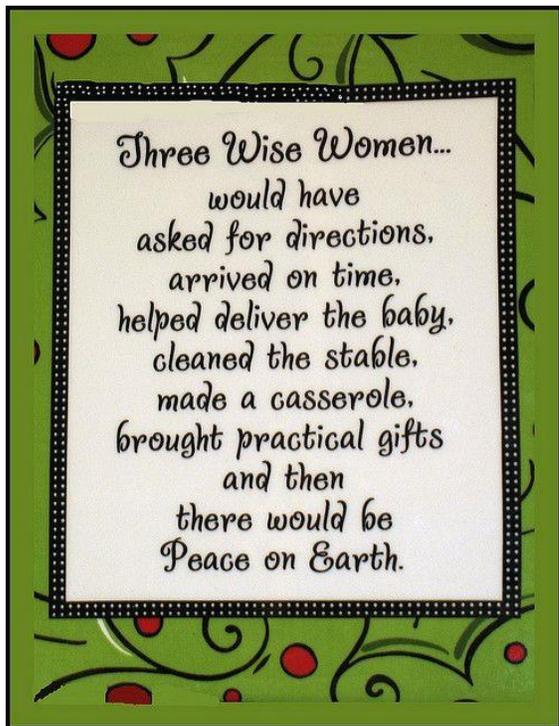


# *New Castle Presbyterian News*

## *January 2021*

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On Sunday, January 3, we'll celebrate Epiphany, the arrival of the Wise Men to visit the Christ child. In our manger scenes, they are often grouped in with the angels and the shepherds, arriving in time to visit the infant Jesus. The Gospel of Matthew includes certain political and astrological details which suggest the wise men might have arrived even up to two years after the Christ child's birth. Regardless of Jesus' age, it must have been a surprise for Mary to welcome three foreign magi, or astrologers, into her home and accept such extravagant gifts.

The wise men's powerfully symbolic gifts celebrate the Christ child's calling, but as suggested by this re-imagined three wise women story, perhaps they were not the most appropriate gift to bring to a young child.

As I pen this newsletter opener, I'm into my 35<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy, and I can appreciate the impracticalities of giving gold, frankincense, and myrrh to parents of young children. Your incredibly generous baby shower gifts of diapers and swaddles, books and toys, will be much more appreciated by Baby Foltz upon his arrival!

The gifts of the wise men do not end with their physical offerings. Their ultimate gift to the Christ child is that of protection; they return to their own country without communicating with Herod the location of Jesus and his family, giving them time to flee to Egypt. God gives the wise men the courage and understanding to stand up to Herod's violent intentions and hunger for power; may God give wise men and women today the same courage and understanding. As we welcome a new year together, may our own offerings to Christ and our neighbors reflect the generosity and goodness of the wise men in the Epiphany story!

In the light of Christ,  
Pastor Miriam

## **EPIPHANY SUNDAY COLLECTION – JANUARY 3, 2021**

As the Magi greeted the Christ child with gifts, let us celebrate Epiphany Sunday with gifts for our neighbors in need. Since the start of the pandemic, we have doubled our monthly grants for utility assistance. The needs have been great and we have been blessed to be able to respond. To the recipients, who are in the midst of a financial wilderness, these grants appear to be manna from heaven; but we know we are the intermediaries who make the manna available.

On Sunday, January 3, 2021 between 12:00pm and 1:00pm, the Deacons will sponsor a drive-through to collect contributions for our Gifts of Love fund. Manna in the form of cash or checks will be greatly appreciated so that we can continue our mission of service. No amount is too small or too large. Deacons will be available to accept your donations contactlessly or you may want to park and rub elbows.

“As we have been blessed, we seek to use all that we have to bless others with this good news of grace and joy.”

## **MATERNITY LEAVE - A NOTE FROM PASTOR MIRIAM**

Anytime a pastor takes time away from a call, whether it's for a sabbatical or family leave, the church and the pastor affirm their faith that God will sustain them through a period of reflection and changed activity and an occasion for recovery and renewal of vital energies. As much as one can plan for a baby's arrival, I plan to be on maternity leave from approximately January 25th through April 19th.

During my 12 weeks away, my hope and prayer is that I am able to take this time to physically recover from childbirth as well as share with Steven the awesome responsibility of caring for Baby Foltz through the incredible first three months of his life. While I will be unplugged from NCPC during my leave, meaning that I won't respond to any pastoral needs by email or phone, I do plan to tend my own faith, through devotionals, reading, and the occasional tuning-in to NCPC worship. As I add 'parent' to my vocational list, I am excited for the ways that God will deepen my calling as pastor to NCPC. I am also confident that these 12 weeks will fly by!

During my 12 weeks away, my hope and prayer is that NCPC will have opportunities to be renewed by God, particularly through the guidance of Rev. Nona Holy and leadership of Session. While I am away, I hope that y'all will welcome Rev. Nona with open hearts and minds, trusting her to be your pastor through this time. Additionally, my prayer is that you can also take this time to grow in your own calling as a member of NCPC. While some of you have particular callings, such as deacon, elder, or trustee, all members of the body of Christ are called to serve God and neighbor. How will God surprise you with opportunities to lead with love during this time? Be encouraged and have faith that God is at work in the midst of this time. I'm excited to see what new opportunities are in store for NCPC throughout 2021!

## **COMING UP IN WORSHIP**

January brings some special worship experiences. Please plan to join us for...

January 3 – As we conclude the Christmas season, we'll celebrate Epiphany, the arrival of the Wise Men through song and story and the sacrament of communion. Join us for a Gifts of Love collection from 12-1 outside the church and receive an Epiphany Star!

January 10 – Baptism of the Lord Sunday and Ordination and Installation of new officers, Steven Martin (elder) and Elizabeth Parziale (deacon). We'll hear about Jesus' baptism, and what it means for us.

## **NEW CASTLE PRESBYTERY MEETING**

New Castle Presbytery will meet on Saturday, January 16 via Zoom. Elders Candy Dunson and Ray Snyder will attend and serve as our elder commissioners.

## **ENVELOPES**

Please don't forget to pick up your church offertory envelopes. They are located in the entrance way of the CE building. To save on postage they will not be mailed out. The church office is open daily from 8:30-12:30 or by contacting Pastor Miriam.

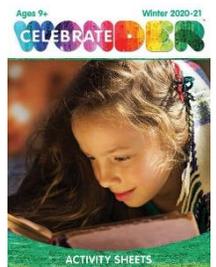
## **WEDNESDAY – BIBLE STUDY**

Our Wednesday Bible Study will resume on January 20th with a study on Esther. Led by Pat Taylor and Eileen Larkin, the group will convene via zoom at 1:00 each Wednesday. We'll read through the book of Esther and reflect together on the ways that God grants wondrous courage through challenging situations. Contact Pat or Eileen for the zoom link and further details!

## **SUNDAY SCHOOL IN 2021**

We hope everyone had a safe and healthy Christmas season, and we look forward to seeing you at Zoom Sunday School on January 3! Having another lesson over computers can be taxing, so in 2021, we'll be having only one Zoom meeting each month.

Families, you will receive the Sunday School activity curriculum in the mail at the beginning of every month, and we will meet through Zoom on the last Sunday of the month. So in January, there will be the rescheduled Zoom on January and the regular Zoom on January 31. Ms. Diana will send emails each week for a lesson review, but you will have all of the activities for the month in hand. Let Ms. Diana know if you haven't received the curriculum, and she'll make sure one is coming your way!



We know it hasn't been the same this year, and we are trying to make the best of this situation. Thank you for your understanding and patience as we figure out the best way to continue learning and worshiping together!

## **VALENTINE'S DAY**

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!

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, Sunday, February 14<sup>th</sup>. 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 15).

## **YARD CLEANUP THANK YOU**

The Trustees would like to thank all that came out for the grounds cleanup day in December. We were able to get a lot accomplished before the snow! It was a great distanced gathering and a chance to support the church in person.

## **RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT**

### **Congregational Meeting Recap - 12/20/2020**

Thank you all who were able to join the Congregational Meeting via zoom on December 20, 2020. We were able to present and review the approved 2021 Budget, as well vote on and approve Pastor Miriam's terms of call. We also elected to the Class of 2023 - Steven Martin as Elder, and Liz Parziale as Deacon. What a wonderful way to end the year!

## **RAINBOW NOTES – THE QUANDARY OF “QUEER”**

I think most of us are now familiar with the "Q" in alphabet soup of LGBTQIA+ as meaning "Queer" or "Questioning." For this quick article, I'm only going to address "Queer." The word was first associated with the gay community in the early 1930's and initially held its literal meaning of "odd" or "peculiar." It doesn't take much of a mental leap to see how this quickly became a pejorative and hurtful term to the gay community. Many people today still have powerful, negative connotations to the word because of the verbal and often physical abuse that was associated with it.

Recently, the word Queer has become "owned" by the younger rainbow generation, much like "Quaker" was adopted by the Religious Society of Friends.

Why have today's youth embraced Queer and make it their own? Hard to say, but I imagine it's because there's a much wider recognition of spectrum in gender and sexuality. Rather than deal with lengthy self-descriptions like cis-gender gay male, transgender lesbian, or gender-queer pansexual human, the word "Queer" simplifies things, especially when advertising something for all, like "Queer Prom" or "Queer Space" (safe area). It's great to know the term is losing its hateful power, but I recommend avoiding its use to describe someone unless that someone uses it themselves. It's a Queer thing.

## THANK YOU - SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS VOLUNTEERS

Our efforts this year to support the yearlong work of Friendship House have been greatly altered. Three kings arrived bearing gifts. They enabled our church to bring light and hope to our community, raise much needed money for people in need, and opportunities for us to share talents and bake the treats, soups, and bread recipes we enjoy.

Thank you to Bruce Raker and his family for researching, building, and erecting the lovely silhouette Nativity scene in our church yard. Bruce has a tool for everything and a generous heart to give of his time and talent. We've heard that the painting was done in the Rakers' living room! The lighted scene gives 2nd Street, and New Castle, the quiet confidence that God's love is here. Thank you for this peaceful setting.

Our second gift is the beautiful print created by Rachael Briggs of a typical New Castle home prepared to celebrate Christmas. We appreciate the time she spent organizing and creating the handsome linoleum block print and the skill used to produce the many prints we are all receiving and are available to anyone who donates to Friendship House through our church website. Thank you for the hope we feel when looking at this lovely blue home.



The third royal gift given to Spirit of Christmas has been from Kris Krawczyk. Our church secretary has been the control center for spirit of Christmas, collecting and organizing all the recipes for *A Taste of Spirit of Christmas Cookbook*. Also, all information about our activities this year can be located virtually through our church website, where Spirit of Christmas has its own colorful link. Thank you for enlarging the scope of our witness.

There have been shepherds in our flock who have facilitated electric hook up (Peter McCurdy), communicated with our neighbor partners (Jo Viola and Lyn Briggs), and created an updated flyer and kept the information in the sign on the church wall current (Lyn Briggs). Thank you for leading us to green pastures and still waters.

Singing angels have hovered over the decisions made as we entered new territory. The voices of Shirley Knox, Connie Reese, Pat Taylor, and Ray Snyder have blended insight and ideas with caution and kept us safe. Pastor Miriam enabled us to accomplish remote communication through Zoom leadership and emails. The glory of the Lord is shining!!!

We're excited to share that in addition to NCPC's mission gift of \$2,500, we have raised an additional \$1,625 in support of Friendship House's mission to love and care for our neighbors in need. Thank you all for spreading the light of Jesus Christ in 2020, and we look forward to all the ways we can serve him together in 2021!



Beverly Stoudt, Congregational Life/Membership

**Meals on Wheels**

**HELP! We need Meals on Wheels delivery people for the upcoming year. 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 is January 18-22. 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 18**

Jude Morrow  
Jo Viola

**Tuesday 19**

Miranda Matthews  
Joan Smith

**Wednesday 20**

Karen & Jim  
Beatson

**Thursday 21**

Cynthia Robbins  
Nanette Nichol

**Friday 22**

Susan & Jim  
Flook

**January Birthdays and Anniversaries**

Cynthia Beam, 1/1  
Mary Duncan, 1/1  
Lynn MacEwen, 1/1  
Rachel Briggs, 1/2  
Kris Stone, 1/6  
Olivia Viola, 1/6  
Mariellen Boyle-Edinburg, 1/8  
Linda Twyford, 1/10



Wren Esham, 1/14  
Daniel Dunson, 1/16  
Jim Whisman, 1/17  
Mary Cebenka, 1/20  
Emma Thornton, 1/22  
Ryker Teller, 1/25  
Julia Spock, 1/27

Karen & Jim Beatson, 1/9  
Bob & Janet Swick, 1/21  
Jim & Barbara Whisman, 1/25



**Monthly Report**



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

Membership:

November .....	142
Addition by Affirmation of Faith – Erica Russell, Toni Kiger & Andrew Marley.....	+3
Loss by Death – Carl Witt, Sr., (#54) December 8 .....	-1
December .....	144

Income thru 12/05/20

2020 Budget: .....	\$232,295.00
2020 Actual:.....	\$210,472.00

Expenses thru 12/05/20:

2020 Budget: .....	\$233,732.00
2020 Actual:.....	\$212,292.00

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

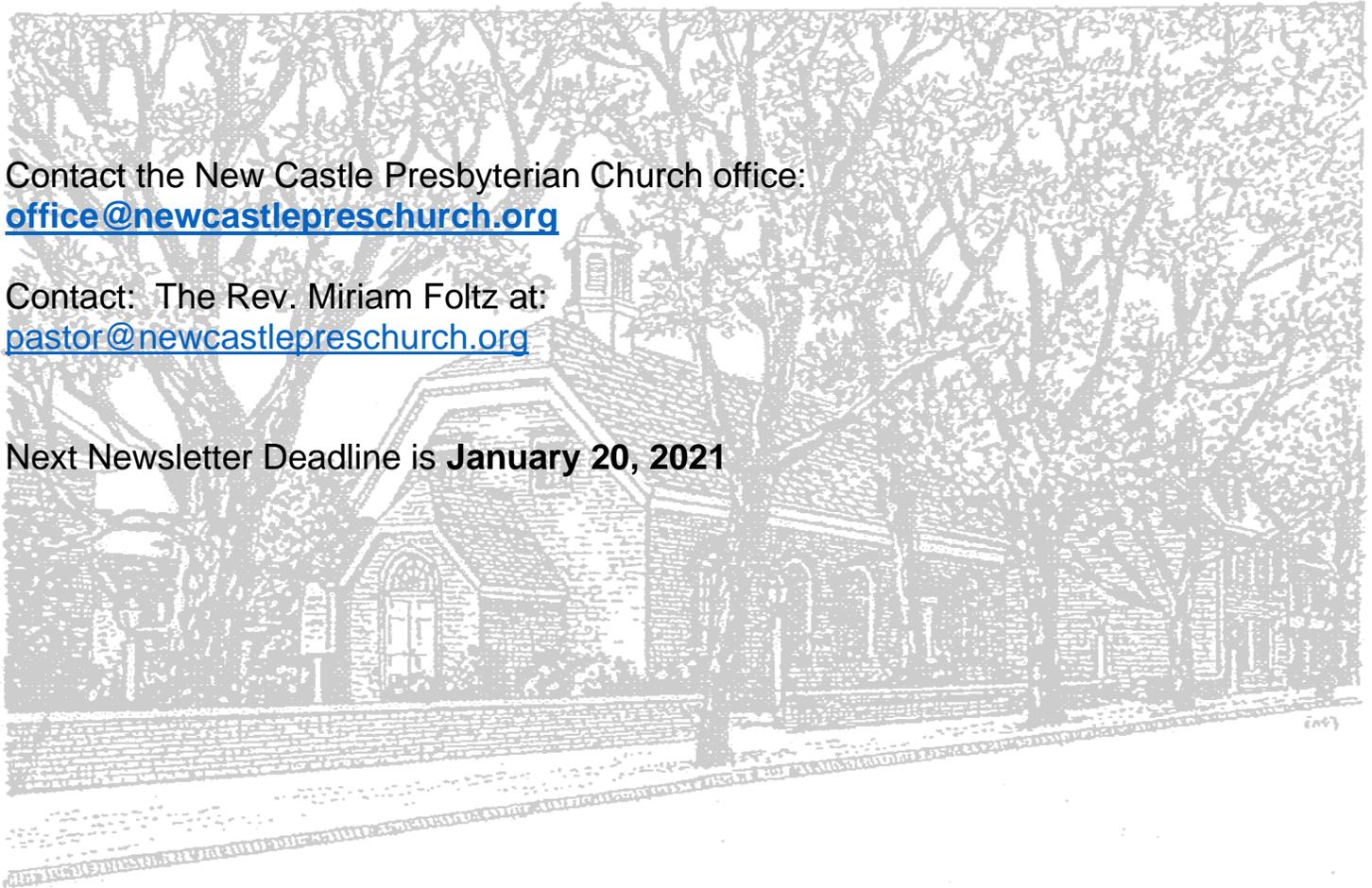


Address Change  
Requested

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

Contact: The Rev. Miriam Foltz at:  
[pastor@newcastlepreschurch.org](mailto:pastor@newcastlepreschurch.org)

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



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