

New Castle Presbyterian News

December 2017



ADVENT AND CHRISTMAS AT NEW CASTLE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

- December 3** **First Sunday of Advent**
10:30 a.m. Worship and Sunday School
The Sacrament of the Lord's Supper
- December 9** **Spirit of Christmas (Saturday)**
9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- December 10** **Second Sunday of Advent**
10:30 a.m. Worship and Sunday School
- December 17** **Third Sunday of Advent**
10:30 a.m. Worship and Sunday School
Congregational Meeting
Christmas Caroling
7:00 p.m. Gather at church
8:00 p.m. Refreshments - Mayhews (17 E. 5th)
- December 24** **Fourth Sunday of Advent**
10:30 a.m. Worship and Sunday School
Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship (Saturday)
5:30 p.m. Children's Service (Meeting House)
7:30 p.m. Traditional Service (Meeting House)
- December 25** **Christmas Day**



DECEMBER 24 – THE ADVENT 4/CHRISTMAS EVE COMBO

Every 7 years, it happens. And this is one of those years. December 24 falls on a Sunday. So it is both the 4th Sunday of Advent AND Christmas Eve. Here's what that day will look like at church – and we hope you will join us!

10:30 a.m. Worship Service – 4th Sunday in Advent (lighting the candle of Love)

5:30 p.m. Family Christmas Eve Service. This shorter, more casual and child-friendly service will celebrate the good news of Jesus' birth through songs and story.

No separate nursery care needed, because all ages welcome!

7:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Candlelight Service. All are welcome as we rejoice in God's gift of Jesus, sharing scripture, song, special music and the sharing of candlelight –as we welcome the One who came to be the Light of the World.

OFFICE CLOSING

The church office will be closed for Christmas on Monday, December 25th & Tuesday, December 26th. It will also be closed for New Year's on Monday, January 1st and Tuesday, January 2nd.

GIFTS OF LOVE – new name, same need

Our "Gifts of Love" donations (formerly known as "White Gifts") are received with thanks all year long. But traditionally, our congregation gives more intentionally during the Advent/Christmas season. Both your non-perishable food items, and your financial gifts in the "Gifts of Love" pew envelopes, go to help people in need of food and utility assistance in our own community. In this season of giving, remember "Gifts of Love".

NEW VISITOR WELCOME CARDS

Just in time for Advent, your Worship Committee has created new visitor welcome cards for the pews. Not only does this provide the church with information from and about those who visit with us, but they give those visitors something to take home, with contact information and weekly schedule. Many thanks to Scott Matthews and Kris Krawczyk for bringing this idea to life! Now how about inviting some folks to church to use them?!?!?

In the interim.....

Whether I can believe it or not, and whether I am ready or not, it is not only December – but it is Advent. Though the world around us has been demanding our attention to nothing but Christmas since the day after Halloween, Advent is needed more than ever in our lives and in this world. And for congregations in transition, in the interim time, Advent is your season.

“Advent” comes from the Latin word for “coming”. Something’s coming, though not here yet. On the December calendar, it is the way we are called to pace and prepare ourselves for the One who’s coming we celebrate – the birth of our Savior.

Something’s coming, though not here yet. In Advent, we are also called to renew our hope in the promise that there is still hope – because God is not done with us yet. Christmas is not the whole story. We don’t pack the good news away in January. Jesus is coming again. God will make it all right – will bring justice and peace, a new heaven and new earth – where “every tear will be wiped away”. Who doesn’t hope for that? But for now – we live in the “not yet”, in the interim, in Advent days. Days when a look at the world around us makes us feel like we are holding on to hope by a thread, a frayed one at that. That, just like in these winter days, there is more darkness than light.

This is why we need Advent. We need to hear and proclaim the promise, the hope, in the midst of the “not yet” days. And so we shall.

In our Advent worship, we’ll light candles, adding a new one week by week for hope, peace, joy and love – light shining in the darkness.

We will include in each week’s bulletin an Advent Devotional for your use at home throughout the week, guiding us through scripture to focus our minds and hearts on the true meaning and hope of the season.

We will learn a new Advent hymn “Choose to Hope” – and sing ourselves each Sunday into living the words of its refrain: “In the times of darkness, in times of fear, choose to hope, choose to love, and know that God is near.”

Here’s an Advent gift for you – have a read, and have some hope!

<http://pres-outlook.org/2004/01/earning-hope/>

These are Advent days. Let us seek out the promise, let us hold on to the hope, let us be the lights that shine in the darkness. Good news is coming!

Waiting, hoping, preparing the way with you

Important! Mission Study/New Pastor Survey Coming in December

Over the past few weeks, you have enthusiastically provided input to the Mission Study Team through group conversation that has greatly helped illuminate who we are as a church and our hopes for the future. We now need your help with one more step in developing our Mission Study Report. A short, online survey will be shared via email with you at the beginning of December. The survey—which should take about 15 minutes of your time—will pose questions designed to help us gather information and insight more generally about you, our church, and our vision for the future of our church and hopes for a new pastor. Please note that all responses to the survey will be anonymous.

If you do not have email access or are not comfortable with completing an online survey, don't worry! The survey will also be available on iPads and laptops in the CE Building on Sundays in December, where someone will be on hand to provide assistance. Be on the lookout for the survey in early December and be sure to provide your input no later than **December 22**. Everyone's participation is vitally important to the development of our Mission Study report and ultimately, our pastor search process

– thank you!

Your Mission Study Team: Amy Selheimer, Bruce Raker, Gail Seitz, Kelly Koczak McCurdy, Corky Viola, & Jim Whisman

WELCOME, NEW MEMBERS!

At their meeting on November 14, Session acted on one of their great privileges—receiving new members. Connie and Laurie Bell (mother and daughter) were received by Certificate of Transfer from Christiana Presbyterian Church. We celebrated their membership in worship on November 26. Please welcome them to our church family! Their contact information is already in the new directory.

USHERS STILL NEEDED!

Can you say “Good morning!”? Hand out bulletins? Count to 80? Collect the offering? Then you can be an usher – AND WE NEED YOU! The Worship Committee has a sign up sheet in the CE Building – and it is BLANK on 12/10, 12/17, 12/24 (5:30 pm and 7:30 pm Christmas Eve services) and 12/31. Can you help? Instructions – and gratitude - provided!

CALL FOR CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

Session has called for a congregational meeting following the worship service on Sunday, December 17, for the purpose of presenting the 2018 church budget.

THREE BOARD MEETING will be held on Tuesday December 12 at 6 pm, for a shared meal and discussion.

2018 Stewardship Update

We are so grateful for the generous response of the congregation, pledging time, talent and financial resources for the mission of this church for 2018! As of November 26, we have received 62 pledges.

Total pledges received for 2017 were also 62 by the end of the year. But, due to changes in membership, these are not the same 62. And there's good news in that! For 2018, we have received 10 new pledges – and anticipate some more! Of returning pledges, though 10 reduced their pledge amount, 24 have increased their pledges amount for 2018!

We are working hard to get the 2018 budget ready for Session approval by December 12. Based on 2017 information, it looks like we are still waiting on +/-10 pledges.

Are we waiting on you? We hope we can count on you to join the momentum of increased giving, as a sign of our vitality for seeking pastors to see! Please get your 2018 pledge to the church office as soon as possible, with our deep thanks!

- Monty Gerhart

“The one who blesses others is abundantly blessed; those who help others are helped.”
Proverbs 11:25



Last Minute Contributions

Please be advised that in order to have any contribution to the church count as a gift for 2017, it must be received by the church or postmarked by December 31, 2017. The IRS rules are stringent and there is no “**grace period**”. The easiest way to have these in the system is to set up direct bank giving.

Forms for direct bank giving are available in the church office or on the church website: newcastlepreschurch.org/stewardship

A Seamen Center Thank You

The Mission and Outreach Committee extends a big thank-you to all those who helped provide donations for 50 “ditty boxes” for the Seamen Center. The boxes will be handed out to seafarers arriving at the Port of Wilmington in time for Christmas. This mission gives us the opportunity to be a part of a much bigger world in celebrating the true spirit of Christmas. Also donated were 67 hand knitted hats and scarves and books and blankets.

Ellie Gerhart

Friendship House Breakfast

Our congregation served breakfast to over 100 individuals from the Wilmington homeless community. A breakfast quiche was made and served with fruit cup, juice and coffee. Thank you to Gene Mayhew, Joan Smith, Ringo Keka and Ray Snyder for their help serving. We also donated 4 cartons of hot chocolate mix for the Code Purple program that operates on cold nights.

When the 2018 list of serving dates for Friendship House is posted, I will let you know our dates to serve.

December Sock Drive

Please consider donating socks during the month of December. We need socks for both men and women. White sport socks are the best but we will accept anything you would like to donate. Gently worn socks are also acceptable. Each Sunday I will deliver the socks to Friendship House and they will distribute them to the individuals who come to the Sunday breakfasts and also on Code Purple days and night. Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Mission and Outreach Task Force

We have assembled a committee to take a look at our Mission programs. Conchita Showell, Jennifer Dunham, Melissa Boris, Ringo Keka, Mark Rappold, Sally Brett Watson and Kenny Warren are meeting to see what is, working, what we may need to streamline, and what new initiatives may be in our future. We are also looking at our budget and what our "in-kind" donations are so we can give our Mission Study team a more accurate idea of how much we are spending and donating in dollars and cents. We hope this information will be helpful to prospective pastors to get a real sense of who we are as a giving congregation.

Yard Clean-up

Please join us for our church/manse yard clean-up on Saturday, December 2 at 9:00 a.m. until noon. Please bring rakes and/or brooms. All are welcome!



Caroling in Old New Castle

Be sure to mark your calendar for a great evening of Christmas Caroling on Sunday night December 17th! We will meet at the church at 7:00pm and proceed from there walking around Old New Castle and caroling.

We will end up at Gene and Carol Mayhew's house (17 E. 5th Street in New Castle) for refreshments and fellowship (we usually arrive there between 8:00 and 8:30pm).

Please join us at the Mayhew's even if you are unable to walk around and carol.





Never too late to Donate a Frozen Turkey!



If you earn credit for a free turkey this fall please consider donating it to a Christmas Food Basket project organized by the Newark Area Welfare Committee. Beverly Stoudt, co-chair. Approximately 375 families and senior citizens will receive a week's worth of non-perishable food on Saturday, December 16. Each basket also will be accompanied by a **10—15 lb. frozen turkey** for Christmas dinner.

Turkey donation deadline is **Sun. Dec. 10**. Call Beverly Stoudt, at 368-9354 to arrange for pick up and storage. You can also put it in the church kitchen freezer. Please let Beverly know it is there.

- We will pledge a turkey.
- We will bring our donated turkey to church.
- We do not have space to store a turkey and will need to have our donated turkey picked up.

Please call our family at _____.

Thank you for considering this – an act of kindness in the form of a frozen turkey!

-Beverly Stoudt (368-9354), Newark Area Welfare Committee, P.O. Box 951, Newark, DE 19715

Flower Guild Annual Poinsettias



Donations are being taken for poinsettias. Please fill out the form and return to the office. The Sanctuary will be decorated for two weeks. Flowers may be taken home after the Christmas Eve service. The deadline for orders will be December 10, 2017. The cost is \$15.00. Please make checks payable to NCPC.

NAME: _____

In Memory/Honor of: _____

How many: _____

Spirit of Christmas 2017 - Saturday, December 9

Thanks to all who have volunteered their time and talents for this year's Spirit of Christmas celebration! Here is a quick summary of needs still to be met:

Books: Coffee-table quality books and other nearly new volumes are preferred. You may bring books clearly labeled for SOC to the CE building and leave them in the entry area. If you have questions, or if you have a large number of books to donate, please contact **Peter McCurdy** for guidelines.

"Look What \$20 Will Buy" table: The deadline for donations for this table is Nov. 26. Please see Jo Viola if you have questions.

Homemade Soups and Breads: Please see details in the item below.

Crafts: Please contact Ellie Gerhart if you have handcrafted items to offer.

Sign-up sheets are still posted in the CE building. Contact **Monty Gerhart**, volunteer coordinator, (302-328-0908), to offer your time and learn how you can help.

Red and green "Save the date" cards are still available in the entry area of the CE building. Please pick up a few and distribute them to your friends and other contacts.

All proceeds from donations and sales for Spirit of Christmas at New Castle Presbyterian Church are given to Friendship House ministry to the homeless.

News from Christian Education

All who attended the Pumpkin Party on October 27 had a fun time playing games, eating pizza, candy, and cookies, as well as, drinking yummy punch with floating eyeballs. Children from the neighborhood dressed in costume, and enjoyed decorating pumpkins, "mummy" bowling, face painting, and the annual favorite "Pumpkin Walk".

Those who came also contributed to our church's mission project for the seamen at the Port of Wilmington. The following "Ditty Box" items were collected: 40 packs of tissues, 25 chap sticks, 18 tubes of toothpaste, 12 toothbrushes, 14 sewing kits, 12 bottles of lotion, 7 bottles of hand sanitizer, 5 boxes of Q-tips, 4 boxes of gloss, 3 bags of cough drops, 2 bottles of mouth wash, 3 bags of razors, 2 cans of shaving cream, 1 can of deodorant, 2 boxes of envelopes, and one pack of pens.

It was also an outreach to our neighbors in the community. We had at least 10 new adults and children come, and we hope they will come back to our future fun activities. What a great way for all our members, adults and children, to interact with and share the love of Jesus with others.

Thank you to all who helped in every way! Looking ahead – our Sunday School children are working on ornaments for Spirit of Christmas, and on music to share in Worship. And we are "test driving" a new curriculum!

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 December 25-29. 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 25
No Deliveries

Tuesday 26
Joan Smith
Miranda Matthews

Wednesday 27
Carol & Gene
Mayhew

Thursday 28
Cynthia Robbins
Nanette Nichol

Friday 29
Susan & Jim
Flook

December Birthdays and Anniversaries

Lisa Fries, 12/5
Conchita Showell, 12/6
Parker Boris, 12/8
Vic Clark, 12/8
Robert McCullough, 12/8
Daniel Barry, 12/9
James Anderson, 12/13



Pat Taylor, 12/16
Kim Beebe, 12/17
Celia Viola, 12/19
Lyn Briggs, 12/22
Annabelle Kern, 12/22
Charlotte McDowell, 12/30

Bruce & Lisa Raker, 12/14
Connie & Don Reese, 12/28
Jim & Susan Flook, 12/30



Monthly Report

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

Membership:

October 175
November 177

Income thru 11/04/17:

2017 Budget: \$224,648.00
2017 Actual:..... \$208,296.00

Expenses thru 11/04/17:

2017 Budget: \$216,871.00
2017 Actual:..... \$200,565.00

THANKS FOR SERVING IN DECEMBER!

COMMUNION

December 3 – **Corky & Joanne Viola**, Ringo Keka, Shirley & Dan Knox

USHERS

December 3 – Gail & CJ Seitz

December 10 –

December 17 –

December 24 – Scott & Amy Selheimer

December 31 -

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

December 3 – Jim & Susan Flook

December 10 – Gail Seitz

December 17 – Ringo Keka & Jen Dunham

December 24 – Carol Mayhew

December 31 – Noon Circle

WORSHIP LEADERS

December 3 – Heather Raezer

December 10 – Kay Fry

December 17 – Jane Fouracre

December 24 – Minerva Lermond

December 31 – Bev Stoudt

NURSERY

December 3 – Amanda & James Anderson

December 10 – Melissa Boris/Heather Raezer

December 17 – Lyn Briggs/Susan Townsend

December 24 – Andrew Lundgren/Bev Stoudt

December 31 – Molly Shaw/Molly Cooney

SUNDAY SCHOOL

December 3 – Bruce Raker

December 10 – Mark & Laurie Powell

December 17 – Bev Stoudt

December 24 – Heather Raezer

December 31 – Ron & Susan Studd

COUNTERS

December 3 – Lyn Briggs/Carol Mayhew

December 10 – Jane Fouracre/Bruce Raker

December 17 –

December 24 – Jane Fouracre/Jo Viola

December 31 -

EMMANUEL DINING ROOM

Steve Martin

Cynthia Robbins

Miranda Matthews

FLOWERS - Brenda Walters

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

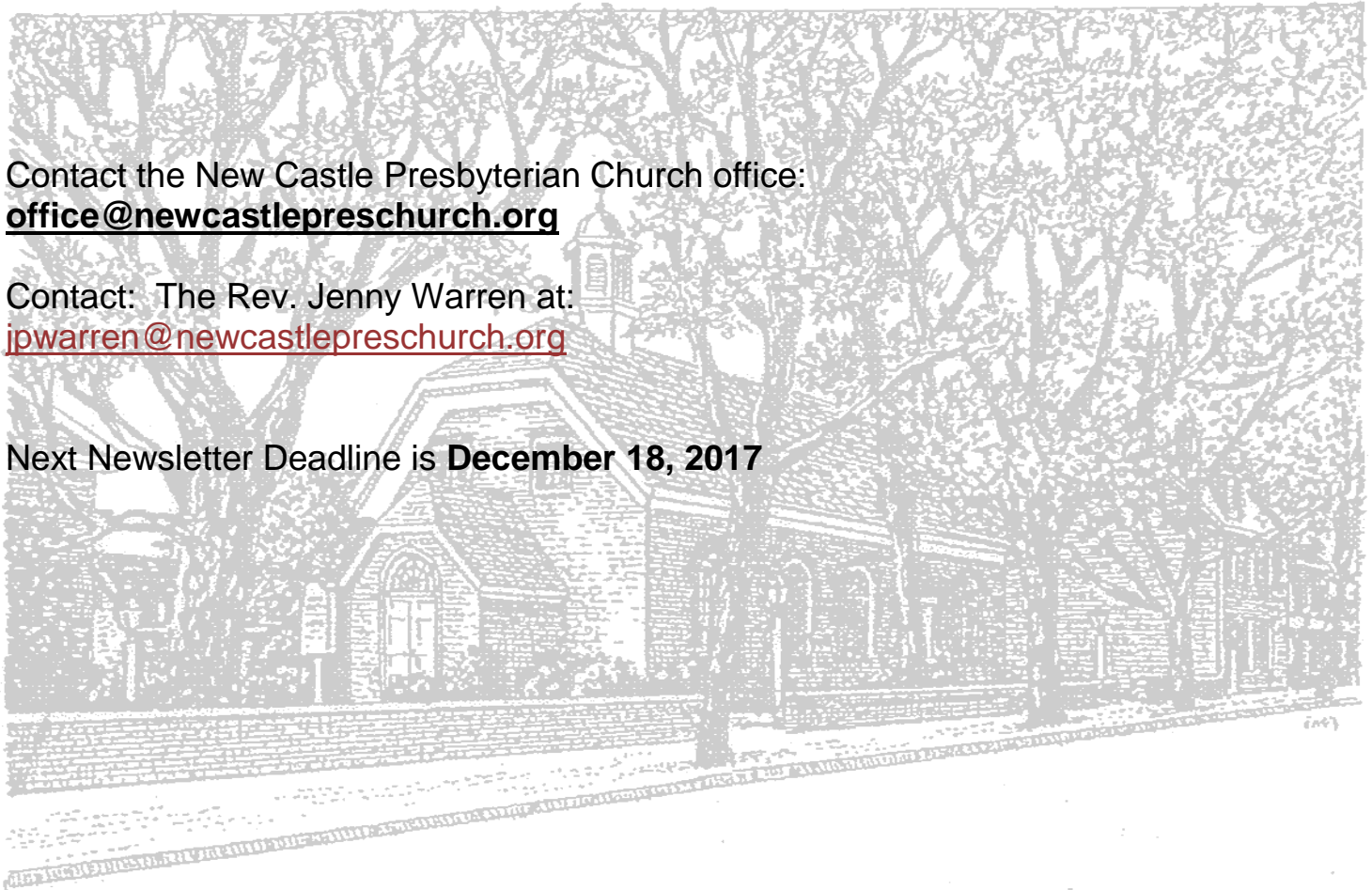


Address Change
Requested

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

Contact: The Rev. Jenny Warren at:
jpwarren@newcastlepreschurch.org

Next Newsletter Deadline is **December 18, 2017**



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