



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

October 2022

Vol. 193

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

Chuck's Church Chat

October

O hushed October morning mild,
Thy leaves have ripened to the fall;
Tomorrow's wind, if it be wild,
Should waste them all.

The crows above the forest call;
Tomorrow they may form and go.
O hushed October morning mild,
Begin the hours of this day slow.
Make the day seem to us less brief.
Hearts not averse to being beguiled,
Beguile us in the way you know.
Release one leaf at break of day;
At noon release another leaf;
One from our trees, one far away.
Retard the sun with gentle mist;
Enchant the land with amethyst.
Slow, slow!

For the grapes' sake, if they were all,
Whose leaves already are burnt with frost,
Whose clustered fruit must else be lost—
For the grapes' sake along the wall.

Robert Frost

Saints,

Grace to you and peace...

This has always been one of my favorite works by the good poet Frost because it so accurately and emotionally captures the sixty-four Octobers I've experienced throughout my life walking the meadows, fields, and country lanes of New Jersey as the hours of daylight dwindle. By the way, there's a wild grape vine growing just behind the parsonage and the grapes are delicious. Mr. Frost would be delighted!

October is that season of transition from harvest to winter preparation; a month when my "Mom Mom Niblock" was busy cutting up and canning garden vegetables for the winter, and "Grandmom Coblentz" cooked down and strained peaches picked from the orchard for her famous peach jelly. Speaking of harvests, our own Jehovah Jira Garden is finally showing signs of slowing down after yet another bountiful year supplying fresh, healthy fruits and veggies to our food-deprived neighbors. Soon the last lone tomato will be picked as the last lone cricket chirps from under a fallen leaf tinged with frost, and we'll know its time to close the garden gate until next April.

And as the gate creaks shut, how about we whisper a prayer of thanks for all the amazing volunteers whose efforts made this year's garden such a vital part of our food ministry?

October promises to be quite the exciting month at New Dover! Here are just a few things to look forward to in the weeks ahead:

- ⇒ Throughout the month there's Sunday School for youth and adults every Sunday morning at 9:00!
- ⇒ Have your spirits lifted at our Saturday Praise services at 5:00 pm, plus traditional Sunday worship at 10:15!
- ⇒ Hot Topics classes entitled "Reading the Bible Again for the First Time" take place live every Monday morning at 10:30 and live and online every Thursday evening at 7:00!
- ⇒ Ignite Youth Conference is back LIVE in Wildwood, the weekend of September 30 – October 2. Our youth will be there!
- ⇒ World Communion Sunday is October 2nd!
- ⇒ Our annual Charge Conference is scheduled for 9:30 am, Saturday, October 8th at Wesley UMC in South Plainfield. Come out to celebrate our ministry and vote for our new slate of nominees, staff salaries, etc.!
- ⇒ On October 12th I've been invited to present "*An Evening with Robert Frost*" at the monthly UMW gathering. The whole church is welcome to attend!
- ⇒ Laity Sunday happens at worship on October 16th. Come to praise God and celebrate our diverse and highly gifted church!
- ⇒ And I know it's early, but start gathering pledges for the annual MEAICA Hunger Walk that will take place 2:00 pm on Sunday,
- ⇒ November 6th at Centenary UMC in Metuchen!

So there you go. It may not be canning veggies or cooking down peaches but there sure will be lots to do at New Dover this month! In the meantime, don't forget that October is also a great month to stop by our Flea Market, every Tuesday from 7:30-1:30. There's lots of cool stuff to buy and breakfast and lunch available as well!

Have a blessed October,
Rev



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz
Debbie Ladym
Earlette Butterfield
Brian Richards
Kyle Becker
Service men & women
Veterans
Homeless, unemployed
& uninsured

All affected by Covid-19 and
their families

The People of Ukraine
Victims & their Families of
the recent mass shootings
All Elderly of NDUMC

Pray for all those affected by Natural Disasters, those suffering with addictions, those suffering from depression, Victims of terrorism & violence, all national leaders, and all those serving at New Dover UMC.

All doctors, nurses, EMT, teachers, grocery store workers, janitors, and all other frontline workers. Thank you and God Bless.

If you wish to add anyone to the 2022 permanent prayer list, please contact Karen Rowland at krowland648@yahoo.com

FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

PLEASE JOIN US FOR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP EVERY
WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 10 AM



Don't
face the
day until
you have
faced
God
in prayer.

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SERMON OF THE MONTH

“The Mercury Malaise”

(Preached Sunday, September 11, 2022)

II Thessalonians 3:6-15

When I was out one night last week, I was served by a young lady who was wearing a pink T-Shirt that had printed on the front, “*I feel like Mercury has been in retrograde my whole life.*” Now I had absolutely no idea what that meant, but as one who’s had a lifetime interest in our space program, I had to at least attempt to find out. So the next time she came by I simply asked her what her T-shirt meant, and guess what? She had no idea either; she told me she just liked the way it looked! So naturally I did what any inquiring mind does these days, I went to the library.....JUST KIDDING! I immediately got out my phone and Googled it. What I discovered led to the sermon you are about to hear...

So here’s what I uncovered: the phrase “Mercury in retrograde” has two meanings: one scientific, the other....not so much! “Scientifically speaking, a Mercury retrograde is simply an optical illusion where, from our perspective on earth, the planet appears to reverse its orbit and move backwards in the night sky.” It has to do with the different speeds in the orbits of Earth and Mercury. So the apparent retrograde of Mercury is a perfectly natural and understandable event in scientific terms. It’s no big deal. But if that’s the case, why the T-Shirt? Nobody buys a no-big-deal T-shirt, right? Well, the message on the T-shirt has absolutely nothing to do with science and everything to do with superstition.

According to proponents of astrology, whenever Mercury is seen to retrograde (that’s three to four times every year) it supposedly renders a negative effect on our daily lives! According to astrologers, it drags us backward, just like the planet’s path in the night sky. We’re told the times of Mercury’s retrograde will bring on feelings of malaise, defeatism, and depression. From that bastion of scientific thought (*sarcasm alert!*) Vogue Magazine I read that Mercury in retrograde “...*is likely to send your everyday life into a tailspin.* Feeling low energy anyone? Blame it on Mercury! And of course, astrologers claim its influence will vary according to your zodiac sign. Born in late April, I’m a Taurus, so I scrolled down to see what they had to say about me and my fellow Taurus peeps. Well, they warn that “*The retrograde may wreak havoc on your internal communications but...you tend to be a private person so you might want to find a quiet place where you can let your sound flow directly from your heart.*” Yeah, you all know me- I “tend to be a private person, right? I’m about as private as a Kardashian! See, that’s why I myself have never put an ounce of stock in this superstitious, pseudo- scientific *garbage!* Other than that I have no opinion on the matter...

For those of us who put little or no trust in astrology, Mercury in retrograde sounds less like a cause and more like a convenient excuse a person can give for apathetic, negative, lethargic behavior. Even though there is absolutely no measurable physical effect that the planets and distant constellations have on our lives, belief in astrology, like taking a placebo, is capable of exerting a psychological influence on one’s attitudes and actions, meaning that if one truly believes Mercury in retrograde has the power to bring them down, chances are they’ll allow themselves to be brought down! I’m calling such superstitious belief “the Mercury Malaise,” and astrology aside, this malaise, along with apathy, negativity, and lethargy, has been having a field day with us lately, hasn’t it?

For millions of Americans, it’s like an ominous grey cloud has descended, hovering over us, casting its murky shadow on all that we do. No doubt some of it can be attributed to the two years of Covid and its influence on our lives, but this malaise has extended beyond the pandemic and continues to infiltrate every nook and cranny of our lives. It’s been especially felt on the job.

There's a phenomenon going around the workplace lately and its been given a name- "quiet quitting." What exactly is that? Well, quiet quitting has been defined as

"...the practice of reducing the amount of effort one devotes to one's job, such as by stopping the completion of any tasks not explicitly stated in the job description, reducing productivity or the amount of work one performs, and rejection of the pressure or expectation to "go above and beyond" in one's role as the norm (especially when not being fairly compensated for such tasks and responsibilities). It often involves abandoning ambitions for advancement."

Okay. This is all very interesting, Rev, but what does lethargic performance on the job have to do with our faith? Well, if you peruse the Bible, a lot, and if you heed Paul's words in II Thessalonians, a heckuva lot! Turns out Paul was having an issue with "quiet quitting" all the way back in the 1st century!

The Bible contains literally dozens of verses that deal with the importance of hard work, and literally dozens of passages that condemn minimal effort, and malaise on the job. Listen to a few from the Book of Proverbs alone: Proverbs 13:4- *"The appetite of the lazy craves, and gets nothing, while the appetite of the diligent is richly supplied."* Proverbs 18:9- *"One who is slack in work is close kin to a vandal."* Proverbs 15:19- *"The way of the lazy is overgrown with thorns, but the path of the upright is a level highway,"* and Proverbs 21:25- *"The craving of the lazy person is fatal, for lazy hands refuse to labor."* Pretty tough talk from the writer of Proverbs! And notice that at no time does the Proverbian say, *"But I get it, Mercury's in retrograde so it's okay to slack off."* No, Proverbs is pretty straight-forward when it comes to lack of effort. And this was all echoed by the Apostle Paul in his second letter to the church at Thessalonica!

Thessalonica was the capital of the Roman province of Macedonia, and as such was a thriving working class community. It was one of the first churches that Paul, along with his fellow evangelists, Silvanus and Timothy, set up outside of the Middle East, and as such it held a very special in Paul's heart. But affection aside, Paul was never one to shy away from constructively criticizing or disciplining his churches when the situation called for it, and in the case of this second letter to the Thessalonians, it's pretty evident what was concerning Paul.

The church had among its members a number of quiet quitters! Listen to the words of the apostle:

"Now we command you, beloved, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, to keep away from believers who are living in idleness and not according to the tradition that they received from us."

What's interesting here is that Paul is not referring to the actions of believers in the context of the church, but rather to their behavior outside, in the greater Thessalonian community: *"For we hear that some of you are living in idleness, mere busybodies, not doing any work."* Question- why should Paul care how the early Christian believers in Thessalonica behave outside the boundaries of the church? Well, because Paul believed, as we do today, that the vast majority of our ministry occurs outside the walls of the church. Paul was also acutely aware that as Christians, we are always "on stage!" We are not a cult that exists only behind slammed doors and shuttered windows. Saints, we are out there! So what Paul was trying to get across was this: if their fellow co-workers knew they were followers of Jesus (and given the evangelical nature of their faith they should know that!), then how the believers carry themselves away from the church is even more important than how they act while gathered together as a fellowship! Anyone can act all Christian-y inside the sanctuary, right? What's more important is how we act when we're on the outside, among our neighbors, colleagues, and coworkers!

Paul 100 percent believed that the Thessalonian Christians should serve as an example to the non-Christian Thessalonians when it comes to their work ethic. And Paul didn't just talk the talk- he most definitely walked the walk, along with Silvanus and Timothy, he was an example to the Thessalonian community:

"...we were not idle when we were with you, and we did not eat anyone's bread without paying for it; but with toil and labor we worked night and day, so that we might not burden any of you. This was not because we do not have that right, but in order to give you an example to imitate."

Saints, as Paul is telling us as well, we are always to be held up as examples to others on how to live a Christian life! Think about it- if a non-believer is aware that a coworker is a Christian, and he or she saw that the Christian was lazy on the job, displayed little or no work effort, was basically a burden to his or her coworkers, how do think that impacts their idea of what it means to be a Christian? What Paul was telling his church members 2,000 years ago was this- that there was no excuse for being a “quiet quitter” in Thessalonica, or anywhere else for that matter! That for Christians of all ages, including our own, there is no excuse for lackadaisical effort in the workplace.

Saints, Mercury in retrograde means nothing to a true Christian, and quiet quitting is never an option, because our work ethic, like all aspects of our lives, is always on display, and it is one of the most important tools in our evangelistic tool belt!

A strong work ethic is also essential when it comes to the ministry of the church, amen?! You know, there have been all kinds of excuses given for why church attendance continues to plummet; everything from secular humanism to Sunday soccer! But perhaps it’s because our churches have far too many members who have become “quiet quitters?” Christians who mail in their faith, attend church on Sunday but do little or nothing else, the bare minimum to convince themselves that they are actually “Christian,” but in reality their faith is so watered down as to be useless when it comes to the actual building of God’s Kingdom on earth! Saints, quiet quitting has no place in the life of a disciple, and as Paul taught us, it has no place in the ministry of the church of Jesus Christ!

Saints, before we begin this new church season, let us first examine our own work ethic when it comes to our life as a disciple, asking ourselves, “Am I doing all I can to cultivate my faith and strengthen the ministry of New Dover? How we answer that question will go a long way in determining the road ahead! For encouragement, I close with the words of Paul from II Thessalonians:

“Now such persons we command and exhort in the Lord Jesus Christ to do their work quietly and to earn their own living. Brothers and sisters, do not be weary in doing what is right.”



Greater New Jersey Conference
United Women in Faith
Fall Meeting

October 15, 2022, 10am - 3pm; breakfast from 9-9:45
Bridgewater UMC, also hybrid

Ingathering: bring rainbow yarn and gallon zip lock bags

Cost (includes breakfast and lunch) for in-person attendance is \$10.00

Register by October 7th

Registration: <https://form.jotform.com/221166107825149>

Guest speaker is Mark Miller

Topic: Intersectionality: Where Love and Justice Meet



United Methodist Women News



In September Dianne Petersen and Lisa and Dave Chesney delivered 6 large plastic bags of pop tops to Ronald McDonald House in Long Branch, NJ.

The donated pop tops are taken to a local recycling station where they are weighed and cashed in by the pound. The money is used to assist the House with operational expenses; and cover the cost for families who stay at the House. The Pop Top Collection

Program enables RMH to provide a home to keep families close while their children are receiving medical care.

We recently received a letter of thanks from Ronald McDonald House for our continued support of this program. The letter is hanging on the UMW bulletin board if you would like to read it.

A collection jar can be found in Fellowship Hall. Please save your pop tops and bring them in.

The UMW will meet Wednesday, October 12th at 6:30pm. All women of the church are invited to join us for an enjoyable program and refreshments afterwards.

Bell Choir Ringing Schedule

Our Fall - Winter Ringing Schedule

On ringing days: Rehearsal 8:00 Worship 10:15

September 18 – Bells play at Bound Brook UMC for their 175th Anniversary (no rehearsals)

September 25 – Music Sunday

October 30 – Reformation Sunday

November 13 – Day of Peace

December 11 – Advent

Saturday, December 24th – Christmas Eve 7:00 pm service

January 8 – Epiphany Sunday

Regular practices start on October 2 after 10:15 service. All new members are welcome to join the Bell Choir.



STARS FOR CHARITY is a volunteer group of artists who use their skills and individual styles to transform a 5" WOODEN STAR into fine art. The stars are then auctioned on Ebay. Any remaining stars will be sold at a live auction. 100% of the proceeds go to an agreed-on charity. Last year we donated to two New Jersey food-based nonprofits - "Bread-Breakers" of New Dover United Methodist Church in Edison, and Community Food Bank of Hillside which supplies food pantries all around NJ. Together we provided 13,000 meals for the needy. This year we aim to triple it to 40,000 with the aim of expanding into PA and NY.

Please help us support our food deprived neighbors with the power of your art. **Return your finished star by November 20th to:**

Stars For Charity
c/o New Dover United Methodist Church
687 New Dover Road
Edison, NJ 08820
Attention: William Bunting

Contact Bill Bunting at buntingart@yahoo.com or contact the church office for stars.

You may create more than one if you desire. The more stars, the better. **PLEASE INCLUDE A SHORT BIO.**

Then watch the stars come out in December on the official Ebay website:

[new_dover_umc](https://www.ebay.com/str/new_dover_umc)

Please consider Stars for Charity so **YOUR** talent can become an agent for change.



MEMBERSHIP CORNER

TRUE FAITH BRINGS COMMITMENT

To many Christians Christ is little more than an idea, or at best an ideal. He is not a fact. Millions of professed believers talk as if He were real and act as if He were not. And always our actual position is to be discovered by the way we act, not by the way we talk.

We can prove our faith by our commitment to it, and in no other way. Any belief that does not command the one who holds it is not a real belief; it is a pseudo belief only. And it might shock some of us profoundly if we were brought suddenly face to face with our beliefs and forced to test them in the fires of practical living.

Many of us Christians have become extremely skillful in arranging our lives so as to admit the truth of Christianity without being embarrassed by its implications. We arrange things so that we can get on well enough with divine aid, while at the same time ostensibly seeking it. **We boast in the Lord but watch carefully that we never get caught depending on Him.** “The heart is deceitful above all things, and desperately wicked; who can know it?”

Pseudo faith always arranges a way out to serve in case God fails it. Real faith knows only one way and gladly allows itself to be stripped of any second way or makeshift substitutes. **For true faith, it is either God or total collapse.** And not since Adam first stood up on the earth has God failed a single man or woman who trusted Him.

The man of pseudo faith will fight for his verbal creed but refuse flatly to allow himself to get into a predicament where his future must depend upon that creed being true. He always provides himself with secondary ways of escape so he will have a way out if the roof caves in.

What we need very badly these days is a company of Christians who are prepared to trust God as completely now as they know they must do at the last day. For each of us the time is surely coming when we shall have nothing but God. **Health and wealth and friends and hiding places will all be swept away and we shall have only God.** To the man of pseudo faith that is a terrifying thought, but to real faith it is one of the most comforting thoughts the heart can entertain.

It would be a tragedy indeed to come to the place where we have no other but God and find that we had not really been trusting God during the days of our earthly sojourn. **It would be better to invite God now to remove every false trust, to disengage our heart from all secret hiding places and to bring us out into the open where we can discover for ourselves whether or not we actually trust Him.** That is a harsh cure for our troubles, but it is a sure one. Gentler cures may be too weak to do the work. And time is running out on us.

From The Root of the Righteous by A.W. Tozer

October Birthdays

- 1 Nalini Dialle
Charles Greve
- 6 Claudine DeSimone
- 7 Lisa LaFauci-Gilmore
- 8 Ed Ladym
Oliver Vyas
- 9 Anita DeSimone
- 10 Patrick Kingsly
- 11 Subhas Budala
- 13 Chelsea Nyema
- 14 Marian Jones
Sherry Masih
Lori Perrine
Jessica Preston
- 15 Will Sanders
Kyle Sanders
- 16 JayR Manglapus
Tyler Rademacher
- 17 Anthony Sarno
- 19 Wilson Christian
- 22 Sunitha Reddy Thumma
- 24 Lulu Kamenas
- 27 Rachel Aludino
Sylvia Boyd
- 29 Marilyn Kimball
- 30 Anaiah Lewis
- 31 Victor Vilela

October Anniversaries

- 17 Robert & Kyle Becker
- 21 Jim & Peggy Silva
- 25 Sherry Grace Masih
- 29 Peter & Dawn Burnett
- 30 Anthony & Alyssa Sarno





October 22, 2022

3:00PM

Outside in the Front parking lot
(inside if raining)

COP 40th Year Anniversary Celebration!

On August 28 after service, a few of New Dover members travelled to Sparta UMC to celebrate 40th year anniversary of Christian Outreach Project. A service of recognition and memories followed by a warm fellowship was a perfect way to bring back the old and the new members who have been part of COP. We are especially thrilled to reconnect with COP this summer after many years of pause, and will continue to partner in this great in-state outreach opportunity to reach into homes, lives and churches for timely regeneration as maturing Christians.



News for the Youth and Young Adults~ YaYA!

As the new school year kicks in, we will be meeting on Sundays right after service and coffee hour for our YaYA, from Noon to 2pm and our meets include lunch. New Dover YaYA will be helping to host the church's coffee house this year as our main objective. Different project groups will work together to prepare, create, and execute 3 unique coffee houses. Exciting!

We will be meeting EVERY 2nd & 4th SUNDAYS at our church in the Fellowship Hall.

We also will incorporate some collaborative meetings with our neighboring churches on different days (when they meet) so look out for further notice.

Welcome to New Dover Sunday School, Sundays at 9AM.

Fall in love with Jesus~

Welcome back to New Dover Sunday School as our teachers decorate and prepare (clean and sanitize) their classes inside out. Our theme this year will center around "Pray Without Ceasing" from 1 Thessalonians 5:17, sharing with children and youths how important it is to keep on and keep up in their prayers at times as uncertain and testy as this we live in.



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