

DOVER VOICES

From Pastor Mindy:

JANUARY 2026



Advent has come and gone, we talked about getting ready, preparing ourselves but most especially preparing our hearts for the coming of our Savior, who came as a tiny baby, born in a dirty, dark, cold, smelly stable. For four weeks, we lit the Advent candles to help us prepare. Leaning into what the prophet Isaiah was teaching about what it means to live into God's world, where the lion and lamb lie together in peace.

On Christmas Eve we lit the Christ candle to share the light of Christ with the world. Then came the Christmas season, the time when we gather after Christmas to share the joy, the love, to teach one another, to know that "*nothing is impossible with God*". Luke 1:37 Mary's faith is so strong, that she places herself in God's hands... "*Here am I, the servant of the Lord; let it be with me according to your word.*" Luke 1:38

Epiphany, begins on January 6, the season of light. "*Arise, shine; for your light has come, and the glory of the Lord has risen upon you.*" Isaiah 60:1

Do we see the light shining, do we place ourselves in God's hands?

There were some horrible, tragic things that happened in the seasons leading up to Epiphany. On the first day of Hanukkah on a beach in Australia, people were celebrating their faith. In the midst of this sacred celebration some were killed, and others hurt. Brown University, as the students were studying for finals, students were killed. A son killed his parents. My friends, we must take action and live into the light. What that means for each of us is different.

"The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness shall not overcome it." John 1:5

God's light shines in us, in how we treat one another, in what we say and how we live. The light of Christ shines in how we love and live together within our family and within our world. When we say mean things, when we set out to hurt someone especially anonymously, we aren't sharing the light of Christ. I invite you to share the light of Christ with others. When we don't stand up for God's love for all people, when we become complacent when others are killed, when we don't even blink anymore at shootings, we aren't living the light of Christ.

Christ's light is shining...Thanks be to God!

Pastor Mindy





Do you have Good News to Share for the newsletter?

About happenings at Dover UCC or celebrations in your life. Please send to 😊 Amy Storms (amy-storms@att.net or 314-704-7534). Pictures appreciated but not required.

Cookie walk/silent auction raises over \$2,000!

Over \$2,000 was raised at the cookie walk and silent auction. The award for best bakers should definitely go to Dover!!! Thanks to all who participated. The money will go towards April's Back Bay Mission trip.

For more information about the Mission trip—questions, interest in participating, etc.—contact Martha Vivona.



Finley Keller named "Top Kicker in D2" for the State of Ohio!

Finley is a senior at North Ridgeville, and was not only named to the First Team-All Ohio, he was named the top kicker for D2 in the State!

Finley is the son of Amy & Brent Keller, and the grandson of Bette & Mike English.

Congratulations, Finley!!



A Delightful Poetry Event

On December 7, folks had a wonderful time reading their favorite poems and even some that they had written themselves.



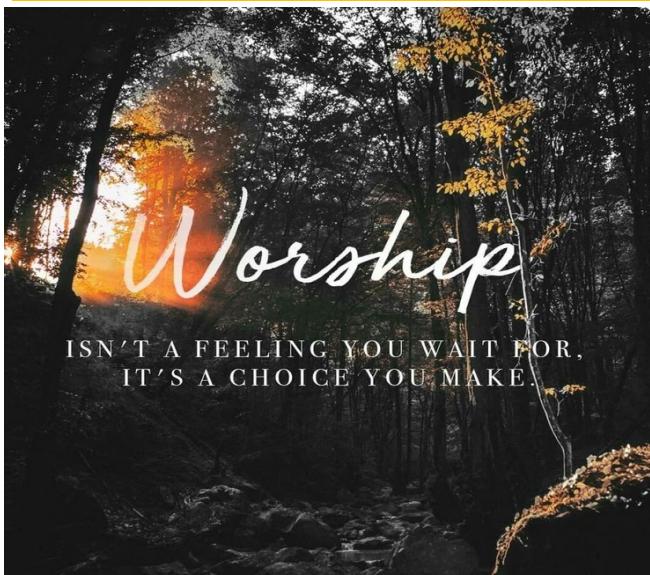
Dover Santas join Project Noelle to make Christmas merry for 39 kiddos!

Even with a late start and early deadline, Dover UCC folks came through! We collected 39 boxes of Christmas gifts for the children of Project Noelle and the Missions committee chair put together the last set of gifts.

Project Noelle is a charity which assists the children who have innocently suffered due to a parent's overdose death, prison, or active addiction.



JOIN US FOR WORSHIP



We have two services every Sunday morning, one at 8:15 AM in our chapel, which is a more informal service, and the second at 10:00 AM in the sanctuary, where you will hear a variety of music styles from contemporary praise to traditional hymns. Pastor Melinda Quellhorst's message is sure to inspire.

Our 10:00 AM service is also live-streamed on Facebook (Dover Congregational UCC) and on the home page of our website, <https://www.doverucc.org>. Recorded services

will be available on our website under the 'Worship' tab immediately after the service.



Faith Formation and Faith Explorers are in full swing. and our children are learning about prayer and kindness. Come grow with us—there's something for every age! Any questions—please contact Jacquie DelMonte. 440-463-6460.

~ MISSIONS TEAM MOMENTS ~

The turning of the calendar from 2025 into 2026 brings moments of both reflection and resolve. We as a team will be looking back to see what worked and what didn't; what we accomplished and what we still have to do; how we can refresh and renew ourselves and our commitment to ways we can help make this A Just World for All.

I am so proud of our team and we are all so proud of our church! More children have access to books, more women have access to confidence-building feminine hygiene supplies, more people have been able to begin rebuilding after a disaster. Our LGBTQ+ siblings as well as those on the broad spectrum of autism feel more loved and supported. People affected by gun violence feel heard and cared for. The unhoused are welcomed and those living in areas of food insecurity are fed. The often-forgotten innocents of the opioid epidemic were remembered at Easter and Christmas.

Two of our most needed efforts will remain ongoing through the new year. More and more people are worried about the changes in policy that cause them to make difficult decisions about how to best budget their income with the least amount of harm to their families. Disasters are a force of nature that cannot be avoided. Our food drive and our partnership with the UCC's Disaster Response Network directly help those most in need.

We are researching new ways to make a positive difference from building beds to providing support to immigrants; from hosting educational sessions to joining with other churches who share our vision of turning the words of love Jesus taught us into action. We would love you to join us in any way that touches your heart. Remember, every member of our church is a Missions Team member!

Peace,
Judy Brizzolara
Missions Team Leader
judybdoverucc@aol.com

Mary Ann Brizzolara, Gail Cordy, Heather Harris, Joe Healey (Street Ministry), Jan Jones, Ann Lew, Judy MacKeigan, Andy Meder, Sharrie Nichols (Environmental Justice), Amy Storms, Martha Vivona





Forgiveness- It's Good for your Health!

Who hasn't been hurt by the actions or words of others? These wounds can leave lasting feelings of resentment, bitterness and anger — sometimes even hatred. But if you hold on to that pain, you might be the one who pays most dearly. By embracing forgiveness, you can also embrace peace and hope. Consider how forgiveness can lead you down the path of physical, emotional and spiritual well-being. Your holiday season may be much more joyful!

What is forgiveness?

Forgiveness means different things to different people. But in general, it involves an intentional decision to let go of resentment and anger. The act that hurt or offended you might always be with you., but working on forgiveness can lessen its grip on you. It can help free

you from the control of the person who harmed you. Sometimes, forgiveness might even lead to feelings of understanding, empathy and compassion for the one who hurt you.

Forgiveness doesn't mean forgetting or excusing the harm done to you. It also doesn't necessarily mean making up with the person who caused the harm. **Forgiveness brings a kind of peace that allows you to focus on yourself and helps you go on with life.**

What are the benefits of forgiving someone?

Letting go of grudges and bitterness can make way for improved health and peace of mind. Forgiveness can lead to:

- Healthier relationships.
- Improved mental health.
- Less anxiety, stress and hostility.
- Fewer symptoms of depression.
- Lower blood pressure.
- A stronger immune system.
- Improved heart health.

Improved self-esteem.

Being hurt by someone, particularly someone you love and trust, can cause anger, sadness and confusion. If you dwell on hurtful events or situations, grudges filled with resentment and hostility can take root. If you allow negative feelings to crowd out positive feelings, you might find yourself swallowed up by bitterness or a sense of injustice.

Some people are naturally more forgiving than others, but even if you tend to hold a grudge, almost anyone can learn to be more forgiving.

What are the effects of holding a grudge?

If you struggle with finding forgiveness, you might:

- Bring anger and bitterness into new relationships and experiences.
- Become so wrapped up in the wrong that you can't enjoy the present.
- Become depressed, irritable or anxious.
- Feel at odds with your spiritual beliefs.

Lose valuable and enriching connections with others.

How do I move toward a state of forgiveness?

Forgiveness is a commitment to change and takes practice. To move toward forgiveness, try to

- Recognize the value of forgiveness and how it can improve your life.
- Identify what needs healing and who you want to forgive.

- Join a support group or see a counselor.
- Acknowledge your emotions about the harm done to you, recognize how those emotions affect your behavior, and work to release them.
- Choose to forgive the person who's offended you. Release the control and power that the offending person and situation have had in your life.

What happens if I can't forgive someone?

Forgiveness can be hard, especially if the person who hurt you doesn't admit wrongdoing. If you find yourself stuck:

- Practice empathy. Try seeing the situation from the other person's point of view.
- Ask yourself about the circumstances that may have led the other person to behave in such a way. Perhaps you would have reacted similarly if you faced the same situation.
 - Reflect on times when others have forgiven you.
 - Write in a journal, pray or use guided meditation. Or talk with a person you've found to be wise and compassionate, such as a spiritual leader, a mental health provider, or an impartial loved one or friend.

Be aware that forgiveness is a process. Even small hurts may need to be revisited and forgiven again and again. If the hurtful event involved someone whose relationship you value, forgiveness may lead to reconciliation. But that isn't always the case. Reconciliation might be impossible if the offender has died or is unwilling to communicate with you. In other cases, reconciliation might not be appropriate.

Forgiveness is possible, even if reconciliation isn't!

What if the person I'm forgiving doesn't change?

Getting another person to change isn't the point of forgiveness. It's about focusing on what you can control now. Think of forgiveness more about how it can change your life by bringing you peace, happiness, and emotional and spiritual healing. **Forgiveness can take away the power the other person continues to have in your life.**

What if I'm the one who needs forgiveness?

The first step is to honestly assess and acknowledge the wrongs you've done and how they have affected others. Avoid judging yourself too harshly. If you're truly sorry for something you've said or done and want forgiveness, consider reaching out to those you've harmed. Speak of your sincere sorrow or regret. Ask for forgiveness without making excuses.

You can't force someone to forgive you. Others need to move to forgiveness in their own time. Remember, forgiveness is a process. Whatever happens, commit to treating others with compassion, empathy and respect.

"Forgiveness is unlocking the door to set someone free and realizing you were the prisoner!" — Max Lucado
Information taken from MayoClinic.org

Blessings and Prayers for a Healthy and Happy Holiday Season! ~ Julie Kiefer, RN



Just a few thoughts for the New Year...

“God has granted us another year—may you look ahead without fear. Celebrate this brand-new year!”

Catherine Pulsifer



“A happy New Year! Grant that I may bring no tear to any eye when this New Year in time shall end. Let it be said I’ve played the friend, have lived and loved and labored here, and made of it a happy year.”

Edgar A. Guest

“We pray that with the birth of the New Year there will come a hope that peace will soon reign throughout the entire world. That there will be less greed, bitterness and hatred, but instead a greater love for humanity will prevail.”

Unknown

“What have we to fear? God is all-sufficient for the coming year.”

Frances Ridley Havergal

“New Year is a perfect time for reflection, with no regret for the past and no anxiety for the future; a time for bountiful celebration, and thank God who is the source of all.”

Roela Victoria Rivera

“This for the New Year my wish and my plea—Lord, make a regular man out of me.”

Edgar A. Guest

“Go forth into the New Year with brave heart. When fortune smiles, smile with her. When fortune frowns smile the more, and trust in God.”

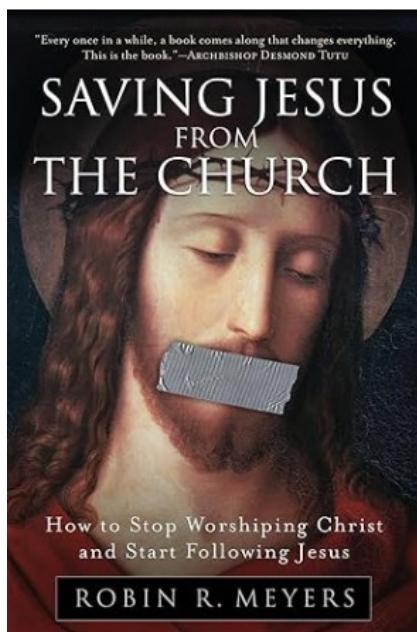
George L. Perin

“This year, instead of spending valuable energy pursuing New Year’s resolutions that will most likely be abandoned by January’s end, let’s invest our previous time pursuing God’s plans and priorities for our lives!”

Ramona Vincent

January 2026

	1/4	1/11	1/8	1/25
Altar Flowers				
Coffee	Maria Velez			Calling & Caring
Liturgist	Judy MacKeigan	John McDougald	Don Nichols	Sharon Nichols



Discussion of the book "Saving Jesus from the Church" by Robin R. Myers will begin on January 10 at 10:30 AM at the Nichols home – located at 47 Renaissance Pkwy on Jones Road in Olmsted Twp. If you'd like to attend but do not have a book let "Dr." Don know, the cost is \$5.00 dollars. Dr. Don's phone # is 330-417-9874 and the email is donsharon2025@gmail.com.

Sharing a ride is advised.

**ARTICLES / PICTURES FOR THE FEBRUARY EDITION
OF DOVER VOICES ARE DUE:**

WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 21st !!!!!!

Please send all submissions to:

doverucc44145@gmail.com before that date.

“READING IS AN EXERCISE IN EMPATHY; AN EXERCISE IN WALKING IN SOMEONE ELSE’S SHOES FOR A WHILE.”

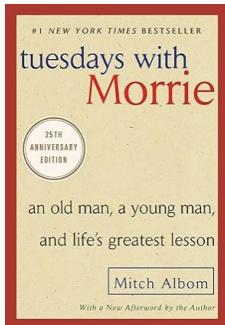
~MALORIE BLACKMAN

MONDAY AFTERNOON Book Group

Tuesdays with Morrie: An Old Man, a Young Man, and Life’s Greatest Lesson
By
Mitch Albom

Monday, January 5th
12:30 PM Parlor

“Maybe it was a grandparent, or a teacher, or a colleague. Someone older, patient and wise, who understood you when you were young and searching, helped you see the world as a more profound place, gave you sound advice to help you make your way through it. For Mitch Albom, that person was his college professor Morrie Schwartz.”

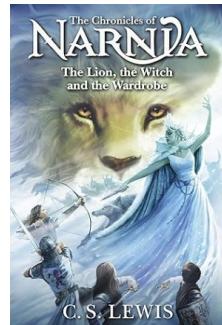


EVENING Book Group

The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe
By
C.S. Lewis

Monday, January 26th
7:00 PM Pam Compton’s house

“Four siblings step through a mysterious wardrobe and into the magical Narnia, a once-peaceful land now frozen in snow and stone by the cruelty of the evil White Witch. Only the return of the Great Lion, Aslan, can put an end to the White Witch’s tyranny and restore peace. But for winter to meet its death and spring to come again, a great sacrifice must be made. . . .”



Reading in the month of January

January is often associated with new beginnings and resolutions, making it an ideal month for reading. The month is named after the Roman god Janus, symbolizing the transition between the old and the new year. It is a time for reflection, setting goals, and starting fresh. Following are a couple of selections:

Hamnet by Maggie O’Farrell

An emotional portrait of William Shakespeare’s family during the plague years.

Tomorrow, and Tomorrow, and Tomorrow by Gabrielle Zevin

A novel about a collaboration, creativity, ambition, disability, desire, and devotion—the story of Sam and Sadie’s decades-long relationship.

Maggie; or, A Man and a Woman Walk Into a Bar by Katie Yee

A meditation on mid-life, motherhood, and the sustaining power of female friendships.

Nights of Plague by Orhan Pamuk

An Ottoman-plague novel mirroring our own recent years: fear, rumor, nationalism, religious divides, suspicion of science, political opportunism.

Lincoln on the Verge by Ted Widmer

Lincoln’s 13-day journey for his first inauguration unfolds like a political thriller: assassination plots, national fracture, private security guards, double-spies, and a leader stepping into history with the heavy awareness of what might be required of him.

FOR YOUR INFORMATION

The generosity of our congregation is evident every single day. If you are mailing in your pledge to the church office or a donation to another ministry, **please indicate on the "Memo" section of the check, e.g. pledge, Denison food pantry, Calling & Caring, etc.**



Online Giving

app and be directed to our giving page on our website. Contact Jane Coil if you have any questions how to use the online giving feature. doverucc44145@gmail.com



The Dover website (doverucc.org) provides an easy link for making online donations--one-time, recurring or to special funds. You can make a notation in the "Note" field: if you are leaving a memorial-- who the donation is in memory of, etc. OR -- you can scan this QR code with the camera on your phone or a QR reader



HOSPITAL/HOME VISITS

Please notify the church office at 440-871-1050 if you are admitted to the hospital so a phone call or visit from our parish nurse Julie or a member of the Calling & Caring committee can be arranged. When you are recovering, Julie and members of the Calling & Caring committee are available to give you a call; just call the church office to let them know you desire a call. We are not notified by hospitals of admissions.



Please notify the church office if you have a change of address, telephone number(s) or a new email address. A church directory is emailed quarterly to congregation members, and we would like to have the correct information for you!

HAVE A CONCERN OR QUESTION FOR CHURCH COUNCIL? MEET YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL MEMBERS.



Moderator - Adam Jakubiak
Vice Moderator - Judy MacKeigan
Clerk - Sharron Wilkins
Treasurer - Liz Emmer

Members at Large:

Judy Brizzolara, Sandy Burkey, Terry Chadwick, Millie Harley, Reggie Pratt, Dan Read, Scott Thompson

Ex-oficio Members:

Rev. Mindy Quellhorst

Serving the Church

Adam Jakubiak.....Council Moderator
Judy MacKeigan Council Vice Moderator
Sharron Wilkins Council Clerk
Liz Emmer Council Treasurer
Jane Coil.....Office Administrator

Rev. Mindy Quellhorst.....Pastor
Rev. Scott Patterson Pastor Emeritus
Jamie Kunselman Music Director
Ben MalkevitchOrganist
Julie Kiefer, R. N.Parish Nurse

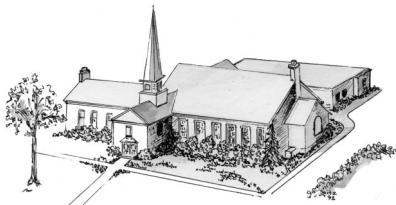
Come to me, all you who are weary and burdened

Matthew 11:28

~ Prayer Requests---Please pray for God to be with these individuals, and for them to feel God's presence in the midst of their concerns:

Sandy Aber, Chae Aschliman (Friend of Pastor Mindy's), Karen Bellebuono (Friend of Mary Ann & Joe Brizzolara and Judy Brizzolara), Janet Leopold-Caden (friend of Judy & Dave MacKeigan), Carson (Son of Gail Cordy's daughter's friend), Rev. Wayne Chasney, Mark Chomoa (Rae-Rita Chomoa's son), Aida Colon-Velez, Gail Cordy, Betty Correll (Sandy Burkey's mother), Eli (Friend of Judy Brizzolara), Ed Fiskamp (on the loss of his wife, Cheryl Bambach-Fiskamp, friends of Judy Kean), Dale Gregg, Sharon Hobbs (Friend of Pastor Mindy's), David Magill (Carol McDougald's brother), Jim & Kaye Mesaros, Inge Moorman, Mike Pentek, People of Ukraine, Israel, Palestine, Gaza, Myanmar/Middle East, Bob Pozwick (Pat Houser's brother), Pastor Mindy, Roger Stewart

2239 Dover Center Road
Westlake, OH 44145



440-871-1050
doverucc.org



*No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*

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