

The Dover Church

“A Welcoming Community of Faith and Service since 1762”

March 25, 2026

Volume 17, Issue 2

News from Meeting House Hill

The Dover Church Mini-Parish Journey

I am beginning my third year as a member of the Dover Church. I arrived here after processing the loss of my parents, a stressful professional grind dealing with the COVID public emergency, and the emergence of mental health issues in my youngest son. I didn't know a single person in the congregation, but by the end of my first service I felt the warmth and welcoming that you all create and feel at the Dover Church.

From birth through High School, I was an active youth in my family's church in Pittsburgh, PA. I was in all the Choirs they had (can't sing!), on the handbell team, went to weekly Youth Group, traveled on all the mission trips, and even ran the Sunday morning sound board. And most Sundays I watched my Dad usher in a double-breasted blazer with brass buttons (OG if you ask me!). It was very much my hive and being a busy bee was my perspective of church. Now, returning to a congregation after a thirty-year absence, my mission was to continue that active participation, and add to it deep, intentional work on my spiritual growth and relationship with Jesus.

So far, so good. The abundance of opportunities to contribute to the Dover Church community, and the heartfelt pastoral care of Max and Kayla have been nothing short of transforming. The closeness and support among church members have made a lasting impression on me, reinforcing my choice to return to the fold at this place. This strong sense of community is one of the reasons I chose to become a Deacon, and why I am thrilled about this opportunity to share with you the work of the Board of Deacons to launch and sustain Mini-Parishes.

During my earliest conversations with Max and Kayla, I shared my past experiences and hopes for my time at TDC. These discussions aligned with their broader goal to create deeper connections between all members of our congregation through our existing Lay Leaders on the Board of Deacons. And so, the concept of Mini-Parishes was born.

Mini-Parishes are designed to foster meaningful connections and provide support within our church community, embodying the spirit of lay ministry. They are grounded in the Mission of the Dea-

LOOKING AHEAD

Easter Plant Orders

By Friday, March 27

Spring Grounds Clean-up

Saturday, March 28, 9 AM

Palm Sunday, March 29, 10 AM

Maundy Thursday, April 2

6:30 PM Sharing Soup and Bread

7:30 PM Worship

Easter Sunday April 5

With Guest Brass Quintet!

9 AM Worship

Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch

immediately after 9 AM worship

11 AM Worship

Service at Fox Hill Village

Sunday, April 12, 1 PM

Women's Spiritual Friendship

Wednesday, April 15, 9:15 AM

Wednesday, May 20, 9:15 AM

Service at New Pond Village

Sunday, April 19, 1 PM

Men's Breakfast Group

Friday, April 17, 7:30 AM

Steve Karlson's Home

The best way to reach Pastor Rev. Noah is to call his cell

phone: 503-989-9626

See inside calendar for more details.



THE DOVER CHURCH • P.O. Box 305, Dover, MA 02030 • Tel: 508-785-0957

admin@thedoverchurch.org • www.thedoverchurch.org

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

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

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cons, "...to assist the Pastor of their church in ministering to the church and its members, thereby freeing the Pastor to better serve and to further expand his/her Christian Mission..." A core aspect of this model is that each Deacon can connect with and address the needs of their Mini-Parish members in a way that meets them where they are. While we know we can never replace the deep knowledge, experience, and capacity that Max and Kayla (and now Noah) bring to one-on-one spiritual conversations, we share their care and compassion for every member of our Church. Through Mini-Parishes, we strive to be an extension of that care for you.

I hope that, as you read this, you recall the cards and mailings "Your Deacon" sent over the past year, as well as the check-ins, conversations, or visits that took place. For 2026, we are excited to welcome three new Deacons to the Board, joining those who are continuing their service for a total of ten Deacons/Mini-Parishes. I invite you to join Your Deacon in envisioning what it means to be a Church where members forge meaningful connections, actively support one another, and trust one another with our spiritual wellness.

For me, Mini-parishes fit into my journey right between communal engagement found in church activities and personal engagement in my faith. Where Deacons reach out to ask how you are, check in at coffee hour, or send a note as an open invitation to build a stronger connection. Where the support you receive from your Deacon feels distinct from clergy conversations, providing something special through a member-to-member relationship. Where noticing the spark of the divine in others helps to nurture it in ourselves.

For you, I hope that Mini-parishes add to the list of special connections you have with in the Dover Church. Complementing our many small group ministries at an even more personal level. In the coming weeks, please look for the first mailing of the year from your Deacon. This outreach is only the start in our journey together – it's an invitation for you to connect with your Deacon and our effort to show that we are thinking of you and care about your well-being.

David Mahr
Deacon and Member of the Accessibility Project Capital Campaign Committee



Learning Optimism, Living Hope

Do preschoolers know what optimism means? They do if they attend Noanet Nursery School. Optimism has been the curricular theme this January. As Gita Coutts, NNS Director, told parents, "Our intent is to teach children that it is okay to feel sad sometimes, and that those feelings do not last forever-there is always a brighter side." In their morning circle discussions, they are sharing valuable ideas such as continuing to try even if they aren't successful right now and developing "I can!" thoughts.

The concept of optimism seems particularly pertinent to us as a church right now. We have so many worries, from uncertainty with the world at large to concerns about Max and our church community during this time of change as well as whatever private challenges may be facing each of us. How do we retain hope and look for the brighter side? We could try the NNS Twirling Station - twirl under a light bulb and see if you can come out on the "bright side"! Or we could look to our faith and see how that can bring us hope.

Hope is at the center of our faith. In Romans 15:13, Paul says, "May the God of hope fill with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope." As we struggle with remaining optimistic in the face of adversity, Paul urges us to remember that God and God's love is with us. It doesn't mean our burdens will be released, but God is there to support and uplift us.

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According to John 16:33, Jesus says to the disciples, "I have said these things to you, that in me you may have peace. In the world you will have tribulation. But take heart; I have overcome the world." God is there to help us find the strength to carry on, even in the face of serious challenges. Some of us may turn to prayer to feel God; others may see the hand of God in the love and support we receive from others during times of adversity. In these uncertain times, be an agent of God's love. When you act with compassion and care, that support comes back to you. When all seems hopeless, do not despair, but look for the helpers. Better still, be the helper. Be one of those who brings hope and optimism into the world.

The children of NNS typically end their circle time by saying, "May everyone have a great day at play!", but this month they have been saying, "Will everyone please have an optimistic day!" May all of you have optimistic days, filled with the love of God.

Kristen Dennison
Head, NNS Board

Pastoral Care

While Max and Kayla are on leave, our Bridge Pastor, Rev. Noah, is available for all pastoral care needs.

Rev. Noah has been with our congregation for nearly three months now.

His thoughtful presence and gifted preaching have been a true blessing during this season. You may reach Rev. Noah at 503-989-9626, and at noah@thedoverchurch.org.



Upcoming Worship Services

Easter Services 2026

Palm Sunday March 29
10 AM Worship

Maundy Thursday April 2
6:30 PM Sharing Soup and Bread
7:30 PM Worship

Easter Sunday April 5
Guest Brass Quintet
9 AM Worship
Easter Egg Hunt and Brunch
immediately following 9 AM worship
11 AM Worship

We hope you will join us 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/>.

Palm Sunday – Palm Parade

Join us March 29th for a joyful Palm Sunday celebration! Children are invited to take part in our Palm Parade during the opening of the service, helping to bring the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to life. Pick up a palm branch, wave it with joy, and join in shouting "Hosanna!" as we honor our King and begin Holy Week together.



We look forward to celebrating with you!



Lent invites us to slow down, make space for God, and let grace reshape our hearts.



Easter Lily Plants Orders

Honor a loved one this Easter with a beautiful Easter Lily. These flowers will grace our Meetinghouse and serve as meaningful tributes of love,

hope, and gratitude.

Order online using the QR code, or pick up a paper form in the church pews or office. Please submit all orders by Friday, March 27.



Easter Sunday – Worship services, Egg Hunt and Brunch

We will be holding **two Easter Sunday worship services**, at 9 AM and 11 AM. A brass quintet will help lead us in joyful music as we celebrate the resurrection together.



We will be holding our **Easter Egg Hunt** in Taylor Garden directly following the 9:00 AM service. Young families, please stay after the egg hunt to enjoy food and fellowship together.

We will have a robust coffee hour on Easter Sunday, between the 9:00 AM and 11:00 AM services. No matter which service you will be attending, we hope you will join us in Kraft Hall for coffee hour.



We are looking for volunteers to help provide food for this special event. Please scan the QR code to see what we need and to sign up to provide something, or call the office and let us know. We would appreciate having all contributions delivered to the Kraft Hall kitchen by 9:45 AM. Many thanks.



Monthly Services at Living Communities

Fox Hill Village Bus to The Dover Church

The bus for Fox Hill Village residents to attend worship at The Dover Church will be on Palm Sun-

day, March 29. Please check with the front desk for departure time.

Worship Service @ Fox Hill

Rev. Noah will lead a traditional Protestant worship service at Fox Hill on **Sunday, April 12**, at 1 PM.

Worship Service @ New Pond Village

Rev. Noah will lead a traditional Protestant worship service at New Pond Village on **Sunday, April 19**, at 1 PM.

Dedicate Flowers for our Sunday Altar

Please contact Betty Brady directly on her cell (339-225-5925) to discuss a date and dedication. The cost is still \$50.00 payable to the Dover Church. Thanks,
Betty Brady, Flower Committee



An Update About Max

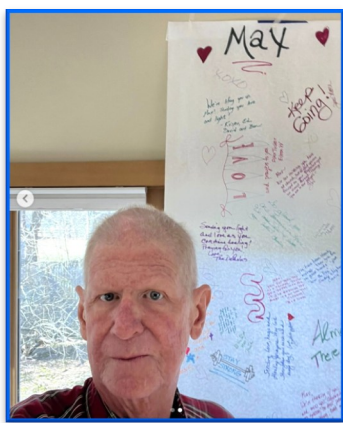
In recent communications, Max has shared deep gratitude for the congregation’s prayers, meals, and the many rides to Dana-Farber that have supported him throughout treatment. Earlier scans showed encouraging signs – his tumor had shrunk significantly following chemotherapy, and physical exams recently revealed no detectable lymph-node lumps. Though he continues to look for “small signs of light,” this second phase of treatment has also brought particularly difficult days.

In his most recent update, Max describes feeling profoundly depleted as he navigates the cumulative effects of radiation and chemotherapy. He is currently getting 100% of his nutrients from a feeding tube and managing a painful case of thrush, a common treatment side effect that has made eating and speaking extremely difficult. Severe fatigue leaves him winded even after climbing a single flight of stairs. His doctors remind him that recovery from these side effects will take time – possibly several weeks before he begins to feel relief, several months before he feels more like himself, and up to a year before his new baseline becomes clear, provided his June scan is clean.

Even so, Max continues to hold onto humor and hope, recalling one of his Gram’s old sayings,

“you look like death warmed over”, as he reflects on the realities of treatment. He remains deeply moved by the congregation’s care, including the balloons and banner delivered to the parsonage on his last day of treatment. These gestures, have meant more than words can express. Max looks forward to being in church when he is able and sends his love and blessings to all who continue to walk this journey with him.

Below are a couple of pictures from the end-of-treatment celebration items dropped off on March 12. Thank you to all who signed the banner, and to our honorary artist Toni Richards for bringing it to life.



Dear God, be near to Max in these difficult days. Renew his strength, ease his suffering, and let Your compassion be his constant companion. May each breath, each hour, and each new day bring him closer to restored wholeness. Amen.



**Max, we love you and miss you!
We continue to lift you up in prayer, and are thinking of you!**



Welcome Baby Ruth

We joyfully share the news that baby Ruth Elena Edstrom arrived on March 8, at 5:19 p.m., weighing 8 lbs. 9 oz., and both she and Kayla are doing well. The congregation celebrates with Kayla, Walter, and big brother Ronan as they welcome Ruth into their family and look forward to introducing her to the church in the days ahead.



Please join us in surrounding them with love, prayers, and warm congratulations as they begin this beautiful new chapter as a family of four!



Accessibility Project Update



Accessibility Design Operation (ADO)

The Accessibility Project continues to move forward. Architect Don Mills has submitted schematic drawings to the Dover planning department and conservation commission to determine whether any special permits will be needed. He is also consulting with construction and specialty contractors as budget and scheduling plans take shape – work that will continue over the next several months.

Lee Graham, Chair, leegraham46@gmail.com

Committee Members:

- Lee Graham
- Sally Shoemaker
- Betty Brady
- Bob Pettit
- Tom Leeds

Capital Campaign Committee

The Church Council has appointed a Capital Campaign Committee. Each member has been assigned a small group of congregational contacts – not to pressure anyone, but simply to check in, ensure materials have been received, and answer questions as they arise. These personal connections are intended to help keep communication open as the project progresses.

The campaign committee is meeting weekly, and both groups will continue to provide updates. The ADO Committee welcomes any questions and is grateful for the strong engagement and support from the congregation.

Campaign Status

Goal: \$1,760,000

Secured: \$1,282,500

- Endowment: \$700,000

- Pledges: \$620,682 from 43 donors

75% of goal reached

Remaining to fundraise: \$439,138

To keep the planned building schedule, we need all pledges in within the month of April. Thank you for your help in ensuring we make the church accessible for generations to come.

Feel free to reach out to George Hong, our Moderator, with any questions at gord.tdc@gmail.com.

Committee Members:

George Hong	Leah Hoover
Bruce Hain	David Mahr
Beth Benjamin	Bo Pettit
Betty Brady	Ana Sanchez
Daniel Gerrish	Nancy Simms

Faith Formation &
Spiritual Growth

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

Our Women's Spiritual Friendship will meet again on April 15 at 9:15 to continue our study of "Bad Boys of the Bible," this month continuing our focus on Jacob. All are welcome to join for our casual and open ended discussion! If you'd like to learn more or receive the readings, please reach out to Leslie Decker. Take a look below at our upcoming meetings and top-

ics. Hope to see you there!

- ◆ April 15th, Leslie leading, discussing Jacob 2
- ◆ May 20th, Toni leading a painting activity!
- ◆ June 17th, Kayla back, potluck breakfast for last meeting before summer



Sunday School

March

1st: *The Woman at the Well*: **Storytelling/Drama Rotation**

8th: WSF service/**TBR open**

15th: **No Sunday School/TBR open**

22nd: *Jonah and the Fish*: **Art Rotation** (Painting with Miss Toni)

29th: Palm Parade; *Jonah and the Fish*: **Games Rotation**

April

5th: Easter Sunday/**No Sunday School/TBR open 9:00 AM**

12th: *Jonah and the Fish*: **Cooking Rotation**

19th: **No Sunday School/TBR open**

26th: **No Sunday School/TBR open**

Palm Sunday - Palm Parade

Join us March 29th for a joyful Palm Sunday celebration! Children are invited to take part in our Palm Parade during the opening of the service, helping to bring the story of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem to life. Pick up a palm branch, wave it with joy, and join in shouting "Hosanna!" as we honor our King and begin Holy Week together.



We look forward to celebrating with you!

Easter Sunday

Join us on Easter Sunday, April 5, for worship at 9 AM or 11 AM. A brass quintet will add beautiful music to the celebration. We'll have an egg hunt and brunch immediately following the 9 AM worship. All Are Welcome!



Confirmation Class

On March 20-21, our 2026 Confirmation Class attended the retreat “Many Gifts, One Body” in Centerville, MA.

Our youth brought open hearts and thoughtful reflection to the retreat, exploring their unique gifts and how they strengthen the Body of Christ. Throughout the weekend they supported one another, engaged deeply with the community, and embodied the kind of church we hope to be. Their grace, honesty, and enthusiasm left us deeply inspired.



Save the Date: May 3rd

Walk to End Homelessness

HSYG is partnering with the Mission in Action Committee for the **Family Promise 2026 Walk to End Homelessness at 12:00pm on May 3rd at Natick High School!** Join us for this wonderful community event to raise awareness and funds for the work Family Promise does to support families facing housing insecurity.



Watch for more information to follow in the Youth Group e-News.

Mission In Action: Serving Others

Habitat for Humanity Saturday April 18

- ◆ Put your Faith into action by volunteering on a Habitat construction site!



- ◆ No construction experience needed – all volunteers 18+ are welcome.
- ◆ To sign up: Glenn Jensen at glenn.jensen@nerc.com
- ◆ Construction site address: 26 Poquanticut Ave, North Easton, MA
- ◆ Limited spots. Save yours!

Walk to End Homelessness

The Dover Church will be participating in the **Family Promise 2026 Walk to End Homelessness at 12:00pm on May 3rd at Natick High School!** Join us for this wonderful community event to raise awareness and funds for the work Family Promise does to support families facing housing insecurity.

Watch for more information to follow in the e-News.

Fellowship Opportunities

Tea and Check In

Thursdays at 2:30 PM

Join us for a relaxing hour of conversation and connection. Enjoy tea, cookies, and the wonderful stories and insights shared by this lively group. It’s always a heartwarming time together. We meet in the church library. Come join us!



Men’s Breakfast Group

Friday, April 17, 7:30AM

The Men’s Breakfast Group will meet on **Friday, April 17 at 7:30 AM** in Steve Karlson’s home. For more information, please contact Glenn Jensen at glenn.jensen@nerc.com.



March 2026

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> <p style="text-align: center;">* WORSHIP STARTS AT 10 AM *</p>						
1 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 1:00 PM Fox Hill Service 7:00PM HSYG	2	3 7:00 PM Deacon's Meeting	4 11:45 AM Wonder Wednesday 7:15 PM Boy Scouts	5 2:30 PM Tea and Check In	6 Girl Scouts #63303	7
8 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual	9	10 7:30 PM Finance Committee Meeting	11 7:15 PM Boy Scouts	12 2:30 PM Tea and Check In	13	14
15 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship with Fox Hill Guests In-Person & Virtual	16	17	18 9:15 AM Women's Spiritual Friendship Group	19 2:30 PM Tea and Check In	20 7:30 AM Men's Breakfast Group	21
22 9:00 AM Choir 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 6:00 PM Intergenera- tional Dinner	23	24	25	26 2:30 PM Tea and Check In	27	28
29 PALM SUNDAY 9:00 AM Choir 10:00 AM Worship with Fox Hill Guests In-Person & Virtual 7:00 PM HSYG	30	31				

April 2026

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
<p>(This calendar receives many updates after publication. The most up-to-date calendar is the electronic one on our website: www.thedoverchurch.org/calendar.)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">* WORSHIP STARTS AT 10 AM *</p>						
			1 7:15 PM Boy Scouts	2 MAUNDY THURSDAY 2:30 PM Tea and Check In 6:30 PM Soup & Bread Supper 7:30 PM Worship	3	4
5 EASTER SUNDAY 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 9:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual Egg Hunt immediately following 9 AM worship 10:00 AM Brunch 11:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual	6 	7 9:00 AM Fox Hill Garden Club 7:00 PM Deacon's Meeting	8 11:45 AM Wonder Wednesday 7:15 PM Boy Scouts	9 2:30 PM Tea and Check In	10 2:30 PM Girl Scouts #63303	11
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19 9:00 AM Choir Rehearsal 10:00 AM Worship In-Person & Virtual 1:00 PM Worship at New Pond Village	20 Patriots Day (Office closed)	21 7:00 PM Church Council Meeting	22	23 2:30 PM Tea and Check In	24	25
26 9:00 AM Choir 10:00 AM Worship with Fox Hill Guests In-Person & Virtual 7:00 PM HSYG	27	28	29 7:15 PM Boy Scouts	30 2:30 PM Tea and Check In		

TOGETHER IN FAITH



TOGETHER IN FAITH



CELEBRATE EASTER AT THE DOVER CHURCH

Next to Dunkin'



Palm Sunday 3/29 10 AM

Maundy Thursday 4/2

Soup Supper 6:30 PM

Worship 7:30 PM



Easter Sunday 4/5

9 AM and 11 AM Worship

10 AM Easter Egg Hunt

& Brunch

17 Springdale Ave, Dover MA 02030

THE DOVER CHURCH

P.O. Box 305 • Dover, MA 02030 • Tel: 508-785-0957 • 508-785-0434 • admin@thedoverchurch.org

Spring Grounds Cleanup

Saturday, March 28, 9 AM

Bring your rakes, tarps and energy

All Are Welcome!



Order Your Easter Plants

By Friday, March 27

Fill a paper form, talk to Betty Brady,
or use the QR code



THE DOVER CHURCH

Facebook: @thedoverchurch.org **Instagram:** @thedoverchurch **YouTube:** @thedoverchurch
