



206 S. Main Street. Avon, IL

avonfederatedchurch.com

(309) 255-6702 (cell/text)

News From **THE AVON**

FEDERATED CHURCH

A FREE GIFT FROM OUR CHURCH!

Our church Outreach Committee and Church Board have been very busy since May 2022-- offering many new things to our church members, church friends, and the community. Our next big thing is providing a FREE gift of one year of access to over 22,000 great online videos from RightNow Media. We are using some of our Outreach funds to make this free to you.

If you receive an email from RightNow Media at the end of November--please know that it isn't junk mail or "spam". It's gift from the Federated Church --and approved by the Church Board.

The 22,000 FREE online videos include Bible studies, devotional videos, kids videos, self-help and mental health series --and much more. Our church will also have it's own "page"--and that page will have links to our weekly online Message and Prayer and to our online Christmas Eve Service videos etc. If you don't get the special email at the end of November, just reach out to the church and we will get you access to the video site.



"Messy Church"--November 13th-- 4-6 p.m



Last month's "Messy Church" was a huge success. We expect this month's gathering to be even better. "Messy Church" is fun for all ages---kids thru great-grandparents.

Everyone is invited to attend. We meet indoors in the Fellowship Hall --located at the rear of our church building. "Messy Church" is the 2nd Sunday of each month 4-6 p.m.

**If 50 or more
people attend
Jon Prain gets a
pie in the face!**

There will be fun crafts, great snacks, silly games, a brief message about God and Jesus, and a couple of action songs that will get you up and moving. The meal this month will be chicken nuggets, tater tots, corn, plus fresh fruit and vegetables. Come join the fun & bring friends and family!

MADRIGAL CHOIRS TO SING AT WORSHIP NOVEMBER 20th

At our morning worship service at 10:00 a.m. on Sunday, November 20th, we will have the privilege of listening to the singing of the Monmouth-Roseville Madrigal Choirs under the direction of Keven Ferry. (Kevin was our church choir director for ten years.)

Abingdon-Avon Community Thanksgiving Service November 20th

On Sunday, November 20th, the ministers of the Abingdon and Avon area will offer a Community Thanksgiving worship service at 6:00 p.m. The location will be the Abingdon Christian Church. Rev. Jon Prain will be preaching the message.

CHRISTMAS INFORMATION

THE IN-PERSON CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP SERVICE will be held on Saturday, December 24th at 5:00 p.m. in the church sanctuary. We will have our traditional "finger food" buffet following the Christmas Eve service. **HOWEVER**, we will have the buffet downstairs in the Fellowship Hall --like we did last year. Anyone who can bring food for the buffet--such generosity is always appreciated.

ONLINE CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE: Once again, we will be having a pre-recorded ONLINE Christmas Eve worship service. It will be uploaded in the early afternoon on Christmas Eve day--and will remain online indefinitely. As usual, we could use people to volunteer to do scripture readings and/or sing songs (as solos, duets, small ensembles, etc). Please contact Rev. Jon Prain if you can help out in this way. He may be reached at (309) 255-6702 (cell/text) or jon.prain@gmail.com.

CHRISTMAS DAY (DECEMBER 25th): The Church Board decided that there will be NO in-person worship service at the Avon Federated Church on Sunday morning, December 25th. This will allow church members, church volunteers, and church staff to be with their families on Christmas morning.

FINANCIAL DONATIONS May Be Mailed To:

The Avon Federated Church
P.O. Box 432
Avon IL 61415

Worship services are 10:00 a.m. Sunday
Sunday School for Children 10:15 a.m.

Website:

avonfederatedchurch.com

Building location:

206 S. Main Street (Avon, IL)

MAINTENANCE PROJECTS

Our main church building is 115 years old and the Fellowship Hall is now 62 years old. Thus, from time-to-time, building maintenance is needed. Two years of COVID challenges also caused us to delay some of the needed maintenance projects. However, this Summer and Fall there was much maintenance activity.

It had been roughly 40 years since we last did any tuckpointing on the red brick portion of the building. The last tuckpointing held up very well. We were fortunate enough to be able to get the same (family-owned) company to come and tuckpoint the building again this Summer. The current owner of company also worked on our last tuckpointing project (roughly 40 years ago) when he was just a teenager.

The windows in the fellowship hall were 62 years old, single-pane, with aluminum frames--and were in need of repair. The Church Board (and congregation) voted to replace all of the windows in the Fellowship Hall building. That work happened this Fall. We now have new "double pane " windows--and more insulation was also added in the area of the windows.

On the south side of the building, the same company that did the tuckpointing came back this Fall and poured many feet of new concrete sidewalk. This replaced old and cracked sidewalk and it does a better job of sloping rainwater away from the church foundation.

Our main indoor steps were at least 95 years old. This summer, work was done to upgrade the support framework under that stairway.

OUTREACH

ACTIVITIES

Our church's Outreach Committee was very busy in the Summer and early Fall.

In June, we had a "Summer Party on the Lawn". It was attended by roughly 120 people from the church and community.

We had free food, games, and prizes. We even had a combination "bounce house" and inflatable slide.

In July, we had the "Field of (ice cream) Dreams". This was a baseball AND ice-cream themed event. We had games and a dunk tank. We decorated part of the outside of the fellowship hall to look like an ice cream truck and served ice cream, popsicles, and other frozen treats.

In September, we had an event that we called the "Fall Fest". We had campfires, hot dogs, s'mores, games, and two hay-racks full of people who went on a 30 minute hay ride. We had a table with resources such as free New Testaments, lists of area food pantries, and lists of other area resources.

We sold lemon shakeups several times at the Avon Farmers' Market. Twice, we picked a restaurant and invited people to come join us for a meal together. (Pizza Ranch and The Guacamole Grill). Over 200 kids attended Trunk or Treat on the church lawn on Halloween.

The "Hanging of the Greens" Service"

Every Advent/Christmas season, the Avon Federated Church has a "Hanging of the Greens" service. It is almost always held on the First Sunday of Advent. This year, the First Sunday of Advent is Sunday, November 27th. The worship service will begin at 10:00 a.m.

Although the service changes a bit from year-to-year (due to things like the number of children in the Sunday School or things like the pandemic) the core elements of our "Hanging of the Greens" service remain the same. 1) We finish decorating the church for the Advent and Christmas season. (We will do some of the early decorating right after worship on Sunday, November 20th). 2) We sing many Christmas carols. 3) We discuss the origins of some of our beloved Christmas customs. 4) We tell the story of the birth of Jesus.

Join us for the "Hanging of the Greens" service on Sunday, November 27th at 10:00 a.m.

From the Pastor

I don't know about anyone else, but my October and early November were very busy and stressful (and the rest of November, December, and the early part of January look like they are going to be busy and stressful as well).

There are some some lifestyle changes that we can make in order to help lower our stress and anxiety. We can try to get more sleep. We can limit our caffeine and alcohol intake. We can try to take on fewer projects and responsibilities. We can try to have a more healthy diet. However, we all know that each of these things are easier said than done. Thus, oftentimes a more spiritual or more religious approach can be helpful--especially when we are in the midst of very stressful moments.

When we are in the midst of stressful moments, we can pause--take a couple of deep breaths--and then say a brief prayer. We can also let some memorized scripture verses or memorized prayers help us when we are in the midst of a stressful event or panic attack. Here are some that I find to be helpful:

We are told in I Peter 5:7, "Give all your worries and cares to God, for he cares about you." (New Living Translation). There is a nighttime prayer in the *New Zealand Prayer Book* that says:

"It is night after a long day. What has been done has been done; what has not been done has not been done; let it be.". Many people are also familiar with THE SERENITY PRAYER, "God, grant me serenity to accept the things I cannot change; courage to change the things I can; and wisdom to know the difference.". These things, and others, can help during stress.

May God comfort and bless you in times of busy-ness and stress.

Rev. Jon Prain