



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

June 2021

Vol. 179

A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church

CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

Grace to you, peace...

Have you ever met up with a long-time friend you haven't seen in a while? Maybe a year or two? Maybe ten?! You hear they're in town, you call and agree to meet at your old favorite restaurant that evening. You wonder what it's going to be like after being so long apart. So much has happened over the years! How much will have changed between the two of you? *"Will we still be as good together as we always were?"* And so you arrive, park your car, hesitate for a moment at the door, open it and walk in. And before you can say a word they rush up to greet you, you give each other a big sustained hug, sit down at a table and start talking, and....it's like you've never been apart! Yeah, you get the feeling you're picking up the conversation right where you left it off all those years ago. And that's when you know that you two have always been, and forever will be, life-long friends.



I was thinking along those lines when wondering what's it going to be like coming back to weekly worship in the sanctuary once the danger of COVID19 has passed and our lives get *"back to normal."* It's been almost a year and a half since we first heard the ominous warnings and our lives adapted to the measures put in place for our health and safety. We've had to live according to different daily timetables, we've reconfigured our priorities, changed how we dress, work, attend school, schedule doctor and dental appointments, plan family functions, celebrate holidays, and take vacations.

Been thinking about church a lot lately given that the numbers in the US have been steadily heading down once the vaccinations became available. We've all been through a life-storm-of-the-century event; some of us had it worse than others; many having lost dear family members, loved ones, friends, colleagues, co-workers, and neighbors. But at long last, while we still need to remain vigilant and responsible, it appears as though we have finally rounded the corner. And so we wonder- what's next? What will it be like on Sunday mornings to be back in the pews, the lectern, and pulpit after living through such trauma?

I recalled a time in my life when, after being absent for a period of time, I had to "get back up on the horse" as they say. In July of 2012, after 14 years teaching, coaching, and serving as chaplain at The Pennington School, I returned to pastoral ministry at Totowa United Methodist Church. It was a bit bizarre for the first week or two, knocking the proverbial rust off, getting to know the congregation, and reacquainting myself with colleagues in ministry. But with God's help after a month or so it was like I had never been away, in fact in many ways it was better, because in that time away from the pastorate I had become a far better teacher, picking up skills that I didn't have beforehand such as how to teach using PowerPoint, and I also discovered new ways to organize and implement effective community service.

I'm hoping that's what it will be like for each of us, who call ourselves New Dover United Methodist Church, in the weeks and months ahead. We too have improved on or picked up some new skills since the pandemic began that will only serve to make us a stronger church. For instance, we are so much better at getting our message out over the Internet, broadcasting on three different platforms! We have increased participation in our outreach ministry ten-fold! And we have demonstrated that a church of modest size can make a HUGE difference in the lives of our hungry neighbors!

It's been great seeing so many of you back at worship in the sanctuary on Saturday nights, and in the front parking lot on Sunday mornings (and yes, we had an unplanned rain-induced stampede into the sanctuary on May 2nd!), but won't it be amazing once we are back worshipping weekly inside, with fellowship (and coffee!!!) after the service, and seeing all those smiles and hearing all that laughter?

It will be like two old friends meeting up after so much time away and realizing they never missed a beat!

Keep on keeping the faith,

Rev Chuck



KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Boyce Family
Manny & Nora De La Paz
John Resch
Service men & women
Veterans
Homeless, unemployed
& uninsured
All affected by Covid-19 and
their families

All Elderly of NDUMC
The People of India
Karoline Tuason & Ryan
Margaca
Benjamin Pino & Family
Family of Helen Polese
Ajith & Sandra De Alwis
Bob Maimoni

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

Do More

John H. Rhoades

*Do more than exist, live.
Do more than touch, feel
Do more than look, observe
Do more than read, absorb
Do more than hear, listen
Do more than listen,
understand.*

In This Issue:

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SERMON OF THE MONTH

“Jesus and Cancel Culture”

(Preached Sunday, April 25, 2021)

II Corinthians 2:5-11

But if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but to some extent—not to exaggerate it—to all of you. This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person; so now instead you should forgive and console him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I urge you to reaffirm your love for him. I wrote for this reason: to test you and to know whether you are obedient in everything. Anyone whom you forgive, I also forgive. What I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, has been for your sake in the presence of Christ. And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.

Question- have we become a society in which the capacity to forgive one another has become an impossibility?

2,500 years ago in ancient Athens, Greece, there was a procedure under in which any citizen could be expelled from the city. It was called *ostraka*, the word for the broken pottery shards that were used as voting tokens. Here’s how it worked: citizens would give the names of those they wish ostracized to a scribe who would then scratch the names on the shards and deposit them in an urn. Officials would then dump them out and sort the names into separate piles. The person whose pile contained the most *ostraka* would then be banished from town for ten years. How serious were they about it? Well, the ostracized person had just ten days to get their lives in order and leave the city. And by the way, if they attempted to return before the ten years was up the penalty was death!

Today, the word "ostracize" is one of several terms used when someone is expelled from a group, organization, or society. Other words for such an action include excommunication, exile, and the latest making the rounds- “canceled.” These days we don’t say a person we wish to dissociate from is ostracized; we say they are cancelled. And because of its current widespread use, such a prevailing attitude has been given its own category- “Cancel Culture.”

Cancel Culture is the 2021 equivalent of the ancient Greek practice of ostracism. In fact Wikipedia defines “Cancel Culture” as “*a modern form of ostracism in which someone is thrust out of social or professional circles – whether it be on social media or in person.*” Morning Consult defines Cancel Culture as “*the practice of withdrawing support for (or canceling) public figures and companies after they have done or said something considered objectionable or offensive.*” While the Greeks physically barred an ostracized individual from remaining in town, cancel culture removes the cancelled individual from... well...culture! A person who’s been effectively “cancelled” is often be fired from his or her job, and once fired will find it hard to work anywhere.

Although the term began on the liberal side of the political spectrum to ostracize persons who may have, at one time or another in their lives, spoke out against progressive causes, it has since been appropriated by the right as well. A liberal politician who supported a Trump appointee might be cancelled by the left. A conservative who voted for Trump’s impeachment could be cancelled by the right. In other words, cancel culture now exists throughout the political spectrum, just depends if one is cancelled from MSNBC or Fox News!

But it’s not always about politics. We can all understand why someone who’s shown to be part of a racist organization or a perpetrator of sexual assault, pedophilia, or murder, etc., would be

“cancelled,” but then it gets a little more subjective. You might be “cancelled” because of something prejudice or off-color that you posted online when you were a teenager. Or someone found a photo of you from 1986 in front of a pick-up flying a Confederate flag and you weren’t ripping it down. Or maybe you dated someone from the “wrong side” of the political spectrum. Or maybe it’s just because someone, for whatever reason, really doesn’t like you and they start digging around until they find some dirt to throw your way. How many of us have never done something we are ashamed of now? I don’t know about you, but people my age are sure happy that no one had cell phones when we were in college- right buddies?! John writes *“If we say we have no sin we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us.”* And when Jesus confronted the mob about to cancel a prostitute he challenged them saying *“He who is without sin, cast the first stone.”* Point is, no one is immune. I don’t usually quote religion critic, Bill Maher, but he recently warned us: *“...cancel culture is real. It’s insane. And it’s growing exponentially. And it’s coming to a neighborhood near you.”*

A question we ought to be asking ourselves is this: ***what does Jesus think of cancel culture?*** Correspondingly, where should we, his disciples, stand on the issue? So let’s head to the pages of scripture to see if we can find anything there that might enlighten us a bit! The New Testament lesson from II Corinthians, details the fall-out when Paul ran head-on into what amounted to 1st century cancel culture. Let’s see how he handled it...

The city of Corinth is located about 60 miles due west from Athens across the Saronic Gulf. Paul, along with Silvanus and Timothy had established the church there around the year 50. Like almost all of the early churches in the Mediterranean world the Corinthian church had its issues. Paul was one of many missionaries who were doing their best to bring the Gospel of Jesus Christ to the world outside Palestine. This passage addresses a particular person, not named, who, after Paul left town, had attempted to rally the church against Paul and his teaching, although we don’t know exactly what the issue was. Paul, his interpretation of the Gospel challenged, in a letter had expressed his disappointment and displeasure with the person. The church sided with Paul. A majority of the congregation initiated a severe penalty against the offender arguing that such a blatant act of rebellion called for extreme measures. The Greek practice of ostracism was no doubt a possibility. In other words, the man who had dared take on Paul could very well have been cancelled by the church! How would Paul handle this?

First off Paul makes it clear that he himself was not hurt by the offender’s actions, rather his chief concern was the welfare of the church: ***“But if anyone has caused pain, he has caused it not to me, but to some extent—not to exaggerate it—to all of you.”*** Any reading of Paul reveals that his concern for the health of church always far exceeded any personal affront he may receive. Paul, concerned as to whether the actions of his adversary had done real damage to the church, was satisfied that they had not, so Paul moved on to how to proceed from there.

It’s clear from the passage that the church’s disciplinary actions had the desired effect; they had led the rebellious person to feel sorry and repent for what he had done. So what’s next? At this point Paul addresses two questions. First of all, should the congregation allow the repentant sinner back into the fold, or should he be forbidden to reenter the Corinthian church? Second, whatever their decision, how will it effect the church itself? In other words, would Paul, who always held the welfare of the church first and foremost, believe it would be wiser to keep the troublemaker out, or would he recommend they let him back in?

What Paul writes next answers that question and leaves little room for doubt: ***“This punishment by the majority is enough for such a person; so now instead you should forgive and console him, so that he may not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. So I urge you to reaffirm your love for him.”***

Paul had heard from his colleague Titus that the offender was truly and deeply grieved at what his actions had done, and was a danger of falling into complete despair. Paul, following lock-step with the ethical teaching of Jesus, saw such an outcome as unacceptable for any believer, and so he offered the only proper Christian response- not ostracizing, not cancelling the offender, but following

one of the parables of Jesus to the letter he recommended they welcome “the prodigal” back with forgiveness and encouragement! Not only was this the merciful thing to do for the repentant sinner, but it was also the right thing to do for the church! Paul recognized the real enemy here, the most dangerous adversary of the Gospel, and it wasn’t the man who offended him. Listen- **“And we do this so that we may not be outwitted by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his designs.”**

You see what’s happening here? Paul is way more worried about Satan getting a foothold in the faith community than the actions of the rebellious parishioner! Paul knew that any church unwilling to forgive someone not only falls completely out of step with Jesus teaching, but will destroy itself by falling for Satan’s call for vengeance! And what is true for a church is also true for any believer: someone who is unwilling to welcome back into the fold another human being who has asked for forgiveness is hurting him or herself far worse than the one they fail to forgive!

What this lesson from 2,000 years ago is saying to us in 2021 is clear. ***Cancel culture has no place in the Christian Church***, and by extension, it has no place in our society either! Because Saints, if we devolve into a society where it’s impossible to forgive one another, than, just as Paul feared in Corinth, Satan is winning. **It’s time for us to cancel “cancel culture!”** So let’s once again take up the cross of Christ and lead, not with judgment, but with forgiveness. Not with fear but with faith. Saints, if we err, let us always err on the side of compassion!

United Methodist Women

Our next UMW meeting will be held Wednesday, June 9th, 2021 at 6:30pm. We are planning to have our usual “Pot Luck” dinner. Please bring your favorite dish to share.

We will begin with a meeting discussing new/old Mission projects for 2021/2022 and planning new and exciting programs for our Fall/Winter season.

Hope to see you all there. Any questions, please call Dianne or Peggy.

Sincerely,

Dianne Petersen
UMW President
732-381-8688



UNITED
METHODIST
WOMEN

Faith • Hope • Love in Action



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

June Birthdays

- 1 *Lauren De Zaio*
Amy Silva
- 2 *Sunhee Yoon*
- 6 *Evan Gilmore*
- 7 *Marilou Lelina*
- 8 *Xander Christian*
Pramila Ponugubaty
- 9 *Jelovus Jeevaraj*
- 10 *Rosalina Allarey*
Peggy Silva
- 13 *Jaffy Jeevaraj*
- 15 *Meghan Vilela*
- 16 *Andrew Hunt*
Danielle Mizak
- 18 *Daniel Gray*
- 20 *Stefanie Ladym*
- 21 *Charles Bennett*
- 22 *Jayne Bonner*
- 23 *Marilynnne Romeo*
- 25 *Caroline Christian*
Zill Christian
- 27 *Maureen Sanders*
- 28 *Lina Christian*
- 30 *Alice Bennett*
Samuel Del La Paz

June Anniversaries

- 2 *Thomas & Sunitha*
Duggimpudi
- Charles & Janet Greve*
- 5 *Daniel & Sharon Gray*
- 25 *Kevin & Paulette Harland*





COMMUNITY BAG PROGRAM

We will receive a \$1 donation for every reusable \$2.50 Community Bag sold during our selected month at our selected Stop & Shop location.

Benefiting Organization:

New Dover UMC

Selected Month:

June

Selected Stop & Shop:

1083 Inman Ave.
Edison, NJ



BLOOMIN' 4 GOOD PROGRAM

Fight Hunger With Us!

BENEFITING HUNGER ORGANIZATION:

New Dover UMC



Every \$9.99 Bloomin' 4 Good Bouquet sold at our Stop & Shop store this month will send us a **\$1 donation!**

Our Stop & Shop Location & Month:

1049 US Highway 1 South, Edison, NJ
June

Learn more about the Bloomin' 4 Good Program at stopandshop.bloomin4good.com.

People Who Work Behind the Scenes

There are so many tasks that need to be accomplished in order to keep our church open for the ministries that fulfill God’s Work. It is to that end that we ask you to pray for and acknowledge these “behind the scenes” workers.

These are the people who keep our church clean and sanitized, schedule repairs and inspections, count and account for our donations, schedule volunteers for various activities, are responsible for the care and beauty of our altar and sanctuary, set up and breakdown worship services and other church related activities, repair items around the building, and oversee the day- to- day function of our church. Many of these people are those who have accepted leadership on our Church Council, Trustees and the many other committees. They share their gifts in “invisible ways”!

During this journey of the COVID pandemic, we have learned to value essential workers. Let us remember to value and pray for the essential workers here at New Dover. Let us not take them for granted!

Consider becoming a part of the essential workers at New Dover. Reach out to us and we will joyfully find a rewarding opportunity for you!

Karen Rowland, Chairperson of Worship
 Jeff Rowland, Trustee President

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	
	March	Year to Date
Income	\$ 29,920.76	\$ 54,772.54
Expenses	\$ 22,915.72	78,646.55
Difference	\$ 6,005.04	\$ (18,201.80)

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

This month we continue with our Scriptures by the alphabet. If you have others that you feel more connected with, please substitute.

Now you are the body of Christ, and each one of you is a part of it-1 Corinthians 12:27

Obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right-Ephesians 6:1

Praise the Lord, O my soul; all my inmost being, praise his holy name-Psalm 103:1

Starting a **Q**uarrel is like breaching a dam; so drop the matter before a dispute breaks out-Proverbs 17:14

In **R**epentance and rest is your salvation, in quietness and trust is your strength-Isaiah 30:15

Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved-Acts 4:12

Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding-Proverbs 3:5

Give me **U**nderstanding, and I will keep your law and obey it with all my heart-Psalm 119:34

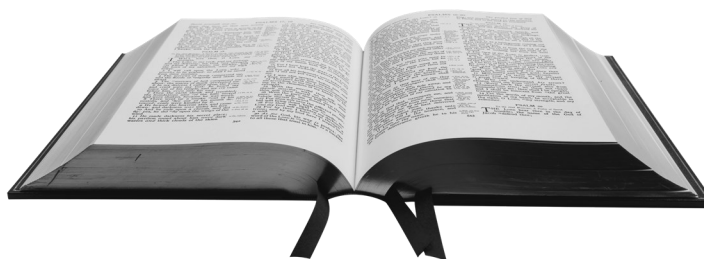
I am the **V**ine; you are the branches. If a man remains in me and I in him, he will bear much fruit-John 15:5

With God all things are possible-Matthew 19:26

Don't let anyone look down on you because you are young, but set an e**X**ample for the believers in speech, in life, in love, in faith and in purity-1 Timothy 4:12

You will seek me and find me when you seek me with all your heart- Jeremiah 29:13

Never be lacking in **Z**eal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord-Romans 12:11



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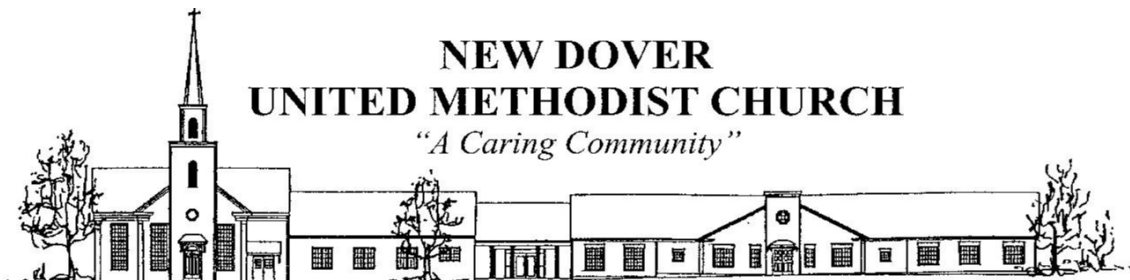
Church Office 732-381-9478

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E-mail : admin@newdoverumc.org

**NEW DOVER
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**

"A Caring Community"



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:
