

NEW DOVER HERALD

May 2019

Holiness unto the Lord

Vol. 156

Highlights

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CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

Grace to you and peace!

This edition of "the Chat" comes to you from that narrow window between our Maundy Thursday service and Good Friday so it is just one of several items on the agenda this morning. Busy! Busy! Busy!

So much work goes on behind the scenes every week at the church in order to ensure we have worship that is both moving and meaningful.

- ◆ Our teams of Nurture, Worship, and Church Council meet regularly to transform and fine tune our services.
- ◆ Our choirs and musical artists directed by Dr. Grace Kim spend hours rehearsing.
- ◆ Our Bell Choirs, conducted by the Alice Bennett, rehearse weekly;
- ◆ "Acts of Praise" arrive at the church two hours early every Saturday to prepare for our Saturday service.
- ◆ In the meantime, greeters, ushers, liturgists, nursery aides, coffee hour providers, and counters need to be scheduled each and every week!
- ◆ In the office during the week Trish puts together bulletins and newsletters (like this one!), and schedules folders to assemble everything.
- ◆ Every week Lori Perrine creates the PowerPoint for our morning announcements.
- ◆ And of course the Trustees, led by chair Jeff Rowland, do their best to ensure we have a dry, comfortable place to worship.

And this is just worship! Think about the time and preparation that goes into putting on our Sunday School, Youth Group, Hot Topics, Bible Study, Vacation Bible School, outreach projects like "Day Without Hunger," Operation Christmas Child, the Hunger Walk, our Food Pantry, and on and on and on!

And here's the kicker- the vast majority of the work is done by volunteers. Let that sink in! In a world where the demands for our time have approached crisis levels, so many of you still find the time to thank God through hour upon hour of service to His church. Without that faith response, none of this would happen.

So, the next time you come to church, pick up a bulletin and sit down to worship, remember all the love-based time and effort behind the scenes that went into it! And if you happen to hear a voice calling on you to take on a bigger part by all means take God up on it! What a joyful way to celebrate our faith!

Your Servant in Christ,

Chuck

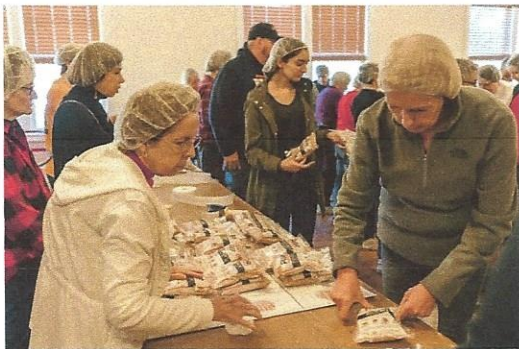
Rev. Chuck Coblentz

Rise[®]

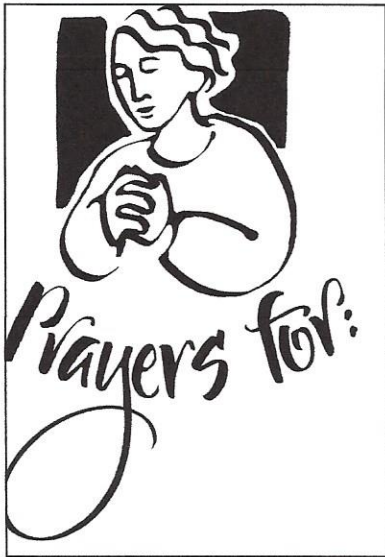
AGAINST HUNGER

The Rise Against Hunger food packing event was a re-sounding success. On the morning of March 23rd, Fellowship Hall was staged for packing, weighing and filling bags with 26,500 meals. Over 120 volunteers from all different community and church organizations arrived and the packing began. With the enthusiastic leadership of Rob from Rise Against Hunger, Rev. Chuck and especially Brian Richards, the morning was full of spirit, teamwork and music as we achieved our goal in 2 hours.

I think I can say for everyone involved it was the most meaningful and fulfilling project that we have been privileged to take part in. Enjoy some of the photos of the day. You can also go to www.newdoverumc.org to see them all.



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Bob Meckler & Family
Manny DeLaPaz & Family
Spencer Kolb
Christine Rowland
Eric Myers
Christine & Judy Tymitz
America
Christians of India
Marian Jones

LuLu Kamenas
NDUMC Missionaries
Preston Family
Boyce Family
Jeff & Karen Rowland
Our Schools
Robyn & Carolyn DeCicco
All suffering with
Addictions

Convalescent Homes
All Servicemen and
Women
Allie Forbes

Pray for all those seeking employment, those affected by Natural Disasters, those suffering with addictions, those suffering from depression, those affected by acts of terrorism, all national leaders and troops, 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.



SAVE THE DATES

- | | |
|-----------|------------------------|
| May 12 | Mother's Day |
| Jun 1 | Pedals for Progress |
| Jun 9 | Strawberry Festival |
| Jun 16 | Father's Day Bake Sale |
| Jul 15-19 | Vacation Bible School |



SERMON OF THE MONTH

“Which Jesus Would We Choose?”

Preached April 14, 2019

Matthew 27:15-24

Joshua 24:14-20

Holy Week is very much a tale of twos. It's a tale of two crowds- One optimistic, upbeat, and hopeful, waving palm branches, the other pessimistic, angry, and cynical, waving the flags of a vanquished nation. And it's also a tale of two Jesuses- One a recent arrival in town, the other held in prison. Their lives would intersect in an impromptu mass election staged by the Roman governor of Judea named Pontius Pilate. To appease the crowd and honor a Passover tradition he would allow them, by acclamation, to vote on which Jesus was to live and which was to die.

Much like many of our recent elections, the choice between the two candidates could not have been more defined. One preached unconditional love and envisioned an open, inclusive community. The other espoused the violent overthrow of the Roman government, deportation of the foreigner invaders, and the rebirth of the Jewish nation. And just as when we enter the voting booth, who each person in that crowd chose reflected what he or she believed in their heart. And you know what? 2,000 years later, Jesus of Nazareth and Jesus bar Abbas yet stand before us. We know how the crowd described by Matthew voted, but who would we permit to live, and who to die? We who call ourselves “Christian” are so quick to judge the Jerusalem crowd for voting to free Barabbas, after all, we would've chosen Jesus of Nazareth....right?

Well, before we answer what sounds on the surface like a rhetorical question, let's take a couple of moments to examine the two men Pilate has paraded before us. Who was this man they called “Jesus bar Abbas?”

Did you know that Barabbas is one of the few characters aside from Jesus' followers to appear in all four gospels? Matthew is the only gospel writer who gives his full name; in Mark, Luke, and John he known simply as Barabbas. Jesus, or *Jeshua*, was a very common Hebrew name that traces its popularity to Joshua, the hero who led the Jews out of the Wilderness into the Promised Land, who gave the stirring speech about choices found in our Old Testament lesson: *“Now if you are unwilling to serve the Lord, choose this day whom you will serve....but as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord.”* What about the name “bar Abbas?” Well, in Aramaic, the language of first century Palestine, “bar” means “son of,” while Abba means “father,” so bar Abbas means literally “son of the father,” or “the son of Abbas.”

That explains his name, but who was he? Fortunately, the few clues in the gospels render a pretty consistent picture. Matthew describes Jesus bar Abbas only as “a notorious prisoner,” but what was he doing in prison? The other gospels shed light on that question. Mark, the earliest gospel says, “Barabbas was in prison with the rebels who had committed murder during the insurrection.” Luke agrees saying he was “a man who had been put in prison for an insurrection that had taken place in the city, and for murder.” And John refers to Barabbas as a “*lēstēs*,” a word often used when referring to revolutionaries,” and John further states, “Now Barabbas had taken part in an uprising.” So they all agree- Jesus bar Abbas was in jail for participating in a violent insurrection against Rome in which people were killed. Given this biblical evidence, numerous scholars believe that Barabbas was part of a 1st century political movement known as the Zealots. The Zealots were founded in the year 6 to fight against what they felt was over-taxation by Quirinius, the Roman governor. But tackling the tax code was only the start- the Zealots ultimate goal was to restore Israel to its former glory by any means necessary, including the use of violence against the pagan Gentiles, the foreigners who had taken over their country. But the Zealots rampant xenophobia didn't stop there. So extreme was their rage, if any of their fellow countrymen failed to follow their lead they were branded unpatriotic. Worse, if any Jew cooperated with Rome, the Zealots, would turn their zealous anger upon them as well, raiding their homes, terrorizing their families, and killing those they considered apostates and collaborators. The Zealots were religious extremism run amok, all under the banner of patriotism. As a prominent Zealot, Barabbas was no doubt hailed as a hero by those who hated how things had turned for Israel, with harsh animosity toward the foreigners in their midst. Such was the man named Jesus bar Abbas. But what about the man called Jesus of Nazareth who had

ridden into town just a few days before?

Well, like Jesus bar Abbas, this Jesus wanted change. Like Barabbas he had a well-earned reputation as a radical revolutionary, but there were two major dissimilarities in this tale of two Jesuses. First of all, unlike Jesus bar Abbas, Jesus of Nazareth consistently preached against the use of violence, imploring his followers: to forgive seventy times seven when someone does you wrong; to turn the other cheek when struck; to unconditionally love even one's enemies and that included the Romans. Second, while Barabbas was zealous only for the nation of Israel, Jesus of Nazareth had bigger things in mind. Much bigger. He preached of something he called the Kingdom of God, a Kingdom that extended far beyond the borders of Israel, encompassing the entire world, a Kingdom founded on faith in the God of all Creation, a Kingdom ruled not by prejudice and fear, but rather by empathy and hope, a Kingdom where Jews and Gentiles alike could walk hand in hand. For three years Jesus of Nazareth wandered from town to town in Galilee preaching this radical gospel, so that by the time he turned south toward Jerusalem his reputation as a teacher, a healer, and a courageous prophet preceded him.

As he rode into Jerusalem on the back of a donkey, those in the crowd around him, believing he may actually be the long-awaited Messiah, waved their palm branches in royal tribute and laid their cloaks before him. Jesus had given them something they had been sorely lacking- hope. Hope in a new world where there would be no more greed, no more poverty, no more wars. And when he entered the precincts of the Temple and drove out the thieving moneychangers just by the force of his personality alone, their expectations reached a fever pitch. Here was a man brave enough to take the fight to the very seat of religious and political power in Jerusalem. For the next four days, while Jesus bar Abbas languished in prison, Jesus of Nazareth walked the streets of Jerusalem boldly and openly preaching this Kingdom of God to all who would listen. And they did listen, yes they did- especially the Temple priests, the Pharisees and Sadducees, and Roman soldiers stationed there to keep the peace. They listened, but they didn't like what they were hearing because it judged the world they were secure and comfortable in. To anyone looking on, it was only a matter of time before Jesus of Nazareth would join Jesus bar Abbas in prison. And of course that's precisely what happened. And we know the story by heart. Jesus was arrested, tortured, tried by the Sanhedrin, and handed over to Pilate for sentencing and further punishment. And the law was clear as to what the punishment was for inciting revolution- crucifixion.

So now we have these two Jesuses arrested and sentenced to die on a cross, but then you have this strange twist in the tale where Pilate, honoring an obscure Passover tradition, offered to free one of the two death row inmates, based entirely on the will of the crowd, and so he brings them out and asks the crowd to vote on which one he should set free, and, as we know, the crowd overwhelmingly chose to release Jesus bar Abbas. We all know what happened, but were we all that shocked, or was this the expected result? Saints, that's a real important question because, as you've probably noticed, there are numerous parallels between ancient Palestine and modern America that demand our attention when it comes to how we are to interpret this tale of two Jesuses. Why did they choose Jesus bar Abbas as opposed to Jesus of Nazareth?

First of all, think about the crowd before Pilate that day- what was their emotional state?

It could be summed up in one phrase- angry patriotic fervor. You see Passover to the Jews was more than a mere "religious" holiday, it was also politically charged. Passover was their 4th of July, celebrating liberation from slavery in Egypt and the beginning of their march to the Promised Land. That's why the streets and inns of Jerusalem were swelled with pilgrims. That spirit of freedom and independence, built upon centuries of proud nationhood, was only intensified by the presence of oppressive Roman authority. The atmosphere in Jerusalem that day was so close to boiling it was all Pilate could do to keep a lid on it. And all the while revolutionaries like the Zealots, only too happy to take advantage of the emotional energy, walked among the crowd fanning the flames of patriotic xenophobia. The Jews under Roman rule were desperate for a hero who shared their dream to make Israel great again. And it was into this flag-waving, nationalistic atmosphere that Pilate brought forth those two men arrested for inciting revolution, telling the crowd they could only vote for one. And they chose the zealous patriot over the man from Galilee.

But before we judge the Jerusalem crowd, we really need to ask ourselves what turns out to be anything but a rhetorical question- who would we ourselves have chosen had we found ourselves in a similar atmosphere? I ask that in light of our current caustic political climate where, like the Zealots of old, politicians and pundits pontificate behind podiums, stalk town halls, and coldly stare out of our TV sets stoking the fears and inflaming the prejudicial xenophobia of the loyal crowds before them. Who would they recommend we choose? The nonviolent prophet compelling us to love one another? Or the charismatic patriot calling the population to arms? Saints, 3,000 years later Joshua's voice rings out, "*Choose this day*

whom you will serve..." Saints, 2,000 years later Pilate's voice yet rings out, "*Whom do you want me to release for you, Jesus Barabbas or Jesus who is called the Messiah?*" Guess what? We can only choose one.

But before we cast our ballot, know this. We cannot claim to believe in Jesus within the friendly confines of this sanctuary, but line up behind the Barabbases of this world the moment we leave. Because every time we choose Barabbas we also answer Pilate's second question just as the crowd did 2,000 years ago: *Pilate said to them, 'Then what should I do with Jesus who is called the Messiah?' All of them said, 'Let him be crucified!'* Having served this church for almost three years, I don't believe there's anyone here who would willfully cry for Jesus' crucifixion. But how can we be assured we'll always make the right choice?

One way is to look at the crowd we find ourselves in. On this Palm Sunday we need to remember, that this tale of two Jesuses is also a tale of two crowds. And as long as we remember the crowd we came in with, we'll be alright. Saints, remember that we are a part of the crowd waving palm branches, celebrating the one who rides into the city humble upon a donkey, maintaining our faith in the words and life of the one who comes in peace, whose Kingdom, unbounded by political borders, welcomes the poor and the dispossessed. We don't abandon this crowd the moment we leave this sanctuary! Our faith in Jesus and his message is either with us throughout our entire life, or it is not true faith at all. As long as we remember that, as long as we maintain our hope in the glorious Kingdom of God, we'll never feel the need to join the other crowd the angry, violent crowd who stood before Pilate, motivated by fear and prejudice, and chose Barabbas.

No together with the Saints and martyrs who have kept their faith in the one called Jesus of Nazareth, we will forever wave our palm branches high and when asked by Joshua to "*...choose this day whom you will serve...*" we will reply, "*... as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord!*"

JESUS OR BARABBAS

FINANCE

The Finance Committee is continuing to provide financial information. The following provides the income and expenses as of February 2019. 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 are shown which include salaries, utilities, conference obligations and other costs to keep the church operating.

New Dover United Methodist Church Operating Fund		
	2019	
	February	Year to Date
Income	\$ 22,170.58	\$ 41,858.31
Expenses	\$ (16,877.17)	\$ (47,451.71)
Difference	\$ 5,293.41	\$ (5,593.40)

UMW News

Our next meeting will be held on Wednesday, May 8th at 6:30 pm. Our own Rev. Chuck will be our presenter this month. Come hear about his adventures in Mancos Canyon in Colorado and Bear's Ear National Monument in Utah. He will be showing photos of remote and remarkably preserved cliff dwellings, so over 1000 years old.

All women are invited to attend our meeting and enjoy refreshments afterward.

If you have any questions, please see any UMW member.

Sincerely,

Dianne Petersen (732-381-8688)
UMW President



Pedals for Progress
June 1, 2019

Drop-off from 9am-12pm

Pedals for Progress has received, processed and donated over 155,000 bicycles, 4,000 used sewing machines, and \$10.8 million in new spare parts to partner charities in developing countries.

Pedals for Progress isn't just donating used bicycles: It's also helping developing world economies by promoting self-sustaining bicycle repair businesses.

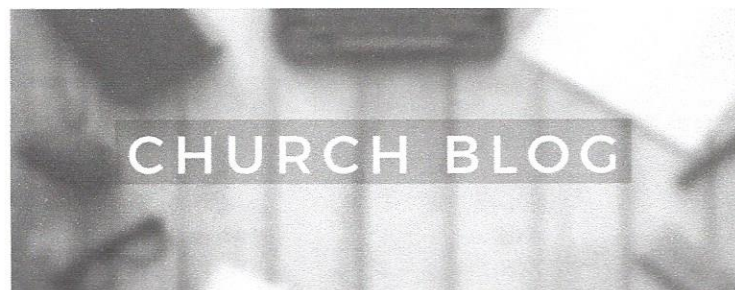
Donate your used, unused bikes and sewing machines and help promote economic development throughout the world.

MEMBERSHIP BLOG

Our blog opens with Sunday, March 17-St. Patrick's Day! It was a busy morning in the sanctuary. Brian R., our Lay Representative, spoke about conference business including The Way Forward. The Sunday School was in attendance at the beginning of the service to perform "This Little Light of Mine", with some percussion! The bells of New Dover and Bound Brook UMC played 4 pieces during the service, greatly appreciated by those present. The Scriptures for the day were Lamentations 3:25-36 and Luke 14:15-24. Jesus warned the Jews that if they refused His invitation, they would be uninvited and others would take their place. What are our excuses for not accepting His invitation? Who are we inviting in or trying to keep out; are we making decisions that invite exclusivity? There may have been a time when WE were in the role of outsider/outcast. The kingdom of God is not a country club for the elite but a sanctuary for all. We cannot judge but must remember that EVERYONE is welcome at the table.

Thanks to the Sunday School and bell choirs for their beautiful music! The next weekend's service began with the hymn, "Marching to Zion" including a little clapping. The Scriptures for the day were Isaiah 42:1-9 and Mark 8:27-33. Jesus knew it was time to go to Jerusalem and face his destiny, yet Peter refused to accept what was happening. Peter was in turn rebuked because he was more interested in his plan for an earthly king and kingdom. Do we accept Jesus on His terms or try to mold Him to ours? To believe in what He truly is, is to be transformed to a life in pursuit of the kingdom of God. Do we march in the light or deny the true nature of Christ? Let's follow Jesus! On the last Sunday of March, a good sized congregation was treated to the talents of SunHee Yoon on the organ and Rev. Chuck performing his own song ("Song of Jake") for the anthem; what a blessing to have them share their music. The Scriptures for the day were Deuteronomy 21:22-23 and Luke 19:1-10. The story of Zacchaeus is a familiar one, yet reminds us that those we ignore and ostracize are looking to be accepted and understood. Any wall we put up, Jesus can take down; He shows us how to reach out in love and be transformed into people of justice and compassion. Let's not put up walls of prejudice, anger, fear and hate, but keep in mind that we are ALL God's children and as such we are all wrestling with Him during times of change and acceptance of His plan for our lives.

April services began on the 7th with Communion Sunday. The Chancel Choir was on hand to deliver a moving version of "Cry No More" for the anthem. The Scripture for the day was John 9:1-34 (Jesus heals the blind man). The Pharisees viewed anomalies present at birth to be the result of parental or personal sin, yet Jesus challenged their belief by discriminating between sin by choice and conditions beyond our control. When faced with situations we can't reconcile with our ideology, do we challenge or change the facts to suit ourselves and try to mold others according to OUR will? When our legalistic arguments fail us, do we turn to anger and dismissal? Let's not treat those in difficulty as unworthy and be blind to the difference of sin by choice versus conditions allowed by God for His glory. ALL those who truly repent of their sins are welcome to the table. Holy Communion by intinction followed the sermon and the service was concluded with "Marching to Zion".





The Incredible Race
July 15-19, 2019
9am - 12pm

It's a race, unlike anything you've ever experienced. A race filled with fun clues to find and interesting challenges to attempt! At the same time, it's about another race. A race that began at the Garden of Eden and continues until this day. What race? The Human Race. As the children attempt challenges and fill their scorecards, they'll also discover that, no matter where we live, what shade of skin we have, or what language we speak, we are all part of the same race—the human race—and all part of the same family from Adam and Eve. Send your kids on an *Incredible Race* to **experience God's love for every tribe, language, and nation! Register today!**

Online registration, as well as printable registration forms, may be found on our website www.newdoverumc.org, outside the church office, or email us at newdovervbs@gmail.com



May 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			<p>1 10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6-8pm Karate 7:00pm Trustees</p>	<p>2 Hot Topics 7:30 AA</p>	<p>3</p>	<p>4 10:00-11:00 Karate 1:00-4:00 Kids for Christ 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>5 8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship 11:15 Choir Practice 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 4:00 Youth Group 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service</p>	<p>6 10:30 Hot Topics 6:30 Social Justice</p>	<p>7 7:30-1:30 Flea Market 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p>8 10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6-8 Karate 6:30 UMW</p>	<p>9 Hot Topics 7:30 AA</p>	<p>10</p>	<p>11 10:00-11:00 Karate 1:00-4:00 Kids for Christ 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>12 Mother's Day 8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship 11:15 Choir Practice 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service</p>	<p>13 Herald Articles Due 10:30 Hot Topics 7:00 Nurture</p>	<p>14 7:30-1:30 Flea Market 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p>15 10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6-8 Karate 7:00 Worship</p>	<p>16 7:00 Hot Topics 7:30 AA</p>	<p>17 7-9 Cub Scouts #318</p>	<p>18 10:00-11:00 Karate 1:00-4:00 Kids for Christ 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>19 8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship & Church School 11:15 Choir Practice 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 4:00 Youth Group 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21 7:30-1:30 Flea Market 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (WH)</p>	<p>22 10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6-8 Karate</p>	<p>23 7:30 AA</p>	<p>24</p>	<p>25 10:00-11:00 Karate 1:00-4:00 Kids for Christ 5:00 Praise Service 6:30-8:00 Telegu 7:30 AA & AI Anon</p>
<p>26 8:30 Worship 10:00 Worship 11:15 Choir Practice 11:45 Bell Choir Practices 11:30-1:00 ADC Bible Study 5:00-6:30 Telugu Service</p>	<p>27 Memorial Day Office Closed</p> 	<p>28 7:00pm Ad Council 7:30 Scout Troop 44 (FH)</p>	<p>29 10:00 Prayer Fellowship 6-8 Karate</p>	<p>30 7:30 AA</p>	<p>31</p>	