

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL

The regularly scheduled meeting was held December 12, 2024 with 6 members and 1 guest present.

LAY LEADERSHIP

- The Committee is on hiatus until Fall

WORSHIP

- January 3 – First Friday 7:00PM @ Avoca
- January 5 – Christmas decorations will be taken down after Church
- March 4 – Fat Tuesday Pancake Supper
- March 5 – Ash Wednesday Service 7:00PM @ Avoca
- April 17 – Maundy Thursday Service 7:00PM @ Mitchellsville
- April 18 – Prayer Vigil 6:00AM-6:00PM @ Avoca
- April 18 – Crosswalk 1:00PM @ Parsonage
- April 18 – Tenebrae Service 7:00PM @ Avoca
- April 20 – Easter Sunrise Service 7:00AM @ Avoca
- April 20 – Easter Sunday Service 11:00AM @ Avoca
- May 8-10 – First Northeast Annual GMC Conference @ Cortland NY

PASTOR PARISH RELATIONS COMMITTEE (PPRC)

- A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved to increase Pastor's salary for 2025

FINANCE COMMITTEE

- December bottle collection earned \$64.65 for a total of \$212.45 for the year
- Pastor's Compensation Package has been completed

MEMBERSHIP COMMITTEE

- Current membership is 79
- Three individuals have been transferred to AMC
- Seven individuals were approved for removal during the Annual Church Conference on November 9th
- Two individuals have requested transfer to AMC

FUNDRAISERS

- Merchant and Tops cards - \$1058.25

OLD BUSINESS

- The popcorn machine was donated to the Howard Fire Department
- The lawn mower may be repaired and sold in the Spring
- Mike Wasserman volunteered to coordinate the mission project to deliver copies of "The Story" and cookies to the Caboose residents on Christmas Eve
- All committees should elect a vice-chair before the next Ad Council meeting on February 8th
- A cart will be placed in the Narthex in January for the weekly collection of food and money for the Avoca-Kanona Food Pantry

NEW BUSINESS

- Pastor Barre will contact Robin Scouten to see if the woman who needed 25 Bibles for her new nursing home Bible study class would like the excess red Hymnals stored in the choir room
- A new Bath/Avoca Cub Scout troop is being formed. After December 18th the new troop will meet at the AMC on Wednesday nights @ 6PM. The Boy Scouts will continue to meet on Thursday nights @ 6PM
- A motion was made, seconded and unanimously approved that AMC charter the new Cub Scouts troop

2024 CONCERTS

- Final Harvest – July 2025
- The Puffers – date to be determined

PASTOR'S TIME

- Everything already covered

A little boy was in a relative's wedding. As he was coming down the aisle, he would take two steps, stop, turn to the crowd, put up his hands like claws and roar. So it went: step, step, ROAR, step, step ROAR, all the way down the aisle. As you can imagine, the crowd was near tears from laughing so hard. The little boy, however, was getting more and more distressed from all the laughing and was also near tears by the time he reached the pulpit. When asked what he was doing, the child sniffed and said, "I was being the Ring Bear."

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

Bill Heard

November 14, 2024 Meeting:

Members present: Bill Snyder, Bev & Al Belanger, Fred & Marge Wood, Gary Weldy and Pastor Barre Butts.

Projects Completed:

- Staining completed on all the church trim
- Fixed toilet leak in the men's room
- Boilers serviced and a control circuit board replaced
- Jane Kaszczynek was issued a key for the pantry door

New Business:

- Use of the church by Carol Preston on Nov 30 and Dec 21 was approved.(approval for the use on Dec 21 was given by WG Heard after the meeting date)
- Use of the church by the Cub Scouts on Wednesday nights was approved
- Purchase of two new toilets for the Ladies room was approved.

Next meeting January 9, 2025.

TREASURER'S REPORT

December 2024 – Ron Salles

We continue to carry a reserve in the General Fund. The size of the reserve fluctuates from month to month, depending on the income and debts incurred, but most of the time there is enough working capital to keep our bills paid as they are received, along with any unexpected expenses that suddenly appear.

The General Fund is the money we use to pay the everyday bills, like power and heat, pastor's salary, insurance, office expenses, etc. I continue to pay our bills on time.

On the Mission Fund side, we no longer have any mission reserves as we have distributed the funds for use this year. This year we concentrated on our local missions as our missions' projects; The Campership Fund (Scouts), The Ramp Mission (The Ramp Guys), The Lighthouse Mission (The Lighthouse Christmas), and The Avoca – Kanona Food Pantry. Jane's initial estimate of how many

people she would be helping is in reality doubled and we have increased the funding in order to help.

The Capital Project Fund campaign to repair and repave the parking lot continues. This is work that needs to be done soon in order to save the current pavement. The work was to start the end of September, but has been delayed due to weather. The expansion part, however, was completed at the end of September, with the major part now scheduled for some time in May 2025.

The accepted quote is for about \$50,000.00, so that is the goal for this capital project. As of October 13, 2024, \$24,830.00 has been raised. Because of this outpouring, the Administrative Counsel decided not to seek a bank loan, but to borrow from our own reserves earmarked for other projects. We will just need to replenish these reserves.

Due to the delay in construction, and with the blessing of the Administrative Counsel, on October 15th I purchased a \$25,000.00 Certificate of Deposit at 4.5% to mature May 15, 2025. This will help earn some money for the project.

Thank you and God bless you!

If you have any questions please contact Ron Salles (ronald.salles@me.com).

MULTIMEDIA PRODUCTION

Ron Salles

Please visit our NEW webpage at www.avocamethodistchurch.com and find the links to our NEW Facebook page at www.facebook.com/AvocaMethodistChurch and NEW YouTube Channel at www.youtube.com/@AvocaMethodistChurch .

Please subscribe to the NEW Facebook and YouTube channels. Please update our new email avocamethodistchurch@gmail.com . We will eventually be closing down the old social media accounts and the old email address.

We continue to record the Sunday Service and publish it on our YouTube Channel. Unfortunately, anything that is copyrighted must be removed from the recording and things that are private (like prayer requests) are also

removed. I try to only record the pertinent parts of the service, but sometimes someone may be recorded incidentally. If you don't want to be part of the YouTube recording, let me know and I'll edit you out.

If you can't attend, or are traveling, you can still see the service. I try to post it by that evening or the next day at the latest. The post goes to the church's Facebook account as well as the YouTube account. If you are a YouTube subscriber, you should get notification when you log on to YouTube. Please share with your family and friends.

The service is also recorded on DVD, so if you can't attend for any reason or you want to see the entire service with the prayers and music, etc., (or until the DVD is full, a little more than an hour), let me know and we will get a copy to you at no cost to you.

Mike Wasserman is now helping me with the sound system and video recording. Thank you Mike!

If you have any questions please contact Ron Salles (ronald.salles@me.com).

RAMP MINISTRY **Glenn Davis**

The Ramp Ministry had a very busy 2024. We constructed 40 ramps. We removed and refurbished 21 ramps that were no longer needed. We purchased materials totaling \$30,701.29. The warehouse has a good supply of lumber to start 2025 and we currently have 12 ramps on our "to do list". Although we used most of the Office of the Aging funds available for ramps back in June, SSSF (Steuben Senior Services Fund) granted us \$10,000.00 so we could continue to help "our-neighbors-in-need". The need for ramps just keeps growing!

A huge Thank You to Dale English and Dale Landon who purchased new matching caps and tee shirts for all the Ramp Guys. We really appreciate them. Also, a big Thank You to the Ramp Guys who contributed to a fund for a new chop saw. I especially want to Thank all who have donated to our Church Ramp Ministry. Those funds allow us to build ramps for those individuals who are not eligible for any other funding.

We have 22 very dedicated and hard-working volunteers on the ramp crew. They worked a total of 5799.25 hours in 2024. That includes planning and administration as well as the actual build times. Although they worked very hard, it would be really helpful if we had a few more volunteers. Not everyone can be available all the time and it is getting more difficult for some of us old "geezers" to keep up the pace that the need for ramps requires. If you, or someone you know, could spare a few hours once or twice a week it would be a tremendous help. We typically work Tuesday and Thursday morning and sometimes into the afternoon. Long days are a real strain on most of us. Many hands make for light work, even the Lord's work. The fellowship and comradery of our crew is heartwarming. Seeing the "Thank You" in recipients' eyes is the best pay there is.

As always, the GOOD LORD has and will take care of our needs. GOD IS GOOD !!!!!!!!!!!

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL **Fred Groner**

The 8 session series called "UNSHAKABLE" by Pastor Rick Warren and led by Gary Weldy was completed. The series taught much about how GOD's faithful servant Daniel survived and even thrived during his stressful 70 yearlong captivity by Persian kings. Daniel showed an unshakable faith when the heat was on during his many impossible situations under captivity,

A Bible verse, Daniel 3:17, "If we are thrown into the blazing furnace the GOD whom we serve is able to save us," is key to our understanding how we can become unshakable during stressful situations we often encounter in our lives.

Learning how to become unshakable must be done with total humility. Humility means that you know as a believer that you need GOD's help to deal with life's stressful problems and that self-help without GOD doesn't work.

We learned from Daniel how to obtain needed wisdom. Wisdom is not viewing how to live our lives during difficult times from our personal point of view but from GOD's point of view. We need to commit ourselves to continuously learning GOD's point of view on life by focusing attention on GOD through studying GOD's word,

building a faith trust in GOD, and building a good prayer relationship with GOD.

Pastor Warren details what is needed to acquire an unshakable faith just like Daniel. Learning wisdom from GOD's word, praying and expecting GOD to give you spiritual power when tested, knowing GOD will walk you through impossible situations, and by standing firm in Christian beliefs through constant relationship with GOD are basic to growing our faith which will allow us to mature and become unshakeable.

ADULT SUNDAY SCHOOL meets almost every Sunday at 9:30am. ALL WELCOME.
CHURCH AFTERWARDS.

AVOCA-KANONA FOOD PANTRY

The workload has more than doubled since the Avoca-Kanona Food Pantry relocated to the Avoca Methodist Church in August 2023.

The monthly stipend the Church provides this mission project plus donations from other organizations and individuals does not cover the pantry's weekly costs.

The Administrative Council has approved the pantry's request to ask the congregation to donate food and/or money for the Avoca-Kanona Food Pantry during the months that they are not asked to support the Lighthouse Christmas.

Therefore, a cart will be placed in the Narthex in January for the weekly collection of food and money for the Avoca-Kanona Food Pantry. Please give if you are able.

LIGHTHOUSE CHRISTMAS 2024 **Jim Young**

The Lighthouse Christmas distribution was December 14th. Eighty three (83) families with two hundred seventy-five (275) individuals (including 127 children) received a top and a bottom of a banana box filled with food, plus 10# of potatoes, 3# of onions, fresh apples & oranges, a dozen of eggs, and a loaf of bread.

In addition, each family received a bag with paper supplies (paper towels, Kleenex, and 3 rolls of toilet paper), an AMC calendar, a pen, and a copy of "The Story".

Each individual received a twin-sized blanket throw; the men received tools and O'Keefe's Working Hands & slip joint pliers; the women received body lotion & fragrance mist; and the children toys/gifts appropriate for their ages.

We praise God for the good weather. It was cold but it didn't rain or snow.

We thank all the volunteers who came to help with the distribution and with other tasks during the prior weeks to get ready.

We sincerely thank the Avoca Methodist congregation for the generous donations of food and money received for this mission. The Lighthouse Christmas could not happen without your support.

December 14th was an amazing day of giving and receiving. The Lighthouse Christmas was in the morning from 9:00 AM to 11:00 AM. Dave Burdick's Christmas Concert was at 3:00 PM. The concert was followed by a delicious Holiday dinner.

It was a very special day for the Avoca Methodist Church as we journey through Advent to Christmas.

AVOCA SCOUTS UPDATE **Michael A. Wasserman** **Round Table Cub Scout Commissioner**

This fall season of Scouting has turned into a very impressive year in Avoca as we prepare to re-charter for the 2025 Year. Our Troop 32 (5th -12th Grade Scouts) will re-charter with the AMC again, now that we are no longer a part of UMC. We are also welcoming 3 New Scouts, two are brothers joining us from Prattsburgh, whose units went down this past season. Troop 32 continues to be led by our Scout Master, Mr. Randy Heard who has been in scouting more years than I care to count.

I am also happy to announce the return of our Pack 1032 (K-1st Grade), which will consist of children from both Avoca and Bath, and we hope to welcome scouts from Prattsburgh also.

This new pack will have a completely new Leadership, including our new cub master Wendy White, who used to be the assistant Cub master in

Addison. We are fortunate and happy to have her joining us. She also brings 2 Cubs and 1 BSA youth and her boyfriend as a leader.

Also, another major Change is that we are no longer the Five Rivers Council. As of November 1st, 2024, our council has merged with the Buffalo District and is now known as the Great Falls Council.

This is a very new change for all of us in scouting but will increase the opportunities for scouts in our area to gain more opportunities and knowledge on their trek to the rank of Eagle.

I have been promoted from Commissioner to the new Round Table Cub Scout Commissioner this past September, and I am also working very closely with Pack 1032 as they get their footing, and build their program.

Last but not least, our church AMC, now hosts the Round Table Meetings once a month. However, starting in January, due to the expansion of our district stretching into PA, we will be having some of our meetings in PA. This part has not yet been finalized by the district.

So here is to a great 2025 Scouting Year

BIRTHDAYS

January

9 Sharon Blankenship
11 Ron Rogers

February

2 Jim Young
4 Bev Belanger
5 Adam Ormsby
6 Forrest Slayton
8 Lois Cagle
12 Neil Simpson
15 Don Loveland
22 Al Belanger
22 Martha Cleland
25 Margaret Fletcher
29 Linda Davis

ANNIVERSARIES

January

None in January and February

A Sunday school teacher was telling her class the story of the Good Samaritan. She asked the class, "If you saw a person lying on the roadside, wounded and bleeding, what would you do? A thoughtful little girl broke the hushed silence, "I think I would throw up."

RECIPE CORNER

COOL WHIP COOKIES

INGREDIENTS:

- 1 box of cake mix (any flavor, but vanilla or chocolate works great)
- ½ cup Cool Whip (thawed)
- 1 large egg
- ¼ cup powdered sugar (for rolling)

DIRECTIONS:

1. Preheat the oven to 350° and line the baking sheet with parchment paper or a silicone baking mat.
2. In a medium-sized bowl, combine the cake mix, Cool Whip, and egg. Stir until fully combined. The dough will be sticky.
3. Pour the powdered sugar into a shallow bowl. Use a spoon to scoop out small amounts of dough, roll them into balls, and then roll each ball in the powdered sugar until fully coated.
4. Place the coated dough balls onto the prepared baking sheet, spacing them about 2 inch apart. Bake in the preheated oven for 10-12 minutes, or until the cookies are set and slightly cracked on top.
5. Let the cookies cool on the baking sheet for a few minutes before transferring them to a wire rack to cool completely. Enjoy the soft, melt-in-your mouth goodness !!!

If I were your

Wife, and you missed supper, I'd want to know where you were !
Boss, and you missed work, I'd want to know where you were !
Coach, and you missed practice, I'd want to know where you were !
Car pool friend, and you missed picking me up, I'd want to know where you were !
Teacher, and you missed class, I'd want to know where you were !
But, I am your pastor, and you missed church Sunday, but I'm not supposed to be nosey !

THANK YOU !!!

Dorene and Carol sincerely thank you all for the very generous gifts we received this Christmas. It is our honor to work with such a loving, caring congregation. We wish you a Happy New Year! May this year bring you joy, peace, and happiness.

BLESSED IN AGING Esther Mary Walker

Blessed are they who understand
My faltering step and shaking hand
Blessed, who know my ears today
Must strain to hear the things they say.

Blessed are those who seem to know
My eyes are dim and my mind is slow
Blessed are those who look away
When I spilled tea that weary day.

Blessed are thy who, with cheery smile
Stopped to chat for a little while
Blessed are they who know the way
To bring back memories of yesterday.

Blessed are those who never say
“You’ve told that story twice today”
Blessed are they who make it known
That I am loved, respected, and not alone.

And blessed are they who will ease the days
Of my journey home, in loving ways.

A NEW YEAR’S PRAYER W. R. Hunt

Dear Lord, Please give me –
A few friends who understand me and yet remain
my friends
Work to do, which has real value, without which
the world would feel the poorer
A mind unafraid to travel, even though the trail be
not blazed
An understanding heart
A sense of humor
Time for quiet, silent meditation
A feeling of the presence of God
Patience to wait for these things
Wisdom to know them when they come.

DID YOU KNOW THAT:

Psalm 118 is the middle chapter of the entire Bible?
Psalm 117, before Psalm 118 is the shortest chapter in the Bible?
Psalm 119, after Psalm 118, is the longest chapter in the Bible?
The Bible has 594 chapters before Psalm 118 and 594 chapters after Psalm 118?
If you add all the chapters except Psalm 118, you get a total of 1188 chapters.
1188 or Psalm 118 verse 8 is the middle verse of the entire Bible?

Should the central verse not have an important message? “It is better to take refuge in the Lord, than to trust in man.” Psalm 118:8

WHO AM I IN CHRIST?

I am forgiven.	Ephesians 1:7
I am enough.	2 Corinthians 12:9-10
I am rescued.	Colossians 1:13-14
I am redeemed.	Romans 3:24
I am God’s Masterpiece.	Ephesians 2:10
I am valuable.	Luke 12:6-7
I am chosen.	John 15:16
I am justified.	Romans 3:23-24
I am accepted.	Romans 15:7
I am saved.	Ephesians 2:8-9
I am courageous.	Deuteronomy 31:6
I am free.	Romans 8:1-2
I am wonderfully made.	Psalm 139:14
I am a new creature.	2 Corinthians 5:17
I am born of God.	1 Peter 1:23
I am adopted by God.	Ephesians 1:5
I am a child of God.	John 1:12
I am Jesus’ friend.	John 15:15
I am a citizen of Heaven.	Philippians 3:20-21
I am a member of Christ’s body.	1 Cor 12:2
I am never alone.	John 1:12
I am loved.	John 3:16

DATES TO REMEMBER

Jan 3	7:00 PM	First Friday @ AMC
Jan 5		Epiphany Sunday
Jan 5	12:15 PM	Take down Christmas decorations
Jan 11	2P - 4P	GMC Open House @ Mitchellsville
Jan 12	8A – 10 A	Pancake Breakfast
Jan 16	10:00 AM	Merchant Card Order
Jan 19	12:15 PM	Potluck Dinner
Feb 7	7:00 PM	First Friday @ Bath Presbyterian
Feb 9	8A – 10 A	Pancake Breakfast
Feb 16	12:15 PM	Potluck Dinner
Feb 20	10:00 AM	Merchant Card Order