

New Castle Presbyterian News

March 2021



As I sit across from her, these days on Zoom, and share reflections about my life, my spiritual director will often respond with this question: What could be the invitation in what you just shared? What might God be inviting you to learn, to understand differently, about yourself, about God's own self? In other words, let's look more deeply at your experience, what you've been noticing about yourself, your life, those around you. Let's take a careful look and see if we can notice where God is in the midst of your life. Let's listen to your experience and see if we can hear how God is inviting, revealing, beckoning to you through that experience.

That simple question, the conversations that arise from it, often leave me with much to ponder, with a new sense of God's presence in my life, with a renewed understanding of my call and purpose.

In many ways, the Lenten journey is both one big invitation and a series of smaller ones as well. As a season, it is a time when we are invited to give God our fuller attention. We are invited to commit ourselves to the spiritual disciplines of prayer, fasting, and almsgiving - giving and service to others. But not for the sake of doing these things alone but because doing them, increasing their frequency and priority in our lives, focusses our attention on who God would have us to be.

And if we accept those invitations, then we reach the celebration of Easter with hearts and spirits renewed, our relationship with God deepened, and our awareness of God's presence in our lives more acute.

Particularly in this challenging time of lingering pandemic, when our resilience buckets need to be refilled, when isolation, fear, and grief, dominate our emotional landscapes, Lent is rich with invitations to peace, to hope, to honest prayer, to deepened relationship, to service. May we each receive and accept the invitations extended to us in this season and may they lead to encounters with God which refresh our souls.

Peace, be well -
Pastor Nona

**DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME BEGINS
SUNDAY, MARCH 14 AT 2:00 A.M.
Don't forget to "Spring Forward!"
(and change your smoke alarm batteries).**



SYMPATHY

The sympathy of the congregation surrounds the loved ones of Grace Hayford, a long time member of New Castle Presbyterian Church, who died to this life Monday, February 22nd. A Graveside service will be held, Tuesday, March 2, at 11 am at the New Castle Presbyterian Church Cemetery. Prayers for God's comfort for all who mourn.

WORSHIP COMMITTEE

We joyfully welcome Nona Holy to our congregation as temporary pastor during Pastor Miriam's maternity leave. Pastor Nona will be with us through the end of April. She is splitting her time shepherding us and students at the Campus Ministry of the University of Delaware. Nona is in the church office each Thursday morning and can be reached for prayer requests and other concerns by email nholy@udel.edu or cell phone 302-299-9077. Pastor Nona is planning Lenten Sunday services, a Maundy Thursday service, and compiling meditation readings for Good Friday.

Sunday worship services have been both via live YouTube and, for the first time, live Zoom. The February 7 service enabled us to see each other—some for the first time in months. Thank you, Peter McCurdy and Rachel Briggs for your technical expertise and time each week.

Each Sunday a lay member of our congregation is the liturgist, leading the call to worship, prayers, reading Bible passages, and introducing the offertory. Anyone who feels comfortable to come to the Meeting House on a given Sunday can sign up to be the liturgist on line at: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/8050b44adaa2aa0f94-2021> At this point we have people signed up through April 18. Plan ahead and pick a slot.

One Great Hour of Sharing offerings will be collected during Lent and offered on Easter Sunday. Literature and the "Fish" banks will be sent to member households.



There was a live streamed YouTube Ash Wednesday service February 17.



Easter Sunday we hope to have a mass of flowering bulbs inside the Meeting House. Please fill out the form below and return it to the office to order Easter flowers in memory of or in honor of loved ones. After the Easter Worship service the flowers will be placed outside the church door and you may drive by and pick up your pot.

WEDNESDAY BIBLE STUDY

Join us on Wednesdays at 1 p.m. via Zoom as we delve into the Book of Esther. Through Wednesday, 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 ([sngceileen1953@aol.com](mailto:sngeileen1953@aol.com)) for the zoom link.

SUNDAY SCHOOL NEWS

We are finishing up with the Sunday school unit exploring "inclusion through community." We learned what it's meant to be disciples; and what Jesus is calling us to do. The disciples had a choice, and we also have a choice to follow God or not. Being a "Fisher of Men" is God wanting us to share the good news about Jesus with others and helping them know that God loves them too! It's not always easy to talk about Jesus to others, but we can show what it's like to love and include our neighbor by acts of kindness, sharing, and by praying for others! The next unit will be exploring how God guides us through difficult times. I think that's a lesson we can use all the time! We will have our next ZOOM meeting again March 21, at 11:30.

- Diana Reilly

THE EASTER FAIR IS COMING!

Join us Saturday, April 3rd at 10:30am for our annual Easter Fair. This year's fair will feature crafts and a socially-distanced egg hunt! Families will be provided their own crafting stations and supplies.

Due to social distancing guidelines and limited space, anyone planning to attend must RSVP by Saturday, March 27th at www.newcastlepreschurch.org/easterfair

Have questions? Want to volunteer? Contact Kaitlyn Raker at keraker618@gmail.com or Chris Fagles at poolside2k@gmail.com.

MASSANETTA MIDDLE SCHOOL CONFERENCE

The New Castle Presbytery is forming a group to attend Massanetta's Middle School Conference—Rooted in Love from Tuesday, June 22nd through Friday, June 25th.

For more information, contact Pastor Mark Piedmonte-Silvoy of Buckingham Presbyterian Church at pastorpedmonte@gmail.com or visit Massanetta's site at <https://massanettasprings.org/programs/msc>. Scholarships through both the New Castle Presbytery and the CE Committee are available.

If you plan to attend please fill out the linked form below by March 25th.

<https://forms.gle/RbA36sXhndBDM8Mz8>

MONTREAT YOUTH CONFERENCE

High schoolers are invited to the 2021 Montreat Youth Conference—Called to Connect! For more information visit the Montreat Conference Center site at <https://montreat.org/events/myc2021>. Scholarships through both the New Castle Presbytery and the CE Committee are available.

For those interested in attending, please contact Molly Shaw at molly.shaw@delaware.gov by Monday, March 15th.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NEWS

THE GIFTS OF LOVE FOR THE SPRING SEASON (MARCH-JUNE)

Thank you for all of your help in providing for our friends in need all year round, not just during the cold holiday months

UNDIE SUNDAY SUCCESS!

Our February Underwear Drive for Friendship House brought in 363 pairs of underwear, socks, tee shirts, and bras in all sizes, colors and patterns for men, women and children. Thank you to all who donated!

Your generosity in giving the gift of new, clean underwear, which we often take for granted, reflects our commitment as written in Matthew 25: 40 "I tell you, whenever you did this for one of the least important of these brothers of mine, you did it for me."



BEAR MINISTRY

It's been a LONG time since we were able to worship together in our sanctuary. The absence of friends and loved ones can leave many of us discouraged and depressed, especially if there are other areas in our lives where we are struggling. When we're in an emotionally dark place, the smallest of gestures often keeps our candles of hope gently lit. Perhaps it's a text or email or phone call to say, "I miss you and I'm thinking about you."

Another way to share hope is with one our "Care Bears." These small stuffed animals have been with us in worship during times of joy and sorrow. They used to reside near the sanctuary entrance but can now be found outside the church offices. They remain saturated with the Spirit's presence of our together times and are eager to share their love. If you know of someone whose candle of hope is flickering dimly, consider picking up one of these small, soft bears and sending it to them. Just stop by the church when the office is open and pick one up. It's as simple as that! It may well be the "bear hug" that someone needs today.



LGBTQIA+ NEWS - RAINBOW NOTES

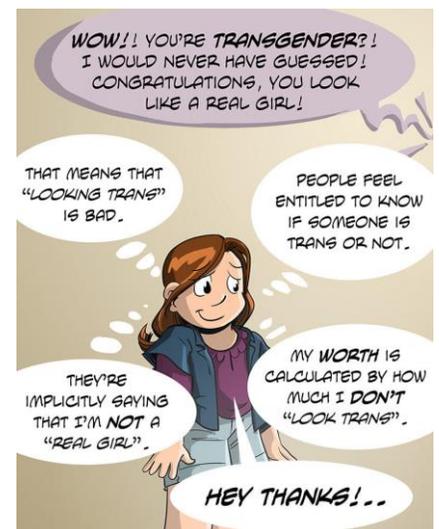


March 31 is Transgender Day of Visibility (TDOV), a day set aside to raise awareness of transgender people, their accomplishments, and discrimination against them. As the resident transgender member of our congregation, I thought I'd take this opportunity to briefly describe what it feels like to be trans. An analogy I like to use is living in a culture that is not your own. If you've ever visited a different culture, you know what it's like to feel out of place and you know the relief of returning to all that's familiar. Men and women, on the whole, have socially different cultures, no matter where they are in the world.

To be transgender is to live one's life defined and confined by their birth gender culture while inwardly knowing they mentally, emotionally, and spiritually belong to the other. Although a person can physically leave one part of the world and return home, the only way a trans person can find "home" is by changing their outward appearance and behavior to conform to their inner gender as best as they can. Since our bodies seldom support that without much effort, many transgender people are berated, mocked, and humiliated. This means that it's often easier to stay hidden than to live life openly. When religion and politics double-down on gender stereotypes, it's not just easier to stay hidden, it's safer. I've personally been spit at, scorned, had rocks thrown at me, and lost who I thought were dear friends and family members. To date, I've had it easy in this regard; many trans people are beaten and murdered because of who they are.

TDOV give allies of transgender people the opportunity to say, for at least one day a year, "You're okay. It's safe here." It also allows transgender people, both hidden and out, to see a growing support for who we are and to identify possible friends and allies. If you have a friend or loved one who is trans, please send them a note this month to say that you care about them. Even those of us with a good support network still live with some fear of being betrayed by friends or harmed by society. A cup of cold water does much to quench one's thirst (Matt 10:42), so too does a kind word help quench the fears of a transgender person.

– Salina Brett



Assigned Male Comics by Sophie Labelle
<https://www.facebook.com/assignedmale/>

CONGREGATIONAL LIFE & MEMBERSHIP

Ongoing activities will continue for the foreseeable future: the prayer wall outside the CE Building door and the two small fellowship groups which have been meeting outside in person.

The **Spirit of Christmas** sub-committee held a final meeting January 21. NCPC has sent \$4000.00 to Friendship House. Additional donations were made to Friendship House by way of the link on our church website. Twenty-eight block prints designed and created by Rachel Briggs were distributed by request to anyone who donated \$30 or over to Friendship House. Thanks to Rachel for sharing so much of her time and talent to this enterprise!

A beautiful illuminated Nativity Scene in white silhouette was designed and constructed by Bruce Raker and erected in the church yard in front of the CE building for the Spirit of Christmas season. It quietly proclaimed to the many passers-by the presence of God with us and His great love for all mankind. It has been stored for use in future years. The Spirit of Christmas sub-committee plans to meet via Zoom on Thursday, August 19, at 7 PM to organize the approach our congregation wishes to take for 2021 regarding Spirit of Christmas. Steve Martin has agreed to take the lead for the 2021 committee. Anyone in the congregation who would like to be included at the August meeting may contact Beverly Stoudt to be on the list to receive the link for August 19.

Trivia Game Night

About a dozen members of the congregation enjoyed a Zoom “Virtual Game Night” on February 19. It was a “Wide-open Trivia” event emceed by Miranda Matthews. (Thanks to Miranda and Scott for designing and setting up the online format.) A wide range of age groups included teens through seniors. Homemade treats were awarded to the high scorers. Thanks to Janet Spring, Beverly Stoudt, and Miranda Matthews for providing the prizes! Watch for information soon regarding another trivia night TBA!

Zoom Art Class

Rekha Baharwani will teach a Zoom Art Class on Sunday, March 21, at 1 PM, FREE for ALL AGES. Participants may use supplies that they have at home: markers, colored pencils, pastels, water color paint boxes, crayons, acrylic or poster paints, etc. Rekha will provide paper if households don't have art paper. She will drop off paper at the church office, which can be picked up ahead of time by participants prior to the class. In the meantime artists can search their homes for objects or pictures they plan to draw, color, or paint. More details will be available as the date draws near.





Flower Donations

In the spirit of the season of Easter, the sanctuary will be decorated with spring flowers. If you would like to donate a flower in memory of a Loved One, or honor of someone, please fill out this form and return it with your check in the amount of \$18.00.

Please order as early as possible.

Your donation supports the many visible aspects of the church and is greatly appreciated.

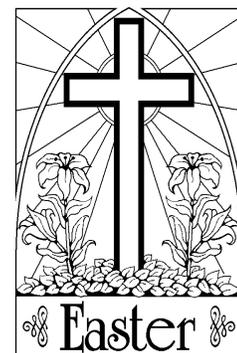
Deadline to order is March 28, 2021 (Palm Sunday).

NAME: _____

AMOUNT: \$ _____

(check one) IN MEMORY _____ / HONOR _____ OF:

**Please make all checks payable to:
New Castle Presbyterian Church
25 E. 2nd Street
New Castle, DE 19720**



Thanks again for your support!



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 March 29-April 2. 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 29

Jude Morrow
Jo Viola

Tuesday 30

Miranda Matthews

Wednesday 31

Karen & Jim
Beatson

Thursday 1

Cynthia Robbins
Nanette Nichol

Friday 2

Susan & Jim
Flook

Monthly Report

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



Membership:

January	143
Loss by death, Grace Hayford (#68) February 22, 2021	-1
February	142

Income thru 02/01/21:

2021 Budget:	\$57,275.00
2021 Actual:.....	\$51,671.00

Expenses thru 02/01/21:

2021 Budget:	\$27,496.00
2021 Actual:.....	\$25,805.00

March Birthdays

Phillip Walters, 3/2
Howard Sowden, 3/5
Joan Lioi, 3/5
Ginny Appleby, 3/9
Amy Selheimer, 3/10
Carl Witt, Jr., 3/10
Liz Parziale, 3/10
Jennifer Dunham, 3/12
Chad Viola, 3/12
Susan Fogarty, 3/13



Brendan Walters, 3/16
John Handy, 3/16
Katherine Martin 3/16
Connie Bell, 3/18
Jane Fouracre 3/19
Gene Mayhew 3/20
David Shaw, 3/21
Jamie Kern, 3/25
Sandra Wilson, 3/30
Barbara Toccafondi 3/31

No Anniversaries in March

THANKS FOR SERVING IN MARCH!

COMMUNION – Jim & Susan Flook

WORSHIP LEADERS

March 7 – Jane Fouracre

March 14 – Rod Denison

March 21 – Joanne Viola

March 28 – Ray Snyder

EMMANUEL DINING ROOM

Steve Martin

Cynthia Robbins

New Castle Presbyterian Church
25 E. 2nd Street
New Castle, DE 19720
Phone: (302) 328-3279
Fax: (302) 328-5670
E-Mail: office@newcastlepreschurch.org
Office Hours: 8:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

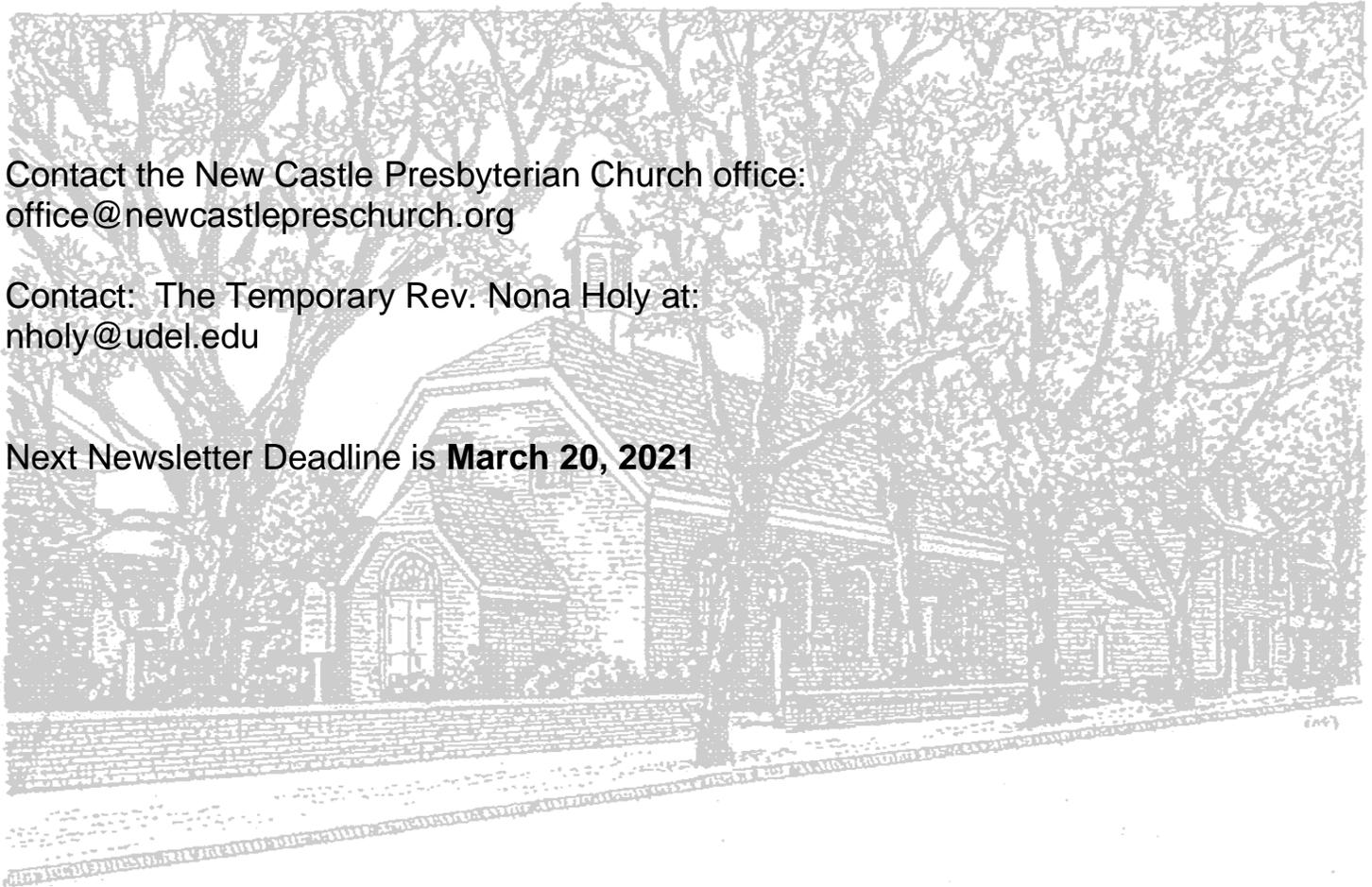


Address Change
Requested

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

Contact: The Temporary Rev. Nona Holy at:
nholy@udel.edu

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



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