



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

May 2021

Vol. 178

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

Grace to you and peace!

It's funny how some memories stick with you and others fade like a foggy sunset. One summer morning when I was around five Mom told my brother Paul and I to keep watch out of our big bow window in the living room because we were getting a big surprise. How exciting was that?! Maybe we were finally getting that set of monkey bars we'd been begging for! So we sat on the window well and kept our eyes peeled. It wasn't long before a big, dark brown panel truck with the name "J.B. Van Sciver" painted on its side appeared, slowed down to halt just past our gravel driveway, then slowly reversed in.

Pretty soon the driver and a helper began lifting huge cardboard boxes out of the back, lowering them to the driveway before putting them on a hand-truck and rolling them up our flagstone sidewalk, up three stairs and into the house. When they took off the cardboard we saw the big surprise- a brand new suite of bedroom furniture- two twin beds, two chests of drawers, a cabinet with a bookshelf, and a corner desk and chair. Okay, so it wasn't set of monkey bars, but it was a big upgrade from having to share a mattress with my irritating little brother!

That set of furniture served Paul and I for the rest of our childhood and then some. I spent countless nights at that desk, doing homework, reading all about dinosaurs, listening to Phillies baseball and Flyers hockey games, and eventually filling out college applications. In other words, that Van Sciver delivery had a big role to play in who I became as an adult and who I am now. But why am I telling you this? Well because a recent event triggered the memory...



What could it be??? A new set of furniture for the office? Monkey bars????!!!! No, something even better! And no one was more excited than Brian Richards to see it come in!



With the incredible growth of our food ministry we have weekly been running out of space for homemade sandwiches and frozen stuff from Wawa. So, after exhaustive research, we purchased two desperately needed appliances: a commercial refrigerator and a companion freezer. The good news- they are both made by Arctic Air, one of the best reviewed manufacturers out there. More good news we got both units for the cost that most companies charge for one! More good news, the shipping from Nevada was free! And the best news? It didn't cost New Dover anything! The units were paid for by a grant we applied for from the Conference as well as \$400 raised by our fantastic United Methodist Women- thanks Ladies!

Like the Van Sciver bedroom suite that served my brother and I all those years ago, these units will help us serve the needs of our Edison community by feeding literally tens of thousands of hungry neighbors year after year after year. A big shout out to all of our dedicated volunteers, every one of you who have donated sandwiches over the course of the past year, our amazing Outreach Committee, and especially the leader of our food ministry, Brian Richards. Great job Dude! Now let's see where God takes us next!

Peace,

Rev Chuck

KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Boyce Family
Judy Tymitz
Pat & Brian & Family
Parkhill Family
Manny & Nora De La Paz
Debbie Ladym
John Resch
Cancer patients
Robin & Carolyn DeCicco

Tonya Burleigh
Service men & women
Veterans
Homeless, unemployed
& uninsured
All affected by Covid-19 and
their families
Children with Autism
All Elderly of NDUMC

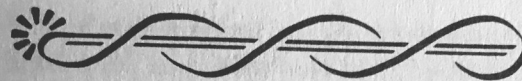
Rose DeLand
Petersen family
Jean Fletcher
Stephanie Rademacher
Paulette Harland
Fiona Meade

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 2021 permanent prayer list, please contact Pat Carpenter 732-208-0139 pcarp732@gmail.com

FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

TRIALS & TRIUMPHS



*I thank God for my handicaps, for, through them,
I have found myself, my work, and my God.*

Helen Keller



*I can do all things through Christ which strengthen
me. Philippians 4:13, King James Version*



*For those who will fight bravely and not yield,
there is triumphant victory over all the dark
things of life.*

James Allen

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SERMON OF THE MONTH

“The Sin of Gullibility”

(Preached on Sunday, February 28, 2021)

Ephesians 4:1-7, 11-16

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all. But each of us was given grace according to the measure of Christ's gift.

The gifts he gave were that some would be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some pastors and teachers, to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until all of us come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to maturity, to the measure of the full stature of Christ. We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming. But speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knitted together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body's growth in building itself up in love.

Gullibility- is it a sin? Did you know that if you say the word “gullible” real slow it sounds exactly like “oranges?” Okay, to those of you who actually are trying this, my sincere apologies! I'd say the devil made me do it, but...well, you know! Why did some of you even try saying it? Was it because you trusted me? Silly rabbit!

We'll get back to the trust the preacher thing later on- trust me...(?) But in the meantime, have you ever been told, “You're so gullible?” We probably all have at one time or another, right? Not sure, but I don't believe that's ever meant as a compliment! I don't know about you, but doesn't there seem to be an awful lot of gullible people running around these days?! Seems like there's a lot of people who'll believe about anything. Despite everything the evidence suggests, there are a heckuva lotta people believing that the world is actually flat as a pancake, that our climate isn't changing, that COVID19 is a hoax, and that Elvis is still alive, “*Yup, saw a picture of him in the supermarket paper pumping gas in Peoria!*”

Wikipedia defines gullibility as “*a failure of social intelligence in which a person is easily tricked or manipulated into an ill-advised course of action.* It can also be defined as *the tendency to believe unlikely propositions that are unsupported by evidence.*” While some people seem to be gullible by nature, every one of us has gone through a time or two in our lives when we're more gullible than normal, in other words, more vulnerable to be being fooled, tricked or scammed. Myself included! Case in point....

When I served a couple of churches in Salem County I used to love going to the Elmer Auction every Friday and one night, I was looking through the “merchandise” when I spotted a signed LeRoy Neiman sketch buried beneath some dirty old frames containing worthless prints. Well I don't know much but I knew anything signed by the artist LeRoy Neiman was worth hundreds, and if it was an original sketch we're talking thousands\$\$\$! So I waited patiently for an hour or so until the auctioneer got to the otherwise nondescript pile of frames and started the bidding at \$1. Well, somebody else must have seen the sketch because to my dismay the bidding started going up. I tried to see who was bidding against me but couldn't locate the competition. Finally, when the bids reached \$65 the other person dropped out and I had the Neiman! Even though it was more than I had hoped to spend, I was euphoric to get such a bargain. This would do so well on eBay! And then I got home and took the sketch out of the frame. Drum roll please.... UGH! It was a page torn out of a book, not a signed original sketch. The frame was worth more than the print. Oy vey! I felt like an idiot. How could I have been so gullible? Upon reflection, I figured out that it was because *I so wanted it to be a genuine Neiman sketch* that it clouded my judgment to the point that I never questioned the signature's authenticity.

That desire to *want something to be true* is perhaps *THEE* major influence when it comes to being gullible, but there are other factors as well:

Ignorance is also major- the less we know about something the more likely we are to get duped. Unscrupulous car mechanics or handymen often take advantage of clueless customers who don't have a basic

understanding of how things work.

Out and out laziness leads straight to gullibility, *not taking the time, effort, or due diligence* when it comes to making life decisions or buying something like a car for instance- Used car salespeople prey on gullible buyers wandering their lot!

Desperation is another factor. Panic might lead us to choices we normally wouldn't make and will one day regret.

Gullibility is also tied closely to **weak critical thinking skills**. Absence of healthy skepticism contributes to poor decision making. Cognitive research scientist, Hugo Mercier, writes that we humans have a tendency to **readily accept unsupported or false statements so long as they support their preconceived beliefs**. Think about how quickly, without even bothering to fact-check, most of us Facebook users are to like or share a post just because it supports *our* point of view!

And finally, here's a biggie: **putting one's trust in the wrong person!** That's the reason I did that silly gullible/oranges experiment at the beginning of the sermon! Let that be a lesson that you shouldn't put too much trust in us preachers! But seriously, think of all the gullible people who, despite the warning signs and numerous exposes' in the news, actually have put their trust in unscrupulous TV evangelists, those wolves in sheep's clothing who own multiple mansions and private jets; they send them their life savings for a 50 cent prayer cloth or a "ticket to heaven."

Misplaced trust not only makes us gullible, it can lead to disastrous consequences. Just ask the followers of cult leaders like Jim Jones, Marshall Applewhite, or David Koresh. Their followers put their complete trust in them and they ended up losing their lives.

And it's not just religion- unscrupulous con artists in all fields prey upon the gullible. Some politicians can literally say anything because they know their base will never ever abandon them. Of course lately in the news, most of the participants in the mob that attacked the Capitol placed their faith in an Internet presence known as Q, like an Old Testament idol, a person who claims to be an insider but who may not even exist, and now it looks like their misplaced trust not only revealed their gullibility, it will also be bringing them some serious jail time!

Yes, Saints, gullibility can lead us down roads we ought not be on; it can take our money; it can put us in prison; it can even kill us! But that said, is being gullible a sin? After all, that's what the title of the sermon is suggesting right? It's one thing to point out the dangers of gullibility, but is it being gullible actually a sin? For that let's turn to the Bible and in particular a passage from Ephesians, where that very question is addressed.

This morning's New Testament lesson came from a letter written to the church at Ephesus. What's interesting is that the earliest manuscripts we have of this epistle it never mention Ephesus, meaning that designation was probably added later. For that reason, most scholars believe it was originally written to a group of churches in Asia Minor, one of which may have been Ephesus, and that effects how we understand the contents of the letter. We know from reading the book of Acts as well as Paul's letters that in the first century the churches of Asia Minor were subjected to a wide variety of proselytes coming to town trying to spread their own ideas as to what it means to be a Christian. Many of their ideas clashed with what Paul himself had taught them. Needless to say this led to confusion, chaos, and schisms in the church.

No one was more concerned about this, or enraged by it, than was Paul himself! In his letter to the church in Galatia, the Apostle's frustration spilled over, pleading with church members, *"I am astonished that you are so quickly deserting the one who called you in the grace of Christ and are turning to a different gospel— not that there is another gospel, but there are some who are confusing you and want to pervert the gospel of Christ... You foolish Galatians! Who has bewitched you?"* Clearly Paul felt that because the Galatians were so new to the faith they were vulnerable to false teachings. In other words gullible.

This theological civil war of allegiance was happening to churches all over Asia Minor as the young Christian faith struggled to find its identity, and the epistle we call Ephesians was written to address the crisis as well. The key in Ephesians chapter 4 is verse 14 that practically defines gullibility. Listen! ***"We must no longer be children, tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine, by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming."*** Hear that? This is nothing less than a first century warning against being gullible!! When he says they are not to be ***"children,"*** he's telling them they need to possess the wisdom of mature adulthood and not be as naïve as children often are.

Children have a tendency to "follow their heart," which sounds nice. But was it not Jeremiah who taught us that ***"The heart is devious above all else...who can understand it?"*** Our heart has a tendency to wander from the truth if it "feels good." Our heart is also tempted to believe something without question if it matches our own beliefs. And Saints, a fickle heart is an easy target for those who live to deceive! A strong believer will know there is often a big difference between what he or she desires and what the scriptures tell us God desires. A strong believer will question everything, to test if it adheres to God's will and is done in the spirit of love.

When the writer says ***"...tossed to and fro and blown about by every wind of doctrine..."*** he's describing what happens when a person is not educated in the scriptures or wise in the ways of the faith. Those who don't know the scriptures are easily led astray by one who plots to take full advantage of their ignorance. Those who do not "get it" when it comes to the basic tenets of our faith are easily led astray by any smooth talker in a tailored suit who

comes along. Substitute a toga for a tailored suit and that's precisely what was happening in the churches of 1st century Asia Minor. Like a ship in a storm at sea, gullible persons will be subject to damaging waves and the destructive winds of false doctrine. The result will leave them lost at sea at best, shipwrecked upon the rocks at worst. And when the letter warns them not to be taken in "**...by people's trickery, by their craftiness in deceitful scheming,**" he is describing the unscrupulous religious scam artists who deliberately swept into the churches to take full advantage of gullible parishioners!

Saints, when we allow ourselves to be conned, scammed, or deceived into wasting our time, talent, and treasure on things that are not of God's Kingdom, that is time, talent, and treasure not spent on the Kingdom of God! It is time, talent, and treasure wasted! What is the sin in gullibility? ***It is the failure to put in the effort,*** to do the work we need to do so that we do not become the victims of those who try to sell us a bill of goods who preach a false doctrine! How do we achieve this? Well, unlike the easy fixes that scam artists promise, I'm going to be straight with you- the life of a true disciple of Jesus Christ is not an easy one! Jesus of Nazareth, who was clearly the opposite of a scam artist, was always clear about that. In Matthew 16 we hear, "***If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves and take up their cross and follow me. For those who want to save their life will lose it, and those who lose their life for my sake will find it.***" I dare you to try to candy-coat those words. True Christian discipleship takes a lot more than tuning in for an hour on Sunday morning. It takes more than a token offering. More than a church membership certificate. And despite what some scam artist preachers may tell you, genuine faith in Jesus has never been a ticket to instant riches.

But O Saints, genuine faith is so much more than anything a scam artist can ever promise! Because once we get it, once we open up and allow that unconditional love of God into our hearts, all those fears, all those lies, all those doubts that have held us back melt away and we will finally possess that "***pearl of great price,***" that Jesus promised to those who earnestly seek him. We will finally sense that "***peace that passes all understanding***" that Paul wrote to us about. We will finally realize our worth as one made in the image of our Creator, called to a mission worthy of such a claim!

In the epistle called Ephesians we are told to "***...lead a life worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, making every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.***"

The keyword here is "worthy." When it comes to worthy discipleship there are no shortcuts! So let's study the scriptures! Let's take up our cross! And once we do, we will leave all gullibility behind!

Church Re-opening Update

The Church Opening Task Force met on April 12, 2021 to discuss the re-opening of the church following the guidelines of the CDC, the state and the GNJAC. Below are some highlights from that meeting:

- The plan is to start worship outside on May 2, 2021 at 10 a.m.
- The Church Opening Task Force will meet again on Tuesday, June 22, 7 p.m. to evaluate and plan for Indoor worship starting from July 2021.
- Nursery is unavailable for use until further notice. We need a nursery coordinator.
- Ushers/Liturgists – will be scheduled as per needs.
- Inclement weather decision - Communication with the congregation (Newsletter, Email, Facebook etc.)



NEW DOVER UMC VIRTUAL VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

July 12th-16th, 2021

Embark on an epic quest through hidden ruins, ancient caves, and dense jungles. At Treasured VIRTUAL VBS, kids dig into action-packed, faith-filled adventures. They'll discover God's greatest treasure isn't diamonds, gems, or gold—it's them!

Send your kids on an impacting adventure!
Register today!



**EARLY BIRD REGISTRATION
DEADLINE: MAY 15TH!**

Register by May 15 and
receive a VBS theme t-shirt!

**REGULAR REGISTRATION
DEADLINE: JULY 1ST!**

Online registration may be found here:
VBSPRO.EVENTS/P/NEWDOVER

Any questions? Please contact us at NewDoverVBS@gmail.com

May Birthdays

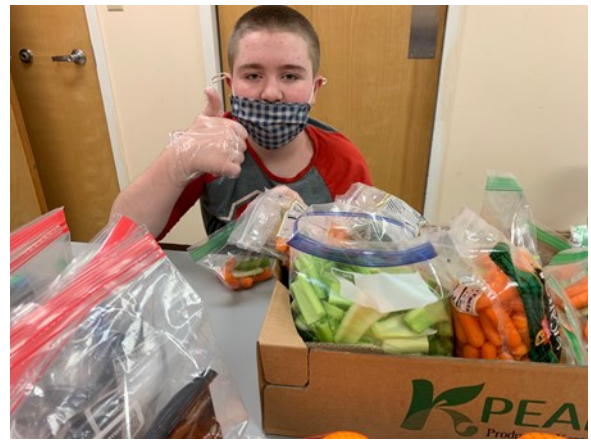
- 1 *Arul Dugginpudi*
Evan Gumbs
4 *Anthony Harland*
6 *Desdimona Christian*
10 *Mya Maggiore*
13 *Joseph Bonner*
14 *Thomas Duggimpudi*
15 *Jake Engel*
17 *Johnathan Paul*
18 *Fletcher Bennett*
19 *Aaron Christie*
20 *Mary Jane Manglapus*
22 *Rajiv Dialle*
23 *Chris Greve*
Fran Livecchia
Sharonda Meade
Shirley Shaffer
25 *Kalindu DeAlwis*
28 *Sanjay Christie*
Jonathan Lettieri
29 *Melissa Owsiany*
30 *Jeff Rowland*

May Anniversaries

- 7 *Mukesh&Sangita Christian*
12 *Tim&Elaine Lindner*
17 *Jeff&Karen Rowland*
24 *Tony&Cindy Bonito*
Elton&Michele Nyema
27 *Dave&Lisa Chesney*



FOOD MINISTRY NEWS: YOUTH AND YOUNG ADULTS IN MOTION!



Declan and Heavenly Hosts packing lunches featuring his award winning Garlic Dip.



Garlic Dip
by
Declan O'Rourke



Heavenly Host Lunch

United Methodist Women

We have all missed our special gatherings that we have celebrated together for so many years. We hope (and are planning) a meeting for May.

On May 12th at 6:30pm, we will have a brief business meeting and then just enjoy a social evening together. Our last UMW meeting was St. Patrick's Day 2020 (hard to believe).

Please watch for any updates or changes if we must make adjustments.

Sincerely,

Dianne Petersen
UMW President

I would like to thank you all for your prayers during Howard's kidney transplant and recovery. He is doing well now.

A huge thanks to Anita Davis for filling in for me and being a good sport when I extended my leave beyond the original month I had planned. Thanks, also, to Rev. Chuck and SPRC for allowing me to spend the time I needed to attend to Howard.

Peace and love,

Trish



The Finance Committee is continuing to provide financial information. The following provides the income and expenses as of February 2021. 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		
	2021	
	February	Year to Date
Income	\$14,609.53	\$31,523.99
Expenses	\$25,460.39	\$55,730.83
Difference	(\$10,850.86)	\$(24,206.84)

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

Memorize Bible verses from the letters of your name. This month we'll go from A-M, and finish up with N-Z in June. If you find others you like better, more power to you!

As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than your ways and my thoughts than your thoughts-Isaiah 55:9

Be joyful always; pray continually; give thanks in all circumstances, for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus-1 Thessalonians 5:16-18

Call to me and I will answer you and tell you great and unsearchable things you do not know-Jeremiah 33:3

Delight yourself in the Lord and He will give you the desires of your heart-Psalm 37:4

The Earth is the Lord's, and everything in it, the world, and all who live in it-Psalm 24:1

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have eternal life-John 3:16

God is our refuge and strength, an ever present help in trouble-Psalm 46:1

How great is the love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God!-1John 3:1

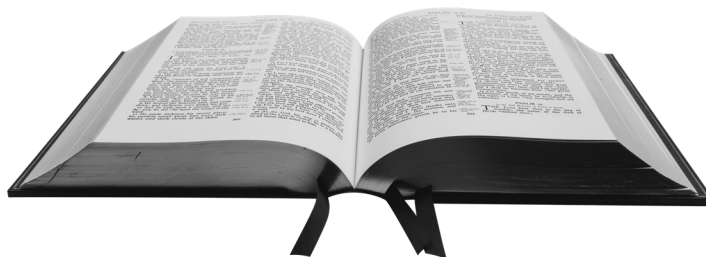
I can do everything through Him who gives me strength-Philippians 4:13

Jesus Christ is the same yesterday and today and forever-Hebrews 13:8

Know that the Lord is God; it is He who made us, and we are His-Psalm 100:3

Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength-Mark 12:30

Many, O Lord my God, are the wonders you have done-Psalm 40:5



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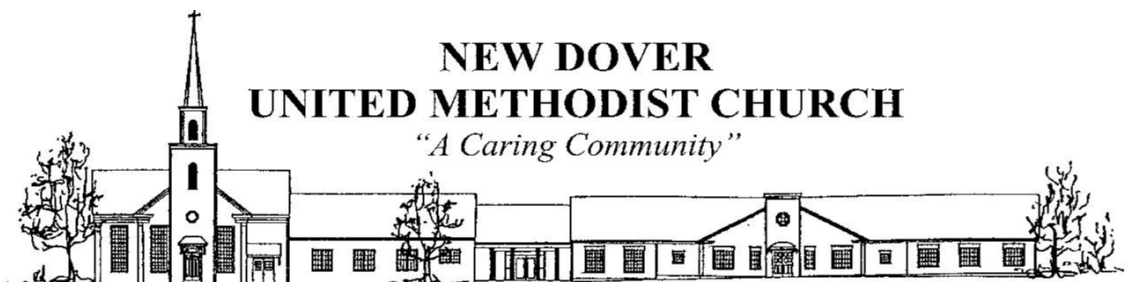
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NEW DOVER UNITED METHODIST HERALD

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Dear Friends, This has been a strange time for all of us. We are concerned about each other's health and well being. It means rethinking traditions that we have for the holidays. Unfortunately, we cannot have our usual lily sale for the Easter season. However it is an opportunity to rethink how we celebrate and remember our loved ones this season. We have set up a way for you to donate to one of several missions that we support here at New Dover and dedicate the donation. Please see the form.

Thank you and God Bless you this Easter season!

Lisa Gilmore



Easter Lilies & Memorials

In light of our situation with COVID 19. We are asking that instead of purchasing a lily plant this holiday season that a donation be made to either the Memorial Fund, the Endowment Fund, Miracles and More or the Food Ministry. You may choose your amount or make your gift the same amount as a lily (\$8) with a dedication. Please fill in the form and drop off at the office or mail it to New Dover.

Order deadline: March 21, 2021

Please make checks payable to New Dover UMC

Total Amount: \$ _____

Memorial Fund: \$ _____ Endowment Fund: \$ _____ Food Bank:
\$ _____
Miracles and More: \$ _____

Please print all information below

In Honor of:

In Memory of:

Given by:
