



New Ark

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

ISSUE 4 | April 2025

“As close as breathing”



Image Description: Photo of a woman with light skin standing behind a broken tree stump shielding her bare chest, appearing as though she is inside the tree, like a strapless dress. Other trees have gold and green foliage.

I don't want my poems
on dead trees.
Trees are poetry themselves—
Xylem and phloem
Roots and humus
Bare branches in winter
Buds bursting in spring
Canopy in summer
Color in fall.
Even as I compose this poem
With only my mouth
I inhale the trees' daily work
Every exhale feeding their future.

—©2007 Cynthia E. Robinson

In the second creation story, God formed Adam from the ground and then breathed life into him. The Hebrew word for breath, as well as wind and Spirit, is ru'ach. The Greek word is pneuma. Our spiritual ancestors regarded the breath as the life-giving presence of God. God interacts with us through our breathing, regenerating our bodies with every moment.

Since the COVID outbreak five years ago, we have been opening our worship service with a communal deep breath—the Body of Christ centering itself in the life-giving presence of God. I find it helpful during the day to take a few minutes, to slow my breathing and focus on it, that breathing itself is a prayer.

When we are living in stressful times, it can become so easy to engage our fight or flight response. Our breathing can become shallow to the point of holding our breath without knowing it until we exhale in a forced rush of air. Until we begin again.

Every moment is a resurrection, as close as breathing. The forests around us resemble the breathing passages in our lungs, the trees regenerating our planet, just as our breathing renews our bodies, the exchange of oxygen and carbon dioxide connecting us in a playful dance of creation.

It seems so simple that it becomes easy for us to discount it and take it for granted: a spiritual practice of breathing otherwise known as meditation. We forget that we are granted only one day at a time, even one moment at a time, that we live from breath to breath.

With each inhale, we breathe in peace. With each exhale, we feed our future. Like a tree that is planted by water, we shall not be moved.

Tell the truth.
Sing with passion.
Work with laughter.
Love with heart.

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

April
Showers
Bring May
Flowers

April showers bring May flowers ... I can't help it. Every year, that saying goes through my head. Spring is a time of hope. Nature begins to bloom. The extra Vitamin D gives us more energy. We start to tackle those cleaning and organizing projects. Around the house. Outside. In the Church Handbook. This is my gentle reminder to all committees to "spring clean" your Handbook descriptions if you didn't do that task. Sorry! Couldn't resist! But seriously, do go out and enjoy the changing of the season. Have a wonderful Easter season! It is a season of hope and new life!



TOGETHER WOMEN RISE

April 25, 2025 – 12:00 p.m.

April Project: "Organic Backyard Gardens"

The April project of Rise in India is "Organic Backyard Gardens" by Asia Initiatives. The purpose of this grant is to enable 450 women in remote villages to achieve financial and nutritional independence through organic vegetable gardens, teaching them the skills to maintain and market produce, and improving the nutrition and incomes of themselves, their families, and their communities. This project will be implemented using Social Capital Credits (SoCCS), promoting acts of social good in exchange for training on

climate-resilient agricultural techniques as well as the tools and equipment needed to grow sustainable Backyard Nutrition Gardens.



Join us for lunch in the sanctuary at noon on Friday, April 25. After sharing lunch together, we'll learn more about this project and how it empowers women.

BUILD OUR FUTURE TOGETHER:

Visioning for the New Ark UCC

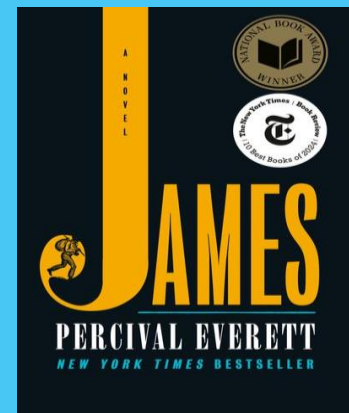
The Visioning Event scheduled for May 2-3 has been postponed. Please save the date of Sunday, May 25, and watch for more details to be provided shortly.

EASTER EVENTS

- **April 13:** Palm Sunday worship. Second Sunday.
- **April 17:** Maundy Thursday—folks can attend Newark UMC dinner and worship.
- **April 18:** Good Friday—joint worship service, NAUCC and Calvary Baptist (details TBA).
- **April 19:** Flower cross construction.
- **April 20:** Easter sunrise service at Head of Christiana cemetery at 7:00 a.m. Easter Worship at NAUCC at 9:30 a.m.

BOOK GROUP

The NAUCC Book Group will meet at 2:00 p.m. on Thursday, April 17 at the home of Mary Jo Williams for a discussion, led by Maggie Passero, of the book, *James, a Novel* by Percival Everett.



**A FRIENDLY
REMINDER
from the PCRC**



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

**LECTIONARY
READINGS**

■ **April 6**

Isaiah 43:16-21
Psalm 126
Philippians 3:4b-14
John 12:1-8

■ **April 13**

Luke 19:28-40
Psalm 118:1-2, 19-29
Isaiah 50:4-9a
Psalm 31:9-16

■ **April 20**

Acts 10:34-43
Psalm 118:1-2, 14-24
I Corinthians 15:19-26
John 20:1-18 (Luke 24:1-12)

■ **April 27**

Acts 5:27-32
Psalm 150
Revelation 1:4-8
John 20:19-31



April 2, 2025 at 7:00 p.m.

On this first Wednesday in April we will look at the various Easter stories. How are they consistent and where do the gospel writers differ? In preparation you may wish to look over each of the stories: Matthew 26-28; Mark 14-16; Luke 22-24; John 18-20.

Join us at 7:00 via zoom:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85718260381?pwd=Sm5ORlhSZHI2dNRkcDBBVVR2azlodz09>.



April 13, 2025 at 11:00 a.m.

As we think about Earth Day this April, we will begin with a viewing of David Attenborough's documentary, "A Life on Our Planet." Because the film runs 1 hour, 23 minutes, we will begin promptly at 11:00 a.m. If you think your stomach will rumble, you may wish to bring a snack on which to munch as you watch.



Join us for our **Spring Clean Up Day** on Saturday, April 12, from 9:00 a.m. until 1:00 p.m. Bring tools and equipment!

**IN SEARCH of
2025 BENEVOLENCE
RECIPIENTS**

Each year, the Social Justice Committee chooses small, local organizations to whom our NAUCC benevolence funds could make a difference. We will distribute our \$6,500 among those who work for peace and justice, hunger, housing, and the environment this year. We try to balance those who work to alleviate immediate needs and those who work for systemic change.

In 2024, our benevolence funds went to the Delaware Center for Justice, Delaware Interfaith Power & Light, Exceptional Care for Children, Family Hope Coalition, Healthy Foods for Healthy Kids, Hope Dining Room, Housing Alliance Delaware, Lori's Hands, Meeting Ground, and 1 in 7B. We also gave scholarship monies to the Lenape, the Nanticoke, and the Newark NAACP.

If you are aware of a 501c3 or other nonprofit group that you would like to have considered as a benevolence recipient, please contact any member of our Social Justice committee. We will be making our decisions during May and June.

The members of the Social Justice Committee are Lynn Boulter, Don Crary, Peggy Dillner, Pat Eber, Ron Hartman, Kathy Hyde, Jean Kutcher, Mike Lonergan, Bob Pasteris, Gail Pasteris, and Pastor Cynthia.



DINNER with US

We have a date: May 18! I've already put in my order with the powers that be for a lovely, warm evening.



An excerpt from *The Opposite of Fascism* by Anand Giridharadas, reads: "Because having, and nurturing, in your life a sphere for joy and connection and community and love and food and music and human difference and living and letting live is everything they are not and is everything they are trying to take away."

So let's build more community. Let's test the fire code. Let's eat food they want to deport like Venezuelan Pabellon criollo, Central American pupusas, or Ukrainian Pirozhki.

Please join us on May 18 and let me know (mcatkinson@comcast.net) if you would be willing to host. A sign-up sheet will be available mid-April.



NRDC GIRDS for TRUMP COURT BATTLES

The Natural Resources Defense Council (NRDC) was formed in 1970. Its budget for the year is ~\$245 million and it has 3 million members. Monies do not come from government grants but mostly from members. Its monies are spent as follows: 65 million for clean energy future (climate change), 56 million for sustainable communities, 38 million for wildlife and wildlands, 34 million for China, India, Canada, and beyond, and 50 million for operations and fundraising.

NRDC has a long history of fighting for a cleaner, healthy

Earth. The below article was taken from NRDC's Spring 2025 newsletter, *Nature's Voice*.

"It's 'all hands on deck,' says NRDC Chief Counsel Mitch Bernard. In the wake of last November's election, Bernard and our entire legal team have been engaged in intense preparations for what is expected to be a furious campaign of litigation aimed at beating back the second Trump administration's relentless assault on our environment and health. To meet the barrage of attacks head-on, NRDC has launched an emergency legal fund dedicated to fueling our courtroom battles to stop the Trump agenda.

As *Nature's Voice* goes to press, our litigation team is confronting the first wave of attacks while honing the best

legal strategies to counter an administration that appears determined to spend the next four years trying to reverse the failures of the first Trump administration to deliver on its promises to America's dirtiest industries. The polluter-funded wish list Project 2025 which, among other radical anti-environment attacks, seeks to reverse climate progress, gut the Environmental Protection Agency, ignite a fossil-fuel frenzy on our public lands, and strip endangered wildlife protection, was crafted in response to those failures—a track record that, conversely, ranks among NRDC's proudest achievements.

During Trump's first term, we filed more than 160 lawsuits and prevailed in nearly 90 percent of the cases resolved, racking up wins that ranged from derailing the administration's attempt to resurrect the climate-wrecking Keystone XL pipeline to stopping it from fast-tracking oil and gas development in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

For Bernard, who helmed NRDC's litigation team during the first Trump administration, the extraordinary success dramatically underscored his conviction in the power of hard-hitting court action to protect our environment and health, yet he is under no illusions about the tough battles that lie ahead. "They've learned from their mistakes," he says of the new administration, "which means we're going to have to be twice as smart and fight twice as hard."

To make a special gift to NRDC's **Legal Fund to Stop the Trump Agenda**, visit www.nrdc.org/legalfund.

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

**MAY 2025
NEWSLETTER
DEADLINE**

12:00 noon
on Monday,
April 28, 2025

- 07 Heather Suchanec-Cooper
- 14 Erik Dressler
- 18 Doug Chase
- 24 Ellen Pletz
- 25 Gloria Noel
- 27 Emma Dressler
- 27 Marcia Rahn
- 27 Terri Hamm Harrison



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

THANK YOU from

Newark Area Welfare Committee



Thank you for your generous donation to the Newark Area Welfare Committee (NAWC). We appreciate your support, and your donation directly enables our organization to assist Newark families in crisis.

Our all-volunteer organization has been actively assisting needy families for more than 90 years. Your assistance and interest in NAWC are deeply appreciated. It is a source of inspiration to see this level of concern for families in the Newark area. Thanks to donations like yours, we can join together to put our motto "Neighbors Helping Neighbors" into action.

Warm Regards,

Deborah Seador
Corresponding Secretary
Newark Area Welfare Committee

Thank you for your generous and consistent support of your Newark neighbors in need.

KEEPING in TOUCH LETTER

This year the Membership Committee is taking on the task of updating our Membership Records. The records include both Members and Friends of New Ark UCC. Hopefully by now you have received a "Keeping in Touch" letter/survey by regular mail or email. We value our Members and Friends and want to make sure that our records are accurate.

As all entries noted are at the request of the individual, your input is valuable and your response to the mailing will be very appreciated. We are asking for people to return survey responses within two weeks of receipt, by mail, email, or by dropping off the form at church. Thank you in advance for your help!

—NAUCC Membership Committee

Annual
Delaware
Interfaith

PEACE
WALK



Sunday, April 06, 2025
1:00 PM - 2:00 PM

Old College Entrance,
E. Main Street, Newark, DE


DSC DELAWARE SIKH
COALITION

Register at:
ipw25.eventbrite.com



LENTEN FLOWER NEEDS

For Palm Sunday and Easter Sunday we will need congregants to do some clipping in their gardens.

- **“PALMS”:** On the first Palm Sunday, residents grabbed local greenery (which happened to be palms) to wave as Jesus rode into Jerusalem. We will have our children wave our **local greenery** as we sing our first hymn on Palm Sunday, but we’ll need folks to donate grasses and/or branches that can be waved easily. Palm Sunday is April 13.
- **TULIPS OR DONATION:** If you wish to purchase \$12 potted tulips in memory or in honor of someone, to be displayed on Easter Sunday, please see the sign-up sheet in Wells Hall. Some may wish to donate the same amount to either Friendship House or Meeting Ground in lieu of the potted flowers. That separate sign-up sheet is also in Wells Hall. If you are not worshipping in person and wish to purchase tulips or make a donation to Friendship House or Meeting Ground, please email Peggy Dillner (dillner@comcast.net). All sign-ups must be completed by Palm Sunday (04/13/25) so the florist can be notified of the number.
- **FLOWER CROSS:** The New Ark’s traditional flower cross will be put together by Sarah Dressler and any others who wish to assist on the Saturday morning before Easter

(04/19/25). **Blooms and greenery** of all sorts will be needed to create a beautiful Easter cross for our sanctuary. Floral donations can be brought either on Friday when Joy is in the office or on that Saturday morning. Easter this year will be April 20.



SEEKING PEOPLE to CARE for OUR CHILDREN

We find ourselves in need of 2 people to supervise our children. If you know of anyone who is looking for a very part-time job working with children, please have them get in touch with Debbie Micklos at djam197@comcast.net for more information.

Specifically, we are seeking the following:

- a Nursery attendant to care for our infants and toddlers every Sunday from 9:20-11:00 a.m.
- a person who enjoys supervising a multi-age group of children from age 4 to 10. They are needed for every Sunday in June 2025 and at

least one Sunday a month the rest of the year. The care is needed from 9:20-11:00 a.m.

Thank you for the appreciation that you extended to Dena Birdsall as she cared for our children. She really enjoyed supporting our children and seeing them grow!

EET UPDATE

Join us for an Engineering Evaluation Task Force (EET) update on Sunday, April 6, at 10:45 a.m. Learn about the most recent steps toward our affordable housing plan.

EARTH DAY—APRIL 22





May we all be mindful of our environmental impact and take action to preserve the beauty and diversity of our planet.

CODE PURPLE

Thank you ALL for supporting our Code Purple program during this cold winter season! We successfully hosted 64 Code Purples between our Wilmington and Newark locations this winter season with seven host faith communities. That's truly remarkable and we cannot thank you enough!




The poster features a background of various fresh fruits and vegetables, including almonds, kiwi, blueberries, and tomatoes. At the top left is the Delaware House Democrats logo, and at the top right is the Food Bank of Delaware logo. The main title is in large, bold, green font. Below the title is a paragraph explaining the event. A yellow highlighted box contains a request for donations. The date and time are listed next to a calendar icon, and the location is listed next to a location pin icon. Four circular portraits of representatives are shown in a row, with their names listed below them. At the bottom, a list of other participating legislators is provided.


 




Food Bank of Delaware Emergency Donation Drive

Due to the recent severe cut to their food supply, Newark-area members of the Delaware House Democrats are teaming up with the Food Bank of Delaware to host a **donation drive**.

We ask Delawareans to stop by the Food Bank during this event to donate non-perishable food items.

 **Tuesday, April 1, 2025**
6pm - 8pm

 **Food Bank of Delaware, Newark Headquarters**
222 Lake Dr, Newark, DE 19702

Rep. Eric Morrison Rep. Melissa Minor-Brown Rep. Kerri Evelyn Harris Rep. Ed Osienski

**Sen. Jack Walsh, Rep. Cyndie Romer, Rep. Sophie Phillips,
Sen. Bryan Townsend, Sen. Marie Pinkney, Rep. Mara Gorman,
Rep. Madinah Wilson-Anton, Rep. Frank Burns,
Rep. Kam Smith, Sen. Dave Sokola**

The Trump Administration's cuts to the USDA have resulted in the cancellation of 750,000 pounds of food, equating to about 900,000 meals, meant to be delivered to the Food Bank of DE between April and July 2025. In response, on **Tuesday, April 1, from 6:00-8:00 p.m.**, Newark-area members of the DE House of Democrats will be teaming up with the Food Bank of DE to host a donation drive. The Food Bank needs all of our help. We are asking members of the public to join us in donating some of the Food Bank's most needed items, including hot and cold cereals, peanut butter, canned fruit, canned meats, canned vegetables, and rice or pasta. For more information on how to help the Food Bank of DE, visit <https://www.fbd.org/get-involved/>.

APRIL 2025 CALENDAR

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

Apr 2025 (Eastern Time - New York)

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
30 8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship	31 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	1 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Memor. Initiative - 6:30pm - Membership Growth 8:30pm - Social Justice (online)	2 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	3 10pm - System 4 Cleaning 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S)	4 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - Newark OA (L)	6 12:30pm - LCWC (S)
6 8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Communion 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 10:45am - EET First Sunday 2pm - Elder Eric (S/W)	7 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	8 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Memor. Initiative - 6:30pm - Worship Planning	9 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	10 10pm - System 4 Cleaning 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S) 5:30pm - Finance C. (online) @ 7pm - Worship C. Mtg (online)	11 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 8pm - Couples for Christ (W, K, S) 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	12 9am - Spring Clean-Up Day 1pm - Greater Grace (W)
13 8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 11am - Second Sunday (S) 2pm - Greater Grace (S)	14 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	15 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 2:30pm - Town Hall Meeting (S) 5:30pm - DE CJ LGBTQ+ Youth 5:30pm - Memor. Initiative - 8:30pm - Coord. Com.	16 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	17 10pm - System 4 Cleaning 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 2pm - Book Group @ off site 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S)	18 10am - Office Open 11am - Hope Dining Room 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - Newark OA (L)	19 12:30pm - LCWC (S)
20 8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour	21 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	22 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Memor. Initiative - 6:30pm - Worship Planning	23 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	24 10pm - System 4 Cleaning 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S)	25 10am - Office Open 12pm - Together Women Rise (W) 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6pm - Couples for Christ (W, S, K, S) 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	26 12:30pm - LCWC (S)
27 8:45am - Choir Practice (S) 9:30am - Worship 10:30am - Coffee Hour 2pm - Greater Grace (S)	28 10am - Office Open 10am - STAR Foundation 12pm - NL Deadline 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 7pm - Al-Anon (L)	29 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Memor. Initiative -	30 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 6:30pm - DE Zan (S) @ Sanctuary 7pm - New Ark Meet Up (online)	1 10pm - System 4 Cleaning 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 5:30pm - Drama Kids (S)	2 10am - Office Open 1pm - NEC/FH Hospitality (W) 8:30pm - Newark OA (L)	3 12:30pm - LCWC (S)