



**Dover First UMC's Weekly Newsletter**  
**February 20, 2026**

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

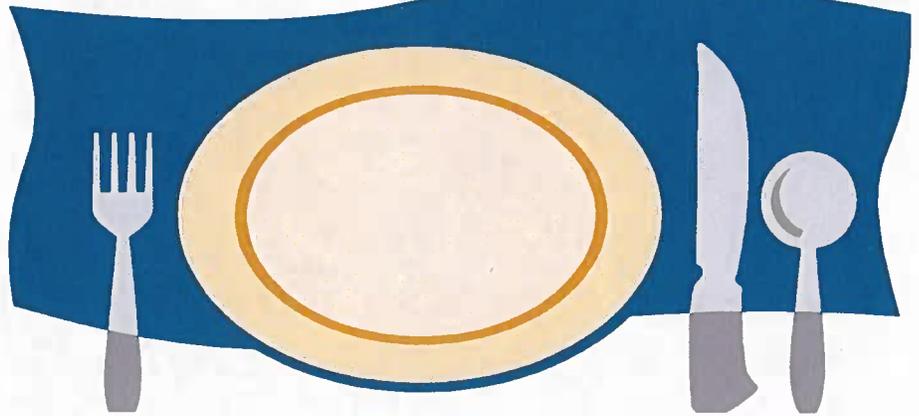
**Nursery Care**  
Sunday mornings  
for children 1 to 3  
in rooms 1 and 3

**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](http://doverfirst.org)  
for online services,  
special studies,  
announcements,  
opportunities to serve,  
and the church calendar  
and ways to give.



Appreciation Fellowship Meal

**Troop #94 Scouts and Leaders  
Invite All Dover First Members  
60 and Over to Be Their Guests  
for a Delicious Dinner with:**

**Ham, Mashed Potatoes, Salad  
Green Beans, Dessert and Beverages**

**This Free Fellowship Meal is Shared  
with Thanks to the Church Family  
for 70 Plus Years of Support.**

**Monday, March 9th at 5:30 p.m.  
in the Fellowship Hall  
Please RSVP by Signing Up in the Lobby**

Sisters and Brothers,

This year I want us to re-commit to paying attention to Scripture. But we do not simply read for information; we read for transformation. I am grateful for all of you who read through Philipians with me in January. I think Paul's message of rejoicing in the midst of suffering is as timely now as ever. And thank you to everyone who shared with me all your thoughts about Philipians I genuinely appreciated learning from you.

In February, I would like us to take time to read Matthew's Gospel. This is the Gospel for the liturgical calendar this year and so it is fitting to read it. If you are not aware, there are 28 chapters in Matthew and so I will be committing to reading one chapter a day. And like I said, I want this to be transformative, so I want to read this in a modern translation that will hopefully use language that is new to me and so strikes me differently and makes me think. For this reason (and because I have not used it much) I am reading through The Message. It is not important which translation you use, but I thought you would appreciate how I am approaching the text.

Here are some themes that I will be thinking about.

- Jesus as the new Moses, a prophet to lead
- The kingdom of heaven is here, being citizens of this kingdom
- Jesus is Emmanuel, what does it mean that God is with us.

I hope you will take the time to work through Matthew with and as we grow together in God's word.

Blessings,

Pastor Wesley



**LENTEN**

# OUTREACH

**This Year's Special Lenten  
Envelope Offerings Will Support  
the Mission of Beneath the Shade**

Beneath the Shade is a transitional living space for women who are choosing recovery and want to rebuild their lives and explore what having a relationship with God might be all about. Beneath the Shade is for women who have lived with substance use disorders, have at least 30 days substance free and know they need more time in a semi-structured and loving setting in order to live successfully on their own.

**To support this mission in our community,  
please pick up a Lenten Envelope in the lobby,  
and return your donations on Easter Sunday.**

**Visit [beneaththeshade.org](http://beneaththeshade.org) to learn more.**



## **Need Help Dealing with Grief?**

**Join Pastor Wes for Our *GriefShare*  
Grief and Loss Support Group**

**Thursdays at 7 p.m. in the Lounge  
Beginning on February 19th**

A *GriefShare* support group is a safe, welcoming place where people understand the difficult emotions of grief.

Through this 13-week group, you'll discover what to expect in the days ahead and what's 'normal' in grief.

Together we'll learn helpful ways to cope with its unpredictability and gain support along the way.

**Book info will be available soon. Please sign up in the lobby.**

# A Week in the Life of a Slave

Join Pastor Wesley George for a special group study from accomplished Ashland Theological Seminary's professor of New Testament studies, John Byron.

The narrative follows the slave Onesimus from his arrival in Ephesus, where the apostle Paul is imprisoned, sharing the lived context of that time and place, supplemented by numerous sidebars and historical images. John Byron's historical fiction is at once a social and theological critique of slavery in the Roman Empire and a gripping adventure story, set against the exotic backdrop of first-century Ephesus.

Please Sign Up  
in the Lobby

This five-session study will meet in the lounge beginning at 6:30 p.m.

**February 17 and 24**  
**March 3, 10 and 17**

Books ordered by the church will be \$16 each or you can add it to your Kindle for \$15.

A WEEK IN  
THE LIFE OF  
A SLAVE



JOHN BYRON



# Welcome to Worship

## February 22, 2026

### Welcome and Announcements

Prelude

“A Lenten Psalm”  
Wihla Hutson

Call to Worship

Psalm 32:1-5

L: Blessed are those whose transgression is forgiven,

L: Whose sin is covered.

**A: Blessed are those whom the Lord does not hold guilty,**

**A: And in whose spirit there is no deceit.**

L: When I did not declare my sin, my body wasted away

L: Through my groaning all day long.

**A: For day and night your hand was heavy upon me;**

**A: My strength was dried up as by the heat of summer.**

L: I acknowledged my sin to you,

L: And I did not hide my iniquity;

**A: I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord",**

**A: Then you forgave the guilt of my sin.**

\*Hymn #2173

Shine, Jesus, Shine

Scripture                      Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7

Prayer

All children who would like to go to Kidz Min in the Education Zone are asked to meet at the back of the sanctuary during the hymn.

\*Hymn #2112      Jesus Walked This Lonesome Valley

Scripture                      Matthew 4:1-11

Choir Anthem      “What the Lord Has Done in Me”  
Words and Music by Reuben Morgan  
Choral Setting by Lloyd Larson

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

Message                      Worship Who?  
Pastor Wesley George

\*Hymn #2158      Just a Closer Walk with Thee

\*Benediction

\*Postlude                      “Praise the Lord of Lords”  
Mark Williams

## ***Worship Who?***

### **Scripture: Matthew 4:1-11**

4 Then Jesus was led up by the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted by the devil. <sup>2</sup> He fasted forty days and forty nights, and afterwards he was famished. <sup>3</sup> The tempter came and said to him, "If you are the Son of God, command these stones to become loaves of bread." <sup>4</sup> But he answered, "It is written, 'One does not live by bread alone, but by every word that comes from the mouth of God.' "

<sup>5</sup> Then the devil took him to the holy city and placed him on the pinnacle of the temple, <sup>6</sup> saying to him, "If you are the Son of God, throw yourself down; for it is written, 'He will command his angels concerning you,' and 'On their hands they will bear you up, so that you will not dash your foot against a stone.' "

<sup>7</sup> Jesus said to him, "Again it is written, 'Do not put the Lord your God to the test.' "

<sup>8</sup> Again, the devil took him to a very high mountain and showed him all the kingdoms of the world and their splendor; <sup>9</sup> and he said to him, "All these I will give you, if you will fall down and worship me."

<sup>10</sup> Jesus said to him, "Away with you, Satan! for it is written, 'Worship the Lord your God, and serve only him.' "

<sup>11</sup> Then the devil left him, and suddenly angels came and waited on him.

### **Questions**

1. Why does Jesus go to the wilderness why not fast at home?
2. Why does Jesus fast if he knows he will be tempted, why intentionally weaken himself before this struggle?
3. What is the real sin behind each of the three temptations? Is it wrong to make bread etc?

### **Background**

Related Scriptures: Genesis 2:15-17, 3:1-7; Luke 4:1-13; Hebrews 4

Jesus' fast was an intentional time of reliance in God but one cannot be relying on God if one is not facing temptation, otherwise there is nothing to rely on God for. Further, when tempted Jesus demonstrates reliance on God by relying on Scripture to reflect God's character.

**John Chrysostom:** The text says "then." Then when? This was after the descent of the Spirit, after the voice that was borne from above had said, "This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." Led by whom? This is marvelous. All of this was led by the Holy Spirit. For it says Jesus was "led up by the Spirit." All this was for our instruction. The Lord does whatever is necessary for our salvation by both acting and being acted upon. He submitted himself to being led up there to wrestle against the devil. Now we should not be troubled if, after our baptism, we too have to endure great temptations. We should not treat this as if unexpected but continue to endure all things nobly, as though it were happening in the natural course of things. <sup>1</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup> Manlio Simonetti, ed., *Matthew 1-13*, Ancient Christian Commentary on Scripture 56.

## ***Worship Who?***

### **Reflection**

Jesus has experienced a grueling month and a half, physically and emotionally and at the end of it the Devil is at his shoulder saying, "I'll give you everything you came here for." Yes, the text says that the Devil offered the world in exchange for worship, but we do not want to read these words so literally that they become of caricature of what they actually mean. A formal or ritualized worship of the Devil would have been so repugnant to Jesus that it would not have been a temptation. The Devil is not so foolish as to think Jesus would start praying to him in exchange for the kingdoms of earth. When the Scripture says worship it is saying serve, or use the tactics that the Devil uses. All three of the Devil's temptations are meant to distract Jesus from doing things God's way. Whether it is making food before God gives it to him or conquering the world through the ways of Rome, each of the temptations are about Jesus laying aside God's principles to serve his own ends. Notice though the ends the Devil tempts him toward are the same goals God wants Jesus to accomplish. God wants Jesus to be alive so of course God wants Jesus fed. Of course God would not want Jesus to die from a fall. God wants Jesus to reign over the earth. These are the three things the Devil says. The temptation is not the wrong end goal, it is the means used to achieve that end.

This passage points to the fact that how Jesus accomplished his mission was important as what he did. The ends do not justify the means. The Devil does not try to get Jesus to deviate from the plan of ruling the world but he wants Jesus to deviate in how he reaches that end. He never asked Jesus to give up on the ultimate goal that God had for him, instead he was even more subtle. Why? Because Jesus could only truly reign over the earth if he lived a life worthy of his calling. Jesus might have been given power over the world if he had followed the Devil's means but he would never truly reign. Because true dominion works with God to fulfill the call of humanity in Genesis 1. Truly taking on the rule of the world means identifying fully with God to the fullest extent and Jesus could not do that through the traditional power politics used by humans.

This matters for us, not simply because we look to Jesus work and are grateful he resisted temptation but as Hebrews 4:15 says "For we do not have a high priest who is unable to sympathize with our weaknesses, but we have one who in every respect has been tested as we are, yet without sin." We are in fact tempted in the same ways as Jesus. We are tempted to abandon God's means while trying to accomplish God's ends. We are tempted to care more about the ends of my own life and happiness more than doing things the way God wants. Each day we are tempted to "take matters into our own hands" in ways that "get things done" but do not honor God. And the worst part is that these temptations can often be defended by Scripture, the same way the Devil did. So how do I, who clearly am not Jesus, hope to overcome temptation? How can I distinguish God's voice in Scripture from the temptation? This is the question and it is why Jesus spent so much time alone in the wilderness connecting to God. Jesus wanted to hear clearly from God and took steps to understand God more deeply, and so we should also. We need to be invested in learning to distinguish God's voice and learn wisdom from God. Because even today there is a temptation to seek the kind of power that the Devil offered Jesus. Even today we hear opposing messages about the Scriptures. Yet even today God has not left us alone, we are still connected to the Holy Spirit and if we devote time to hearing from God we too will be able to distinguish the messages and understand God's voice. This obviously takes time and we need to be patient with ourselves but the temptation to walk away from God's path to try to achieve God's ends is real and we need to recognize that. We need to give ourselves time with God regularly so that we can learn to understand God's purposes and hear God's voice. Otherwise we will be succumbing to the temptations that Jesus calls us to resist.

# This Week at Dover First UMC

## Sunday

10:20 a.m.    Worship Service

## Sunday

10:20 a.m.    Worship Service  
                    Communion

*Lent*  
First Sunday  
in  
*Lent*

## Monday

9:30 a.m.    Finance Meeting

7 p.m.        Leadership Board Meeting

## Tuesday

6:30 p.m.    Book Study

7 p.m.        WMM Church Spanish-Speaking

7 p.m.        Boy Scouts Scout Room

## Wednesday

6:30 p.m.    Cub Scouts Education Zone

7 p.m.        Choir Rehearsal

## Thursday

7 p.m.        Grief Share Lounge

7 p.m.        WMM Church Spanish-Speaking

**Friday**        No Events

**Saturday**    No Events