



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

January 2022

Vol. 185

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

A Happy New Year and a Blessed 2022 to you all!

Of the eleven "Chuck's Church Chats" I write each year this one for January is always the most difficult. That's because I have to get it in to Trish for inclusion in "The Herald" two weeks before Christmas without knowing how the services went, or even whether I got anything for Christmas! But there's another big reason why this "chat" is one of the more difficult I've ever written...

That's because we are about to have two of our most vital church members leave town for the wilds and trout streams of upstate New York. Let me just state that Pat Carpenter and Brian Richards are among the most energetic, passionate, and dedicated parishioners I've ever had the honor to pastor. So much so, that I can't imagine how diminished our church would be had they not played such a vital role over the years.

Pat has been extremely active in such a wide variety of ministries including Wednesday Morning Prayer Group, Worship Committee, Altar Guild, Vacation Bible School, Greeter, Outreach Committee, office volunteer, as well as being there as an emotional overall support for so many who have fallen on hard times.

And Brian? All he's done was initiate and drive the renovation of Fellowship Hall, serve as both president and board member of the Trustees, serve as Lay Delegate to Annual Conference, sign us up to become the United Methodist Central New Jersey Mission Hub, spearheaded our highly successful Bread-breakers mission, and too many other things to count.

Now Pat and Brian assure us they won't be total strangers once they make the move (closing on their new home is January 3rd); they're still within a two-hour drive, and they're going to keep their membership with New Dover. But hey, it's going to be eerily quiet around the church once they're not poking their heads into the office every weekday morning to see if there's anything needs doing, or simply to say hello and "*shoot the bull!*" What I'm saying is that more than highly committed church members, I will personally miss seeing my dear friends, and wish them nothing but the absolutely best that God has in store for them in the upcoming year.

And that's my wish for all of you as well. Wherever the road takes you, and there will always be unexpected dips, rises, bends, and forks in it, may God guide our choices and make his presence known throughout all of 2022.

Your fellow servant in Christ,

Chuck

Rev Chuck



God bless You
Pat & Brian!



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz
Pat & Brian
June Ebbets
Lulu Kamenas & family
The Manglapus Family
Gail Engel
Service men & women
Veterans

Homeless, unemployed
& uninsured
All affected by Covid-19 and
their families
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.

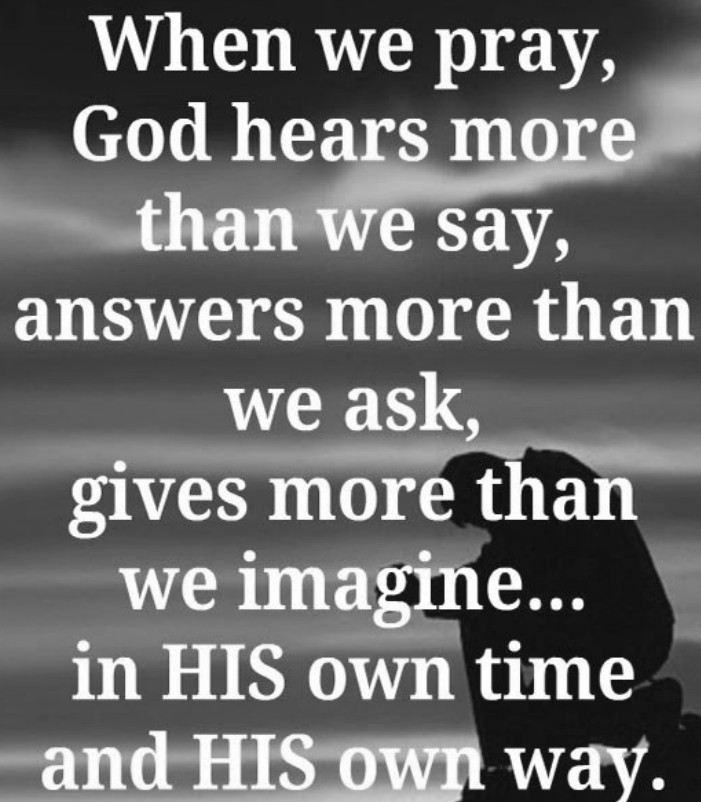
If you wish to add anyone to the 2022 permanent prayer list, please contact Karen Rowland at krowland648@yahoo.com

FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

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

In This Issue:

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- December Birthdays & Anniversaries
- Membership Corner



When we pray,
God hears more
than we say,
answers more than
we ask,
gives more than
we imagine...
in HIS own time
and HIS own way.

SERMON OF THE MONTH

“Buried Gifts”

Preached on Laity Sunday, October 17, 2021

Matthew 25:14-30

Have you ever given someone you care about a gift, maybe even a rather expensive gift, and then you ***never see it again***?! they never wear it, or use it, or ride it, or anything it! After a while you might drop a hint that you're onto them! “*Hey Horace, my man, ehhhh, how are you liking that turtleneck sweater I bought you for your birthday?*” Horace, obviously quick on his feet responds, “*Love it Chuck! Love it just as much as the plaid vest you gave me last year!*” This gets worse than turtlenecks and vests though. Speaking for most of us guys, we know that no matter how many hours we put in at the mall, the majority of the jewelry we purchase for our significant others has a better than 90 percent chance of being buried, maybe not in the backyard, but in the back of some obscure drawer in a jewelry case, in some dusty, forgotten corner of the attic. And how does that make us feel, fellas? We think what a waste of time and income it was to give such an expensive yet neglected gift, right? We might even get a bit perturbed, mad even!

Now put yourself in God's place and you'll begin to empathize with this parable. God is the great giver of gifts, but the gifts God gives us aren't as material or ephemeral as jewelry or a plaid vest. God gives us gifts for living our lives. God gives us gifts who's function is to make this world a better place. God gives us gifts used to build God's Kingdom, to spread God's love around our neighborhood and around the world. But Saints, if we never put these gifts to action, well, God is not only disappointed, according to the parable that Stephanie just read, God gets a bit perturbed! Unlike Horace's turtleneck sweater, putting to use the gifts God gives us is not optional. In fact, according to this parable, we are to take these gifts and multiply them, make them stronger, during our time here on earth.

Today is Laity Sunday, a day when we not only honor the contributions of our numerous laity, but it is also a day to celebrate the gifts that God has blessed us with as we march forward in ministry, and no parable of Jesus so addresses the subject of God-given gifts as does the passage from Matthew 25. The master in the parable does two things here: first of all he “***summons***” his servants; calls them over. Second, he “***entrusts***” them with his estate. These two simple verbs, **summoned** and **entrusted**, define our covenant with God. Saints, every last one of us has been ***summoned, or called*** by God. And every last one of us has been ***entrusted*** with various responsibilities.

Note that each servant in the parable is given ***a different degree of responsibility*** dependent on their ability. That word we translate “ability” is the Greek word “*dunamis*” from the root “*dunamai*” meaning “able to” or “can do.” In other words, that which a person is capable of doing. God recognizes that each servant has different degrees of capability. For that reason one of the servants was entrusted with five talents, another two, and the other just one. What's a talent, you ask? In Jesus' time a talent was a fixed amount of silver or gold, the equivalent today of around \$10,000- not pocket change, right?! Anyway, once his servants receive their talents the master backs his chariot out of the driveway, and they're are on their own...

So the drama ensues- we wonder, how will the servants handle their responsibilities by the time their master gets back home? Here Jesus story telling is pretty straight forward. The one entrusted with the five talents? Well he goes out and doubles them to ten! Must have bought some ancient Bitcoin! The one entrusted with two talents? He doubles that to four; not bad! Not as impressive as Bitcoin servant, but still not bad; he's like a “day trader” of talents! And then we

come to the servant entrusted with just the one talent. What did he do? Let's call him hole diggin' dude. Yeah, he buried his in the ground; never made a nickel!

So what do ya suppose is gonna happen when, after time away, the master pulls back into the driveway? It will all depend on what the servants have done with the talents they are entrusted with. First up- Bitcoin servant! Well he just struts right up to his master and says, "*Check it out! You gave me five? Well here's five more! Ten altogether- Bazinga!*" And the master tells him in, "*You da man! You made me very happy*" and gives the guy a big old hug. What about day trader servant? Well, even though he was less capable than Bitcoin guy, he nevertheless doubled his talents as well. And for doing that, for living up to his capabilities, he gets the exact same response from the master: "*Come here you! You've proven yourself to be a darn good investor, so next time you're getting a promotion!*" And another big hug ensues! Such a happy scene so far right? And next up? Uh oh- it's the hole-diggin' dude standing there with his one dirt-encrusted talent. And we know this ain't gonna end well! After seeing what his buddies did with their talents, he has a sinking feeling about this, so he skulks sheepishly up to his master, brushing the dirt of his one talent, and before his master can even say a word what's he do? Yep, starts making all kind of excuses! Unbelievably, the hole diggin' dude actually digs himself deeper, because he starts blaming his master for his actions! "*Look sir, I knew that you're a harsh master, taking what isn't yours, scared me to death, so rather than risk losing it I dug a hole and put my talent in there for safe keeping Here, take it back, it's yours anyway; truth is, I never wanted it in the first place!*"

Needless to say, this does not go over well with the big guy, not pleased, not pleased. But even 2,000 years later we are pretty shocked by his reaction! "*Why you wicked, lazy, no-good sack o' poo! So I'm a harsh dude who takes what isn't mine? That's what you think of me? Well if that's the case, the least you could have done was get me some interest- put the talent in a bank maybe? But noooooooo! Gimme that talent! Hey Bitcoin servant, my man, here, you take it; I know you'll do great things given what you did with the other talents I gave you. But as for you- hole-diggin' dude- you can literally go to hell, where you will be tortured for, let's see..... ALL ETERNITY!* And just like that the hole-diggin' dude is hauled off kickin' and screamin'!

See, I told you, that was harsh was it not? Seems at first like a bit of an overreaction, right? The Master cast him right into the outer darkness; no strike one, no strike two, just boom! I ask you- what did he do to deserve that? Technically he committed no sin; broke no biblical law. I mean this guy didn't really **do** anything did he! He didn't do anything! He didn't do anything.... well that's sort of the point ain't it! He was punished to the fullest extent because he didn't do anything. He was summoned by his master, given one lousy talent, and he did nothing with it.

Let me ask you, can you think of anything more displeasing in the eyes of God? Do you know someone very famous once said, "*The hottest place in Hell is reserved for those who remain neutral in times of great moral conflict.*" Who said that? That person sounds as tough as the master in the story! Who said it? Give you a hint- it was the same person who also said, "*He who passively accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against it is really cooperating with it.*" Same person who said, "*History will have to record that the greatest tragedy of this period of social transition was not the strident clamor of the bad people, but the appalling silence of the good people.*" Yeah- it was Martin Luther King. Not exactly a person known for pontificating harsh judgment. But King, like others striving to build the Kingdom of God, recognized that the greatest enemy they confronted was not those who openly opposed them, rather those who were **capable** of helping, who had the **gifts** to help the cause, but who chose instead to bury their talent, sit on the sidelines, and do nothing.

You see Saints, that's why the punishment given to the one-talent slave is justified. He had the talent, but rather than put it to use, he buried it. He thought that simply **breaking even** was good enough when it came to serving his master. But Saints, is there anything sadder or more frustrating than talent wasted? Not according to Jesus. Then and now, the message he teaches his followers through this parable is simple, is it not? We are not put here on earth to "break even!" We are not put

here on earth to merely get by! Each one of us has been called on to leave this earth a better place than when we found it, to advance the Kingdom of God toward fulfillment, not spin our wheels in the dirt. And each one of us, according to our capabilities, has been entrusted with a certain talent or talents to make that happen. Some of us have five talent capability, others four talent, or three or two, or perhaps just one. We are not all equal in what we're capable of doing. **But we are** all equal in terms of our responsibility to employ the gifts we've been given to build the Kingdom.

Saints, if our religious life consists of nothing more than church on Sunday than we might as well be taking our talent and burying it in the cold hard ground. The parable of the talents teaches that such an apathetic life is not only unacceptable, it is abhorrent to God. According to Jesus himself, what is the worst sin we can commit? We're talkin' sin with a capital "S"? Is it not the failure to live out our calling, the failure to use the talent God has given us. The greatest sin for those of us who claim to be a follower of Jesus is to waste our gift. Wow Rev, that sounds harsh. It sure does. But how can we interpret this parable otherwise?

Just think about where Matthew placed this parable in his gospel-just before the Great Judgment. Just before when the Son of Man separates the good sheep from the bad goats, based entirely on *what*? Not on what we profess to believe, but by how we actually lived out our faith. Saints, we have been summoned to a purpose, entrusted with the gifts necessary to make it happen.

What happens when gifts go wasted? This happens... *"I was hungry and you gave me no food; I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink; I was a stranger and you did not welcome me; naked and you did not give me clothing; sick and in prison and you did not visit me."* We had the food, had the drink, had the welcome mat, had the clothing, had the time to visit, had the gifts to make it all happen, but we chose instead to bury our gifts in the dirt, and our apathy, our failure to act, has a price.

But here's the good news Saints- it's never too late to answer God's call; never too late to start putting your considerable talents to good use! It's true, our God is righteous in his judgments, but God is above all, compassionate and forgiving! So if your talent is buried out back somewhere I have a suggestion: get the heck out there and dig it up, and start putting that talent into action! We have a lot of challenges before us as a church, as a nation, and as a world and God needs every last one of us to answer the call.

This Laity Sunday we indeed have much to celebrate when it comes to the capabilities of our church, do we not? Rest assured, God has witnessed the way so many of us have taken the talent he has given us and used it to build his Kingdom on earth, here in Edison. God is no doubt pleased when he see how so many of us have put the talents we been given to use. The gifts of teaching and administrating our Sunday School, Bible Studies, Youth Group, and Vacation Bible School. The gifts of sandwich making and those who gather every Friday morning to fill bags with balanced meals. Our volunteers who pick up meals from Wawa, and then distribute it. We celebrate the talents that uplift us in worship- gifts of music, liturgy, and technology as the service goes from here to our balcony then out into the world. God blesses those who use the precious gift of prayer every Wednesday morning in the Susannah Wesley room, as well as those who have the gift of maintaining and improving our buildings and grounds. Those who take care of our finances in the quiet of the office when no one's around, or count and care for the offering every week. And what about those who help out with coffee hour, or work the flea market, or welcome us to church every Saturday and Sunday?

Saints, we do a lot with our talents to be sure, compared to most churches we have a large percentage of members and friends who put their faith into action. But like the five talent servant of the parable, God believes we are capable of so much more! The big issue is not what have we done, but what we are capable of doing in the time ahead! As much as we celebrate what we've accomplished so far, if we do no find ways to multiply the gifts God has blessed us with it is the equivalent of burying our talent in the ground. It is not acceptable to God, nor should it be to us, to plan a future that is status quo or pessimistic in scale! If we set a goal let's make it a lofty one, so

equivalent of burying our talent in the ground. It is not acceptable to God, nor should it be to us, to plan a future that is status quo or pessimistic in scale! If we set a goal let's make it a lofty one, so that by Laity Sunday next year we have even more to celebrate!



UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

It's hard to believe it is 2022 already. We hope you all enjoyed a safe, happy and blessed Christmas.

Our United Methodist Women's Christmas party was a wonderful success with 21 women attending. We enjoyed a delicious covered dish dinner, a beautiful prayer said by our own Pastor Rosie followed by a fun Christmas decoration making guided by our crafts lady, Peggy. We are growing and hope more women will join us during our next meeting in March for our St. Patrick's Day celebration and exciting plans for the new year.

We wish you joy and many blessings in 2022.

Sincerely,

United Methodist Women
Dianne Petersen - President

Don't forget to save those "pop tabs" for Ronald McDonald House.



Confirmation Class 2022!

By Rosie Pang, Associate Pastor

It's here! Starting Sunday, January 9, 2022, 2pm first Sunday of Confirmation class begins.

Confirmation is a public act and profession of their faith.

Public profession of faith

Although confirmation is not a sacrament in The United Methodist Church, it is an important marker along our spiritual journeys.

At baptism, we are initiated into the new covenant in Jesus Christ and membership in the Church, Christ's body in the world. For many, this happens when they are very young.



January 2022



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						<i>1 Happy New Year</i>
<i>2 Epiphany Sunday</i> <i>9am Children & Adult</i> <i>Sunday School</i> <i>10:15am Worship</i> <i>11:15am Bell Practice</i> <i>4:30 pm Telugu Service</i>	<i>3</i> <i>10:30am Hot Topics</i> <i>7:00pm Trustees</i>	<i>4</i> <i>6-7:30pm GS 80105</i> <i>7:30p BS 44</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i> <i>7:00 Hot Topics</i> <i>(on Zoom)</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i> <i>9am Kahboom</i> <i>Robotics</i> <i>5pm Praise Service</i>
<i>9</i> <i>9am Children & Adult</i> <i>Sunday School</i> <i>10:15am Worship</i> <i>11:15am Bell Practice</i> <i>4:30pm Telugu Service</i>	<i>10</i> <i>10:30am Hot Topics</i> <i>7pm Nurture</i>	<i>11</i> <i>7:30p BS 44</i>	<i>12</i>	<i>13</i> <i>7:00 Hot Topics</i> <i>(on Zoom)</i>	<i>14</i>	<i>15</i> <i>9am Kahboom</i> <i>Robotics</i> <i>5pm Praise Service</i>
<i>16</i> <i>9am Children & Adult</i> <i>Sunday School</i> <i>10:15am Worship</i> <i>11:15am Bell Practice</i> <i>4:30pm Telugu Service</i>	<i>17 MLK Day</i> <i>7:00pm Worship</i>	<i>18</i> <i>6-7:30pm GS 80105</i> <i>7:30p BS 44</i>	<i>19</i>	<i>20</i> <i>7:00 Hot Topics</i> <i>(on Zoom)</i>	<i>21</i>	<i>22</i> <i>9am Kahboom</i> <i>Robotics</i> <i>5pm Praise Service</i>
<i>23</i> <i>9am Children & Adult</i> <i>Sunday School</i> <i>10:15am Worship</i> <i>11:15am Bell Practice</i> <i>4:30pm Telugu Service</i>	<i>24</i> <i>10:30am Hot Topics</i> <i>7pm Council</i>	<i>25</i> <i>7:30p BS 44</i>	<i>26</i>	<i>27</i> <i>7:00 Hot Topics</i> <i>(on Zoom)</i>	<i>29</i>	<i>29</i> <i>9am Kahboom</i> <i>Robotics</i> <i>5pm Praise Service</i>
<i>30</i> <i>9am Children & Adult</i> <i>Sunday School</i> <i>10:15am Worship</i> <i>11:15am Bell Practice</i> <i>4:30pm Telugu Service</i>	<i>31</i> <i>10:30am Hot Topics</i>					

January Birthdays

*Gerry Allarey
Renil Khristi
Liam Dalton
Julie Gottstein
Sean Becker
Sue Dalton
Jameson Ouellette
Annapurna Budala
Jesse Harland
Sanjana Dialle
Michael Greve
Janice Wilson
Cindy Bonito
Tim Roth
Elmira Higoy
Vicki Aludino*

January Anniversaries

*Ajith & Sandra De Alwis
Poorna & Catherine Jeevanandam
Rajiv & Sanjana Dialle
Bolton & Indira Nyema*



MEMBERSHIP CORNER

36 Christian Ways to Reduce Stress (author unknown)

1. PRAY

2. Go to bed on time.
3. Get up on time so you can start the day unrushed.
4. **Say no** to projects that won't fit into your time schedule, or that will compromise your mental health.
5. **Delegate** tasks to capable others.
6. **Simplify** and unclutter your life.
7. Less is more (although one is often not enough, two are often too many).
8. Allow extra time to do things and to get to places.
9. Pace yourself. Spread out the big changes and difficult projects over time; don't lump the hard things all together.
10. Take one day at a time.
11. **Separate worries from concerns.** If a situation is a concern, find out what God would have you do and let go of the anxiety. If you can't do anything about a situation, forget it.
12. Live within your budget.
13. K.M.S. (keep mouth shut) This single piece of advice can prevent an enormous amount of trouble!
14. Do something for the kid in you everyday
15. Carry a Bible or download a Bible app to read when waiting in line.
16. Get enough exercise.
17. Eat right.

This is only the first half; second half in February!

NOTICE TO MEMBERS AND ACTIVE CONSTITUENTS: There will be a directory update in January 2022. Please check your listing in the directory emailed to you previously; if you want to make changes or deletions, let me know before Jan. 24, 2022. If you want to put in a photo, email to me or give to me on Sundays. You will only be emailed or given a directory if you have your contact information in it. For those without email, I will have hard copies available in February. Subsequent updates of individual listings will only be sent out by email, so I urge you to provide an email address if you have one. Any questions, email me or speak with me on Sundays. Thanks!

Anita Davis
marblesandmayhem@outlook.com



PRAYER PUPS BY JEFFREY SMITH



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