Sunday, March 15, 2015 ~ 11 am at Asbury UMC in Atlantic City.***

On March 15 at Asbury UMC in Atlantic City, the Cape Atlantic District will host a celebration of the 75th Anniversary of UMCOR. It was 75 years ago this year when the United Methodist Committee on Relief was born in what is now Boardwalk Hall in Atlantic City. Methodist Bishop Herbert T. Welch rose on the floor of the General Conference of 1940 and called for the creation of an organization that would be “a voice of conscience” among Methodists. From that one moment UMCOR was born. Today it works in over 80 countries around the world providing emergency assistance in times of disaster, supports sustainable agriculture programs in developing countries, and assists refugees who are fleeing from violence and persecution. Bishop John Schol, District Superintendent Brian Roberts, and UMCOR CEO Rev. Dr. Denise Honeycutt will be participating.



# *The First United Methodist Church of Avalon*

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## **Mission Projects Results**

The figures are in! During 2014 our Church provided outreach to the following organizations:

- ❖ 12 Backpacks filled with school supplies were provided to boys and girls of Glenwood Elementary School in Wildwood.
- ❖ 12 gift cards of \$25 each were provided to the children of Glenwood Avenue Elementary School for sneakers or shoes.
- ❖ Over 1,450 boxes of groceries were packed which provided a complete Thanksgiving Meal for needy families on Thanksgiving through Make a Difference Day in October.
- ❖ Four homeless families were provided a meal and a place to stay through Family Promise.
- ❖ Over 35 adults and older youth served as teachers, assistant teachers, and counselors along with one Ark-builder as part of the Workshop of Wonders Vacation Bible School 2014.
- ❖ Two families who wouldn't have had much of a Christmas received many Christmas gifts through our Church's Giving Tree program.
- ❖ 4 families received a Walmart Gift Card to help with their Christmas shopping this year in partnership with Caring for Kids.
- ❖ 7 families were supported with crisis and family counseling, which was provided through our partnership with Bridge Wellness Services and the GNJ Conference Board of Church and Society Peace with Justice.

## **FOCUS ON MISSION**

Our Avalon Church is grateful to all the members and friends who have participated in a mission project this year or contributed financially to a worthy cause. Our Church's Communion offerings, hands-on mission projects, and support for our connectional system have met a variety of needs in South Jersey and around the world.

### **COMMUNION OFFERINGS**

#### **January 4th -**

Human Relations Day  
(Community Development Program)

#### **February 1st -**

Pennington School  
(Scholarship Programs)

#### **March 1st -**

One Great Hour of Sharing  
(Supports UMCOR)

### **MISSION PROJECTS**

#### **January**

Bridge Wellness Services

#### **February**

Personal Care Items  
For Family Promise

#### **March**

UMCOR Health Kits  
Partnership with Avalon  
Elementary School

### **GLEANINGS:**

Help feed the hungry children in Cape May County. Please place non-perishable items in our grocery cart (Courtesy of Avalon Market) and they will be delivered to local food banks.

## Vacation Bible School 2015

Are you ready? Vacation Bible School is coming this summer! Our theme for VBS 2015 is: G – Force: God's Love in Action. Participants will get to feel the power of God in their lives. Feel the force of God in our lives.

**What:** This year, our Church will offer the G-Force Adventure Park where kids explore putting their faith into action. This year's VBS is focused on mission. Kids will experience God's unstoppable love by participating in G-Force Adventures. They will discover how fueling up on God's Word will change their lives. By taking in the power of the God Force, our children and youth will come alive with movement and be better prepared to share God's great love for the world.

**Who:** Registration is for children 4 years old through 6<sup>th</sup> grade. Forms will be available on our website beginning on Monday, April 6, 2015. Junior and Senior High students can become volunteers and register as counselors-in-training and senior counselors.

**When:** July 13 - 17, 2015 at 9 am to Noon and July 18, 2015 at 10:00 am

**Where:** The First UMC of Avalon at 3344 Dune Drive, Avalon, New Jersey 08202.

For more information, please call: (609) 967 – 4204 or go to [www.avalonmethodist.com](http://www.avalonmethodist.com)

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## Memorial Garden Walk

Our Memorial Garden Walk is a permanent reminder of loved ones. It is a place where loved ones and cherished friends are honored and remembered with a memorial brick.

The bricks come in two sizes: 4 x 8 and 8 x 8 and can be purchased for \$75 and \$150 each. The Memorial Walk forms are available on the back table in the church. Complete a Memorial Walk form and submit it to Suzanne Ludlum. Annually, the memorial bricks are ordered from Impressions in Stone. As the orders are under the minimum, we place the orders once a year.



You are invited to remember family members or cherished friends with your personal message on an engraved brick.

For more information see Suzanne Ludlam or contact the Church Office.

# The First United Methodist Church of Avalon

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## Looking Ahead

April 2nd: **Maundy Thursday**  
Soup & Bread Dinner - 6:00 pm  
Service - 7:00 pm

April 3rd: **Good Friday ~ 7:30 pm**  
at Ev. Lutheran Church of Our Saviour

April 5th: **Easter Sunday Sunrise Service**  
7 Mile Island Ecumenical Service 6:30 am

April 5th: **Easter Sunday**  
Contemplative Worship with  
Communion 8:30 am  
Traditional Worship Service 10:00 am



May 24th: **Heritage Sunday Celebration**

July 13 - 17th: **VBS 2015**  
Are you ready? Vacation Bible School  
is coming this summer!

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## District News

The Cape Atlantic **District Day of Learning** is scheduled for **Sunday, February 7, 2015**. Registration begins at 2:15 pm. The Day's activities will end at 6:00 pm. This Day of Learning is designed for those in leadership positions within our Church who would like to learn more about the jobs that they do. Workshops outlining the role of the Church Council, the responsibilities of Trustees in a local church, and the work of the Staff Parish Relations Committee will be held. Come and be a part of this learning experience.

Location: St. Peter's UMC  
501 East 8<sup>th</sup> Street  
Ocean Cit, NJ



## January

- January 13th: Trustees Meeting 7pm  
*Pastor's Study*
- January 15th: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am
- January 20th: Women's Circle at 11 am
- January 22nd: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am
- January 29th: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am

## February

- February 3rd: Finance Meeting 7:00 pm
- February 5th: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am
- February 10th: Church Council Mtg 7:00 pm
- February 12th: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am
- February 17th: Women's Circle at 11 am
- February 18th: **Ash Wednesday Service**  
Soup & Bread Dinner - 6:00 pm  
Service - 7:00 pm
- February 19th: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am
- February 26th: The Breakfast Club 8:30 am

## March

- March 1st: One Great Hour of Sharing  
Celebration
- March 8th: The Breakfast Club 12:30 pm
- March 10th: SPRC Meeting 7:00 pm
- March 17th: Women's Circle at 11 am
- March 29th: **Palm Sunday** 10:00 am