

THE DOVER UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
45 West Canal Street, Dover, PA 17315  
Eva O'Diam, Pastor

Fifth Sunday of Easter

May 2, 2021

**WELCOME FRIENDS!**

"God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them.  
We love because he first loved us."  
- 1 John 4:16b & 19

PRELUDE

*"Only Trust Him"*

Hughes

***Our time of worship begins as the prelude is played.  
Please maintain a meditative silence.***

ANNOUNCEMENTS AND WELCOME

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: The vine emerges from the earth, nourished and nourishing.

**All: Rises without visible connection; roots hidden, promise unknown.**

One: Strong to withstand storms, fragile when plucked too soon.

**All: So it is that we grow... nourished by invisible connections to the living God,  
called to nourish that which is seen and that which is yet buried within.**

INVOCATION

One: Cultivating God, we come as your children to grow and learn, because you are our divine vine grower. God, we desire for you to abide within us, and for your grace to be revealed anew daily. As your branches, we ask you to nourish us for continued growth. May you transform our hearts and minds as we hear your Word, sing your praises, and engage in holy dialogue through prayer.

**All: May you help us to bear good fruit through the vine of Jesus Christ. In Whose name we pray, Amen.**

TIME WITH THE YOUNG OF HEART

PRAYER OF RECONCILIATION

One: O God, giver of life, we confess the times when we fail to love our neighbors as we love ourselves. God, forgive us when we ignore or we fail to see our neighbors in need. Abiding God, also forgive us when we reject love from others, and shut down completely. As we confess the times when we did not tend to our own needs, and denied ourselves of your forgiveness and grace. In our failures, we have refused your invitation to grow closer to you.

**All: (Out loud but muted): In our confession, O God, we pray your abiding love be shown through the ways we love more fully. Amen.**

## ASSURANCE OF GRACE

One: O God, hear your beloved community as we repent and pray for your forgiveness.  
Give to us your grace and restore to us your love that is forgiven and fearless.

**All: God, we desire for your loving Spirit to renew and strengthen us daily. Amen.**

### Musical Interlude: WATER, RIVER, SPIRIT, GRACE

Water, River Spirit, Grace. Sweep over me, sweep over me!

Re-carve the depths your fingers traced in sculpting me, in sculpting me.

## COLLECT

One: Loving God, whom we praise and glorify as disciples of Jesus Christ, cleanse us today by your word so we may rejoice once more in our baptism and aspire to the perfection of love among us and throughout your world. Prune away the dead debris of our fears and failures so we may become productive branches in the church, reaching out to feed a world starving for genuine love and yearning for community. And all God's children said...

**All: Amen.**

One: God is still speaking.

**All: Are we listening?**

## SCRIPTURE

### Acts 8:26-40

#### Philip and the Ethiopian Eunuch

**26** Then an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Get up and go toward the south<sup>[a]</sup> to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." (This is a wilderness road.) **27** So he got up and went. Now there was an Ethiopian eunuch, a court official of the Candace, queen of the Ethiopians, in charge of her entire treasury. He had come to Jerusalem to worship **28** and was returning home; seated in his chariot, he was reading the prophet Isaiah. **29** Then the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over to this chariot and join it." **30** So Philip ran up to it and heard him reading the prophet Isaiah. He asked, "Do you understand what you are reading?" **31** He replied, "How can I, unless someone guides me?" And he invited Philip to get in and sit beside him. **32** Now the passage of the scripture that he was reading was this: "Like a sheep he was led to the slaughter, and like a lamb silent before its shearer, so he does not open his mouth. **33** In his humiliation justice was denied him. Who can describe his generation? For his life is taken away from the earth." **34** The eunuch asked Philip, "About whom, may I ask you, does the prophet say this, about himself or about someone else?" **35** Then Philip began to speak, and starting with this scripture, he proclaimed to him the good news about Jesus. **36** As they were going along the road, they came to some water; and the eunuch said, "Look, here is water! What is to prevent me from being baptized?"<sup>[b]</sup> **38** He commanded the chariot to stop, and both of them, Philip and the eunuch, went down into the water, and Philip<sup>[c]</sup> baptized him. **39** When they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord snatched Philip away; the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. **40** But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he was passing through the region, he proclaimed the good news to all the towns until he came to Caesarea.

## I John 4:16-21

### God Is Love

**16** So we have known and believe the love that God has for us. God is love, and those who abide in love abide in God, and God abides in them. <sup>17</sup> Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness on the day of judgment, because as he is, so are we in this world. <sup>18</sup> 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. <sup>19</sup> We love<sup>[a]</sup> because he first loved us. <sup>20</sup> Those who say, "I love God," and hate their brothers or sisters,<sup>[b]</sup> are liars; for those who do not love a brother or sister<sup>[c]</sup> whom they have seen, cannot love God whom they have not seen. <sup>21</sup> The commandment we have from him is this: those who love God must love their brothers and sisters<sup>[d]</sup> also.

## John 15:1-8

### Jesus the True Vine

**1** "I am the true vine, and my Father is the vine grower. <sup>2</sup> He removes every branch in me that bears no fruit. Every branch that bears fruit he prunes<sup>[a]</sup> to make it bear more fruit. <sup>3</sup> You have already been cleansed<sup>[b]</sup> by the word that I have spoken to you. <sup>4</sup> Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. <sup>5</sup> I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. <sup>6</sup> Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. <sup>7</sup> If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. <sup>8</sup> My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become<sup>[c]</sup> my disciples.

### RESPONSE TO THE WORD

One: The Word of our Still-Speaking God!

**All: Thanks be to God! Hallelujah!**

### MEDITATION

*"Fear and Faith!"*

Pastor Eva

### PASTORAL PRAYER

### A MOMENT FOR REFLECTION

*"Healer of Our Every Will"*

Sue Storm  
Arr. Hayes

### INVITATION TO GIVE

### GREAT PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

One: May the Lord of Easter be with you!

**All: And also with you!**

One: Open your hearts to God, beloved of the Lord.

**All: We lift them to the One who fills our lives with joy and wonder.**

One: Children of Easter, sing praises to God.

**All: Our voices unite in thanksgiving to the One who walks with us in this life. You opened your hands, pouring creation's glory into the emptiness of chaos, God of beginnings. The sun, moon, and stars became the mirrors of the light of your face, shining down upon all that was crafted. Shaping us in your divine image, you stood beside us, pointing out all the good you offer to us. But we found comfort in sin's shadows, fear and doubt claiming us as friends, and we turned our backs on you. Through our ancestors in the faith, Sarah and Samuel, Hannah**

**and Hosea, you demonstrated your faithfulness, your longing to welcome us into your embracing arms of love. But we did not recognize them, and clung to the vain words spoken to us by temptation. So, you sent your child to us, to show us what love truly is, that we might have this hope offered to us in Jesus. So, with little children who delight in your joy, and with older folks who trust in your promises, with our sisters and brothers throughout all time, we join our voices in praising your name: Holy, holy, holy, God of grace and beauty. All creation joins in singing your glory. Hosanna in the highest. Blessed is the One who comes so we may be like him. Hosanna in the highest.**

**One:** Blessed are you, Holy and Righteous God, and blessed is Jesus Christ, Author of Life. In the Word become flesh, you call us to repent and turn to you. In the Light of the world, our eyes are opened so we can see you standing with us. In scarred hands and feet, we see the power of sin and death destroyed by your grace and hope, so we can reach out and embrace that life which is ours forever with you. As we gather around the Table to remember, as we give thanks for the life which was given for us, we speak of what we do not always understand – the mystery of faith.

**All:** **Christ walked to Calvary to show us the power of love. Christ strode from the tomb to raise us to life. Christ will come and stand among us, to lead us home.**

#### PRAYER OF CONSECRATION

#### SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

#### PRAYER OF THANKSGIVING

**One:** Let us pray: O Christ, we thank you for this feast of life. Fed by your love, and strengthened by your life; we humbly accept your call to go into this world to live with hope, and to share your joy.

**All:** **You commission us to feed as we have been fed, forgive as we have been forgiven, and love as we have been loved. Thanks be to God. Amen.**

+ BENEDICTION

+ CHORAL AMENS

+ POSTLUDE

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The Altar Flowers are in celebration of Carolyn Stayrook's 70th birthday on May 3  
by Neil Stayrook and Sandy Markle.

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(+All Who Are Able Are Invited to Stand)

Today's Greeter: Don Gardner

Reader: Tonia Reinert

<p><b>4 Helpers are needed during worship service on Sunday mornings!</b> <b>We need 2 greeters (masked and gloved) to hand out bulletins and offer hand sanitizer.</b> <b>An elevator operator - A reader.</b></p>
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UPPER ROOM DEVOTIONAL MAGAZINES ARE AVAILABLE FOR PICK-UP DURING  
REGULAR CHURCH OFFICE HOURS AND ON SUNDAY MORNING.

**Welcome to Dover United Church of Christ,  
an Open and Affirming Church.**

*The congregation of Dover United Church of Christ, in the spirit of Christ's invitation, "Look, I have set before you an open door," welcomes all who seek to know and share God's love. We affirm the dignity and worth of every person and celebrate the diversity in which God created us, each in God's image and loved by God. We declare ourselves to be an Open and Affirming congregation, welcoming persons of every race, language, gender, age, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, ability, and economic status into full membership and participation in the life, worship, rites and sacraments of this church. We commit to model a community of faith that works toward openness and understanding, offering justice, reconciliation, healing and wholeness of life for all people.*

*Welcome one another, therefore, just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.  
(Romans 15:7)*

**Large print worship materials are available.  
Please see an usher.**

**This Week at Dover UCC:**

<b>Today</b>	<b><i>Benevolent offering</i></b>
Tuesday	10:00 a.m. Bible Study – in-person or by Uberconference <b>Book Club – 5:30 p.m.</b> – <i>Girl A</i> by Abigail Dean – by zoom, contact the pastor for link Girl Scouts – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Fellowship hall)
Wednesday	Boy Scouts – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall) <b>NO Bible Study</b> tonight... we will resume on Wednesday, May 12.
Thursday	Boy Scouts – 6:00 – 8:00 p.m. (Fellowship Hall)
Friday	6:30 p.m. – Friday Night At the Movies: A Documentary on Climate Change, <i>Kiss the Ground</i> . The answers are right in front of us!
Next Sunday	<b>Mother's Day</b> <b><i>DUCC Digest deadline</i></b> Adult Faith Formation – 9:00 a.m. Dover UCC in person or by zoom. Contact the Pastor if you would like the zoom connection. <i>WORSHIP – 10:00 a.m. In-person, live stream on Facebook and Uberconference.</i>

**TUESDAY 10:00 AM Bible Study!**

We will meet on Tuesday, either in person at the church or by Uberconference  
by calling 717-297-0750. Your choice!  
Hope to see you there!

Pastor Eva's cell phone number is 717-418-9627. Please call any time for pastoral emergencies. Her office hours: Tuesdays, Wednesdays and Thursdays, 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. <b>E-Mail: <a href="mailto:pastor@doverducc.org">pastor@doverducc.org</a>.</b>
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<b>Do you have a prayer concern? Call Nancy Schubert at 717-292-2113.</b>
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<b>PLEASE NOTE: A sponsor is needed for the Altar Flowers on June 13. If you're interested in sponsoring, please contact Gina Nell at 717-515-0314. Thank you.</b>
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### **From the Church Secretary!**

I will be taking vacation days Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, May 11-13. If you need something done by me during that week, please have it to me by the week of May 2 and I will do my best to get it done for you. Thank you. Willie Scofield

### ***Happy Mother's Day! May 9!***

Once again, for Mother's Day, we want to invite you to send us a picture of your Mother, or Grandmother, or significant person who felt like your Mother. Email them to [pastor@doverducc.org](mailto:pastor@doverducc.org) along with *one word trait* that describes a gift they gave you. We will use these in worship and will have a gift for all of the women to take home with you. Please send these in by May 2! You can check with the office if you sent a picture last year, but please send the one word trait! Also remember to bring personal care items for New Hope in honor of your Mother! Soap, shampoo, body lotion, etc.

### **DOVER UCC WANTS TO HONOR OUR 2021 GRADUATES!**

Anyone graduating from high school, college, trade school, business school, etc., please complete the form included with this issue of the Digest so we can "Honor our Graduates" in the June *Digest*. Please return the form to the church office before May 9. Thank You!

### **WORSHIP TIME CHANGES!!!**

**SUNDAY, MAY 30**

**WORSHIP BEGINS AT 9:00 a.m.**

In-person, live stream on Facebook and Uberconference.



### **Outdoor Worship & Worship Time Change**

We have some fun upcoming times for worship! On May 23 we will celebrate Pentecost! The Spirit will be celebrated! May 30, marks Memorial Day weekend and we will revert to 9:00 am worship for the Summer! Sunday, May 30 will be our first outdoor worship for the summer. We plan to worship outdoors once a month this summer. Join us on June 13, July 4, August 15 and September 5 for outdoor worship. We hope to have a picnic on September 5 as well.

### **Adult Faith Formation meets Sunday's at 9:00 a.m.**

The Adult Faith Formation continues to meet both in person and by zoom. We are considering what our faith has to do with climate change. We will use the book *Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change* by Jim Antal. "Why should people of faith engage the moral challenge of climate change, and how should we do it? *Climate Church, Climate World* answers these questions and empowers readers to join others in taking action. We can expand the Golden Rule to include future generations. We can shift our focus from personal salvation to collective salvation. Because climate change amplifies all forms of injustice—hunger, refugees, racism, poverty, inequality, deadly viruses, war—defense of creation is a campaign for justice." This study will include thoughtful discussion, sharing a documentary movie, creating our own pizza garden and will challenge us to consider our children's future and how we care for God's creation. Get the book on [amazon.com](http://amazon.com), [betterworldbooks.com](http://betterworldbooks.com), or order or (borrow) the cd. Need help finding the book? Just ask Pastor Eva.