



# THE NEW DOVER HERALD

May 2024

Vol. 211

*A Ministry Newsletter of New Dover United Methodist Church*

## CHUCK'S CHURCH CHAT

Saints,

Grace to you and peace...

Having a grandfather (World War I), uncle (World War II), and father (Korean War) who served in the armed forces, Memorial Day has always meant a lot to our family. For many years, before we gathered in the afternoon at Aunt Betty's house in Franklinville for the most looked-forward-to picnic of the year, there was the annual parade down Delsea Drive in Clayton, New Jersey, that end at the Veteran's Cemetery where a tribute would be offered to our nation's fallen heroes.

For the Memorial Day parade of 1993, my grandfather, Harry Coblentz, was honored to be the Grand Marshall. At the time Grandpop was 96, and the oldest surviving World War I veteran in town. Although he was still in pretty good physical shape for his advanced age, Grandpop's short-term memory had slipped quite a bit, so on given days he was prone to forget where he was and tended to repeat himself quite a bit. Despite that, he maintained a positive attitude, and loved to laugh. Throughout his long life, one of his bits of wisdom he often shared was *"You can't beat fun, I don't care who you are!"*

So, on this particular Memorial Day, 31 years ago, my Dad and I stood on the curb under bright but cloudy skies, waiting for Grandpop's convertible limo to cruise by so we could throw him a wave. Dad had his ever-present VHS camcorder on his shoulder, and I had my Canon AE1 camera all ready to preserve the moment. Pretty soon we heard the approaching drums of the Clayton High School Marching Band following in the wake of the Color Guard, and right behind them came the Grand Marshall's limo. Despite his memory issues, Grandpop knew just what to do when he was in a parade so as he was driven by he waved in our direction and yelled *"Happy Days!"* Once he passed, Dad and I got in the car and made our way to the Memorial Day program.

On the south side of the cemetery a microphone, podium, and speaker had been set up, with chairs along the cyclone fence where local dignitaries, including Grandpop, were seated. Dad and I walked up to him to see how he was doing. With his VFW cap perched proudly on his head, Grandpop was smiling broadly and seemed so happy to be out for the day. *"That was some parade!"* he declared. Pretty soon it was announced that the program was about to start, so Dad and I walked back to the gathered crowd. Following the playing of The National Anthem, one local politician after another came to the mic. Not to be overly critical, but what I remember most about their speeches was that they were immediately forgettable! Most had not prepared remarks that were anywhere near worthy of the solemn occasion. One of them actually said the undignified part out loud: *"I know you all can't wait to get to your picnics, so I'll be brief."* Really?

Finally, one of the older gentlemen, who also wore a VFW cap and had known him for years came to the mic, pointed toward my Grandpop and paid tribute, not only to his service in the "Great War," but also to his decades as a community leader, World War II town warden, Gloucester County freeholder, and member of the Board of Elections. And then, to the surprise of many, least of all me, Grandpop rose up from his folding chair and, with an unsteady but constant gate, made his way to the mic. *"Oh, you want to say something Harry?!"* the gentleman at the mic asked.

*"Is Grandpop going to speak?"* I nervously asked Dad. Because of his memory loss, I was pretty sure he didn't know what the occasion was, and the last thing I wanted was for Grandpop to stumble and be at a loss for words in front of such a big crowd. But Dad, focusing the lens of the VHS camera, just winked and smiled, *"Don't worry; he'll do great."*

And turned out, Dad was right, because unlike the previous "speeches" offered that day, what followed has been forever etched in my memory. Throughout his long life, Grandpop had always been a polished public speaker and that morning, in less than a minute, he showed every speaker who had gone

before what it meant to rise to the occasion! With a voice that dispelled the clouds, he began, *“I just want to say how happy I am to be here with you on this august occasion. I have always been proud to have served my country. And while I don’t recognize everyone in the crowd here this morning, I just want to tell each and every one of you that it’s great to be alive! God bless you all!”* With that Grandpop turned and walked back to his seat with thunderous applause rising from the crowd. With just those few “appropriate remarks, Grandpop had reminded everyone what Memorial Day was all about. I have never been more proud in my life. *“I told you!”* said Dad.

Grandpop lived on for another year, just a month shy of his 98<sup>th</sup> birthday, and with his passing joined the myriads of veterans whose service we honor every Memorial Day. Since then, Dad and Uncle Bill have joined that heavenly gathering, and we will honor them all this Memorial Day.

You know, one of the first things I realized once I started my ministry at New Dover was the great respect and honor this church gives to its veterans and the memory of those who served and have passed. By honoring them, we honor the God who called them to serve. I close with a couple of verses from “For the Fallen,” a poem by Laurence Binyon (1869-1943)...

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:  
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.  
At the going down of the sun and in the morning  
We will remember them.

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,  
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;  
As the stars are starry in the time of our darkness,  
To the end, to the end they remain.

Amen,

*Rev Chuck*



Harry Mansfield Coblentz (1896-1994)  
USS Leviathan, World War I

# KEEP US IN YOUR PRAYERS



Manny & Nora De La Paz  
Debbie Ladym  
Shirley & Lamont Shaffer  
Beverly Vollmar  
Evelyn MacKenzie  
Fran Livecchia  
Gail Engel  
Connor Chin  
Leyla Dixon

Jerry DiRenzo  
Service men & women  
Veterans  
Homeless, unemployed  
& uninsured  
The People of Ukraine  
For Peace in the ongoing  
conflict in Israel & Gaza

Victims & their Families of  
mass shootings  
All Elderly of NDUMC

Pray for all those affected by Natural Disasters, those suffering with addictions, those suffering from depression, Victims of terrorism & violence, all national leaders, and all those serving at New Dover UMC.

All doctors, nurses, EMT, teachers, grocery store workers, janitors, and all other frontline workers. Thank you and God Bless.

If you wish to add anyone to the 2023 permanent prayer list, please contact Karen Rowland at [krowland648@yahoo.com](mailto:krowland648@yahoo.com)

## FROM YOUR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP

### *In This Issue:*

- Chuck's Church Chat
- Keep Us in Your Prayers
- Sermon of the Month
- Rise Against Hunger
- Stewardship Corner
- Mays Birthdays and Anniversaries
- Mays Calendar

PLEASE JOIN US FOR PRAYER FELLOWSHIP EVERY  
WEDNESDAY MORNING AT 10 AM



 Bible App

# SERMON OF THE MONTH

## "Up a Tree"

*(Preached Sunday, March 17, 2024)*

### Luke 19:1-10

**Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through it. A man was there named Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax-collector and was rich. He was trying to see who Jesus was, but on account of the crowd he could not, because he was short in stature. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore tree to see him, because he was going to pass that way. When Jesus came to the place, he looked up and said to him, 'Zacchaeus, hurry and come down; for I must stay at your house today.' So he hurried down and was happy to welcome him. All who saw it began to grumble and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.' Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, 'Look, half of my possessions, Lord, I will give to the poor; and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will pay back four times as much.' Then Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house, because he too is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek out and to save the lost.'**

Jericho. We know this city that Jesus has entered. This is not the first time we have encountered Jericho in the Bible. Whenever we hear "Jericho" what comes to mind? Right- its walls! Jericho is forever remembered as the city of the walls, built to protect its people from attack. Walls built to give its inhabitants a feeling of security, walls built to keep those on the inside separated from those on the outside. The walls of Jericho were thick and strong, built to hold off any attack that an enemy would dare attempt. But while those great walls of stone and mortar rendered Jericho nearly invulnerable to the attacks of human armies, those same walls came crumbling to the ground when the force opposing them was the will of God and the faith of a people. Most of us remember from Sunday School that, obeying God's command, the invading Hebrews marched around the fortress city, blowing their trumpets and shouting to the tops of their lungs, and the walls long thought impregnable cracked and crumbled and fell!

Now the memory of the attack led by Joshua was a thousand years old, buried deep in the Hebrew past, and as Jesus entered the city, the great stones had long since eroded into rubble; there were no walls left in Jericho. Or were there? On the way to Jerusalem, God, this time in the person of Jesus, would once again encounter this city and lay siege to one more wall that was constructed to separate people, one from another.

Zacchaeus was the chief tax collector in Jericho. Living in a nation held in the iron grip of Rome was not an easy task for one who made his living as an agent of that Empire. Zacchaeus was a Jew who worked for Rome, and as such was held in the absolute lowest regard by those who lived in and around him. To say that he was despised by his fellow Jews would be a gross understatement. All we need to know about Zacchaeus is that he had the title "Chief Tax Collector" behind his name. His job was to go door to door collecting his neighbor's hard earned money and turning it over to Rome. It was a job for which he was well-compensated. In an age of oppressive poverty, Zacchaeus was very well off indeed, and in the eyes of his neighbors that made things much worse. No doors were opened to Zacchaeus once he finished his work for the day. No neighbors who would invite him into their home for bread and wine. No children to smile at him as he made his rounds. No, the kids in his neighborhood were taught by their parents to turn their faces away from him as he passed.

So we see, even though the city walls of Jericho had come crashing down a thousand years before, a great wall yet existed that kept his neighbors from knowing the workings of Zacchaeus heart. And these so-called neighbors were determined to keep him on the other side of that massive

wall they had constructed. So no one knew, and no one cared, that this man they despised had within him a heart sinking in loneliness and despair, a heart seeking to be understood, a heart in search of forgiveness, acceptance, in search of any sign of love.

One day while making his rounds, Zacchaeus overheard the news spreading through the town that a prophet from Galilee, with a reputation for healing the sick, exorcizing demons, feeding the hungry, and new teaching about unconditional love and forgiveness in place of judgment would be passing through Jericho. The whole town was abuzz with excitement, lining the streets, just to get a glimpse of him. But more than anyone in town, Zacchaeus wanted to see Jesus, and so that afternoon he made his way to the main street through town hoping to catch a glimpse of him. But what's the one thing about Zacchaeus from Sunday School we will always remember?

Well he was, to coin a phrase, built "low to the curb". No matter how tall we may be now, we all know what that's like, right? Think back and remember the frustration you felt when you were a little kid trying to watch a parade! Remember getting stuck behind some lady in a gigantic hat and miss float after float and band after band. Zacchaeus must've felt the same way, but on that day he would not be denied. Bound and determined to see for himself this man of God, Zacchaeus ran up ahead of the crowd, found an unoccupied sycamore tree, and up he climbed! A dust cloud was rising to the north and soon the great mob of disciples, followers, and curiosity seekers came through the old city gate, marching down the street.

Picture the scene: Jesus walking at the head of the crowd, onlookers lined three and four deep on the side, and there, rising above and behind the wall of people, a lone tree, and within its branches a man. A man scorned by the town; a man clinging to the limbs of a tree, physically separated from Jesus by a big wall of humanity. A man desperately in need of acceptance. How frustrating it must have been for Zacchaeus, to have lived his life outside the walls built by his neighbors, and now finding himself kept apart from the only one who could help him by yet another wall, ironically made up of those same neighbors. Oh well, at least he'd get a glimpse of Jesus as he passed. It would have to do. But if there was one thing about this man who was passing through Jericho it was this: he never met a wall he couldn't bring down!

Gazing up over the crowd into the tree Jesus saw right through Zacchaeus' title and reputation and looked into his very heart. Jesus alone sensed the desperation of this broken man, the loneliness, the longing to be understood. So stopping his parade, Jesus looked up, probably would have shaken his head and smiled. To paraphrase he shouted "*Zacchaeus! Get your butt down outta that tree! Today I coming over to your place.*"

A sudden hush fell over the crowd. "*Whose house did he say he was going to?! Zacchaeus? Zacchaeus the tax collector?! Naugh man!* But sure enough, as they looked on, Zacchaeus clambered down the tree, meandered through the wall of humanity and walked up to Jesus with a broad smile on his face. Why was he smiling? Because with that one declaration, Jesus had breached the wall and gained entrance to the heart of a person who was struggling to regain his dignity as a child of God. But of course the crowd refused to share in Zacchaeus' joy.

Quite the opposite; the text tells us that "*ALL who saw it began to grumble, and said, 'He has gone to be the guest of one who is a sinner.'*"

"*Sinner!*" With that word of judgment the crowd had drawn the line, reinforcing that seemingly impregnable wall between themselves and Zacchaeus, a wall they were very content to let stand and reinforce if necessary. *Sinner* to them meant someone who was unclean, unworthy to be the company of the pure and the righteous. But along comes this stranger in town, Jesus and what does he do? With merely a word of greeting he lets everyone there know that he sees Zacchaeus as more than a tax collector. That despite their judgments, he was no different than any of them- a child of God, a fellow traveler on the journey. And so, with Jesus' simple gesture, the great wall separating those on the inside from those on the outside came crashing to the ground just as Jericho's immense stone walls had fallen a thousand years before.

We know this city, Jericho, do we not? Just as we know the nation in which we live. Like ancient Jericho, we have found ways to keep those "on the outside" separated from those of us "on the inside." The residents of Jericho used the phrase "*tax collector*" as the foundation on which they built the walls to keep Zacchaeus from entering their circle of fellowship. The negative feelings associated with the term tax collector cannot be overemphasized. If you wanted to pick one vocation that would assure ostracism by the Jewish community, you couldn't top being a tax collector for Rome. It was probably for this reason Jesus so often employed tax collectors in his illustrations and parables. Now, in spite of April 15<sup>th</sup> we don't have anywhere near a negative regard for the "collectors" of taxes in our society today; we mainly see them as simply doing their job. We wouldn't exclude them from any of our clubs or social organizations, let alone churches. Calling someone a "*tax collector*" doesn't have the same effect it once did. Heck, one of my best friends works for the IRS!

No, we use other phrases to exile individuals and groups from our in-crowds. We continue to construct high, thick walls on foundations whose bricks are made of all manner of racist, sexist, antisemitic, and homophobic slanders. It just so happens that in this story they all fall under the label, "Tax Collector." And while we the church gather on the sides of the street every Sunday morning to see Jesus pass by, those we've walled off are, like Zacchaeus, are forced to climb a tree simply so they might peer over us to get a mere glimpse of the Savior. In other words, we the church, who are called to bring Jesus to the outcasts rather than do so, instead obscure Jesus behind walls of our own construction. And so they are still out there and they are many, so many, desperate for just a friendly word, a demonstration of trust, hoping that someone like us will tear down those walls to understand the inner workings of their heart that we might know them for who they truly are, children of God, confused and hurting... just like us.

Where do you and I find ourselves in the story of Zacchaeus? Would we acknowledge and approach him as Jesus did? Or would we stand with the crowd and grumble while Jesus leaves us to go have dinner with him? Shall we accept prejudices that our fears produce and keep the Zacchaeuses of the world on the outside? Or shall we, in the name of Jesus, break through those walls?

Before we answer too quickly, we need to consider the other lead actor in our story who, like Zacchaeus, eventually found himself on the outside. Ironically, he too wound up in a tree, but unlike Zacchaeus he didn't climb there; he was nailed there. And why? Because he was judged by his own people as contradictory from what the religious leaders of his day declared to be "acceptable." Yes, the one upon that tree is the very same one who called to Zacchaeus just a few days before in Jericho. He dared to love as God loves, unconditionally, with no weight given to labels or public perceptions, and for that he was crucified. Saints, it is because of that sacrificial love, you and I need feel alienated ever again, no matter how many of our neighbors want to label us. You and I don't have to climb a tree to see him, for once we accept his love into our hearts he dwells within us eternally.

And when he lives here, all the walls *ALL*, come tumbling down. And because we are filled with his spirit we know that no matter how often we are tempted to get swept up in the whims of public opinion, no matter how certain groups in our society wish us to despise others they deem less worthy, and no matter how our neighbors may grumble whenever we reach out to a brother or a sister in a tree on the outside, like Jesus we will stop! And we will call to that person, and we will let that person know that he or she is loved, and that they have a place in God's Kingdom. So Saints, let's get out there and be Jesus for every Zacchaeus we meet!

# Sunday School Easter Egg Hunt



*Easter Sunday  
March 31, 2024*

*Pictures taken by  
Brian Rademacher*



## STEWARDSHIP CORNER

What does it mean to volunteer?



A volunteer is a person who freely offers to perform a service or other undertaking. It is someone who willingly offers to do something without being forced or paid. Volunteers are people who see a need, and step forward to address the need.

Volunteering can bring meaning and purpose to your life, while increasing self-esteem and wellbeing. Who wouldn't want that?! It can also relieve stress, and positively impact your organization and community. Another benefit to volunteering is the sense of social connection it provides. It allows you to be part of a group and potentially meet new people. Volunteering can also give you the opportunity to do something you enjoy but wouldn't do as a full-time job. You may not want to teach full-time, but maybe you want to teach Sunday School, or volunteer at VBS, or work with a youth group.

Opportunities for volunteering in the church are always there. Don't wait to be asked, find out where you fit, and let us know.

## FINANCIAL NEWS

The Finance Committee is continuing to provide financial information. The following provides the income and expenses as of March 2024. The church income includes what is provided to the church in pledge envelopes to current expense and other income sources such as building rentals, flea market and various fundraising activities. Church expenses are shown which include salaries, utilities, conference obligations and other costs to keep the church operating.

| New Dover United Methodist Church Operating Fund |                |                 |
|--|----------------|-----------------|
|  | 2024           |                 |
|  | March          | Year to Date    |
| Income   | \$ 29,279.57   | \$ 82,612.59    |
| Expenses   | \$ (39,523.88) | \$ (107,797.47) |
| Difference                                       | \$ (10,244.31) | \$ (25,184.88)  |





May 18, 2024  
WILL BE  
*"A DAY WITHOUT  
HUNGER"*

JOIN US AT  
NEW DOVER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
AS WE ASSEMBLE  
30,000 MEALS  
LET'S "RISE AGAINST HUNGER!"

Look for sign up sheet at the church or go to [www.newdoverumc.org](http://www.newdoverumc.org)  
then follow the link to SignUp Genius.



## May Birthdays

- 1 Arul Reddy Duggimpudi  
Evan Gumbs
- 6 Desdimona Christian
- 10 Phil Davis
- 13 Joseph Bonner
- 14 Thomas Reddy Duggimpudi
- 15 Jake Engel
- 19 Aaron Christie
- 20 Mary Jane Manglapus
- 22 Rajiv Diallye
- 23 Herold Christian  
Christopher Greve  
Fran Livecchia  
Sharonda Meade  
Shirley Shaffer
- 25 Kalindu De Alwis
- 28 Sanjay Christie
- 29 Melissa Owsiany
- 30 Luke Colon  
Jeffrey Rowland

## May Anniversaries

- 7 Mukesh & Sangita Christian
- 12 Tim & Elaine Lindner
- 17 Jeffrey & Karen Rowland
- 19 John & Kirsten Rodriguez
- 24 Tony & Cindy Bonito  
Elton & Michele Nyema
- 27 Lisa & Dave Chesney

# Celebrate!



## 2024 COFFEE HOUSE

"Bon Voyage: Celebrate Cultures, Bring Back Your Stories"  
Hosted by New Dover Youth and Young Adults (YaYA)

Saturday, June 15, 2024



### MORNING (10 to Noon\*\*)

- Open to All Ages
- Brunch and drinks \$\*
- PARTY BASH-Celebrate your or your children's academic achievements with your friends, extra curricular accomplishments, artworks (perform/display), and your unique cultural experiences/narratives WITH YOUR FAMILY and FRIENDS\*

\* Food and drinks will be on sale. Must Sign-up your PARTY BASH with a minimum fee to be included in the BASH. All proceeds to benefit YaYA Ignite Conference as well as local non-profit art

\*\* End times may be subject to change

### EVENING (TBD) 14 years and older





- Open Mic (Sign-up)
- Artists
- Dinner and drinks \$\*
- No entrance fee

Contact:

Aidan O'Rourke for Evening Questions  
Rosie Pang for Morning Questions

# May 2024

| Sun   | Mon  | Tue   | Wed   | Thu                                  | Fri  | Sat  |
|---|--|---|---|--------------------------------------|--|--|
| <br>5<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:15am Worship<br>11:00am Amer Desi<br>11:30am Bell /Choir<br>Practice | 6<br>10:30am Hot Topics<br>7pm Trustees<br>7:30pm AA   | 7<br>7:30-1:30 Flea Market<br>7:30pm BS Troop 44  | 8<br>10:00am Prayer<br>Fellowship<br>6:30 UMW Meeting | 9<br>7:00pm Hot Topics<br>7:30pm AA  | 10<br>8:00am Sandwiches<br>5:00 Kabhoom<br>7:30pm AA<br>7:30pm Small Group | 11<br>9:00am Kabhoom<br>2:00pm D2C<br>5:00pm Praise Service<br>6:15pm Telugu Service<br>7:30pm AA                            |
| 12 Mother's Day<br>No Sunday School<br>10:15am Worship/Bells<br>11:00am Amer Desi<br>11:30am Bell /Choir Practice<br>4:30pm Telugu Service  | 13<br>10:30am Hot Topics<br>7:00pm Nurture<br>7:30pm AA  | 14<br>7:30-1:30 Flea Market<br>7:30pm BS Troop 44 | 15<br>10:00am Prayer<br>Fellowship                    | 16<br>7:00pm Hot Topics<br>7:30pm AA | 17<br>8:00am Sandwiches<br>5:00 Kabhoom<br>7:30pm AA<br>7:30pm Small Group | 18 <b>Rise Against Hunger</b><br>9:00am Kabhoom<br>2:00pm D2C<br>5:00pm Praise Service<br>6:15pm Telugu Service<br>7:30pm AA |
| 19 Pentecost<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:15am Worship<br>11:30am Bell/ Choir<br>Practice  | 20<br>10:30am Hot Topics<br>7pm Worship<br>7:30pm AA   | 21<br>7:30-1:30 Flea Market<br>7:30pm BS Troop 44 | 22<br>10:00am Prayer<br>Fellowship                    | 23<br>7:00pm Hot Topics<br>7:30pm AA | 24<br>8:00am Sandwiches<br>5:00 Kabhoom<br>7:30pm AA<br>7:30pm Small Group | 25<br>9:00am Kabhoom<br>5:00pm Praise Service<br>6:15pm Telugu Service<br>7:30pm AA  |
| 26<br>9:00am Sunday School<br>10:15am Worship<br>11:30am Bell /Choir<br>Practice<br>4:30pm Telugu   | 27 Office Closed<br> Memorial DAY | 28<br>7:30-1:30 Flea Market<br>7:30pm AA          | 29<br>10:00am Prayer<br>Fellowship                    | 30<br>7:00pm Hot Topics<br>7:30pm AA | 31<br>8:00am Sandwiches<br>5:00 Kabhoom<br>7:30pm AA<br>7:30pm Small Group |  |

**NEW DOVER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH  
687 NEW DOVER ROAD  
EDISON, NEW JERSEY 08820**

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
US POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 30054  
New Brunswick, NJ  
08901

***DATED MAIL—DO NOT DELAY***

**RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED**

PLACE MAILING LABEL HERE

# NEW DOVER UNITED METHODIST HERALD

**Church Office 732-381-9478**

**Fax 732-381-9479**

**E-mail : [admin@newdoverumc.org](mailto:admin@newdoverumc.org)**

