



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

March 2020

Vol. 165

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

Grace to you, peace!

Kahlil Gibran in his poetic essay entitled "The Life of Love" wrote this about spring:

*Come, my beloved; let us walk amidst the knolls,
For the snow is water, and Life is alive from its
Slumber and is roaming the hills and valleys.
Let us follow the footprints of Spring into the
Distant fields, and mount the hilltops to draw
Inspiration high above the cool green plains.*

Normally by this time of the year we've expended hours shoveling snow and expended much of our finances heating our homes! But this year? I haven't looked closely at all the statistics, but I cannot remember a milder winter in all my life. In fact there were many days when it was colder in Florida than it was here! That said, it will still be a joy to "*follow the footprints of Spring,*" to see the crocuses and daffodils shedding the earth crumbs and rising triumphantly from flower bed and field, will it not?

Speaking of spring, we are in the midst of a beehive of activity here at New Dover. Donations to the Rummage Sale have already topped last year in terms of amount and quality! Thanks to each one of you who've donated everything from jewelry to volleyball nets! Already dozens of volunteers have spent hour upon hour getting the rooms ready for the onslaught of bargain hunters. Our goal is \$10,000 and the money raised will help us, in conjunction with "Rise Against Hunger," feed 84,000 children as we gather on March 21st. If you haven't signed up by now, please hurry because all three shifts (150 volunteers in each) are filling up fast! Altogether the Greater New Jersey United Methodist Church Conference has a goal of HALF A MILLION meals assembled on that day! Saints, it was a miracle when Jesus fed 5,000, right? I believe Jesus will be smiling on us big time when we do 100X that!

In closing, the season of Lent is full upon us, so in addition to seeking "*...inspiration high above the cool green plains,*" let us also seek it in our worship experience, our study of the scriptures, and our devotional life. With Jesus and countless disciples before us we have turned our eyes toward Jerusalem. Before we enter its gates, let us prepare our hearts for the drama that defines our faith. Meet you at the Temple!

Your servant in Christ,

Rev Chuck

Rev. Chuck Coblentz



The Finance Committee is continuing to provide financial information. The following provides the income and expenses as of January 2020. The church income includes what is provided to the church in pledge envelopes to current expense and other income sources such as building rentals, flea market and various fundraising activities. Church expenses shown include salaries, utilities, conference obligations and other costs to keep the church.

New Dover United Methodist Church Operating Fund		
	2020	
	January	Year to Date
Income	\$ 17,923.17	\$ 17,923.17
Expenses	\$ (21,150.02)	\$ (21,150.02)
Difference	\$ (3,227.75)	\$ (3,227.75)

In This Issue:

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- Finance News
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**New Dover UMC Flea Market
Opens March 17, 2020
at 7:30.**

If you are interested in having a table or volunteering, contact Jeff Rowland.

KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Boyce Family

Judy Tymitz

Tom Crouse

Bonner family

Pat & Brian & Family

Aaron Christie

Dianne & Herb Petersen

Parkhill Family

Mary Ellen Anglin

Manny & Nora De La Paz

Sandra De Alwis

Fran Livecchia

Cancer patients

Service men & women

Veterans

Homeless, unemployed

&uninsured

Evelyn Millard

Robin & Carolyn DeCicco

Liam Dalton

Calvin Christian

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.

Any names that may have been left off are not intentional. We trust in God to know all our needs.

You always hear the usual stories of pennies on the sidewalk being good luck, gifts from angels, etc. This is the first time I've ever heard this twist on the story. Gives you something to think about.

Several years ago, a friend of mine and her husband were invited to spend the weekend at the husband's employer's home. My friend, Arlene, was nervous about the weekend. The boss was very wealthy, with a fine home on the waterway, and cars costing more than her house.

The first day and evening went well, and Arlene was delighted to have this rare glimpse into how the very wealthy live. The husband's employer was quite generous as a host, and took them to the finest restaurants. Arlene knew she would never have the opportunity to indulge in this kind of extravagance again, so was enjoying herself immensely.

As the three of them were about to enter an exclusive restaurant that evening, the boss was walking slightly ahead of Arlene and her husband.

He stopped suddenly, looking down on the pavement for a long, silent moment..

Arlene wondered if she was supposed to pass him. There was nothing on the ground except a single darkened penny that someone had dropped, and a few cigarette butts. Still silent, the man reached down and picked up the penny.

He held it up and smiled, then put it in his pocket as if he had found a great treasure. How absurd! What need did this man have for a single penny? Why would he even take the time to stop and pick it up?

Throughout dinner, the entire scene nagged at her. Finally, she could stand it no longer. She casually mentioned that her daughter once had a coin collection, and asked if the penny he had found had been of some value.

A smile crept across the man's face as he reached into his pocket for the penny and held it out for her to see. She had seen many pennies before! What was the point of this?

'Look at it.' He said. 'Read what it says.' She read the words ' United States of America '

'No, not that; read further.'

'One cent?' 'No, keep reading.'

'In God we Trust?' 'Yes!' 'And?'

'And if I trust in God, the name of God is holy, even on a coin. Whenever I find a coin, I see that inscription. It is written on every single United States coin, but we never seem to notice it! God drops a message right in front of me telling me to trust Him? Who am I to pass it by? When I see a coin, I pray, I stop to see if my trust IS in God at that moment. I pick the coin up as a response to God; that I do trust in Him. For a short time, at least, I cherish it as if it were gold. I think it is God's way of starting a conversation with me. Lucky for me, God is patient and pennies are plentiful!

When I was out shopping today, I found a penny on the sidewalk. I stopped and picked it up, and realized that I had been worrying and fretting in my mind about things I cannot change. I read the words, 'In God We Trust,' and had to laugh. Yes, God, I get the message.

It seems that I have been finding an inordinate number of pennies in the last few months, but then, pennies are plentiful! And, God is patient..

Submitted by Prayer Fellowship Group

SERMON OF THE MONTH

“Just Beneath the Surface”

Sermon preached on January 26, 2020

Mark 4:26-29

This parable of the hidden seed follows perfectly behind that of the sower in Mark 4:1-20. Like that one, it's a very earthly parable with a very earthly spirituality. The seed, we're told, is the word of God. The sower is one who proclaims or witnesses to that word, spreading it across the earth. But while the parable of the sower describes seeds strewn across the surface of the earth, this parable describes what's happening just beneath the surface, unseen even by the sower.

Jesus also said, [‘The kingdom of God is as if someone would scatter seed on the ground, 27 and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow. he does not know how. 28 The earth produces of itself, first the stalk, then the head, then the full grain in the head. 29 But when the grain is ripe, at once he goes in with his sickle, because the harvest has come.’](#)

One day during my last year as chaplain and religion instructor at The Pennington School, I heard a knock on the door of my office. As usual my door was already open and I looked up and saw a former student, Josh Weisberg, class of 2005 standing there. I got up from my desk, walked over, smiled, gave him a bro-hug, and invited him in.

He sat down on the couch next to my desk and I asked the obligatory question a former teacher asks a former student: “How are things going?” He replied, “That’s what I came here to tell you about. I’ve decided I’m going to rabbinical school.” “Really?!” I replied, my smile widening, “You want to be a rabbi! That’s very exciting Josh; how did you decide on that path?” “Well,” he said, “It all started while I was attending your Cults class...” “Huh??? Cults???” I stammered. “Oh, you have got to explain this one!”

I had taught a course on religious cults for 13 years at Pennington as a way to teach students the difference between healthy and unhealthy religion; eventually it became the most popular elective on campus. Now to be honest, Josh hadn’t really stood out in the class, in fact quite the opposite. Sitting quietly and unassumingly in the back, he rarely participated in our often-raucous discussions and debates, although he must have been paying attention because he easily aced every quiz, test and paper. But back to the matter at hand- how did his journey toward rabbinical ministry begin in my class, of all places? Josh told me that even though his parents wanted him to pursue something in the financial field, he never found any subject more fascinating to him than the study of religion, a fascination that began for him in Cults class.

“Wow!” I thought. You never know how what you teach or preach will affect the lives of those who listen, do you? Most of the time we don’t even consider that possibility. It’s like it happens by magic!

Have you ever had someone remind you of something you said to them years ago, and how they’ve never forgotten what you told them? May have been a bit of advice with a problem they were trying to solve. Perhaps a word of kindness when they were going through a rough time. Or maybe it was just a story you shared that came to mean something important to them as time went by. Whatever it was, chances are, at the time, you never expected what you said to them to be remembered over time, let alone become an important part of their life, a pleasant remembrance that made them think of you. Yet, years later you were privileged to witness the fruit that such words bore out. What a blessing! This morning’s parable of the hidden seed is all about how that sort of blessing comes to fruition.

At the time Mark’s gospel was written, the early Christian church was undergoing widespread persecution by the Roman Empire. Christianity, the upstart religion on the block, was being blamed for all manner of society’s ills, from discouraging worship of the emperor, to breaking up families, to starting the

fire that burned most of Rome! Things could not be going much worse. On top of that, Jesus had not yet returned to establish his Kingdom as so many leaders in the early church had prophesied. It was now forty years after the crucifixion/ resurrection and many in the church were losing patience.

These were the readers of Mark's gospel, and this parable of the hidden seed contained a powerful word for all felt discouragement- patience, it told them; have faith in God's timing; you may not fully understand what's happening just beneath the surface, but rest assured its happening! God is at work. Your faith will be rewarded.

That was then, this is now. Today this parable continues to offer hope in face of despair, whenever and wherever despair arises, letting us know that, despite what we perceive on the surface, the seed that is the word of God is growing unseen in ways we can't imagine. It takes faith to believe that despite appearances, despite the often lack of visible evidence, God is constantly at work in the world. And doesn't this fit right in with the Apostle Paul's description of faith as "*belief in things unseen?*"

Saints, when we look around our world today, it's difficult not to be discouraged about what we see: wars, terrorism, and threats of nuclear annihilation, tribalism threatening to tear nations apart, the gulf between the rich and the poor growing wider, the cost of healthcare bankrupting thousands every year. Corona virus. Climate change wreaking havoc all round the world. But just as the early followers of Jesus before us, and countless others over the centuries who endured conditions of extreme hardship and persecution, this parable calls on us to have faith that, despite appearances, God's kingdom will inevitably triumph. Saints, we live in a time that calls for both radical faith and patient endurance, but before we jump out of our pews and start throwing seed, what say we take a closer look at the parable itself. What's it all about?

Well, Jesus tells us right away what the parable is all about, doesn't he? Right in the first verse he says this parable, like nearly all of his parables, is all about *the kingdom of God*, that vision Jesus described of a world operating under the divine love of God with unconditional love for our neighbors, the world that God intended from the very beginning before we fell away and decided we had a better plan.

Want to know what the kingdom of God is like, he would ask, let me give you an example. Most of Jesus' parables attempt to explain what the Kingdom is like. In this one he says that "*...someone would scatter seed on the ground, and would sleep and rise night and day, and the seed would sprout and grow, he does not know how.*" So we can imagine the seed that the sower scatters on the surface falling into the cracks and crevices in the soil, where things begin to happen. Now we're told the sower has no clue as to how the seed grows into a plant, and that was no doubt true for their time; science was rather primitive in the first century.

We of course *DO* know how exactly how a seed grows, right? It remains dormant until conditions are right. A seed requires water, oxygen, and the proper temperature in order to germinate. When that happens water and oxygen are taken in through the seed coat. The embryonic cells then swell, cracking open the seed coat and a root emerges, followed by a shoot containing the stem and leaves. But if we think that our modern scientific knowledge removes the mystery of the hidden seed and renders the parable obsolete we are missing the point entirely! Remember that Jesus said it's all about the Kingdom of God. And so what does this parable tell us about that Kingdom?

Frederick Grant, a Professor of Biblical Theology at the Union Theological Seminary once wrote that the hidden growth of the seed is not so much evidence of the presence of the Kingdom of God, as of its proximity and certainty. Through this parable Jesus is telling believers that the time is near. That the seed, the word of God, has already been sown, and so the harvest must inevitably follow. For Mark and his readers, even as they suffered under dire poverty and violent persecution, this was the assurance that the delay of the Kingdom was only apparent, not real, because despite all appearances, God was at work, growing the seed just beneath the surface. That God's word would break through its seed cover and put down its roots and push through the soil's crust to bring on a rich harvest.

But what does that mean for us in the year 2020? It tells us too that, in spite of appearances, God is hard at work. That even though we, like the sower, may not totally understand how the Kingdom-seed grows, it is growing nevertheless. That the word that springs forth from God remains the most powerful force on earth, and the most powerful force in our lives That even though we don't create the seed, we are called on to sow it, and that we, nor anyone else, can block it from springing forth. That we can depend on it and work with it to bring on the promised harvest.

Saints, this is the very heart of Christian faith, is it not? That God is at work in the world, that God is at work in our lives? Whenever there is deep discouragement about the ultimate triumph of God, we turn to this parable and remember to have patience for one day our faith *will* be rewarded. One day when conditions are right the seed will germinate, crack open, put down roots, and a green blade will rise from the earth.

This is true for the world as a whole, but on a more intimate level it is true for our lives as well. Because there have been and will be times when it seems God is far away. When it seems the bad guys are winning. When it seems our prayers will never be answered. When like Jesus on the cross we cry out for God to come near. But then we remember how on that very day, Jesus was crucified and buried, and all hope seemed lost. But just wait. Because just beneath the surface God was stirring. And on the third day the Kingdom-seed bearer rose again and from the moment we believed our lives have never been the same! And so with all the Saints we sing....

*Now the green blade riseth, from the buried grain,
Wheat that in dark earth many days has lain;
When our hearts are wintry, grieving, or in pain,
Jesus' touch can call us back to life again,
Fields of our hearts that dead and bare have been:
Love is come again like wheat that springeth green.*





YES, WE CAN!

Pack a half million meals in one day? Nothing is impossible with Jesus.

There are more than 7 billion people in this world and more than 800 million of them are hungry.

Everyone deserves an education and the opportunity to flourish - but in order to do this they need enough to eat.

GNJ has been working hard with Rise Against Hunger to stem this tide, but more needs to be done...

JOIN US SATURDAY, MARCH 21

For GNJ's "Rise Against Hunger, Yes, We Can!" event.

We will host a meal packing event in several different locations across GNJ with the goal of packing 500,000 meals in one day!

Our goal at New Dover is 84,000 meals packed.

3 Shifts available

9a-11a

12p-2p

3p-5p

To register for the event, contact Brian Richards at 732-433-3000

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

The United Methodist Women will hold their first meeting of the new year on Wednesday, March 11th at 6:30pm.

We will have our annual St. Patrick's Day celebration, a dinner of delicious homemade soups, sandwiches and dessert. We are asking for a \$5.00 donation to help defray the costs.

Our "crafty" Peggy has planned a small decoration to celebrate the day. We will also be packing the gift bags for the Woman Veterans.

All women are invited to join us. Look for a sign-up sheet on the bulletin board in Fellowship Hall.

Questions?? See any UMW member.

Sincerely,

Dianne Petersen - President
732-381-8688 (h)



Help needed behind the scenes! Ever wonder how the altar and communion is set up and ready for the season or event? Like working with a great group of people? The Altar Guild is looking for you!! We need help for the months of February and May during the year. If you are interested, please see Lisa Gilmore or Karen Rowland. We appreciate any help and can answer any questions! Thanks!!

Save the Date

- | | |
|----------|-------------------------------------|
| March 9 | Herald Articles Due for April issue |
| March 17 | Flea Market Opens |
| March 21 | Rise Against Hunger Packing Event |
| April 5 | Palm Sunday |
| April 12 | Easter |



MEMBERSHIP BLOG

On the third Sunday of January we gathered in the spirit of unity and solid spiritual leadership to remember Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., recognize our church leaders for 2020, and listen to the first of Rev's sermon series on the parables of Jesus. The Scriptures for the day were Proverbs 12:11-12, 22:8-9 and Luke 8:4-15. Rev. spoke on the parable of the sower. When we look at today's sowers, we need to ask ourselves what seeds are being sown and who benefits from those seeds. Many are trying to prepare our soil (hearts) for us so they can sow seeds of their choosing. We need to prepare our soil by cultivating it with the Word so that we recognize false teaching when we hear it. The service ended joyfully with "We Shall Overcome" sung in a circle around the sanctuary. Let us sow with LOVE! On the last Sunday, Rev. opened the service with a reading from Psalm 40. The Scriptures for the day were Isaiah 48:6-7 and Mark 4:26-29. He continued on to the parable of the seed, noting that we must consider what effect our words and actions can have on others, even years after an encounter. We need to continue sowing seeds with faith and endurance even when God's work is not obvious to us, and remain encouraged and optimistic about the future. The seeds are waiting for the right conditions, and will sprout in His time. The hymns (#311, #508, #707) closely mirrored the sermon and helped to boost our faith and hope!

February services began on the 1st with a reprise by Acts of Praise on Saturday night-it was a joyful hour of worship! On Sunday, the Scriptures of the day were Isaiah 35:3-6a and Matthew 11:16-19. Rev. discussed that John the Baptist's message was of judgment and repentance while Jesus' was of celebration and love for those who DID repent. Unfortunately there was a response of negative labeling to both; when their comfort was threatened, the reaction was fear. What is our reaction when we hear His teaching? Let's look beyond labels and find out more about the people and issues we face; let's accept Jesus' invitation to love and help others, and come to the table in unity. Holy Communion followed at the rail. The following weekend the congregation was blessed to hear Rev. Davidson give the message. The choir provided the anthem, while Kyle S. sang an original song for the offertory. The Scriptures for the day were Psalm 1:1-6 and Luke 13:6-9. Rev Davidson spoke on the parable of the fig tree. The people of Israel were tired of waiting for justice; what fruits are we waiting for? We need to be willing to wait and listen to the Gardener, learning patience and gaining knowledge while doing the work of the kingdom. Let's not assume we know the answer to every situation, but let's continue to prepare the soil of hearts with diligence and endurance. The service ended with "Blessed Assurance".

Also, early in the month of February we learned of the sudden passing of loyal church member Nayan Vyas. Although the Vyas family had been living in Delaware recently, they continued attending when possible and were always joyfully received. A service was held in Delaware on February 7, attended by Rev. Chuck and members of our church family. Our hearts go out to Alpa, Jessica and Oliver; we will miss you Nayan but know your heart, mind and soul are now at peace.

Finally, we say goodbye to long-time church members Anita Donnelly and her family; Anita was also our church treasurer for 17 years. The Donnelly family has moved on to Wesley UMC in South Plainfield, but their presence and work here at New Dover will never be forgotten. Best wishes Anita, Devin, Jake, Josh and Jesse!





March 2020

Sun **Mon** **Tue** **Wed** **Thu** **Fri** **Sat**

<p>1</p> <p>8:30 Worship 9:00 Adult Sunday School 10:00 Children Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice 11:30 & 12pm Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 1:00-2:30 Telugu Service 4:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:30 Hot Topics 6:30 Social Justice</p>	<p>3</p> <p>7:30 Scout Troop 44 (FH)</p>	<p>4</p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6:00 Karate 7:00 Trustees</p>	<p>5</p> <p>7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 AA</p>	<p>6 World Day of Prayer 7:00 GS Troop 80005</p>	<p>7</p> <p>10:00-11:00 Karate 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>8</p> <p>8:30 Worship 9:00 Adult Sunday School 10:00 Children Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice 11:30 & 12pm Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 1:00-2:30 Telugu Service 4:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>9 Herald Articles Due 10:30 Hot Topics 7:00 Nurture Meeting</p>	<p>10</p> <p>6:00 GS Troop 80105 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (FH)</p>	<p>11</p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6:00 Karate 6:30 UMW</p>	<p>12</p> <p>7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 AA</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>10:00-11:00 Karate 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>15</p> <p>8:30 Worship 9:00 Adult Sunday School 10:00 Children Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice 11:30 & 12pm Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 1:00-2:30 Telugu Service 4:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:00 Herald Team 10:30 Hot Topics</p>	<p>17</p> <p>7:30 - 1:30 Flea Market 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (FH)</p> <p style="text-align: center;"></p>	<p>18</p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6:00 Karate 7:00 Worship</p>	<p>19</p> <p>7:30 AA</p>	<p>20</p> <p>7:00 GS Troop 80005 7:00 Cub Scout Pack 318</p> <p>Set up for Rise Against Hunger</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:00-5:00 Rise Against Hunger 10:00-11:00 Karate 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>22</p> <p>8:30 Worship 9:00 Adult Sunday School 10:00 Children Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice 11:30 & 12pm Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 1:00-2:30 Telugu Service 4:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>23</p> <p>10:00 Herald Team 10:30 Hot Topics 7:00 Ad Council</p>	<p>24</p> <p>7:30 - 1:30 Flea Market 6:00 GS Troop 80105 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (FH)</p>	<p>25</p> <p>10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6:00 Karate</p>	<p>26</p> <p>7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 AA</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>10:00-11:00 Karate 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>29</p> <p>8:30 Worship 9:00 Adult Sunday School 10:00 Children Sunday School 10:15 Worship 11:30 Choir Practice 11:30 & 12pm Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 1:00-2:30 Telugu Service 4:00 Youth Group</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10:30 Hot Topics</p>	<p>31</p> <p>7:30 - 1:30 Flea Market 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (FH)</p>				

March Birthdays

- 4 *Sharon Gray*
- 5 *Brian Christian*
- 6 *Emily Mann*
- 7 *Timothy Roth*
- 8 *Steven Castlegrant*
- 10 *Daniel Mizak*
Bolton Nyema
- 11 *Mark Vedana*
- 13 *Abraham Katkar*
Salins Paul
Danielle Perrine
- 14 *Christopher Sanders*
- 17 *Dawn Preston-Burnett*
- 19 *Jean Fletcher*
- 20 *Peter Burnett*
- 22 *Alyssa Sarno*
Jessica Tymitz
- 31 *Cecil Parmar*

March Anniversary's

- 2 *John & Marilyn Kimball*
- 9 *Rizwalt & Nilpa Khristi*
- 30 *Wilson & Jesmina Christian*



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