

ISSUE 2 | February 2024

#### "Lent: Ponder Creeks, Paths, and Bridges"



**Image Description:** Photo of a path leading to a small, handmade, arched wooden bridge over a quiet woodland creek.

Before moving to Delaware in 2016, Su and I had lived in our Germantown, MD home for 30 years. At the end of our street and across the avenue lay a path into the woods that I loved to walk. The path meandered alongside a creek and crossed it from one side to the other several times over wooden foot-bridges. The path led to North Lake where the creek converged with many others forming this delightful lake bustling with fish, turtles, and waterfowl. The path continued around the lake where I could take in the full display of nature. I walked that path almost daily over the many years that we lived there.

Over the years I witnessed subtle but inevitable changes along the creek. If I could put the years into a fast-forward film, the creek and its banks would look alive! The meandering currents actually are relentless forces, carving the banks into ever-changing angles. Places that had once been bends in the creek over the years gave way to the subtle but unrelenting waters. Over time, the creek punched through the bends in the bank, bringing down the trees that had once firmly gripped the earth now washed away by waters' incessant effort to flow in a straight line. The fallen trees' roots lay exposed like hundreds of dried fingers pointing upward. The old creek bed, now abandoned by the currents, lay exposed and dry, collecting nothing but dirt, old stones, and dead leaves. With time, however, even it yielded to new growth—not as a creek bed anymore, but as part of the woods' floor. As the landscape changed I witnessed the creative resilience of nature ever adapting. Ironically, only the bridges and path itself exposed the most glaring stress and strain of the ever-changing landscape in their effort to remain immovable and constant. But their innate lack of resilience meant certain collapse and obliteration requiring constant repair and reconstruction. All the while, however, the creek and its bank moved on in their evervital dance of beauty, refreshment, power, and change.

Lent is an invitation to us every year to witness the constant though subtle currents of the Spirit over life's many changing seasons and years. These spiritual currents are as unrelenting as a creek flowing through the woods. The Spirit cuts through once firm structures of beliefs and security as it creates ever-new landscapes of living and loving. Lent is our opportunity to ponder: How is our life of faith together in this church more like the resilient banks that caress the creek? And how is it more like the neatly lined path and inflexible bridges that cross it?

Peace,

Doug

**NEW ARK UCC** 

A Just Peace, Open & Affirming, Earthwise Congregation





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#### **CONVENER'S CORNER**

Jenny Greenzweig, Convener

Greetings and thank you for recognizing me as your new Convener! We joined the New Ark in 1996 when I was pregnant with our oldest, Sarah. Micah was born in 1999. We lost my husband, Greg, suddenly in 2019. He was an artist and art teacher, and his presence can be felt through the artwork in the building (murals, banners and the UCC cross in Wells Hall to which everyone contributed a special stone).

I'm an empty-nester with three spoiled cats, and I teach first grade. I have been involved in the New Ark in many ways over the years. My first involvement was through the Volunteer Enlistment Committee—a great way to meet people, I was told! I was a member and chairperson of the Christian Education Committee for many years and have taught preschool through high school age groups; I am also a trained Our Whole Lives teacher. I have represented our church as an Association and Conference Representative at different times. I am currently a member of the Pastor Congregation Relations Committee and I also perform background checks for those wishing to volunteer with our youth.

I am excited to take on this lay leadership position and I am proud to be a member of a Just Peace, Open and Affirming, and Earthwise church. Shalom!



## February Project: Equality Now

This month we are examining one of the transformational partnerships. Together Women Rise's Transformational Partnerships are designed to make the biggest impact on achieving global gender equality by addressing the root causes of gender inequality.

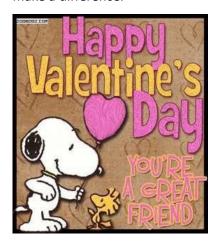
Almost every country in the world has laws that treat women and girls as second-class citizens. It may take another 286 years to remove discriminatory laws and close prevailing gaps in legal protection for women and girls (Source: UN Women).

This month we will look at Equality Now whose mission is to achieve legal and systemic change that addresses violence and discrimination against women and girls around the world.



Together Women Rise and Equality Now share a common belief that legal equality is critical for achieving gender equality and creating a better world for everyone. We are proud to partner with such an impactful, global leader in using the law to create a just world for women and girls. Since 1999, almost 60 percent of the discriminatory laws highlighted by Equality Now have been fully or partially reformed.

Join us for lunch on Friday, February 23 at 12:30 in Wells Hall to learn how Equality Now works for universal change. Bring a small dish to share or your own bagged lunch—and an interest in knowing how you can make a difference.



#### **BOOK GROUP**

The NAUCC Book Group will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, February 15, at the home of Brenda Toomey. A discussion of the book, *The Best We Could Do*, by Thi Bui, will be led by Linda Brasel and Peggy Dillner.





## LECTIONARY READINGS

#### **■** February 4

Isaiah 40:21-31 Psalm 147:1-11, 20c I Corinthians 9:16-23 Mark 1:29-39

#### **■** February 11

II Kings 2:1-12 Psalm 50:1-6 II Corinthians 4:3-6 Mark 9:2-9

#### ■ February 18

Genesis 9:8-17 Psalm 25:1-10 I Peter 3:18-22 Mark 1:9-15

#### ■ February 25

Genesis 17:1-7, 15-16 Psalm 22:23-31 Romans 4:13-25 Mark 8:31-38





February 7, 7:00 p.m.

February's Wisdom Wednesday will look at the Israeli-Palestinian Issue. With a short history, we will discuss the complications in reaching peace in the Middle East. Zoom in at 7:00 to <a href="https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85718260381?pwd=Sm5ORlhSZHI2dnRkcDBBVVR2azlodz09">https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85718260381?pwd=Sm5ORlhSZHI2dnRkcDBBVVR2azlodz09</a>.

## PASTORAL CARE DURING SABBATICAL

Pastor Cynthia began her Sabbatical on January 1, 2024, and the Rev. Douglas Griffin is now serving as our Sabbatical Pastor during her absence. If you need assistance, the best way to reach Pastor Doug is by calling (301) 938-4860 or emailing griffinnaucc@icloud.com. Pastor Doug's NAUCC office hours are on Wednesday.

## ANNUAL MEETING

The Annual Meeting was held on January 28, 2024, with participants in the church sanctuary and online. Jenny Greenzweig was selected Convener. Other trustees for 2024 are Bryan Klebon, Facilitator; John Micklos, Recorder; Kathy Hyde, Financial Secretary; and Cathy Atkinson, Treasurer.

The church budget recommended by the Finance Committee for 2024 was approved.

Bev Weiland will serve as delegate to the Association and Mindy Dowsett will serve as Conference delegate.

## HOPE DINING ROOM FUNDRAISER

During the entire month of February, **Home Grown Café** will donate 50 cents to Hope Dining Room for every order of the following:

- > cauliflower wings
- classic burgers
- > up-all-night martinis
- > strawberry lemonades



This is part of Home Grown's "Twelve Months of Giving" program. If you are eating at Home Grown, consider ordering one or more of these items to benefit Hope Dining Room.



## CODE PURPLE: A SUCCESSFUL NIGHT

The New Ark hosted its first Code Purple of the season on January 21, as one of five local churches providing shelter to the homeless during an extended cold snap. We hosted 15 guests—6 women and 9 men. Most were new and younger. All were very appreciative.

A big thanks goes to our crew and to Will, an NEC staff person who was present for the entire event. Our evening began at 5:00 with Linda and Tim Brasel, Michael Cox, and Bob Pasteris getting Wells Hall set up as a dining room and sleeping area. Dinner was provided by the Brasels, the Dillners and

the Coxes and consisted of homemade soup, macaroni and cheese, plus salad, bread, fresh fruit, dessert, tea, and coffee.



The guests arrived between 5:30 and 6:00 p.m. and were checked in by Will. Cathy and Mark Atkinson provided hospitality from 7:00 p.m.- 12:00 a.m. Most guests settled onto their mattresses and went to sleep after dinner. Lights were dimmed by 9:00 p.m. One guest showed some restlessness but did not disturb the others. It was a typical, quiet night—good for catching up on one's reading.

Connie Cox and Mike Lonergan provided hospitality from

12:00-6:00 a.m. At 5:00 a.m., Will roused our guests, and Connie and Michael Cox prepared a sausage and egg breakfast with juice, toast, and bananas, while Mike Lonergan and Bob Pasteris rolled up and stored the mattresses, cleaned the floors, and put Wells Hall back in order.

The laundry, consisting of used sheets and blankets, was broken up into four bags and Ellen Pletz, Peggy Dillner, Cathy Atkinson, and Gail Pasteris each took a bag home to wash and fold. The church was empty by 6:30 a.m.

Again, a big thanks to our evening's Code Purple volunteers, Will, the Newark Empowerment Center, and the members of the New Ark UCC for making this ministry possible.



https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60B0E45A4A92CA3FA7-47160951-ashwednesday#/



#### CO2 and GLOBAL WARMING

Why does CO<sub>2</sub> affect global warming? Radiation falling on the earth from the sun (~5000° K) is mostly in the visible range. Radiation back into space from the earth (~288° K) is in the infrared range. To maintain a constant temperature, the energy emitted must equal the energy absorbed. Nitrogen and oxygen, the principal components of the atmosphere, are transparent in both the visible and infrared regions. While CO<sub>2</sub> is essentially transparent in the visible region, it absorbs in the infrared, thus decreasing the amount of energy escaping into space, thereby increasing surface temperature.

Can mere humans really affect the amount of CO<sub>2</sub> in the atmosphere? For millions of years they didn't. Up until the 19<sup>th</sup> century, combustion was mostly limited to cooking and heating. With the invention of the steam engine, internal combustion engine, jet engines, rocket motors, hydrocarbon fueled generators, etc. to perform work, burning of fossil fuels increased by orders of magnitude. In addition the population exploded from one billion in 1800 to 8 billion today (who exhale ~2 billion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> every year). Since 1900, nearly 1.7 trillion tons of CO<sub>2</sub> have been added to the atmosphere principally by the

combustion of fossil fuels. ~700 billion tons were absorbed by terrestrial and marine sinks, while ~one trillion tons remained in the atmosphere increasing the  $CO_2$  level from 295 ppm to 410 ppm. Currently we inject 40 billion tons per year into the atmosphere, greater than the rate at which natural sinks can absorb it.

Can the increase of ~200 ppm CO<sub>2</sub> affect global temperature? Yes-remember the rise is small. Absolute temperature, i.e., degrees Kelvin, is the operative scale here (energy emitted varies with absolute temperature). The earths' average surface temperature is ~288°K. The observed increase since 1900, which correlates with the CO<sub>2</sub> increase, is ≥ 1.1° K, a change of ~0.4 percent. Even that change is enough to melt the ice pack (half a trillion tons are lost annually), raise sea levels, cause more intense storms and more extensive forest fires. The projected rise of 2-5°K over the next few decades will greatly increase the severity of those effects.

Small temperature changes have a large effect on the earth's life forms. In particular, humans are rather fragile—they can only survive in a relatively narrow temperature range. A 5 percent increase (14°C or 26°F) would render most of the planet uninhabitable. A change of 10 percent would send the intelligent designer back to the drawing board to generate a whole new set of flora and fauna.

—Courtesy of Ken Hartman

## MONAMAANXMONAMAAA

# FROM MINNEAPOLIS to PALESTINE: UCC'S LENT 2024 RESOURCES FOCUS on LIBERATION, SAYING NO, and FLEXIBILITY

The Lenten season that begins with Ash Wednesday on February 14 and continues through Easter Sunday on March 31 will be rich with themes connecting liberation struggles from Minneapolis to Palestine and exploring a practice of saying no.

Throughout Lent, the UCC's Join the Movement toward Racial Justice is offering a daily practice calendar and weekly book study guide. A webinar on Feb. 8 will launch the Lenten series, led by Join the Movement's leaders, the Rev. Velda Love and Sharon Fennema.

Each of these opportunities responds to how the Lenten season begins amid the violence and death of war in Israel and Palestine, with the theme "From Minneapolis to Palestine: Nourishing the Rising Up Journey." They incorporate Curtiss DeYoung's book *The Risk of Being Woke*, which is rooted in the activism that emerged following George Floyd's murder.

Excerpted from an article by <u>Kayla Berkey</u>published on Jan 23, 2024

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Should you wish to read this article in its entirety, go to this link: From Minneapolis to Palestine: UCC's Lent 2024 resources focus on liberation, saying no and flexibility - United Church of Christ.

#### 2023 BENEVOLENCE RECIPIENT: THE 1 in 7B FOUNDATION

This is the ninth in a series of articles to inform the congregation about each of the benevolence recipients that the Social Justice Committee chose to benefit for fiscal year 2023.

Picture it: It's been a long work day. You come home, take a shower, throw today's work clothes into the washing machine, change into clean, comfortable clothes, and sit down to a tasty meal.

It's so easy to take those routines and those resources—a washing machine, a shower, clean clothes, a clean body, a meal—for granted. But not so for those experiencing homelessness. If you don't have a place to live, and you don't have money for a laundromat or a meal, you go without basic hygiene and nutrition.

That's where the Delaware non-profit named "1 in 7B Foundation" steps in.

1 in 7B Foundation founder, Marc Puican, asks, "What can you do today to be 1 out of the 7 billion people on this earth to stand out and make a positive difference in someone's life?" He and the 1 in 7B Foundation are making a difference in the lives of those in Delaware experiencing homelessness by providing a mobile unit, equipped with showers and laundry facilities, that travels to scheduled stops around the state, including in Newark, to provide these basic services. Here, guests can shower, wash clothes, and receive food as well as a compassionate ear and skilled guidance. The Foundation envisions enlarging its services in the future to include crisis intervention, employment assistance, and transitional housing.



The 1 in 7B mobile hygiene unit

Our New Ark congregation supported the 1 in 7B Foundation this year through a contribution of \$1,000 funded by the benevolences budget administered by your Social Justice Committee. The Foundation also welcomes volunteers to assist in this ministry. You can learn more by visiting the Foundation's website at 1in7bfoundation.org.

#### **GO-BAGS**

February is another scheduled month for our church to prepare and deliver Go-Bags to the Newark Empowerment Center as we do four times per year. Our goal is to assemble 100 bags to give to our food-insecure neighbors. We currently need 30 juice and 20 Nutri-Grain bars by the first weekend in February. Thank you!

MARCH 2024
NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE

12:00 noon
on Monday,
February 26, 2023

07 Chris Franson-Wright

08 Jon Manon

08 John Williams

11 Bob Cassels

13 Donna Lindsay

17 Jenny Dressler

18 Pam Bitter

18 David Bell

19 Angela Seguin

20 Kathy Hyde

20 Beverly Wieland





If we've missed your special day, please contact the church office at (302) 737-4711 or email newarkucc@verizon.net.

#### THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK YOU!

Although we're a little late this year, the Social Justice Committee would like to take this opportunity to say a big, giant **THANK YOU** to our amazing congregation for your generous support of **Sharing the Joy** and filling five baskets (actually boxes) chock full of Thanksgiving goodies to create a wonderful holiday meal for folks who likely wouldn't have been able to purchase it themselves. **Sharing the Joy** this year was able to insure that each family member got \$100. The Finance Committee topped it off by using points gained by the Church's use of credit cards to provide each family a \$250 Walmart gift card. This year we were even able to share a donation with Exceptional Care for Children to buy presents for some of their children.

Without your generosity we would not have had the delightful experience of delivering these blessings to such grateful folks. Believe us—it's a wonderful experience to be the folks representing all of you and your amazing generosity. One benefiting family even gave us two frozen meals for our Friendly Freezer. She said they don't have much money, but always have some food to share with those in need. NAUCC is known and appreciated in the community because of all of you.

## THANK YOU from EXCEPTIONAL CARE for CHILDREN

Dear New Ark UCC:

Thank you for your support of Exceptional Care for Children this past year. It would not be possible for us to provide such great care and enrichment without you!

It has been an unprecedented time in healthcare, but we make it so our kiddos don't feel a difference. Every day we continue to provide them top-notch 24-hour skilled nursing care in a homelike environment. Our talented team of nurses, skilled therapy professionals, and caring staff puts in their all every day to give these children the best childhood possible.

Supporters like you allow our kids to be kids—despite their medical challenges. Thank you!

Sincerely,
Autumn Majewski

#### NEW ARK UCC HOSTS FIRST EVENT of NEWARK INTERFAITH GREEN TEAM

On Tuesday, January 30 the New Ark UCC hosted the first event of the newly formed Newark Interfaith Green Team. Angle Bivens of Energize Delaware gave a spirited presentation sharing many ways to save energy in one's home. All attendees living in Delaware will be sent a free weatherization kit worth approximately \$50.

Energize Delaware is a nonprofit corporation offering renewable and energy efficiency programs that help Delawareans reduce their carbon footprint. Programs range from the most popular "Home Performance with Energy Star" home assessments and rebates to low interest loans that help businesses including farms, nonprofits, congregations, schools, government, and residents convert to solar or install energy-efficient systems. The Energize Delaware team and partners are happy to assist Delaware residents as they become energy efficient. Visit their website for details at <a href="https://www.SolarDelaware.org">www.SolarDelaware.org</a>.

The Newark Interfaith Green Team includes representatives from local faith communities who are working together to educate and motivate our congregations to take actions to care for our earth. Our purpose is to share knowledge and provide support to empower the Newark area faith community to take action. The Green Team plans to share knowledge through periodic community events and to provide support by promoting collaboration among Newark area faith communities. The Newark Interfaith Green Team welcomes representatives from all Newark area faith communities to join us. Look for information about a coming event presented by the Sierra Club.



## Florence Price

Snapshots of My Soul

### February 18, 2024 3:00pm

Newark United Methodist Church 69 East Main Street, Newark, DE 19711

#### Admission is free.

Reservations required (via link below). Parking is available behind the church (62 E. Delaware Ave.) or in municipal lots #1 (54 E. Delaware Ave.), #3 (220 S. Main St.) or #6 (78 E. Delaware Ave.), or #7 (141 E. Main St.) Fees may apply.

Music provided by Her Tyme 20xx

Rosaria Macera, Director, Crystal Hayman Simms, Narrator

Performing as soloists - Elizabeth Cochran, Nina Cottman, Alberta Douglas, Cheryl Everill, Makeda Hampton, Kathleen Hastings, Hiroko Yamazaki - and featuring the Lincoln University Select Choral Ensemble.

About the program: Florence Price (1887-1953) was the first African American woman composer to have her symphony performed by a major American orchestra. In addition to concertos and orchestral works, she also composed works for choir, violin, piano and organ, as well as art songs and original settings of spirituals, in a style that has been described as "Afro-Romantic." Ms. Price's life trajectory bridges the period of Post-Reconstruction and the dawn of the Civil Rights Movement. A private and introverted individual, Ms. Price prefers to reveal her personality through her musical compositions, which serve as "snapshots" of her soul.

This concert is sponsored by Music Performance Trust Fund, Delaware Division of the Arts, Newark NAACP and The Newark Partnership.

This program is supported, in part, by a grant from the Delaware Division of the Arts, a state agency, in partnership with the National Endowment for the Arts. The Division promotes Delaware arts events on www.DelawareScene.com.









For more information and to register go to: https://www.rosariamacera.com/her-tyme-20xx/





## **FEBRUARY 2024 CALENDAR**

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P:30am - Worahip	7pm - Al-Anon (L)		8:30pm - Howark Green Team (6)		8:30pm - DE Zen (8) @ Senctuary		10em - Office Open	12:30pm - LCWC (6)
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