

The Way Forward

The Way Forward...Final Thoughts

Time has passed quickly SINCE I first shared with the Session the desire to retire in September. Elders, leaders, and members have been involved in forward thinking and planning and this has made the time quickly pass. I was officially "retired" at the most recent meeting of Presbytery on Saturday, August 19 but realize from the heart that the final worship service on September 3 is the day it becomes reality. What follows after that worship service will be the writing of letters of appreciation for support and friendship over the years. It is continued therapy for me. I have already discovered that letters written by members of my first congregation (Petersburg, WV) and letters from Avondalers serve the same purpose. The reading of

those notes and letters will take time. I shall forever be thankful to those who served on the Pastoral Nominating Committee who called Nadja and me to Avondale back in 1987 and to those who worked long hours to assure that my retirement would be a time of creative celebration.

I know the membership of Avondale well and believe that this creativity will unfold into the relationship with your interim pastor and the person whom God calls next to serve with you. Name the fears, affirm your faith, and become excited about what the future holds! The Session of the past three years, perhaps unknowingly, has

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"O Lord...We offer to you our grief, ourselves, and our hopes... we pray that you melt us and mold us and fill us..."

Interim Pastor Search Update

We celebrate communion with John Earl on the first Sunday in September. For the remaining Sundays in September, Rev. Christopher Lee will lead worship.

For the four Sundays in October, we welcome Rev. Annette Bedford as preacher. Rev. Bedford entered the ministry as a second career. She worked with Duke Power and IBM as an organizational consultant. She graduated from Union Theological Seminary here in Charlotte in 2009 and served as minister of Fishing Creek Presbyterian Church in Chester, SC. She now assists with the chaplaincy program at Mercy Hospital.

Worship in October includes World Communion

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"When the world gets out of hand, I remember the Hand of God." - Dr. Earl, 1987

"Name the fears, affirm your faith, and become excited about what the future holds!" - Dr. Earl, 2017

cont. Interim Pastor

Sunday and Reformation Sunday in this 500th anniversary year of the Reformation. Rev. Bedford will be assisted by Chris Lee and other members of Avondale.

Our search for our Interim Minister continues steadily. We have several interviews under our belt and are diligently working to find the person that God has called to Avondale at this time. We appreciate your continued prayers as we continue our work. We are making strong headway.

As a reminder, the interim pastor position is a full-time position, and in our Presbytery, ministers must have completed a special course(s) on being an interim pastor. A church may not form the Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC) that looks for the next permanent minister, until the interim pastor is in place. Rev. Bedford is a "supply pastor" to bridge to our interim pastor. She will be leading worship.

Please pray that we are led to the person who will help us best prepare for a new senior pastor at Avondale while helping us stay on track with worship and mission.

Our committee: John Magee, Barbara Darling, Rich Worf, Lynn Wilkerson, Betty Boyd, and Bill Caldwell

"Let's keep the ship moving forward!" Rev. Lee

cont. The Way Forward

worked hard for what is to come. Avondalers should be confident about who you are and the direction to which God is calling. You are a remarkable congregation and God continues to bless you.

Because Nadja and I have been so blessed to be a part of Avondale, it has been difficult for us to come to the realization that we are doing some things for the last time. The last handbell piece, the last sermon, the last children's moment, the last sharing of Sacrament. Our final worship together on September 3 will be a confirmation of this. Again, no sermon preached but a service of worship in which there will be a litany for the closure of our ministry and the sharing of Communion as the Body of Christ. It is essential to remember who we are and to whom we belong.

Perhaps my last function of ministry, when departing alone from the grounds of Avondale, will be to make sure the doors are locked and the lights are turned off. Now it's your turn. All of you. God has given to all of you the joy and privilege of belonging.....

"O Lord, help us not to get stuck in history. We offer to you our grief, ourselves, and our hopes, and we pray that you will indeed take us and melt us and mold us and fill us that our lives together will reflect the saving love of Jesus Christ." Edward White

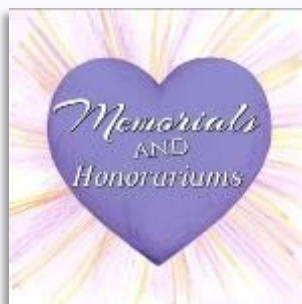
Yours in Christ, John

Check Requests / Expense Reimbursements

Forms and Instructions available online: <http://tinyurl.com/APCCheckRequest>

As a reminder, check requests need to be approved before submitting for reimbursement. Dr. Earl was often able to approve a request when one was submitted without approval, because he was involved in ministry and budget; however, with John retired, we need the Ministry Team Leader's approval. Leader approval via an email is accepted.

Memorials & Honorariums



In Memory of: Mike Cathey

Given by:

Elizabeth & Eric Hasselman
Connie T. Stout
Darlene & John Beard

In Memory of: Betty Marvin

Given by: NYS Convention and Cultural Events Office

In Honor of: John Earl and Nadja Sefcik-Earl

Given by: Theodore D. Morrison

Donating *In Memory of / In Honor of* just got easier:

www.avondalepresbychurch.org/donate



Birthdays in September

1	Ben Miller Evan Michael Harrison Hannah Stockwell Sandy Brodof	9	Brenda Coble James Harris	22	Catherine Mitchell
2	Floyd McClung, Jr Jim Flowers	11	Chris Cuvillo	23	Keely McKenzie Marcus Mitchell Shawn Love Sydney Jordan
3	Stewart Farris	13	Jerry McClure Karey Marren Will Tomey	24	Steve Annas William Dunlap
4	Caroline Starnes Grant Caldwell Jessica Wardlaw	14	Chris Hipps	25	Brett McCarthy Debby Sacra Sharon McGinn
5	Alex Powell Anne Hamilton	15	Addison McNeil Amanda Seals Joanne Sahlie Sande Darby	26	Mason Todd
6	Andrew Flowers Mary Catherine Suydam Matt Mitchell	16	Bill Parrish Sabine Schwieman	27	Jane Pearl Swart
8	Taylor E. Shanks	20	Rich Stanley	29	Caleb Toney Lee Weigle Tim McLeod
		21	Shea Chambers		
		22	Ainsley Chambers		

Wedding Anniversaries in September

6	Lisa Miller and Rich Worf 2014	19	Ellen Watson 1953
8	Jim and Christie Flowers 1979		Carolyn and Aaron Wright 2015
9	P. K. Kalevas 1948	24	Ann Gregory 1955
10	Bill and BJ Byrd 1983		Jed and Hannah Wilkerson 2016
11	Ronnie Holm 1954	29	Dennis and Susan Brandau 1984
13	Louise Chambers 1970	30	Charles and Karen Eakes 1995

Joys & Concerns

Concern for Members:

Dennis Brandau; Ruby Cathey; Rachel Darling; Rose Graham; Sue Haag; Chuck Hendrix; Bordie McCloskey; Martha Meunier; Shep and Liz Moore; Patti Oswald; Bill Parrish; Kelly Platt; Ann and Ryan Patterson; David and Libby Phillips; and Martha Rogers.

Concern for Family and Friends:

Barbara Aylor; the Blottman Family; Rita Braswell; Scott Braswell; Mary Cerena; Paul Fairleigh; Betty Gamble; Carol Hatfield; Laura Henderson; Alice Martin; Ray Moss; Deanna Murphy; Mike Page; Claire Refaey; Warren Snider; Hunter Stubbs; Unika Tillman; and Tom Yarborough.

Church Triumphant:

We extend our Christian sympathy...

Martin Cameron, brother of Kay Cameron Conner, entered the church triumphant on August 24, 2017. Born in North Carolina, he resided in Colorado. [Read more.](#)

Betty J. Marvin, our member, entered the church triumphant August 18, 2017 (b. April 17, 1925). Services were held August 26. [Read more.](#)

James Brandau, younger brother of Dennis Brandau, entered the church triumphant on August 7, 2017.

Retirement:

We extend love and support...

John Earl and Nadja Sefcik-Earl

Mission has approved a Special Offering for PCUSA Disaster Assistance

TROPICAL STORM HARVEY

CHANGES

"We all have changes in our lives. From day to day we need God to help us get through whatever may come our way. Some days we may be shouting, "Praise God!" while other times we may be crying out, "I need a miracle!" Whatever the day may bring, changes will come and we need to have a godly mindset in order to handle them."

from "Changes: God's Opportunity to Bless" by Martha Noebel

Joys & Concerns

Baptisms:

Baptized in the name of the Father, of the Son and of the Holy Spirit...

- Joshua Sutherland, son of Adrian and Wynanda Sutherland, on July 30, 2017.
- Soren Carl and Oscar Curtis Miller, twin sons of Ben and Renee Miller, on August 27, 2017.
- Alevia Taye and John Frederick Callaway, daughter and son of John and Joy Callaway, on August 27, 2017.

Old Friend:

Do you remember Garrett Bugg? He shared a birth announcement with Avondale. Born to Garrett and Alison Bugg, and his older sister Emilia, on February 18, 2017, was son Garrett Joseph Bugg.



Member Directory Online

Find phone numbers and more!

www.avondalepresbychurch.org/directory

Password: member

Hands & Hearts

MUSIC

Join our Music Ministry

Our music team invites you to join in music. Worship Choir and Band invite you to sing and/or play instruments. Music reading, knowledge is helpful but not required. An open heart and willingness is needed in helping to lead worship with musical gifts. Practices are Thursday evenings. Please contact [Regina Love](#) or [Rich Stanley](#).

NURSERY

Care of Our Children

To shine your love and care on our children, and enable parents of young ones to enjoy worship. Please sign-up with Dee Dee McDonald at graynemma5@gmail.com.

AVONDALE ADVENTURES

Join the Adventure!

Avondale Adventures calls for adults to serve as table conversation facilitators during the 10 week, Wednesday evening program that begins October 4. To join in, please call or email the Church Office. Sande@avondalepresbychurch.org



MEMBER CARE

Join the Adventure!

Avondale is known for the way we care for each other. With John retired, we need additional Hands & Hearts. Cook, prayer, visit... there are many ways you can help. Betty Chambers: bettychambers529@gmail.com

USHERS/GREETERS

First faces of Avondale

To share your warmth and give welcome to all, please sign-up with Lynn Wilkerson. lbwilkerson@att.net

WOMEN'S RETREAT

Looking for a few good women

...to help plan and organize the spring 2018 Women's Retreat, our annual memorable gathering weekend. Suzi Thornberry: sthornberry@carolina.rr.com

FALL FESTIVAL

Fall is in the air

Help plan this exciting event at Avondale on October 14! Contact: Alice CuvIELLO alicefitchett@gmail.com or Carolyn Wright carolyn.fiala@gmail.com

Tree in Sacred Garden

...not an easy task

After obtaining several professional opinions and getting a “biopsy” of the tree base, the diagnosis is the large oak tree in the Sacred Garden is getting weaker and weaker. The Property Committee has recommended it is time to take down the large beloved oak.

This is a sad action we need to take but it is to be proactive instead of reactive. You might remember a very large limb falling last year and how it landed “perfectly”. And when I say “perfectly”, I mean nothing was damaged. It jolted our thinking a bit because the limb that fell could have damaged the Sacred Garden.

Taking down the tree will not be an easy task. The tree is estimated to be about 100 years old (...think of all of the things that have changed around the tree over the years). It is tall, broad and in a hard to reach location, not to mention the importance of the structures that it now shades. Getting large equipment into the garden is impossible. The job will take days, equipment will have to reach over the hedge and the Sacred Garden and some parking will be blocked. Looking to the future, another tree of substantial size will be planted to replace the beloved oak.

Tree in Sacred Garden

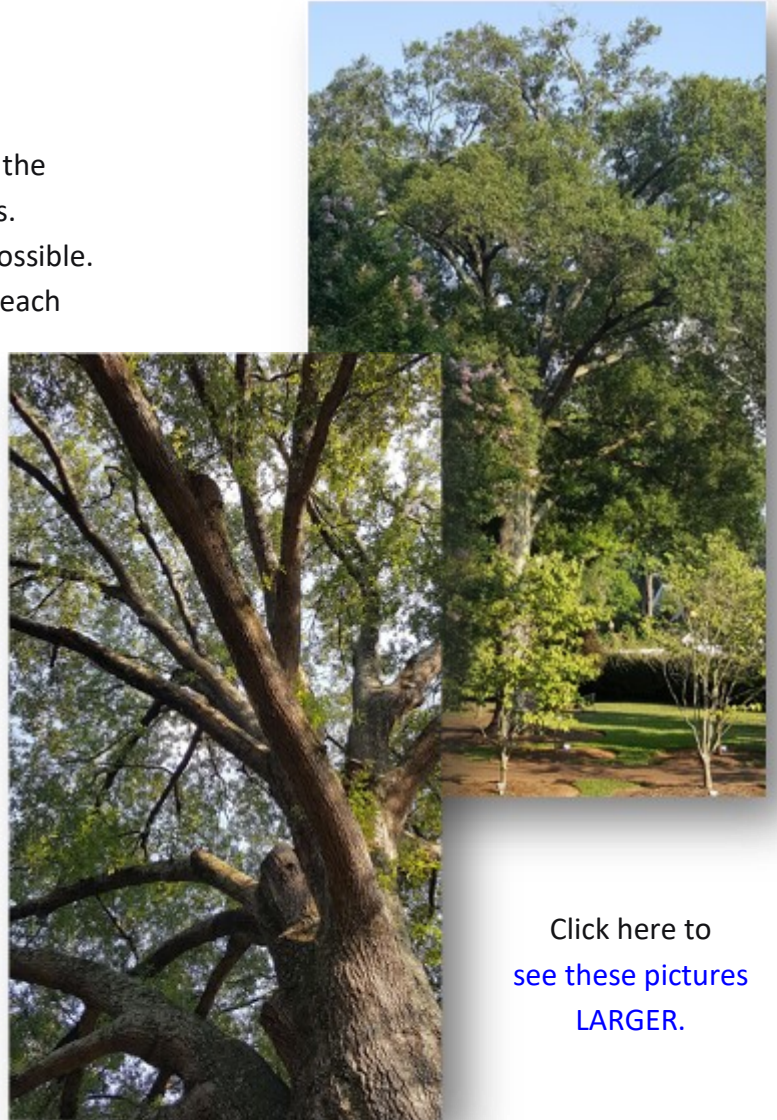
...Update

The big oak tree in our Sacred Garden will be removed on October 5, 2017. It will take one day to take down this tree and a large portion of the parking lot will need to be blocked off. Following, the parking lot will actually be blocked for a few more days as crew finishes removing the debris.

Join the Property Team

...seeking more Hands & Hearts

I think that I shall never see
A poem lovely as a tree.
A tree whose hungry mouth is prest
Against the earth's sweet flowing breast;
A tree that looks at God all day,
And lifts her leafy arms to pray;
A tree that may in Summer wear
A nest of robins in her hair;
Upon whose bosom snow has lain;
Who intimately lives with rain.
Poems are made by fools like me,
But only God can make a tree.
-- Joyce Kilmer



[Click here to see these pictures LARGER.](#)

ABC Ministry

Bethlehem Center K-5 Out of School Program Moves to Southview Recreational Center

Bethlehem Center programming for K-5 students has moved to Southview Recreation Center, located at West Boulevard and Billy Graham Parkway (1720 Vilma Street). This site is about 15 minutes from Avondale and once housed the Boys and Girls Club of Charlotte. The program will continue to serve students from Southside and Brookhill homes. Volunteers from Avondale who work with the K-5 group will work at the Southview center.

The Bethlehem Center ("BC") administrative offices will remain at the main campus on Baltimore Avenue. Family meals and family programs for all grades – Kindergarten through grade 12 – will continue to be planned at the Baltimore Avenue campus.

This move also opens up the BC campus for many possibilities for programming, fellowship, and other opportunities Avondale may want to plan with BC families and/or the broader communities of Southside and Brookhill. Avondale leaders are being trained this week on proper opening and closing procedures of the BC facility.

The move of the K-5 students will not affect the Avondale-Bethlehem Center (ABC) Out of School program for middle and high school students.

The Bethlehem Center continues to expand its reach and improve opportunities for the children and communities it serves.

Donnell Washington, Teen Services Coordinator, sent a big thank you to all for an excellent **End of Summer Showcase**. "I couldn't think of a better way to end the summer; you guys ROCK! I strongly believe we're moving closer and closer, I can see the excitement amongst the [BC] team and Avondale congregation. The world could use some of that loving right now," said Donnell.



Volunteer to Work with BC and ABC Programs

To volunteer for Bethlehem Center and/or with the Avondale-Bethlehem Center teen program, please complete the volunteer application located at www.avondalepresbychurch.org. Send your application to the Bethlehem Center as directed on the application. You will be notified when your background check is complete, after which you will be scheduled for BC volunteer training.

During the BC training, you will learn more about the BC programs and volunteer opportunities. You will learn how to log volunteer hours – these records help the BC when they apply for grants. Part of the training also deals with child abuse and neglect. You may also need to attend Avondale's Child Youth Protection policy training; you will be notified by Avondale if this is the case.

School Supplies Drive

Approximately 20 book bags were collected for Bethlehem Center students! Also, ASAP collected school supplies for Sedgely Middle School.



Avondale News

Youth Kick-Off

Sunday, Sept 10 / 11:00 AM - 4:00 PM
at Fellowship Point

Youth fellowship gatherings resume in September, starting with the Youth Kick-Off. The 2017-18 Youth Fellowship schedule should be approved and ready after the Kick-Off.



Lip Sync Contest, Joke-Off, chocolate syrup, raw eggs... Family Fun Night was a blast!



Vacation Bible School Recap

Our 2017 summer bible camp was held July 31 to August 4. Over 40 children attended our "Maker Fun Factory: Created by God, Built for a Purpose" camp! With Kelly Platt, Libby Thompson, Lyn Sweet, Lynn Wilkerson, John Earl as "the inventor, Ian Victor", and many, many adults and middle school youth as leaders, volunteers, nourishers, and memory makers... the camp was a huge success!

Avondale Adventures..... begins October 4!

Come "ROCK" with us as we learn about rocks in the Bible. Wednesdays, 5:30 to 7:30 PM, October 4* through December 13, 2017. K-5th graders will enjoy dinner, Bible, recreation, crafts and music. The Adventure Choir Christmas Musical will be shared on December 3. *See the required Parent Registration Meeting.

Adventure Dates:

*Sept 27 - Avondale Adventures Parent Registration Meeting / 6:30 PM
Oct 4-Dec 13 - Avondale Adventures 5:30 to 7:30 PM on Wed
Dec 3 - Avondale Adventures Musical Time TBD

ASAP News: Attention All Seniors

Please make plans to join us for our ASAP Luncheon and program in September on the 25th at noon in the Fellowship Hall. ALL seniors are invited to join us for a delicious meal and a great program. Author Joy Callaway will share with us the adventure of writing her second book, "Secret Sisters". If you have not attended an ASAP meeting, this will be a great opportunity to join in the fun. If interested, please contact Caroline White or Brenda Coble.

Bunco: An Invitation to Ladies of All Ages

Bunco will begin its 7th year of fun on Friday, Sept 1 at 6:30 PM in the Fellowship Hall. For wonderful fellowship, lots of laughter, great snacks, and a mission focus, please join us.

A \$5 donation to play goes to a mission each month. If you are interested in joining a great group of Ladies of all ages, call Brenda Coble 980-297-4997 or Betty Patterson 704-609-8831 for details. 2017-18:

Feb 2	
Sept 1	Mar 2
Oct 6	Apr 6
Nov 3	May 4
Jan 5	and June 1

Basketball Season Approaches

Basketball season begins again soon.

Sept 15 - Registration Opens

Oct 15 - Registration Deadline

Nov - Practices Begin first week of Nov

We are glad to have Zachary "Ziggy" Barjona return this season as our Basketball Program Coordinator.

www.avondalepresbychurch.org/basketballministry

"Paper for Water" by our K-5 Sunday School

Thanks to the Session and congregation for donating \$501.87 to the "Paper to Water" Mission. The children are so grateful. Paper for Water's primary mission is to bring water and the Word to the Thirsty, one piece of paper at a time. To learn more visit www.paperforwater.org.

Avondale Children's Center

The Avondale Children's Center, a 5-star rated center, has openings now for 4 and 5 year olds. Please help spread the news! Interested families should contact the Children's Center directly at 704-377-6960 or www.avondalechildrenscenter.com.

Youth Fall Plant Sale

Going on Aug 30 to Sept 11
Pansies, violas, snaps, herbs, kale, cabbage, hosta, and perennials.

Coordinators: Paige Hamilton
and Jane Shumate

[Order Forms on our website](http://www.avondalepresbychurch.org)
beginning August 30.



John & Nadja Online

Check out our webpage dedicated to all things John & Nadja. Watch the video, or a longer version with bloopers, see the "Quiz Show" slide show, and enjoy pictures. www.avondalepresbychurch.org/johnandnaja



Avondale Presbyterian Church
 2821 Park Road
 Charlotte, NC 28209

Newsletter Publishing Schedule

Avondale Avenues is published monthly on the last Tuesday of the month. Content deadline for the next newsletter is a week prior to publication. Send submissions to caroline@avondalepresbychurch.org.

Worship in September

September 3, with Dr. John Earl

Communion service

Dr. John Earl returns from Montreat for his final worship service to celebrate the Sacrament of the Lord’s Supper.

September 10, with Rev. Christopher Lee

Matthew 18:15-20

The true gift of Christian community is the strength found in the fellowship of believers. As we embark upon a new era of pastoral leadership and ministry, it is important we remember that the ministry of the church has never, nor will it ever be about its clergy. The strength of the church and its ministry is its membership as empowered by the Holy Spirit, in service of Christ....and in Christ's Name ALONE. We invite all to WEAR RED on this day.

September 17, with Rev. Christopher Lee

Mathew 18: 21-35

Though we like to think church is the place we come to "escape the tensions of world", our lives together reflect something vastly different. In the days to come, there will be uncertainty, doubt, fear, and yes, even conflict.

Our future together will require patience and forgiveness. We often think of forgiveness as just "agreeing to disagree" or simply ACTING like we have forgiven someone, when, deep down, we really haven't. This parable illustrates what God feels about "surface-level" forgiveness and its impact on our souls.

September 24, with Rev. Christopher Lee

Jonah 3:10 - 4:11

Is God consistent? Yes. Is God unchanging? This story deals with very heavy theological concepts: the nature of God, judgment, forgiveness, anger/wrath. Jonah's relationship with God is a familiar call narrative also dealing with the prophecy of judgement against a people in conflict with God. Jonah is an ordinary person, called to do something extraordinary, and when the extraordinary happens..he complains about it. Sound familiar. This text will surely bring a smile (and immeasurable hope) to everyone's face.

October 2017, with Rev. Annette Bedford

See Interim Pastor Search Update on front page.

