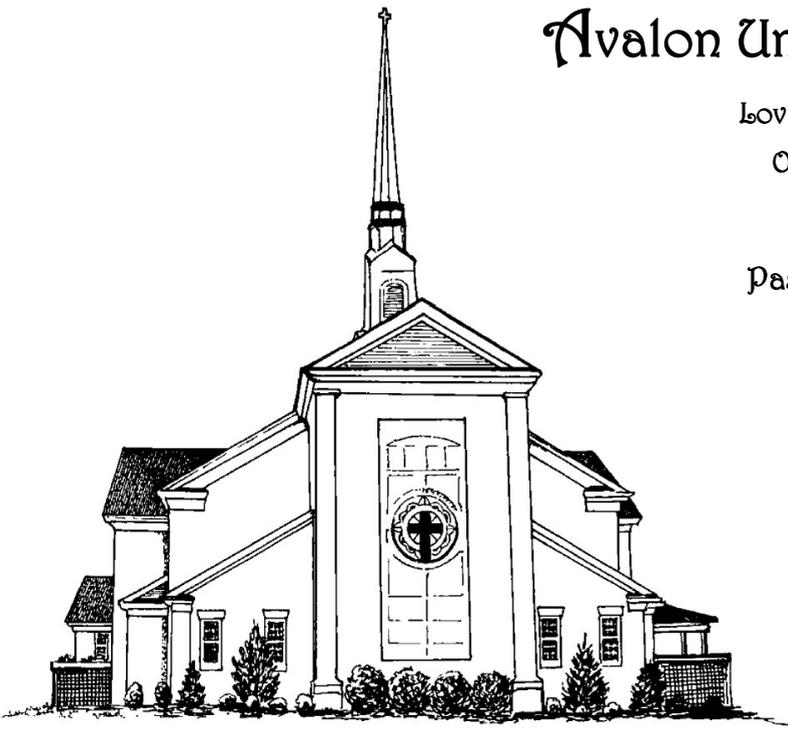


Avalon United Methodist Church

Loving God, Loving People
On Our Christian Journey

Pastor Debbie Cong

May 1, 2019



Love Won't Stop

Today I am thanking God for the fact that He doesn't stop loving us! As we have just celebrated His death and Resurrection this past Easter weekend and look ahead at the calendar for the month of May, I think about how when He was on the cross He spoke about many things. One being about His mother being taken care of. He said to his disciple, "Behold your mother!" and from that hour on that disciple took her to his own home. John 19:27.

Mother's Day is May 12th and I think of the gift He has given us in our mothers. Some have gone on to be with Him and some are still here with us. Either way we can give thanks for them and honor their lives. My mama went through a lot of trouble with me! Especially during my teenage years as she had to look for me a couple of times. But she never stopped loving me and I thank God for her.

Scripture paints a beautiful picture of God, who is Love, relentlessly beckoning His wandering children. Like a good shepherd He cares about and seeks out every lost sheep affirming the priceless value of every beloved child of God.

"Rejoice with me; I have found my lost sheep." (Luke:15: 6).

Love never stops looking for us. He will pursue us until we've returned to Him. We can pray for others who need to know that love because God never stops looking for them either. I thank God for never giving up on me and for giving me a mama who didn't give up on me either! How does it encourage you to know that God continually pursues you in love? How is He using you (like a mother) to reveal His love to others?

Happy Mother's Day!

Pastor Debbie

From Our Music Director:

Thank you to all involved in making our Good Friday cantata a success! So many people stepped up to the plate and helped it come together. It is amazing to see what this congregation can do with a little nudge ☺ Please let your friends in the choir know what you think of all their hard work and dedication!

At the request of a few folks, we will be doing a "History of Hymns" series discussing some famous (and some lesser-known) hymns. I chose "Sweet Hour of Prayer" to kick things off. It is my grandpa's favorite hymn, and one that he has sung to me plenty of times over the years.



"Sweet Hour of Prayer" #496

*Sweet hour of prayer! Sweet hour of prayer!
That calls us from a world of care,
And bids me at my Father's throne
Make all my wants and wishes known.*

*In seasons of distress and grief;
My soul has often found relief,
And oft escaped the tempter's snare
By thy return, sweet hour of prayer!*

This hymn is attributed to William Walford, a British minister who penned these stanzas in the 1840s. Thomas Salmon, a traveling preacher, helped Walford's poem to reach the mainstream by writing an article in the 1845 *New York Observer* daily section. After gaining traction there, it was set to music by the famous William Bradbury ("Just as I am", "The Solid Rock", "He Leadeth Me").

Interestingly enough, there is a bit of controversy over the real William Walford. Salmon's article describes Mr. Walford as a "blind lay preacher who owned a trinket shop in the village of Coleshill-Warwickshire." Unfortunately, the only known William Walford on record from the time period is the well-to-do Rev. William Walford of Homerton, England, who wrote several books and served as president of the Homerton Academy. While we know that preachers never embellish stories even a little bit, what are the odds of a blind trinket shop owner writing books and becoming an academy president in 1840s England? With many similarities between Walford's books and the hymn's stanzas, it seems likely that the man on record was the real author, not the blind lay preacher of Salmon's story. It remains a mystery of history.

The hymn is all about personal prayer with the Lord, an oft-neglected part of the Christian life. While we can easily spend 2-3+ hours at church each week, how often do we spend the same amount of time praying directly to God? March's Revival gave us the chance to do a 24-hour prayer vigil in 1-hour slots, and the impact of spending that amount of time focused on God was eye opening.

I challenge you to spend more time this month in personal prayer. If an hour feels intimidating, try adding a few minutes here and there. It's hard to go wrong praying more either way.

In Christ, Andrew

From the Youth Director 's desk:: Derek Thornton

Welcome to Summer 2019! The school year is ending, seniors are graduating, and the students of Avalon UMC are enjoying some much needed rest from their studies. At Avalon, however, this is the time of year when our students start to get more busy. Starting this month, on Memorial Day Weeked, we will have an event at the Lime Sink off of the Avenues to hang out with other area churches and invite some of our friends in ministry. There will be food and fellowship, games and fun on Saturday May 25th.

June looks to be a busy month, as we start off with a movie night on June 8th. This event will take place at the Youth Building. Two weeks later on Saturday, June 22, we will go down to Vashti in Thomasville to assist in some work on their property; we will be joined by several exchange students from the Dominican Republic. This looks to be an excellent time of fun and fellowship. As we move into July, we have plans for both a trip to Atlanta and for a lock-in to round out the summer. More details on those events to come.

With regards to lessons and what the Youth Group is studying, on Sunday mornings, we are continuing to read through Luke's gospel. For Sunday evenings, we are continuing are study on "How to Read the Bible?", which is designed to better understand scripture to be ale to apply it to our lives. On Wednesday nights, we return to a topical, discussion-based class, titled simply, "Conversations", which allows us to discuss some of the more pressing topics in our world today and what Scripture has to some about them.

Katie and I hope you all are doing well. Blessings to you as to you travel during the summer season, as I hope you pray for us and our students as they do the same.



Memorials Memory

Music

Jimmy Hall John & Sheila Creel
Jeannie Davis John & Sheila Creel

Mission

Hazel Sellers Mona Faye Williams

Memorials

Hazel Andrews Mary & Floyd Herman
Jimmy Hall Mary & Floyd Herman

2019 Leadership Chairpersons

SPR Committee—Terry Stumpe	UMM Lloyd Mears	Memorial Katye Reed
Trustees— Carl Ellis	Usher Lloyd Mears	
Finance— Wayne Barnette	Homebound Cheryl Laughlin	
Missions—Carolyn Rentz	Lay Leader—Sheila Creel	
S S Superintendent— Richard Griffin	Evangelism—Ann Owen	
UMW—Mona Faye Williams	Worship—Jenni Bode & Debbie Zuern	

Our own Nola Bricker has signed up to run in the Benefit/Fundraiser for the Americus Campus of The Methodist Home on June 1. Let's support Nola and The Methodist Home with our donations with a Silver Sponsorship : \$200 includes: Avalon UMC name on race t-shirt, and on race signs, and a free race entry! Thank you for your support of Nola and Missions!

Day of Prayer, May 2nd 12noon, Down Town Government Building on Pine Ave.

Stewardship of God's Kindness

Kindness is love showing mercy. Of all the fruits of God's gracious Spirit this is probably the one with which most of us are familiar. It can be summed up in one of the best known verses of the Bible: "Do unto others as you would have them do unto you." (Mt. 7:12)

We are not talking about being kind and expecting others to reciprocate that kindness, such as when we give a birthday or Christmas gift we are looking for one in return of equal value. To the contrary, we are being kind because we want to lift up and encourage someone, making their days a little better and brighter. We remember we are representing Christ, and as His we are "Little Christs" on the earth.

We are moved to be kind because we care. Since Jesus cares for us we care about others. Because we have a genuine interest in others we desire to be helpful and understanding as we reach out to minister where and when it hurts.

This is the quality of kindness that characterizes our Heavenly Father. He truly cares. He feels our pain. He lay down His life for us. He has our well-being always in His mind. "His merciful kindness is great toward us." (Ps 117:2) God's kindness can be experienced, but it can't be explained.

The Lord's advice to us is that our kindness should be such that we can do good to those who hate us, can love our enemies, bless those that curse us, and pray for those who despise us. This demonstrates that we are His people.

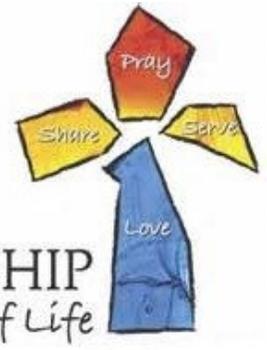
He bestows His good gifts on the believer and unbeliever, and blesses both. He asks us to do likewise. Such living requires courage. Our intentions may sometimes be misunderstood, snubbed or scorned. But we are not kind to be complimented. We are kind because He is in us and we are in Him and we are allowing Him to work through us. We are becoming like Him. We leave the result of our kindness in God's hand.

We know for certain that when we sow seeds of kindness we harvest what is planted. There will be a bountiful harvest of blessings for us and others. Life can become wonderfully rich in benefits this way. God makes sure the law of sowing and reaping never falters.

Kindness is the life and love of God apparent. Warmth, good cheer and affection exude from those who live with an active attitude of unselfish kindness. Such kindness lifts loads, speaks peace and inspiration and dispels darkness. It has far-reaching effects.

When we operate in His kindness, we leave behind a legacy of love. For goodness and mercy will follow us all the days of our lives.

Janet Beard, Stewardship Chairperson



49'ers Senior Luncheon Avalon UMC

Fellowship Hall

Next Luncheon:

May 21, 2019 11:30am

\$7.00 per person

Third Tuesday of each month. We meet in the Fellowship Hall. Lunch provided by Kaye Blalock, Southern Elegance Catering. Come bring a friend and enjoy making new friends who love the Lord! Everyone is invited. We continue to have wonderful meals and entertainment. Each month is different.

United Methodist Women will honor our two high school graduates, James David Ethridge & Hunter Bush, at Family Night Fellowship on Wednesday, May 15, 6pm. Plan to come and celebrate with us. Bring your good wishes and encouragements as we celebrate their accomplishments as we celebrate their accomplishments. Please make your supper reservations.

Wednesday Family Night Fellowship (FNF)

PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS

May Menus

FNF Begins at 6PM

May 1—Pork Loin Calico Rice Butter peas, Dessert

May 8—Baked chicken, Macaroni & cheese, Black eyed peas, Dessert.

May 15—Meatloaf, Mashed potatoes, Butter beans, Dessert.

May 22—Chicken pot pie, Green beans, Salad, Dessert.

May 29—Hamburger steak, Rice & gravy Turnips, Dessert.

Server Rotation: Volunteers

Please be mindful that if your reservations are not cancelled by noon on Tuesday, you are responsible for payment.

Cost: Adults- - - - - \$6.50

Children under 12 years- - \$3.50

Take outs- - - - - \$.50 extra

Pastor—Rev. Debbie Cone
Music Director—Andrew Bode
Pianist/Oranist— Vicki Wilburn

Youth Director— Derek Thornton
Secretary— Elaine Tarpley
Finance—Donna Carswell

3018 Gillionville Rd., Albany, GA 31721-2908

Pastor's email: debbiedcc@att.net

Pastor's Home Number: 229- 432-2266

Church : Tel: 229-436-2056

Fax: 229-436-2011

Email: avalonumc@gmail.com

Website: www.avalonumchurch.org

Regular Sunday Schedule:

9:45am Sunday School **11am** Morning Worship **6pm** Evening Worship

THOSE WHO SERVE

Offering Stewards May 5—Nola Bricker/Janet Beard

May 12—Ann Owen/Kim Glass

May 19—Bill Beard/Ellen Branch

May 26—Wayne Barnette/Sheila Creel

Ushers: May 5 — Lloyd Mears, Ron Wolfe, Carl Ellis, Max Collins,
Richard Griffin, Robbie Collins, Josh Hammond

May 12— Avalon Youth

May 19—Lloyd Mears, Ron Wolfe, Carl Ellis, Max Collins,
Richard Griffin, Robbie Collins, Josh Hammond

May 26—Lloyd Mears, Ron Wolfe, Carl Ellis, Max Collins,
Richard Griffin, Robbie Collins, Josh Hammond

Prayer Room: May 5—Homer Milliner May 12—John or Sherry Tracy

May 19—Carolyn Rentz May 26—Mona Faye Williams

Nursery: May 5—Ann Owen May 12—Tina Justice

May 19— Terri Stumpe May 26—Dollie Dollar

Sound Technician: Bob Smith

Trustee of the Month May: Debbie Zuern

If Trustee is unable to be at an event your month it is your responsibility to get someone to fill in for you. Buildings need to be locked after an event.

Circle Of Concern:

Nikki Daniel, Gene & Laverne Hawkins, Dorothy Griffin, Rebecca Smith, Ursula Gaydosh, Mike Ling, Bobby Reese (friend of Barry & Tina Justice), Rebekah Griffin, Gail Mears, Wendy McLeod, Beverly Reese (Bobby Bruner's daughter), Martha Darsey, David Michels (Brother of Cheryl Laughlin), Ginger Chamberlain (friend of Cheryl Laughlin), family of Fred English, Glenn Stanford, (Son of Jan Beard,) Jim Warner, Phyl Strawbridge, Jane Everett (sister of Debra Harris), Glenn Creech (Agnes McCorkle son in law), Kathy Hanson, Murray Blackstock, Wilda Rutland, Bill Williams, (friend of Beth West), Ike Hopkins, Bob Smith, Jerry Lang, Molly Arnold & Nick Roosevelt (friends of Andrew Bode).

If you know of anyone that needs to be added or removed please call the church office.

Home Bound – Please join us in this ministry to these members:

Barry & Nikki Daniel, Ann Dollar, Ed & Nelle Ennis, Gene & Laverne Hawkins, Gay Sheffield, Rebecca Smith, Joyce Waters, Kitty Tomlinson, Bill Coward, Cora Dasher, Lola Moreland, George Anderson, Wilda Rutland.

BIBLE STUDY

Bible Study led by Sherry Tracy: The new Bible Study will begin meeting on Wednesday, May 1, 2019 at 1:30pm to 3pm in the children's building. The study will be from the book, "not a fan"