

The Dover Church

"A Welcoming Community of Faith and Service since 1762"

November 1, 2024

Volume 15, Issue 7

News from Meeting House Hill

To the church of Jesus Christ in Dover:

May you know abundant grace and peace from God our Creator and our Lord Jesus!

With the elections coming next week, I would like to tell you a story.

In my last church, we had a long time Moderator. By "long time," I mean that that church had disregarded the by-law imposed term limits long before I arrived for the simple reason that everyone trusted Jack to be the moderator. He was the guy to work with the ministers to ensure the well-being of the church.

Jack was a good man who was easy to talk to and listened to what you said. Jack had lived his whole life in that little, rural Connecticut town. He knew everyone. When we would go out to breakfast, he would introduce me to so many people we would hardly have time to chat ourselves. Jack had served in Vietnam and was still hurt by the way he and his fellow veterans had been treated upon return from Southeast Asia. Jack was a career state trooper. Jack was a husband, father and grandfather. Jack had a maple sugar shack, where all the men who could would gravitate in boiling season, to share venison they had shot themselves and load the boiler with firewood they had cut and split themselves. Jack would show up when you asked and was kind and helpful. One Sunday I was preaching on a social justice issue, quoting scripture here and scripture there to make my point. It was a tight, well-argued and adequately delivered sermon, if I do say so myself. I did not get a lot of feedback on the way out, other than the usual "good sermon today" or "nice to see you, Max."

That afternoon, I was on the front lawn at the parsonage, playing with the kids. The parsonage there was about where Kraft Hall is here...right next door. Jack rolled up in his pick-up truck, got out, and asked if I had a few minutes to chat. "Of course, Jack." We walked the 20 yards over to the front steps of the church to sit down and chat. I could still see the kids, who would be fine playing by themselves.

Jack looked at me, and said words to this effect, "you gave an impressive sermon this morning, Max. You clearly did your research and I cannot argue with you about what's in the Bible because you

LOOKING AHEAD

Reception of New Members
November 3 at 10:00 AM

Grief Workshop
Wednesday, November 6
10:00-11:00 AM

Saging
Sunday, November 10
11:30 AM-12:30 PM
Wednesday, November 13
9:30-10:30 AM

Men's Breakfast Group
Friday, November 15
at 7:30 AM

Fall Grounds Clean Up
Saturday, November 16
8:30 AM

Parenting Spirituality Group
November 17
11:15 AM

Women's Spiritual
Friendship Group
Wednesday, November 20
at 9:15 AM

Agape Sunday Service
November 24
10:00 AM

To reach Max or Kayla, call cell phone:
Max: 508-982-0422
Kayla: 508-269-8406

See inside calendar for more details.

Daylight Saving Time ends on.....Sunday,
November 3rd Turn your clocks back one hour.

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the Rev'd Dr. C. Maxwell Olmstead, Senior Pastor • max@thedoverchurch.org

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know and I don't. But I have to tell you, Max, you can beat me over the head with the Bible and quote all the theologians you like, but I just cannot go there. To be honest, what you are talking about makes my skin crawl. It just feels wrong in my gut. It's against everything I was raised to think and the way I have lived my life the past 65 years."

I am not the smartest man, but, by the grace of God, I was able to discern that I couldn't argue with that. Jack was being completely transparent and honest. So I said, "now you're talking, Jack. I apologize if you felt like I was patronizing and lording my Biblical and theological education over you and everyone else."

"I'm glad you understand, Max."

"Me too, Jack. I hope you can understand, however, that I am supposed to poke the hornets' nest on a regular basis."

He laughed, which could have meant any number of things, but we remained friends and were able to be members of the same church.

Well, my now friends, we are about to have an election and, no matter who wins, the followers of the person who doesn't win are going to feel like their vision of how our country should be is imperiled. I really do not think that is overstating it, having listened to both Harris and Trump enthusiasts. Moreover, there is a real danger that the results will be contested and even, perhaps, lead to violence. All of this erodes citizens' confidence in our democracy, which is a far worse problem than who is President for four years. When we no longer trust our way of being a country, well, it is hard to remain friends, let alone feel like we are fellow citizens. The word "enemy" is bandied about these days when referring to people who vote differently than we do, so I do not think I am overstating this either.

The Dover Church has always been a place where people shy away from being open and transparent about difficult subjects that we sincerely disagree on. I think people shy away because they fear for the consequences, that friendships will be broken, that our fellowship will disintegrate.

There's nothing we can do to make our church a place of greater trust and honesty before next Tuesday, but I think we could begin to practice what Jack did those many years ago. I think we should think of ways to talk about the hard subjects (race, gender, immigration, abortion, truth, etc.) amongst ourselves in smaller groups, if for no other reason than to practice for our lives in the world. I think we can pull it off, if we always bear in mind Jesus' teaching: "judge not lest ye be judged." I am open to your ideas about what this might look like, but it would make our church an oasis in a sea of anger and disagreement and that would be worth working at.

In faith, hope and love,
Max
By the grace of our Lord,
(one of) your pastor(s)

Upcoming Worship Services

We hope you will join us this month for worship on Sundays at 10:00 AM.

Welcoming New Members

We will be receiving new members during worship on **Sunday, November 3rd** at our 10:00 AM service. Join us to welcome our new members.

Agape Sunday Service

Join us on **Sunday, November 24th** at 10:00 AM for our traditional Thanksgiving service. We will again have quick breads and grapes for the congregation to enjoy during the service.

Monthly Worship Services at Fox Hill Village

This month, Max will be offering a traditional Protestant worship service at Fox Hill Village on **Sunday, November 10th** at 1:00 PM. Max is hoping to continue with a hymn sing at the start of the service. If you live at Fox Hill Village, we hope you will join them. Ask at the front desk for meeting location.

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We will also have a bus that will bring our Fox Hill Village congregants to The Dover Church on **Agape Sunday, November 24th**. Check with the front desk for departure time.



Helping out on Sunday mornings

We invite you to volunteer on Sunday mornings! Are you able to usher, serve as liturgist, or be a scripture reader? Would you like to grab a friend and host our coffee hour?

If you feel led to serve in any of these areas, please let Martha know or sign up online through the link in the eNews to help. Thank you!

Stewardship 2025

2025 Stewardship Message

Stewardship 2025 has launched! Our 2025 Stewardship chairperson is Betty Brady, and we thank her for her personal message during service on October 27th. A churchwide mailing of personal stewardship packets is on its way. The stewardship committee believes we need a 3% increase in pledges this year to keep pace with the rising costs of goods and services. We hope everyone faithfully considers their 2025 gift to the church and graciously chooses to increase their pledge by the 3% requested. With this modest increase, our 2025 pledge goal is \$415,000. Please join with fellow members of your faith community here at The Dover Church and submit your 2025 pledge on or before Agape Sunday, November 24th.

With God's grace and under his constant care, Your 2025 Stewardship Committee.



Faith Formation & Spiritual Growth

Prayer Chapel

Looking for a way to connect with new and old friends? Wanting to build some time for your spirit into your daily routine? There are so many reasons to take part in TDC's zoom prayer chapel, which will continue meeting on zoom **Wednesday 12:30 to 1:00 PM**. Take time to check in with church family, share joys and sorrows, and be in prayer together. Please reach out to either Max. or Kayla if you have any questions.

Grief Workshop

Join us for the next grief workshop on **Wednesday, November 6th at 10:00 AM** in the church library. In this group, we share stories of our lives, listen to one another, and delve into books that we may find helpful. Perhaps the greatest gift of this group is the safe space where we are able to put into words our deepest discord. People grieve losses of all kinds: a spouse or family member, an unwanted change in life, memories. The main point of this group is to remove any stigma from grief as a weakness or something to get better from. We are trying to integrate our grief and move forward into this new life.

Saging

Our "Saging" group will gather on **Sunday, November 10th from 11:30 AM-12:30 PM** and **Wednesday, November 13th from 9:30-10:30 AM**. We will meet in the Church Library unless otherwise noted. This group is going to help each of us develop our innate spiritual wisdom, as well as tap into the spiritual wisdom of our tradition.

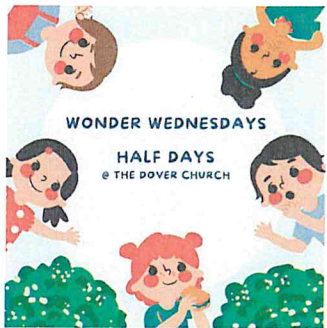
Women's Spiritual Friendship Group

Join us this month on **Wednesday, November 20th at 9:15 AM** as we take a break from our study of women in the Bible to make Christmas prayer candles. We'll discuss a poem while crafting candles to keep and to sell to benefit the youth pilgrimage. All are welcome, regardless of crafting expertise or prior involvement in the group! Reach out to Kayla or to Leslie Decker for more information.

Youth Programming

Wonder Wednesdays

We have had a wonderful first semester of our after school program on elementary half days - Wonder Wednesday. We had 18 students enrolled this fall and are already registering for our January through May semester (see our website for more info and to sign up). This fall, we've learned about Passover, Elijah and the widow, the Feeding of the 5,000 and the Last Supper. We've made bread, churned butter, experimented with food scraps, and explored the elements of a traditional Jewish Seder. We wove baskets, molded clay pots, crafted papyrus, made lava lamps, and painted canvases.



We ran around outside and in, and ate a whole lot of chicken nuggets. We even teamed up with our nursery school to decorate cookies for elders in the community! We had such a blast with this amazing group of children! We couldn't have done it without the adult volunteers who made the food, led the crafts and organized the chaos. Thank you to Beth Benjamin, Gail Lopez, Alysia Poe, Toni Richards and Dottie Rother. Thank you!!



Youth Groups

We are delighted to continue our Middle School and High School Youth Groups collaboration with Pilgrim Church in Sherborn! Teaming up has allowed us a more robust pool of adult support and a larger pool of peers for our students. Pilgrim Church's Christian Education Director, Victoria Gaisford, will continue to take the lead on Middle School Youth Group, open to 6th, 7th and 8th graders which will meet two Sundays a month at Pilgrim Church (25 South Main Street, Sherborn) at 5:15 PM.

Middle School Youth Group

November

- 11/10: Miracle on Main – participation after worship

December

- 12/8
- 12/19: Service Trip to My Brother's Keeper

High School Youth Group

Our high school youth group has been off to a great start! We've played silly games, brainstormed future fundraisers, hand-tossed pizzas, made s'mores, and crafted care packages to send to our friends and siblings away at college. We're looking forward to a busy fall ahead, one full of lots of opportunities to serve our neighbors! Take a look at our at-a-glance schedule below. All students in 8th through 12th grade are welcome! We meet out of Kraft Hall every Sunday at 7 PM. Please reach out to Kayla for more information!



November

- 11/3: City Reach Donation Sorting & Games
- 11/10: Miracle on Main St , Pilgrim Church, 11-1
- 11/15 & 16: City Reach Mission Trip with common cathedral
- 11/17: NO HSYG, City Reach
- 11/24: Thanksgiving Dinner & Food Sorting & My Brothers Keeper Gift Planning

December

- 12/1: NO HSYG, Thanksgiving Break
- 12/8: My Brothers Keeper Wrapping
- 12/15: Christmas Cookies & Movie
- 12/22: NO HSYG, Christmas Break
- 12/29: NO HSYG, New Years

To learn more about any of these opportunities, please reach out to Kayla at kayla@thedoverchurch.org.

Youth Group Intergenerational Dinner

Thank you to all who participated in our October Intergenerational Dinner! 22 of our youth groupers hosted a group of our elders for a delicious meal and interesting conversation. We'll have another intergenerational dinner in mid-March!



CityReach

On November 15th, our youth group is headed down to Boston to participate in the CityReach overnight with common cathedral. This has become a yearly pilgrimage for us, and we're excited to already have 14 teens signed up! While we're in Boston, we'll have the opportunity to break bread and worship with unhoused folks on the Boston common and learn about homelessness from those experiencing it.

Our youth group is collecting the following items to share with those we meet:

- All kinds of gently used carrying cases such as backpacks, tote bags, fanny packs, small suitcases with wheels.
- Travel-size toiletries (nothing containing alcohol)
- New white socks
- New underwear for both men and women, and bras
- Gently used and clean sleeping bags & blankets
- Gently used and clean, sweat shirts, sweat pants, outerwear (especially hooded sweatshirts)
- Monetary donations to be used to purchase clothing

Folks sleeping outside are looking for loose, sturdy, and warm clothing and tend to prefer larger sizes - think L-XXXL. Please keep this in mind when donating. We do not need any dress clothes, tightly fitted clothing, children's clothing, etc. Think about what you might want to go winter camping with.

Donations can be dropped off in the church office or left in the collection bin outside of the Office Wing door. Our group is sorting donations on **November 3rd, but later donations will be accepted until November 13th.**

Sunday School

With our new "Celebrate Wonder" curriculum, we are honoring the spiritual life of our children – their natural sense of awe, wonder, imagination, and curiosity – and helping to shape their growing faith. We have created an enriching environment where children can explore their faith and integrate it into their daily lives through memorable experiences, spiritual practices,



and opportunities to deepen relationships with God and each other. We hope you will come wonder with us as we celebrate the Spirit of God in the lives of children!

Registration for Sunday School can be found on our website or in our eNews.

Each Sunday children will remain in worship until the children's message and then head to Sunday School class with their teachers and fellow students. On long weekends, we will not have Sunday School. The Teddy Bear Room will be open every Sunday from 9:30-11 AM for our youngest members.

November in Sunday School:

- 3rd: In the Wilderness
- 10th: *No Sunday School*
- 17th: The Ten Commandments
- 22nd: A House for God

Parenting and the Spirit

Spirituality Group for Parents of All Ages & Stages

Join us on **November 17th from 11:15 AM-12:15 PM** when our Parenting group will meet after worship to discuss holiday traditions - what we've inherited and what we want to build for our families. We'll talk about how we connect with our faith during holiday celebrations and what our hopes are for our families during festive and celebratory times. We'll also dive into a simple craft, creating "God's Gifts" Advent jars to try out this Christmas season. Thanksgiving and Christmas are right around the corner, so we thought this will be a good chance to take a deep breath and enter the season with some extra intention. We hope you can join us!

This is a laid back gathering, meeting monthly, with loosely-guided small group discussion, open to parent's of all ages and stages! Childcare will be available during our meeting, and we will share a simple soup and bread lunch. All are welcome, whether or not you have joined in before!

RSVPs are not required, but if you know you'll be there, give Kayla or Max a heads up so we can more accurately plan for food!

Fellowship Opportunities

Men's Breakfast Group

Our Men's Breakfast Group will meet on Friday, **November 15th at 7:30 AM** at the home of Steve Karlson. This group is open to men of all ages. They

meet monthly for community building and to socialize. All are welcome. If you are interested in learning more about joining this group, please contact Glenn Jensen, glenn.jensen@ne-rc.com.

Tea and Check In

3:00 PM on Thursdays. This is a fun way to check in with your fellow members. Come relax, have a cup of tea and cookies and bring your parish news. We meet in the church library



Fall Grounds Clean Up

Our leaves are falling! We will hold a grounds clean up on **Saturday, November 16th**. Meet at the church at **8:30 AM!** Bring rakes, gloves, leaf blowers and any other garden tool



you think would be helpful. Coffee and doughnuts will be served!

Grapes and Bread Needed

We are looking for help with our Agape Service on **November 24th**. Please let the church office (508-785-0957 or admin@thedoverchurch.org) know if you are able to help by **providing either bunches of grapes or a loaf of quick bread.** (banana, pumpkin, etc.) Loaves should be uncut.

Please drop off items by Friday, November 22nd if possible. Many thanks.



Advent Bulletin Covers

We are looking for artists, young or old, to draw pictures of Advent for our Sunday worship bulletin covers in December. Talk to Martha if you have an artist in your family who would like to sign up for a Sunday!

November 2024

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p><i>(This calendar receives many updates after publication. The most up-to-date calendar is the electronic one on our website: www.thedoverchurch.org).</i></p>						
					1	2
3 Daylight Saving Time 10:00 AM Worship New Member & Covenant Sunday In-Person & Virtual 7:00 PM HSYG	4 6:30PM Sanctuary Choir	5	6 10:00 AM Grief Workshop 12:30 PM PrayerChapel 7:00 PM Deacon's meeting	7 10:00 AM COA Program 3:00 PM Tea and Check In	8	9
10 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 11:30 AM Saging 1:00 PM Fox Hill Village 5:00 PM MSYG	11	12 12:15 PM COA Lunch	13 9:30 AM Saging 12:30 PM PrayerChapel 7:30 PM Finance meeting	14 10:00 AM COA Program 3:00 PM Tea and Check In	15 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Group 4:00 PM CityReach Program begins	16 CityReach Program 8:30 AM Fall Grounds cleanup
17 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 11:15 AM Music Committee 11:15 AM Parenting	18	19 7:30 PM Church Council	20 9:15 AM Women's Group 12:30 PM PrayerChapel	21 10:00 AM COA Program 3:00 PM Tea and Check In	22	23
24 Agape Sunday 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 7:00 PM HSYG	25	26	27 12:30 PM PrayerChapel	28 Happy Thanksgiving 	29 8:30 AM COA Senior Coffee	30



Join us for our Thanksgiving service on
Sunday, November 24th at 10:00 AM!

THE DOVER CHURCH

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