

New Castle Presbyterian News

December 2020



In Psalm 137, the Psalmist reflects from Babylonian exile, “How could we sing the Lord’s song in a foreign land?” In our current experience of exile, as we reel from the heartbreaks of 2020 and being distanced from loved ones over the holidays, we may find ourselves asking the same question. How could we sing the Lord’s song in this time? Even if our hearts were filled with songs of praise, scientists specifically counsel against singing in groups or public spaces, as this airborne virus excels at being propelled by singing. How can we sing the Lord’s song in this foreign land?

For the Psalmist, they find that while they struggle to sing, neither can they fully forget the Lord. Remembering God’s goodness meant holding fast to hope, even if that hope couldn’t be put into musical praise. The Psalmist declares to the Lord, “Let my tongue cling to the roof of my mouth, if I do not remember you.” This Advent season is a time for Christians to tell God’s incarnational story. Even if we cannot sing the Lord’s song together by caroling up and down the streets of New Castle, we can hear the songs of deliverance that our ancestors of faith sing throughout scripture.

During Advent, we’ll hear the songs of prophets, angels, and ordinary women and men, reminding us of who God is and how God is leading us to new life in Christ. Their songs invite us to speak, to sing, to remember God’s Good News of Jesus Christ. We can encounter Christ’s peace, hope, joy, and love through their songs and join in God’s praise from our living rooms and dining room tables.

Gather with NCPC through our online and in-person happenings this month, including Sunday Worship, our Wednesday Advent Bible Study, and our Prayer Walk on Sunday, December 20. And join us for Christmas Eve worship, in-person at 5:00 or virtually at 7 p.m. Let us remember together: Christ’s light shines in the darkness, and the darkness does not overcome it.

In the light of Christ,
Pastor Miriam

ADVENT HAPPENINGS

The Season of Advent begins November 29. Advent means "coming" or "arrival." Join us via livestream worship each Sunday as we light the Advent wreath and consider the meaning of this season. Connect with us through these opportunities:



Pastor Miriam will lead a **weekly reflection group on Wednesdays, December 2, 9, 16, and 23 at 1 p.m.** via Zoom. Join her in reading the Presbyterians Today daily devotional on Howard Thurman's poem "Let Us Light Candles" - <http://pcusa.org/2020advent>. Email her to receive the zoom link.

Join us for a **Prayer Walk on Sunday, December 20th**, at noon in the church yard., following our Congregational Meeting. The Worship and Christian Education Committees have organized an Advent prayer walk around the four Sunday's themes of Christ's hope, peace, joy, and love. The CE committee has organized an Advent scavenger hunt for children and their families. Come search for signs of what the advent season means to you and leave behind your own symbols of hope, love, joy, and peace. This is an event for all ages, abilities, and prayer styles, so we hope you'll bundle up for the weather, don a mask, and join us as we seek Christ's light together this season.

CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Our Christmas Eve, on Thursday, December 24 will be different this year, but we trust that Christ will come into our home and hearts nevertheless! Join us for a short in-person, outdoor, masked and distanced candlelight worship service at 5 p.m. in the church yard, and then tune in to our full-length service at 7 p.m. We trust that as the sounds of "O Holy Night" fill the space of the Meetinghouse, so Christ's grace is filling our world.

5:00 p.m. Outdoor Candlelight Service - a 20-minute worship service with prayer, Scripture readings, and some limited music. Masks and distancing required.

7:00 p.m. Livestream Christmas Eve Service - tune into worship in the Meetinghouse, singing and praying with full voice in your own home

We will provide electric candles for the 5:00 service; assemble your own Advent Wreath and candles at home for the 7:00 service!



YARD CLEANUP

The Trustees have set our next grounds clean-up day for Saturday, December 5 from 9am to noon. This is a great opportunity to spend some socially distance time outside on the church campus! Bring your rakes, gloves, and muscles to care for the church yard. The Trustees will provide coffee and donuts, as well as yard waste bags. If you have any hesitations about your physical ability or Covid concerns, please do not attend, but we do welcome all ages who have some extra elbow grease to care for the church grounds!



NEWS FROM THE CHOIR LOFT

Advent, the season of waiting and anticipation will have a different sound this year because of the pandemic. Even though the services are being live-streamed, the music will be just as beautiful and meaningful.



On Nov. 29th, our dear friend cellist Carolyn Hendrix will perform “O Come, O Come Emmanuel” accompanied by Bethany Faiz.

Dec. 6th, our vocal quartet, Lisa Raker, Ellie Gerhart, Minerva Lermond, and Bruce Raker, along with soloist Sarah McCann and accompanied by Carolyn Hendrix and Bethany Faiz will present the beautiful song “Light A Candle for Peace”.

Dec. 13th, Minerva Lermond and Rachel Briggs will be presenting a beautiful bell duet, entitled “O Come, Little Children” accompanied by Eileen Larkin on piano.

On Dec. 20th, the bells will return with a haunting rendition of “In the Bleak Midwinter” performed by Minerva Lermond, Rachel Briggs and Ellie Gerhart.

On Dec. 24th, Christmas Eve, we are once again delighted to have our own Sarah McCann sing “O Holy Night” accompanied by Bethany Faiz at our beautiful 7:00 service.

Please join us during this most blessed season!

Eileen Larkin
Music Director

THREE BOARD MEETING – TUESDAY DECEMBER 8th at 6:30 p.m.

The annual meeting of Session, Deacons and Trustees will be held via Zoom at 6:30 p.m. on December 8.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING – DECEMBER 20 AT NOON

The session has called for a Congregational Meeting on Sunday, December 20, for the purpose of reviewing the 2021 budget approved by Session. The meeting will begin at noon in the church yard and include the vote to approve the pastor’s terms of call and elect officers to fill vacant positions.



OFFICE NEWS

Kris will be on vacation Thursday, December 10 and Friday, December 11. She will also be on vacation Monday, December 28. The office will be closed Thursday, December 24 – Friday, December 25 and Thursday, December 31 – Friday, January 1. For any emergency pastoral care needs, please leave a message on the church office at (302) 328-3279 and someone will get back with you.



SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

On what would've been the 20th anniversary of New Castle Presbyterian's Spirit of Christmas event, we lament that on Saturday, December 12, we won't be opening our Meeting House for musical concerts, providing hospitality in our Christian Education building, and offering crafts, books, and other items for sale in support of Friendship House. And yet, we invite everyone to join us in our Spirit of Christmas giving initiative to Friendship House!

In previous years, all money raised at Spirit of Christmas has gone to support Friendship House, and we hope that can show them our support, especially in this time of great need. Friendship House is a New Castle County non-profit that embodies the Spirit of Christmas. Through their transitional housing opportunities, employment counseling, clothing bank, and other programs, Friendship House captures the hospitality, generosity, and abundant welcome of this season.

NCPC is committing \$2,500 in our mission giving to Friendship House, and we hope to raise a matching \$2,500 this Spirit of Christmas season in support of this ministry. While there's no fudge for sale to sweeten your gift, if you make a donation of over \$30 at <https://www.friendshiphousede.org/>, you can forward your donation receipt to spiritofchristmas@gmail.com, and NCPC artist Rachel Briggs will mail you a block print of her work!

After you make your donation, also check out our *Taste the Spirit of Christmas Cookbook*, available digitally at no cost through our website. Even if we don't get to enjoy NCPC cookies or soups together this December 12, you can find the recipes at <https://www.newcastlepreschurch.org/spiritofchristmas> and make them in the safety and comfort of your own home.

We hope that you will join us in supporting the work of Friendship House, and we look forward to warmly and safely welcoming everyone back to New Castle Presbyterian Church next year!



TEMPORARY PASTOR FOUND!

A Temporary Pastor has been found to fill in for the time Pastor Miriam is out on maternity leave!!! It is with great pleasure that we share that the Rev. Nona Holy will be our Temporary Pastor. Rev. Holy currently works with the Campus Ministry at the University of Delaware, and for the past few months has been the Temporary Pastor at Elsmere Presbyterian Church.

The process for selection was relatively smooth! The task force of Peter McCurdy, Jo Viola, Jen Dunham, and Melissa Boris worked closely with the Presbytery and interviewed a few candidates, before selecting Rev. Holy.

Pastor Miriam's due date is January 29. While Baby Foltz will arrive when he decides to arrive, Pastor Nona's start date is anticipated for later January, and she will serve 15 hours a week for the 12 weeks of Pastor Miriam's parental leave.

QUICK & SWEET NOTE

Brownies for Friendship House are needed before Dec 7th.

Just because 2020 has dealt us a reclusive card for the holidays doesn't mean we can't share a little Christmas joy with those in need. Our brownie ministry for Friendship House is still going strong. If you'd like to share a morsel of chocolate delight, please bake a pan of brownies and bring it to the church and put it in one of the freezers.

For you long-time supporters, since we are no longer able to remind you with a brownie mix at the door on Sunday morning, the Deacon Boards is asking that you purchase a mix or two and bake it prior to the 7th of each month.



BABY BUZZ

Steve and Miriam's baby arrival day is coming soon! Even sooner - a virtual Baby Shower! Here are the key dates:

Thursday, Dec 10th - deadline for submitting your parenting advice

Saturday, Dec 12th, 1:00-2:00 PM - Shower gift drop-off

Sunday, Dec 13th, 1:00-2:00 PM - Virtual Baby Shower



If you'd like to drop-off your shower gift so that the expectant couple can open it as you watch, please bring it by the church on Saturday, Dec 12th. The Beehive of Salina, Eileen, Jen, and Melissa will be there to pick it up and take it to the gift honeycomb in the Fellowship Hall.

Still haven't purchased a gift, but want to? Here's the link to the Foltz Gift Registry: <https://www.babylist.com/welcome-baby-foltz>

Would you like to be part of the Foltz Baby Buzz? We're planning a fun virtual activity - a friendly (and funny) spousal competition regarding parenting. We need your help by completing a super-short questionnaire that taps you for all your parenting advice. You can find the survey here at <https://bit.ly/3pWTcUW>. We'd love to have your answers by Thursday, Dec 10th in order to have time to put together the activity.

If you want to watch all the fun, here are the Zoom details:



Topic: Foltz Baby Shower - It's All the Buzz!

Time: Dec 13, 2020 01:00 PM Eastern Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting – the link will be emailed to you on Friday, 12/11

Warmly,
Salina

MISSION & OUTREACH NEWS

THANK YOU!

Because of your generosity, we were able to deliver an incredible 525 [Emergency food kits](#) to vulnerable families in Guatemala, providing a month's worth of food for 2,700 people. This number shattered our original goal of a mere 100 food kits, and we are so grateful that **each and every** woman in the Association has now received one. This outpouring of support came from more than 100 individuals and 14 churches, as well as from New Castle Presbytery. We also want to recognize the exceptional work of our in-country partners, CEDEPCA and the Association of Mam Christian Women for Development, for making this project possible.

So what is next, you ask? Egg-laying chickens, of course!

Egg-Laying Chickens

Guatemala has the sixth highest rate of chronic malnutrition in the world, with nearly half of the country's children going to bed hungry at night, according to a report by USAID. Food insecurity is especially prevalent in rural indigenous communities where levels of hunger have skyrocketed to daunting levels during the COVID-19 crisis. In response, the Association of Mam Christian Women for Development has spearheaded a nutrition program, which includes a successful egg-laying chicken project. Each family that receives a set of three chickens will have more than a dozen eggs every week!



These egg-laying chickens:

- Cost \$40 for a set of three.
- Provide a sustainable source of protein for families.
- Are purchased from a local farm, supporting a small business.
- Are native and specially bred to resist illness.
- Will reach the most vulnerable women of the Association first.

Starting with Giving Tuesday, Dec. 1, and throughout Advent, The Guatemala Project of New Castle Presbytery, is offering a unique Christmas gift for those hard-to-buy names on your Christmas list, or simply a great way for you to reach out to the world to help fight the Covid crisis in a tangible way. To give the priceless gift of 3 chickens, go to www.ncpguatemala.com/projects/egg-laying-chickens.



Each gift of \$40 includes three chickens, delivery, training, and special feed for the first month. We hope you will support our efforts by making a donation. Gifts of any size are appreciated. Thank you!

SEAMEN CENTER DITTY BOXES & THANKSGIVING DINNER BASKETS

November was a busy month for the Mission/Outreach Committee. In spite of the pandemic, through generous donations, we were able to fill and deliver 45 ditty boxes to the Seamen's Center in mid-November. Later that same week, we delivered 30 Thanksgiving dinner baskets to families of Carrie Downie Elementary School, New Castle Elementary School, and Eisenberg Elementary School.

We have also made donations to the Baylor Women's Prison Covid needs, New Castle City Police Adopt a Family project, and St. Peter's Food Bank.

Thank you for supporting our outreach efforts through your giving to NCPC!

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

He came down, that we may have Hope, Peace, Joy and Love, Hallelujah, forevermore! We will miss singing that special advent song together, and it's hard to believe that Christmas is almost here! What a year of wonder and adventure we have had! Whoever said "necessity is the mother of all inventions," was obviously talking about 2020! We learn in Sunday school how special and important it is to care for your neighbor, and to help all those in need. This year we have had the chance to help our neighbors the most by staying home in our pajamas! Every year, the church recognizes our 3rd graders and presents them with their own Bible; encouraging them as they grow in God's word. This year, with the safety of Zoom, we presented our young member, Annabelle with her own Bible! We have had the fun of learning about God's word via ZOOM twice a month, and being able to safely share our faith journey together from a safe distance! What a fun way to experience the Fruit of the Spirit, and putting on the whole armor of God, in the comfort of your own home! We are all on this adventure together to navigate through the Bible and uncover all of the wonderful lessons that God has in store for us! Have a Merry Christmas, and a very Happy New Year!

LGBTQIA+ TASK FORCE NEWS

"We love our neighbors. Immigrants, LGBTQIA+, of color, with disabilities, of all and any faiths." We display these words outside of our church as a statement of affirmation and love, and a promise for those searching for acceptance and assurance of God's love. This year, more than any other year we cling to this promise, and we recognize how important it is to truly show God's love to our neighbors.

Together, we have experienced the joy of becoming a More Light Presbyterian church, and pain that came when our dear friends at Church on Main in Middletown were the target of a horrific act of vandalism and hatred.

"They will know we are Christians by our love." Let's finish the year full of love, go out with joy and be led forth with peace!



WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

On November 29, we welcomed new members, Erica Russell, and her son, Douglas Russell, by the Sacrament of Baptism during worship. Erica, her husband, Ernest, and Douglas are pictured. Help us welcome the Russell family by sending notes to 30 Scotch Pine Road, Newark, DE 19711.



On December 13, we will welcome new members, Toni Kiger and Andrew Marley by affirmation of faith, and their son Luke Marley by the Sacrament of Baptism. Toni, Andrew, and Luke are pictured. Help us welcome the Kiger-Marley family by sending notes to 2709 Marshall Road, Drexel Hill, PA 19026



CONGRATULATIONS!

Congratulations to members Karyn Fry and Nancy Kersey on their wedding on October 30! Pastor Miriam, Nancy, Kay, and two family members gathered for a wedding service in the Meetinghouse. Thanks be to God for the gift of marriage, and many blessings to Kay and Nancy as they live into God's covenantal love together!



CONNECTIONAL PRESBYTER ANNOUNCED

For the past nine months, Pastor Miriam has been serving on the search committee for New Castle Presbytery's Connectional Presbyter, the position that Jessie MacMillan (former manse resident) had served in until August 2019.

The committee will present our candidate, Cindy Kohlmann, at a Special Called Presbytery meeting on December 8 at 4 p.m.

Thanks be to the Holy Spirit for moving through the search process!

Pictured here: search Committee members Tom Speers, Miriam Foltz, Julius Jackson, Dianne Deming, Candidate Cindy Kohlmann and her husband Eric Markman, and Gary Patterson.



STEWARDSHIP



Thanks to all for joining our journey through the wilderness during the Stewardship season for 2021! After three weeks of lessons and sermons about the journey, we were able to gather as a congregation to affirm our commitments to share our time, talents, and treasures in service to God's kingdom. Thank you to everyone who stopped by our Pledge Sunday campfire event to drop off their pledge cards and s'more prayers, as well as thank you to everyone who has returned their pledge cards by mail. The outpouring of support during these difficult times is amazing!

Additionally, the Resource Development Committee would like to thank Salina, Amy, and Peter for speaking about their wilderness encounters of God, as well as Lyn and Rachel Briggs for their campfire creations.

There's still time to mail in your pledges, so be sure to return those either by mail or in person to the church office. Additionally, mark your calendars for our Annual Congregational Meeting on December 20 at noon in the church yard. We'll present the 2021 budget and share how Christ is calling NCPC into the new year.

ON-LINE DONORS - USING "GIVE NOW" ON NCPC'S WEBSITE

For those of you who utilize the "Give Now" button on NCPC's website, a giving statement will be sent out by the Presbyterian Foundation at year end, summarizing your gifts for the year. The Presbyterian Foundation is the organization that coordinates on-line giving for congregations. This statement will be sent by January 31st per IRS regulations.

The Recording Secretary is NOT tracking the on-line gifts in her records. The giving statement that you receive from NCPC at year end will NOT reflect any on-line donations. If you give a combination of on-line gifts, along with envelopes or auto-withdrawal, you will receive 2 statements at year end – one from NCPC and one from the Presbyterian Foundation. In that case you would have to add the 2 together to get the total amount of your donations.

If you have any questions, please contact the Church Treasurer (Dan Knox) at (302) 322-0225 or dfk827@comcast.net.

- NCPC Finance Team

December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Frank Boris, 12/2
 Lisa Fries, 12/5
 Conchita Showell, 12/6
 Parker Boris, 12/8
 Robert McCullough, 12/8
 James Anderson, 12/13
 Pat Taylor, 12/16



Kim Beebe, 12/17
 Kevin Collins, 12/18
 Lyn Briggs, 12/22
 Annabelle Kern, 12/22
 Charlotte McDowell, 12/30
 Parker Toto, 12/30

Bruce & Lisa Raker, 12/14
 Jim & Susan Flook, 12/30



Meals on Wheels

HELP! We need Meals on Wheels delivery people for 2020. Call Susan Flook at 328-7346 if you are interested. Substitutes needed, too. No weekend deliveries. Thanks. Consider this as your call in Christ!

Our next delivery will be December 14-18. If anyone is interested in delivering meals to shut-in Seniors in the New Castle area, please contact the office at 302-328-3279.

Monday 14

Jude Morrow
 Jo Viola

Tuesday 15

Joan Smith
 Miranda Matthews

Wednesday 16

Karen & Jim
 Beatson

Thursday 17

Cynthia Robbins
 Nanette Nichol

Friday 18

Susan & Jim
 Flook

Monthly Report

Look here each month for a statistical report on the life of the congregation:

Membership:

October	142
November	142

Income thru 11/01/20:

2020 Budget:	\$218,820.00
2020 Actual:	\$200,305.00

Expenses thru 11/01/20:

2020 Budget:	\$212,533.00
2020 Actual:	\$193,214.00



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Fax: (302) 328-5670
E-Mail: office@newcastlepreschurch.org
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

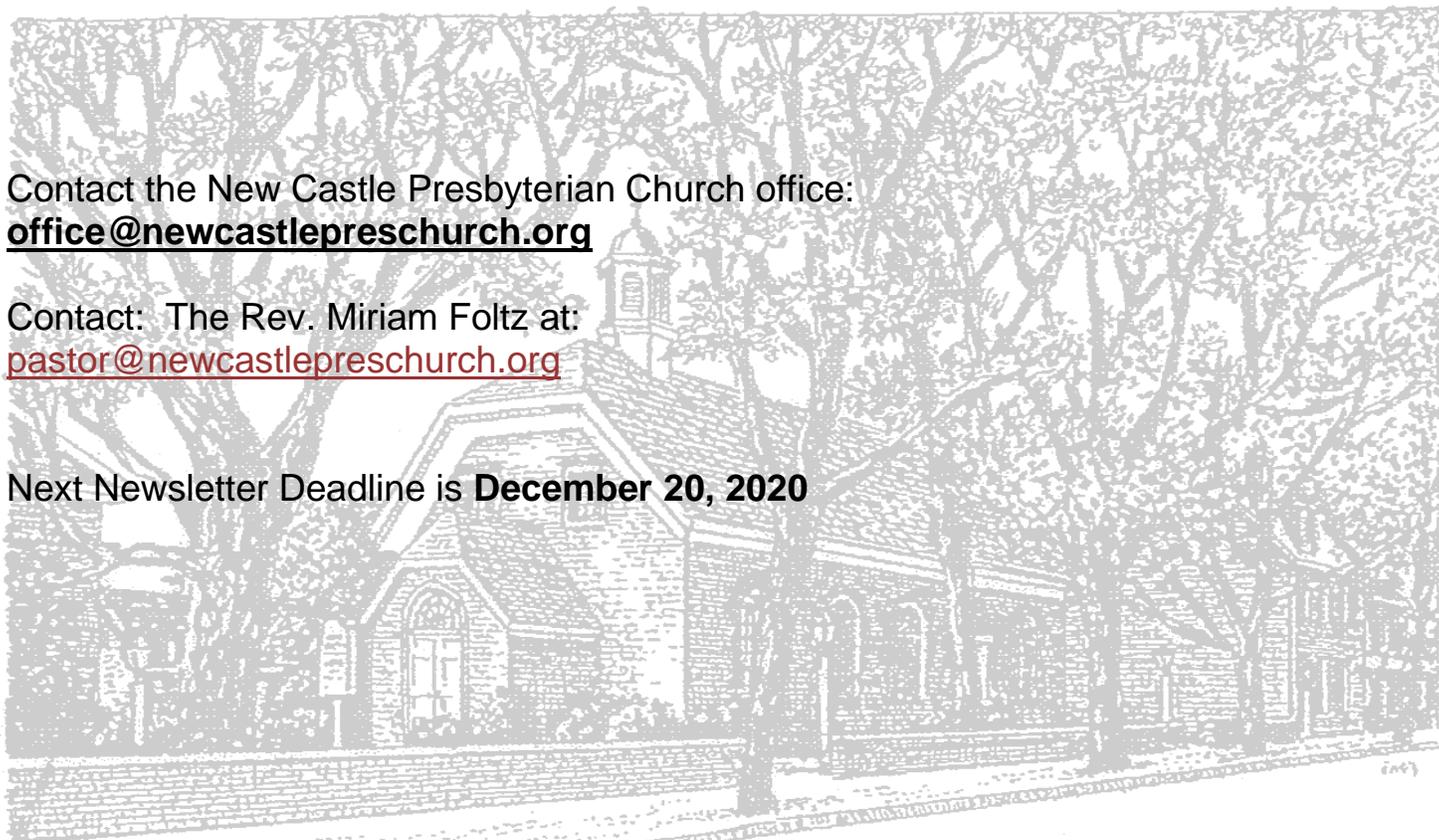


Address Change
Requested

Contact the New Castle Presbyterian Church office:
office@newcastlepreschurch.org

Contact: The Rev. Miriam Foltz at:
pastor@newcastlepreschurch.org

Next Newsletter Deadline is **December 20, 2020**



New Castle Presbyterian Church ~ Built 1707 ~ New Castle, Delaware