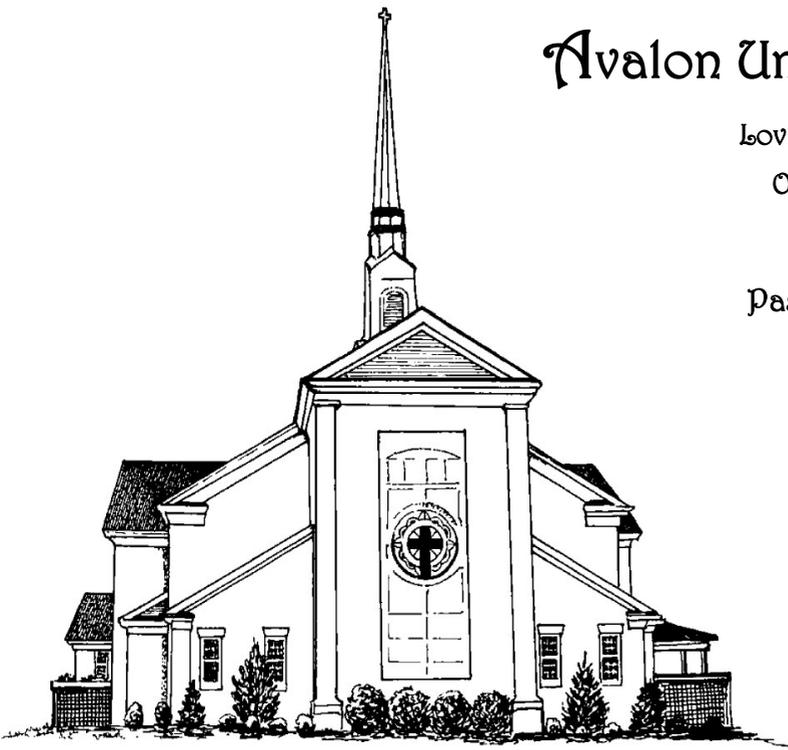


# Avalon United Methodist Church

Loving God, Loving People  
On Our Christian Journey

Pastor Debbie Conge

February 1, 2019



## LET'S WORK TOGETHER

As I have thought about this concept, I read this devotional by Kelly Carver and couldn't have said it better myself, so I wanted to share it with you.

**Proverbs 6:6-8** says, "Go to the ant, you sluggard; Consider its ways and be wise! It has no commander, no overseer or ruler, yet it stores its provisions in summer and gathers its food at harvest."

The next time you see a colony of ants, notice their orderly lines, the heavy loads they carry, and their unwavering persistence.

Ants are mentioned only twice in the Old Testament, but as Solomon speaks about work ethic in Proverbs 6, he praises ants!

But why ants?

1. Ants, although small, are incredibly hardworking. They tirelessly leave home to provide for the colony, traveling long distance for resources. They lift up to fifty times their body weight to carry food. As Christians, we are called to serve the Lord in whatever we do, no matter how tedious or difficult.
2. Ants value their colony. They build extensive nests together and share heavy loads with one another. In fact, Arizona State University biologists write, "Most ant colonies are so united toward the common purposes of survival, growth, and reproduction, that they behave like a single organism. Similarly, we as individual members form one body of Christ, working together for His kingdom. We have different gifts and different callings, but each unique piece contributes critical parts to the whole. Scripture encourages believers to build each other up in this work, hold ourselves accountable and honor our community.
3. Ants live in an organized hierarchy but without a sense of rank or inferiority. Although a queen ant leads and sustains the colony, she heavily depends on drone ants and worker ants to further the community. The colony recognizes leadership and structure, yet no "supervisor" nor "commander" ants ensure subordinate ants do their jobs. Instead the ants' diligence comes from an innate drive to contribute, each from their valued role.
4. Ants work according to the season. They carry out appointed tasks in their appointed time, whether securing provisions during hot summers or gathering food during fall harvests. Ants embrace seasons of plenty to prepare for seasons of want. Their work may seem monotonous or uninteresting, but these tasks carry them through winter. In wise timing they find security and sustenance.

We follow a similar pattern in the seasons God gives-whether seasons of the calendar year, church year, or life cycle. We rest and rejuvenate during vacations or academic breaks. We anticipate Easter through the somber season of Lent. We spend months of pregnancy preparing for motherhood, or years of work earning a promotion. We sow wisdom and discipline into growing children. We can work well in each season, even if it seems never-ending, tedious, or pointless. Each season offers a way to bless our lives, the lives of our families, our body of believers and our community, and we will reap what we sow.

Through even His smallest creatures, God provides a thoughtful model: persevere in hard work, prize community, pinpoint our role, and prepare through each season. Let's look to God for direction, then learn from the ants to work well for His kingdom.

In HIS Service, Pastor Debbie

## From our Music Director:



### Behind the Scenes:

There is always something to be thankful for when it comes to the Avalon choir. Even though it can be hard work, being a part of this group is worth every second!

Each Sunday we are here early, putting the finishing touches on the week's anthem. Some members even take it upon themselves to warm up their voices on the way, so that they can give their very best. After a quick prayer, it is time to robe up and head to worship!

The real fun comes on Wednesday nights. Rehearsing music is a process, and we are constantly striving to be better, learning new things, and challenging each other to be better musicians. When we need a break, fortunately, people are there to chime in with comments, funny stories, and plenty of updates about family and friends. It's a close, yet welcoming community, and over time you get to know who's sitting next to you, who's in your section, and all the news about the people around you. They get to know you too! It's our own "small group." All of this goes on while sharing a great activity in common, and praising the Lord. Yes, there is plenty to be thankful for in the choir.

In Christ,  
Andrew Bode

## From the Youth Minister's Desk:



Is it already February? Where did January go? It seems like we just celebrated the New Year. Time sure does fly when you are staying busy!

As we continue to move along in 2019, our students have started two brand new lesson series that have started off with excellent reception. On Wednesday evening, we are working through the miracles of Jesus as recorded in the book of John in a series titled, "The Grave Robber," highlighting how Jesus creates life even amongst the most broken, dead lives.

On Sunday mornings, we continue to make our way through Lukes gospel, as we have since before the New Year, however, Sunday evenings we have started a series called, "How to Read the Bible," which focuses on the broad story fo Scripture and God's plan for the world, while learning about the history and background of God's word. It is along this same vein that we will be taking our trip to the Biblical History Center in La Grange, GA.

Other events over the next couple months include a lock-in with several local area churches, a trip to a Braves baseball game, our annual concert in Atlanta, and doing service work with some visiting Dominican Republic teenagers. Other events are to come, so be on the lookout for updates.

"By this everyone will know that you are my disciples if you love one another." John 13:35

### DID YOU KNOW?

In 2017 every dollar given to a South Georgia UM Church had 90 cents which stayed in each local church. The remaining 10 cents went to Conference apportionments, District apportionments, and Conference/General Advance mission specials.

Are you interested in joining the Prayer Chain Ministry? Please respond to Church Office. The list is being updated and you are encouraged to join this powerful ministry!

Diane Barronton 156 Glen Arven Dr. Leesburg, GA 31763 joined Avalon on January 13, 2019. We welcome her to the family of Avalon.

### **2019 Leadership Chairpersons**

SPR Committee—Terry Stumpe	UMM	Lloyd Mears
Trustees— Carl Ellis	Usher	Lloyd Mears
Finance— Wayne Barnette	Homebound	Cheryl Laughlin
Missions—Carolyn Rentz		
Evangelism—Ann Owen		
UMW—Mona Faye Williams		

# The Stewardship of Joy



The second fruit of the spirit mentioned in Galatians 5:22-23(KJV) is joy. Without the first, "love," the others cannot be manifest in a Christian's life because His love is the "driver" of all the others. The Scripture makes it clear that God's Holy Spirit has implanted in the believer's heart the seed of the spiritual fruit ready to germinate. He would have us cultivate them by using His power that works within us. Each fruit is one of His attributes.

Joy is not the same as happiness which is a physical, worldly thing. Joy is a spiritual force which emanates from the character of God. The "old nature" cannot produce spiritual fruit. When we praise God, magnify His name, thank Him, honor and glorify Him we are expressing our joy in who He is, what He has done, and what He will do.

There is no joy like that we experience when a lost person comes to the Lord. The angels in heaven rejoice over the salvation of one lost soul. And what about our own salvation? Habakkuk 3:18 says, "I will rejoice in the Lord, I will joy in the God of my salvation." Habakkuk trembled at God's majesty. He said, "The Lord is my strength, and he will make me to walk upon mine high places." The Lord will do no less for us when we serve and honor Him and allow Him to help us produce the fruit He has placed within us.

The Lord brings to His children joy unspeakable. When we recognize and acknowledge our joy in knowing Him and belonging to Him, then we begin to "rejoice" in Him, making joyful noises unto Him. Ps 98:4; 100:1. We express our joy by praying, reading and studying His work and magnifying Him to the world and to other Christians. We allow Him to be our "Gardener" by constantly "tending" the "soil" and energizing us to work outwardly the sweet-smelling fruits of our spirits, which will bless those with whom we come in contact, and attract them to Him.

We are to remember that we bear the name of Christian which means "Little Christ." Since we represent Him to the world, we must not "lie on Him" by not emulating Him. When the world looks at us, they should be seeing Jesus. We are full of joy because He has saved us, resides within us, is preparing a place in Heaven for us, ever liveth to make intercession for us and is the One who enables us to produce good fruit from our gardens.

Because of this we should be full of joy, even when our circumstances take a turn for the worse, simply because we have Him. He has said He will never leave us nor forsake us. Heb 13:5. Doesn't this make you want to shout for joy?

Exemplifying good stewardship of His attributes which He has placed within us will contribute to our joy and bring pleasure to our Saviour as well as those around us. The fruit of joy comes under the umbrella of His love, so we could add to the old song that the world will know that we are Christians by our joy! And all of God's children say, "Amen!"

Janet Beard, Stewardship Chairperson

## 49'ers Senior Luncheon Avalon UMC

### Fellowship Hall

#### **Next Luncheon:**

**February 19, 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.

## **Wednesday Family Night Fellowship (FNF)**

### PLEASE MAKE RESERVATIONS

#### February Menus

#### FNF Begins at 6PM

Feb. 6—Roast beef, Rice pilaf, Zipper peas, Dessert

Feb. 13—Baked chicken, Broccoli casserole, Green beans, Dessert

Feb. 20—Pork loin, Squash casserole, Black eyed peas, Desert

Feb. 27—Fried chicken, Mashed potatoes, Butterbeans, 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

## **Southwest District Upcoming Events**

Feb. 9, 19-Multicultural Luncheon Celebration 12-2pm Cordele

Apr. 27, 2019—Wesley Glen Ministries Fish Fry

Jan. 15-24, 2020—Holy Land (Call District Office)

**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** Feb. 3—Bill Beard/Ellen Branch  
Feb. 10—Wayne Barnette/Sheila Creel  
Feb. 17—Katy Reed/Jenny Collins  
Feb. 24—Nola Bricker/Janet Beard

**Ushers:**

Feb. 3 — Lloyd Mears, Ron Wolfe, Carl Ellis, Max Collins,  
Richard Griffin, Robbie Collins, Josh Hammond  
Feb.10— Avalon Youth  
Feb. 17—Lloyd Mears, Ron Wolfe, Carl Ellis, Max Collins,  
Richard Griffin, Robbie Collins, Josh Hammond  
Feb. 24—Lloyd Mears, Ron Wolfe, Carl Ellis, Max Collins,  
Richard Griffin, Robbie Collins, Josh Hammond

**Prayer Room:** Feb. 3—Homer Milliner Feb. 10 Carolyn Rentz  
Feb. 17—Mona Faye Williams Feb. 24—Barry Justice

**Nursery:** Feb. 3—Dollie Dollar                      Feb. 10—Kim Glass  
Feb. 17—Nancy Newman                              Feb. 24—Linda Stevens

**Sound Technician:** Bob Smith

**Trustee of the Month of February:** Floyd Herman

**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, Hazel Sellars, Will Hammond (13 Yr. old Nashville GA.), Wendy McLeod, Beverly Reese (Bobby Bruner's daughter), , Martha Nicholson, Martha Darsey, David Michels (Brother of Cheryl Laughlin), Ginger Chamberlain (friend of Cheryl Laughlin), 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 (Martha Nicholson daughter), Murray Blackstock, Wilda Rutland.

***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, Fred English, Ed & Nelle Ennis, Gene & Laverne Hawkins, Gay Sheffield, Rebecca Smith, Joyce Waters, Kitty Tomlinson, Bill Coward, Cora Dasher, Lola Moreland, George Anderson, Wilda Rutland.

**Memorials**

**Missions**

Daniel L. Williams	Mona Faye Williams
Slater & Odessa Norris	Mona Faye Williams
Archie L Norris	Mona Faye Williams
Chris Hopkins	Mona Faye Williams

**Honor**

John & Sheila Creel	Lucille Crouder
Robert Fowler	Disciples S.S. Class
Wayne Barnette	Disciples S.S. Class