



New Ark

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ISSUE 1 | January 2025

“Silence is not an option”



Image Description: Logo for the Open and Affirming Coalition of the United Church of Christ, comprised of a tree with a rainbow hand as the trunk and branches and leaves colored in rainbow hues, pink and blue, brown and black, and Open in blue letters, Affirming in green letters.

The week before Christmas, David and I went to see the movie “Wicked.” When I heard these words, I quickly grabbed a pen and a piece of scrap paper out of my bag and scribbled them down: “If you make it discouraging enough, you can keep anyone silent.”

Earlier that same week I had heard that the Executive Banquet and Conference Center had booked the Delaware Republican Party for an event on January 10 featuring Rep. Nancy Mace of South Carolina. Not long after Sarah McBride had been elected to Congress, Rep. Mace began a crusade to exclude McBride from using the women’s

bathroom at the Capitol. I asked a friend if she knew whether a protest was planned for the January 10 event. She said that the general consensus among Democrats in the know was to not give it any gas, to just let it go.

As a parent of a transgender adult and as the pastor of a church with transgender members and young adults, this isn’t a partisan issue but a human issue and I cannot keep silent. So, I called the banquet center and left a message.

In the reply I received, I was told that the banquet center does not inquire about the program. I then sent an email that included the following: Tolerance does not include tolerating intolerance. Free speech does not include hate speech. Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel wrote, “We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.” Hate has no place in the great state of Delaware. As the parent of a transgender adult, I am profoundly disgusted you would give hate a platform and a microphone without hesitation and under the guise of policy and parity. I also posted the email

on Facebook and tagged the banquet center. I have since been blocked.

This is why the United Church of Christ has an Open and Affirming Coalition and why we are an ONA church. To help and support our LGBTQ+ friends and neighbors, including pastors, trans families, and to assist Ugandan LGBTQ+ individuals find lifesaving housing.

The coalition is seeking 100 churches and individuals to support their Justice 100 campaign that will build a mutual aid fund, support mental wellness and, with the Alzheimer’s Association, support brain health in the LGBTQ+ community. I plan on contributing to this campaign.

[Justice 100 - UCC Open and Affirming Coalition](#)

I am proud to be a member of the UCC and to be a pastor of an ONA church that extends an extravagant welcome. I hope you are too.

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

Cynthia

NEW ARK UCC

A Just Peace, Open & Affirming,
Earthwise Congregation

Rev. Cynthia Robinson, Pastor



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CONVENER'S CORNER

Jenny Greenzweig, Convener

Joy and love ...

During Advent, we lit the candles of Joy and Love. We heard messages from Pastor Cynthia about joy and love. We also heard some political messages, unavoidable as Cynthia pointed out. As we, or rather, as I enter the New Year, I have hopes and goals but also trepidation about the "new regime." Announcements about policy that will negatively and directly affect my family, friends, and how churches may function scare me. Very simply, I am worried and have been since November. How will I and those I care about navigate the New Year? I will do so by continuing to live my life. I will talk the talk and walk the talk. The yellow sign out front is proof that our church is doing that. I will support causes, contact my legislators, and prayerfully make decisions. We are a Just Peace, Open and Affirming, and Earthwise congregation, and I am so proud to share that with others when I talk about our church! I will move forward, finding joy in everyday life.

Have a happy and blessed New Year!

lunch and learn more about what this project does to support these women.

PASTOR CYNTHIA'S HOLIDAY SCHEDULE

Pastor Cynthia will be on vacation until January 8, 2025. The Rev. Andrew Weber will be providing pastoral coverage during her absence as well as filling the pulpit on Sunday, January 5.



January 24, 2025

January Project: "Beyond the Bars"

January is the month to learn about assistance for previously incarcerated individuals. The church is sponsoring a benefit concert benefitting **NEW BEGINNINGS, NEXT STEP** on January 19 which does this locally.

The January project for Together Women Rise in Kenya is **"Beyond the Bars: Sustainable Livelihoods for Women Leaving Prison."** The non-profit, Clean Start Africa, works with women, girls, and children impacted by the criminal justice system to restore their dignity and hope for a successful reintegration. Our grant will fund an economic empowerment

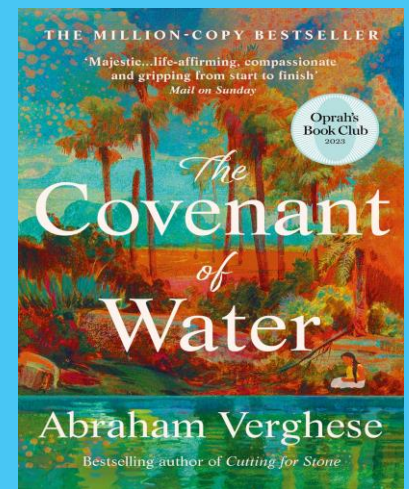
program designed to provide sustainable economic opportunities and dignity to women transitioning out of prison in Kenya. Most of the women are poor, illiterate, single mothers, and the sole breadwinners of their families. The program addresses systemic socio-economic injustices and inequalities that contribute to the incarceration and recidivism of these vulnerable women.



We will meet at noon on the 4th Friday, January 24, to share

BOOK GROUP

The NAUCC Book Group will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, January 16, at the home of Linda Brasel for a discussion, led by Brenda Toomey, of the book, *The Covenant of Water* by Abraham Verghese.



**A FRIENDLY
REMINDER
from the PCRC**



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

**LECTIONARY
READINGS**

■ **January 5**

Isaiah 60:1-6
Psalm 72:1-7, 10-14
Ephesians 3:1-12
Matthew 2:1-12

■ **January 12**

Isaiah 43:1-7
Psalm 29
Acts 8:14-17
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22

■ **January 19**

Isaiah 62:1-5
Psalm 36:5-10
I Corinthians 12:1-11
John 2:1-11

■ **January 26**

Nehemiah 8:1-3, 5-6, 8-10
Psalm 19
I Corinthians 12:12-31a
Luke 4:14-21



January 1, 2024

Wisdom Wednesday will take a break in January since the first Wednesday is New Year's Day! Join us on February 5.



January 12, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

Jen Broomfield will lead the continuing discussion of the book *How to End Christian Nationalism* by Amanda Tyler. The focus will be on the latter half of the book dealing with what actions we might take. All are welcome to join at 11:00 a.m. in the sanctuary and on Zoom.

CODE PURPLE UPDATE

The New Ark UCC has already hosted Code Purple once this season. We had 11 guests—3 women and 8 men.

When hosting Code Purple, we discovered that all but four of our sheets are missing. Please check the back of your closets for any unneeded twin sheets that you could donate to help rebuild our stock.

Volunteers, both men and women, are still needed for Code Purple. We particularly need help during the late shifts. Please contact Bob Pasteris (pas-teris@comcast.net) for more information or to volunteer.

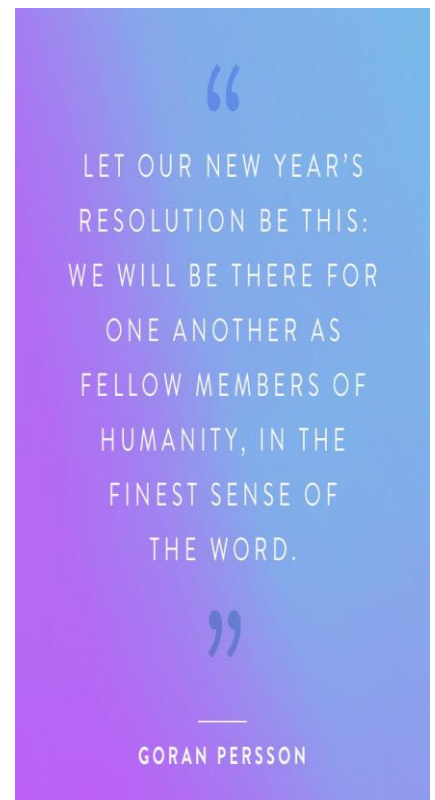
GO-BAGS

February is another scheduled month for us to deliver Go-Bags to the Newark Empowerment Center as we do four times per year. However, now that NEC/Friendship House is meeting here at the New Ark church, we are delivering our bags in smaller lots as soon as supplies come in.



Our goal is to assemble 100 bags for our food-insecure neighbors. We currently need the following Go-Bag items to be brought in during the month of January:

68 Protein	76 Juice	64 Fruit
50 Crackers	50 Nutri-grain Bars	



**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 mcatkinton@com-cast.net. More information to come.



The Biden Administration has passed two major bills which will assist Delaware and other states in advancing our country toward being more environmentally responsible. The below was drawn from Delaware's 'Climate Action Plan' booklet. Let us all help make 2025 a greener-Earth year.

Federal Funding Opportunities

The federal Bipartisan Infrastructure Law (BIL) and the Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) provide states and municipalities with significant opportunities to invest in clean energy, energy efficiency, clean transportation, and hazard reductions. These funds will accelerate our state's ability to reach goals for emissions and resilience. Examples include:

- \$10 million to use over five years for weatherization of housing units and workforce training through the Weatherization Assistance Program
- \$7 million over five years through the Grid Resiliency Grants program for Delaware

utilities to improve resilience of electric grids

- \$33 million over five years for the Delaware Energy Office to develop and implement a Homeowner Managing Energy Savings (HOMES) rebate program \$33 million to use over five years for low- and moderate-income consumer discounts on the purchase of high-efficiency electric home appliances through the High-Efficiency Electric Home Rebate Program
- \$809,000 one-time funding for Colonial School District to pilot three electric school buses through the Clean School Bus Program
- \$18 million over five years to invest in a network of high-speed electric vehicle charging stations along major Delaware highways through the National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Program
- \$44 million one-time funding through the Rebuilding American Infrastructure with Sustainability and Equity (RAISE) grant program for new bike and pedestrian infrastructure
- \$27 million over five years through the Carbon Reduction Program to invest in projects designed to reduce on-road transportation emissions
- \$3 million over five years to update Delaware's Climate Action Plan through the Climate Pollution Reduction Grant (CPRG) program.



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

FEBRUARY 2025

NEWSLETTER

DEADLINE

12:00 noon

on Monday,

January 27, 2025

05 Debbie Micklos
 06 Evan Cox
 17 Kit Angell
 17 Anita Wellner
 18 Patty Gross
 19 Karla Bell
 25 Patricia Hall
 26 Mindy Dowsett
 26 Richard Waibel
 28 Steve Bertsche
 31 John Henry Suchanec
 Cooper
 31 Linda Raffaele



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



OPEN POSITIONS for 2025-2026

Listed below are the open positions for leadership roles in the New Ark UCC for 2025-2026 along with links to the job descriptions. Terms start at the beginning of 2025.

The open positions are as follows:

➤ **Trustee Position**

Financial Secretary to replace Kathy Hyde (keeping financial records of people's giving; making deposits; working with the Treasurer; and serving as a Trustee)

➤ **Other Selected Position**

Volunteer Enlistment: One or two people for a two-year term (finds volunteers for open church positions)

➤ **Non-Selected Position**

Fellowship Time Coordinator to replace Pat Eber.

We need to fill these positions prior to the Quarterly Congregational Meeting on January 26. The Financial Secretary candidate will need to undergo a background check and the church will cover that expense.

We also always have the need for fresh faces on our other standing committees, including Worship, Membership, Social Justice, Facilities, and Finance.

You can contact Kim Bell or Jon Manon if you are interested in, or if you would like further information about, any of the positions or *click the links below for fuller job descriptions:*

Open Selected Positions for the New Ark UCC 2025

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ac-DMSiVJBNbGH1dOpsJFYMwud-whUkk6ZHZXuc_YuBfQ/edit?usp=sharing



Financial Secretary (2-year term)—open link, scroll down: https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ac-DMSiVJBNbGH1dOpsJFYMwud-whUkk6ZHZXuc_YuBfQ/edit#heading=h.gsqm56d2erlc

Volunteer Enlistment (2-year term): https://docs.google.com/document/d/1ac-DMSiVJBNbGH1dOpsJFYMwud-whUkk6ZHZXuc_YuBfQ/edit#heading=h.8e3i6d5h0loa

Open Non-Selected Positions for New Ark UCC 2025

Fellowship Time Coordinator (no specific term): Maintains and coordinates the sign-up sheets for Fellowship Time volunteers (paper copy at church and an online version). Makes announcements during church services and does newsletter reminders as needed to ensure that we have volunteers to bring a variety of snacks each week.

WIND ENERGY & DELAWARE

Tuesday, January 7

7:00 p.m.



SPEAKERS:

*** Senator Stephanie Hansen, 10th 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.

Join us at the following Zoom link:

<https://udel.zoom.us/j/97444159574>



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!

TACKLING PROBLEMS in the NEW YEAR



- Have you or a loved one had a nagging problem you would like to solve?
- Do you think assistive technology might help?
- Do you want to explore what options are available and where to get them?
- Are you worried about being eligible for such assistance, how to try something before you buy it, or how to get funding to pay for it?

If you or a loved one fits any of these questions, **Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative (DATI)** can help. Delaware's ATI office is part of a federal program available in all 50 states offering expert consultations and hundreds of devices from low tech and low cost (grabbers, special utensils, etc.) to high tech and greater cost (computer suggestions, digital magnifiers, etc.) to help with everyday problems. The only eligibility requirement is that you be a Delaware resident.

Don't live in Delaware? The DATI staff can help you find a center that covers your area.

Not sure what is available for you? You can look at their website or visit the office in person to see all the ways DATI can help address your individual needs.

Want to try something out at home, work, or anywhere else before buying it? DATI may be able to lend you equipment to try it first.

Not sure you can afford it? DATI has access to many programs that can help pay if you qualify and even has staff to get through those qualifications.

Need a simple device to help someone manage transferring in and out of furniture? Or a variety of magnifiers to help you see things better? A set of eating utensils to help you eat without spilling? Assistance with dressing?

DATI helps people from infancy to seniors, with needs that may be disability related or just a part of aging. And from personal experience, I can tell you they not only want to help people meet their individual needs but will often "go the extra mile" to help you meet your goals.

Delaware has two DATI centers, in Newark and Milford. The fully accessible Newark location is within the University of Delaware Center for Disabilities Studies at 461 Wyoming Rd. (phone: 302-831-0354, e-mail: dati-ud@udel.edu, website: [Delaware Assistive Technology Initiative \(DATI\) - Center for Disabilities Studies](http://www.dati-ud.org)).

If you want information on the Milford office or any other site, their staff will provide it. They also participate in or provide demonstrations at community events around the state. So stop by, attend a community fair, or give them a call. They try to fit their guidelines around you instead of trying to fit you into their guidelines.

If you have additional questions, please feel free to reach out to Nora Martin.

JANUARY 2025 CALENDAR

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

Jan 2025 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
29	30	31	1	2	3	4
8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Kintsugi - Martial Arts	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S)	7am - System 4 Cleaning 8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - Newark OA (L)	8:30am - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (S)
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Communion 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Greater Grace (S) @	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 6:30pm - Membership Growth 8:30pm - Social Justice (online)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S) 5:30pm - Finance C. (online) @ 7pm - Worship C. Mtg (online)	7am - System 4 Cleaning 8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - Newark OA (L) 7pm - Brandywine Recorders (S)	8:30am - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 1pm - Greater Grace (W)
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 11am - Second Sunday (S) 2pm - Greater Grace (S)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 6:30pm - Worship Planning	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 2pm - Book Group @ off site 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S)	7am - System 4 Cleaning 8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 11am - Hope Dining Room 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - Newark OA (L)	8:30am - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (S) 5pm - Couples for Christ (SNWKC)
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Concert/Fundraiser (S)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 6:30pm - Coord. Con.	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S) Pending	7am - System 4 Cleaning 8am - NEC/FH Individual Appts. 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 12pm - Together Women Rise (W) 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - Newark OA (L)	8:30am - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (S)
26	27	28	29	30	31	1
8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Greater Grace (S)	10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 12pm - NL Deadline 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	5:30pm - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 6:30pm - Worship Planning	10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)		7am - System 4 Cleaning 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 6:30pm - Newark OA (L)	8:30am - Kintsugi - Martial Arts 12:30pm - LCWC (S)