



THE NEW DOVER HERALD

September 2023

Vol. 203

*A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church
Celebrating 175 Years 1848-2023*

Honoring the Past, Blessing the Present, Transforming the Future

Chuck's Church Chat

'September Midnight'



*"Lyric night of the lingering Indian Summer,
Shadowy fields that are scentless but full of singing,
Never a bird, but the passionless chant of insects,
Ceaseless, insistent.
The grasshopper's horn, and far-off, high in the maples,
The wheel of a locust leisurely grinding the silence
Under a moon waning and worn, broken,
Tired with summer ..."*

-Sara Teasdale

Saints of New Dover,

Grace to you and peace! Not sure too many of you are "tired with summer" as the good poet Sara Teasdale writes. Be that as may be, ready or not here comes the fall! But hey, before we leave the summer months I have a few of praises to raise!

First of all, what a "Stellar" week of Vacation Bible School this July! Thanks to our co-leaders Rhea and Naomi and an amazing crew of volunteers who, with dedication and imagination, gave our students such a creative way to think about the Creator and all creation! The sanctuary, halls, and classrooms were transformed into a very believable "Spaceship Edison," putting every VBSer into an orbital, zero-gravity reality. Each morning was filled with such a contagious spiritual energy that one couldn't help but be launched into it! To top it off, on the Sunday morning following we had an incredible VBS celebration during worship and a spectacular "Luncheon Under the Stars" potluck that followed! Every year our VBS just gets better and better, and that's no accident given the effort that our Astronauts and Mission Control crew put in!

Second, thanks to all the volunteers who not only kept Bread-Breakers and our Wawa ministry active, they kept it thriving throughout July and August with hundreds of lunches heading out to our neighbors in need every week. Special thanks to everyone who got up early on Friday to sub in for our regulars while they were on vacation!

Finally, thanks to Pastor Rosie and Trish for keeping the New Dover ship afloat while I was out west rafting the Salmon River! Whenever I checked in from Montana I witnessed business as usual at the church and that's mainly because of their faithful dedication and indomitable work ethic!

Okay Saints, it really was quite the summer and now the new season of the church year is upon us, and once again we will be hitting the ground running! Here are just a few things to look forward to as the weeks progress...

On Sunday, September 10, we switch back to our regular 10:15 worship time, plus the Church Picnic and Rally Day for Sunday School follows the service, so gear up for that!

On Wednesday, September 13th at 6 pm, The United Women of Faith will have their annual kick-off dinner at Manny's Diner. All women are invited. Sorry guys!

Pedals for Progress happens on the morning of Saturday, September 16th. Once again this year will need volunteers to help fix up the donated bikes, so if you can pick up a wrench, or fix a flat tire (or want to learn how) come on by!

Sunday School for both Youth and Adults begins at 9:00 am on September 17, so make sure to register your kids so we'll know how many to prepare for. Adults, just drop in!

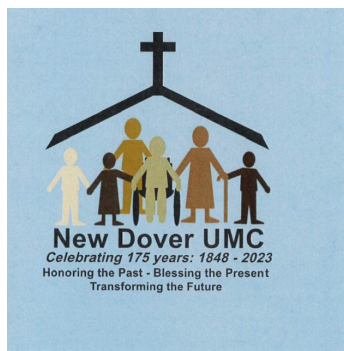
Our new Hot Topics class (and it's going to be hot alright!) is entitled "Mega-churches." The exploration begins the week of September 25th. Live classes on Monday mornings at 10:30, and hybrid (live and Zoom) classes on Thursday evenings at 7:00!

And don't forget, on Sunday, October 8th we will have our gala 175th Anniversary Luncheon at Pines Manor. Tickets (if they're still available by the time you get this) are \$35 for adults, \$20 for youth ages 6-12, and \$15 for children 5 and under.

Finally, I want to close with a word of profound gratitude for Tami Pino and the countless hours she spent in ministry with us here at NDUMC. Besides serving as a Trustee, Tami worked with Bread Breakers, coordinated our Wawa drivers, and made weekly runs herself. She also served as an usher, and Saturday night praise services won't be the same without Tami and Ben. We wish nothing but the best for Tami, Ben, and Alexa now that they have moved back to Seattle. What can be said other than "*Well done, good and faithful servant!*"

And to each one of you,
a most blessed September,

Rev Chuck



T-shirts celebrating our 175th Anniversary are now on sale in Fellowship Hall, on Sunday mornings, through September! Costs are from \$15 - \$20, depending on size. All shirts are light blue and 100% cotton. Cash or check payments are due when ordered. Please see Lisa Chesney or Janice Wilson for additional information.

KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz
Debbie Ladym
Shirley & Lamont Shaffer
Beverly Vollmar
Family of Victor Vilela
Evelyn MacKenzie
Fran Livecchia
Service men & women
Veterans

Homeless, unemployed
& uninsured
The People of Ukraine
The People of Maui
Victims & their Families of
mass shootings
All Elderly of NDUMC

Pray for all those affected by Natural Disasters, those suffering with addictions, those suffering from depression, Victims of terrorism & violence, all national leaders, and all those serving at New Dover UMC.

All doctors, nurses, EMT, teachers, grocery store workers, janitors, and all other frontline workers. Thank you and God Bless.

If you wish to add anyone to the 2023 permanent prayer list, please contact Karen Rowland at krowland648@yahoo.com

FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

PLEASE JOIN US FOR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP EVERY
WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 10 AM

In This Issue:

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**Teach your children to
pray so when their
young hearts are
broken & hurting, they
can go to God instead
of turning to this
world.**

SERMON OF THE MONTH

“Our Journey Back to Eden Begins”

(Preached Sunday, August 13, 2023)

Genesis 12:1-9/Galatians 3:6-9, 15-18

Saints, ultimately the Bible is one long story, with a beginning and an end. Now why do I need to state that? Because, let's face it, most of the time we encounter the Bible one or two scripture passages at a time. That could be on any given Sunday morning, or a Bible Study, or a Sunday School lesson, or when we do our daily devotions. It's a little like being set down randomly on a road that leads from one place to another. Unless we've walked that road from the beginning, and have some sense of where it's heading, all we can know about that road is what we can see from where we are.

That's why whenever we read or hear a scripture passage read, we need to be careful that we are aware it's part of a much bigger story. When a biblical passage is removed from its context, we risk misinterpreting its meaning; sometimes drastically! This long story I'm referring to is the entire biblical narrative from Genesis 1 to Revelation 22; from the seven days of creation all the way to the restoration of paradise, and everything in between! When we lose sight of the whole journey, of where the road begins and where it's heading, we not only stand a good chance of misreading the passage, we also become vulnerable to preachers, teachers, and pundits who either out of pig ignorance or evil intent, pull passages out of context and render utterly false interpretations of where God is actually trying to lead us!

Saints, that's the reason I chose to go back to the basics of the Bible story this summer, particularly the early chapters of Genesis, where the biblical journey begins, in order to understand our human condition as outlined in the primeval history, and to set the stage for all that follows. Over the past four weeks we've covered the dramatic events in Genesis 1-11. We delved into God's first creative act- light breaking upon the darkness, and the role light plays throughout all of scripture. We looked back at the original sin and how all sin reflects this story of "the Fall," when the first humans mentioned in the Bible were deceived into losing faith in God and took matters into their own hands. Next we dove back into Noah's flood, and how chaos reenters both the story of the Bible and the story of our lives whenever sin abounds. And finally, we retold the story of Babel, and how human ambition and pride, in the form of a city with a high tower, led God, for our own good, to scatter its inhabitants to all ends of the earth.

We also discovered that these first chapters in the Bible were all about alienation. How in Genesis 3 humans became alienated from their Creator, and wife from husband. How in Genesis 4, with its story of Cain and Abel, brother was alienated from brother. Next, after the Great Flood, the story of Noah and Ham addresses the alienation of parent from child. And finally, Babel is all about the human race becoming alienated from one another. This alienation is most clearly illustrated in the expulsion of Adam and Eve from Eden, when humans were now forbidden to eat from the Tree of Life.

So that's where the primeval history in Genesis 1-11 leaves us- in a world torn apart at the seams. We are left devastated, wondering how, if ever, we can overcome the alienation that has engulfed all creation. Has God given up on us? we ask. Where is the hope, if any, in what we just read? The only possibility (and let's face it, it really feels like we're grasping at straws) is found back in Genesis 3:15, where God curses the serpent who deceived Eve promising ***“I will put enmity between you and the woman, and between your seed/offspring and hers; he will strike your head, and you will strike his heel.”*** Apparently, God is telling the serpent that the gloves are coming off! That one day, God doesn't say when, this ***“seed,”*** meaning an offspring/descendant of the woman, will one day take the fight to this deceiver of the human race. And even though this offspring of the woman will be severely wounded in the fight, the serpent shall and will be defeated. And so we're left to wonder when that victory will happen and just who that offspring might be?! Anyway, there's nothing more said about it throughout the next few chapters in Genesis.

Little do we know at this point, but the biblical narrative we will one day call the *history of salvation* is about to begin! This story is all about how all the people of the world, alienated from our God and from one another, are given the opportunity to make our way back into a righteous relationship in the arms of a loving God. And what is God's plan to redeem all the people of earth? Will God perform some huge cosmic wonder that all will witness? Maybe blot out the sun for a day, or triple the number of stars in the sky? A megamiracle so blatantly obvious that everyone on earth, immediately upon witnessing the awesome power of our

Creator, realizes their transgressions, repents and turns back to God? End of story! That would considerably shorten the Bible would it not?!

But it turns out that's not God's plan. Not even close! Instead of a pretentious, breathtaking display of cosmic proportions, God chooses instead to initiate a plan that is of a scale as intimate and humble as humble can be. In order to bring redemption to all the people of earth, God chooses to begin, not with cosmic fireworks, but with the earthly journey of one man and one woman.

Near the end of Genesis 11, as we're slogging through what looks like another long and boring genealogy we read: "***When Terah had lived for seventy years, he became the father of Abram, Nahor, and Haran.***" Then in 11:29 we read that this Abram took a wife whose name was Sarai. Those names, Abram and Sarai, have nothing at this point that makes them stand out from all the other names mentioned in the genealogy, do they? Nothing that distinguishes them from all the other ancestors mentioned. But, unbeknownst to us at the time, with this first mention of Abram and Sarai, we find ourselves standing at the starting line of a centuries long journey that will take us through the entire rest of the Bible story! And so it begins...

"Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.' Rather than gloss over this first verse in the story, let's pause and think about what God is asking Abram to do, here. He wants him to leave his home behind. Leave behind the safety, security, and familiarity of what had been his family's homeland for generations and embark on a journey into the unknown. You know, the vast majority of the people on earth, throughout history, never wander very far from their homes (New Dover's congregation excepted!) Not only that, but Abram was 75 years old at the time of God's call! Seems a little late in life to begin such an adventure, don't you think? Saints, it takes both faith and courage to step out of our comfort zones, even when it's God calling on us to do so. But note how Abram responds to God's call- ***"So Abram went, as the Lord had told him..."*** Notice what Abram didn't do- he didn't hesitate, did he? He didn't sit down and weigh the risks or debate the complications. God called, and Abram responded, immediately! At this point we might ask, did Abram even have a choice? And the answer is of course he did! Abram was a human being like every one of us, and God has always allowed us the freedom to choose whether or not to follow his call and commands. With Abram's decisive positive response, it seems God picked the right person to begin the long journey that would ultimately lead us back to Eden. But packing up and heading out of Haran wasn't all God had spoken about to Abram!

God promises that ***"I will make of you a great nation..."*** and by ***"of you"*** God means Abraham's descendants. And though he would have his doubts later on in the Genesis story, here Abram once again didn't question God. But come on now, who could blame him if he did! Not only was he 75 years old, hardly a time to start a family, but Sarai was also in her "golden years," and we were already told in Genesis 11:30 that she was a barren woman, apparently incapable of having children. Nevertheless, Abram and Sarai went along with God's plan, packed up the caravan and headed west.

Now at this point in the story, Abram doesn't even know where this nation God will establish through him and Sarai is even located! It's not until after they had gone many miles that God reveals that bit of information:

"When they had come to the land of Canaan, Abram passed through the land to the place at Shechem, to the oak of Moreh. At that time the Canaanites were in the land. Then the Lord appeared to Abram, and said, 'To your offspring I will give this land.'

Great they got some land. But *THIS* land? Why this land- was it picked randomly by God? Were property values down compared to neighboring lands? Maybe that's because it's the only region of the Middle East where there's NO OIL! Well, when we question why God chose Canaan all we need to do is look at a map and we'll discover that it is *the one place* where major roads to three continents, Africa, Asia, and Europe, converge! When it comes to God's long-term plan to redeem ALL humanity, there's really no better place on Earth to have Abram's descendants set up shop! And so it turns out this is God's plan to redeem humanity: pick an elderly husband with a barren wife and have them travel to a crossroad land where somehow their descendants will become a great nation in, oh... 450 years! Really? Yep. Right people, right place, right time! And Saints, this is the story we are all a part of.

I'm going to close by moving ahead 1,500 years from the time of Abram and Sarai to Paul's Letter to the Galatians. In it we read that Paul sees Abraham (*both Abram and Sarai's names were eventually changed by God*) as the pioneer of the faith. He writes:

"Just as Abraham 'believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness', so, you see, those who believe are the descendants of Abraham. And the scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, declared the gospel beforehand to Abraham, saying, 'All the Gentiles shall be blessed in you.' For this reason, those who believe are blessed with Abraham who believed."

According to Paul, Abraham is the model for our faith. Strange, because by the way, he was a flawed person, wasn't he? We know that later in his story there were times when Abram's own faith in God wavered. Like when, for fear of his life, he offered Sarai to Pharaoh saying that she was his sister. Or like when he fathered a child with Hagar because he didn't believe Sarai could have children. Abram disobeyed God numerous times! What do we take from that? Just this- never turn down God's call on your life because you don't think you're good enough. Here's the thing- ***NO ONE IS GOOD ENOUGH!*** Every doggone one of us sins! Read the whole story in the Bible; God is always calling flawed human beings including the writer of Galatians, Paul, who, when he was called was the most feared persecutor of Christians in the world! So if you hear God calling you please don't make that excuse! If Abraham and Paul were good enough than you are too!

Paul goes on to write ***“Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring; it does not say, ‘And to offsprings’, as of many; but it says, ‘And to your offspring’, that is, to one person, who is Christ.”*** Here's something that we cannot possibly understand unless we see the bigger story. Remember that passage from Genesis 3:15 when God tells the serpent that one of Eve's descendants will crush the serpent's head, even though it will leave him severely wounded? Well Paul believes that descendant is one person alone- Jesus Christ, who crushed the serpent's head though he was ***“wounded for our transgressions.”*** And who then are we? We are the collective Body of Christ on earth, that one offspring of Eve who continues to crush the serpent's head whenever there are those who would employ evil means to achieve their own ambitious goals. Whenever there are those who would choose their own good over that of their neighbor in need. Saints, you and I have been called to be active participants on that long journey back to Eden, a journey that began with God's call to Abram, and ends in the Book of Revelation, when once again, redeemed, restored, and reconciled, we will be able to partake of the fruit of the Tree of Life. Until that moment comes, we are called to be as vital a part of that story as anyone in scripture! So, as Paul implores, let us be like Abraham, the pioneer of our faith, and immediately shout “yes” when we hear God calling our name!



Christian Outreach Project

June 25-July 1, 2023

Camp Lou Henry Hoover and surrounding neighborhoods

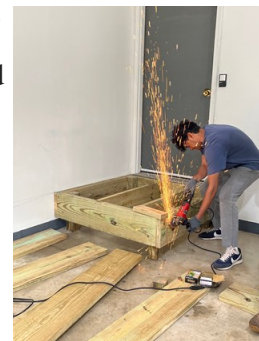


This year was the second year of New Dover Youth and Young Adults (YaYA) participating in the COP week. Especially meaningful to see Declan return for his second year and new members join; here's what they have to say about their week-long experience of aiding to the needs of the community, building and repairing parts of homes in the Sussex County, NJ through a very extreme weather. Also new this year is our addition of the COP New Dover Advisor, Amy Silva. She helped prepare this team with her experience of COP as youth which she vividly remembers to this day and will continue to raise New Dover crews in many years to come.

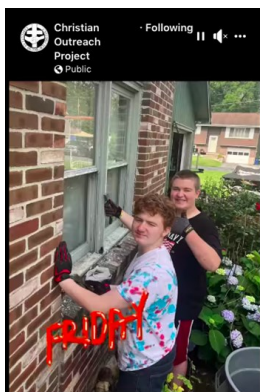
Rishith Duggimpudi (Incoming Junior in HS) says...

The first day of COP I walked in not really feeling comfortable. I didn't really like the environment I was in since it was different. I thought that I would be left out coming from a small church and being, honestly, the only Indian person there. But to my surprise I was welcomed openly. I felt included and experienced something that everyone should experience, the feeling of camaraderie and friendship. Even small activities such as playing a game of football were meaningful to me since the people that I was playing with were all genuine people. As odd as it may sound, not everyone is genuine in life!

Following this along the week we were able to go kayaking at a local lake! Kayaking is such a simple activity but with people that are meaningful it can mean so much more. Along the way we went and connected a large group of kayakers around 8-10 kayakers. The person in the middle of the kayak. Although it can be seen as just a fun activity. This strengthened the feeling of comradery. We even got to go and hike to the top of a mountain. This experience gave us not only an incredible view at the top but also an enjoyable time to converse and hang around our new friends. All of this contributed to the theme that I'm trying to play off of. Comradery, something that has kept the human race alive for hundreds of years. We can only thank GOD for this since he is the epitome of compassion and care. God has granted us this wonderful experience to not only help others in COP but to help ourselves in taking a step back into God's work and nature.



Declan O'Rourke (Incoming Junior in HS) says...



COP is an amazing experience, but it isn't all fun and games. As you know the main activity during COP is working on houses. Most of you maybe thinking that means painting houses, and your right, but it is so much more than that. Although I did alot of painting I also put in insulation, helped throw out shingles and sanded out a porch by hand. And that's just me, at 2 of the 3 worksites i was at the volunteers over 18 were repairing a roof. Kyle's crew fixed a deck and laid cement in a walkway, Rishith's crew built a wheelchair ramp, and that's just a generalization at what we worked on at COP.

On Monday we started the week by sanding down the back steps, while others started pulling apart the porch roof. That was all halted very early in the morning though do to rain, something that would be a problem throughout the week. On Tuesday I and one other power washed the outside of the house while the others trimmed a tree that was hanging over her house, as well as put down new plywood and shingles down on the porch roof. Because we didn't have the materials to complete the job on Tuesday, we went to a 2nd site to help with another roof.

On Wednesday we were hoping to start painting but the deck was too wet and it got pushed back and instead we went to the 2nd site to help again. This time I was doing several odd jobs. Usually it would be carrying down shingles to the dumpster or running tools and materials to somebody on the roof or inside. Thursday half our crew went to the second site for the entire day while the other half including me went to our first site to pain the front and back porch. On Friday my half of the crew started an entirely new site where we painted a man's windows and the other half worked on 2 separate sites repairing a roof and building a deck.

Kyle Sanders (Young Adult/Praise Leader at New Dover) says...



Every morning at COP we had a morning devotion delivered via podcast. Each day there was a different-but-related reading from Scripture accompanied by a reflection and some music, all following a theme, and the theme for the week was “crossroads,” the idea being that crossroads are the places in our lives where we need to make decisions. That sounds simple enough. Obviously, when you make a decision, it is implied that there is a multiplicity of options, a number of potential choices you can make. But the decisions and choices we’re talking about aren’t, “Should I get Chinese for dinner or pizza?” But instead, they are, “What is worthy of my finitude?” or, “What should I give myself, my life to?” “What is God calling me to do?” But you’re not alone in these decisions, in fact, the God of the universe, the God Jesus called ‘Abba,’ is a God of the crossroads, which is to say that God is a God that meets us at the crossroads, and what’s even more but that God is already there before we even come to know ourselves as encountering the divine in every choice we make. The very fact that we are self-creating beings means we play a role in choosing how we are going to create ourselves and are ultimately responsible for our choices. But we aren’t starting completely from scratch nor are we arriving at the crossroads as isolated, rejected and lonely individuals; you are beloved by God on your best and worst days, you are divinely embraced and wrapped within the love of God no matter what. You never come to the crossroads alone.

As good Methodists and Wesleyans, we come to know of God’s prevenient grace, or that notion that God is at work in our lives, in the life of all creation, luring us and the entire cosmos towards holy possibilities of greater novelty, newness, truth, goodness, beauty, *zestiness* — Monday’s COP Scripture reading told the kids how God knows the plans God has for us, that famous verse from Jeremiah, of course, but it is up to us to freely choose to respond to the call, the lure, the plan of God. God can’t force you to follow the divine will. Instead, God’s word arrives kind of like a whisper, as process theologian Marjorie Su-choki has written, and these daily devotions, and the study of Scripture, but most importantly the practice of *actively giving your life to the beautiful vision God has for the world* such as is being done during the week at COP prepares you to more readily receive this divine word—it’s always there, God is always speaking, always calling us at the crossroads to choose the path of beauty, truth, goodness, and justice, but we have to respond. However, before we can respond, we should first come to know ourselves as called by God—called to respond. In being called, God asks us to respond to what God has already given us, done for us, and shown us what is possible for us to become. And the more you respond, the more God is able to work with you, and the more readily you can perceive the whispered word of God, calling you into newness and ever-deepening possibilities of greater becoming for yourself and the world.

At night, we sang songs including “How Great Is Our God,” “Give Me Jesus,” and “Here I Am, Lord.” We prayed and listened to readings from Scripture. On the final night, our “last supper” as one big group, we had communion—we broke bread, dipped it in “Methodist wine” (grape juice, of course) and remembered that we are what we eat, that the God of the universe dwells in us, that God has hands in the world only insofar as *we are* the hands of God, that we make real the presence of Christ to others, and that we ought to see the face of Christ *in* others, especially the poor. And it dawned on me—the very nature of the Christian Outreach Project is Eucharistic (of course, all of church is or ought to be), which is to say that it embodies the four-fold act of the Eucharist: we are first taken—gripped by the love of God, taken within a divine embrace, called to be the body of God in the world; then we are blessed, blessed because what joy and gift it is to do the work of God. We are blessed to be the hands of God. After being taken and blessed, we are broken, insofar as we splinter from our home churches, join crews with people we don’t really know yet, and broken insofar as the work is demanding of our bodies, too, though for the glory of God, but nonetheless we are broken so that we may be received by others; so we are taken, blessed, broken and then we are given or *shared*—all drink from the cup, all have some bread, and there is enough for everyone to have their fill and still there is some leftover.

What’s more, I’ve realized that it is only at the crossroads that one can partake in the Lord’s Supper. All are called, and God meets you at the table on your best days and worst days. And for some of the homeowners we worked with, I know I can speak for mine, we are working with them amidst some of their worst days. And sometimes the table for someone to meet God at is a driver’s seat, or a couch after a double shift, or the bed in the morning when they’ve gotten home from work at 4am. And maybe some of our homeowners don’t feel they can meet God at the table. So we bring the table to them, we break the bread not only for them but *with* them. Empowered by the Holy Spirit, we seek to become the presence of Christ, and we do our best to become the hands of God. The communion table is only found at the crossroads. You are dared to choose to put on Christ and to take up your cross (What is the cross if not the ultimate crossroads?). You are called to become bread that can be broken and wine that can be poured for your community and for the world. For the people of God and all of God’s creation.

Every single moment of your life is crossroads. There is always a choice to make. Yet, God presents Godself at the crossroads, and God’s whispered word calls us toward a path of goodness, justice and beauty and love and service. And what is there to say except, “Here I am, Lord. Is it I, Lord? I have heard you calling in the night. I will go, Lord, if you lead me. I will hold your people in my heart. I will hold your people in my heart.” This is all you need to say at the crossroads. This is the heart of what the Christian Outreach Project is. And what can be more worthy of your finitude?



Overall, Christian Outreach Project 2023 crew altogether was able to transform at least 9 homes this summer. www.christianoutreachproject.org

And they even made it in the Conference Newsletter!



Highlights from the Strawberry Festival, June 11, 2023



September Birthdays

- 3 Deborah Ladym
5 Rosemary Raju
7 Nancy Rock
11 Alethea Poornaselvan
12 Hemant Raju
14 Ed Carney
15 Ava Christian
18 John Bonner
21 Mike Taylor
23 Christon Perera
Marsha Quckenbush
24 Nilesh Katkar
26 Sangita Christian
Declan O'Rourke
30 Robbin Roth

September Anniversaries

- 4 Edward & Deborah Ladym
8 Cesar & Elmira Higoy
9 Chang June & Sunhee Yoon
14 Edward & Phyllis Carney
16 Dan & Danielle Mizak
24 Scott & Tonya Burleigh
25 Michael & Martha Taylor
26 John & Jayne Bonner
27 Ted & Juel Nelson



The **United Women in Faith** will begin their 2023-2024 year with a dinner at Manny's Diner, 1030 Raritan Road, Clark, NJ. The dinner will begin at 6:00pm on Wednesday, September 13, 2023. We will order individually from the menu and receive our own checks. Any questions, please call Connie at 732-287-2231.

Our October 11th meeting will include a presentation entitled "Healing Touch: Reiki and Relaxation" by our own, Eleanor Campbell, retired Physical Therapist. The meeting will begin at 6:30pm. All women of the church are invited to join us. See Dianne Petersen with any questions.



Bring your unused bikes and/or sewing machines
September 16, 2023 9am-12pm

There is a minimum \$10.00 donation per bike/sewing machine to help offset repair and shipping costs.

P4P Mission is *"To empower sustainable economic development by recycling bicycles and sewing machines from the U.S. and shipping them to motivated people in the developing world."*

MEMBERSHIP CORNER

PERSEVERANCE

The Bible has a lot to say about perseverance in several different contexts. Clearly, the Scriptures teach that those who “overcome” and persevere in the faith will inherit eternal life (**Revelation 2:7**). This truth is also expressed in **Colossians 1:23** where we see that people will be holy, blameless, and above reproach “if they continue in the faith, grounded and steadfast, and are not moved away from the hope of the gospel.” So all Christians should be in agreement that those who are ultimately saved are those who do persevere and continue to believe the gospel.

The Bible clearly teaches that we are “born again” by the Holy Spirit, which results in our coming to faith in Christ. All who have been “born again” do have eternal security and will persevere. The doctrine of the perseverance of the saints is founded in the promise that “he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ” (**Philippians 1:6**) and Jesus’ declaration that “all that the Father gives me will come to me” and “I shall lose none of them that he has given me” (**John 6:37, 39**).

Beyond the concept of perseverance in regard to salvation, there are biblical exhortations to persevere in the Christian life. In his pastoral epistles to Timothy, the apostle Paul reminds the young pastor to “watch your life and doctrine closely. Persevere in them, because if you do, you will save both yourself and your hearers” (**1 Timothy 4:16**). Timothy’s character was that of a godly man, and his doctrine was sound and scriptural. Paul warned him to watch them both closely and persevere in them because—and this is a warning to all Christians—perseverance in godly living and believing the truth always accompany genuine conversion (**John 8:31; Romans 2:7**).

Further exhortations to persevere in the Christian life come from James, who warns us to be “doers of the word and not hearers only” because those who hear but do not do are “deceiving themselves.” “But he who looks into the perfect law of liberty and continues in it [perseveres]...this one will be blessed in what he does” (**James 1:22-24**). The sense here is that the Christian who perseveres in godliness and the spiritual disciplines will be blessed in the very act of persevering. The more we persevere in the Christian life, the more God grants His blessings upon us, thereby enabling us to continue to persevere. The psalmist reminds us that there is great reward in persevering in the Christian life. In keeping God’s commandments, there is “great reward” for our souls (**Psalms 19:11**), peace of mind, a clear conscience, and a witness to the world more eloquent than many words.

James also exhorts us to persevere “under trials” because those who do will be blessed and will receive the “crown of life” which God has promised (**James 1:12**). Just as the true believer will be eternally secure in his salvation, his faith will also persevere in affliction, sickness, persecution, and the other trials of life that befall all believers. If we desire to live godly lives in Christ, we *will* suffer persecution (**2 Timothy 3:12**), but the faithful will persevere, kept by the power of the Holy Spirit who is the guarantee of our salvation and who will keep us “strong to the end,” persevering so we will be “blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ” (**1 Corinthians 1:8**).

(adapted from gotquestions.org)

(NEXT MONTH: PERSISTENCE)

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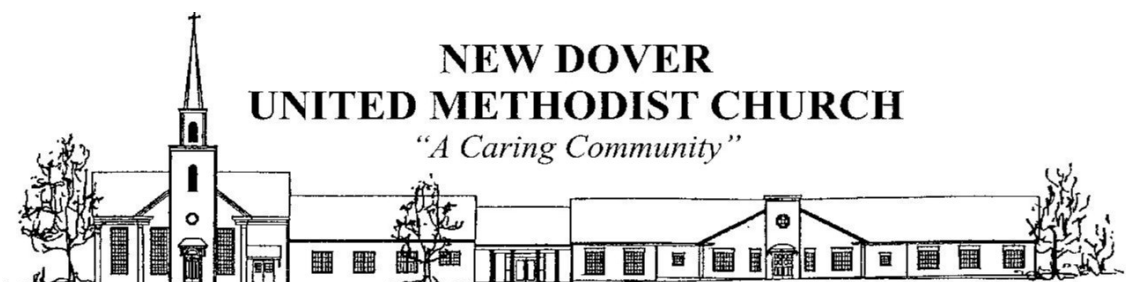
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**NEW DOVER
UNITED METHODIST CHURCH**
"A Caring Community"



At Stellar VBS, children discovered what it means to shine Jesus' light! The kids explored how Jesus shined hope, love, forgiveness, and joy to the world—and how we can do the same with His power! We experienced a week full of faith discoveries, memorable music, and epic adventures that helped kids grow in friendship with Jesus! Thank you to our dedicated volunteers for making this VBS week possible and to the children for their enthusiastic participation. We extend our heartfelt gratitude to New Dover for their support, prayers, and generous donations that contributed to making this week truly memorable.

On VBS Sunday, we enjoyed a STELLAR worship service and potluck that celebrated the ministry of Vacation Bible School during New Dover's 175th year. The morning worship service was filled with songs from past Vacation Bible School programs and hymns about light! We gathered in Fellowship Hall after the morning worship service, sharing in the blessings of our VBS ministry. People brought their favorite dishes and joined us as we dined, reminisced, and made new memories together. The day was filled with laughter and joy as we played a game, watched VBS music videos spanning the past decade, and shared heartfelt expressions of gratitude. It was an unforgettable afternoon of faith, fellowship, and thankfulness for all that God had done through Vacation Bible School. Cheers to SHINING JESUS' LIGHT in New Dover's 175th year!





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