

CONLEY'S CONNECTION

In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity.

GOD IS STILL PRESENT

A Message from Pastor Bill Davis

The master of the banquet tasted the water that had been turned into wine. He did not realize where it had come from, though the servants who had drawn the water knew. Then he called the bridegroom aside and said, "... you have saved the best till now." What Jesus did here in Cana of Galilee was the first of the signs through which he revealed his glory.

John 2:9-11a

Over the past year, an epidemic of scams has swept through our country. The Peninsula-Delaware Conference has alerted our churches to let parishioners know that neither our bishop nor any other legitimate Methodist organization or church will solicit funds through private emails or automated phone calls. Conley's was not spared as emails and phone calls were sent out in our church's name in an attempt to steal money from unsuspecting victims. Again, please be alert to such activity.

While modern technology has afforded new opportunities for thieves to exploit, the existence of scams is nothing new. In 1916, an inventor named Louis Enricht claimed to have developed an additive that would transform ordinary water into a gasoline substitute. Enricht claimed that his invention would reduce the per-gallon cost of fuel to a single penny. At a press conference, Enricht asked reporters to bring him a bucket of tap water; he then stirred in a small amount of his additive, and invited everyone to test the mixture in their own vehicles. It worked! But not for long. Enricht had merely discovered that if you add acetone to water, the mixture will, indeed, run an engine...and then destroy it. Before the destructive effects could be seen, Enricht had managed to collect millions of dollars for his worthless "invention"—even from such experts as Henry Ford. In the end, Enricht's transformation of ordinary water demonstrated nothing more than the greedy nature of humanity.

In the passage above, Jesus used a transformation of ordinary water to demonstrate the glorious nature of God (I encourage you to read the entire story in John 2:1-11). At a wedding celebration, Jesus transformed water into wine. Not just any wine, mind you, but the very best. Most of the people at the celebration were too busy to see the miracle; only a handful of servants and disciples recognized the presence of the Divine in their midst.

Continued on page 4 ➤



"It's been a trying couple of years. The pandemic has made the difficult things of life a little more difficult as logistics have been complicated, and it has made the joyous things of life a little less joyous as celebrations have been restricted. But God is still present."

Visit Our Website



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

SPARC	2
Thrift Shop News	2
Odyssey.....	3
Missions.....	4
5 Questions	5
What's Going On?	6
Ponderings.....	7



AND REVIVAL COMMITTEE

Pray for Pastor Davis

Pastors are called and gifted by God for a special mission. They must be wise and knowledgeable spiritual leaders; compassionate and patient listeners; encouraging and supportive counselors; continuously available and ready to serve tirelessly. They are expected to do this with love and integrity. In order to do this they must maintain a personal growing relationship with Christ. God

has sent Pastor Davis to be our spiritual leader. We are obligated as Christians and members of Conley's Church to pray for Pastor Davis and are be blessed to be able to do so. Pray for our pastor often using your own prayer or joining others in praying the following suggested prayer:

Father God, we thank You for sending Pastor Davis to be our spiritual leader. Forgive us when we give in to critical thoughts and speech instead of honoring and encouraging the one You have sent. We ask that he will serve You humbly and compassionately, open to the leading of Your Holy Spirit. Thank You for the wisdom and knowledge You bless him with as he teaches us Your word. We ask that the busyness of church matters does not interfere with his personal quiet time with You as he seeks Your approval rather than that of humans. When problems within the church arise we ask for Your divine intervention and discernment for Pastor Davis. May he have wisdom in seeking Your will as he makes decisions for Your church at Conley's. Still those who would come against him, and raise up those who would come alongside him in his ministry. Being a pastor takes physical as well as spiritual energy. Bless Pastor Davis with good health and physical energy and time apart for spiritual refreshment. Bless his wife, Susan, as she partners with him in ministry. We ask for You to preserve quality family time with Susan and their children, Holly, Anna, and James. May their love for one another abound and glorify You. Grant us a spirit of patience and compassion as we bring You glory by supporting and encouraging our Pastor Davis. In the holy name of Jesus, our Lord and our king. Amen.

CONLEY'S THRIFT SHOP

It's hard to believe that August and September have passed, and now we're at the beginning of fall. We stand around scratching our heads, wondering where the time has gone. This year has really flown by.

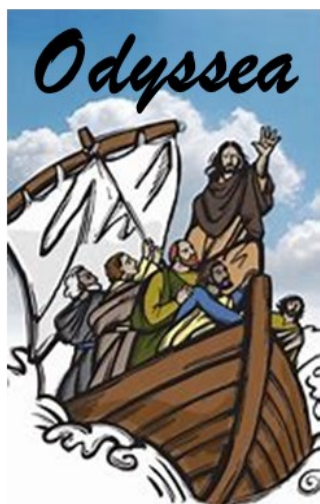
Sally and I would like to give a big THANK YOU to all of the volunteers and staff who helped us with the fall/winter clothing switch that happened Monday, September 20. We started at 9 am and stayed until 2 pm. This is one tough job to do—we take down all of the summer clothing and decide what we are going to do with it for this season. The racks, floors, windows, and shelves are all cleaned before we begin to hang the new fall/winter season items. It is amazing how many dust bunnies we find hiding in the corners and under the clothing racks. We are still filling in the empty spots on the racks.

This is a good time for you to come and shop for your fall wardrobe!!! We have a good selection of really nice items to choose from, and all at reasonable prices.

We welcome our new volunteer, Judy Smith. She will be assisting us on Thursdays.

Thanks for your support, and please continue to keep us in your prayers.

- Pat Vogt



ODYSSEA: A SPIRITUAL JOURNEY

A Call to Faith by Experience

By Art Schmidt

“I will raise up for myself a faithful priest, who will do according to what is in my heart and mind. I will firmly establish his priestly house, and they will minister before my anointed one always.” (1 Samuel 2:35 NIV)

We all come to faith in many different ways, and John Wesley, the leader of the Methodist movement, understood that. “Wesley believed that the living core of the Christian faith was revealed in Scripture, illumined by tradition, vivified in personal experience, and confirmed by reason.”¹ This methodology, referred to as the “Wesleyan Way,” was based upon these four criteria. The term “Wesleyan

Quadrilateral” was later coined by Albert C. Outler, a 20th-century American Methodist scholar. I am a Methodist because of *personal experience*.

My story of faith began with an extraordinary experience when I was seven years old. After he retired from the U.S Army, my dad was accepted to the Washington, D.C. Police Academy, so we moved to D.C. to live with my Greek maternal grandparents until he graduated. I started going to church on Sunday with my grandmother at the Sts. Constantine & Helen Greek Orthodox Church, and it was there that I first heard about Jesus. My first experience of entering that church was amazing—the grand Byzantine architecture, the blue dome adorned with gold leaf, and the beautiful painted icons. Once my grandmother’s best friend found out I hadn’t been baptized, she offered to become my godmother and sponsored me for baptism. So at age seven, I was baptized in the traditional immersion ceremony with my family and friends as witnesses. What made my baptism experience extraordinary? Unlike infant baptisms, I made the choice to follow Jesus, and I remember everything about my baptism.

I embraced the Orthodox beliefs and traditions that set the tone for my family, but I chose to leave the church after my grandmother passed while I was in college. When I moved to Baltimore in 1995, I suddenly felt the nudge to look for a new church home. I thought it would be best to “go back to my roots” and worship in a familiar tradition, so I chose the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral located downtown, but I quickly realized I didn’t feel “at home” there. A friend told me about a church a few blocks from Annunciation that was welcoming and sponsored many community outreach ministries which piqued my interest.

On a warm Sunday morning in August 1995, I walked up the steps of the Mount Vernon Place UMC for the first time, and when the pastor greeted me, he said, “Welcome, we’ve been waiting for you.” I walked into the sanctuary and knew instantly I had been led to my new church home. It was there that I learned to serve in a soup kitchen ministry (Carpenter’s Kitchen), published my first church newsletter (“The Flame”), and started writing about a journey of faith (“Odyssea”). Those experiences formed the foundation of my call to faith as a Methodist.

From that experience at Mount Vernon Place, through the years and three other churches since then, to the first time I worshipped at Conley’s in 2019, it has been my experiences that strengthened my faith and kindled my dedication to being a Methodist. We are all affected by our life experiences—both the good and bad. Our experiences help us mature as human beings and grow into the person God intends us to become. It’s important to recognize that our spiritual experiences enrich us individually and as a community of faith.

Key Pillars of Faith Descriptions

- 1. Scripture:** The first and primary authority; it contains the only measure whereby all other truth can be tested.
- 2. Tradition:** Don’t undervalue the witness of development and growth of the faith through the past centuries and in many nations and cultures.
- 3. Experience:** Apart from scripture, experience is the strongest proof of Christianity for each person. For example, “One thing I know: I was blind but now I see!”
- 4. Reason:** Without reason we cannot understand the essential truth of Scripture as long as we are assisted, of course, by the Holy Spirit.

¹ United Methodist Church, “Book of Discipline”.



Christmas at Sea Seamen's Center of Wilmington Port of Wilmington, Delaware

Conley's UMC will be participating again this year in providing items for "Christmas at Sea." We will begin collecting on October 24 and end November 21. This gives us enough time to have the items delivered in a timely manner. The tub for donations will be in the narthex. Please give generously.

The goal of the Christmas at Sea Program is to give a ditty box, a shoe box filled with gifts, to every seafarer arriving in Delaware during the month of December. Last year the Seamen's Center provided gifts to over 1,000 mariners. The boxes are filled with essentials, a hand-knit hat and scarf, and a few goodies.

Thank you to Richelle Marvel for handling our Shoebox Ministry, which we will be collecting thru October 10. This is a mission our church has supported for years and one we hope to continue to support. Please return your filled shoebox to the church by October 10, or to pack a shoebox online, please go to Conley's website and click on the flying shoebox in the upper right-hand corner (conleysumc.org).

If you have any questions about Missions at Conley's, please contact one of our team members: Sandy Shipe, Cheryl Conway, Barbara Evans, Richelle Marvel, Cynthia Tobal, Bill and Nancy O'Brien. Remember, the Mission Team is open to anyone with a heart for missions.

Our next meeting is December 16, 2021, at 1 pm in the Mission room. We would love to see you there. Marie Van Der Wall, Mission Team Chair, mavanderwall@gmail.com

God Is Still Present

~Continued from page 1

What about us? Are we able to recognize the presence of God in our midst? Saint Augustine observed that what Jesus did at Cana was merely a "fast forward" version of what God does every year on countless hills all around the world as vines silently turn water into wine. There is so much activity swirling around us in life that it is easy to miss the miraculous presence of God quietly moving in the midst of it all. But for those who take the time to observe, all creation testifies to the transforming power of God. God is good. God is good all the time. And anything God touches is improved by that touch.

It's been a trying couple of years. The pandemic has made the difficult things of life a little more difficult as logistics have been complicated, and it has made the joyous things of life a little less joyous as celebrations have been restricted. But God is still present. That first miracle at Cana was an indication of what the ministry of Jesus would be like whenever people received him. And what was true during Christ's time on earth is still true today. Whenever we open our eyes to the presence of God in our situation, the ordinary, common and colorless things of this earth are touched with a new power that makes them extraordinary, fragrant and flavorful. May all of us at Conley's Church be alert to the transforming, enriching presence of God in our lives.

- Pastor Bill Davis

5 QUESTIONS FOR-

Diane Jones
Conley's Music Director



◆ **Where did you grow up, and what's your favorite memory from your childhood?**

I was born at Mercer Hospital in Trenton, NJ. I spent the first five years of my life between my mother's parent's farm in Crosswicks, NJ, and my father's parent's home in Bordentown, NJ. I'm a "farmer" at heart and absolutely love gardening to this day. I loved riding the tractor with my grandpop who gave me so much love and affection, as did my grand mom. We didn't watch TV, and I don't even remember if there was one there, but I never missed it because we had one another and entertained ourselves. After my grand mom passed, we moved to the big city of Trenton, but it was nothing like being in the country. I've been trying to get back to that simple life ever since.

◆ **When did you first come to Conley's, and what brought you here?**

My friends and clients Paul and Chris Yngve, former members of Conley's, invited me to apply for the Music Director's position after hearing me sing "The Sound of Music" while caring for Paul one evening. The rest, as they say, is history. I love it here!

◆ **What was your career before retirement?**

Well, that's a long story because I'm a "Jill of all trades." However, my most lucrative and longest career was as a professional singer. I headed regional bands and was the back-up singer for several nationally well known entertainers, but singing for the Lord has been the most rewarding. I taught K-8 school children for 15 years in the field of Special Education. My retirement job has been as a caregiver for a local agency. Also, I've been caring for my mom, and I'll soon be caring for my great-granddaughter. Pray for me—a baby at my age!

◆ **Tell us about your family (husband, children, grands).**

I'm a divorced mother of two wonderful daughters; Danielle (50) and Rieyelle (42). They are single mothers, and I have six granddaughters: Mariah (31), Jai'Lynn (27), Khadijah (25), Dominique (25), Tanasia (20), and Morgan (5). Yes, somebody had what I lovingly call an "old baby." I have eight great-grandchildren, and one more on the way!

◆ **What's your favorite way to relax?**

I don't know what that means. But if you want to know how I enjoy getting away from the worries of life, I will have to say it's by gardening and keeping my small yard full of flowers as best I can. I'm not complaining because that small space is all I can handle, and besides, I am the garden minister at my church. I love walking, swimming—anything on the water—cooking, which I will now have more time for since I'll have the baby for five months while my granddaughter is deployed to Korea until March 2022. Please keep me in prayer. I love Conley's; it doesn't seem like work for me. It's definitely a place of love and fellowship. Thanks for having me. This is truly a blessing for me.

WORSHIPPING DURING THE MONTH OF OCTOBER

Worship with us on
Sundays at 10:00 AM
in person or online.

Our sanctuary is
cleaned and sanitized
every Monday in
accordance with
guidelines.

We live-stream
the service on Vimeo,
Facebook, and YouTube.
Links on our website.

Produced by:



You can make a
donation or tithe using
the online portal on
our website:
conleysumc.org

Thank you
for supporting our
mission and for your
faithfulness in giving!

WHAT'S GOING ON AT CONLEY'S?

◆ Kairos 1st Annual Family Songfest

Kairos of Delaware presents "A Celebration of Music" by the Kairos Bands, Saturday, **October 2**, 1—4:30 pm at the American Legion Post 28 Pavilion. Flyers are available in the narthex and in the church office. More info: Marie Van Der Wall 302-249-7897

◆ CYC After-School Program

Conley's Youth Connection after-school program is held every Monday 3:30—4:30 pm for elementary school children. Transportation to Conley's is available. More info: Jay Bachman 717-368-7425

◆ Wednesday Bible Study Group

Susan Davis leads "The Faithful; Heroes of the Old Testament" bible study group on Wednesdays. In-person study meets in the library at 6 pm, Zoom class at 7:15 pm. No study group on October 27. More info and to register, email: conleys.classes@gmail.com.

◆ Fall Bible Study Group

The Thursday morning bible study group will resume on **October 7**. Karen Lessey, a retired pastor, will lead the group and focus on Pastor Bill's scripture lesson for the next Sunday. The group meets at 10 am in the Missions Room through October. More info: Karen 302-448-9924; karenlessey@icloud.com

◆ Fall Cemetery Clean-up

Saturday, **October 9** at 2 pm. Please remove any decorations you want to keep before the 9th. Fall decorations will be kept in place.

◆ Operation Christmas Child

The "Shoebbox Ministry" is a great way to share the gift of Jesus Christ with children and families around the world at Christmas. All the boxes in the narthex have been taken, but you can pack a box online using the link on the church website. The deadline to return a packed box or pack one online is **October 10**. More info: Richelle Marvel 302-841-9794

◆ Women's Encouragement Group

Our resident pastoral counselor, Richelle Marvel, is leading a group to encourage and support women. The group will meet on Monday, **October 11** at 6:30 pm in the library. To register, 302-841-9794 or livewellbfit59@gmail.com.

◆ Church Council Meeting

The monthly council meeting will be held on Thursday, **October 21** at 6:30 pm in the library.

◆ Prayer Service

This month's service will be held on Wednesday, **October 27** at 6:30 pm in the sanctuary. Please join us for a contemplative time to lift up prayers of praise, repentance, petition, and thanks. All are invited.

◆ Sunday Morning Adult Bible Study

Pastor Jim Van Der Wall leads the group every Sunday morning at 8:30 am in the Fellowship Hall. Please join us!



Here's an update on my family—

Marie and I married in 1995, blending a family of four children, her two girls and my two boys.

Nicole is married to Jason and lives in Felton DE. She works for the state of Delaware and has three grown children: Torin, Caelan, Lydia.

Valarie is married to Steven and lives in Milford DE. She works for Wilmington University and has two school-age children: Hannah and David.

Jay is married to Susan and lives in Albuquerque, NM. They both work for Sandia Laboratories.

Scott is married to Ashley and lives in Newark, DE. He works for a computer company.

I am the middle child of five children, all of whom grew up in New Jersey.

Ethel is deceased and was a United Methodist pastor in the Greater New Jersey Conference.

Barbara is retired and lives in Florida. She is a widow; her husband was a Vietnam War veteran.

James (me) is a clergy member of the Peninsula-Delaware United Methodist Conference. I am married to Marie, retired, and living in Plantation Lakes in Millsboro, DE.

John is married to Nancy. They are retired and have recently moved to King's Creek, Rehoboth Beach, after having lived many years in California.

Ruth, a dental hygienist, is married to John, an electrician. They live in New Jersey and have two grown daughters.

Praise the Lord for our family!



TRUNKS FOR TREATS

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 31
CHURCH PARKING LOT
6-8 pm

The candy donation bank and sign-up sheets are in the narthex. The candy bank helps our Trunkers provide enough goodies for everyone. If you sign up to be a Trunker, please provide enough goodies for a minimum of 100 kids, and more is greatly appreciated.

Please decorate your trunk with non-violent, gory, or scary themes. Suggestions: Bible themes, fall themes, Disney themes, or collectible items such as dolls, bears, trains, baskets, bottles, etc.

A light meal will be served at 5 pm for Trunkers and helpers. Please arrive by 5:15 pm and plan to remain until 8 pm. If you are unable to participate, candy donations are greatly appreciated.

Pray for the safety of the children, the adults driving them around, the participants and helpers, and for good weather. Pray that the gospel tracts handed out that evening will touch someone's heart and plant a seed that helps them grow in the Lord.

God bless you for however you are able to support this event and for being a prayer warrior.

For more information:
Jean Carpenter
302-841-5077
carpenterdcjr@gmail.com

CONLEY'S CHURCH
33106 Jolyns Way
Lewes, DE 19958

Pastor: Rev. Dr. William Davis
E-mail: conleysumc@gmail.com
Website: conleysumc.org
Phone: 302-945-1881

Worship with us:
Sunday at 10:00 AM
(Details provided on page 6.)

Follow us:
Facebook: @conleysumc
Instagram: /conleysumc
YouTube: /Conleys UMC

Editor/Publisher: Art Schmidt
Copy Editor: Anthony Chiffolo

Editorial Board:
Pastor Bill Davis
Louise Finn
Art Schmidt

November Issue Deadline:
October 25



Conley's United Methodist Church
33106 Jolyn's Way
Lewes, Delaware 19958

PLEASE
PLACE
STAMP
HERE

