

# The Dover Church

*"A Welcoming Community of Faith and Service since 1762"*

January 1, 2025

Volume 16, Issue 1

## News from Meeting House Hill

To the church of Christ in Dover:

May the blessings of Advent, hope, peace, faith and joy, be abundant in your lives as we enter the season of Epiphany!

What do you hope to achieve in this New Year? What do you hope for? Look forward to? Are planning for? Counting on?

And what do you fear in this New Year? What makes you dread the months ahead? What are you hoping doesn't happen?

So much of our lives happens because of what our expectations or fears are going in. I know that sounds sort of "wishful thinking" new agey philosophy babble, but it's true, when you think about it. If you cannot imagine something, how can you possibly see it when it comes your way? If you are terrified of something, how can you see what it really is if your eyes are cast down in terror?

I try not to use too many flyfishing analogies in my church work for fear of coming across as a tired old saw, but one of the first things I learned when I learned to fly fish was not how to cast or what fly to use, but how to see the fish. Trout are marvelously evolved fish, perfect for the unique environment each of them habitates. Their colors and lines and spots and body shape blend them right into the flow of the water, the ripples in the surface, the browns and grays and greens of the bottom. If you don't look for a trout, the way a kingfisher looks for a trout, by staring intently at a stretch of water where you know a trout "ought to be," you'll never see the fish. But given time, the trout will move and you see the underside, or opens it's mouth and you see the flash of white, or the sun will shine in a certain way so you suddenly see the fish's shadow on the bottom and then, what was once fish-less, barren water is now a place of real possibility.

My hope for all of you is that you might indulge yourself in some Biblical hope and fear in the coming year. Rather than hearing only what the politicians, cable networks, internet influencers, and newspaper editors tell you to hope for and fear, you might return to the touch-

## LOOKING AHEAD

**Epiphany Sunday**  
January 5 at 10:00 AM

**Saging**  
Sunday, January 5  
11:30 AM – 12:30 PM

**Wonder Wednesdays**  
Spring Semester will meet on  
1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 3/12, 4/2, and 5/7  
11:45 AM – 2:15 PM

**Baptism of Jesus**  
January 12 at 10:00 AM

**Women's Spiritual  
Friendship Group**  
Wednesday, January 15  
at 9:15 AM

**Annual Meeting  
of The Dover Church**  
January 26, 2025  
Directly following worship

**Men's Spiritual  
Friendship Group**  
Friday, January 31 at 7:00 AM  
in Kraft Hall

The best way to reach  
Max is to call his  
cell phone, 508-982-0422 . Kayla  
can be reached on her cell  
phone, 508-269-8406.

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admin@thedoverchurch.org • www.thedoverchurch.org

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

the Rev'd Kayla McKinsey, *Associate Pastor* • kayla@thedoverchurch.org

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stone of our faith tradition and hear what our Lord guides you towards and away from. The parable of the man who built his house on sand and the man who built his house on a rock are what I am getting at.

In Faith, Hope, and Love,  
Max  
By the grace of our Lord  
(One of) your Pastor(s)

Staff Updates

2024 ended with a bang! What started out looking like an endless hiring process with the need to replace a Director of Congregational Life, a Music Director and a Sexton, has ended with a full slate of really talented people.

Most of you have already met Ana Sanchez, our new DCL. Ana is fantastic and has been doing some great work in areas we have not really worked on before: marketing and membership connection. This work doesn't bear immediate fruit, but I look forward to seeing what comes of in in the months and years ahead.

Right around Thanksgiving, we were able to hire Daniel Reid to be our new Music Director. Dan is a Ph.D student at Boston University working on Choral and Orchestral Direction. Dan also has a Masters of Divinity from Yale. The pick-up choir who assembled for his interview were mightily impressed with his skill at teaching people how to sing, how quickly he created a cohesive choir, and his enthusiasm. Dan is also an outstanding organist. Dan will begin on Epiphany!

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Last but not least, a clean church is a happy church. We were able to hire John Dalton to be our new Sexton in December. John is a local guy who has lived his whole life in Dedham. Eminently friendly with a real and easy connection to people, John looks like he will keep us spick and span. Thanks yous and kudos to all the members who participated in these various search and hires. Well done, good and faithful servants!

Upcoming Worship Services

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

**Epiphany Sunday**

Join us for worship on Sunday, January 5th at 10:00 AM as the Three Kings arrive from their long journey.

**Baptism of Jesus**

On Sunday, January 12th, we remember our baptisms. Max will preach about when Jesus was baptized.

**Monthly Worship Services at Fox Hill Village**

This month, Max will be offering a traditional Protestant worship service at Fox Hill Village on **Sunday, January 12, 2025 at 1:00 PM**. If you live at Fox Hill Village, we hope you will join them. Ask at the front desk for meeting location.

We will also have a bus that will bring our Fox Hill Village congregants to The Dover Church on , **Sunday, January 26th**. Check with the front desk for departure time.

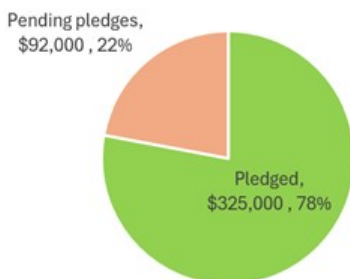
**Annual Meeting**

The 263rd Annual Meeting of The Dover Church will be held on **Sunday, January 26, 2025** directly following the 10:00 AM worship service. Please see the warrant posted around the church. All interested people are invited to attend and participate in the meeting. Only members and associate members may vote. We will be holding this meeting both in person and online. If you are interested in attending the meeting virtually, please contact Ana Sanchez, [ana@thedoverchurch.org](mailto:ana@thedoverchurch.org), for the zoom meeting ID information. Please request the zoom information before the start of worship.

## Stewardship Updates

### Stewardship 2025

Stewardship 2025  
99 families submitted their pledges



Many thanks to the 99 families who have brought us over the \$325,000 mark as we work toward our \$417,000 stewardship goal for the upcoming year; our journey is 78% completed. Pledge income is our largest source of operating income and represents almost two thirds of our annual operating budget. As church leadership leaps into the budget preparation process, they are making decisions on ministry and mission expenditures and are banking on this full pledge amount being available to support these Christian endeavors.

Building a budget requires some reliance on estimates and incomplete information, but the more concrete our income data can be, the more comfortable leadership becomes with the expense side of the equation. If you have not yet had the chance to submit your 2025 stewardship pledge, please take a minute to do so now. The budget team will be forever grateful!

#### **How to give:**

You may submit your pledge by completing the pledge card mailed to you in November, completing a pledge card from the pews and adding it to the collection plate on an upcoming Sunday morning, sending an email to our assistant treasurer at [nancy@thedoverchurch.org](mailto:nancy@thedoverchurch.org), making an online pledge at [www.thedoverchurch.org/giving](http://www.thedoverchurch.org/giving) or by following this link: <https://tinyurl.com/TDC2025Stewardship>. May you find Peace today and throughout the rest of the Advent season.

### Stewardship 2024

**24 accounts outstanding for a total of \$19,000**

We are finishing this pledge year with gusto! We have had several pledge commitments completed in the last week. There are only 24 accounts still open with outstanding pledge payments of just over \$19,000. If you are part of this elite grouping (!!), **please send in your final 2024 payments by the end of the year.**

### 2025 Offering Envelopes Available

If you would like a boxed set of weekly offering envelopes for 2025, please let Nancy know and she will set them out for you in the narthex. Each set is numbered to make record keeping clear and convenient and to save you the time it may take to write your name and date on the general envelopes found in the pews. Nancy's email address is [nancy@thedoverchurch.org](mailto:nancy@thedoverchurch.org), or she may be reached by phone at 508-785-0957.

Faith Formation &  
Spiritual Growth

**SPiritual  
MEN'S FRIENDSHIP  
GROUP**

**NEW: Men's Spiritual Friendship Group**  
**January 31, 2025 at 7:AM**

If you have been around the church for the last decade or so, you may have heard that we have a group called Men's Breakfast. These guys have been getting together for breakfast at a member's home once a month for a while now. As a frequent member of this group, I can say that it has been great fun.

Having said that, I would like to begin a more structured men's fellowship that actively tries to involve men who are newer to our congregation. The great joy of our church like ours is that people connect with others outside their age group or friend group.

Having said that, I also know that 95% of the men in our church do not read emails from the church and will not be reading this, so they will have no idea that I am reaching out to them. I am



working with Ana Sanchez, our DCL, to find and set up a texting app to reach the 91 men on our membership roster. That's right, 91!

The fellowship will be breakfast based in Kraft Hall, on a recurring day every month. I will provide a reflection or conversation starter that is faith/life based beforehand so that we can really get to know each other, rather than just exchanging pleasantries and shooting the breeze (which is what already happens at Coffee Hour).

Knowing you men aren't reading this, you'll just have to keep your phones turned on for the text message soon coming to your inbox inviting you to this new friendship opportunity through our church.

Our first meeting will be on **January 31, 2025 at 7:AM**. We will be reaching out to you by text. If you would like to help with breakfast, please reach out to Max.

### Resources for Hard Times

Most people probably think of church as listening to a sermon in Sunday service, singing in the choir, chatting with folks in coffee hour, Sunday School for the Kids, Youth Group for the teens, and doing some good in the world.



Church is that, but church is also a depository of resources for people going through hard times: death, divorce, sickness of all kinds, relationships challenges, self doubt, addiction, questions about meaning and purpose, and loss.

"Give me a break, Max!" I can hear you thinking to yourselves. "There's no way he can set himself up as an expert in all those fields!"

I am not saying that I am the sole resource, but that resources exist. For starters, we are blessed to have two pastors at The Dover Church who can walk alongside you in the hard times, listening, holding a hand, praying, and perhaps offering some spiritual guidance if that is what is needed. That might not seem like much, but I can tell you from personal experience that it can make all the difference. Where else in life do you have a community that has people willing to do that with you.

Sometimes you really need a good lawyer,

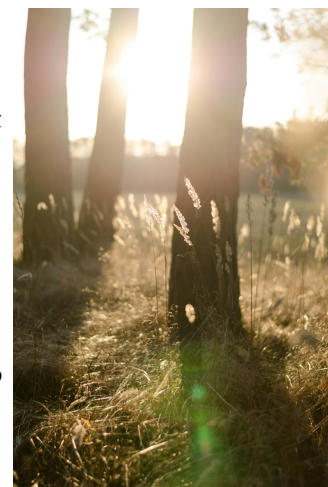
therapist, psychiatrist, social worker, or a ride to AA. I can help you find those people... and I can go as a guest to AA as well.

All of this is a long way of saying – if you are in a rough patch, please let Kayla or me know. We are a judgment-free zone who are totally confidential with the sole hope of helping you find the healing and wholeness you need.

Max & Kayla

### Saging

Back in September, I started a spiritual practices group I called "Saging." The premise I have is that all of us have innate wisdom of what we know to be true, true about ourselves, about life, about God. Too often in the West, religion is a product that experts give to consumers. I believe that religion is something that we each get in touch with out of our own wisdom, sagacity. We are sages. The purpose of this group is to help those who attend to get in touch through various time-tested practices from various faith traditions. I hope you can join us in the New Year. Our Saging group will gather on **Sunday, January 5th from 11:30 AM-12:30 PM**. We will meet in the Church Library.



### 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 on **Wednesdays 12:30 to 1:00 PM**. Take time to check in with church family, share joys and sorrows, and be in prayer together. You can find the zoom link in the website public calendar. Please reach out to Max or Kayla if you have any questions.



**Women's Spiritual Friendship Group: Wednesday, January 15 at 9:15 AM**

After a couple of months of festive crafting and fellowship, our Women's Spiritual Friendship Group is excited to resume our study of women in the Bible. We'll be meeting at 9:15 on Wednesday, January 15th. All are welcome for casual but meaningful conversation, whether or not you have joined in before. Please reach out to Kayla or Leslie Decker for more information or a scan of the next month's optional readings.



**Youth Programming**

**Wonder Wednesdays**

Our Wonder Wednesday program kicks off its second semester on **January 8th!** We'll be exploring God's creation, focusing on the wonder and abundance of the watery corners of creation - oceans, lakes, rivers, and streams. If you know of a K-5 student at Chickering or Pine Hill, spread the word!

Wonder Wednesdays, which runs from 11:45-2:15, is a faith formation experience focused on the goodness of creation, the call to serve, and the never-ending love God has for each of us. Each day we'll explore Bible stories, play games, get crafty and creative, and run around outside. Contact Kayla or Martha for more information.



**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.

**MSYG Dates January/February 2025**

- January 12
- January 26
- February 9

**HSYG Dates/Times January/February 2025**

To learn more about any of these opportunities, please contact Kayla for more info! ([kayla@thedoverchurch.org](mailto:kayla@thedoverchurch.org)) Meetings are Sunday evenings at 7 PM in Kraft Hall.

**January**

- 5: Games & Snacks
- 12: SYP
- 19: NO HSYG, MLK
- 26: Game Night & Snacks

**February**

- 2: Flower Arranging
- 9: NO HSYG, Superbowl Sunday
- 16: NO HSYG, Feb Break
- 23: Among US & Snacks

**My Brother's Keeper Christmas Sponsorship**

Thank you to everyone who participated in our youth group's sponsorship of a family through the organization My Brother's Keeper!

Thanks to the generosity of our church, we were able to go above and beyond the wish list given to us for our family of 9 (2 parents and 7 children, including one year old twin girls!). It meant a lot to see the thoughtful and quality gifts that were donated to this family, who might not have received any other presents this year.

Our teenagers had a blast wrapping the gifts at one of our weekly meetings, and sent them off with thoughtful prayers for each member of the family. We are so grateful for the church's support!

**Thank You**





## Christmas Pageant

Third Advent was Christmas pageant time at The Dover Church! Our Sunday School students brought to life the nativity story with their earnest reenactment! Mary, Joseph, Dominic the donkey and an array of animals, shepherds, kings, angels galore and a shining star captivated everyone with their smiling faces, enthusiasm, energy and joy! The teens who participated and narrated brought a heartfelt flair to the pageant with their creativity and leadership. We are so grateful for all the participants and volunteers who helped bring this pageant to life.



## Sunday School for January 2025

- 5th - Jesus in the Temple
- 12th - Jesus' Baptism
- 19th - Temptation in the Desert
- 26th - Jesus in the Synagogue

## NEW: FAMILY PLAYGROUP

While this group is sponsored by The Dover Church, it is not a religious offering. Caregiving to young children is an incredibly important vocation, but it can be isolating.

Our hope is that this group will be a gift to all in the community, providing young families with a place to connect and to blow off steam, especially during a long New England winter.

Please **spread the word** about this exciting new group!

All are welcome. **No fee, registration, or RSVP required.**

YOU'RE INVITED TO JOIN THE

# FAMILY PLAYGROUP

At The Dover Church  
8:30-10am, Thursdays, 1/9 - 3/28  
17 Springdale Ave, Dover, MA

FREE PLAY GROUP  
FOR PARENTS/CAREGIVERS &  
LITTLES (BABIES + TODDLERS)

LITTLES CAN BURN  
WINTER ENERGY WHILE  
ADULTS ENJOY COFFEE,  
TREATS, AND CONNECTION

We have baby toys,  
slides, climbing  
structures, and a  
little bounce house!  
Enter on the side of  
the church closest to  
Dunkin.

Contact Kayla ([kayla@thedoverchurch.org](mailto:kayla@thedoverchurch.org)) with questions.

# January 2025

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: <a href="http://www.thedoverchurch.org/calendar">www.thedoverchurch.org/calendar</a>.)</i></p>						
			1 <b>New Year's Day</b> 	2	3	4
5 <b>Epiphany</b> <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> In-Person & Virtual <b>11:30 AM Saging</b> <b>7:00 PM HSYG</b>	6	7 <b>7:00 PM</b> Deacons Committee Meeting In-Person & Virtual	8 <b>12:30 PM</b> Prayer Chapel <b>7:15 PM BSA</b> Troop 1	9 <b>3:00 PM</b> Tea and Check In	10	11
12 <b>Baptism of Jesus</b> <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> <b>1:00 PM @ Fox Hill</b> Village In-Person & Virtual <b>5:00 PM MSYG</b> (Pilgrim Church) <b>7:00 PM HSYG</b>	13 Family Promise Hosting	14 Family Promise Hosting <b>7:30 PM</b> Finance Com- mittee Meeting	15 Family Promise Hosting <b>9:15 AM</b> Women's Group <b>12:30 PM</b> Prayer Chapel <b>7:15 PM BSA</b> Troop 1 <b>7:30 PM</b> Finance Committee Meeting	16 Family Promise Hosting <b>3:00 PM</b> Tea and Check In	17	18
19 <b>10:00 AM Worship</b> In-Person & Virtual	20 <b>MLK Day</b>	21 <b>7 PM</b> Church Council Meeting	22 <b>12:30 PM</b> Prayer Chapel <b>7:15 PM BSA</b> Troop 1	23 <b>3:00 PM</b> Tea and Check In	24	25
26 <b>10:00 AM</b> Worship In-Person & Virtual <b>11:00 AM</b> Annual Meeting In-Person & Virtual <b>5:00 PM</b> MSYG (Pilgrim Church) <b>7:00 PM</b> HSYG	27	28	29 <b>12:30 PM</b> Prayer Chapel <b>7:15 PM BSA</b> Troop 1	30 <b>3:00 PM</b> Tea and Check In	31 <b>7:00 AM</b> Men's Spiritual Friendship Group	



ANNUAL  
CONGREGATIONAL  
MEETING

The Dover Church's  
Annual Meeting

The 263rd Annual Meeting of The Dover Church will be held on **Sunday, January 26, 2025** directly following the 10:00 AM worship service. Please see warrant in the church.

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THE DOVER CHURCH

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