



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

April 2023

Vol. 199

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

Chuck's Church Chat



Saints,

Grace to you and peace in this month of gathering sunshine, warming breezes, and dewy pastures. Blessings upon you and your family as we enter the season of plowing and cultivating, of planting and sprouting, of new life from death!

The year was 1965 when my grandparents bought a 50-acre farm in a sparsely populated town in what is the most densely populated state, and so began a new phase of my life. "Poppop," a life-long pork butcher, aptly named it "Swine Acres," and it was there as a seven-year-old I first began to perceive and appreciate the rhythm of the changing seasons. I witnessed the transformation of depressions in frozen fields into shallow ponds that would spontaneously generate fairy shrimp, mosquito larvae, and spring peepers, whose high-pitched croaking would echo through the meadows and hedgerows, until you walked too close that is! Then they would shut down like the Beatles at the end of "*I Want You (She's So Heavy)*."

Of all my memories growing up on the farm, the most vivid are connected, not to sight or sound, but to smell! Most of you will relate to how certain scents have the capacity to transport us back to a particular time and place. Why is that? According to Discovery.com, unlike our other senses, "*Scents... go straight to the brain's smell center, known as the olfactory bulb. The olfactory bulb is directly connected to the amygdala and hippocampus, which might explain why the smell of something can so immediately trigger a detailed memory or even intense emotion.*"

Come spring the odors arising from freshly overturned soil in the garden or a clump of dirt in my hand do that magic, taking me immediately back to that farm of my childhood and the radishes my grandmom planted and the fields my grandpop plowed. Clinging like overturned roots to that memory come all the emotions tied to that time and place, when the world was fresh and new, poised on the edge of potential, and bursting with possibilities. And Saints, there's another far more distant memory the scent of the soil calls to mind- that it is from this very same earth that we ourselves were sprung.

Spring has that effect on us, doesn't it? As most often happens, Easter falls in April this year and with it the rebirth of the very same hopes and dreams we experienced as children. So whether you grew up on a farm in Salem County or a crowded neighborhood in Edison, reach down, grab a handful of earth and take in those soily scents that remind us from whence we have sprung!

Have a blessed April,

Rev Chuck

April Birthdays

- 1 *Jonathon Lamoreaux*
Rhea Manglapus
Aiden O'Rourke
- 2 *Bindu Christian*
Judy Rienzo
Harold Shaban
- 3 *Bobby Engel*
Justine Stevenson
- 5 *Angelina Budala*
Phyllis Carney
- 10 *Joanne Demler*
- 11 *Eric Colon*
- 14 *Doug Rock*
- 15 *Krisel Manglapus*
- 16 *Swati Christian*
- 21 *C.J. Yoon*
- 24 *June Ebbets*
- 25 *Rev. Chuck Coblentz*
- 26 *Naomi Hunt*
- 27 *Wilfredo Manglapus*
- 29 *Judy Tymitz*

April Anniversaries

- 9 *Ben & Patricia Stevenson*
- 11 *Richard & JoAnn Lettieri*
- 13 *Brian & Mackenze Chesney*
- 16 *Timothy & Robbin Roth*



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz
Debbie Ladym
Shirley & Lamont Shaffer
Beverly Vollmar
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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SERMON OF THE MONTH

"Barbarian at the Gates"

(Preached on Palm Sunday, April 10, 2022)

Luke 19:29-44

In the year 66 the Jews of Palestine, against all odds, kicked out the hated pagan Romans and took control of Jerusalem, their holy city, but four years later, the barbarians were back at the gates. Three legions of the Roman army, 70,000 men, led by the future Emperor Titus laid siege to the city of Jerusalem, cutting off its supply lines and hammering away at its walls with massive battering rams. After months, the food stores inside dwindled and 10,000 citizens of Jerusalem cowered in hunger, praying and pleading that God would come down from heaven and save them from utter destruction. But God did not.

Resistance proved futile. Eventually, much like the city of Jericho centuries before, Jerusalem's thick walls crumbled, and Roman legions poured through the breaches, showing no mercy, slaughtering men, women, and children indiscriminately. The "Titus Arch" in Rome was built as tribute to the Roman victory. Inside the arch is a sculpted panel showing Roman soldiers carrying off the spoils, including a menorah, before burning the Temple to the ground.

The hope for a restored Israel, which itself had burned so brightly four years before, ended with the fiery destruction of the Temple, the physical heart of the Jewish religion. But here's the thing- it need never have happened, because forty years earlier, all this had been foreseen.

Leaving ancient Jericho, that fabled city of Joshua's siege, Jesus turned south down a dusty road toward Jerusalem; walking beside and behind him, a loyal crowd of followers.

When he arrived on the Mount of Olives, outside of the city he sent his disciples ahead to find appropriate transportation, not a general's armored war horse, nor an emperor's triumphal chariot, but a borrowed donkey, a humble beast of burden, so symbolic of the way he performed his ministry- with hard work, humility, and calloused hands.

Mounting the donkey, Jesus made his way down the winding road toward the Holy City, the crowd waving palms and laying their cloaks before him. We all know the story. We all love a parade. And as we sit here in our pews on Palm Sunday we can imagine being swept up in the crowd as it marches toward the holy city. But then, just before he was to enter Jerusalem, on a hill overlooking the city, Jesus stops, and something most unexpected happens.

On a day expected to be the ultimate, triumph of Jesus' three-year journey of ministry, spreading the news of God's Kingdom throughout greater Galilee, just as he's about to arrive at the gates of the city, he stops and gazing upon Jerusalem, Jesus begins to weep, as if he could see clear as day the utter destruction that would rain down upon this city and its people four decades into the future Jesus was in mourning, not remembering a catastrophic event of the past, but for a coming, inevitable calamity. Jesus prophesied ***"Indeed, the days will come upon you, when your enemies will set up ramparts around you and surround you, and hem you in on every side. They will crush you to the ground, you and your children within you, and they will not leave within you one stone upon another..."***

We might ask, what had the city done to deserve such a fate? Why would it suffer such total destruction, much like Jericho had centuries before?? Jerusalem will fall, Jesus said, ***"...because you did not recognize the time of your visitation from God."*** You see, catastrophe would strike at the heart of Jerusalem, not because the Roman Empire was so powerful, **but because the people of the city failed to recognize the Lord, on the day he came to town.**

You say, *"Wait a minute Rev, I thought they did recognize him!"* Isn't that what this day is all about? Don't you see them waving the palm branches and throwing their cloaks before his path? Don't you hear them shouting ***"Hosanna, Hosanna!"*** and ***"Blessed is the one who comes in the name of the Lord!"*** Come on, it sure looks and sounds like they recognized Jesus as their messiah! At least they're saying all the right things. But Jesus knew better.

He saw through their nationalistic, tribal longing for a hero to lead them to victory over their oppressors, who would lift this city, this nation of Israel off the trash heap of history and restore it to its former power, its former wealth, its former glory. But we know that wasn't why Jesus came to Jerusalem, was it? Jesus had zero interest in any type of pseudo-religious, nationalistic fervor. He knew that what he was bringing to Jerusalem wasn't what the ravenous patriotic crowd was cheering him on for. Just as he could clearly see 40 years into the future, he could also clearly see what the week ahead would bring. Just beyond the waving of the palms he saw the laying on of the whip. He could hear the cries of "*Hosanna to the King!*" morphing to "*Crucify the Traitor!*" He knew that despite all the crowds shouting and palm waving, ***they had no idea who he really was; they didn't really recognize him at all.***

To the Scribes and the Pharisees, to the Sanhedrin, Jesus was nothing more than a radical subversive who not only threatened their secure comfortable way of life, but worse, challenged their views of how Judaism ought to be practiced. In their minds Jesus was an outlaw, a sinner, a heretic and a blasphemer. Sure, a few deluded souls in the crowd may have believed they were cheering for the long-awaited Messiah, but the Scribes, Pharisees, and Temple Priests knew better. To them, Jesus was nothing more than a barbarian at the gates. And so they immediately began making plans to get rid of him.

Saints, on this day we call Palm Sunday, God came to Jerusalem, and Jerusalem failed to recognize him. But they should have. And so Jesus prophesied: ***"O Jerusalem! If you, even you, had only recognized on this day the things that make for peace! But now they are hidden from your eyes."*** And so Jesus wept, because he knew there would be no next opportunity.

That with this latest rejection, the last vestige of hope for Jerusalem would be lost. All this weighed heavily on his heart as he made his way along the winding road leading down from the Mount of Olives, the palm branches waving a mockery, the shouts of "Hosanna!" a sham, echoing, dreamlike, into emptiness. And we all remember what happened once he made his way through those gates and made his way to the Temple, don't we?

As if to justify the fears of the religious leaders, Jesus dismounted the donkey and strode boldly into the Temple's outer precincts, overturning the tables of the money-changers, driving out those selling animals for sacrifice, and boldly condemning the wealth-driven commercialism of the Holy Temple and its priesthood.

Witnessing the damage Jesus was doing to standard Temple culture, can't you just see the members of the Sanhedrin turning to one another and stammering, *"Ah- see! We were right! The mob calls him the Messiah but look- he's nothing more than a barbarian at the gates! Someone who dares judge how we've been living or lives and demand us to change. We'll just have to see about that! How best to we get rid of him?"*

So, who was this Jesus of Nazareth come down from the north? The Savior of the world, or a barbarian at the gates? Or maybe, just maybe..... he was both!

Saints, it is Palm Sunday and once again the Lord approaches, but the gates before him this morning are not those of Jerusalem, rather they here- they are the gates before our very hearts. And guess what? Everything that matters in our lives, now and in the future, will hinge upon whether or not we see this man Jesus for who he truly is, and not what we make him out to be!

So as he approaches the gates, what do we see? Does he ride toward us in joy gladness because he senses a faith that opens wide the heart-gates and allows him entrance on his terms?

Or does he pause at a distance and weep because even after all these years we too fail to recognize him? Does he see our future as the triumph of love, or a defeat grounded in self-righteous delusion?

And looking back into his eyes, who is it that we see this morning? The Savior we've been praying for? Or a barbarian at the gates, who's presence threatens our worldly perceptions? Or maybe, just maybe, he is both? Standing before the gates of our heart this Palm Sunday morning, what does Jesus perceive? Do the cries of "*Hosanna, Hosanna!*" sound like little more than "*Lord, Lord?*" Is the entirety of our faith nothing more than a ritualistic weekly blip on our schedule? Can our entire religious life be summed up in nothing more than catchy bumper stickers?? Wait a minute Jesus! "*Hosanna!*" we shout, "*Hosanna!!!*" But he has heard it all before.

Does Jesus weep, because he knows he is loved in word only? Is it because he knows we can only accept him if he is the Christ *we* desire him to be, because there's no way we could never accept him for who he truly is- the One who challenges our every perception of this life? The One who pleads with us to be more faithful in every aspect of this life. The One who, if we let him, will point out the flaws within our own ethics and values, our own political ideologies, our own prejudice and xenophobia, and give us a new heart from which to love and a new life in which to live? Because that's what a Messiah is supposed to do!

Saints, on Palm Sunday it's so easy to focus on the procession itself. It's so easy to get caught up in the waving palms, the joyous exuberance, the uplifting hymns, the overall pageantry of the day. But if for a moment we take our eyes off the crowd, and turn our gaze upon the one who rides amidst it all, we notice he is not what we were expecting. His face is yet lined with sadness. The tracks of his tears are yet visible. His heart is still filled with grief. This is how the true Messiah approaches. But is this the one to whom we are willing to open our hearts? Or is the Jesus we follow nothing more than our own creation, who rubber stamps whatever our own dreams and ambitions may be? Nothing more than a yes man to all we hold precious? Sadly, for many, that's all he'll ever be.

In the Book of Revelation we hear the true Messiah announce, ***"Behold I stand at the door and knock, if you hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to you and eat with you and you with me."*** Saints, our Savior, the blessed Barbarian, is just outside the gates, at the very entrance of our hearts, and he is ready, willing, and able to flip over the corrupt tables and transform all that we are. Holy Week has begun; let us open wide the gates and bid him come in!

UNITED WOMEN OF FAITH

Our next meeting will be held Wednesday, April 12, 2023 at 6:30pm. Our program for the evening will be presented by Carol White. Carol is a hospice chaplain at the Center of Hope and Palliative Care in Scotch Plains. Please come and hear her tell of the compassionate care and comfort given to the patients there.

Following our speaker, please join us for delicious refreshments, relaxation and wonderful friendships that are always there. All women of the church are welcome.

Sincerely,

Dianne Petersen, President

Below is a list of items UWF is collecting for the women veterans at Menlo Park Veteran's Home:

Hand & body lotions
Body spray
Combs
Scarves (small & NEW)
Jewelry
Small notepads
Pens & pencils
Writing Paper
All occasion cards
Toothpaste/toothbrushes

Other small, personal items
Small Gift Bags for gift items

We would like to donate 60 bags, if possible.
Thank you all for your donations!

THE CHRISTIAN OUTREACH PROJECT

www.christianoutreachproject.org

The Christian Outreach Project is a non-profit organization, part of the Greater New Jersey Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. For one week each summer, COP sends groups to houses in local communities to provide housing repairs to homeowners who are unable to handle the projects themselves.

The week for COP 2023 is June 25-July 1. The cost for participants is \$420. This money goes to help offset the costs incurred through use of the Camp Hoover facilities, as well as to help pay for the supplies necessary to complete the projects undertaken.

- 2022 Statistics – 7 homes repaired, 8 participating churches, 48 youth & adult participants
- 2021 Statistics – 7 homes repaired, 8 participating churches, 41 youth & adult participants



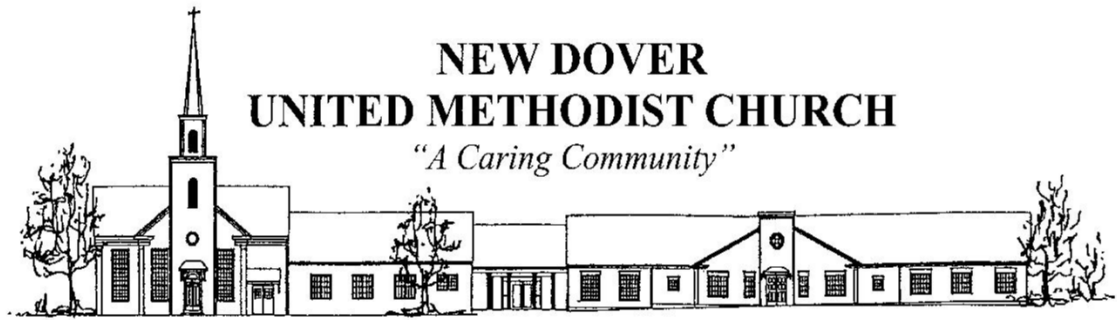
ADOPT A CREW!

Each crew member from New Dover participating in COP needs \$420 (Camp Fee) + \$50 (Tools) + \$30 (Travel) = \$500 Total

Please consider adopting a crew member by donating in any amount you generously can give.

You can write a check to New Dover UMC
Memo: Support COP
or go to www.newdoverumc.org, click **DONATE TO>>>**
PROJECT GROUPS UNDER YAYA





NEW DOVER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

"A Caring Community"

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.

You can go online using the QR code to complete the questionnaire or you can obtain a copy of it at the church. 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.





Holy Week

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.

SAVE THE DATE FOR VBS 2023!



STELLAR VBS
JULY 17 - 21, 2023
9AM - 12PM

Send your kids on an out-of-this-world adventure at New Dover United Methodist Church Vacation Bible School!



JOIN THE VBS TEAM!
SIGN UP
TO BE A VOLUNTEER.

Are you looking for a meaningful way to serve and make a difference in the lives of children? Join the VBS team! We are seeking volunteers to help create an unforgettable experience for kids as they learn about Jesus' love. Scan the QR code to sign up!

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Reflections Upon the Christian Life

Repentance...

What is the connection between repentance and salvation?

The book of Acts especially focuses on repentance in regard to salvation- (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). To repent is to change your mind regarding sin and Jesus Christ. In Peter's sermon on the day of Pentecost (Acts chapter 2), he concludes with a call for the people to repent (Acts 2:38). Repent from what? Peter calls the people who rejected Jesus (Acts 2:36) to change their minds about that sin and to change their minds about Christ Himself, recognizing that He is indeed "Lord and Christ" (Acts 2:36). **Peter calls the people to change their minds, to abhor their past rejection of Christ, and to embrace faith in Him as their Messiah and Savior. Repentance involves recognizing that you have thought wrongly in the past and determining to think rightly in the future. The repentant person has "second thoughts" about the mindset he formerly embraced. There is a change of disposition and a new way of thinking about God, about sin, about holiness, and about doing God's will.** True repentance is prompted by "godly sorrow," and it "leads to salvation" (2 Corinthians 7:10). Repentance and faith can be understood as two sides of the same coin. It is impossible to place your faith in Jesus Christ as the Savior without first changing your mind about your sin and about who Jesus is and what He has done. Whether it is repentance from willful rejection or repentance from ignorance or disinterest, it is a change of mind. Biblical repentance, in relation to salvation, is changing your mind from rejection of Christ to faith in Christ. Repentance is not a work we do to earn salvation. **No one can repent and come to God unless God pulls that person to Himself (John 6:44).** Repentance is something God gives—it is only possible because of His grace (Acts 5:31; 11:18). No one can repent unless God grants repentance. All of salvation, including repentance and faith, is a result of God drawing us, opening our eyes, and changing our hearts. God's longsuffering leads us to repentance (2 Peter 3:9), as does His kindness (Romans 2:4). To see what repentance looks like in real life, turn to the story of Zacchaeus. Here was a man who cheated and stole and lived lavishly on his ill-gotten gains—until he met Jesus. At that point he had a radical change of mind: "Look, Lord!" said Zacchaeus. "Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount" (Luke 19:8). Jesus happily proclaimed that salvation had come to Zacchaeus's house, and that even the tax collector was now "a son of Abraham" (verse 9)—a reference to Zacchaeus's faith. The cheat became a philanthropist; the thief made restitution. That's repentance, coupled with faith in Christ. Repentance, properly defined, is necessary for salvation. Biblical repentance is changing your mind about your sin—no longer is sin something to toy with; it is something to be forsaken as you "flee from the coming wrath" (Matthew 3:7). **It is also changing your mind about Jesus Christ—no longer is He to be mocked, discounted, or ignored; He is the Savior to be clung to; He is the Lord to be worshiped and adored.**

(In May, Part 2: Salvation)

Source: gotquestions.org

THE MILDRED VOLLMAR SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION IS AVAILABLE. 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.

If Jesus Came Back Today

Vincent Godfrey Burns

If Jesus came back today what would people say?
Would they cheer him and strew the way
With garlands of myrtle and bay
As they did on that distant day
When he came back to Jerusalem?
What would America say if Jesus came back today?
We fashion great churches and creeds
But the heart of the people still bleeds
And the poor still rot in their needs.
We display with pride his cross
In the midst of our pagan life
While we hug to our hearts the dross
Of our selfishness and strife.
What sacrifice have we made
To live the life he prayed?
What willing blood have we shed
To do the deeds he said?
To be popular and well-fed
We forsake the way he led
And follow a ghost instead!

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