

The Dover Church

"A Welcoming Community of Faith and Service since 1762"

April 1, 2025

Volume 16, Issue 4

News from Meeting House Hill

To the gathering of Christ's disciples in Dover:

May the peace of God our Creator and the grace of our Lord Jesus be with all of you!

In my last contribution to the church newsletter, I wrote pretty extensively about being the pastor of our church in the times in which we find ourselves. I thank those of you who contacted me with your responses, not because you were all praising me, but because the point of writing something is to engage in conversation. There is nothing worse than saying something you hope people listen to and hearing crickets...says the preacher in me.

This month I am putting the ball in your court with the question: how can your faith help you navigate the living of your days in the times you find ourselves?

As disciples of Jesus, the answer is staring us right in the face whenever we enter a Christian church of any denomination. I am referring of course to the Cross of Christ hanging on the front wall of the church. All disciples find themselves standing before the Cross. If the Cross isn't before us, then we are up to something other than being disciples.

The Cross is uncomfortable and messy. It's not a go along to get along sort of thing, but a reminder of the brutality of the Imperial Powers that be in the world; the Empire that killed Christ and tens of thousands of other Jews to intimidate, to rob of hope, to force to bow down to Caesar; a reminder that the Powers ever since still seek to kill Christ. The earliest Christians were thrown to the lions not because they prayed or read the Bible, but because they proclaimed Jesus as Lord, and not Caesar.

Seeing the Cross on the wall also reminds us of our baptismal vows: "Do you promise to follow in the ways of our Savior, to resist oppression and evil, to show love and justice, and to witness to the work and word of Jesus Christ as best as you are able?" "I promise, with the help of God."

The Cross further reminds us that the brutality of the Imperial Powers is never the final word. Death does not win. We are people of the empty tomb.

Maybe you have gone through terrible suffering in your life of

LOOKING AHEAD

Worship at Fox Hill Village
Sunday, April 6, 1 PM

Bus from Fox Hill Village
Sunday, April 13

Communion Class
Celebration Service
on Palm Sunday April 13

Prayer Chapel
Wednesdays 12:30 – 1 PM on Zoom
Zoom in website calendar

Wonder Wednesdays
4/2, and 5/7
11:45 AM – 2:15 PM

Women's Spiritual
Friendship Group
Wednesday, April 16, 9:15 AM

Maundy Thursday, April 17
Soup & Bread Fellowship 6:30 PM
Worship 7:30 PM

Easter Sunday, April 20
Worship 9AM and 11 AM
Egg Hung immediately following
9AM worship
Brunch 10 AM

Men's Spiritual
Friendship Group
Friday, April 11 at 7:00 AM

The best way to reach Max is to call
his cell phone, 508-982-0422.
Kayla: 508-269-8406

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one kind or another: terrifying illness, loss of loved ones, addiction, trauma, tragedy, betrayal, rejection. I have lived through all of those. If, however, you have come out the other side and feel not that you lucked out, not that you muscled through it, not that you got over it, not that you beat the odds, but that God saved you, that God raised you from the tomb, then you know the power of the Resurrection. You are living Resurrection. You are an Easter person.

I am. I know that living that Resurrection power has made me less fearful and absolutely confident that since God saved me once God is faithful and will do it again, so that I can continue to go forth into the world proclaiming the power of the Resurrection to all those around us who are bowed down, beaten down, worn down. Just some food for thought.

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.

If you cannot join us in person, we hope you will join us virtually. Use this link to access the YouTube link, worship bulletin, and music:
<https://thedoverchurch.org/worship/online/>.

April 6 – Service of Appreciation for our Ministry with Refugees

Many of you may be unaware that our church has had a major ministry serving refugees

over the last several years. By major, I mean that we have committed substantial resources and dramatically impacted the lives of 17 people who came to America in a state of utter vulnerability.

It began with 12 young men from Afghanistan who had served in the Afghanistan Air Force against the Taliban and could not return to their country for fear of torture and death. These young men have built lives for themselves here, pursuing educations and vocational training, finding jobs, supporting themselves, moving to other parts of the country to pursue better opportunities, bringing their fiancées here. In short, they have been living the American dream of freedom and opportunity.

Next, we welcomed a family from Guatemala fleeing the gang violence in their homeland. It is hard for any of us to comprehend what “fleeing gang violence” actually means, but this one family has been through the wringer. We have helped them with acquiring

English, finding a home, getting into school, going to the doctor and dentist and optometrist, getting driving licenses, finding jobs, doing all the



things we native born folks do over the course of years as we grow up, leave home and find our way in the world. Once again, it is impossible for us to imagine what “arriving with just the clothes on your back” and being unable to communicate in English can mean. These folks are making their way in their new home.

The reason many of us may be unaware is that very few of us are “hands on” in this ministry. On April 6, those of us who are “hands on” are leading a service of recognition. We will be welcoming Rob Andrews, a neighbor from Dover, who has been instrumental in the settlement of dozens of refugees in our area, to share some thoughts in the service. He helped us partner with Jewish Family Services who have been at the forefront of the faith-based humanitarian effort to resettle refugees in the greater Boston area. The Jewish commitment to substantively aiding the stranger, the outcast, the foreigner has been a tonic for my soul.

This is not a celebration of how awesome The Dover Church is or what good Christians those of us who have been “hands on” are. More, this is a reality check service. There are literally millions of people fleeing their homes in our world right now

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and our faith calls us not to turn away. If you would like to see a sliver of what not turning away has been like in our context, please join us on April 6 for worship and afterwards in Kraft Hall where we will be putting together welcome kits for the refugees from Haiti who are still allowed for the moment to be here in metro-Boston. The kit project should be of interest to your kids. While this is a worship service, please invite your friends and neighbors who might be feeling the urge to help out. I can assure you, there is more than enough for any of us to do and we rejoice at more hands to help.

In faith, hope, and love,
Max

Holy Week Services

Join us for **Palm Sunday**, April 13 at 10 AM. We will have a special palm parade at the start of worship. We will also be celebrating our **Communion Class** on this day.

On Maundy Thursday, **April 17th**, join us for a **soup and bread potluck supper at 6:30 PM** in Kraft Hall before the **7:30 PM worship**. We always need readers and liturgists. If you would like to participate, please sign up using the link in the **eNews** or call the church office.



Easter Services

We will have 2 services on Easter morning: Our **9:00 AM and 11:00 AM** services will be in the sanctuary. We're delighted to have a brass quintet playing music during both services.

Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch

We will have an Egg Hunt in Taylor Garden **immediately following the 9 AM service**. And we'll have a **Brunch at 10:00 AM** in Kraft Hall.

Young families, make sure to stay after the Easter Egg Hunt to share a special moment of fellowship.



Order Your Easter Plants Now

We are now taking orders for Easter plants – lilies, daffodils, and tulips – that will decorate our sanctuary on Easter Sunday.



To order, use the form in our eNews or pick up a paper form from the pews or office. Plants are \$10 each. You can pay online through our website's Giving page or by mailing a check to the church office. Orders must be received by Friday, April 11, 2025, to be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin.

Monthly Worship Services at Fox Hill Village

Max, Kayla and Dan will be offering a traditional Protestant worship service at Fox Hill Village on **Sunday, April 6 at 1 PM**. If you live at Fox Hill Village, we hope you will join them. Ask at the front desk for meeting location.

This month, we will have a bus that will bring our Fox Hill Village congregants to The Dover Church on, **Sunday, April 13, Palm Sunday**. Check with the front desk for departure time. All are invited to stay for Coffee hour after worship.

Stewardship Update

As we journey through Lent, we mark the passage of time on many calendars – the days long ago as Jesus processed toward his final glory, the days here in New England as we wait for the sun and flowers of Spring to catch up with the calendar that proclaims Spring is here, and the days of this year's stewardship campaign as our church community comes together to pledge its love and support for what happens here on Meeting House Hill.

Our most recent stewardship push saw fifteen new pledges join the previous 126; many thanks to these new faithful supporters. Our collective journey to the \$417,000 stewardship goal set by our church leaders is all but \$14,164 complete. We anticipate receiving a few more pledges over the next two weeks and fully expect the campaign to be successfully completed by Holy Week. We want to extend our gracious thanks to all who have supported the church through their financial gifts to the 2025 stewardship campaign. We are grateful

to be able to do God’s work through your generosity.

If you have not yet pledged and would like to support the church in this critical way, there are several options to help you do so. 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, making an online pledge at www.thedoverchurch.org/giving/, or by following this link to our website pledge page: <https://tinyurl.com/TDC2025Stewardship>. Spring Blessings to all!

Accessibility at The Dover Church

What does that even mean... “accessibility”? Are we talking about wheelchairs and ramps, bathrooms, automatic doors? What?

It’s hard for us to imagine, as all of us who are active worshippers at The Dover Church and participants in our faith in fellowship in Kraft Hall and the Admin wing are obviously fully abled. If we weren’t, we probably wouldn’t be here because our building presents a number of real challenges to less abled folks. We cannot possibly understand the challenge getting into, out of, and around in our buildings is to those who are less abled than us.

If you have not been involved in leadership, you are probably unaware that leadership has been talking about this for some time now. We have spoken with an architect. A few of those members who are drafts-people, engineers, and handy with projects have sketched out ideas and started talking to carpenters, masons, elevator companies and so on.

On March 18, Church Council voted to present the idea of making our Meetinghouse fully accessible to a Congregational Meeting on **October 26, 2025**. The idea is that between now and October 26, we will employ an architect to work up designs for what making our Meetinghouse fully accessible would look like and how much it would cost. Simultaneously, we will be holding **listening sessions during coffee hour** on **(April 27th, May 18th, June 1st)** to offer members and friends of the congregation the opportunity to share ideas and insights about accessibility, and to voice concerns.



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We wouldn’t be New England congregationalists if some of us weren’t voicing concerns. We want as full a congregational input as possible. We will also be looking into possible grants to fund this project. And finally, we will begin to organize a team to do the capital campaign work necessary for such an extensive project. Our hope is to have all the necessary information on hand on October 26 so that members can come to that meeting, learn what is involved, offer opinions, and ultimately vote whether we will move forward with the project.

Please speak with Max if you have any questions or would like to volunteer to help out with an aspect of this process. If we go forward, this should be really exciting and life-changing for our church and for the people out there right now who just cannot get into and around in our building.

Faith Formation & Spiritual Growth

Men’s Spiritual Friendship Group **April 11 at 7 AM**

If you haven’t heard, we have started a fellowship for men at the church and have 16+ people participating. It is a breakfast group, which is good for some and bad for others. We gather on a given Friday at 7AM for breakfast in Kraft Hall: usually strong coffee, pancakes, eggs, bacon, sausage and fruit salad. I am hoping to diversify the menu. A bunch of guys show up early to help cook. We chat a bit over coffee and the smell of bacon and then sit down together in Kraft Hall to discuss a chapter from a book I am writing about practicing Jesus. It is very practical and engaging, not high theology, if I do say so myself. And we pray.

I communicate via text message, so if you would like to be on the mailing list, please let me know and I will be sure to include you. This group is really best if you get the chapter ahead of time and give it some thought.

Men’s Breakfast Group and Spring Grounds Clean Up

Saturday, April 19, 8 AM

Our Men's Breakfast Group will meet Saturday, April 19 at 8 AM at the church for breakfast and fellowship. All men of the church are invited to join in. This is a great opportunity to meet



some of the other men of our church family.

Then at 9:00 AM we invite everyone (men, women and children) to join us for a church grounds clean up. Bring your rakes, tarps and gloves. We thank you in advance for your help!

Women’s Spiritual Friendship Group
April 16 at 9:15 AM

Our Women's Spiritual Friendship Group is looking forward to meeting again on April 16 after a busy March full of worship planning and leadership. We will continue with our study of "Bad Girls of the Bible." All are welcome! Reach out to Kayla or Leslie Decker for more information.

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 on the website public calendar. Please reach out to Max or Kayla if you have any questions.

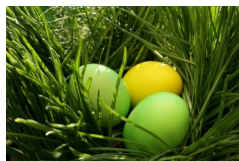
Youth Programming

Easter Services

Join us on Easter Sunday, April 20th. We will have 2 services on Easter morning: Our 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM services will be in the sanctuary.

Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch

We will have an Egg Hunt in Taylor Garden immediately following the 9 AM service. And we’ll have a Brunch at 10:00 AM in Kraft Hall. Young families, make sure to stay after the Easter Egg Hunt to share a special moment of fellowship.



Communion class

Our Communion Class has been meeting throughout Lent to learn about the story of the Last Supper and the sacrament of Communion. Our group of ten 2nd, 3rd, and 4th graders have made juice, baked bread, explored the church, acted out the last supper, make bookmarks and art, honed our archery skills, and decorated our own stoles. We will be cele-

brating the class and their hard work through a **special communion service on Palm Sunday, April 13th**. Please come and support this wonderful group of young people!



Wonder Wednesdays

This semester we are exploring God's creation, focusing on the wonder and abundance of the watery corners of creation - oceans, lakes, rivers, and streams.

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.



We are looking forward to gathering again on Wednesday, **April 2nd and May 5th!** Contact Kayla or Martha for more information.

Sunday School for April 2025

Each Sunday children will remain in worship until the children's message and then head to Sunday School class with their teachers. On long weekends, when there is no Sunday School, the Teddy Bear room will be open. Childcare is available every Sunday starting at 9:40 AM and is available during our 10 AM service for 0 through 3-year-olds.

Register for Sunday School on our website: <https://thedoverchurch.org/children-youth/sunday-school/>

Looking ahead in April:

- 6th - Peter's Denial
- **13th - No Sunday School** Palm Parade. Service for All Ages.
- 20th - Easter Sunday - No Sunday School - Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch
- 27th - Breakfast on the Beach

Middle School Youth Group

At last month's Souper Bowl of Caring, MSYG collected \$250 and forty bags of groceries for

A Place to Turn Food Pantry!

Our next Middle School Youth Group Meeting is April 6th when the group will put together Easter Baskets for the Elderly. More information to follow.

Looking ahead:

April:

- 6: Easter Baskets for the Elderly
- 27: Earth Day Clean Up

May:

- 4: Service Project TBA
- 18: Year-End Celebration

High School Youth Group Dates

Look ahead at everything in store for the High School Youth Group these next couple of months. All teens grades 8-12 are welcome! Contact Kayla for more information.

April

- 6: Paint & Punch
- 13: Birthday Boxes & Games
- 20: NO HSYG, Easter
- 27: NO HSYG, April Break

May

- 3: Cornhole Tournament (Saturday, 3-5)
- 11: NO HSYG, Mother's Day
- 18: Birthday Boxes for Unhoused Kids
- 24: NO HSYG, Memorial Day

Cornhole Tournament

Mark your calendars for **May 3rd from 3-5pm!** Our Youth Group, with help from our Christian Education Committee, is hosting a Cornhole Tournament to raise money in support of our youth pilgrims. There will be good music, yummy food, friendly competition, and cool prizes, all in support of a good cause. Registration and more information to follow!

Vacation Bible School (VBS)

Save the Date: August 4 – August 8, 2025



It's time to hit the trail... for adventure! This August we invite you to join us for True North VBS! You can expect a week of epic adventures filled with awesome Bible-learning experiences kids will see, hear and touch, hands-on science experiments, team building games, unforgettable Bible songs, and tasty treats! Get Ready for the summer event that points



kids to Jesus, a faithful friend we can always trust in a wild world!

Mission In Action: Serving Others

Walk to End Homelessness

Family Promise Metrowest – The annual FPM “Walk to End Homelessness” will take place on **Sunday May 4th from 12:00 pm – 3:00 pm**, starting and ending at Natick High School. Mark your calendars for a fun-filled event including a 2.3-mile walk dedicated to raising funds and awareness about the urgent need for affordable housing for Metrowest families in need. The Dover Church will be organizing a walking team, so stay tuned for details!



Spring Bike Drive

If you have an old bicycle or two you'd like to donate to a great cause, now is your chance! The Lowell Bike Connector, in conjunction with the Dover Recycling Committee, will be holding a bike drive at the Dover Transfer Station on Sat. May 17th. The Mission in Action committee will be assisting with this effort by arranging to have The Dover Church parking lot as an additional designated drop-off site.

The Bike Connector is a non-profit, volunteer bicycle collective that provides low cost or free recycled bicycles and parts to needy children and adults.

Women's Lunch Place Collection

We want to express our great appreciation to all who contributed to our late winter/early summer drive, as well as **special thanks to Arthur Danielski and his parents**. Donations ranging from personal hygiene items to rain ponchos and light jackets were brought in by Arthur Danielski and his dad to WLP's location in Boston. Arthur volunteered his assistance as part of meeting his community service requirement for his club baseball team. He additionally promoted the drive with a personal video and created flyers to reach our church community as well as his teammates and their families.

April 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: www.thedoverchurch.org/calendar.)</i></p>						
		1 7:00 PM Deacon's Meeting	2 11:45 AM Wonder Wednesdays 12:30 PM Prayer Chapel (Zoom) 7:15 PM BSA	3 3:00 PM Tea and Check In	4	5 Private Event 10AM –3:30 PM
6 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 1:00 PM @ Fox Hill 5 PM MSYG 5:30 PM Communion Class 7:00 PM HSYG	7	8 7:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting	9 12:30 PM Prayer Chapel 7:15 PM BSA Troop 1	10 3:00 PM Tea and Check In	11 7:00 AM Men's Spiritual Friendship Group 2:30 PM Girl Scouts Troop # 63303	12
13 Palm Sunday 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 7:00 PM HSYG	14	15 7 PM Church Council Meeting	16 9:15 AM Women's Group 12:30 PM Prayer Chapel 7:15 PM BSA Troop 1	17 Maundy Thursday 3:00 PM Tea and Check In 6:30 PM Soup and Bread Fellowship 7:30 PM Worship	18 Good Friday	19 8 AM Men's Breakfast Group and Spring Grounds Clean-up
20 Easter Sunday 9:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual Egg Hunt immediately following 9 AM service 10:00 AM Easter Brunch 11:00 AM Worship	21	22	23 12:30 PM Prayer Chapel 7:15 PM BSA Troop 1	24 3:00 PM Tea and Check In	25	26
27 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 5:30 PM MSYG	28	29	30 12:30 PM Prayer Chapel 7:15 PM BSA Troop 1			

Join Our Team: Volunteers Needed for True North Vacation Bible School This Summer!

Save the Date: August 4 – August 8, 2025

We're looking for passionate and dedicated volunteers to join us for our True North VBS this summer! Help make our Vacation Bible School an incredible experience for kids! Whether you have a talent for storytelling, making snacks, playing music, or organizing games, there's a place for you on our team!

Adults and youth entering Grade 7 or above are invited to volunteer. Volunteers 18 and older must complete a CORI and Background Authorization form.



If you're ready to embark on this incredible adventure, please sign up using the QR code. Reach out to martha@thedoverchurch.org with any questions.



THE DOVER CHURCH

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Cornhole Tournament

Fundraiser for our young pilgrims

Sign up below



May 3 in Kraft Hall

3 PM - 5 PM

\$30 for teams of 2 or more