

NEW DOVER HERALD

July/August 2018

Holiness unto the Lord

Vol. 147

Highlights

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“Summertime
is always the best
of what might be.”

—CHARLES BOWDEN



CHUCK'S CHURCH

Said Tweedledum & Tweedledee...

*The time has come,' the Walrus said,
To talk of many things:
Of shoes — and ships — and sealing-wax —
Of cabbages — and kings —
And why the sea is boiling hot —
And whether pigs have wings.'*

-Lewis Carroll

Saints,

Grace to you and peace...

The time has indeed come! And while the question of whether pigs have wings may not be pertinent, ramping up *every* aspect of our ministry certainly is! And *ramping up* is what this “Chat” is all about.

The end of June will mark two years of our journey together and we have much to celebrate and a lot to be thankful for. But rather than looking back I want to use this edition of the Chat to focus on the future of NDUMC.

As I've alluded to several times in worship, I believe the year ahead will prove to be a pivotal one in our church's history. We live in a turbulent era that is truly a two-edged sword. On one hand the world has grown increasingly over-crowded, confusing, and potentially dangerous. War, poverty, technology, corporate greed, pollution, and climate change have led to increased tension and unrest. Throw in a global refugee crisis that far exceeds anything yet seen and you have the makings of tumultuous times. Politicians, preachers, and pundits get elected and/or rich feeding off the fears such conditions tend to produce. It tempts us to get downright depressed and pessimistic does it not?

But check it out- I believe we are actually *blessed* to live in a world crying out for a word of hope because this is where we come in New Dover! As Jesus taught in Mark's Gospel: “*Those who are well have no need of a physician, but rather those who are sick.*” Well, you don't have to be Dr. Phil to notice that there are an awful of hurting people out there, and so if we are to follow Jesus' example and rise to

the challenge we need to ramp up our ministry! And I am pleased to inform you that the process has already begun!

Here are a few highlights...

- ⇒ This year's Vacation Bible School, starting July 16th, looks like it will be the biggest and best in many years! The crew has already been putting together scenery and props. Make sure you let the kids in your neighborhood know!
- ⇒ Our Nominating Committee has also been hard at work identifying the various gifts within our congregation and seeking to increase the level of involvement in our various committees, boards, and fellowships.
- ⇒ We have hired Chris Stanley of Princeton Theological Seminary to be our new student pastor, starting July 1st. Chris is a thoughtful, dynamic, young minister having already served a year as co-pastor in Neshanic UMC. Besides leading our UMYF, Chris will be involved in all aspects of ministry. I look forward to working with him!
- ⇒ Our Social Justice Task Force will be highlighting a different justice-related ministry each month starting in September, all leading up to a **HUGE** event on March 16, 2019, when we will come together to address world hunger, bagging (at least) 30,000 meals right here in NDUMC! Whoa!
- ⇒ Speaking of meals, our Jehovah Jirah Garden has been plowed and planted! Along with our food closet, it helps us address local needs.
- ⇒ We are in the process of upgrading our worship experience across the board, musically, visually, and liturgically. If you've rejoiced in our services up to now you ain't seen nothin' yet!
- ⇒ And we have rejuvenated our Stewardship Committee to help us meet the financial challenges of our growing ministry. Among the big actions coming up are a Capital Campaign to paint our sanctuary and refurbish our badly-in-need infrastructure!
- ⇒ And on and on and on!

Yes Saints, the challenges before us are daunting, but they don't compare to the power our faith provides to go forth as Jesus instructed and build up the Kingdom of God. Remember, we're on the winning side are we not? You're darn right we are!

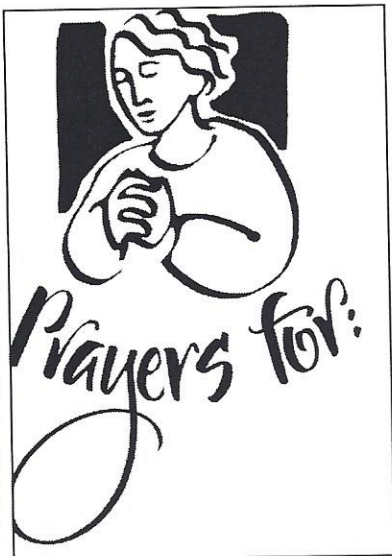
And so, with apologies to Lewis Carroll I close by paraphrasing Tweedledee and Tweedledum.

*The time has come, ' the Savior said,
To talk of many things:
Of worship —outreach — social justice —
VBS — and nurture
And hey- New Dover's ramping up —
And yeah, we'll get our wings.'*

Peace,

Chuck

KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Bob Meckler & Family
Manny DeLaPaz & Family
Spencer Kolb
Christine Rowland
Eric Myers
Nayan Vyas & Family
Robert Rozmus
Christine & Judy Tymitz
America

Christians of India
Marion Jones
LuLu Kamenas
Doug Sargent
Carol Mota
NDUMC Missionaries
Preston Family
Boyce Family
Jeff & Karen Rowland

Protection of the Unborn
Our Schools
Robyn & Carolyn DeCicco
Mike & Barbara Sucheski
All suffering with
Additions
Convalescent Homes
All Servicemen and
women

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.

To activate the prayer chain contact Nancy Preston @732-381-1205
or Anita Davis @732-815-0597

SAVE THE DATES

July 9-16	Vacation Bible School
Sept. 9	Church Picnic @ Merrill Park
Sept 28-30	Ignite
Nov 17	Church Conference

A simple line drawing of a smiling sun with rays. Below the sun is a rectangular sign with a drop shadow. The sign contains the text "SUMMER SCHEDULE" in large, bold, block letters, and "Worship 9:30 am" in a slightly smaller font below it.

SUMMER
SCHEDULE
Worship 9:30 am



SERMON OF THE MONTH

“How Best to Remember?”

Sermon preached May 27, 2018

Proverbs 10:6-7; James 2:14-17

When I was growing up Memorial Day was called Decoration Day by my grandparents, uncles and aunts. While the practice of decorating soldiers' graves with flowers is an ancient custom going back thousands of years, in the United States this particular holiday began during and just after the Civil War. On a designated day of the year, communities or groups within the community, would gather at cemeteries to decorate the graves of soldiers who had fallen as a way to remember their lives and offer gratitude for their sacrifice.

My fondest memory of Memorial Day took place in 1993. My paternal Grandfather, Harry Mansfield Coblenz, was asked to be the grand marshal of the parade through downtown Clayton, New Jersey. Grandpop was 96 at the time and the area's last surviving World War One veteran. He served as a boiler mechanic on the biggest ship in the world, the SS Leviathan, and altogether made 13 round trips across the Atlantic, transporting close to 120,000 men to the European front, a figure far greater than any other ship in history. He was always very proud of his service. The parade organizers sat him in the passenger seat of a convertible limo and my Dad, big VHS video camera in hand, found a good spot along the parade route to watch Grandpop go by. Now at that stage in his life Grandpop's short term memory was pretty shaky, so I was worried that he might forget where he was, and why he was there, but my Dad told me not to worry; *“Pop always rises to the occasion,”* he told me. I'll never forget seeing his car approaching and as he passed we shouted and waved and Grandpop, wearing his VFW cap, smiled broadly, waved back, and shouted, *“Happy Days!”* It was obviously he was having a ball!

As with nearly every Memorial Day parade, this one finished up at the cemetery in town with newly planted flags adorning the graves of the veterans. The local dignitaries took their seats behind a lectern, set up with a microphone and loudspeakers. One by one they approached the mike and addressed the crowd of about 500, basically mailing in their brief addresses. It was obvious that none of them had spent much time or energy composing an actual speech which, given the auspicious nature of the holiday, was in my opinion disrespectful to the men and women we were honoring.

As the service was drawing to a close, one of the dignitaries, an older man, who understood the solemnity of the day, stood up and thanked everyone for coming by to honor the fallen heroes. He then turned and introduced my Grandfather. He said that Harry Coblenz was more than a veteran of World War I; he was a former freeholder of Gloucester County, and a long-standing pillar in the community. He then he asked Grandpop to stand up and take a bow.

Well, Grandpop did more than that- he stood and next thing you know he started walking toward the lectern. The man asked him, *“Harry, would you like to say a few words?”* Grandpop nodded, and the crowd politely clapped; they had heard enough speeches and were ready to get to their picnics. And the vast majority of them were too young to remember my Grandmom and Grandpop's dance hall- *“The Dry Dock,”* that in the 1930s and 40s *the* hangout for teenagers along Delsea Drive. *“Uh-oh,”* I said to my Dad, *“is Grandpop going to speak? I'm pretty sure he doesn't even remember what day it is.”* *“Don't worry about him,”* my Dad replied. *“He'll do just fine.”* And he focused the video camera on the podium. Despite Dad's assurances, I was nervous; I didn't want the old vet to embarrass himself.

Well, Grandpop put his hands on the side of the podium, looked out over the crowd, sized it up, and without any hesitation, gave the greatest 30 second speech I have ever heard in my life! It went something like this: *“I just want to say that it's great to see you all! I don't recognize every face in the crowd but I just want to tell you that I consider you all my friends and it's an honor to be here on this beautiful day.”* He then raised his hand from the podium, made a fist, punched the air and shouted, *“And I just want to tell you, it's great to be alive!”*

The crowd erupted in wild sustained applause as he turned and made his way back to his seat. In 30 seconds he had blown away every other speaker that morning and won the hearts of everyone standing before him. I don't think I was ever prouder in my life than I was in that moment. Wiping my eyes I nudged Dad with my elbow and said, *“Well, you were right! He certainly rose to the occasion.”*

Later when we got him into our car and headed back down Main Street, the balloons and streamers now lying on the sidewalks or blowing down the street, Grandpop looked out and asked, *“What was this some kind of parade or something?”* My Dad just smiled. *“Yeah Pop,”* he said, *“it was some parade!”* About a year later Grandpop died peacefully in his sleep, a month shy of his 98th birthday, and if you could sum up his life in one phrase it would be just that: *“It was some parade!”*

He's always the first person I think of when I wake up on Memorial Day. The brash young man from North

Philly, nicknamed “Handsome Harry,” who came to Hoboken in 1917 seeking adventure, joining the Navy, and making those thirteen round trips through U-Boat infested waters on the greatest ship of the sea. The 21 year old Navy mechanic toiling away on the 46 boilers that propelled mighty Leviathan over the Atlantic time and again, carrying tens of thousands of troops, as well as great men like General Black Jack Pershing, Commander in Chief of the UDS Expeditionary Forces, Franklin Delano Roosevelt, then Secretary of the Navy, as well as the Prince of Wales, future King of England. Grandpop always was and always will be my hero, and it’s my hope that sharing a story about my Grandfather this Memorial Day weekend inspires each one of you to recollect loved ones who served our country and have since passed on, leaving behind a boatload of memories and familial pride. This year we of New Dover have lost some remarkable veterans- Joe Aiello, Carl Livecchia and Wally Curtis, all of whom were also so proud of their service to our country.

Proverbs 10:7 teaches us that, *“The memory of the righteous is a blessing...”* And that is never more evident than on Memorial Day, because it’s so easy to forget the character and the passion and sacrifices made by our patriotic predecessors that enabled this nation, its ideals, and principles to endure. Far beyond the parades and picnics, it is their memory that gives meaning to this holiday. But then the question arises, *“How should we remember them?”* As Christians, is it enough to decorate their graves and throw a parade, or is there more we can do to honor their memory? Something concrete? Something transformative?

You know, memories are a lot like love in a way. Just like love is way more than saying *“I love you,”* memories are a lot more than saying, *“I remember you.”* Just as true love is made known in our actions, so to the only way we truly honor the memory of a fallen hero is through our actions. In that way, honoring their memory is a demonstration of our faith, and we know that faith is lot more than saying, *“I believe.”* You’re all familiar with our New Testament lesson from the Book of James that states, *“What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if you say you have faith but do not have works? Can faith save you? If a brother or sister is naked and lacks daily food, and one of you says to them, ‘Go in peace; keep warm and eat your fill’, and yet you do not supply their bodily needs, what is the good of that? So faith by itself, if it has no works, is dead.”*

I would argue that remembrance alone is just as dead. Unless our memory of loved ones spurs us to action in the present world, then we in fact dishonor those who gave so much that our nation and our ideals might endure. But what can we do that would give iron to our memories this Memorial Day? What can we do that would specifically honor all of our veterans, the dead and the living, from the Revolutionary War fought across New Jersey, to the conflict still being waged in the mountains of Afghanistan? We give thanks to them for their service, but what would inspire them to thank *us* for ours? Well, there is something we *can* do. For that let’s turn back to the pages of the Bible.

There are two incidents in the gospels that jump to mind involving Jesus and soldiers. They are both stories of healing. You may recall the time when a Roman centurion approached Jesus and requested that he heal his servant. Jesus said he’d come right over but the centurion said, *“Lord, I am not worthy that you should come under my roof. But only speak a word, and my servant will be healed. For I also am a man under authority, having soldiers under me. And I say to this one, ‘Go,’ and he goes; and to another, ‘Come,’ and he comes; and to my servant, ‘Do this,’ and he does it.”* Impressed, Jesus replied, *“I have not found such great faith, not even in Israel! Go your way; and as you have believed, so let it be done for you.”* And the servant was immediately healed.

Another incident occurred in the Garden of Gethsemane. The Temple guards were led by Judas to arrest Jesus and while they were in the process Peter drew a sword and cut off the ear of Malchus, the servant of Caiaphas. But Jesus, castigating Peter, said, *“No more of this!”* He touched Malchus’ ear and healed the servant soldier.

We the church, the Body of Christ on earth, have an opportunity to bring about healing on our own and at the same time truly honor the memory of those we remember this Memorial Day. You have probably heard by now of the conditions at many of our VA hospitals, with returning soldiers sometimes having to wait months to get an appointment, and you’ve heard also about many being over-prescribed with pain-killers and anti-depressants without proper diagnoses. But to those of us who read our history books, this is nothing new. Truth is, when you study the history, for over 200 years, we as a nation have had a woeful track record when it comes to taking care of our soldiers. Oh we cheer them on when they’re fighting, but once they lay down their weapons and return home it’s like we forget what they’ve done. This present crisis is only one in a long line that goes all the way back to 1783, when the Capital in Philadelphia was mobbed by 400 soldiers demanding payment due them for their service in the Revolutionary War. Since that time, in war after war, our returning veterans have had to endure broken promise after broken promise from a nation that claims to *“support our troops.”* If we hear one more politician utter that phrase and then fail to act on it, we ourselves ought to storm the capital! The current crisis is epitomized by the widespread occurrence of post-traumatic stress disorder or PTSD among returning soldiers. It’s been blamed for dozens of shootings and hundreds of suicides over the past ten years, but it’s really nothing new. In World War I it was called “shell shock,” in World War II and the Korean War it was called “battle fatigue,” then it was “post-Vietnam War syndrome” and later “Gulf War syndrome.”

We’ve had well over two hundred years to address the effects of PTSD and if anything, it’s getting worse. Saints, as followers of Jesus we have an obligation to do something whenever a fellow human being is hurting, and so

many of our returning soldiers are hurting big-time. It's not enough to say "*We remember.*" It's not enough to slap on a bumper sticker that reads, "*Support Our Troops.*" Because many of the soldiers and sailors we honor this Memorial Day didn't merely say they would die for our country; they actually died for our country. If we truly want to honor the memory of those who have passed through the hell of battle on to glory, then let this be our legacy- that we were the first generation to actually care enough to do whatever it takes to act as Jesus did and bring healing to those who are hurting so bad. "But what can *we* do?" you ask. More than you might imagine.

We can call, write, email, text, and tweet our president and our congress, and tell them that enough is enough - that 200 plus years of futility needs to come to an end now. If we run a business we can hire a vet or we can encourage others to do so. We can even raise a service dog so that a disabled vet has a companion and helper. And often it's something as simple as spending some time talking to a vet. But the one thing we cannot do is nothing. Doing nothing, as James tells us, means that what faith we have is dead. I don't know about you, but I owe it to my Grandpop to do something. How about you?

To further inspire us, here are the words of one president who I believe, had he lived, would have actually made a difference in the lives of soldiers returning to their homes, traumatized by the horror of America's bloodiest war. The president was Abraham Lincoln, and the words are from his second inaugural address, given just six weeks before his own life was taken from him. Let his words inspire us to make this Memorial Day a memorable one in more ways than one. Lincoln said,

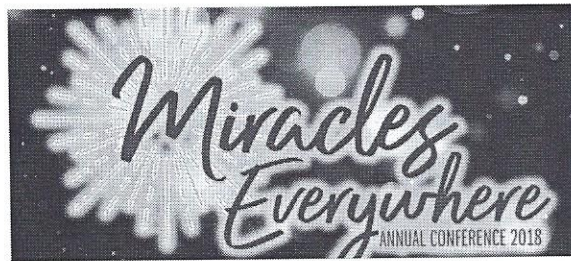
"...let us strive on to finish the work we are in, to bind up the nation's wounds, to care for him who shall have borne the battle and for his widow and his orphan, to do all which may achieve and cherish a just and lasting peace among ourselves and with all nations."

I'll close with a prayer that went out over the loudspeakers of my Grandop's ship at the close of every day at sea:

Lord, save us waking, watch us sleeping that we may wake with Christ and rest in peace.

Visit, we beseech Thee, Lord, our distant homes and families; Thine angels guard them with Thy peace and benediction. Bless this ship we beseech Thee and drive far from it all the snares of the enemy; guide it upon a tranquil course unto the wished-for-haven — guard our Captain, his officers and crew, and the soldier-troops and passengers committed to their care; let Thy holy angels dwell hereon to keep us in peace and let Thy blessings be always upon us. Through Jesus Christ, Thy Son, Our Lord.





Miracles Everywhere

"You are the God who performs miracles, everywhere" - Psalm 77:14

More than 1,400 people attended and six different languages were spoken and sung during the 2018 Greater New Jersey Annual Conference session, the largest attendance in GNJ history. We approved groundbreaking legislation to continue with a lawsuit against the State of New Jersey to desegregate public schools for 271,000 Black and Latino students and approved a budget that will reduce the shared ministry amount we apportion congregations. The Conference also heard that we grew worship attendance in 2017 and several miraculous testimonies of God's wonder-working power through the United Methodists of Greater New Jersey. Miracles are everywhere in and through the ministries of GNJ.

GNJ approved two new partnerships with Tanzania and Puerto Rico Annual Conferences, enacted Leadership 100 in a new strategic plan that will continue us on a path to develop transformational leaders through 2023 and committed to a campaign to raise \$5.2 million for Next Generation, a student ministry seeking to make 2,000 youth and young adult disciples, A Future With Hope to develop 30 Hope Centers in five years and affordable housing, hurricane relief and global mission.

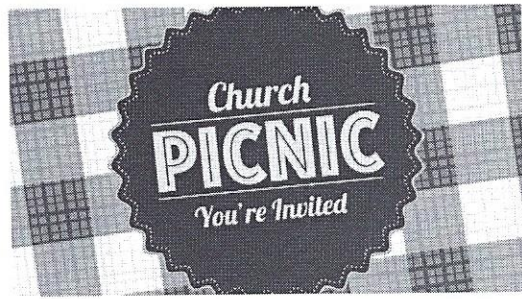
CAPITAL CAMPAIGN

We are going to begin a new Capital Campaign this fall. Our Sanctuary and parts of the Sunday School wing are in need of attention. Our first phase will be repairs and painting of the Sanctuary. Some of the repairs include the insulation duct work to maintain the heating and cooling system. We are also looking at replacement of the window shutters as many of them can no longer be repaired, refreshing the pews by cleaning the seats and the backs that may have pencil marks on them. Repairs to the ceiling and walls need to be taken care of before a beautiful new coat of paint can be applied.

Secondly, our 24 year old Sunday School wing has heating units and hot water heaters that need age related maintenance as soon as possible.

In August, each family will receive a letter with more detailed information of the projects and our Capital Campaign.

In His Service,
The Stewardship Team



Everyone is invited to the Church picnic on September 9 at Merrell Park in Colonia from 12pm-5pm.

Sign up sheet will be posted in August.



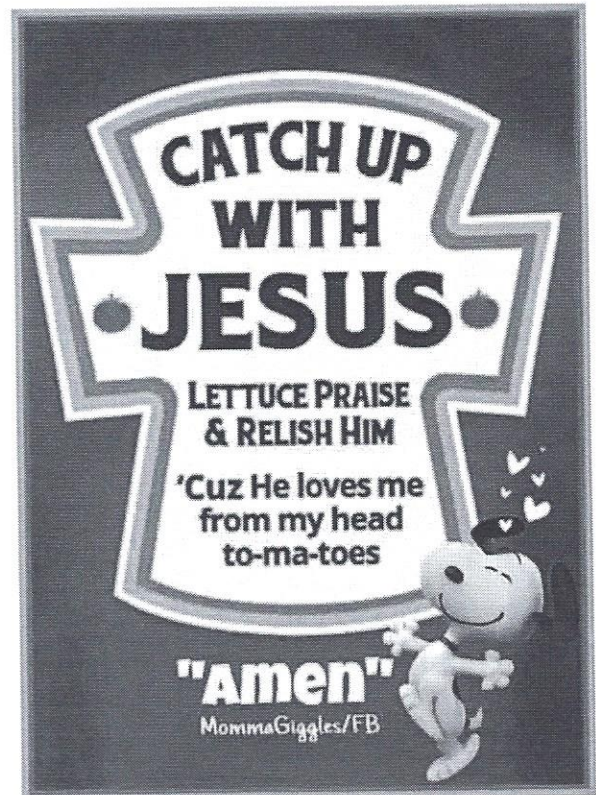
On Saturday, June 9th, New Dover Outreach Committee collected 14 bikes and 3 sewing machines.

Thank you to everyone who supported this project.



VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL
JULY 16 - 20 (9am - 12pm)!

Registration forms can be found outside the church office and online at www.newdoverumc.org!



MEMBERSHIP BLOG

On Sunday May 20, the people of New Dover celebrated Pentecost. More than the usual amount of red was seen in the congregation, and the day was made even more special by the confirmation of two youth into our membership. The anthem was a clarinet-piano duet performed by our music director Grace K. and Jelovus J., played skillfully and with feeling. Our pastor also had his turn, singing "Forever Young" and accompanying himself on the guitar during the offering. The Scriptures for the day were Isaiah 40:27-31 and Mark 10:13-16. Rev Chuck noted that Israel began as a nation with great faith in God's promises, but when that relationship began deteriorating they suffered the consequences of their faltering spirits. As we age, are we feeling that our best years are behind us and our productivity is lost? Do we have church memories of "better times" and feel that the church is declining with no solutions for change? Children see the world with a sense of wonder; everything is new and exciting. As our faith ebbs, so does our spiritual excitement for the future. BUT aging of the spirit is reversible through rediscovering the wonder of God and approaching life as children. Our belief in the eternal God makes US everlasting. We are as young as our faith is strong! The service was followed by a special coffee hour honoring the confirmands; congratulations Aiden O. and Bhaarat J.! May 26-27 was Memorial Day weekend, light in attendance but not in enthusiasm. Saturday evening Rev. spoke of social justice and outreach, reminding us to lift up the oppressed and challenge the oppressors. On Sunday morning the Chancel choir was present to sing "And I Did Nothing" for the anthem and later in the service the congregation joined together to sing "America the Beautiful" with grateful hearts. The Scriptures for the day were Proverbs 10:6-7 and James 2:14-17. Our pastor discussed the need for us to remember those who have served their country, to remember the ideals and principles of those who fought for freedom. What actions can we take to honor their memory and transform us into active disciples? When we see those who are hurting and need help, we need to step forward and begin a legacy of healing.

June services began the weekend of June 2-3 with Communion Sunday. The theme for the day was putting our faith into action, emphasized through liturgy, song and sermon. A larger Chancel Choir sang "How Beautiful" for the anthem. Rev. Chuck and Brian Richards, our conference lay representative, spoke on their experiences at the annual conference. Scriptures, presented as part of the sermon, included Ps. 77:14, Prov. 3:21-23 and Ps. 145:5-6. Rev. and Brian presented information on the issues of NJ school segregation, conference work to rebuild hurricane-damaged homes in NJ and Puerto Rico, elimination of poverty(specifically Rise Against Hunger), and passionate discipleship-turning the focus of churches from inward growth to integrating in and serving their communities. Rev. ended by noting that we are as rowboats lifted on a tide; God's love is lifting all of us at the same time, and together we have great power and strength in Him. Brian had conference materials for viewing following the service. The next Sunday's service included the bell choir and chancel choir performing selections. The Scriptures for the day were Deuteronomy 1:22-33 and Philippians 3:4b-16. Rev. discussed that many are still embroiled in works righteousness OR feel that they are saved and all they have to do is wait for heaven. Yet anything we do to save ourselves is worthless and all righteousness is a gift from God. Let's not be too prideful of our accomplishments, but continue to be led by the Father and press on in His service.

The Sunday School program followed the regular service and included recognition of teachers, students, Superintendent Janice Wilson (stepping down after 5 years of service in the position) and new Superintendent Janet Greve. After the service, the annual Strawberry Festival picnic was held in Fellowship Hall. Thanks to everyone who worked in Sunday School this year as well as those who toiled to make the end of year picnic memorable. And congratulations to our graduates-best wishes!

