stayCONNECTED

Dover First UMC's Weekly Newsletter

October 23, 2026

Let's Worship Together
Sundays at 10:20 a.m.
in the Sanctuary

Nursery Care
Sunday mornings
for children 1 to 3
in rooms 1 and 3

Preschool
Sunday mornings
for children 4 to 6

Children's Ministry
Kidz Min Church
during Sunday Worship

Youth Ministry
Youth Group for grades
middle and high school
Sundays at 6 p.m.

Our Website
Visit **doverfirst.org**
for online services,
special studies,
announcements,
opportunities to serve,
and the church calendar
and ways to give.

News from the Altar Committee

Thanks so much to those who donated to our wreath fund. Three new wreaths were hung on the Wooster Ave doors and three new wreaths on the kitchen and Fellowship Hall doors, all of which can be seasonally decorated. Additionally, we purchased five other wreaths for the winter months, along with magnetic door hooks for all wreaths.

Save the date! We are planning to decorate for Advent and Christmas after the church service on **Sunday, Nov. 22nd**. Advent begins the following Sunday. More details to come.

If you would like to place an arrangement on the altar, please sign up on the flower chart on the bulletin board in the lobby. Large, medium or small arrangements welcome.

Bow makers needed! If you have a knack for making bows and are willing to share your talents, please contact Jan Warden or Debbie in the church office for more info.

If you enjoy sewing and would like to help with several lobby shelf coverings (similar to table runners) the altar committee has fabric available. Please see Jan Warden or contact Debbie in the church office for more details.

- Jan Warden, Altar Committee Chairperson

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United Against Hunger

Dover First UMC vs Phila First UMC

Our Annual Rivalry is On!

October 4th thru 25th

Which church will collect the most monetary donations for the fight against hunger in our community?

This year's friendly rivalry will support:
Greater Dover-New Phila Food Pantry

Please note on your check or envelope that your special Donation to Dover First UMC is for United Against Hunger.

Trunk or Treat



Trunk or Treat

Sunday, October 25 from 5:30 to 7 p.m.

Visit our decorated cars for treats and enjoy a free evening of fun with crafts, cookies, hot chocolate and hot cider.

We'll move indoors in the event of inclement weather.

Dover First United Methodist Church

Parking Lot, Pavilion and Fellowship Hall

1725 N. Wooster Ave in Dover, Ohio



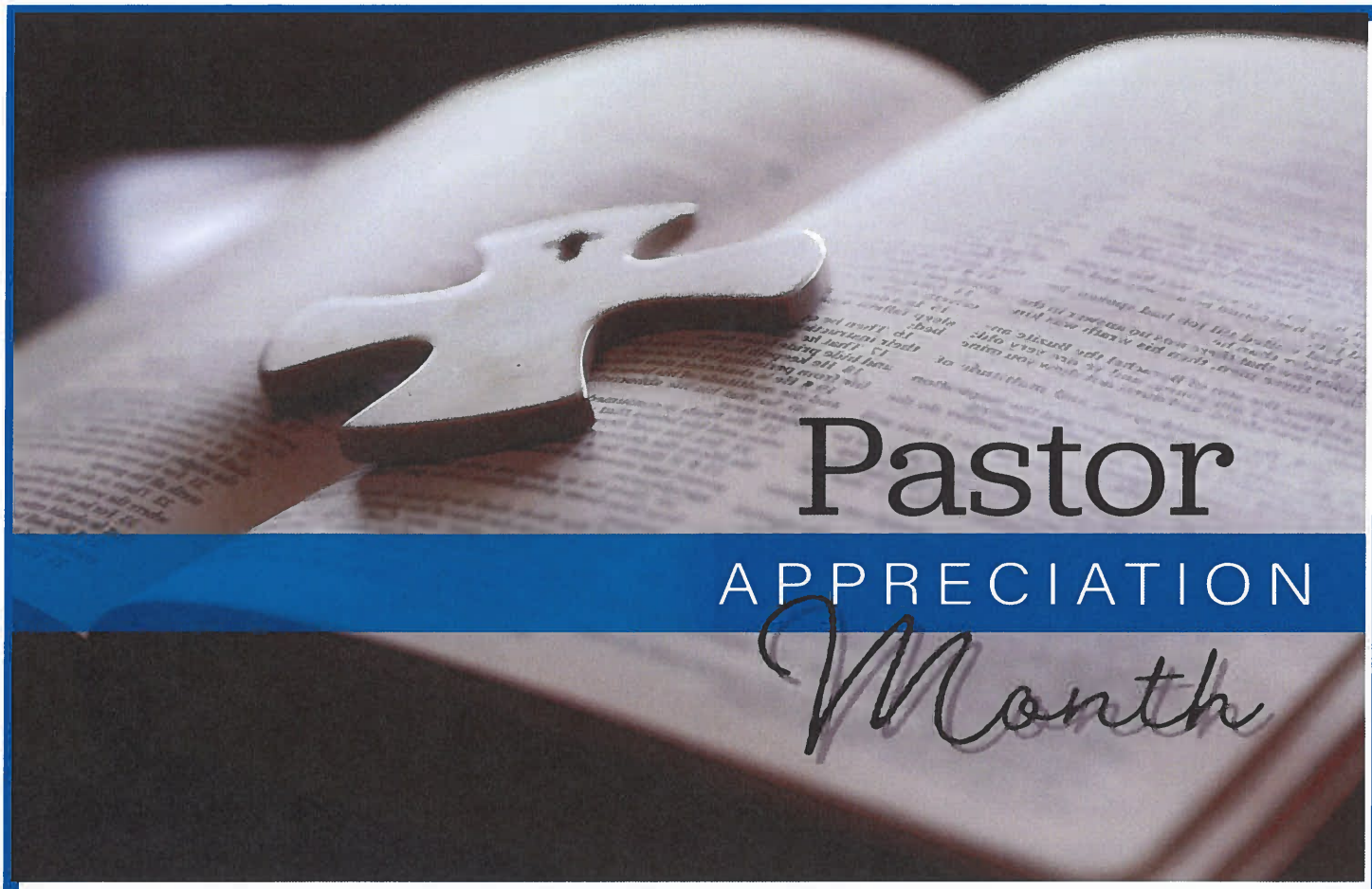
Pick Up Your Operation Christmas Child Shoeboxes in the Lobby Today!

Everything that you need to begin shopping is included in the gift boxes.

Want to participate, but can't get out to shop?

Let our youth group do the shopping for you.
List 'Youth Shopping' on the memo line or cash envelope of your donation to Dover First UMC.

Please return all gift-filled boxes by Thursday, Nov. 12 for dedication on Sunday, Nov 15.



October is Pastor Appreciation Month

A special time to tell our pastor how much he is appreciated every day in every way through our:

Words

Cards

Notes

Emails

Prayers

Encouragement

Dover First United Methodist Church

Welcome to Worship

October 25, 2026

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude "Sweet Hour of Prayer"
Gordon Young

Call to Worship Psalm 1:1-3

L: Blessed are those
L: Who do not walk in the counsel of the wicked;
ALL: Or stand in the way of sinners,
ALL: Or sit in the seat of scoffers;
L: But their delight is in the law of the Lord,
ALL: And on God's law they meditate day and night.
L: They are like trees
L: Planted by streams of water
L: That yield their fruit in season,
L: And their leaves do not wither.
ALL: In all that they do, they prosper.

*Hymn #384 Love Divine, All Loves Excelling

Scripture 1 Thessalonians 2:1–8

Honoring Our Faithful Members of 50 or More Consecutive Years in Membership at Dover First UMC
See Insert

Welcoming Our Newest Members
Michelle Steffl, Travis Steffl, Rick Ramsey

Prayer

*Hymn #170	O How I Love Jesus
Scripture	Matthew 22:34–46
Choir Anthem	"All That I Am" William Hines

*Offering Introduction/Doxology/Prayer/Lord's Prayer

Message	The Lens of Love
*Hymn #2223	They'll Know We Are Christians by Our Love

*Benediction

*Postlude	"Air" Dom Andrew Moore

CCLI License #1687804

Special thanks to Erin Petrella for sharing her gifts as guest organist today.

The Lens of Love

Scripture: *Matthew 22:34–46*

34 When the Pharisees heard that he had silenced the Sadducees, they gathered together, 35 and one of
them, a lawyer, asked him a question to test him. 36 "Teacher, which commandment in the law is the
greatest?" 37 He said to him, " 'You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your
soul, and with all your mind.' 38 This is the greatest and first commandment. 39 And a second is like it:
'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' 40 On these two commandments hang all the law and the
prophets."

41 Now while the Pharisees were gathered together, Jesus asked them this question: 42 "What do you
think of the Messiah? Whose son is he?" They said to him, "The son of David." 43 He said to them, "How
is it then that David by the Spirit calls him Lord, saying,

44 'The Lord said to my Lord,

"Sit at my right hand,

until I put your enemies under your feet" '?

45 If David thus calls him Lord, how can he be his son?" 46 No one was able to give him an answer, nor
from that day did anyone dare to ask him any more questions.

Questions

1. What does it mean to "the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind"?
2. What does it mean to love my neighbor as myself?
3. Who constitutes my neighbor?

Background

Related Scriptures: Luke 10:25-37

When Jesus is asked which commandment is greatest, he is being asked which is the most important for people to keep.

Matthew is the only Gospel to include that Jesus' words summarize the prophets and shows an emphasis that the prophets were trying to show people how to live out God's instruction for life.

Cyril of Alexandria: Therefore the first commandment teaches every kind of godliness. For to love God with the whole heart is the cause of every good. The second commandment includes the righteous acts we do toward other people. The first commandment prepares the way for the second and in turn is established by the second. For the person who is grounded in the love of God clearly also loves his neighbor in all things himself. The kind of person who fulfills these two commandments experiences all the commandments.[1]

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[1] Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew 14-28*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 157–58.

The Lens of Love

Reflection

One of the great lessons I have learned is that when we read the Bible we do so with an invisible pair of glasses. We all have a lens that gets between us and the text, this lens is made up of our culture, our experiences, our learning, and everything else that helps define me. There are many different ways to read the Bible and look at life and not all are equally beneficial. We cannot escape our lens, and that is one of the issues Jesus addresses in this passage in Matthew. The question the Pharisees ask Jesus is essentially what is the lens through which you see Scripture and the world. When Jesus says, "On these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets.", we should understand that he means these commandments are the lens that we need to read the Bible through. We cannot shed the lens that help focus our minds when we read Scripture, instead we need to learn to use the right lens. And for Jesus the correct lens for us to read Scripture through is "how does this help me love God with everything I have and am, and how does this help me to love my neighbor as myself".

Not only is this the lens we should use to read the Bible it is the lens that should govern our lives. Christian tradition has long talked about perfection—" Therefore let us go on toward perfection" Hebrews 6:1. Perfection does not mean that we do everything right; rather it means that we do everything from the right motivation. Perfection is about moving toward love. "There is no fear in love, but perfect love casts out fear; for fear has to do with punishment, and whoever fears has not reached perfection in love." 1 John 4:18. Being perfect is about reaching our fullest potential and our fullest potential is not in what we do but in our character. Being perfect is about shaping ourselves to act according to God's character which is defined in two places, "The Lord, the Lord, a God merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love and faithfulness," (Exodus 34:6), and "Whoever does not love does not know God, for God is love." (1 John 4:8). Scripture is trying to teach us this simple lesson, act like God. We are told who God is and we are told to read all of Scripture through the lens of God's character. Because the Bible is meant to be a revelation of God's loving character it is only when we commit to loving God and neighbor that we begin to see the Bible in the right way. And because God created the world to reflect God's purposes it is only when we live by this same rule that find our true place in it.

And lest we forget, our neighbors are not simply the people who we are attached to like family or friends, they are not simply those we live nearby. Jesus uses the parable of the Good Samaritan to teach us that our neighbors are anyone we can help. Our neighbors are those people we encounter, and loving them as ourselves means that we are as concerned for their well-being as we are for our own. The Bible breaks this down for us when we read passages like Malachi 3:5 "Then I will draw near to you for judgment; I will be swift to bear witness against the sorcerers, against the adulterers, against those who swear falsely, against those who oppress the hired workers in their wages, the widow, and the orphan, against those who thrust aside the alien and do not fear me, says the Lord of hosts." The prophet is pronouncing judgment on those who do not show love to the widow, orphan, the worker, and the foreigner. This is not the pronouncement of a vindictive God who wants to punish people. It is the pronouncement of a loving God who can no longer tolerate when people are failing to love their neighbors. Scripture is not mean to be used to draw lines between me and others so much as it is meant to draw me toward the wellbeing of others.

You are going to have a lens which you use to read Scripture and through which you interpret the world, this is unavoidable. Jesus wants to ensure that his followers understand what the proper lens is and how that lens should be applied to our lives.

This Week at Dover First UMC

Sunday

10:20 a.m. — Worship Service
50 Year Member Recognition

5:30 p.m. to 7 p.m. — **Trunk or Treat**
In the Church Parking Lot and Fellowship Hall

If you are handing out treats or volunteering, please arrive and setup prior to 5 p.m. as the parking lot will be blocked off at that time.



Monday

7 p.m. — Leadership Board Meeting
Lounge

Tuesday

7 p.m. — WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m. — Boy Scouts
Scout Room

Wednesday

6:30 p.m. — Cub Scouts
Education Wing

7 p.m. — Chancel Choir
Choir Room

Thursday

7 p.m. — WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

Friday — No Events

Saturday — No Events

Next Sunday — All Saints' Day

10:20 a.m. — Worship Service
Communion