



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

March 2023

Vol. 198

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

Chuck's Church Chat



*" A bluebird comes tenderly up to alight and fronts the wind to unruffle a plume
His song so pitched as not to excite a single flower as yet to bloom.
It is snowing a flake: and he half knew winter was only playing possum.
Except in color he isn't blue, but he wouldn't advise a thing to blossom.*

*The water for which we may have to look in summertime with a witching wand,
In every wheel rut's now a brook, in every print of a hoof a pond.
Be glad of water, but don't forget the lurking frost in the earth beneath
That will steal forth after the sun is set and show on the water its crystal teeth.*

-from "Two Tramps in Mud Time" by Robert Frost

Saints,

Grace to you and peace as we enter this month of winter into spring, of crystal frost into shimmering dew, of bare flower beds into crocuses and daffodils. As Mr. Frost makes clear in the poem above, March is all about transition. And speaking of transition...

Over the past couple of years we have experienced a significant number of our long-time church leaders/servants moving out of our area, leaving some pretty hefty shoes to fill when it comes to the doing of ministry. And now we are about to lose another fabled Saint of New Dover, this time to the warmer climes of North Carolina.

Over the past two decades, there have been few among us who have accomplished so much when it comes to spreading the love of Christ to neighbors near and far as has Paulette Harland. We all know of the good will, food, supplies, and hours upon hours spent constructing new housing over the course of sixteen years to benefit our friends in the little village of Los Cocos in the Dominican Republic, right? Paulette has always made it a point to involve as many of us as she can in this vital ministry to which she was called. But as the long-time chair of our Outreach Committee, she has also served as both a point person and active participant who has led by example in so many other mission ministries beside. I'm thinking of F.I.S.H. Hospitality, Hillside Food Bank, Operation Christmas Child, our Jehovah Jira Garden, Pedals for Progress, Rise Against Hunger, Bread Breakers our Food Closet, and various other mission projects. In her job as a regional manager, Paulette has been instrumental in building and strengthening the partnership between our church and the Stop & Shop grocery chain, which has helped us feed hundreds of neighbors struggling to feed their families. In addition to her leadership on the Outreach Committee, Paulette has long served as secretary for our Church Council and is on "heavy rotation" as liturgist in worship and counter of the weekly offering.

Paulette is excited in her retirement to continue building homes and spreading God's love in Los Cocos at least twice a year and the good news is that we shall continue to partner with her in this important work. She has mentored Naomi Hunt to be her successor and contact here at New Dover! We will continue to donate clothing, food, supplies, and volunteers to this end.

Whenever Paulette happens to drop by during the week she always brings with her the same energy, enthusiasm, and sense of humor (*often warped!*) that brightens the entire office. I will miss Paulette as a friend, neighbor, and colleague in ministry who believes as I do: that what we are accomplishing as the Body of Christ on earth really is making a difference in the lives of so many! And so...

*Well done, good and faithful servant...
And keep up the blessed work until
Kingdom's end,*

Chuck



Paulette



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz
Debbie Ladym
Brian Richards
Kyle Becker
Victor Vilela
Peggy Silva
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 2023 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

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YOUR PRAYERS
WON'T GO
UNANSWERED
FOREVER.

SERMON OF THE MONTH

“Hummana, Hummana, Hummana...” (Preached on Sunday, October 30, 2022) **Matthew 5:33-37**

Perhaps a few of you will know where I got the title for today’s sermon. It’s from the classic TV sitcom, “The Honeymooners.” Whenever the main character, Ralph Kramden, was caught in a lie, most often by his wife Alice, he would employ the *“hummana, hummana, hummana”* defense. *“Hummana, hummana, hummana”* was what he would say while he was trying to think of the next lie to cover up the previous one! Now face it, we’ve all uttered something similar one or two times (or more?!) in our lives, haven’t we? Maybe we didn’t say, *“hummana, hummana, hummana;”* we may prefer *“um, yeah...about that...”* or *“oh, yeah, well....”* or *“well, you see....”* or, as a last resort, *“uh, uh, uh.....PASS!”*

My point is, if Ralph had simply told Alice the truth to begin with, he wouldn’t have had to resort to the *“hummana, hummana, hummana”* defense, right?! He could’ve just looked her in the eye and told the truth, instead of scrambling around like a kid desperately looking for change in the sofa. If only Ralph had heeded the advice of the sage from Hannibal, Missouri, eh? According to Mark Twain, *“If you tell the truth you don’t have to remember anything.”* In other words, if we simply tell the truth to begin with, we don’t need to spend time trying to make up another fib to cover up our previous one!

So...how are we as a nation handling truth these days? *“Ehhhh...not so hot,”* right? Although we have this idealized notion of there being one grand overarching truth, in reality truth has always had a rather disturbing subjectivity and variability to it. What’s called true one day is false the next. And what’s called false one day is seen as true the next! What the heck are we supposed to believe? Just what is “truth” anyway?

Webster’s Dictionary has a few definitions: “1. the body of real things, events, and facts : ACTUALITY; 2. the state of being the case : FACT; 3. a transcendent fundamental or spiritual reality; 4. a judgment, proposition, or idea that is true or accepted as true.” This fourth definition ought to be of particular interest to those of us living in this 21st century world of realities manufactured by whatever website, news channel, or political party we happen to be plugged into. We are constantly being bombarded with divergent opinions as to what we ought to accept as truth. Given such subjectivity, how in the world are we ever to separate the wheat from the chaff, so to speak? Is it even possible these days to put our trust in truth? And just as important, what can we do about all the lies, lies, lies, lies? Ugh! There are so many lies out there!

You know there’s actually an expression out there that reads, *“If you keep lying loud enough, and repeat it enough times, people will eventually believe that what you’re selling is true.”* Neural scientists have discovered that if we allow more and more lies to pile up inside our brains, if we can’t step back and critically think about what we’re hearing, those lies can arrange our neurons in such pathway as to alter reality as we perceive it! And all of a sudden what once was regarded as demonstrably false, is now believed to be absolutely true. This is why a conspiracy theory, no matter how ridiculous it may seem, always has a chance to brainwash millions!

Turns out telling the truth is important in the Bible. How important? Well, God devoted an entire commandment to it! Saints, there are only ten commandments, right? So if one is taken up completely by a subject, it must be pretty darn important! Exodus 20:16 states *“You shall not bear false witness against your neighbor.”* Pretty straight forward, right? God is telling us not to lie...period! But funny thing, it still hasn’t stop us from lying to one another in the 3,000 years since Moses came down the mountain, has it? And it also hasn’t helped us trust one another when it comes to telling the truth either! Hey, maybe the New Testament will help us out here?

When considering oaths as way to assure whether one is being truthful, Jesus in the Sermon on the Mount teaches us *“Do not swear at all...Let your word be “Yes, Yes” or “No, No”; anything more than this comes from the evil one.”* In other words, an honest person shouldn’t need to rely on oaths in order to convince people he or she is telling the truth.

This is advice my brothers and I often failed to heed! Growing up, whenever one of us made a questionable statement, we had a sort of caste system of honesty utilizing oaths. Let’s say one winter day I wanted to go sledding, but the driveway needed shoveling, and I thought of a way to get out of it by utilizing my little brother....

Me: “*Mom said it was YOUR turn and YOU have to shovel the driveway this morning.*”

Brother: “*Really?*”

Me: “*Yes.*”

Brother: “*Swear?*”

Me: “*Swear.*”

Brother: “*Swear TO GOD?????*”

Oh boy- at this point, if I hesitated in the least, I was done for! And if I was lying, I would never answer “*Swear to God,*” because I didn’t want to get hit by lightning! Thing is, if I possessed a reputation for always telling the truth, my brother would have never felt the need to put me through our caste system of truth! We should have listened to Jesus who taught that in the Kingdom of God there is no need for oaths. In the Kingdom there is only perfect honesty. Oaths are only a concession to the fact that people continue to lie. By pointing out the negative nature of oaths, Jesus in effect shines a light on the virtue of honesty.

So... I wonder what Jesus is thinking about our culture right about now?! Heck, even oaths seem to have lost much of their effectiveness. What are we Christians to do about the way lies predominate our world today?

First of all, we are to summon our best critical thinking skills (*yeah, use the brain God gave us*) and make a genuine effort to separate truth from the lies. When presented with two or more opposing “truths” it is essential that we do our best to determine who is actually telling the truth; not to merely accept something as true because it happens to arise from our particular “tribe,” whether that be Republican, Democrat, Conservative, Liberal, Fox News, MSNBC, etc. One of the main ways truth is compromised is when we come to believe something because it happens to fall in line with our current way of thinking, our politics, or ideology. That’s called “confirmation bias,” and it’s perhaps the main reason truth has such a hard time getting through to us these days. It’s vital that we understand that there are times when we need to step away from our tribe and attempt to see things as objectively as possible.

Second, we need to ask ourselves this question: “*What is truth to us?*” As Christians, truth to us ought to be the words of Jesus, right? If someone comes up to us and asks us what we believe to be true, there is no reason whatsoever for us to hesitate and mutter, “*hummana, hummana, hummana*” is there?! Because we know what truth is! Jesus is God’s truth. Anything that affirms the life and teaching of Jesus is believed to be true.

It follows that anything that opposes the words of Jesus has to be seen as a lie. For that reason we who are his disciples are required to call out anyone who uses words to denigrate and dehumanize others because of their race, culture, politics, economic status, or religious beliefs. For that reason we need to call out anyone who places wealth and status over compassion and justice. For that reason we need to call out anyone who claims racial superiority when we know the truth is we are ALL created in God’s image, and we are all invited into the Kingdom of God.

This is the ultimate truth we stand on- the truth of God in Christ. It follows that anything that opposes it, no matter how often or how loudly it is shouted, must be, by definition, a lie. Want to know that truth? Listen for that “still, small voice” rising above the din of lies. I close with the words of the hymn “O Jesus, I Have Promised”:

*O let me hear thee speaking in accents clear and still,
Above the storms of passion, the murmurs of self-will.
O speak to reassure me, to hasten or control;
O speak, and make me listen, thou guardian of my soul.*

A Look into New Dover's Disconnect to Connect (D2C),
Creative Space for Peace &
Mental and Emotional Health,
An Intergenerational Ministry

By New Dover D2C Group
Written by Rosie Pang

MARCH marks a year anniversary of D2C. Are you surprised?



It all began with a casual conversation of a few willing hearts gravitating together dating back to March 7, 2022. Discussion was on how we've been meeting throughout the pandemic and now that the world is *somewhat* back to "normal" on the outside, there's a growing need in everyone's mental and emotional health. For a place and time in our busy staggered lives to unwind, find peace and center to be heard, to open up and connect with others, young and old, extrovert, introverts. We all need to truly connect with each other better 'coz we don't see what's not visible and the aftermath of the pandemic, the whole upside down world, a rigorously aggressive times for our young, those who've been affected by the pandemic malaise, regressed and traumatized.

"When it comes to our needs, if you don't see it or say it, you often ignore your own needs. Emotional health in the post-pandemic church and world is essential and we can not delay." This would be a place and time we connect with a similar interest as our medium, starting with crochet, quilt, other artistic forms and beyond. Tying in the past New Dover's Coffee House one day and throwing a game day for children and youth to come and unwind, of course, "disconnected" even from Wi-Fi and their competitive platinum-speed internet to meet the speed of real time and real people.

Especially with the help of those who selflessly share their gifts and time as much as their unmeasurable amount of yarns and fabrics, much credit to Stephanie and Helen, Disconnect to Connect, "Lay Down Your Phones and Pick Up Your Tools for Peace" went for a soft-opening in April 2022.

The first few weeks went by and it was the two of us and the three of us. Then there were four and more. Stephanie Rademacher, Helen Jenkins Castro, Justine and Rosie the usual pair, trinity or squad got together and we began to connect, and really connect for the first time. Justine Colon joined in shortly after. We were quite new to each other's company to be honest, at least as some of us more introverts than others, some of us with stories untold, venting about life and asking questions, finding out more about one another. Mysteriously, it was as if we had made a secret self-vow to commit to meet and give our time. At one meeting two teenagers came by to sew for the first and rather than completing their small starter projects, they ended up talking through the whole 2-hour+ and the others just moving along with our hands busy. Simply being present with them. Nodding, responding, uhuh'ing, laughing 'coz we couldn't cry...to just quietly listening and being present. No advice given, uninterrupted, no judgements whatsoever. Just being a listening friend to admire you, happy to meet up and feeling blessed to connect.

Weeks became months, ideas rolled into projects, personal projects evolved to church projects, church projects made a breakthrough to community projects, and that's how we got to making crochet baby blankets for infant baptism, quilt baptismal linen cloth for baptisms, pillowcases for local hospitals and assisted living and veteran's homes, from cute little squishy stars that can fit in a child's hand to big blankets for a grown-up (one day), idea after idea, week after week, D2C is now serving in two major groups: *NEEDleworks* and Fun & Games.

BOTH *NEEDleworks* and Fun & Games Saturdays are open to all ages.

Needless to say, *NEEDleworks* is the pioneering group for D2C. It starts from the tip of a needle-holding hand. It's *NEEDleworks* because we NEED each other, we respond to others' NEEDs, and the world NEEDs us as much as we NEED the fellowship in and through Jesus.

And without the craft needles that travel, we wouldn't be where we are today.

Fun & Games is a straightforward glorified playdate. A Saturday we open a large room with old and new games to play, and play together. Occasional special activities are added on depending who's bringing it, so it's a fun playdate for ALL AGES and you can bring the fun you wish to share with others. We usually max this one day to less than 35 people (counting all adults and children). Because our goal is to MEET with those who visit and get to know each other better we're not blowing this time up to a huge event.

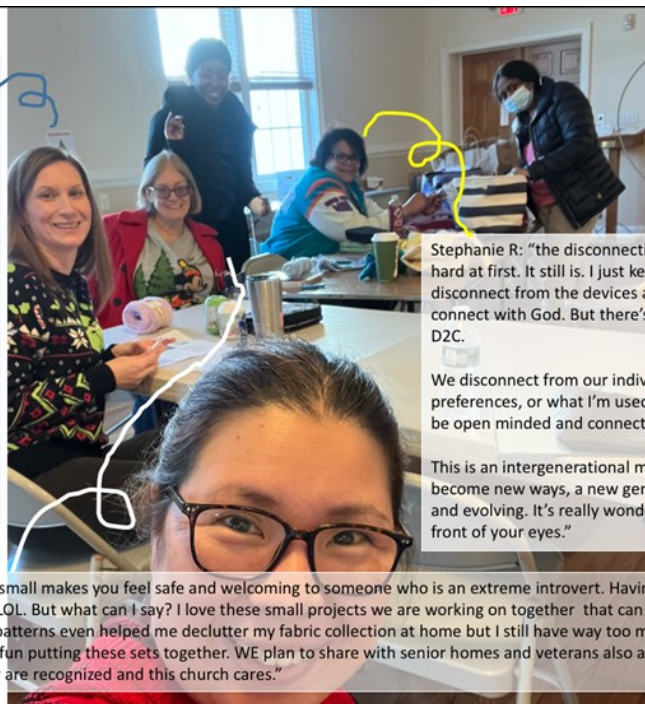
Beginners are always welcome to NEEDleworks and you don't need any supplies at first as we have generous friends lending and donating things as needed. If you want to take some of these classes offered in your local areas, they easily charge you over a \$100 for two months-lessons and we're here offering free lessons and supplies. Piece of cake, and peace of mind! Just come.

Since many of D2C visitors are visual learners and a picture's worth a thousand words, let's turn to some of highlights of our first year with these photos. **Hope you will join us for a Saturday.**

Here's a schedule for the first half of 2023 (Subject to change without notice).

	NEEDleworks (Crochet & Quilt)	Fun & Games
2023 Meeting Dates D2C runs from 2-4PM on the meeting dates.	March 4 th and 11 th	#5: March 18 th
	April 1 st and 8 th	No Saturday in April, Join us on Easter Sunday, April 9 th
	May 6 th only	#6 May 20 th
	June 3 rd and 10 th	#7 Special June (Strawberry Festival) Saturday-Sunday, June 11 th

Justine C: "D2C came about just when I needed it to. Thanks to God for His perfect timing!!! D2C allows me to leave my burdens at the door & enjoy some relaxation & conversation with a group of wonderful ladies I might not have met otherwise. We are able to spend time working on projects that there is no time for at home, while we listen to & support each other. So grab your project & come join us. We can even teach you if you've never done any needlework before. We'd love to see you there!!!!!"



Helen JC: "The group being small makes you feel safe and welcoming to someone who is an extreme introvert. Having said, Rosie definitely asks A LOT, LOL. But what can I say? I love these small projects we are working on together that can bring a big impact. Making Pillowcase patterns even helped me declutter my fabric collection at home but I still have way too much more to share. I'm having a lot of fun putting these sets together. WE plan to share with senior homes and veterans also and touch their lives to show that they are recognized and this church cares."

Spanning the generations!

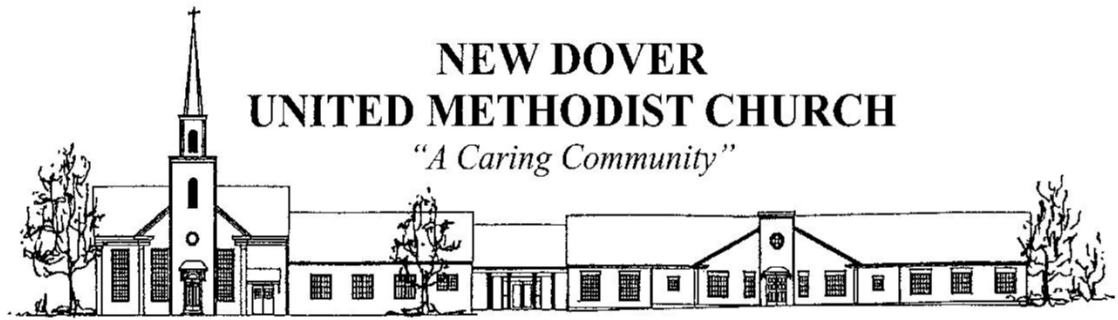
Anita Davis
New Dover Church
Member

Stephanie R: "the disconnecting from my device was hard at first. It still is. I just keep on trying. So, first is to disconnect from the devices and wires and network and connect with God. But there's also something else to D2C.

We disconnect from our individuality, our personal preferences, or what I'm used to, old self, old habits to be open minded and connect with other generations.

This is an intergenerational ministry where old ways become new ways, a new generation then regenerating and evolving. It's really wonderful to watch it happen in front of your eyes."





Dear Saints,

As you know, New Dover UMC is celebrating it's 175th Anniversary this year. The committee is working diligently to make it a memorable year. We are also trying to capture as much history as we can for our archives.

Enclosed is a questionnaire to capture some of your personal history. Please fill out as much as you are comfortable providing. Please make sure your name in on the form. You can make copies of the form for all your family members, obtain additional copies at church, or go online using the QR code to complete the questionnaire there. Some of this may be used in a video montage, all of it will be archived.

Submissions must be in by May 31, 2023 to be included in the montage.

If you would like to submit photos and videos (related to New Dover), please send the file to: **RLManglapus@gmail.com** using **WeTransfer.com**

(Photos and videos may be used as part of a video montage celebrating New Dover's 175th Anniversary.)

You may use this QR code to access our online questionnaire.





United Women in Faith invite all the women of the church to their Annual St. Patrick's Celebration on March 8 at 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall. Join us for dinner, fellowship and craft. There is a sign up sheet on their bulletin board.



April 2	Palm Sunday	10:15 am Worship Service
April 6	Maundy Thursday	7pm Service
April 7	Good Friday	7pm Service
April 9	Easter	6:30 am Sunrise Service 10:15 am Worship Service



Food Packing Event
May 20, 2023
Two shifts AM & PM
Specific details to follow.



Star Words' By the Rev. Julia Singleton

It's that time of year again to choose a new Star Word. What is a Star Word? It's a tradition gaining in popularity where people choose life-guiding words on Epiphany Day (Jan. 6) or on Epiphany Sunday. This is a word chosen at random to help guide you on your spiritual journey throughout the year. Last year my church chose a word for the first time. This past Sunday I gave people the opportunity to share with the congregation what their 2022 word meant to them. It was such a beautiful service, filled with stories of how one little word could have a big impact on people's lives. We shared how we leaned into the word, let it challenge us, prayed to God about it, read to learn more about the word, and overall, let it be our guiding star for the year.

I've heard stories from others outside my church as well. I love hearing about how their words were so fitting. One person received the Star Word "clarity," and by the end of the year they answered a call to ministry. One received "freedom" in a year when they were contemplating retirement. One received "acceptance" while going through major life changes.

Some felt initial disappointment with the word they'd been given. One member received "love" but felt it was kind of generic. Yet, oh how that word challenged them throughout the year.

I felt the same reaction when I received the Star Word "kindness" for 2022. But then a friend challenged me to turn the word on myself and dig into self-compassion. Showing myself kindness and compassion has always been a struggle. So, I did the hard work this year of learning to love and accept myself more fully, to be gentler and kinder to myself. I still have work to do, but I'm so thankful for my 2022 word that helped to guide me on this journey.

My choice for a 2023 Star Word is "generosity." But immediately I felt pangs of guilt. I love being generous; but 2022 was a year of financial strain for us, and I wasn't able to give as much financially as I usually do. So, I thought to myself, maybe this year I can learn how to be more generous in other ways. I look forward to seeing where my new Star Word will take me in 2023.

Consider choosing a word for yourself. You can find Star Word generators online; or you can ask a friend to pray on a word for you. Whatever you decide, I hope 2023 leads you to more abundance, more hope, more joy, more peace, more love— and a closer relationship to God, to others, and even to yourself.

(Note: this article, found on the GNJUMC website, was originally set for the January Herald, but pre-empted by the January special edition-it's not too late to find a word to guide your year!)

THE MILDRED VOLLMAR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION WILL BE AVAILABLE MARCH 1ST. ANY 2023 GRADUATING HIGH SCHOOL SENIOR WHO ATTENDS NEW DOVER AND WHO INTENDS TO PURSUE THEIR POST-HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATION IS QUALIFIED TO APPLY. APPLICATIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON THE DOOR OF THE MAIN OFFICE. DEADLINE FOR THE APPLICATION IS MAY 1ST, 2023. PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE (732-381-9478) WITH ANY QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS.



Easter Food Baskets will be distributed on Sunday, April 2. If you know of someone in need and would like to sponsor them. Please fill out the form that is on the office door and we will add their name to our distribution list.

Items needed: ham, chicken, canned vegetables, gravy, stuffing, cake mixes, brownie mix, pie fillings and crusts, cereal.

March Birthdays

- 4 Sharon Gray
- 5 Brian Christian
- 7 Timothy Roth
- 8 Steven Castlegiant
- 10 Danny Mizak
Bolton Nyema
- 11 Mark Vedana
- 13 Sadie Chesney
Abraham Katkar
- 14 Christopher Sanders
- 19 Bill Bunting
Jean Fletcher
- 22 Alyssa Sarno
- 31 Cecil Parmar

March Anniversaries

- 2 John & Marilyn Kimball
- 9 Ruzwalt & Nilpa Khristi
- 15 Bill & Donna Bunting
- 30 Wilson & Jesmina Christian



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