



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

February 2022

Vol. 186

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

"You might think that after thousands of years of coming up too soon and getting frozen, the crocus family would have had a little sense knocked into it." -Robert Benchley

Saints,

Grace to you and peace in this brief month lived in the hope of winter's exit.



I've mentioned in past "chats" how the crocus, emerging from its bulb and cracking through the frozen soil, often having to pierce a thin coating of ice and snow to unfurl in the chilly light of late February, is the first sign of winter's impending doom. Well, like the crocus so imaginatively critiqued by the writer Robert Benchley, I've had a lifelong predilection to believe spring should begin about halfway through February. I remember as a teenager casting my fishing line into our hometown pond just as soon as there was an opening in the ice, and how that line would carry a thin film of ice shards back to my numbing hands as I reeled in. The bass, having endured a cold-blooded existence under the ice for months, weren't as warm to the idea of a fight, so they collectively refused to hit my lure leaving me to ride my bike back home with no stories to tell other than one of overly-optimistic disappointment.

I'm afraid being overly-optimistic has endured as one of my central character traits throughout the decades (*I once had a dear friend actually tell me I really ought to try getting depressed every once in a while!*). Now well into my seventh decade, I believe that positive part of my nature has never been more tested than in the past couple of years, and I know so many of you have had your own optimism tested as well, amen? But, like the crocus annually defies the elements to rise again each spring, so have you, the members and friends of New Dover continually risen to the occasion whenever things looked bad and times got tough; emerging from the husk of low expectations and negativity, then breaking through the crust of pessimism to burst forth once again!

You may have heard how we entered November with a \$40,000 budget deficit. Concerning indeed, but not unexpected considering how the pandemic has ravaged attendance over its course. I and the Council were hoping against hope that your end-of-the-year giving might cut the deficit in half before the end of December. But guess what? That's not what happened. On no- that's because your generous outpouring, fueled by both your gratitude to God and your enthusiasm for our ministry, **basically wiped out the entire deficit!** Yeah, you heard me- wiped it out!

More than giving me bragging rights I conveyed to our DS, Sang Won Doh (*"Let the one who boasts, boast in the Lord!"*- Saint Paul), it means we can head into the new year with a fresh head of steam, better prepared for the challenges that await us down the road. And rest assured there will be challenges! It's clear that we'll be living with some form of Covid for the foreseeable future, but in the meantime, the hungry yet cry out for bread, the homeless yet cry out for shelter, the sick, injured,

and bereaved yet cry out for healing, and the oppressed yet cry out for justice.

How will we respond, you Saints of New Dover? Just like we always have- with the stubborn, relentless, dependable will of a February crocus! Remember this the first time you see that green shoot emerge from the frosty ground this month. Remember, and you and I will continue our march together through the wilderness into 2022 with an overly-optimistic spiritual attitude, realizing that there's nothing we can't do when we focus our faith upon it.

Amen and keep rising up New Dover!

Chuck

CHURCH STAFF FOR 2022

PASTOR.....Reverend Chuck Coblentz
ASSOCIATE PASTOR.....Eun Young "Rosie" Park Pang
INDIAN OUTREACH MISSIONARY.....Mohan (Peter) Ponugubaty
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT.....Trish Boyce
ORGANIST.....Grace Kim
CHOIR DIRECTOR.....Grace Kim
HANDBELL DIRECTOR.....Alice Bennett
JR. & YOUTH CHOIR DIRECTOR..... Grace Kim

CHURCH LEADERS for 2022

ADMINISTRATIVE COUNCIL.....Patrick Kingsly
PRESIDENT OF TRUSTEES.....Jeffrey Rowland
STAFF/PARISH RELATIONS.....Fiona Meade
TREASURER.....Michelle O'Rourke
FINANCE.....JoAnn Lettieri
LAY LEADER.....Stephanie Rademacher
OUTREACH.....Paulette Harland
WORSHIP.....Karen Rowland
NURTURE.....Janet Greve
SUNDAY SCHOOL SUPERINTENDENT.....Catherine Poornaselvan
PRESIDENT OF UNITED METHODIST WOMEN.....Dianne Petersen
SEXTON.....Joe Murante
LAY DELEGATE TO ANNUAL CONFERENCE.....Brian Richards
LAY SERVANTS:

Alice Bennett
Anita Davis

Manny De La Paz (Emeritus)
Stephanie Rademacher

Lisa LaFauci -Gilmore

KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz

Pat & Brian

June Ebbets

Lulu Kamenas & 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.

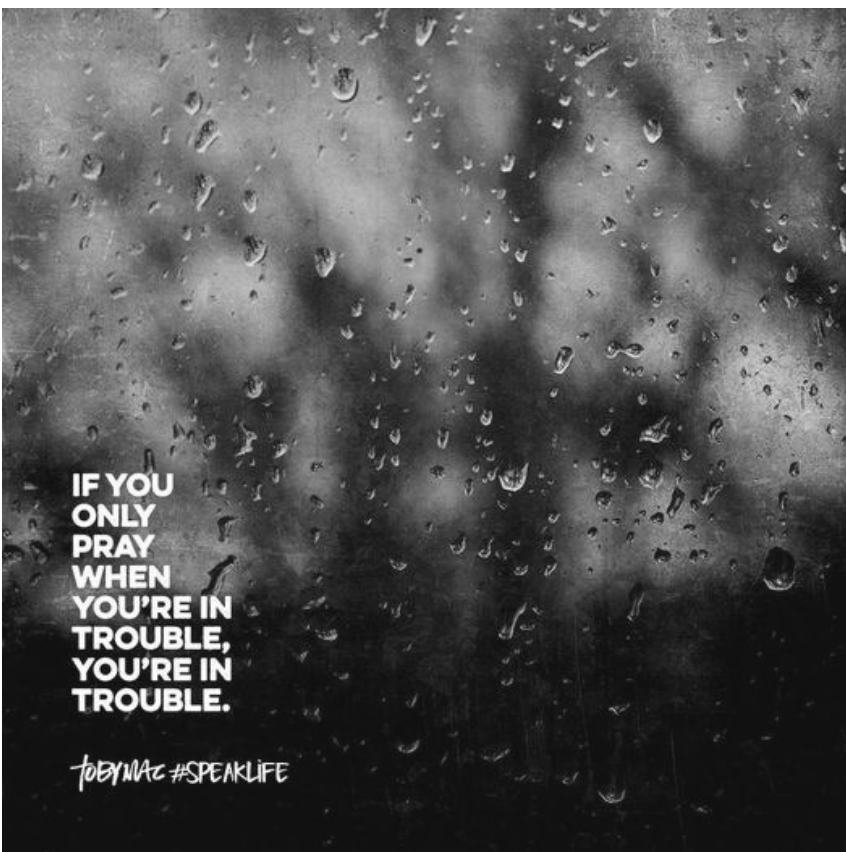
If you wish to add anyone to the 2022 permanent prayer list, please contact Karen Rowland at krowland648@yahoo.com

FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

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

In This Issue:

- Chuck's Church Chat
- Directory of Officials
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SERMON OF THE MONTH

"Let's Get Ready to Rumble!"

(Preached on September 26, 2021- the Day of Eric Colon's Baptism!)

Romans 8:5-13

This morning we have celebrated a milestone in the life of Eric Colon as well as in the life of the church! The ancient sacrament of baptism contains within it words that are challenging and deeply meaningful. And heavy, right? So very heavy. I mean think about what is being asked of Eric and all of us who have dared to be baptized, or had parents courageous enough to have us baptized as infants!

Listen again to these questions to be answered before God and the entire church:

Do you renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness, reject the evil powers of this world, and repent of your sin?

Do you accept the freedom and power God gives you to resist evil, injustice, and oppression in whatever forms they present themselves?

Do you confess Jesus Christ as your Savior, put your whole trust in his grace, and promise to serve him as your Lord, in union with the Church which Christ has opened to people of all ages, nations, and races?

Did you hear that? I mean really hear that? ***“Renounce the spiritual forces of wickedness!” “Reject the evil powers of this world!” “Repent” of your sin!” “Resist evil, injustice, and oppression”*** That's the 4 Rs man! And further- ***“Put your whole trust in God's grace, and promise to serve Jesus as your Lord in union with the Church”***

Saints, these vows are not suggestions, they are not some religious clichés we can take or leave whenever the mood strikes us. They are in fact a declaration of spiritual warfare against all that's wrong on God's green earth! We who've answered these vows in the affirmative have declared war on greed! On abuse of power! On tyranny and oppression! On prejudice and racism! On the exploitation of the earth's resources and the polluting of its skies, waters, and lands! And yes, on apathy itself! Heck, if the minister is being honest, after the baptism is administered instead of a banal benediction she or he ought to look the baptized person in the eye and stammer, ***“Ahhhhhhh.... let's get ready to rumble!!!!”*** So Eric, ***“Let's get ready to rumble!!!!”***

But the challenge this morning doesn't involve only Eric, but every one among us still traveling on our faith journey, still exploring, still questioning, still engaged in battle. It is the constant struggle, as Paul would put- spirit and flesh in a battle to the death for influence over our lives all along the way. Nikos Kazantzakis, the author of Zorba the Greek, and The Last Temptation of Christ understood it. He wrote, ***“My principle anguish and source of all my joys and sorrows from my youth onward has been the incessant, merciless battle between the spirit and the flesh...and my soul is the arena where these two armies have clashed and met.”***

Saints, if we underestimate it, the sacrament of baptism can seem so tame, so user-friendly, so optional and arbitrary from day to day. Yet it is nothing less than the opening salvo in an epic war; God's gauntlet thrown down in the battle for the soul. According to Paul in chapter 8 of Romans, baptism is a life or death decision. How's that for heavy? He wrote,

“There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.”

To be free from the law of sin and death means that because of what Christ has done for us on the cross, we need never allow our fear death to rule over our lives ever again. Saints, is this not what we dare to proclaim every Sunday when we gather together to worship. As we took part in the baptism of Eric, what thoughts entered our minds? Did we consider our own baptism, even if, unlike Eric, we were baptized

in a white gown and diapers, so fresh from the womb that we cannot possibly remember it? Did hearing the words of the sacrament remind us that God grasped on to you and me long before we could even grasp the rail on our crib? Did Eric's baptism call on us to consider where we are now in your own ongoing faith journey? Hopefully it inspired us to celebrate our faith! Or perhaps it left us feeling quite differently.

Maybe hearing those words and realizing how far we've fallen short left us feeling empty, alone, frightened, frustrated, continually trying to convince ourselves that God is real, that this faith thing is all worth it, questioning the very basics of your beliefs? Thoughts like:

"I say that Jesus died for my sins, yet it doesn't seem to do me much good in the real world."

"I call myself a Christian, yet why is it so difficult to love my neighbor as myself?"

"I've been attending church for decades now, I know the words to a hundred hymns, and can recite the Apostles' Creed in my sleep, and still the answers elude me, still there is no peace."

"Life itself is still such a struggle."

"This isn't how it's supposed to be... is it?"

"Is there something wrong with me?"

But as difficult as it may be to face such doubts, there's something infinitely worse, and that is to go through life and never bother to ask! To live a life of monotonous spiritual blindness, numbness, and ignorance, laying claim to the label of Christian without even considering whether or not we are living a life that reflects the true faith Jesus lived and taught.

Yes Saints, if we dare to re-consider the questions asked of us at our baptism, this constant struggle between spirit and flesh may very well leave us feeling either unworthy, guilty or ashamed or all three. It can be so frustrating, can it not? Why should we have such negative, depressing feelings long after first affirming our baptismal vows?

Well, here's some good news- if any of us feel that way, we're not alone. Such uncertainty needn't shame nor embarrass us, for it was just such ambiguity that prompted the Apostle Paul to write the passage I read from his letter to the church in Rome in the first century! Paul contrasted two categories of human beings: ***"...those who live according to the flesh, who set their mind on things that satisfy the flesh, and those who live according to the Spirit, who set their minds on the things that lift up the Spirit."***

Question is, where do we find ourselves in Paul's assessment? To determine that we need to know the characteristics of each. What exactly does a follower of the flesh look like? Well to begin with, followers of the flesh are a frightened lot, always running scared, afraid of so many things in life. Fear is the prime motivator for most of what they do, and this fear shows itself in a variety of ways. Some become withdrawn, preferring not to venture into a world where so much harm can come to them. *"If I don't say anything, stay out of everybody's way, maybe no one will bother me."* They believe there is security in their isolation.

Others build up walls of loud false bravado to keep people from coming too close. They believe that if they take a stand and defend it loudly and relentlessly enough they'll maintain the control they need over their lives. They believe there is security in their blatant self-righteousness. Another thing followers of the flesh do is lash out at anyone who's harbors opinions that conflict with their own. Because they place their faith solely in their own limited way of thinking, anyone who believes otherwise threatens them. Persons loyal to the flesh pre-judge and even demonize those whose opinions differ from theirs because such opinions frighten them. What are they so afraid of?

Well, for those who are of the flesh, the ultimate source all their fear is their impending mortality, for the ultimate end of a life in pursuit of the flesh is inevitably death. The fear of death gives birth to a mindset of survival at all costs. Such a person's life will be centered on ways to avoid facing the inevitability of death, doing anything one can to keep it at bay!

Now followers of the flesh can come across as religious, even religious in the extreme. But here's the problem- instead of placing their faith in God's grace, they believe they can be saved from death by obeying the laws of God. This is what Paul described as "living under the law" What that does is tie up all their energy into following biblical law, because to deviate from that is to risk death. The church is literally crawling with such people. They attend churches all across this great land quite regularly, but their motivation for being in church is all wrong, because rather than celebrating the gift of life in the spirit, followers of the flesh attend church because they're afraid to die and want to get some sort of brownie points from God for coming to church on Sunday! Once settled in a church such a person will do things, not out of gratitude, but to look good in the eyes of the congregation, figuring that to look good before one's neighbors is to look good before God. They will tend to brag about their accomplishments and strive to lord over

people they feel are out of line with their plans.

Now Paul isn't stating that followers of the flesh won't have their good days. There will be times when things go well and they'll be grateful. There may even be times when they find it in their heart to forgive someone who has done them wrong (provided of course that the person apologizes profusely for whatever it was they did). Problem is such moments as these only serve to obscure a deeper, more destructive danger that lies at the heart of the follower of the flesh: that despite their professions of faith, despite their recitations of creeds, despite all the money and time they have given the church, despite the many times they've shouted "*Lord, Lord,*" they have never in their lives actually allowed the Spirit of Christ to enter their hearts and set them free from the fear of death. They may praise God incessantly, but that's because they worry whether God even knows they're there. In brief, followers of the flesh tend to have a fair-weather faith that feels good when everything's peaches and cream, but becomes shaky and untrustworthy when things refuse to go their way.

In contrast to a follower of the flesh, the faith of one who pursues the gifts of the Spirit is steadfast and reliable. Such a believer's life is motivated not by survival instincts, but by the freedom experienced through the indwelling of God's loving Spirit, and the blessed assurance resulting from God's gift of eternal life. Such a believer finds that his or her interests and actions instinctively match those of Jesus, and that shouldn't be surprising in the least, because they've actually allowed Christ's Spirit to enter in! A person of the Spirit will find him or herself overflowing with love for their neighbors, no matter what the neighbor looks like or thinks like or acts like. A person of the Spirit will find it impossible to do anything but love their enemies, because their anger and resentment has been replaced with pity and compassion. While a person enslaved to the flesh will always be provoked by fear of death, a motivation that touches every aspect of his or her being causing that person to be self-centered and self-serving, a person empowered by the Spirit has stared death directly in the face, realized the futility of their own efforts to put it off, thrown themselves entirely onto the mercy of God, and traded in their fears for faith.

This turning over one's life to God and allowing the Spirit entrance is the key action that distinguishes a person of the Spirit from a person of the flesh. While a person of flesh will be motivated by survival at all costs, a person of the Spirit, while concerned about his or her death, refuses to allow it to rule over his or her actions. Rather than fear and judgment, it is freedom and gratitude that rules the heart of a spiritual person, and love flows forth from that heart via their words and their actions.

According to Paul the true mark of a Christian is not that we live a decent life, it is not that we attend church every Sunday, it is not that we follow every one of the ten commandments better than anybody else in the neighborhood. ***The true mark of a Christian is a heart that has allowed the spirit of Christ entrance.*** Once that's done, the Spirit motivates all that person does with her or his life.

And what does the Spirit of Christ inspire us to do? Redirect the energy formerly spent on the constant struggle between spirit and flesh within us outward to the constant struggle for freedom and justice in the world around us. That should be no surprise to anyone who has immersed themselves into the life and teaching of the one baptized by John in the Jordan. Baptism is not initiation into a life that is safe, tame and user-friendly, oh no. It is an invitation to the constant struggle for freedom and justice; the same struggle Jesus himself threw himself into, paying the ultimate price for his. If his Spirit is truly inside us, than ***his struggle becomes our struggle.***

Over the centuries, countless others have arisen from their baptism and gone forth to take up that struggle, and the world will never be the same. This morning Eric has been invited to join in that fight for love and justice. So Eric, I shout this to you and to everyone else here this morning: ***"Ahhhhh....let's get ready to rumble!!!!"***

PERMANENT PRAYER LIST 2021

A Mother's Hope	Edgar Pagan	Non-Christian families in the neighborhood
All cancer patients	Elaine Coblentz	Olivia Rodriguez
All care givers	Evelyn Mackenzie	Our nation & all leaders
All children	Finley Ouellette	Patrimonio family
All first responders & essential workers	Fran Livecchia	Petersen family
All God's creatures, great & small	Gloria Thompson	Protection of the unborn
All homeless people	Greve family	Rademacher family
All loved ones who have passed	Isabelle Siebert & family	Robin & Carolyn DeCicco
All missionaries	Jayne&John Bonner & family	Rose and Jim DeLand
All our past ministers & families	Jean Fletcher & family	Steve Orzol
All prayer warriors	JoAnna Mikels	Support Ministries
All religious leaders	Joe & Shirley Kowalewski	The Unemployed
All service men & women	Joe Mandella	Those with mental illness
All suffering with chronic illnesses	John Resch & family	Tonya & Scott Burleigh
All suffering with addictions	Joycelyn Meade & family	UMC & conference membership
All who don't know the Lord	Judy Tymitz & family	Unspoken prayers
Agnes&Patrick Kingsly & family	Julie&John Gottstein & family	Victims of natural disasters
Alex Budala & family	June Ebbets	Victims of prejudice
Amelia Paporozzi & family	Kathleen Murphy	Victims of terrorism & violence
Azzarello family	Kim Falcone & family	Vjay Kumar
Barbara Sucheski & family	Lily Hart	World peace
Benjamin Pino & family	Liam Dalton & family	Wounded veterans
Bernie Mantashian	Lulu Kamenas & family	
Boyce family	Mae Kiefer	
Brady family	Manny&Nora De La Paz&family	
Brian, Pat & families	Marian Jones & family	
Bud & Earlette Butterfield	Marilyn Kimball	
Caren Brock	Mary & John Battles	
Carney & Vilela families	Matt Bates	
Christians in India	Michael Nilsen	
Christine Rowland	Mrs Jayaraj & family	
Convalescent homes	Myrna Castro's family	
Danny Mizak & family	Nancy Preston & family	
Dawn&Peter Burnett & family	New Dover UMC families	
Detainees	New Dover youth group	

Please review the 2021 Permanent Prayer List and let us know if you want to keep someone or a concern on the list or would you like us to remove someone.

Email the church office or Karen Rowland at krowland648@yahoo.com by February 18th. We will create a 2022 list from your input.

Thank you,

Prayer Warriors

Confirmation Class 2022 Update

By Rosie Pang, Associate Pastor

Confirmation met virtually for the first class on January 9, 2022, 2pm. Total 13 students from three churches (7 from New Dover UMC, 3 from Centenary UMC in Metuchen and 3 from Trinity UMC of South Amboy). Please, pray for our students:

Danny Mizak Jr., Eric and Luke Colon, Rishith Duggimpudi, Declan O'Rourke, Farrah and Serena Allidina.

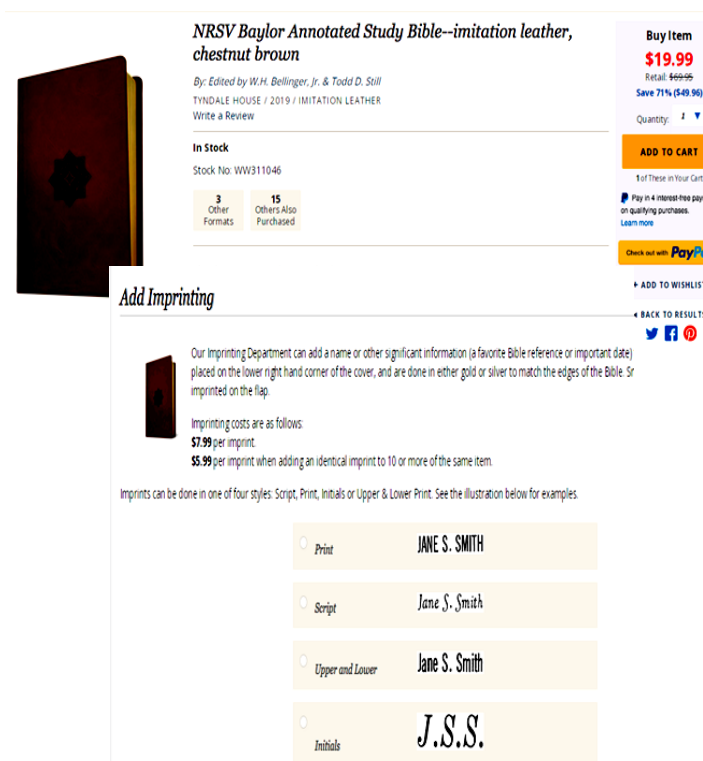
Confirmation is a public act and profession of their faith, an important journey these young people will walk through for the next 4 months. In the last month's Herald, I've turned to the church members to support these confirming students with prayers and when the opportunity comes by your way, to serve as Spiritual Mentors. Spiritual Mentors are one of the important partners to a fuller faith development and experience the joy of being a part of church for each individual.

Each confirming student will walk alongside 1-2 Spiritual Mentors who will guide them with their faith and life experiences, spend quality time, and work hand-in-hand with families. This mentorship surprisingly becomes another growing platform for mentors themselves as they witness how God continues to work through the young people. God's grace passes down from generation to generation through spiritual mentors.

Also, Spiritual mentors' role does not expire. Meaning, while the Confirmation ceremony marks the end of their classes and lessons, as the ceremony begins a new chapter of their faith and church life, the relationship with the mentors continue on to lifetime. An African proverb reminds us that "it takes a village to raise a child." And to raise a generation in Christ's love and works, it takes a church to raise one child to fully blossom and mature in public practice of Christian faith and understanding.

This year, as a part of the Confirmation celebration, we would like to ask anyone from outside of confirmand's immediate family to sponsor a Confirmation gift of personalized NRSV Bible. We would like to prepare a personalized leather-bound Bible to each of 7 students from New Dover which will cost \$30 per gift. If you're willing to sponsor a Bible gift, please contact the church office. A family of a confirmand can sponsor this gift for another confirmand who is not your child.

Contact the church office to Sponsor a Bible gift for a confirming student 2022.



NRSV Baylor Annotated Study Bible--imitation leather, chestnut brown
By: Edited by W.H. Bellinger, Jr. & Todd D. Still
TYNDALE HOUSE / 2019 / IMITATION LEATHER
Write a Review

In Stock
Stock No: WW311046

3 Other Formats | 15 Others Also Purchased

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\$19.99
Retail: \$49.95
Save 71% (\$49.96)
Quantity: 1

ADD TO CART

Buy in 4 interest-free payments on qualifying purchases. [Learn more](#)

Check out with **Pay**

ADD TO WISHLIST

BACK TO RESULTS

Add Imprinting

Our Imprinting Department can add a name or other significant information (a favorite Bible reference or important date) placed on the lower right hand corner of the cover, and are done in either gold or silver to match the edges of the Bible. *See imprinting on the flap.*

Imprinting costs are as follows:
\$7.99 per imprint.
\$5.99 per imprint when adding an identical imprint to 10 or more of the same item.

Imprints can be done in one of four styles: Script, Print, Initials or Upper & Lower Print. See the illustration below for examples.

- Print **JANE S. SMITH**
- Script *Jane S. Smith*
- Upper and Lower **Jane S. Smith**
- Initials **J.S.S.**

I will sponsor a Bible gift for (name of student)

Or for any

1 2 3 4 5 6 7
Student(s).

\$30 per Bible including name imprinting

Please, submit your gift money to the church office by the end of March 2022. Thank you.

Your name: _____
Contact (cell/e-mail)

Would you like your name be mentioned on the gift label? Yes No



February 2022

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
		1 6-7:30pm GS 80105 7:30p BS 44	2	3	4	5 9:00 Kahboom Robotics 5pm Praise Service
6 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship 11:15 Bell Choir Practice 4:30 Telugu Service	7 7:00pm Trustees 7:00 JP Stevens Choir	8 7:30p BS 44	9	10	11	12 9:00 Kahboom Robotics 5pm Praise Service
13 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship 11:15 Bell Choir Practice 4:30 Telugu Service	14 7pm Nurture Meeting	15 6-7:30pm GS 80105 7:30p BS 44	16	17	18	19 9:00 Kahboom Robotics 5pm Praise Service
20 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship 11:15 Bell Choir Practice 4:30 Telugu Sservice	21 President's Day Office Closed 7:00pm Worship Meeting	22 7:30p BS 44	23	24	25	26 9:00 Kahboom Robotics 5pm Praise Service
27 9:00am Sunday School 10:15am Worship 11:15 Bell Choir Practice 4:30 Telugu Service	28 7pm Council Meeting					

February Birthdays

*John Kimball
Alex Benson Budala
Muriel Christie
Chris Becker
Granville Christian
Mary Ellen Anglin
Jeremy Aludino
Samantha Nocciolo
Brian Rock
Dianne Petersen
Karissa Tuason
Bettina Kingsly
Tony Bonito
Chris Bandari
Wendy Bouchoux
Bhaarat Joshi*

February Anniversaries

*Robin & Desdimona Christian
Madhu & Swati Christian
Jerry & Edyie DiRenzo
Regan & Shenn Christie*



36 Christian Ways to Reduce Stress (Part 2)

1. Have backups-an extra car key in your wallet, an extra house key in a safe location, notebook with important info in case your phone is dead, etc.
2. Get organized so everything has its place
3. Listen to something on a CD/your phone while driving that can help improve your quality of life.
4. Write thoughts and inspirations down in a journal.
5. Everyday, find time to be alone.
6. Having problems? Talk to God immediately and try to nip small problems in the bud. Don't wait until bedtime to try and pray.
7. Make friends with godly people.
8. Keep a folder (paper or phone) of favorite scriptures on hand.
9. Remember that the shortest bridge between despair and hope is often a good "Thank you Jesus!"
10. Laugh
11. Laugh some more!
12. Take your work seriously, but not yourself at all.
13. Develop a forgiving attitude; most people are doing the best they can.
14. Be kind to unkind people; they probably need it the most.
15. Sit on your ego.
16. Talk less; listen more.
17. Slow down.
18. Remind yourself that you are not the general manager of the universe.
19. Every night before bed, think of one thing you're grateful for that you have never been grateful for before.



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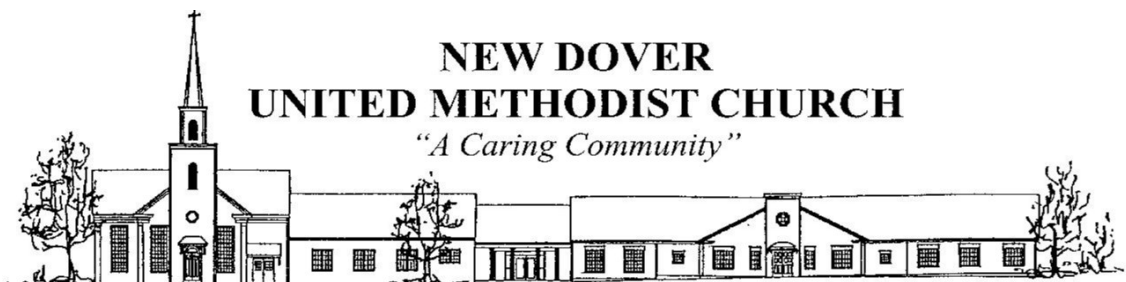
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**NEW DOVER
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
"A Caring Community"

