

# E-Tidings

**Avon E-Tidings**

**Avon Congregational Church**



**February 17, 2026**

## **A Message from the Pastor**

"Please offer a warm welcome to Diane Parker, our new Office Manager. We appreciate your patience as she learns the ropes. As you know, the Office Manager is the hub of church, the in-box for all of our ministries and many of our requests. Read below Diane's bio.



Diane Parker has recently joined our Avon Congregational Church family as Office Manager. Diane comes to us with a great deal of office management and finance experience, most recently, 20 years working with Architectural / Interior Design and Landscape Architectural firms and large corporations.

She calls Simsbury, Connecticut home but comes originally from San Antonio, Texas. Diane grew up in a Spanish speaking home, with her mom being from Mexico. As a single mom, Diane raised two daughters who call Philadelphia and Los Angeles home. Her most recent family addition is a "friendly" pit bull named Howie.

Diane is still figuring out what her hobbies are - but "social butterfly" seems to be working best. She enjoys taking long walks with her dog, antique shopping and reading crime novels.

Blessings,

Pastor Chris



**Coffee with the Pastor - Our next meet-up is Wednesday, February 18 at 10 AM at the Coffee Trade** (21 West Main St.). Join us for conversation and fellowship. Pop in or stay for the hour. See you there!

**The 2026 Flower Sign Up Chart is up!** We are looking for donations of flower bouquets for Sunday Worship Services. Sign up on the bulletin board in the main hall. Questions? Contact Trudy Desmangles at 860-306-8377 or [Trudy.desmangles@gmail.com](mailto:Trudy.desmangles@gmail.com).



**Volunteers Needed for Sunday Coffee Hour - Sign up today!** Our weekly coffee hour is a wonderful opportunity for fellowship and connection. We are currently seeking volunteers to provide simple snacks - see which dates are still available on the main hall bulletin board.

**Worship and Hospitality Volunteers for Communion Sunday, February 18<sup>th</sup>:** Reader – Cail Alvord, Usher – Barbara Ruppert, Trustee – Pastor Chris, Videographer – Donna Lynn Young, Coffee Hour Host - Gail Alvord, Katy Alvord

**February 18th, 7 pm. Ash Wednesday, A Brief Service with Imposition of Ashes**



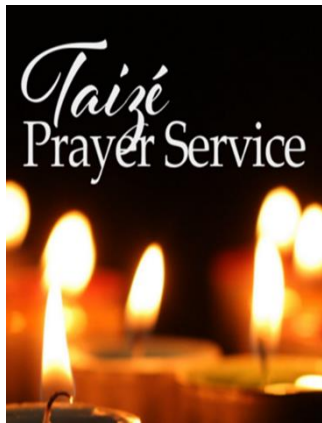
Ash Wednesday is a solemn reminder of human mortality and our need for reconciliation with God, our neighbor and our self. The stark juxtaposition of this day with the celebratory feasting of Mardi Gras shows the reality of our human experience – unimaginable lament in company with unspeakable joy. This day marks the beginning of the penitential Lenten season. It is commonly observed with the imposition of ashes, reflective prayer and introspection.

## February 23rd, 6:00 pm Heritage Potluck in Fellowship Hall



Do you have a favorite dish that has been made by a family member for years and reflects your ethnic heritage? On Monday, Feb. 23 at 6:00 pm, we will have an opportunity to share the foods of our individual cultures and get to know more about our

church family. Please join us and bring your 'heritage' dish to share, along with the recipe (if you're willing) and even perhaps share a favorite family story to go along with your dish! Sign up on the Bulletin Board in the Main Hall



## March 3rd, 7 pm. Taizé Prayer, An Experience of Contemplation and Song

Take a respite from the hectic pace of life and nurture your spiritual practice. Come into the silence, a sacred place of solace and healing lit by candlelight. Hear the still small voice of God in a time of meditative silence and through petitions of prayer and song. Be filled with Spirit this Lent and beyond.

## March 2nd , 9th & 23rd at 6:30 pm AND & 5th , 12, & 26th at 10:30 am A Three Week Bible Study

Genesis, the 'In the beginning' book we all THINK we know. However, did you know there are two different creation stories, two different Noah and his Flood stories, and two stories of God's promise to Abraham? Why is this? And why do other, even more ancient Sumerian and Mesopotamian sacred writings, play into these texts?? The purpose of this study is to discover both what the meaning of these various passages meant for the ancient community seeking God and also to understand what lessons can be drawn for our own Christian faith today.



**First Friday Dinner at Avon Congregational Church, Dine In AND Take Out!! 6 West Main St., on March 6 at 5:30 – 7:00 PM.**



We know life is busy, but to live well, we must eat well! Come meet new friends from all over the Farmington Valley for a family favorite, Lasagna with traditional meat or vegetarian version. This month's hearty entrée is served with a salad, crunchy bread and our wonderful dessert buffet! Includes coffee and tea as well, to complete your dining experience. **\$20 each.** No reservations necessary. Too busy to eat in or looking for a great option to feed your friends and family at home?? Take-out is available. No fuss! For more information, call the church office at 860-678-0488 or email us at [secretary@avon-church.org](mailto:secretary@avon-church.org).



**Dinner Volunteer Sign-Ups** are on the main hall bulletin board by the office. We are looking for helpers who can assist with take-out, cook, serve the meal, clean up during and afterwards, and make a dessert. We are very thankful for all of our volunteers and look forward to another year of delicious dinners!

**Community News** - Stay warm this winter. A reminder that the State of Connecticut offers the CT Energy Assistance Program to help households cover the cost of primary heating bills, including oil, propane, electric, and gas. Please visit the website at [www.avonct.org/energyassistance](http://www.avonct.org/energyassistance), or call (860) 409-4346. Deadline is May 29, 2026.

**Wanted Your 14k gold and sterling silver** - Precious metals are being collected at Hidden Treasures for the church. broken chains, single earrings, dented silver - WE WANT IT! Thank you in advance for your donations.

**Silver Lake Summer Camp for Youth Registering NOW**

Did you know that the United Church of Christ has a beautiful summer camp with more than 60 acres of wooded land on lakeside shores in the western hills of Connecticut? Go to [www.SilverLakeCT.org](http://www.SilverLakeCT.org) to check out all the options for youth in grades 4-12 (a poster is on our bulletin boards too). Silver Lake is a place for everyone to experience nature, make new friends, and explore faith. Church members are offered scholarships for their children. See Pastor Chris for more details on this.



## An Intergenerational Mission Trip Opportunity for August

This is a meaningful multi-generational opportunity open to individuals and families (ages 13 and up). Last summer, 33 people from our Association [went](https://missionattheeastward.org/) on a very meaningful mission trip to Farmington, Maine to work with <https://missionattheeastward.org/> (MATE). They stayed at the Farmington Conference Center ([Farmington Conference Center](#)). The cost last year was appx \$300. This year it will most likely be less AND our church has scholarships to help defray costs.



We are happy to announce that we are returning for another mission trip to the same location this coming summer. August 1-6, 2026. Spread the word for people who may be interested in joining us. We are having two informational meetings (with free dinner!) on March 15 and April 19, 4 pm in Palmer Hall at First Church Simsbury located at 689 Hopmeadow Street, Simsbury.

Here are the current members of the Committee on Ministry:

Chair: John Carlson (Lay member, West Avon) Register: Zack Mabe (Pastor, Terryville): **Treasurer: Chris Solimene (Pastor, Avon)**: Scheduler: Sarah Pradhan (Lay member and Faith Formation Director, Granby): Secretary: Susan Keenan (Lay member, Unionville).

Do you have interest and can attend one of the informational meetings? I'd love to have some representation from Avon Congregational Church. Have questions? Contact Pastor Chris at [pastor@avon-church.org](mailto:pastor@avon-church.org).

### Livestreaming Services and Accessing Church Social Media

**Sunday services are accessible on the Avon Congregational Church Facebook page and our YouTube channel. The links for those are below:**

<https://www.facebook.com/avoncongregational> or  
<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC9C9s7fZ28HKpSllaoeGZfQ>

For information about Avon Congregational Church, click on the following link:

**The Avon Congregational Church Website**

[www.avon-church.org](http://www.avon-church.org)

**Most events and lots of pictures are often posted to our ACC Facebook Page**

## **Statement of Inclusion**

In keeping with the life and teaching of Christ Jesus, we joyfully and unconditionally welcome all people of any age, gender, sexual orientation, race, culture, ability or social or economic status into our community of faith. We affirm the humanity of all people as unique individuals made in God's image. We also affirm the special gifts that each person has to offer. We invite all to participate in the full life of the church and covenant of our Christian community.

## **Staff Contact List – Online Church Information**

Rev. Chris Solimene, Pastor	pastor@avon-church.org
Karen Levan, Dir. of Music Ministries/Organist	music@avon-church.org
Jolene Tefoe, Dir. of Avon Nursery School	ans@avon-church.org
Office Manager, Diane Parker	secretary@avon-urch.org
John Carlson, Finance Administrator	administrator@avon-church.org



Church Address: 6 West Main Street, Avon, CT 06001  
Church Phone Number 860-678-0488  
Church Website [www.avon-church.org](http://www.avon-church.org)  
Church Wi-Fi: avonchurch

## **Steering Circle 2025 – 2026**

Moderator – Jerry Humble; Treasurer – Bob Linderman; Clerk – Candace Doersch;  
Worship – Alex Harris and Kent May; Nurturing – Lee Egan and Joan Miller;  
Outreach – Marcia Cox and Leslie Desmangles; Support – Beth Ferrari and Betsy Van Loon; Members – at - Large – Kate Allen and Kate Rickson - McNally



# **Heritage Potluck**

**Monday, February 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**at 6:00 pm in Fellowship Hall**

**Do you have a favorite dish that has been made by a family member for years and reflects your ethnic heritage? On Monday, Feb. 23 at 6:00 pm, we will have an opportunity to share the foods of our individual cultures and get to know more about our church family.**

**Please join us and bring your 'heritage' dish to share, along with the recipe (if you're willing) and even perhaps share a favorite family story to go along with your dish!**

**Sign up on the Bulletin Board in the Main Hall**



# Summer Camp 2026

↓ Week #

**Grades 4-6**

**Grades 7-9**

**Grades 10-12**

<p><b>1</b></p> <p>JUNE 21-27</p> 	<p><b>PRAISE &amp; PLAY ALL DAY</b> Deans: Stacy Stevens, Debi Mastroni-Kenyon</p> <p><b>BRING ON THE MONSTERS</b> Deans: Brittany Romaniello, Rebekah Lyon</p> <p><b>ARTS ALIVE</b> Deans: Emily McKenna, Tiffany Nakanishi</p> <p><b>BABY CAMP</b> Ages 0-3 &amp; Adult   Wednesday-Saturday Deans: Chelsea Kordiak, Mike Kordiak, Anne Hughes</p>
<p><b>2</b></p> <p>JUNE 28- JULY 4</p> 	<p><b>FAMILY CAMP 1</b> All Ages   Sunday-Wednesday Deans: Sarah Rodriguez, Chris Miller</p> <p><b>CIRCLE OF FRIENDS</b> Deans: Camryn Cicarelli, Aron Gillette</p> <p><b>TBA</b> Program Details to be Announced Soon!</p> <p><b>ADVENTURE CAMP!</b> Dean: Andrew Wicks</p>
<p><b>3</b></p> <p>JULY 5-11</p> 	<p><b>FAMILY CAMP 2</b> All Ages   Sunday-Wednesday Deans: Evelyn Cass Adams, Kelsey DeCarlo</p> <p><b>WATER WORLD</b> Deans: Betty Geiling, Josh Geiling, Maureen Montrase</p> <p><b>SING PRAISE</b> Deans: Valerie Tutson, Leanna Bonafini, Whendi Cook Broderick</p>
<p><b>4</b></p> <p>JULY 12-18</p> 	<p><b>MUGGLES &amp; WIZARDS</b> Dean: Jennifer Long</p> <p><b>FUN IN THE SON</b> Deans: Brian Lapis, Cameron Hull, Caitlin Mundy</p>
<p><b>5</b></p> <p>JULY 19-25</p> 	<p><b>GOD SONG</b> Deans: Victoria Bower, Brianna Gambacini</p> <p><b>ALL ABOARD!</b> Deans: Brittany Anderson, Kaleb Oakleaf</p> <p><b>SUMMERTIME S.T.E.A.M.</b> Deans: Vin Urbanowski, Donna Kaiser</p>



**Tiered Pricing: \$940 | \$850 | \$760**  
*Financial Assistance is available.*

SCAN FOR MORE INFO



[www.SilverLakeCT.org](http://www.SilverLakeCT.org)