



Under the Dome

**Dunbar United Church of Christ
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An Open & Affirming Congregation

Weekly Services

Sunday Mornings @ 10:00 A.M.

Saturday Evenings @ 5:00 P.M.

May 2026

Pastor's Report, May 2026

If I could go to college again, I'd have a double-major: religion, and the Civil War. Because both help us understand ourselves. The Civil war (April 12, 1861 - May 26, 1865) helps us see who we were, what we became, and what we are becoming. The seeds of the Civil War were planted hundreds of years before it was fought, and the outcrop of those seeds — the fruits, values, character, disease — is America now.

Last week I finished reading "Jesse James, The Last Rebel," by T.J. Stiles. The title of the book is misleading because it's not so much about Jesse James as it is about America and our glorious, shameful history. Jesse James, the famous outlaw, was inevitable. He's our homegrown creation, our Frankenstein monster, a human-like figure stitched together from unlikely parts: Christian (Baptist), Confederate guerrilla, horse thief, bank and train robber, terrorist, loving son, brother, husband, father. And Jesse James believed, passionately, that God made white people superior to people of color. He was a Christian White Supremacist (today called Christian Nationalist) who, in his earliest robberies and acts of terror, wore the hood and robes of the Ku Klux Klan. He was a Confederate, not a cowboy. He was of the South, not the Old West.

Churches in the Confederacy taught that Jesus was white and slavery was good and God-ordained. This was, and still is, taught in many churches. After the Civil War, Confederate-sympathizing newspapers presented Jesse James as a hero who tried to make America great again by keeping the power in the hands of white men. A leading White Supremacist newspaper who helped make Jesse James famous was the Weekly Caucasian.

Reading this book, I realized, again, that Christian churches and the Bible are like Amazon. We can go to each and find anything

we want. There are thousands of variations of Jesus and the Bible that we can choose from. So many versions that none of us has to change, ever. We only need to find a church or radio or TV preacher that supports what we want to believe, and we can stay like we are. We can worship Jesus without the cross, without the pain of being born again and again as we move toward becoming him. And we can thank God for making us fully legal citizens and not among the wretched undocumented. Thank Jesus we have our legal documents and citizenship so we are not like the thousands hunted every day like Anne Frank and “disappeared” into undisclosed American concentration camps, officially, politely, called “detention centers.” Imagine God’s pain, seeing the cruel, horrible way we treat our sisters and brothers.

Jesus preached, “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” Repent means change. Not Jesus changing into us, but we changing into him. Jesus of the gospels is the light and life we seek to become. Two of the most important verses in the Bible show how this happens. Some “Greeks” came up to the disciple Phillip and asked, “Sir, we would see Jesus.” (John 12:20-21). This is the way — and why we attend church and read scripture and listen to the guidance of the spirit each day. As grace allows, we keep our gaze and mind on Jesus. We would see Jesus. With our eyes, then with his. We learn to see with his eyes.

Yours, from the land of Civil War, and heaven,

George

*Contact Pastor George @
Phone: (203) 287-8106 or
revonweb@sbcglobal.net*

H.O.P.E.

Hope would like to thank those that have generously donated this past month:

George and Janet Braen

Charlotte and John Sroka

John and Lois Kasarauskas

Heather Sibley

This month we will be donating to Connecticut Food Share Mobil Food Pantry. The Mobil Food Pantry visits more than 100 locations in an outdoor "farmer's market" setting. They offer fresh produce and other perishable foods with no questions asked.

If you would like to make a donation, you can do so by visiting our website or mailing a check with HOPE in the memo.

Thank you for supporting Helping Other People Eat,
Debbie Laffin



Women's Fellowship

Women's Fellowship will be hosting a Salad Sunday on May 17 directly after church. Women's Fellowship will be providing a green salad and a fruit salad. Everyone is invited to make a salad to share. It can be any kind (egg salad, tuna salad, seafood salad, Jello salad, potato salad, macaroni salad, bean salad or whatever you would like to share).

You do not need to bring a salad to enjoy Salad Sunday with us. Hope to see you all there!

Sending out a big Thank You to all that helped with a successful tag sale, especially Tracey Pascarella who “winged it” perfectly! Tracey and her crew did an amazing job!

We are planning an end of the year cookout for Sunday, June 7, after church. Please let me know if you can help set up, cook, clean, bake, etc.

Debbie Laffin

Dunbar United Church Women's Fellowship will be accepting College Scholarship Applications again this year from interested church members. Completed application forms should be received by 12:00 noon on May 25th, 2026.

Any questions please contact Debbie Laffin.

Deacons

Spring Greetings!

The Deacons had a busy Easter season preparing the church.

Our church choir sang beautifully on Easter Sunday.

I want to express my gratitude to the Deacons and their friends who participated in the Tenebrae Service, as well as to Joe Braen for providing the video recording of the service.

Thank you to those who helped out with Holy Week and Easter.

Please remember there are those that are alone. If there is anyone that you are concerned for, or you think would like a visit please let us know. Also if there are any suggestions regarding the service, please contact any of the Deacons.

Rides are available to service to those who need them.

Respectfully yours,
Kitty Donohue

Trustees

The Trustees met on Sunday 4/26.

We reviewed the financial reports and accepted the reports submitted without question or amendment.

Peter Bonadies updated the board on the progress on the Parish House and presented concept designs for windows and other exterior details, which will be addressed in the second phase of construction. Cost proposals for windows and siding will be prepared.

It was agreed that a special committee will meet to begin discussion and planning for interior renovations.

Pete Laffin will guide the group in their deliberations.

Respectfully submitted,
John Donohue

Board of Missions and Concerns

Hi Everyone,

Missions is once again supporting these organizations this year:

- 1) Edesia (Plumpy'Nut—a nutritional supplement to help end malnutrition of children of the world)
- 2) Social Sabby (autism)
- 3) Blood Cancer United (formerly LLS and includes all blood cancers)
- 4) NF Tumor Foundation (in support of Ethan),
- 5) DAV (Disabled American Veterans)
- 6) Dan Cosgrove Animal Shelter
- 7) Alzheimer's Association
- 8) UNHCR (The UN Refugee Agency).

Take care,

Donna and the Missions Committee

Remembering and Celebrating Meg Nowacki

We'll be celebrating our Meg Nowacki on Saturday, May 2, at 11:00 a.m. Please join us to remember such an important person to Dunbar. She would hate the attention, but she deserves it! Her faithful service, juggling many hats and generosity in all ways will be remembered.

Women's Fellowship will sponsor a deli luncheon with baked goods to be served after the service.

If you would like to bake a dessert, help set up or clean up, please let me know. All helping hands appreciated!

Debbie

Sunday Service 10am every Sunday is also available online via Zoom

Meeting ID 658 791 9474

Password 503008

To join by telephone, dial 929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID. If prompted for a password, enter 503008.

Saturday Service every Saturday at 5pm

In person only

Bible Study every Wednesday via Zoom

Meeting ID 658 791 9474

Password 503008

To join by telephone, dial 929-205-6099 and enter the meeting ID. If prompted for a password, enter 503008.

Dunbar UCC Open & Affirming Statement

We, the members of Dunbar United Church of Christ, want Jesus to be the center of our lives. Our mission is to practice the New Commandment that Jesus gave us: to love one another as he has loved us (John 13:34). We seek to follow God's will by loving our neighbors, friends and enemies alike. We seek justice for all.

We celebrate the image of God in every person. As an Open and Affirming Church, we welcome all persons into the full life and ministry of our church, and affirm that the grace of God, known especially through Jesus, is a gift meant for people of every race, color, age, ability, gender and sexual orientation. Worship, leadership, ministry, and employment are open to all.

We are on a journey of faith and invite all people to join us. No matter the church or community where your journey began, you are welcome here.

Mission Statement

“We believe that Jesus calls us to love each other, serve our neighbor, and nurture God's spirit within us.”