

Newtown United Methodist Church

March 2026 Newsletter



Note from the Pastor's Desk

Dear NUMC Family,

Most of us have had the experience of walking into a place, sometimes a church, sometimes another gathering, where something felt alive almost immediately. It was not necessarily loud or dramatic. The building may not have been new. Yet there was a quiet sense of life in the air: a shared attentiveness, a warmth that felt deeper than friendliness, a sense that something meaningful was unfolding.



It makes us wonder what gives a place its soul.

Is it the architecture? The music? The programs? The history? Those things matter, of course. They shape our experience. But they are not, in themselves, the source of life.

During Lent, we are invited to examine our own souls, to notice what feels vibrant and what may have grown quiet, what draws us closer to God and what distracts us. In that same spirit of reflection, it is worth asking what gives life to a congregation.

Perhaps the soul of a church is not found in activity alone, but in attentiveness. Not in perfection, but in participation. Not in one voice carrying the song, but in many hearts engaged in prayer, service, generosity, and care. When a congregation shares in its calling, when many people carry pieces of the flame, something steady and sacred begins to grow.

The soul of a church is not something that can be manufactured or forced. It is nurtured over time. It is strengthened by prayer. It is deepened by kindness. It is sustained when people show up not only to attend, but to participate in the life we share.

In these weeks of Lent, as we tend to our own hearts, may we also tend the life we share together. As winter gives way to spring, may we ask God to renew in us a spirit of attentiveness and shared devotion. And may the quiet work of this season strengthen the soul of our congregation in ways that will continue to unfold long after Easter morning.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Rodney

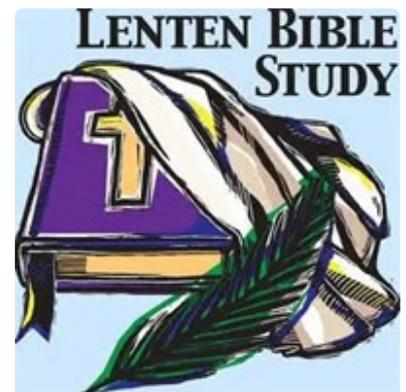
Bible Study

Lenten Bible Study: The Inner Work of the Cross

Join us for a four-week Lenten Bible study exploring the deeper spiritual work of the season. Together, we will reflect on how Lent invites us into honesty, humility, and transformation as we prepare our hearts for Easter.

We will meet on the following Tuesdays: March 3, March 10, March 24, and March 31 at 10:00 a.m.

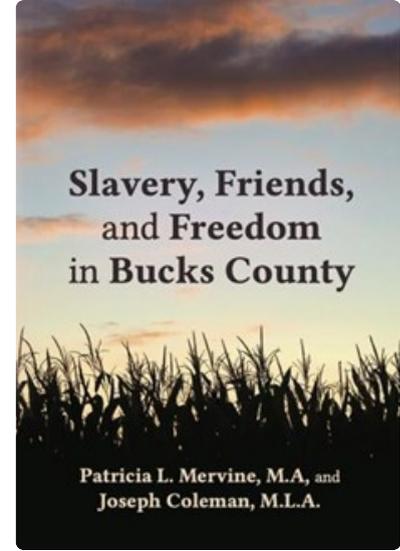
Whether you have been part of our recent studies or are joining for the first time, you are warmly welcome. Lent is not only about giving something up, it is about allowing Christ to shape something new within us.



Slavery, Friends, and Freedom in Bucks County

Presentation description: In researching their new book, "Slavery, Friends, and Freedom in Bucks County," authors Pat Mervine and Joe Coleman have uncovered dozens of untold stories about Bucks County people and places involved with the Underground Railroad. They have been able to link Bucks County to daring escapes, challenges to the Fugitive Slave Act, and even an infamous Supreme Court decision, all of which made national headlines. The stories Pat will share will take you back to the time when slavery and bounty-hunting were legal, and when people of both races found the courage, compassion, and conviction needed to make Bucks County a safe haven and Pennsylvania a free state. The book, "Slavery, Friends, and Freedom in Bucks County," will be

available for purchase; the full purchase price of \$30 goes to the African American Museum of Bucks County's Capital Campaign. Bio: Pat Mervine enjoyed a 30-year career as a speech/language pathologist and assistive technology consultant in Bucks County schools. For her second act, Pat has become immersed in researching local history. Her first book on local history, "Boone Farm: Its People and Place in Middletown History," tells the stories of the twenty-one owners of the Boone Farm, a 1716 stone farmhouse on the banks of Core Creek. That property is soon to be the permanent home of the African American Museum of Bucks County. Both "Boone Farm" and "Slavery, Friends, and Freedom in Bucks County" are Pat's gifts to the African American Museum of Bucks County, a project she believes in with whole heart and soul.



Start time of the presentation: 11 am, **length of presentation:** – 30 minutes including a Q & A session.

Immediately after the presentation, we will be having a soup and salad lunch. Everyone is welcome. There is a sign up sheet in the gallery.

Book display: we will have a small table to display the book. Copies of your book will be available for purchase.

Coat Drive

Coats Drive for Methodist Services: Children and Teenagers

Methodist Services reached out to the church with an urgent need for new coats for the children and teenagers that participate in their various programs. We are happy to report with the congregation support we had 108 coats that were delivered to their office on February 27. Thanks to all for contributing to this project. This was a team effort and a fun one. With the winter weather we have been having, it was great way to show our support to this effort. We wouldn't have been able to get it done without your help. Thanks again for all your support.



2026 Coat Drive



Easter Baskets

This year, the Outreach Committee is providing Easter baskets for local children whose families are in need. These Easter baskets for children up to the age of 12 will ensure they have treats for

Easter and give them and their families smiles. You will be able to find the empty baskets with instructions in the Gallery. Please take one, fill it, and return it to church no later than Sunday March 29. Some suggestions for filling the baskets are candy, small stuffed animals, small toys and games, books, toothbrush and toothpaste, combs, socks, hats, or anything else you choose to include! If you have any questions please call the church office at 215-968-2662.



March Mission of the Month



Mission of the Month

The Mission of the Month (Advance) for March is Heifer International. Due to the weather in the month of January, the committee decided to make Heifer International the Mission of the month for March, so we can continue to support this worthy

charity. The organization works with communities around the world to end hunger and poverty, and care for the earth. It links communities and helps bring sustainable agriculture and commerce to areas with a long history of poverty. It gives animals to families for food and reliable income, as products like milk, eggs, and honey can be traded or sold at markets. When many families gain this new sustainable income, it brings new opportunities for building schools, creating agricultural cooperatives, forming community savings, and funding small businesses. Our financial support can give hungry families the training it takes to feed themselves. It can give a young child the opportunity to have an education. Together, working with Heifer International, we can change the world – one family, one community at a time.

You can use the blue envelopes located in the pews in the Sanctuary and put them in the offering plate, or you can send a check to Newtown United Methodist Church, 35 Liberty Street, Newtown, PA 18940. Please mark your check or envelope "Advance for March."

Newtown UMC Women's Retreat! April 17- 19

2026 Newtown Women's Retreat: True Blue

Ladies, how would you like to get away for a weekend and relax in your blue jeans, bask under the blue sky, and walk along the blue ocean? We will be using the Ocean Grove seaside as a backdrop to this year's retreat theme, "True Blue." The phrase true blue comes from the middle ages, when artisans in Coventry, England dyed material blue in such a way that its color remained steadfast and true, despite washing. Through Bible study, fellowship, and prayer, we will reconnect to the steadfast love of God, and strengthen our faith so we can remain true to who we want to be, come washing, wearing, or whatever!

On hand to lead the Friday night and Saturday portions of the retreat is Rev. Dorry Newcomer, now pastor at Jarretstown UMC in Dresher, PA. Dorry was pastor of Newtown UMC from 2014 to 2018. She hopes the retreat will help foster faith in God that never fades!



. Cost: Per person, \$200 for shared bath; \$250 for private bath. This covers two nights lodging, continental breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, dinner Saturday, and all retreat materials. The registration deadline is **April 1, 2026** Registration forms are available on the table in the gallery.

Caring for Friends

Caring for Friends will not meet again until April 15th @ 9:00 a.m. Caring for Friends makes meals for homebound families in and around the Philadelphia area.

March Schedule



Ushers and Greeters

Ushers for March: Brian & Julie Foster

Greeters:

March 1- Dave & Kathy Mershon

March 8- Nora & Randy Schenk

March 15- Pam Rook & Kay Lawrence

March 22- Dan & Debbie Boltner

March 29-Donald & Susan Smith



Finance Stewards & Communion Stewards

Finance Stewards: Kevin Burd & Cliff Hixson

Communion Steward: Pat King

Lay Readers

March 1- Cami Haneman

March 8- Gerry Hixson

March 15- Pat King

March 22- Pancakes

March 29-Monica Flint





Fellowship Time

March 1-Karen Schoener

March 8-Sandy He

March 15-Barb Rabberman & Dottie Detwiler

March 22- Pancakes

March 29-

Circle of Concern

Faith and fellowship during the day! The Circle of Concern will hold its first gathering of the new year on Monday March 16th , at 9:30 a.m., in the library. We are a circle of women of all ages who gather for prayer, fellowship, and time to learn about United Methodist Women around our country and around our world. If you would like to find out how you can make a difference in your life and in the lives of others, come join us! We usually meet on the third Monday of the month. For more information please call the church office.

2026 Easter flowers

This Easter we will be decorating the sanctuary with a limited number of Lilies. The funds collected for this Easter garden will benefit the ministries of our church. Your dedication will appear in the Bulletin on Easter Sunday, you may take one after the service, the flowers that are left will be planted around our church.

_____at \$15.00 each plant

(number of plants)

IN HONOR OF: _____

IN MEMORY OF: _____

GIVEN BY: _____

PLEASE MAIL THIS FORM & PAYMENT PAYABLE TO:

Newtown United Methodist Church

Attention: Kathy Mershon

35 Liberty Street

Newtown, PA 18940

Phone: 215-968-2662

The deadline to put your dedication in the

bulletin is Sunday March 29, 2026



Easter Meals

For over 25 years we have been helping families in need buy food so they can have an Easter dinner. There are many families who are struggling, and we can help!

Retired Newtown Police Chief Martin Duffy has been our contact for these families since we first started collecting the food, and he continues to do this.

We have had donations from the United Methodist Men and the United Methodist Women organizations to buy Giant gift cards for these families. Chief Duffy will make sure the families receive the gift cards.

If anyone else in the congregation would like to help these families in need, please either buy a Giant food gift card or write a check to Newtown United Methodist Church with "Easter Meals" written on the check. You can mail the check to Newtown United Methodist Church, 35 Liberty Street, Newtown, PA 18940, ATTN: Treasurer, or you can drop off a check in the church office. Please make sure all donations are in no later than Sunday, March 29.



This Month's Birthdays!

March Birthdays!

3/9-Dave Scurlock

3/13-Lee Marvel

3/18-Stephanie Malachowski

3/19-Jay Swerk

3/20-Ana Olmos

3/26-Nancy Matthews

3/27-Pierce Rolli

3/30-Michelle Irving

3/31-Christian Boltner



Newtown United Methodist Church



35 Liberty Street

Newtown, PA 18940

Rev. Rodney Brailsford, Pastor

Phone 215-968-2662

Office Hours: Mon. - Thurs. 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

Email: numc1@verizon.net

Visit us on the web at www.newtownumc.com