

The Dover Church

A WELCOMING COMMUNITY OF FAITH AND SERVICE SINCE 1762



AN OPEN AND AFFIRMING CONGREGATION
IN THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Sunday, September 13, 2026 - 10:00 AM
Welcome Back Sunday

Welcome to The Dover Church. Sunday morning worship is perhaps the only occasion where people of all generations spend time together in the same public place. This is one of our great joys. Different people at different ages worship in different ways. Some are bouncy and some are silent. We ask that everyone welcome each other and embrace these differences.

ORDER OF WORSHIP

GATHERING IN GOD'S PRESENCE

PRELUDE

WORDS OF WELCOME AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

All are invited to join in speaking or singing when bolded words appear.

If you have a prayer request card, the ushers will come by after the sermon to collect them.

GLORIA PATRI

**Glory be to the Father,
and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost;
as it was in the beginning,
is now, and ever shall be,
world without end. Amen. Amen.**

CALL TO WORSHIP

Pastor: Welcome, all children of the living God: the gospel is good news for young and old.

People: Let us worship God together!

Pastor: The good news is proclaimed in God's word, and in how we live our lives with our neighbors.

People: Let us worship God together, every generation.

Pastor: We come together with different abilities and challenges, loving God in a rainbow of ways and styles.

People: Let us worship God together, with our family of faith.

Pastor: All are welcome in Christ's embrace, who proclaimed, "Let the children come!"

People: Let us worship God together, united in faith, hope and love.

GATHERING SONG

Come, We Who Love God's Name

S 43

A TIME FOR REFLECTION AND CONFESSION

Our reflection this morning will be a little different. We will begin in silence. At the chiming of the bell, we will join together in unison in the words below, and then settle back into silence. When the bell chimes again, we will continue with the unison prayer, ending in silence. At the chime of the last bell, we will say together the Amen, "May it be so," in Hebrew.

O Holy One, mysterious presence, hope of my heart and inspiration of my soul, you call us here this morning to reconnect. You are with us always, but we drift away. In this time of quiet, bring to my mind's eye the times when you have been close, when I have watched the burning bush, when I have seen your glory, when I have been embraced by your love.

You are our God, but we are so busy and distracted by our lives, so eager for success and afraid of failure, so tempted by the newest thing, that we wander away, away from you and away from the true selves you created us to be. In this time of quiet, help me to see one distraction, one busy-ness, I could let go of this day that I might know you in the fullness of my life.

Help me, O God, let go of the parts of my life that keep me from you and your love; for I pray these thing in Jesus' name.

Amen.

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: God loves you and there's nothing you can do about it.

People: God loves you and there's nothing you can do about it.

MUSIC

Child of God

Mark Miller

BLESSING OF THE BACKPACKS

EXCHANGING SIGNS OF PEACE

The peace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

And also with you.

CHILDREN MAY LEAVE FOR SUNDAY SCHOOL

GOD'S WORD FOR US

PRAYER FOR ILLUMINATION

O Lord our God, you offer us in scripture words of life, which, through faith, become our word of life. Help us to listen for that word in our lessons this morning. Amen

from the GOOD NEWS OF JESUS CHRIST

Luke 14: 16-24

Reader: The Word of God for the people of God.

All: Thanks be to God.

ACT OF PRAISE

O bless the Lord, my Soul!

God's grace to thee proclaim.

And all that is within me join

To bless God's holy name. Amen

SERMON

"Did You Get the Invitation?"

HYMN

Spirit of the Living God

281

OUR RESPONSE TO GOD'S GRACE

OFFERING OURSELVES TO THE SPIRIT & THE OFFERING

OFFERTORY MUSIC

DOXOLOGY

Praise God from whom all blessings flow;

Praise God, all creatures here below;

Praise God above, ye heavenly host;

Praise Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. Amen.

PRAYER OF DEDICATION

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

THE LORD'S PRAYER

**Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name,
thy kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven.
Give us this day our daily bread;
and forgive us our trespasses, as we forgive those who trespass against us;
and lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.**

HYMN OF PARTING

Joyful, Joyful, We Adore Thee

7

COMMISSIONING AND BENEDICTION

POSTLUDE

LAY LEADERS IN TODAY'S SERVICE

DEACON ON DUTY: Glenn Jensen

USHERS: Laura Beechwood and Linda & Bo Pettit

SCRIPTURE READER: Daniel Gerrish

FELLOWSHIP: CE Committee

*Please join us for fellowship and refreshment in Kraft Hall
following this morning's worship service.*

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Birthdays and Anniversaries

We wish Happy Birthday to the following people: **Judith Bursiek, Riley Spalding, Ellie Danielski, Maggie Danielski, Christina Dougherty, Eric Smith and Judith Barr.**

We wish Happy Anniversary to: **Ham & Susan Hackney and Scott & Kristen Griebel.**

Birthday and Anniversary wishes are for September 13, 2026 to September 19, 2026. Please let us know if we have forgotten anyone!

Announcements

Welcome Rev. Wayne Earl - New Bridge Minister

On September 1st, the Rev. Dr. Wayne Earl (he, him, his) began serving The Dover Church as bridge pastor, here to assist our ministry staff as needed. Rev. Earl is an ordained UCC minister who lives with his wife and son in nearby Quincy. He has earned undergraduate and graduate degrees in theology as well as a Doctor of Ministry degree from Wesley Seminary in Washington, DC. As a clergy-person, he has served as a chaplain, interim, youth, bridge and settled pastor. He recently completed his 15th ministry role overall at Plymouth Congregational Church in Belmont, MA. Along the way, he has worked as a college professor, court mediator, and published author. Originally from Southern California, Rev. Earl enjoys reading nonfiction, exercising, writing and traveling to explore new places. He has also lived in three states and three countries. Most importantly, Wayne and

Lori are the proud parents of five children and three grandchildren! Rev. Earl prefers to be called 'pastor' or by his first name, Wayne. He will be serving alongside TDC staff through at least June of next year.

United in Prayer

We invite you to join us every day at 12:00 noon for one minute of prayer for Max. Whether you are at home, at work, at school, or wherever you may be, know that many others in our church family are praying alongside you. If noon isn't possible, we encourage you to pause and pray whenever you are able.

Though we may be in different places, we are united in spirit, trusting that God hears every prayer offered in faith. May this shared rhythm of prayer be a source of strength, comfort, and hope for Max, his family, and our entire church family.

As Max continues his treatment, let us pray each week for strength, peace, wisdom, comfort, hope, and the assurance of God's abiding presence.

Sunday School

As we prepare for the new year, we kindly ask that Sunday School families take a few moments to complete a registration form for any child who will be attending. Keeping our registration information up to date helps us stay informed about each child's contact information, allergies, dietary needs, and other important information, while also letting us know how best to support each child and provide a safe, welcoming, and positive Sunday School experience.

Even if your child has attended Sunday School in previous years, we ask that all families complete a new registration for this year. To register, use the QR code.



Volunteer for Sunday School

We're looking for enthusiastic teachers and helpers to join our Sunday School Team!

If you're in Grade 8-12, this is a great opportunity to make a difference, have fun, and earn community service hours.

You don't have to be a Bible expert or commit to every week. Even helping once a month makes a huge impact!

If you'd prefer not to teach, we also need caring volunteers to help in our Teddy Bear Room with our youngest children.

Reach out to Martha at : martha@thedoverchurch.org with questions or interest.

College Care Packages

Our annual College Care Package tradition is back! On Sunday, September 20, from 7:00-8:30 PM, the Senior High Youth Group will gather at Dover Church to assemble care packages for our college students, especially freshmen and sophomores.

Have a college student who would enjoy a package? Please sign them up! You can also sponsor a package for \$25, including a personal note or prayer.

We also welcome donations of candy, snacks, and other care package items. Thank you for helping us remind our college students that they are loved, prayed for, and remembered!

To sign up a college student or make a donation, reach out to Kayla or Martha or look for the links in the eNews.

Middle School Youth Group

Middle School Youth Group, a joint ministry of Pilgrim Church and the Dover Church begins Sunday, September 13th and is open to all church and community youth, from the 6th to 8th grade! Join us for fun, service, community, and connection. We meet from 5 to 6:30 pm at Pilgrim Church, 25 South Main Street, in Sherborn. During our first meeting we'll dive in with games and a fire pit! Spread the word!

High School Youth Group

Join us Sunday September 13th for our first youth group meeting of the program year! We'll make s'mores, play games, talk about the year ahead! All are

welcome, please spread the word!

Let Kayla know if you plan to be there and if you have any dietary preferences/restrictions!

Seeking Shoppers for Hosting Week at Family Promise Metrowest

The Dover Church's next hosting week to support families in FPM's shelter program starts on Monday September 14th. The Mission in Action committee is seeking individuals who would be willing to purchase a few grocery and/or household items requested by the resident families. These items can be dropped off at the Kraft Hall kitchen either Sunday 9/13 or on the morning of Monday 9/14.

We also would welcome gift card donations to help these families to buy essential items as needed. FPM's preferred retailers include: Market Basket, Stop & Shop, Walmart, Target and Shell Gas.

The MIA Committee will arrange to transport all these donations to the center on Monday afternoon.

Please contact Peggy Cross at peggyfcross@gmail.com or (508) 479-1432 if you'd like to help!

Diaper Drive for A Place to Turn

THE DIAPER PROJECT provides families in financial distress with up to 1 week of diapers every 30 days to keep them clean, dry, and healthy. Between **Sept. 20 - Oct. 13** The Dover Church Mission in Action committee will be collecting diaper donations for our long-time mission partner A Place to Turn, a food pantry located in Natick that serves the Metrowest

community.

The most requested sizes include 5, 6 and 4T-5T pull-ups for boys and girls. Open boxes accepted! Donations may be dropped off at the administration door.

A few diaper facts:

- Up to 3,000 families in Natick and Framingham alone struggle to buy diapers.
- WIC and food stamp programs don't cover the cost of diapers. A family needs up to \$100 a month for diapers per child.
- Many families have to decide between food, medicine, and clean babies.
- Without diapers, babies and toddlers cannot attend daycare or early childhood programs.

Women's Spiritual Friendship Group

Join us as we kick off another year of Women's Spiritual Friendship on **September 16th!**

This fall, we'll depart from our Biblical character studies, and instead dive into the Enneagram, a personality discernment tool rooted in ancient Christian contemplative tradition. Join us for a brief lesson on the desert fathers and mothers who laid the foundation for this system.

During our class, we'll engage in small group conversation and take a simple test to determine which of the nine Enneagram types we each are. The Enneagram has deep wisdom to offer those who turn to it. Join us as we wade in together! We'll gather at 9am for conversation and turn to discussion by 9:15.

All are welcome (even, maybe es-

pecially, if you think this whole Enneagram thing sounds silly)!

Reach out to Kayla with any questions. See you soon!

Men's Breakfast Group

The Men's Breakfast Group will meet on Friday, September 18, at 7:30 AM in Steve Karlson's home.

For more information, please contact Glenn Jensen at Glenn.jensen@ne-rc.com

A Journey to Taizé

We're excited to invite you to a special screening of Taizé: A Pilgrimage of Trust, a documentary following our 2025 Dover Church youth group as they spend a transformative week in the ecumenical Christian community of Taizé, France. Come experience the beauty and spirit that shaped their pilgrimage.

This is a wonderful opportunity to hear and see how this journey touched our young people and to share in a little bit of Taizé together.

Save the date and join us on **October 4 from 5:00-7:00 PM** for this special evening! We can't wait to share this meaningful story with our church community!

Tea & Check-In Returns

Join us on Thursday, **September 17** at 2:30 PM as Tea & Check-In returns for the fall!

Come enjoy a relaxing hour of tea, cookies, conversation, and connection in the church library. It's a wonderful time to

catch up, share stories, and enjoy the warmth and wisdom of this lively group.

We'd love to see you there!

Volunteer on Sunday Mornings

Are you able to help on a Sunday morning with ushering, being our liturgist, or scripture reader, or by hosting our coffee hour? To volunteer you do not need to be a member. Use the link in the e-News, sign up during coffee hour or contact the church office admin@thedoverchurch.org. Please sign up as you are able.

Dedicate Flowers on Sunday Morning

Help bring beauty and warmth to our worship space while honoring someone special. Dedicate the altar flowers in loving memory or in celebration of a loved one.

Dedications are \$50. Please see Betty Brady during coffee hour to reserve your Sunday

Save the Date!

On **Saturday, October 10, 9:00 AM - 2:00 PM**, in Kraft Hall, our church will host a Blood Drive in collaboration with the American Red Cross. We invite all eligible donors to participate in this life-saving gift of blood donation. Every donation can help save lives and bring hope to those in need.

Please invite your friends, neighbors, and family members to join us as we come together to serve our community in this meaningful way.

Online: Schedule Your Appointment using the QR code here.

By Phone: Call 1-800-RED-CROSS (1-800-733-2767)



Family Promise Metrowest Cordially Invites You to Keeping the Promise: Hope in Action

An evening celebrating the strength of families and the power of community on Thursday, **November 5th** at 6:00 PM at the Verve Hotel Natick.

Register before September 23 for advanced pricing. For more details or to register, use the QR code.



Calling all Bikers and Striders! Join APTT's team

Our friends at A Place To Turn Food Pantry invite our church community to join them for the 2026 Ride & Stride for Food on Saturday, **September 27**, at Noble and Greenough School in Dedham. Hosted by Three Squares New England, this annual event raises vital funds to support local hunger relief initiatives.

A Place To Turn sends a team of walkers and cyclists each year, and would love to have members of The Dover Church community join the fun! Team members fundraise \$350 each and either walk a 5k or bike (25 miles, 50 miles, or 100k).

If you're interested in joining the A Place to Turn team or supporting this important ministry through a donation,

please find additional information and registration details in the eNews.

Accessibility Project Construction Update (as of 9/9)

Interior Progress

Plumbing and electrical inspections have passed, pending the installation of the lift. Lift installation began today and is expected to be completed by Thursday. Final touches to the restroom and sanctuary are also underway.

We ask that you please refrain from entering the sanctuary before worship on Sunday. Many people are working to finalize details, and the area remains an active construction zone with equipment, wiring, and tools still in place.

Exterior Progress

For this coming Sunday, the walkways from the parking lot to the sanctuary will be covered with temporary carpeting to provide a smooth and accessible surface for all. The sanctuary steps will not yet be completed. Temporary but sturdy barriers will be in place to clearly mark safe pedestrian routes to the sanctuary.

Please Note: The regular entrance to the Office Wing is currently under construction and will remain closed through the end of the week. During this time, please access the Administrative Wing through the Taylor Garden door, which is equipped with a doorbell.

Please note that key card access is available only through Kraft Hall during this period.

The granite terrace is coming together nicely and is beginning to showcase

the vision for the completed project.

Parking During Construction

If you have mobility limitations and would like to park closer to Kraft Hall on Sundays, please parallel park along the Springdale Avenue side of the driveway, facing the exit. Please do not double park. Keeping the driveway clear ensures that emergency vehicles have access to the property at all times.

The construction team will ensure that the parking lot remains safe and accessible for Sunday worship, and parking will be available for all who attend services.

Thank you for your patience and flexibility as we complete these important accessibility improvements.

Health Equity International 2026 Celebration:

The Spirit of Konbit

Thursday, **October 15**, 2026 from 5:30-7:30PM at St. Cecilia Parish, Boston, MA

In Haiti, a konbit is a traditional form of cooperative labor that has come to more broadly embody a national spirit of community support, collective problem solving, and solidarity. These ideals are deeply rooted in everything we do at St. Boniface Hospital and have carried us through some of the most difficult years we have ever faced.

We see the spirit of konbit alive in the communities we serve in southern Haiti. We see it in the cooperation between hospital services as they work together to solve a complex issue. It lives in the vast network of employees, support-

ers, and partners who are all working to create a brighter, healthier future for Haiti. Konbit lives in everyone who stands up for the basic human right to good health and who speaks out against injustice.

We are proud to show all of the many ways cooperation, partnership, and a collective belief in the right to be well help us save lives and create a brighter, healthier future for Haiti.

For more information or to purchase tickets, scan the QR code.

