



Dover First UMC's Weekly Newsletter

April 10, 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.

Reflection by Pastor Wes

John 2 tells us Jesus' first sign was to turn water into wine. The water of purification became the symbol of his blood. The drink that sustains life became the drink of celebration. I love the symbolism John uses, to show that Jesus took purification in himself and made celebration even greater. It reminds me that as we grow in Jesus and become even more pure our celebration also grows. The wine of the party became even greater because it came from Jesus. It reminds us that he gives our celebration life and meaning.

Where has Jesus made your celebration greater?

**What did you find fascinating
in John's Gospel this week?**

Sisters and Brothers,

Over the last several weeks I have been preaching in John's Gospel because that is where the lectionary is. It has triggered in me a desire to work through the Gospel more slowly. So for the month of April I will be reading a chapter a day and I invite you to join with me in this exercise. John's Gospel is 21 chapters long so even if you start tomorrow there is still enough time in April that you can divide some of the longer chapters if you need to. The goal is to read slower and focus on the message.

John's Gospel is wonderfully robust and every time I read it I come away with something more. As one theologian said, "John is like water shallow enough for a baby to play in while deep enough for an elephant to drown." It is easy yet offers great depth for those who are looking. Be aware that John often uses words with multiple meanings to illuminate multiple messages simultaneously.

As we approach the book this April I will be focused on the themes of the Spirit. What is the Spirit's role in our world. What does life mean for Jesus. And what does Jesus' new command of loving one another look like in my daily life. I encourage you to ask questions and discuss the book with others. John is certainly a book that benefits us more when we read it in community.

Blessings,

Pastor Wesley

The Food Pantry of Dover-New Phila

422 W. Third Street
Dover, OH 44622



The local food pantry is open twice each week for all in need of food from 5 to 8 p.m. on Thursday 9 a.m. to Noon on Friday.

Home delivery is also available for the homebound and those unable to come to the pantry. Call (330) 649-2228 for info.

Do you or someone that you know need emergency food assistance today, please call (234) 801-8198.

The pantry is an all volunteer organization and many more volunteers are needed to distribute food at the pantry, as well as deliver food to our neighbors unable to come in:
Thursday 4:30 to 8 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m. to Noon
Drivers are needed on Thursday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.

For additional information, visit the pantry website at:
dovernpfoodpantry.org or call (234) 801-8198

Community Men's Fellowship Breakfast

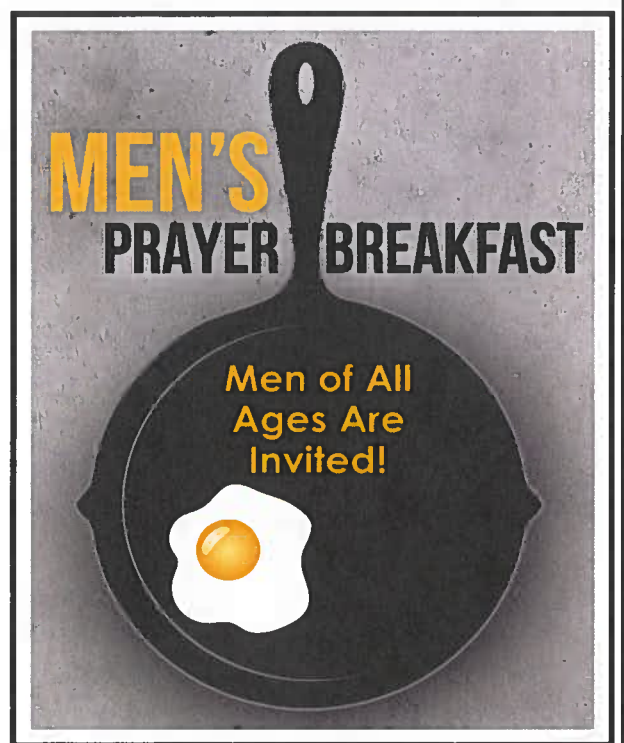
Men of all ages are invited for breakfast, prayer and fellowship each month at a different church from 9 to 11 a.m.

April 18

Salvation Army
809 Emmett Ave NW
New Phila

May 16

St. John's UCC
409 N. Wooster Ave
Dover



Scripture 1 Peter 1:3–9

Prayer

*Hymn #177 He Is Lord

Scripture John 20:19-31

Choir Anthem “I’m Still Amazed”
written by Steve Hurt
arranged by Russell Mauldin

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

Message Bringing Comfort
Pastor Wesley George

Communion

*Hymn #327 Crown Him with Many Crowns

*Benediction

*Postlude “Lift High the Cross”
arranged by Lani Smith

Bringing Comfort

Scripture *John 20:19–31*

¹⁹ When it was evening on that day, the first day of the week, and the doors of the house where the disciples had met were locked for fear of the Jews, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁰ After he said this, he showed them his hands and his side. Then the disciples rejoiced when they saw the Lord. ²¹ Jesus said to them again, “Peace be with you. As the Father has sent me, so I send you.” ²² When he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, “Receive the Holy Spirit. ²³ If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained.”

²⁴ But Thomas (who was called the Twin), one of the twelve, was not with them when Jesus came. ²⁵ So the other disciples told him, “We have seen the Lord.” But he said to them, “Unless I see the mark of the nails in his hands, and put my finger in the mark of the nails and my hand in his side, I will not believe.”

²⁶ A week later his disciples were again in the house, and Thomas was with them. Although the doors were shut, Jesus came and stood among them and said, “Peace be with you.” ²⁷ Then he said to Thomas, “Put your finger here and see my hands. Reach out your hand and put it in my side. Do not doubt but believe.” ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” ²⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe.”

³⁰ Now Jesus did many other signs in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book.

³¹ But these are written so that you may come to believe that Jesus is the Messiah, the Son of God, and that through believing you may have life in his name.

Questions

1. Why does Jesus say “Peace be with you” twice?
2. Why does Jesus say that if the disciples retain the sins of any they are retained?
3. What does Thomas want from Jesus when he asks to see and touch him?

Background

Related Scriptures: Genesis 2; Deuteronomy 33:26; John 14; 1 Peter 1:3–9

Peter Chrysologus: The extent of their terror and the disquiet caused by such an atrocity had simultaneously locked the house and the hearts of the disciples and had so completely prevented light from having any access that for their senses, overwhelmed more and more by grief, the murkiness of night increased and became more pervasive. No darkness of night can be compared with the gloom of grief and fear because they are incapable of being tempered by any light of either consolation or counsel.¹

Cyril of Jerusalem: This was the second time he breathed on human beings — his first breath having been stifled through willful sins. ... But though he bestowed his grace then, he was to lavish it yet more bountifully. And he says to them, I am ready to give it even now, but the vessel cannot yet hold it. For awhile therefore receive as much grace as you can bear. And look forward for yet more. “²

¹ Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 11–21*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 356.

² Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 11–21*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 361.

Bringing Comfort

Reflection

As I read through the story of Jesus' first post-Resurrection appearances to the disciples two questions immediately came to mind, why did Jesus pronounce peace on the disciples twice and why did Thomas want to touch Jesus. As I thought about these questions, I began to see just how frightened the disciples would have been on that Sunday. When Jesus found them behind that locked door. I am sure he found a group under the burden of fear and grief. I also imagine that Jesus' presence increased rather than allayed their fears. Peace was the thing most absent from the room and yet I am sure most desired. What could Jesus offer them that would be more welcome than peace in their souls. Fear is the absence of peace. Fear is the belief that chaos will overwhelm us while peace comes from understanding that God's order reigns in our world. This is why Jesus breathes on the disciples in his first visit. Jesus' breathing the Holy Spirit into the disciples echoes Genesis 2 where God breathes the breath of life into the first human. Just as God breathed physical life into humanity Jesus is now bringing Spiritual life into his followers. This Spirit-filled life is a life of peace, a life that resists the chaos of the world and brings peace into the believer's life. This is why Jesus describes the Holy Spirit as the Comforter (John 14:26). Jesus describes the Comforter (Holy Spirit) in a way similar to how God is described as a "helper"—*ezer* or someone who comes to aid a person when they cannot do something alone. In this passage the Holy Spirit is the aid to peace, providing the disciples with the help to resist the fear that chaos brought into their lives.

But what about the one who was not with the disciples when this happened? Thomas is presented as a unique experience to help us consider the depth of the Christian experience. Thomas wants to experience what his contemporaries had. He wants covets the encounter with Jesus that Peter, James, and the rest were given. In many ways this is what many still wrestle with. Many covet the spiritual highs of others and live in the fear that because they have not had this experience God is absent their life or the world altogether. In Thomas' case Jesus does give him the appearance he seeks but he does so in part to provide a message to us. Thomas is given the appearance so that we can hear the message "Have you believed because you have seen me? Blessed are those who have not seen and yet have come to believe." Blessed are those who can trust that Jesus has risen, walks with them, and will subtly provide his Spirit in their lives without having the same experience the disciples had. Blessed are those who can walk through this world trusting in the peace the Holy Spirit brings without getting caught up in the chaos. Thomas demonstrates a fear that is common to us all, that the only things we can trust to be true are those things we can see. And Just as Jesus came to the ten other disciples to provide comfort in the midst of their fear, Jesus comes to Thomas to do the same. Even though we do not get a repeat of Jesus breathing on Thomas we can be assured that Thomas received the Holy Spirit just as the other disciples did. And even though we have not experienced Jesus' breathing on us the way the disciples did, we too know that Holy Spirit is present in us today.

We might not always label our emotions as fear, we might speak of worry, anxiety, or concerns, but these are the ways the chaos of our world gets between us and God's peace. A healthy life includes taking time to understand these fears and take them to God. When we acknowledge how the chaos of the world troubles us and tempts us to fear we can learn to look for and ask for a greater share in God's Spirit to help overcome such temptations. It is when we learn to look for the life of the Spirit through faith that Jesus brings us comfort and peace.

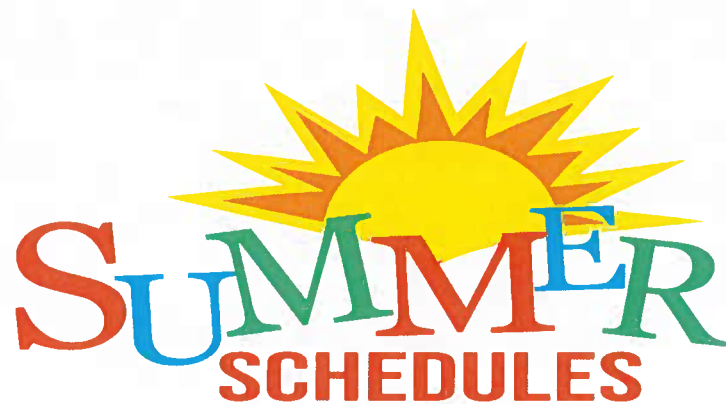
This Week at Dover First UMC

Sunday

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
 Communion

Next Sunday

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
 Youth Sunday



If your group or class has a schedule change for the summer, please share with Debbie in the church office at:

(330) 343-1322
doverfirst@gmail.com

Monday

10:30 a.m. Women's Study
 Lounge

Tuesday

2 p.m. Mary Hannah
 Circle
 Lounge

7 p.m. WMM Church
 Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m. Boy Scouts
 Scout Room

Wednesday

5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts
 Fellowship Hall

6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts
 Education Zone

7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
 Choir Room

Thursday

7 p.m. Grief Share
 Lounge

7 p.m. WMM Church
 Spanish-Speaking

Friday

No Events

Saturday

No Events