



Dover First UMC's Weekly Newsletter

October 2, 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.

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



The Community
is Invited for
Family
Friendly
Fun!

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



Dover First UMC's Winter Coat and Outerwear Drive

**Let's Help Our Community to Stay
Warm and Safe with Donations of:**

New or Gently Used

**Coats, Hats, Gloves, Mittens,
Scarves, Winter Boots
and New Only Warm Socks**

September 27 thru October 18

**Please drop off donations
in the Mission Room
near the church office.**



**All donations will
be delivered to the
Salvation Army
and shared with our
neighbors in need.**

**Questions?
Contact Coordinator
Debbie Benish
(330) 343-1322**

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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.



**Welcome
to Worship
October 4, 2026**

Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

"Change My Heart, O God"

Music and Words by Eddie Espinosa

Call to Worship

ALL: I believe in God, the Father Almighty,

ALL: Creator of heaven and earth.

ALL: I believe in Jesus Christ, his only Son, our Lord,

ALL: Who was conceived by the Holy Spirit,

ALL: Born of the Virgin Mary,

ALL: Suffered under Pontius Pilate,

ALL: Was crucified, died, and was buried;

ALL: He descended to the dead.

ALL: On the third day he rose again;

ALL: He ascended into heaven,

ALL: Is seated at the right hand of the Father,

ALL: And will come again to judge the living and the dead.

ALL: I believe in the Holy Spirit,

ALL: The holy universal church,

ALL: The communion of saints,

ALL: The forgiveness of sins,

ALL: The resurrection of the body,

ALL: And the life everlasting. Amen.

*Hymn #374 Standing on the Promises

Scripture Psalm 19

Prayer

*Hymn #382 Have Thine Own Way, Lord

Scripture Philippians 3:4b–14

Choir Anthem “You Satisfy the Hungry Heart”
arr. Linda Cable Shute
tune by Omer Westendorf

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

Message An Identity that Matters
Pastor Wesley George

Communion

*Hymn #620 One Bread, One Body

*Benediction

*Postlude “Praise Him! Praise Him!”
arr. Mary McDonald
tune by Chester Allen

CCLI License #1687804

Today’s Altar Flowers

In memory of
Nathan Beachy
by Austin Belknap
and Tonya and Jordan Hawk

An Identity that Matters

Scripture: *Philippians 3:4b–14*

⁴ even though I, too, have reason for confidence in the flesh.

If anyone else has reason to be confident in the flesh, I have more: ⁵ circumcised on the eighth day, a member of the people of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, a Hebrew born of Hebrews; as to the law, a Pharisee; ⁶ as to zeal, a persecutor of the church; as to righteousness under the law, blameless.

⁷ Yet whatever gains I had, these I have come to regard as loss because of Christ. ⁸ More than that, I regard everything as loss because of the surpassing value of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. For his sake I have suffered the loss of all things, and I regard them as rubbish, in order that I may gain Christ ⁹ and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but one that comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God based on faith. ¹⁰ I want to know Christ and the power of his resurrection and the sharing of his sufferings by becoming like him in his death, ¹¹ if somehow I may attain the resurrection from the dead.

¹² Not that I have already obtained this or have already reached the goal; but I press on to make it my own, because Christ Jesus has made me his own. ¹³ Beloved, I do not consider that I have made it my own; but this one thing I do: forgetting what lies behind and straining forward to what lies ahead, ¹⁴ I press on toward the goal for the prize of the heavenly call of God in Christ Jesus.

Questions

1. What are the gains or accolades that I have allowed to come between me and my identity in Jesus?
2. What does it mean to become like Christian in his death?

Background

Related Scriptures: Matthew 21:33-46; Philippians 2:1-11

Ambrosiaster: Throughout the letter Paul bears witness to his joy in them and praises their obedience and faith. He is, however, concerned that they, like all who are subject to human conceits, might become elated as though they were already worthy. So he tells them openly, speaking of his own person, that something is still wanting for perfect righteousness. He urges them to good works. If he who is adorned with such dignity confesses that he is still wanting in perfection, they would understand how much more they must work to acquire the blessings of righteousness. ¹

Theodore: “It was he who first caught me in his net” Paul says in effect, “for I was fleeing him and was turned well away. He caught me as I fled. But now I in turn am the pursuer in my desire of catching him, that I may not be a disappointment to his saving work.” ²

¹ M. J. Edwards, ed., *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 272–273.

² M. J. Edwards, ed., *Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 273.

An Identity that Matters

Reflection

We have all heard the stories of individuals coming to a friend or family member's house and discovering medals or trophies unceremoniously stored in a box in the garage or attic. The person then discovers that the friend or family member was an incredible athlete or war hero. This revelation causes shock because the person has lived a normal life without bringing any attention to their accolades. Or phrased another way, the individual has not fashioned their identity around their achievements. And this is what Paul is talking about in Philippians 3. Paul's life had been dedicated to doing the right thing. From his birth Paul had been raised to be connected to God. It is easy to dismiss Paul's accolades as "legalistic" however they are the kinds of things that we strive for. He is saying, "I did everything I knew to do to connect with God, I did everything I could to demonstrate my love for God." Yet, even these good things are trash next to Christ. He is basing his entire identity on Christ, not what he did to serve God, what Jesus did in service for him.

The message is that even the most honorable things we have done in our lives are not the source of our identity—Jesus is. But this is not like the soldier who leaves the identity forgotten in a box. Paul is saying that we are to identify so much with Jesus that everything else is filth that if not thrown out will mar our whole house. Paul is not saying that these markers of his life are bad things, after all they helped him find Jesus. He is using some level of hyperbole to tell us that everything that identifies us in our lives needs to be subjected to our identity in Jesus. People will sometimes say at this point that we identify in Jesus because it is the only identity that cannot be taken away from us. But this is simply a utilitarian approach that does not grasp the depth of Paul's message. Paul is saying that it is our identity in Jesus that gives everything else in our lives purpose. He is saying that without his identity all of the good in his life would be the worst kinds of filth. Without Jesus all of the blessings in his life lack any meaning. He is not speaking in a utilitarian idea that we are to ground ourselves in what cannot be taken away. Rather, we are to ground our lives in Jesus who brings purpose to the rest of life.

Understanding this we must take some time to understand what it means to find one's identity in Jesus. Identifying in Jesus means shaping your life around your relationship with Jesus. It means recognizing what impact Jesus has on your life and then living in a way that honors him. Finding identity in Jesus is remembering your relationship as you go about your daily routine. So often in our culture we identify others by their occupation or their family. What Paul is saying to us is that in our minds we are not identified primarily by these roles. Rather these other identities find their purpose in our ability to say, "I am God's child".

Like so many of the other identities we hold, our identity in Christ grows as we invest in it over time. We should consider this passage in light of the Christ hymn from the preceding chapter. We are learning to be children of God-- individuals who root their entire existence in God. Giving everything to God as God has given Jesus to us. It is when we are able to give everything over to God's service we can begin to recognize how much God has given to us and how much God gives back to us. Just like our own children need to learn and grow to know what it means to be part of their biological family, so we also learn to root our identity in Jesus. And just as children learn to give to their family from a status as loved and cared for individuals, so we learn to do the same as part of God's family. As Paul put it in another passage, "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly; teach and admonish one another in all wisdom; and with gratitude in your hearts sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs to God. And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him." (Colossians 3:16-17). Do everything From the realization that your identity safely rests in Jesus who has redeemed you.

This Week at Dover First UMC

Sunday

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
Communion

Next Sunday

10:20 a.m. Worship Service
Noon Private Party
Fellowship Hall

Monday

No Events

Tuesday

7 p.m. WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m. Boy Scouts
Scout Room

Wednesday

5:30 p.m. Girl Scouts
Fellowship Hall

6 p.m. Friends in
Fellowship
Lounge

6:30 p.m. Cub Scouts
Education Wing

7 p.m. Choir
Rehearsal

Thursday

1:30 p.m. Literary Ladies

7 p.m. WMM Church
Spanish-Speaking

Friday

No Events

Saturday

9 a.m. District Charge
Conference
New Phila First