

Spring 2017

The Dove Express

The First United Methodist Church of Avalon

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

THE PASTOR'S CORNER

Dear Friends,

I suspect that everyone knows how much life is full of transitions – times when we literally or figuratively are moving from one place to another. As Eve may have once said to Adam, as they left the Garden of Eden, “Adam, we are now in a period of transition.

Transition times can sometimes be filled with fear and peril. But they can also be times of hope and new opportunities and possibilities. During times of transition we can move from feeling wisdom to anxiety to courage and back to anxiety again and then to hope. Like the time when you started at a new school, or when you moved out of your parent’s home. Perhaps we recall more vividly our graduation from college, or the time when we got married. Think about when the children were born or when that first child got married. Or the day that we retired or something I think about more and more – the day I hope to retire. These are all times of transition.

Our church is in a time of transition that is both perilous and filled with possibilities. Despite the difficulties that we face, there are opportunities and possibilities all around us to continue to be a vital congregation. There is a steady stream of new people that are moving here and we are attracting a steady stream of visiting individuals and families. We need only welcome them with a warm Avalon welcome.

In this time of transition, as we welcome new people, as new leaders step up to the plate and as new friendships are formed, I invite you to continue to develop the spirit of two of the characters in A.A. Milne’s children’s classic, *The Wind in the Willows*. It was Piglet who said to Winnie the Pooh, “I wake up every morning and I say to myself, I wonder what new adventures I will have today.” May God continue to bring us new adventures in this time of transition in the life of our church. May we live out fully what it means to be God’s people in mission and ministry in this time and place.

God loves you and I’ll see you in Church.

Grace and Peace,

Pastor Dave

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEDULE

Come and Worship!

8:30 am - Informal Worship Service

(June 25, 2017 ~ August 13, 2017)

10:00 am - Traditional Worship Service

(With Chancel Choir and Special Music)

The First United Methodist Church of Avalon

This brief history of our congregation was adapted from The First Hundred Years by Dr, Robert W. Crowther – a book that was dedicated to the future generations of the Seven Mile Island in the hope that Jesus Christ will continue to be a meaningful and a transforming presence in our daily lives.

A CHURCH OPEN TO EVERYONE

In 1888, the Peermont Land Corporation acquired 600 acres of land in the north end of the Seven Mile Island and began development of a resort called Peermont. When the railroad was built the trains from Philadelphia came across the bridge at Thompson's Inlet and stopped at Avalon and Peermont before ending their run at Holiday Beach. Soon an Oceanside resort with a quiet family feeling took shape. Summer homes, cottages, and stately mansions replaced groves of trees and bushes along streets of paved red gravel. Those who brought their families to Avalon, Peermont, and Holiday Beach found one thing missing – a place to worship God.

In 1892, when Grover Cleveland was President of the United States, a mid-block lot near the ocean on First Avenue was donated by the Avalon Beach Improvement Company. A new church building fund was started and construction began on a building that still stands to this day. On August 7, 1892, the church doors were open for the first Sunday morning worship service. The new church, the first in the community, was made up of people from different Protestant denominations, and was established as a place of worship for all the people. At first it was called simply the Avalon Union Church. However, in 1893, it became the Peermont Methodist Episcopal Church. Over the course of its history, the name of the Church changed to the First Methodist Episcopal Church of Avalon and finally in 1968 to the First United Methodist Church of Avalon. A new and larger church building was built in 1964 with rooms for a growing Sunday School, a vibrant choir and a vital ministry to youth. It is located on Dune Drive between 33rd and 34th Street in Avalon.

Forty-eight ministers have faithfully served this congregation. In the beginning they served only during the summer. However, in 1909, the congregation took the bold step of keeping the Church open year round. It has never gone back to being only a summer church with only a few keeping the faith through the winter months until the summer crowds return. The longest pastorate here was that of Rev. Robert Scott who served this congregation for eleven years from June, 1975 through June, 1986.

Times may have changed but the power of God, our love for this community of faith, and our hope for the future remains as strong as it has ever been.

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Dr. David J. Montanye, Pastor
Sara Atack, Secretary
Brenda Katapodis, Treasurer
Patti Boyle, Sexton

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 or call the church office at (609) 967-4204. Thanks!

**THE NEW AVALON
ASSEMBLY
A CHAUTAUQUA-LIKE EXPERIENCE
AT THE SHORE**

**The New Avalon Assembly
returns for its 5th year!**

The New Avalon Assembly is based on the Chautauqua experience of the late 1800's and early 1900's, which provided lectures, concerts, religious speakers, and the opportunity to "recreate yourself" in beautiful natural surroundings.

The New Avalon Assembly was formed in 2013, and has been designed to renew this unique forum for personal growth and enrichment. Program offerings have been developed around the four original pillars of the Chautauqua experience: arts, education, spiritual growth, and entertainment. This year's programs will be based on a common theme:

Changing Times, Changing Minds

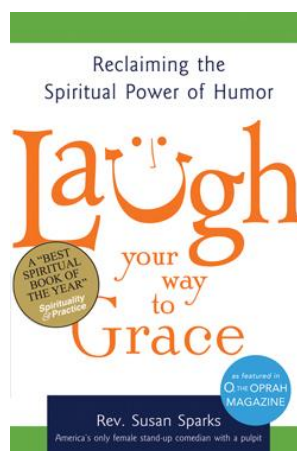
Support for these events will be provided through a partnership with the Avalon History Center, and by contributions from the Avalon Public Library, Southern New Jersey Health Council and generous individuals. The New Avalon Assembly is now a member of the Chautauqua Association, which seeks to bring together the organizations that were part of the original Chautauqua Circuit that flourished in the early 1900's and the new Chautauqua-like organizations that are being revived in resort communities throughout the United States and Canada.

The New Avalon Assembly events for this summer will be held on June 27th, July 11th, July 25th and August 15th at 7:00 pm at our Church. Be sure to watch the weekly bulletin for information on these four Tuesdays in June, July and August.

NEW MEMBERS INVITATION

Have you thought about joining the First United Methodist Church of Avalon? Membership in the United Methodist Church involves making a simple commitment to support this faith community with your prayers, your presence, your witness, and your gifts. You can become a full-member, an associate member or an affiliate member or if you have never been part of a faith community simply profess your faith in Jesus Christ. If you are interested, please speak with Pastor Dave.

**LAUGHTER YOUR WAY TO GRACE
BY REV. SUSAN SPARKS**



If you are interested in participating in a book club featuring "Laughter Your Way to Grace" please call or email the church office. We will be determining meeting times and dates at a later time but I am thinking of perhaps meeting once a month in the daytime.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL 2017



Are you ready?
Vacation Bible
School is coming
this summer!

*Remember that the
Lord is great and
awesome
-Nehemiah 4: 14 b*

What: Hero Central uses music, spectacular science, crafts, heroic recreation, and fantastic Bible stories to help kids discover their strength in God! Kids go on awesome adventures alongside some of their favorite Bible heroes and discover the qualities that make us truly heroic in God.

Who: Registration is for children 4 years old through 6th grade. Junior and Senior High students can become volunteers and register to be Assistant Teachers. Registration forms for those attending and for volunteers are available on our website at AvalonMethodist.com.

Registration is open to all but be sure to register early.

When: Monday-Friday, July 10-14
(9 am-Noon)

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

You can reach us by phone at
(609) 967-4204
or on our website
AvalonMethodist.com.



STUDENT RECOGNITION SUNDAY Sunday, June 18, 2015.

If you know of anyone who will be graduating this year, please let Pastor Dave or our secretary, Sara, know. We will be honoring this year's graduates and all those students who have served as acolytes.

WEST POINT CADET CHOIR

The West Point Cadet Choir, from the United State Military Academy is tentatively scheduled to come and worship with us on Sunday, September 17, 2017. Anyone who is willing to house one or two cadets during their stay here in Avalon and Stone Harbor, please send an email to the Church Office at avalonmethodist@hotmail.com.

Please state your preference for hosting male or female cadets and let us know how many you can house.

Responsibilities include providing your assigned cadets a place to sleep, a meal on Saturday night, and transportation to and from the Church for rehearsals and worship. Our Church would like to host as many cadets as possible.

GOOD NEWS FOR GROCERIES!

We have a wonderful fund raising program at our church. It's easy – sign up for an ACME or SHOP-RITE \$100 gift card; give Margie Lingerfield a check for \$100, she will purchase the cards and give them to you. The church earns \$5 for every \$100 purchased. This does not sound like a lot of money but think of the money spent on groceries in a month. There are churches in our conference that earn over \$5000 a year!

DISTRICT NEWS

Greater NJ Annual Conference

May 21st - 23rd

Wildwood Convention Center
Bishop John Schol, Presiding

This year the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference will be held at the Wildwood Convention Center in Wildwood, NJ. Hundreds of United Methodist from church in New Jersey, and a few from New York and Pennsylvania, will gather on May 21st through the 23rd to celebrate and be in mission.

Louise Baehr is our Church's Annual Conference Representative.

CHURCH CONFERENCE 2017

The Annual Church Conference is tentatively scheduled for Saturday, November 4, 2017. Across the Greater New Jersey Conference the majority of congregations will be gathering for Super Saturday Church Conferences. The purpose of holding these Super Saturday Church Conferences is to:

1. Provide each congregation with separate space and a designated Elder to lead participants through the necessary discussion and decisions reflected in votes.
2. Gather 100 or more leaders and members from 10 or more congregations in worship to celebrate what God has done and is doing in our lives.
3. Provide several workshops to resource our ministries in several areas to strengthen vitality.



Our 2017 Communion Offerings and Mission Projects meet a variety of important needs in Cape May County, in New Jersey, and around the world. Our focus this year is on helping our five strategic

mission partners which help children and families in need here in Cape May County and on building greater capacity to support the One Great Hour of Sharing, the United Methodist Homes, and the Future with Hope Campaign.

COMMUNION OFFERINGS

May 7th:

Peace with Justice

June 4th:

Pinelands Center Mt. Misery

July 2nd:

UM Methodist Homes

MISSION PROJECTS

May:

Blanket Offering

June:

Volunteers in Medicine

July:

West Point Cadet Choir
Activities Fund

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.

The First United Methodist Church of Avalon

**Pencil these dates
on your calendar:**



MAY

- May 9: Trustees Meeting - 7 pm
- May 13: Book and Bake Sale - 8 am-1 pm
- May 14: Mother's Day
Healing Service
Birthday Coffee Hour
- May 16: Women's Circle - 11:30 am
- May 20: 125th Anniversary Celebration
with Avalon Borough & Wells Presbyterian
- May 21 - 23rd: Annual Conference
at Wildwood Convention Center
- May 29: Memorial Day

JUNE

- June 6: Admin Council - 7 pm
- June 11: Birthday Coffee Hour
Peace with Justice Sunday
- June 18: Father's Day and
Student Recognition Sunday
- June 20: Women's Circle - 11:30 am
SPRC Meeting - 7 pm
- June 25: Summer Worship Schedule Begins
- June 27: New Avalon Assembly - 7 pm



is **June 4th**. Pentecost celebrates the birth of the Church and the out-pouring of the Holy Spirit. Wear Red and worship with a Spirit-filled heart.

JULY

- July 4: Independence Day
- July 9: Birthday Coffee Hour
Decorate for VBS 2017
- July 10 - 14th: Vacation Bible School
- July 11: New Avalon Assembly - 7 pm
- July 16: VBS Musical Presentation at 10 am
Service
- July 25: New Avalon Assembly - 7 pm
- July 29: Chicken BBQ - 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm

AUGUST

- August 1: National Night Out
- August 8: Trustees Meeting - 7 pm
- August 12: Peach Festival - 6:30 pm to 9:30 pm
- August 13: Summer Worship Schedule Ends
Birthday Coffee Hour
- August 15: Women's Circle - 11:30 am
New Avalon Assembly - 7 pm
- August 20: Healing Service

Women's Circle

The Women's Circle, women of The First United Methodist Church of Avalon, meet the 3rd Tuesday of each month for brunch/lunch at The Links or the Sand Barrens restaurant. Please join us! There is always a sign-up sheet at the back table in the sanctuary or call Louise Baehr @ 536-2814.

