



Newtown United Methodist Church

January 2026 Newsletter



OPEN HEARTS.

OPEN MINDS.

OPEN DOORS.

Note from the Pastor's Desk

Dear NUMC Family,
January often arrives more quietly than we expect. After the celebration of Christmas, the turning of the calendar does not always come with clarity or momentum. Instead, it invites us into something simpler and more honest: a return to the ordinary pattern of faith, community, and care.

As we begin this new year together, I find myself less interested in rushing ahead and more mindful of who we already are as a church family. The past weeks have reminded us that life holds both joy and sorrow, celebration, and loss. In moments like these, the church is not defined by activity or ambition, but by presence, by showing up for one another, by praying when words are few, and by trusting that God is at work even in quiet seasons.

January is a good time to tend what has already been planted among us. It is a time to strengthen the bonds that hold us together through worship, conversation, shared meals, and simple acts of



kindness. These are not small things. They are the steady practices that form us as the Body of Christ and carry us through the year ahead.

I hope this month feels like an invitation rather than a demand. An invitation to breathe deeply. An invitation to return to worship. An invitation to listen for God's voice in familiar places. An invitation to care for one another with patience and grace.

When we do this well; when we stay rooted in prayer, generosity, and compassion, something beautiful happens over time. **When we care well for one another, we become the kind of church others hope to find.** Growth, in its truest sense, flows from a community that is healthy, faithful, and grounded in love.

There will be time in the months ahead to look outward, to try new things, and to dream together about the future. For now, January gives us permission to begin the year by simply being present to one another and to God.

Thank you for the many ways you continue to show care, faithfulness, and quiet strength. I am grateful to walk this journey with you and look forward to all that God will unfold among us in the year ahead.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Rodney

Bible Study

Looking Ahead: Interfaith Study Series

Later in January, we will be offering a short interfaith study exploring **Hinduism, Buddhism, Islam, and Christianity.**

This study invites us to deepen our Christian faith by learning how people of different traditions seek meaning, devotion, and truth, and by reflecting on how Christianity speaks clearly and faithfully into those shared human longings.

As part of the study, we hope to include **guided site visits** to places of worship, such as the **BAPS Swaminarayan Akshardham in New Jersey**, as schedules and opportunities allow.

The study will be held at **10:00 AM**, with the exact day to be announced soon.



January Mission of the Month



Mission of the Month

The Mission of the Month (Advance) for January is Heifer International. 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.

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING

SOUPER BOWL OF CARING Souperbowl of Caring Since 1990, young people have been leading the charge and inspiring others to collect dollars and food weeks leading up to the Big Game. Teaming up with local partners, these groups give 100% of donations to local charities, changing the nation's largest weekend of football into the largest weekend of caring. On February 8th you can donate canned goods or money to the Penns Park UMC Food Pantry.



2026 Offering Envelopes

The 2026 Offering envelopes are ready to pick up in the gallery. Please pick up your envelopes and maybe your friend or neighbors also! Mailing them would be expensive. We appreciate you help.



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 Jarrettown 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!

A weekend of sharing and fellowship! Get Ready for Our Annual Women's Retreat! Join us for a peaceful weekend by the sea. Through self refecction, small group activities, and fellowship we will
WHAT TO EXPECT: A great weekend and a lot of fun! The retreat will begin on Friday evening with check-in between 6:30 and 7:30. Saturday morning there will be a program. After lunch, you'll have the afternoon free to do crafts, walk the beach, explore the quaint village of Ocean Grove, or just take a nap! We will have dinner as a group, then enjoy an evening of interactive programming. On

Sunday morning, we have worship together with communion before heading home. WHO'S INVITED: This retreat is being planned for adult women of all ages from our church and their friends. Any woman who would like to some spiritual refreshment is welcome! ABOUT OCEAN GROVE: Known as "God's Square Mile at the Jersey Shore", Ocean Grove is just south of Asbury Park, roughly one hour from Newtown. It is a Methodist vacation and retreat community whose mission is to "provide opportunities for spiritual growth, birth, and renewal in a Christian seaside setting." Lodging: There are three first floor, handicapped accessible rooms. Most rooms are on the second and third floors. A limited number of 2nd and 3rd floor rooms have their own bath only 5. All rooms are double occupancy. Cost: Per person, \$150 for shared bath; \$175 for private bath. This covers two nights lodging, continental breakfast on Saturday and Sunday, dinner Saturday, and all retreat materials. The registration deadline is February 22nd 2026 Registration forms are available on the table in the gallery.

Caring for Friends

Caring for Friends will meet again on Wednesday, January 21st at 9:00 a.m.



January Schedule



Ushers and Greeters

Ushers for January: Eric Johnson, Joe & Judi Swerk

Greeters:

January 4-Jim & Helene Mershon

January 11- Nora & Randy Schenk

January 18-Pam Rook & Kay Lawrence

January 25-Dan & Debbie Boltner

Finance Stewards & Communion Stewards

Finance Stewards: Karen Schoener & Dixie Scurlock

Communion Steward: Pat King

Lay Readers

January 4-Janet Johnson

January 11- Gerry Hixson



Fellowship Time

January 4-Kathy Mershon

January 11-Dottie Detwiler & Barbara Rabberman

January 18-

January 25-Cheryl Burd

2026 Flower Chart

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The new flower chart is posted. Please consider donating altar flowers, in memory of a loved one or in honor of someone or for a special occasion. The cost is \$35.00. If you have any questions please call Kathy in the church office.

Circle of Concern

Faith and fellowship during the day! The Circle of Concern will hold its first gathering of the new year on Monday, January 19, 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.

This Month's Birthdays!

January Birthdays!

1/1-Jeremy Lugg

1/3-Robert Welsh

1/9-Susan Smith

1/11-Walt Wahl

1/12-Sue Bloomfield

1/12-Janet Johnson

1/13-Carolyn Brown

1/15-Debbie Boltner
1/18-Dave Mershon Sr.
1/21-Kevin Sweeney
1/24-Pastor Rodney
1/19-Helene Tomlinson



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