

# *New Castle Presbyterian News*

## *February 2021*

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Ashes to Lilies – our Lenten Journey

Greetings NCPC!

I am looking forward to our time together as I join you to cover the pastoral bases while Pastor Miriam is on maternity leave. I'll be leading worship, supporting the ongoing work of committees and tending to pastoral care needs as they arise in partnership with the Deacons.

Most of our time will be spent taking the spiritual pilgrimage which is Lent. It is a rich season - a time to re-orient our lives and to renew our faith. A season in the life of the Church which moves us from the ashes of Ash Wednesday – symbolic of repentance and confession - to the lilies of Easter Sunday - when the hope of the resurrection renews our weary souls and releases us to new lives of worship and service.

God speaks to us through the words of the prophets and the Psalms in Lent saying:  
Yet even now, says the LORD,  
return to me with all your heart,  
with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning;



**... but those who hope in the LORD will renew their strength.  
They will soar on wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary,  
they will walk and not be faint.**

Wait for the LORD;  
be strong and take heart  
and wait for the LORD.

My prayer is that God will speak to us anew through this year's Lenten journey. Our hunger for God's grace and our thirst for God's wisdom are intense this year. Our ache for God's comfort, wisdom, and peace are acute. I trust that God will meet us as we worship and serve together providing that hope we need so that we may keep on in a challenging time.

Peace, be well –  
Pastor Nona

## **ANNUAL CHRISTMAS GIFT**

Surrounded by your love and generosity, my cup overflows! Thank you to everyone who gave to the annual Christmas gift. In the joy of God's goodness and mercy, Steven and I contributed a portion to the Gifts of Love offering; we are blessed to be a blessing. Praying for green pastures and still waters for us all in 2021. - Pastor Miriam

## **WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY**

Join us on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. via zoom as we delve into the Book of Esther. Over nine weeks (January 20 through March 17), we'll gather to read a passage together and hear how God is speaking through Esther's story. Pat Taylor will lead the conversation; no homework is required! Email Eileen Larkin ([sngieileen1953@aol.com](mailto:sngeileen1953@aol.com)) for the zoom link.

## **LGBTQIA+ NEWS**

This time last year we were busy planning for the LGBTQIA+ Valentine's Day Dance with First and Central Presbyterian Church in Wilmington. That dance was special on its own, but if we had known then that it was one of the last social occasions that we would be involved in before the world shut down due to the pandemic, would we have done anything differently? The theme of the dance was 'love and celebration,' and it was held almost exactly one month before anything related to love and celebrating seemed like a far, distant memory. There were many times in the beginning of the quarantine when the world came together in unity for the sake of staying positive and overcoming the gravity of the situation; but that optimism quickly faded when "unity and fortitude" turned into "division and fear," largely for many in our Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender Intersex, Asexual/Ally + family. What can we do to change things? Who is looking for our help? When we became a More Light Presbyterian church last year we made a promise to our LGBTQIA+ siblings that we are here for them, and that they are not alone. "New year, New you!" is usually how most people begin their new year's resolutions. We are one month into the new year, and although it may seem like "Same old, same old," is still in the air, why not look ahead for a bright new us? We will continue reaching out to those still looking for a place to feel included and loved, in a world that thrives on exclusion and hate. Our 'New Year' is here, and the 'New Us' is ready with open arms!



## **ASH WEDNESDAY – FEBRUARY 17 – LIVESTREAM 7PM**

Let's begin the Lenten season together worshipping with the music of the Taize Community in France. This intentional community has given the world meditative, meaningful and singable songs and we'll call upon these gifts as we recognize the beginning of the forty days of preparation leading up to Easter. To learn more about the Taize Community, see <https://www.taize.fr/en>.

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL**

When life gives you lemons... well you know the rest! In the beginning of last year, "Zoom" was a term mainly used when describing a dog's chaotic bursts of energy, who would have thought it would become a term used to refer to our main source of worship and communication? Last year, we "made lemonade" by finding creative ways to share the journey through God's word together! The Sunday school class has begun the new year by learning about "inclusion through community," and reflecting on what it's meant to be disciples; and what Jesus is calling us to do. Each month we mail out an activity booklet to the families, and we hold our Zoom class on the last Sunday of the month at 11:30 and reflect on the lessons we learned. We will meet again on Sunday, January 31 via Zoom at 11:30, after the worship service. Hope to see you January 31 on Zoom, and am looking forward to when we can see each other in-person again!

## **CONGREGATIONAL LIFE COMMITTEE NEWS**

The prayer wall continues on the outside of the CE Building door. It has been well used. Prayer requests from the wall will continue to be shared with the congregation on the first Sunday of each month.

Welcome to our two newest church families, the Russells and the Kiger/Marley family.

The two "small groups" for fellowship continue to meet each week as weather permits and safe distancing can be observed. If you are interested in participating, please contact the church office for information about times and places.

Stay tuned for details about a "virtual game night" in the works for February as well as a Zoom art class in March.

The Congregational Life and Membership committee meets on Zoom one weeknight each month. If you would like to attend and help bring new ideas and insights to the congregation, please contact the church office for information. Beverly Stoudt, currently an Elder on Session, is the committee chair.

## **BREAK OUT YOUR BEST UNDIES TO CELEBRATE VALENTINE'S DAY**

Help chase away the winter doldrums with this drive by opportunity to say hello to some socially distanced friends and do some good at the same time (and maybe even pick up a little chocolate treat:)



On February 14<sup>th</sup>, show your Valentine (and those homeless supported by Friendship House) some love by sporting your brightest knickers and dropping off new underwear of any size or color from 1:00 pm to 2:00 pm. Members of the Mission/Outreach Committee will be there to greet you and thank you for supporting the important work of Friendship House. (In case of inclement weather, donations can be left in the CE Building entryway between the hours of 9 am – noon any time up to February 19).

## **WORSHIP COMMITTEE NEWS**

Advent and Christmas songs of deliverance have been sung and celebrated. Candles were lit, welcoming hope, peace, joy, and love. Bad weather, unfortunately, cancelled planned outside activities and the scavenger hunt. Nevertheless, it was comforting to see our sanctuary and the familiar faces of some of our congregation via YouTube. As we have celebrated the birth of Jesus Christ and his baptism we have heard that hearts can change because Christ puts light within us. Peace will return to us as we chose sacrificial living. When we are transformed by Jesus, we can do God's work with confidence, knowing God's love is always at work. So, we can now seek to follow a distant star and abandon our fears. Jesus lights our soul one candle at a time. What a gift it has been.

Worship Committee has been joyfully meeting with both Pastor Miriam and our interim pastor, Nona Holy. We are eagerly looking forward to meaningful worship leadership with Pastor Nona from the pulpit and in working meetings.

Our thoughts and prayers are with Pastor Miriam and Steven as they prepare for the delivery of their first child in the near future. We are grateful to have had colorful and insightful leadership from the pulpit as Pastor Miriam begins her maternity leave with two weeks of vacation. We thank our guest preachers Salina Brett and Rev. Tom Speers for their insight and leadership on January 17<sup>th</sup> and 24<sup>th</sup>.

There are still openings for lay leadership during Sunday worship. Interested people are encouraged to use the "Sign up Genius" app link published in both the weekly bulletin and newsletter <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050B44ADAA2AA0F94-2021>. February is complete, while March needs liturgists for the 14<sup>th</sup>, and April has openings for the 11<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>.

Pastor Nona is already planning Lenten services. We hope to offer a brief, meaningful Ash Wednesday service on February 17, livestreamed from the Meeting House. We are unsure, at this point, about any ecumenical activities in New Castle. Keep an eye out in the bulletins for more information.

The church office will soon be accepting orders for Easter flowers. Look for instructions on doing that in future bulletins and newsletters. We look forward to adding color and living plants to Easter Sunday worship. Communion will continue to be celebrated on the first Sunday of each month, including April 4, Easter Sunday. One Great Hour of Sharing materials will arrive in the office in February. Look for distribution information in future bulletins/newsletters. OGHS will be collected Easter Sunday. Remember the colorful flowers!

Some faithful bell choir members have been preparing future musical offerings and something special for Palm Sunday. Well planned and select musical offerings will continue to be included in every worship service. Solos, instruments, and small groups of safely distanced singers will continue to enrich our weekly worship.

## Meals on Wheels

**HELP! We need Meals on Wheels delivery people for 2021. 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 February 22-26. 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 22

Jude Morrow  
Jo Viola

### Tuesday 23

Miranda Matthews

### Wednesday 24

Karen & Jim  
Beatson

### Thursday 25

Cynthia Robbins  
Nanette Nichol

### Friday 26

Susan & Jim  
Flook



## Monthly Report

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

### Membership:

December ..... 144

Loss by death – Robert H. Swick, (#475) November 27, 2020.....-1

January ..... 143

### Income thru 01/02/21:

2021 Budget: ..... \$254,521.00

2021 Actual:..... \$239,958.00

### Expenses thru 01/02/21:

2021 Budget: ..... \$254,521.00

2021 Actual:..... \$239,356.00

## February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Nanette Nichol, 2/1

Steven Foltz, 2/2

Toni Kiger, 2/2

Gary Graham, 2/5

Laura Gearheart-Esham, 2/6

James Cottrell, 2/7

Beverly Denison, 2/11

Robert Spring, 2/11



Heather Raezer, 2/12

Maggie Collins, 2/18

Eileen Larkin, 2/21

Cynthia Robbins, 2/25

Zarina Stone, 2/25

Joan Smith, 2/27

Mary Fontinha, 2/27

Ray & Lynn Snyder, 2/7  
Amy & Scott Selheimer, 2/14  
Judy & Bill Hentkowski, 2/15



## **THANKS FOR SERVING IN FEBRUARY!**

### COMMUNION

February 2 – **Janet Spring\***

### WORSHIP LEADERS

February 7 – Ray Snyder

February 14 – Minerva Lermond

February 21 – Joanne Viola

February 28 – Salina Brett

### EMMANUEL DINING ROOM

Steve Martin

Cynthia Robbins

### **GOOD NEWS OF GREAT JOY!**

Guest Preacher Tom Speers shared the news in worship: Pastor Miriam and Steven welcomed their son, Parker Mason Foltz, into the world, January 23, 2021!

Parker was born at 7:13 p.m. measuring 7 lbs 6 oz and 21 inches long. We're grateful that all are doing well.

Thanks be to God! Alleluia!



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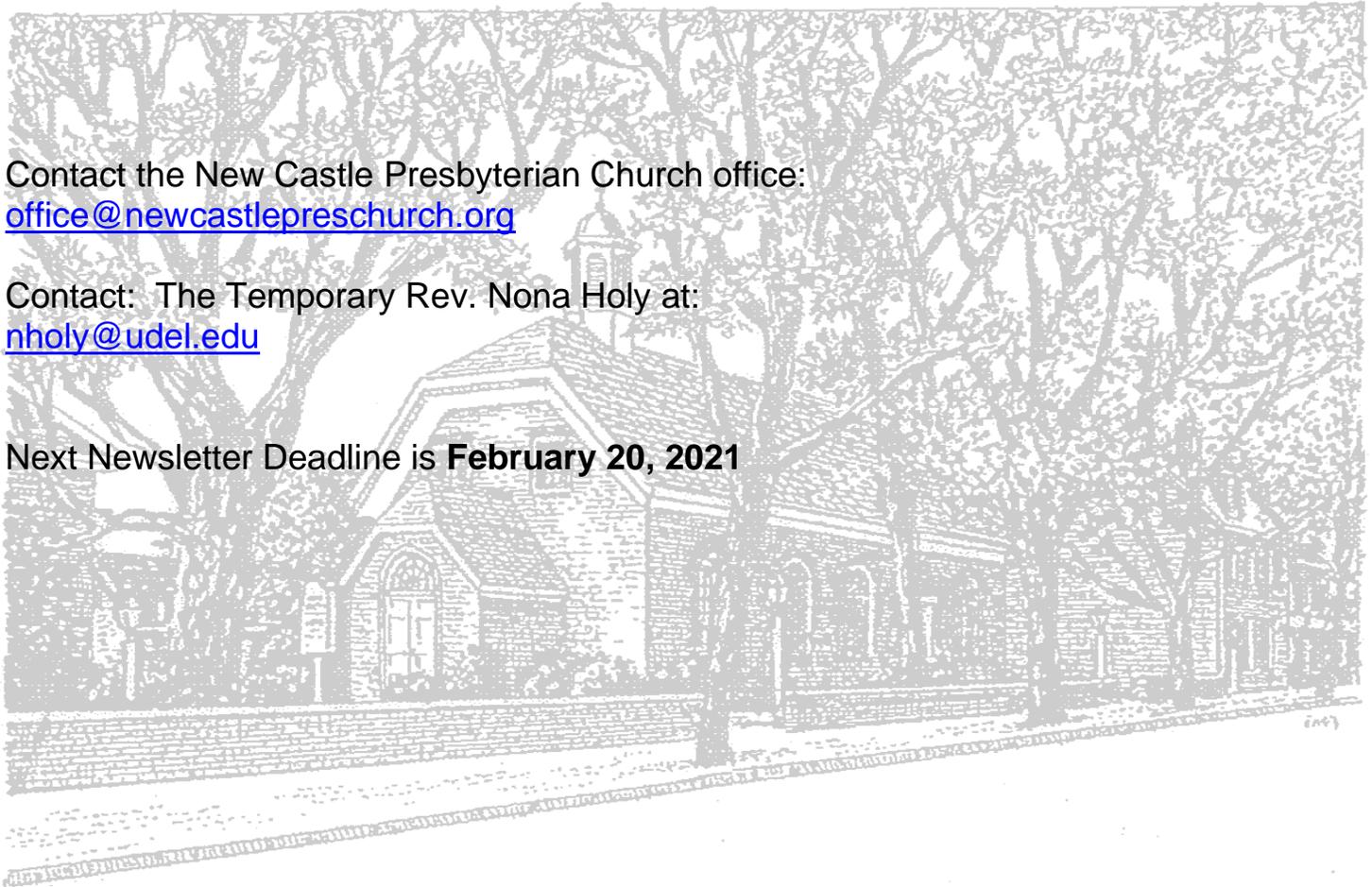


Address Change  
Requested

Contact the New Castle Presbyterian Church office:  
[office@newcastlepreschurch.org](mailto:office@newcastlepreschurch.org)

Contact: The Temporary Rev. Nona Holy at:  
[nholy@udel.edu](mailto:nholy@udel.edu)

Next Newsletter Deadline is **February 20, 2021**



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