



# New Ark

## UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ISSUE 12 | December 2024

### “Perpetuating Hope”



**Image Description:** Photo of actor Catherine O'Hara in “Home Alone,” on a pay phone in the airport in Paris.

In the 1990 Christmas film “Home Alone,” Kevin’s mom Kate McCallister rants to an airline ticket agent, “This is Christmas! The season of perpetual hope! And I don’t care if I have to get out on the runway and hitchhike! If it costs me everything I own, if I have to sell my soul to the devil himself, I am going to get home to my son.”

She reminds me of that quote about hope, not the one with feathers and never stops at all, but this one seen on Twitter: “People speak of hope as if it is this delicate, ephemeral thing made of whispers and spider’s webs. It’s not. Hope has dirt on her face,

blood on her knuckles, the grit of the cobblestones in her hair, and just spat out a tooth as she rises for another go.”

Alright, maybe that’s going a bit too far. Maybe it’s somewhere in between, but hope is still very much an act of rebellion and defiance. Hope is something we can give to ourselves as much as to other people. Hope is not passive; it’s active. Hope needs to be fed every day, sometimes every moment. It’s no wonder we celebrate Christmas in the northern hemisphere at the solstice, when we need hope and light the most.

We need to get really good at perpetuating hope, how to create it and how to sustain it, and Advent and Christmas are just the season to begin such a spiritual practice.

Some of it is self-care, like rest and movement, eating well, reading or meditation or prayer, as well as fun and play and creativity. When was the last time you watched “A Charlie Brown Christmas” or “Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer” or whatever your favorite Christmas movie

is? This is a time for all the things that make us feel cozy and snug.

Some of it is caring for others, whether it’s grocery shopping for someone, making end-of-year donations, cooking a meal or baking cookies for a neighbor, or helping someone with a household expense or unexpected purchase. This is a time for building up our hope muscles by sharing what we have.

As much as hope is about looking forward, it’s also about looking back and learning about how people found their own sources of hope and what they did to sustain it. One such source is the book of Isaiah. It’s a long one, sixty-six chapters, but one chapter a day could take you through to the beginning of February. It starts out rather rough but stay with it. I recommend *The Message* by Eugene Peterson, which you can read online using the following link:

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### NEW ARK UCC

A Just Peace, Open & Affirming,  
Earthwise Congregation

Rev. Cynthia Robinson, Pastor



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[www.newarkucc.org](http://www.newarkucc.org)  
[newarkucc@verizon.net](mailto:newarkucc@verizon.net)

## CONVENER'S CORNER

Jenny Greenzweig, Convener

Kindness is on my mind ... Pastor Cynthia reminded us to practice self-care in a recent sermon. I heard a song on the radio and saw a meme on Facebook about kindness. It's the Season of Advent and we tend to give extra to help others at this time of year. When we teach about kindness at my elementary school, we teach the children that a smile is the easiest way to show someone kindness. It makes the other person feel good and you also feel good. So, friends, I hope you will practice self-care and kindness in this busy holiday season and remember to smile.

Live in love, not hate.  
 Live in hope, not anger.  
 Live in truth, not rumor.  
 Live in kindness, not rudeness.  
 Live in generosity, not selfishness.  
 Live in peace, not frustration.  
 Live in joy, not doubt.  
 Live in movement, not fear.  
 Live in love.

original words by rachel marie martin  
 findingjoy.net

to make informed decisions that are in the best interests of their health and wellbeing.

**Why We Love This:** We love this project because it is innovative in the utilization of a "story-telling cloth" in imparting education on vaccines. This program also focuses on the fact that cervical cancer is a major killer of women in Mali, and this is a logical step in addressing the reduction of cases there.

## PASTOR CYNTHIA'S HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Pastor Cynthia will be on vacation from December 25, 2024 through January 8, 2025.

On Sunday, December 29, we will have a traditional Service of Lessons and Carols. On Sunday, January 5, we will have the Rev. Andrew Weber fill the pulpit.



## TOGETHER WOMEN RISE

December 2024

### December Project: "GAIA Vaccine Foundation"

While *there will not be an in-person meeting of Together Women Rise in December*, we do encourage folks to examine this Mali project online and donate through the website: <https://togetherwomenrise.org/programs/gaia-vaccine-foundation/>.

**Mission of GAIA Vaccine Foundation:** GAIA Vaccine Foundation's mission is to reduce the incidence of infectious diseases that dispropor-

tionately affect the underserved and promote the development of globally relevant, globally accessible vaccines that can be distributed on a not-for-profit basis in the developing world.

**Summary:** Our grant will fund a year-long educational community outreach campaign on HPV, the HPV vaccine and cervical cancer. This campaign will assist in the introduction of the HPV vaccine to Mali and improve general knowledge about HPV/cervical cancer so that women and girls are able

## BOOK GROUP

The NAUCC Book Group will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, December 19, at the home of Connie Cox for a discussion of the book, *Necessary Troubles* by Drew Gilpin Faust.

### NECESSARY TROUBLE

*Growing Up at Midcentury*

DREW GILPIN FAUST

AUTHOR OF THIS REPUBLIC OF SUFFERING



## A FRIENDLY REMINDER from the PCRC



Monday is  
Pastor Cynthia's  
day off.  
Kindly be respectful!

## LECTIONARY READINGS

### ■ December 1

Jeremiah 33:14-16  
Psalm 25:1-10  
I Thessalonians 3:9-13  
Luke 21:25-36

### ■ December 8

Malachi 3:1-4  
Luke 1:68-79  
Philippians 1:3-11  
Luke 3:1-6

### ■ December 15

Zephaniah 3:14-20  
Isaiah 12:2-6  
Philippians 4:4-7  
Luke 3:7-18

### ■ December 22

Micah 5:2-5a  
Luke 1:46b-55  
Hebrews 10:5-10  
Luke 1:39-45

### ■ December 29

Isaiah 9:2-7  
Psalm 96  
Titus 2:11-14  
Luke 2:1-20

## THE CHRISTIAN FAMILY TREE

This month we will continue to view and discuss the video series about our Christian heritage.



December 4, 2024 at 7:00 p.m.

"Holiness, Pentecostal and Charismatic Churches"



December 8, 2024 at 11:00 a.m.

*How to End  
Christian Nationalism*

The news is filled with stories of the impact of Christian Nationalism on our politics, our country, and our freedoms. Please join us on December 8 for our Second Sunday presentation in which we will be discussing the very timely book *How to End Christian Nationalism*.

Here is a brief [amazon.com](https://www.amazon.com) summary of the book: *The essential guidebook for Christians alarmed by the rising tide of Christian nationalism yet unsure how to counter it.*

Christian nationalism is a powerful and pervasive ideology, and it is becoming normalized. From Amanda Tyler, lead organizer of the **Christians Against Christian Nationalism** campaign, comes *How to End*

*Christian Nationalism*, your vital companion for countering this dangerous ideology. Tyler draws on her experiences, conversations with pastors and laypeople, research, Scripture, her Baptist convictions, and her work as a constitutional law expert to help us confront Christian nationalist fervor.

You'll learn how to distinguish Christian nationalism from the teachings of Jesus and to demonstrate how the former perpetuates white supremacy. This book also unpacks key truths we can share with others: Patriotism is not the same as nationalism. Religious freedom means little if it's not for everyone. Christians follow a gospel of love, not the idol of power.

## ANNUAL REPORTS

It's the time of year again when we need to turn our attention toward preparing for our Annual Meeting which will take place in January 2025. With that in mind, each chairperson is requested to submit a report summarizing the activities conducted by their respective committee or task force during 2024. (If it would be helpful to see a previous Annual Report as you prepare this year's report, please email the church office at [newarkucc@verizon.net](mailto:newarkucc@verizon.net)). Please note that the deadline to turn in annual reports is **noon on Friday, December 27, 2024**. Submitting your committee's report on or before the deadline will help to ensure the report is completed on time. The finished Annual Report will be distributed approximately two weeks before the Annual Meeting.

## DINNER with US



A dinner party is more than just a meal; it helps build connections and breaks down barriers within our congregation. We are planning to begin our meals together on January 12, 2025. We now have 2-3 host homes and are looking for diners! Please join us by using the following link to Sign Up Genius. If you are not tech savvy, no problem; a sign-up sheet will also be available at church.

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/409054DACA822A4FD0-53423773-dinner>

Keep thinking about the following:

- Would you prefer a dinner or luncheon?
- If part of a couple, would we be willing to each go to different parties? (This might help with balancing numbers, but it also might be fun!)
- Could I bring a side dish or dessert? (Please coordinate with the host)
- Could I give someone a ride?

If you can't participate in January, we are planning more meals in February and March. Please let me know if you have other questions or ideas about this new adventure! Feel free to contact me at [mcatkinson@com-cast.net](mailto:mcatkinson@com-cast.net). More information to come.



As 2024 year end draws near and we reflect back, have we changed to a lifestyle which is more friendly to our **Crusty Old Earth**? May we enter year 2025 with goals that will continue to contribute towards a better environmental journey. Press Forward! —Ron Hartman



## CODE PURPLE BEGINS

Please help support the Code Purple ministry by volunteering during the nights that our church will be hosting this winter. A Code Purple night is called by the Newark Empowerment Center when outside air temperatures become life-threatening (fall below 20 degrees or reach a wind chill below 15 degrees).

New Ark UCC will be one of five Newark churches which take turns opening their doors to provide overnight shelter and a hot meal to the homeless in our community. We will be second in rotation. UD will again provide the meals with buffet style service and communal dining.

NEC will have staff assigned from 6:00 p.m.-6:00 a.m. for check-in, check-out, and overnight monitoring, but we will need to provide one male and one female volunteer. All guests will need to preregister with NEC to learn the location; locations will not be publicized and volunteers should not share the location with others. Laundry service will be arranged by NEC.

The shifts and tasks that need to be staffed are as follows:

- **Set up, 5:00-6:00 p.m.**  
This is a one-hour time commitment prior to guest arrival and no guest contact is required. It involves setting up Wells Hall with mattresses and bedding, preparing the dining area, and making coffee.
- **Check-in and hospitality, 6:00-8:00 p.m.**  
Assist the NEC staff person with guest check-in, set up the meal provided by UD, handle after diner clean-up, and provide hospitality.
- **Monitor Assistant (two shifts), after dinner from 8:00-11:59 p.m. and overnight from 12:00-6:00 a.m.**  
Church volunteer to aid NEC staff person as needed.

If you would be willing to help out December through March, please let me know which shifts you are willing to cover, and whether you would be willing to do these shifts at another Code Purple church if they are in need of volunteers.

*Continued on Page 5*

## DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

**JANUARY 2025**

**NEWSLETTER**

**DEADLINE**

**12:00 noon**

**on Monday,**

**December 23, 2024**

- 01 Meg Marcozzi
- 02 Gail Pasteris
- 03 Doug Hill
- 04 Asia Bhatti
- 05 Justin Bitter
- 06 Don Crary
- 07 John Tobin
- 11 Frank Huppe
- 12 Jon Cooper
- 13 Teresa Edge
- 13 Leslie Apple
- 17 Matthew Cox
- 20 Hannah Cooper
- 21 Cynthia A. Robinson
- 23 Linda Brasel
- 23 Nila Hill
- 27 Jim Bitter
- 27 Michael Cox
- 27 Rory Bell



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



### **SHARING the JOY!**

*"Joy shared is doubled,  
pain shared is halved."*



Beginning in November during Fellowship Time after the service, we will have information and someone from the Social Justice committee to answer any questions you may have and accept any donations you want to share.

***SHARE the joy of gift-giving  
with those less fortunate than us  
during the Christmas holiday season.***

There are two families in our congregation who are facing significant financial need these days. Up until **December 15**, we will be accepting financial donations to enable us to purchase gift cards to stores that these folks can get to and shop at. The gift cards will be purchased through our church's gift card program which also helps out our church budget.

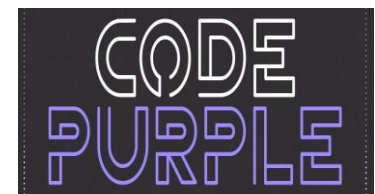
Visit us during Fellowship time after church services for more information or to donate. You can also contact Kathy Hyde at 302-367-3701 or [thehydes99@gmail.com](mailto:thehydes99@gmail.com) for information or to arrange a pick-up.



### **Code Purple, Continued from Page 4**

Volunteers will be notified when a Code Purple night is about to be declared, and asked to provide their availability for that specific night. Bob Pasteris and Connie Cox will be co-coordinators and will assemble that night's crew from those that respond. Most communication will be via email, so please provide an email address along with your phone number.

Thank you for your help and continued support of this ministry. If you need more information, please contact Bob Pasteris ([pasteris@com-cast.net](mailto:pasteris@com-cast.net)).





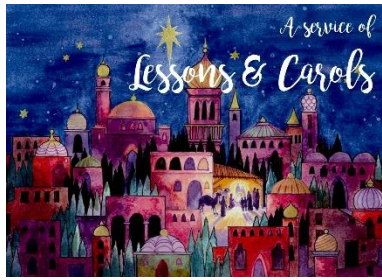
Jim and Ellen Pletz will host the annual New Ark Adult Holiday Party at their home on Sunday, December 15, 1:00-6:00 p.m. Please bring an appetizer, side dish, salad, or dessert to share. Come when you can and visit with church friends. Please see the directory for the Pletz's address.



Beer and Carols will take place on Wednesday, December 18, 7:00-9:00 p.m. at Grain on E. Main Street, Newark, DE. We'll meet at the community table, have dinner, and then lead Christmas caroling at 8:00 p.m. Invite friends and neighbors!



A Service of the Longest Night will be held on Sunday, December 22 at 5:00 p.m. This is a service for anyone who is grieving or for whom the Christmas season is difficult. Details forthcoming in the weekly announcements.



On Sunday, December 29, at 9:30 a.m., we will have a traditional Service of Lessons and Carols for our worship service.



### CHRISTMAS EVE SOUP SUPPER

Our Christmas Eve Soup Supper, one of the many holiday traditions of the New Ark, will begin at 5:30 p.m. Make a pot of soup or bring some bread to church to have supper before the Christmas Eve service at 7:00 p.m.

To let us know you are coming and what you are bringing, please sign up at the following link <https://bit.ly/2024ChristmasEveSoupSupper>

Bring your family and friends for this easy meal. Childcare will be available for the dinner and the 7:00 Christmas Eve service.



### CHRISTMAS EVE SERVICE CANDLELIGHT and CAROLS

Our Christmas Eve worship service will take place at 7:00 p.m. on December 24.

### Perpetuating Hope, Continued from Page 1

<https://www.biblegateway.com/passage/?search=Isaiah%201&version=MSG>.

Love each other  
Share with each other  
Check on each other,

*Cynthia*



## **WIND ENERGY & DELAWARE**

**Tuesday, January 7**

**7:00 p.m.**



### **SPEAKERS:**

**\* Senator Stephanie Hansen, 10<sup>th</sup> District**

**Chair, Senate Environmental & Energy Committee**

**\* Director Dayna Cobb, State Energy Office**

**Join this *online presentation* to hear and discuss what Delaware is doing in the area of wind energy.**

**For zoom link email:**

**[newarkinterfaithgreenteam@gmail.com](mailto:newarkinterfaithgreenteam@gmail.com)**



# JOHN FLYNN CONCERT

**Benefitting**



**Sunday, January 19, 3:00 p.m.**

**New Ark UCC, 300 East Main Street, Newark**



Singer-songwriter John Flynn is known for his “powerful music and tireless efforts on behalf of the lost and the lonely, the shackled and scarred.” Recognition of his talent include Kris Kristofferson, the Woody Guthrie Center, American Library Association, the Phil Ochs Award, Dominican’s Shining Star Award, Rotary’s Paul Harris Fellow Award, and Pacem In Terris’ Peacemaker Among Us Award. John is also the Executive Director of New Beginnings – Next Step, where change starts with relationships. They assist adult individuals who desire to prepare for and successfully meet the challenges of freedom both prior to and after their release from incarceration. See <https://newbeginnings-nextstep.org/index.html>

**Donations to *New Beginnings – Next Step* are appreciated!**



**THANK YOU**  
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We are back and better than ever in 2024 with our End-of-the-Year Auction.

This year we decided to focus on what makes our state so great, the wonderful experiences, artists, and businesses that we have to offer here in Delaware. This year, you will get to bid on everything from date night ideas, local art and art classes, vacation houses, birding tours, and so much more!

Plus, for those looking for some great holiday gift items, we still have plenty to offer for gift cards to local shops and breweries, outdoor equipment, and, of course, our upcycled collection.

The Auction will run from Black Friday (November 29) to December 9th, giving you a chance to get your holiday shopping a more sustainable way while supporting climate action in Delaware!

From upcycled gifts to fishing trips and vacation homes, our Auction has something for everybody!

In place of our normally scheduled Climate and Energy Committee Meeting in December, we want to offer a space for community and an opportunity to de-stress. Join us as we work through our strife, grief, and uncertainty through arts, crafts, and story sharing. This event will not be an ask for you to do anything, contribute anything, or plan anything. We want you to just be in community with those who may be going through the same thing as you right now.

We will have arts and craft supplies available, but if you have something you would like to offer up, you are free to bring your own craft to do solo with company, or bring supplies for others to join you in your special craft. This is a low-structure event, the important thing is to have space to be together. We will have some artistic leaders on site to help those who would like to have some guidance as they work through their projects. Tuesday, December 3, 5:00-7:00 p.m., join us at the Rt. 9 Library. [December De-Stress](#)

**December De-Stress**

Join us for an evening full of arts & crafts, community, and support.

**Tuesday, Dec. 3rd**  
**5- 7pm**

**Route 9 Library**  
**Multipurpose Room A**

**SIERRA CLUB**  
 DELAWARE CHAPTER

# DECEMBER 2024 CALENDAR

Church offices, Central Atlantic Conference, City of Newark Events, NAUCC meetings/events, Other community Events, Rentals

Dec 2024 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1 8:45am - Choir Practice (B) 9:30am - Communion 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Greater Grace (B) @	2 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	3 8:30pm - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 8:30pm - Membership Growth 8:30pm - Social Justice (online)	4 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - DE Zen (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	5 8:30pm - Drama Kids (B)	6 7am - System 4 Cleaning 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	7 8:30am - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (B) 5:30pm - Grail of the Birch Moon
8 8:45am - Choir Practice (B) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 11am - Second Sunday (B) 2pm - Greater Grace (B)	9 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	10 8:30pm - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 8:30pm - Worship Planning	11 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - DE Zen (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	12 8:30pm - Drama Kids (B) 8:30pm - Finance C. (online) @ 7pm - Worship C. Mtg (online)	13 7am - System 4 Cleaning 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - Grail of the Birch Moon 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	14 8:30am - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 1pm - Greater Grace (W)
15 8:45am - Choir Practice (B) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour	16 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	17 8:30pm - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 8:30pm - Coord. Com.	18 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - DE Zen (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	19 2pm - Book Group @ off site 8:30pm - Drama Kids (B)	20 7am - System 4 Cleaning 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 11am - Hope Dining Room 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	21 8:30am - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (B)
22 8:45am - Choir Practice (B) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Greater Grace (B)	23 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 12pm - NL Deadline 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	24 8:30pm - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 8:30pm - Worship Planning	25 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - DE Zen (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	26	27 7am - System 4 Cleaning 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 12pm - Together Women Rise (W) 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	28 8:30am - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (B)
29 8:45am - Choir Practice (B) 9:30am - Worship	30 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	31 8:30pm - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts	1 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - DE Zen (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	2 8:30pm - Drama Kids (B)	3 7am - System 4 Cleaning 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	4 8:30am - Kirtaugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (B)