

***The vision of Dover UCC is to seek justice, love kindness and walk humbly with our God.***



***Dover Congregational United Church of Christ***  
February 22, 2026

***Rev. Melinda Quellhorst, Senior Pastor***  
***An Open & Affirming Congregation***  
***A Just Peace Congregation***

*The Blessings of Messiness, a wilderness journey*  
*Wilderness is a place of beginnings/Grace*

**\*Please Stand if able**  
***Black New Century hymnal***

## **Announcements**

### **Prelude**

*"Jesus Tempted in the Desert"*  
(Inspired by Beethoven's Symphony No. 7)

Philip Keveren

### **Centering Silence**

Lent begins in the wilderness. It is someplace we have been before and it is a place of beginnings. The Spirit guides us through the messiness and blessings of the journey. Grace, abundant grace is a gift, nothing we earn. Begin again in the messiness, the blessings, and find you. This Lent we are invited to surrender to the wild leadings of the Spirit.

### **\*Call to Worship**

One: Today is the first Sunday in the season of Lent.

We are called into the Blessings of Messiness, a wilderness journey.

**All: The Spirit that guides Jesus into the wilderness, also guides us in our journey, in the messiness, and blessings.**

One: Jesus is shaped and formed for his ministry, while in the wilderness.

**All: We too, in the messiness of our journey, in the wilderness are invited to surrender to the leadings of the Spirit and find grace.**

One: Pause, and know that you are being held by the Spirit of grace.

### **\*Hymn #547**

*"Amazing Grace"*

### **Opening thoughts**

One: The wilderness is a place of beginnings and can teach us who—and whose—we are. The wilderness can test our strength and faith, but it also shapes our identity and our call. The wilderness can be a place of abundant grace and hope as we are challenged in our journey, in the messiness of faith and blessings. On our journey through the wilderness this Lent, we will engage in positive and helpful ways as we live into God's abundant grace for us.

**Silence****Scripture**

Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7

**Offering of music (10:00 AM) "Jesus in the Wilderness"**

Tyler Mabry

**Children's time (10:00 AM)****Poem** "Full to the Brim even in the desert- From Here in the Sand"

Prayer by Rev. Sarah A. Speed | A Sanctified Art LLC | sanctifiedart.org

**Hymn #211***"Lord Jesus, Who through Forty Days"***Scripture**

Matthew 4:1-11

**Sermon**

Rev. Melinda Quellhorst

**Call to Prayer**

Hymn tune: Children praying

*Lord, listen to your children praying, Lord, send your spirit in this place;**Lord, listen to your children praying, send us love, send us power, send us grace.***Joys and Concerns/Prayers- both silent and spoken****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 debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen.

**Invitation to Gratitude (10:00 AM)****Offering our Gifts****Offering Music***"Distress"*

Kris Rizzotto

**\*Doxology**

*Praise God from whom all blessings flow;  
Praise Christ all creatures here below;  
Praise Holy Spirit, Comforter  
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen*

**\*Hymn #351***"I Was There to Hear Your Burning Cry"***\*Benediction****Postlude***Variations on "Forty Days and Forty Nights"*

Christa Rakich

**Serving You in Church Today****Sermon:** Rev. Melinda Quellhorst**Liturgist:** Eileen Schultz**Media:** Dave MacKeigan**Music Director:** Jamie Kunselman**Organist:** Nichole Fehrman

## **SCONES 101 WITH REGGIE**

Make, take & bake—ingredients and recipe provided. If you've ever had one of Reggie's delicious scones you know this event is a must. So come find out her baking secrets and you can make perfect scones for your Easter brunch. Join us Sunday, March 29<sup>th</sup> at 11:30 in Thomas Hall. Please sign up at The Hub.



## **FINDING THE COURAGE FOR PEACE**

### **Come listen. Come reflect. Come be part of the conversation.**

Join us on Tuesday, March 24<sup>th</sup> at 6:00 PM in Thomas Hall for a timely and urgent conversation with Dan Toussant—leader with Pa Christi and co-founder of the Interfaith Coalition of Stark County. After 50 years of wrestling with faith, fear, and calling, Dan chose action—launching a grassroots peace movement rooted in the nonviolent teachings of Jesus. In a time marked by racism, gun violence, and deep division, his story challenges us to ask: "If not now. . .when?" Dan is also family to Michael DiLauro, making this evening especially meaningful for our Dover Community.

### **Stream Events at Dover**

~The **worship service** will be live on Sundays at 10:00 a.m. on the Dover Congregational UCC website (<https://www.doverucc.org>) and Facebook page and the recording will be posted immediately after the service.

~Monday thru Friday, the office will be open from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Please call the office to ensure someone is in to assist you.

~If you have a care or concern you need to discuss, please contact Rev. Quellhorst at [revmql@gmail.com](mailto:revmql@gmail.com) or call her on her cell, 330-717-5357.

~During the 10:00 AM service, child care is available for children five years and younger in room 104, on the lower level, Faith Formation for older children.

**Large print bulletins and hearing amplifications are available in the back.**

~ **Contributions**~ At the home page click on the “**Give**” button and follow the directions



**OR** you can easily connect to our online donation page by scanning this QR code with the camera on your phone or a QR app--will take you directly to our online donation page!

### **Open and Affirming Statement**

Dover Congregational United Church of Christ is an Open and Affirming congregation. We affirm that God’s grace is available to all. We welcome people of all ages, genders, races, views, abilities, sexual orientations, expressions and identities, ethnic educational and economic backgrounds into the full life and ministry of our church. We declare this in the name of God, whose Son, Jesus Christ, welcomed all people into God’s circle of grace.

Approved by the congregation September 21, 2008  
Additions approved by the congregation April 13, 2014

### **Just Peace Covenant**

As a Just Peace church continuing the work of Jesus, we commit to work toward a world where all persons are treated with dignity and equality, where societies are structured in ways that promote the well-being of all people, and where conflicts are resolved through communication and negotiations, without resorting to exploitation or violence. We strive to embody these principles in our lives and witness as individuals and as a congregation. Our specific focus is: Just Peace in the community- so that all may live free from fear. Just Peace with the Earth – so that life is sustained. Just Peace in the marketplace- so that all may live with dignity. Just Peace among nations- so that human lives are protected. Through our worship, programs, and outreach we seek to be a community of reconciliation, hope, and courage as we work for peace and justice in our world.

Adopted and approved by congregation September 14, 2025