

Dover First UMC's Weekly Newsletter May 1, 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

I have been thinking about Jesus' words to Peter in John 21 "If it is my will that he remain until I come, what is that to you? Follow me!"

Jesus wants us to focus on him. Focusing on how others are living out their walk with Jesus takes our eyes off him.

Just like how Peter fell into the water when he took his focus away from Jesus so we can miss out on Jesus when we focus ourselves on what others are doing.

This is a reminder for me that I am to focus on Jesus and how I interact with him and not on what others are doing.

What did you find helpful in John's Gospel?

Sisters and Brothers,

I hope you have been getting as much from focusing on Scripture this year as I have. This month I want to challenge you to read through the Book of Revelation. If you do six chapters a week, you will finish the book in May. I recognize that Revelation is daunting for many people. The over-the-top imagery can be hard to piece together. This is not helped by how so much popular culture and even Christian media portrays the book. We are often taught to read Revelation in terms of a violent end of the world prophecy. But what John wants us to see is the peace of Jesus surrounding Christians in a world of chaos.

I know that many people want to sell you that Revelation is a timeline for the end, but that is just an idea that has been around for 150 years. Revelation is meant to give you hope that God has sealed you and will continue to guide and protect you no matter what this world throws at you. So, I encourage you to read through the book with the thought, "this book is trying to provide me hope." When you read the criticisms of the churches in Asia, read them as a friend trying to be helpful, not as condemnation. When you read see the death and disease read it like a parent assuring a child that even if there is a monster the parent will protect them. And most importantly if you struggle with this please talk with me because as great as the book is, it can be difficult, but its rewards are worth it.

Blessings,

Pastor Wesley



GRADUATION

Celebration

Honoring Dover First UMC's
2026 Graduates

Aiden Ashcraft
Nathan Harpst
Kara Lint
Grant Mathias
Nathan Ricker
Robert Wolfe
Kaitlin Yoder

During the Sunday, May 10th Service.
Scholarships Will Also Be Awarded.

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:

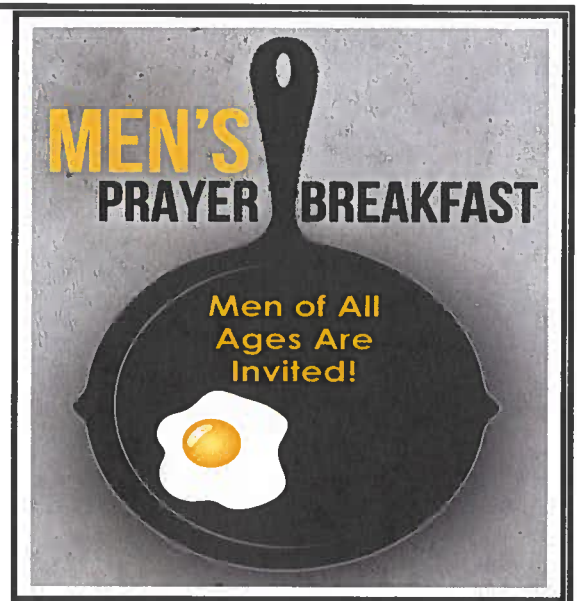
**Thursday 4:30 to 8 p.m. and Friday 8:30 a.m. to Noon
Drivers are needed on Thursday from 9 a.m. to 11 a.m.**

For additional information, visit the pantry website at:
dovernfoodpantry.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.

**May 16 at St. John's UCC
409 N. Wooster Ave in Dover**



What's All The BUZZ?

Camp Read-A-Lot

Wednesdays 9-Noon



6/17

6/24

7/1

7/8

7/15



Register online at doverfirst.org
(look for the VBS form)
or contact the Dover First
United Methodist Church office
at (330) 343-1322 for more info.
Camp Read-A-Lot is a faith-based
summer literacy program for kids
entering grades K-3 or anyone
needing extra help learning to read.
Enjoy stories, music, activities, crafts,
and over 75 different literacy games!



**Welcome to Worship
Holy Communion
May 3, 2026**

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude “The Lord is My Shepherd”
George Blake

Call to Worship Psalm 31:1-4

L: In you, O Lord, I seek refuge;

L: Let me never be put to shame;

L: In your righteousness, deliver me!

All: Incline your ear to me,

All: Rescue me speedily!

All: Be a rock of refuge for me,

All: A strong fortress to save me!

L: You are indeed my rock and my fortress;

L: For your name's sake lead me and guide me;

All: Take me out of the net which is hidden for me,

All: For you are my refuge.

*Hymn #77 How Great Thou Art

Scripture 1 Peter 2:2-10

Prayer

*Hymn #156 I Love to Tell the Story

Scripture John 14:1-14

Choir Anthem "Come, Come to the Table"
Words and Music by Joshua Metzger

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

Message The Eternal Dwelling
Pastor Wesley George

Communion

*Hymn #580 Lead On, O King Eternal

*Benediction

*Postlude "Postlude in C"
George Blake

Today's Altar Flowers

In Celebration of the 54th Wedding Anniversary
of Clyde and Susan Penrod on May 6th

CCLI License #1687804

The Eternal Dwelling

Scripture: John 14:1–14

14 “Do not let your hearts be troubled. Believe in God, believe also in me. ² In my Father’s house there are many dwelling places. If it were not so, would I have told you that I go to prepare a place for you? ³ And if I go and prepare a place for you, I will come again and will take you to myself, so that where I am, there you may be also. ⁴ And you know the way to the place where I am going.” ⁵ Thomas said to him, “Lord, we do not know where you are going. How can we know the way?” ⁶ Jesus said to him, “I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me. ⁷ If you know me, you will know my Father also. From now on you do know him and have seen him.”

⁸ Philip said to him, “Lord, show us the Father, and we will be satisfied.” ⁹ Jesus said to him, “Have I been with you all this time, Philip, and you still do not know me? Whoever has seen me has seen the Father. How can you say, ‘Show us the Father’? ¹⁰ Do you not believe that I am in the Father and the Father is in me? The words that I say to you I do not speak on my own; but the Father who dwells in me does his works. ¹¹ Believe me that I am in the Father and the Father is in me; but if you do not, then believe me because of the works themselves. ¹² Very truly, I tell you, the one who believes in me will also do the works that I do and, in fact, will do greater works than these, because I am going to the Father. ¹³ I will do whatever you ask in my name, so that the Father may be glorified in the Son. ¹⁴ If in my name you ask me for anything, I will do it.

Questions

1. What is the dwelling Jesus is going to prepare?
2. Why does Jesus say that if the disciples have seen him, they have seen the Father?
3. Why does Jesus expect his disciples to do greater works than he did?
4. What does the phrase “in my name” mean in verse 14?

Background

Related Scriptures: 1 Peter 2:2–10; Revelation 21

Chrysologus: He himself has said, “I am the life.” What the soul is to the body is what Christ is to the soul. Without the soul, the body does not live. The soul does not live without Christ. As soon as the soul leaves the body, stench, corruption, rottenness, the worm, ashes, horror and everything that is loathsome to the sight take its place. When God leaves, immediately the stench of faithlessness, the corruption of sin, the rottenness of the vices, the worm of guilt, the ashes of vanities and the horror of infidelity enter the soul, and there comes to pass in the living tomb of the body the death of the soul now buried.¹

Ambrose Lord Jesus, we do follow you, but we can come only at your bidding. No one can make the ascent without you, for you are our way, our truth, our life, our strength, our confidence, our reward. Be the way that receives us, the truth that strengthens us, the life that invigorates us.²

¹ Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 11–21*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 125.

² Joel C. Elowsky, ed., *John 11–21*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 126.

The Eternal Dwelling

Reflection

Imagine having dinner with Jesus on the night which he gives this speech. How confusing and difficult must it have been to hear Jesus say he is going somewhere that you could not follow. I know if I had been there that evening my first thought would be, "Jesus we already have a perfectly good room here. Why would you need to go somewhere else to prepare rooms for us. And yes, there are many rooms in the Temple, but what does that have to do with anything." These would have been rational points to his disciples who were not thinking that he was preparing to die and ascend to the Father. It is when I began to try to think about how the disciples heard Jesus' words during that night that I began to think about how we generally understand these verses. How many of us simply assume that when Jesus talks about going to prepare a place for us we instinctively think, "Jesus went to heaven to get it ready for us." Yet do we ever consider why Jesus would need to prepare a place in heaven?

Why would Jesus have to prepare heaven for us? It does not make sense to think that somehow Jesus would have to prepare heaven for us if that was our home. Instead, I think, like the disciples, I may have misunderstood Jesus when he makes this statement. What if Jesus is not preparing heaven for us in the sense of a place we go to when we die, but in the sense that he is preparing heaven to enter us where we are and to descend to Earth when he returns? This is the picture that Revelation presents us, a New Jerusalem descending to Earth where Jesus lives with us for eternity. In Revelation 21, the skies and Earth are recreated, and Jerusalem descends to the Earth. This vision is meant to provide us with an understanding that Jesus has a goal of recreating the Earth and providing us with a city that is constructed in heaven. And while it is easy to start picturing this as a literal city, that is not the point. We cannot look at the infrastructure of a city and think that is what Jesus intends to bring into this world. Instead, we need to focus on the city, a group of people knit together into community and share a social structure. Jesus and Revelation are both giving us a picture of a community united by the Holy Spirit in the work that God outlines for humanity in Genesis 1.

What can make John 14 difficult to understand is that Jesus mixes metaphors. I think John likes doing that so that we come back to the same words again and again allowing the Holy Spirit to work in us in new ways. But when Jesus says, "I am the way, and the truth, and the life" he is saying that we do not have to wait to the end of time to enter the city. Yes, a day is coming when we will enter the city completely, but part of Jesus going to prepare a place for us is Jesus preparing us for the place. This is what it means that he is the way. Yes, Jesus is the path in the sense that his death and resurrection open the door for us into God's presence, but he is also the way in that living a life emulating him in the Holy Spirit is how we enter the gates of larger life. Jesus wants his followers to understand that he is leaving them so that they can share in the Spirit that is in him and through that Spirit walk the path that he walked. As they commit themselves to walking the path that he walked, they make themselves ready to experience the place that Jesus is preparing, a new Jerusalem.

We follow the same tradition. We like the disciples wish that Jesus was walking here physically beside us, so the path in our minds would be easier. But what Jesus is doing is opening up to us new access to the Holy Spirit. And as the Spirit guided his life so the Spirit will also guide ours. Jesus lays this out for us as a way to follow. What John has done is write this passage in a way that makes us return to Jesus' words frequently, like a map guiding us down the path when we are unsure. Jesus says his followers will do the things he does and greater not necessarily about miracles but about bringing the Holy Spirit into the world. The greatest thing for Jesus is that God's New Jerusalem comes to Earth. This means that when we walk in the Spirit, we do the greatest thing we can. When we work with the Spirit we lay the foundation for the Eternal Dwelling that Jesus wants to provide us.

This Week at Dover First UMC

Sunday

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
Holy Communion

6 p.m. Youth Group
Fellowship Hall

Next Sunday

Mother's Day

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
Celebrating Our
2026 Graduates

Celebrating Our Graduates and Scholarships

Next Sunday



Monday

No Events

Tuesday

Election Day
Fellowship Hall

7 p.m. WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m. Boy Scouts
Scout Room

Wednesday

5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts

6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts
Education Zone

7 p.m. Choir Rehearsal
Choir Room

Thursday

National Day of Prayer

7 p.m. Scout Leaders

7 p.m. Grief Share
Lounge

7 p.m. WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

Friday

No Events

Saturday

4 p.m. Blue and Gold
Banquet for
Cub Scouts
Fellowship Hall