



NEWTOWN SQUARE
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH

NSPC Connections

3600 GOSHEN ROAD
NEWTOWN SQUARE, PA 19073
OFFICE: 610.356.8063
WWW.NEWTOWNSQUAREPRES.ORG
REV. DR. JEANNE THOMAS—PASTOR

JANUARY 2024

From Your Pastor

Dear Friends,

"When the wise men saw the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy." They looked for the sign "in the East" and drew near to Christ as the star led them to a stable in Bethlehem.

It is hard to put ourselves in the place of the magi. For when it comes down to it, we walk a fragile line between our desire to be open to God's leading, yet know exactly where we will be an hour from now. A Calvin and Hobbes cartoon captures this tension well. Calvin, the sophisticated mixture of adult and child embodied in a hyperactive six-year-old, is reading a book and looks disgusted.

He says to his imaginary friend Hobbes, "You know, the *more* you know, the harder it is to take action. Once you become informed, you start seeing complexities and shades of gray. You realize that nothing is as clear and simple as it first appears. Ultimately, knowledge is paralyzing."

Calvin then throws the book away and says, "Being a man of action, I can't afford to take that risk."

That's how we often feel when new possibilities or insights are presented to us. And yet, that's exactly what God asks of each of us...to look for signs of God's presence beside us and before us as we begin this new year.

While the good news of great joy is still ringing in our ears, there is a star on the horizon, guiding you and me, our church, and our world. And even though we may not know exactly where it is leading us, any more than the magi did, what we do know is this: the same God who led these wise men leads US.

So let's keep searching for signs; let's keep drawing near to the God who longs to draw near to us. Let's keep looking for those little epiphanies that will change us, not just individually, but as a body of Christ that longs to be faithful disciples.



January Sermons

12/31 First Sunday of Christmas
Matthew 2:1-12
"Going Home by Another Way"

"Listening to God" Sermon Series for the Month of January

1/7 Epiphany
Luke 2:41-52
"Under Construction"
Reading of the Necrology
Communion



1/14 2nd Sunday after Epiphany
Luke 3:15-17, 21-22
"Empowered by God"

1/21 3rd Sunday after Epiphany
1 Samuel 3:1-10, 15-20
"Listening to God"

1/28 4th Sunday after Epiphany
Matthew 4:12-22
"The Kingdom of God Is... Here!"

**Annual Meeting and Lunch
Immediately After Worship**

**Worship Service 10:00 AM
Join Us!**

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

Star of wonder, star of night
Star with royal beauty bright
Westward leading, *still* proceeding
Guide us to thy perfect Light.

With anticipation and blessings as we enter the New Year,
Jeanne

*"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?"
~ Isaiah 43:19*



SAVE THE DATE: January 28, 2024 Annual Meeting of the Congregation

Following worship on January 28, 2024, there will be an annual meeting of the congregation in the Gathering Room. We will enjoy lunch and fellowship together before hearing a recap of 2023! More details to follow in a bulletin insert in early January.

Come and hear the highlights of 2023 and the goals and objectives for 2024.

***We are all a part of what makes this congregation
such a wonderful community of faith!***

January Pastor's Bible Study: "Hearing God" Please join us on Wednesdays at 10:30 AM in the conference room

♦ January 10

Luke 3:15-22 "Empowered by God"

(how our baptism empowers us to be disciples)

♦ January 17

1 Samuel 3:1-20 "Listening to God"

♦ January 24

**Matthew 4:12-24 "The Kingdom of God
is...Here!"**

♦ January 31

Mark 1:29-39 "Looking for God"



We remember our members who are now with our Lord and offer prayers for their families:

01/03/2023 Gene Bentley

04/17/2023 Peter Burgess

05/27/2023 Carol McNeill



10/06/2023 Lois Bortle

10/10/2023 John Wellington

11/10/2023 William Huey

The necrology will be read during worship on January 7, 2023.

FINANCE UPDATE

Dear Friends,

During worship on December 17, the NSPC Finance Committee reported that there is a projected deficit of over \$20,000 in the 2024 operating budget, requiring close attention and remediation.

With 85 congregants in attendance, everyone was asked to financially support NSPC in addressing this budget shortfall, if able. All were reminded that only through the faithful support of our church family can NSPC continue to offer the quality of worship, ministry and mission, education, music, and youth programming it does currently, which makes NSPC a thriving place of worship. Our members only have their collective faith and one another as a resource for NSPC's Church Family.

During 2023, NSPC lost a number of pledges due to death, changed circumstances, and the travails of ordinary life. This resulted in a significant loss of anticipated income in 2024. While NSPC welcomed new members on Sunday *and many of them have pledged to our 2024 operating budget*, the projected deficit remains and is compounded by increased costs for utilities, maintenance, benefits etc.

In addition, NSPC staff members have foregone compensation increases for far too long, and yet each works diligently to make NSPC a welcoming place of worship. As in the past, our Pastor, the Rev. Jeanne Thomas is foregoing any increase.

Please help us by prayerfully considering further increasing your 2024 pledge OR by making a one-time gift before the end of the 2023 year. Either send a check with "2023 gift" on the memo line or give online by following the prompts on the homepage of our website, www.newtownsquarepres.org. Or reach out to Heather at 610-356-8063 or nspc3600@gmail.com if you need assistance.

We have only one another to fulfill NSPC's financial needs and are hopeful that each member of the church family will step up in this effort.

Thank you.

Rick Weiss, Co-chair of the Finance Committee

Music Ministry

December at NSPC was a busy month indeed!

The Advent season was packed into 3 weeks. The first Advent Sunday was communion with Pastor Nancy. The second advent Sunday was the Christmas cantata "Ring Out, Ye Bells". The sanctuary was filled with great music that morning! I was so pleased with how well the choir sang! Thank you to all the choir members, soloists, and the guest singers for creating such a beautiful morning! Pastor Jeanne's sermon on the 17th, the third Sunday in Advent, leads us to the Christmas Eve Service of Lessons and Carols with our traditional ending with *O Holy Night*, and then *Silent Night* with the candle lighting. It is always my favorite time to see the candles lit in the sanctuary. Thank you to all our talented church members for sharing their talents on Christmas Eve.

The pageant will be wonderful! I am so pleased with all the children and youth at NSPC leading the worship. And so thrilled that the hand chimes will ring *Joy to the World*! I am hoping to have more opportunities to play chimes in the spring! I am hopeful!

The first community concert of the year was on December 10th, a stormy, rainy afternoon. Many community members braved the weather and joined us for a lovely afternoon with holiday and Christmas songs. So much fun! The next concert will be February 4th – Save the date! It is a Saxophone duo with Valentin Kovatev and his wife, Ai-wen. An absolute power couple! Valentin has over 55,000 subscribers across his social media platform!

Happy New Year to you all- see you around!

~Ting Ting
Director of Music



NSPC Friends: Thank you very much for your delicious donations to the Concert reception. All guests enjoyed the reception. We could not have done it without you.



Music Ministry

Community Concert Series

We held our fourth community concert "Holiday Favorites" on Sunday, December 10th at 4:00 PM. The music was both beautiful and festive! We had over 60 attendees come out on the rainy evening to enjoy some music and refreshments. Thank you to all Session members, Deacons, and some members at large for providing food and financial support for the two Community Concerts. Your help was most appreciated.

Stay tuned for the next concert in 2024!







News for: Youth and Family Ministries at NSPC

A Note from Meg:

Throughout the halls on any given Sunday after worship, you might have seen a glimpse of a tiny shepherd, his costume dragging on the floor. Or you might have heard the youth practicing hand chimes. Or, my personal favorite, you might have seen some of our older elementary schoolers and youth in the hallway, calmly partnered and holding hands with one of our preschoolers, preparing to walk into the sanctuary. Whatever you may have glimpsed, pageant rehearsal has been in full swing! The kids of NSPC are ready to tell the important story of Jesus' birth!

The first Sunday of the month, while parent volunteers, Ting Ting, and Javvieveus Stewart stayed back to start our pageant rehearsals, I took 6 members of our Youth Group to Johnsonburg Camp in New Jersey. Johnsonburg is a Presbyterian camp which is endorsed by the Philadelphia Presbytery. This weekend was so special. Our youth were welcomed to Johnsonburg with open arms. The theme of the weekend was "Soul Care," and the leader discussed inviting God into your self-care routines. But there wasn't much "talking," as the weekend had been expertly planned to be very hands-on! Our youth group spent the weekend walking a prayer labyrinth, playing volleyball, going on a hike, riding a zip-line over the trees, trying archery, and worshipping God with other kids, just like them. (Be sure to look on the previous page for pictures of our trip!)

On Saturday night of our retreat, we were at our final "Soul Care" discussion and activity. Our youth group had split up and were either making friendship bracelets on one end of the dining hall or painting with watercolors in the corner. I had chosen a journaling exercise for myself. I sat on a couch in the dining hall, by a fire and tree lit up for Christmas. As I wrote in my journal, I listened as our youth giggled and talked with other kids their own age, about their activities and about Johnsonburg and about God. It is a memory and feeling I will not soon forget!

God is Good!

Meg

Youth and Family Ministries Upcoming Dates

Be a part of planning for youth group and play some Bible games as we explore what matters to us in Youth Group!



- 1/7, 10:15 AM: Back to Basics pt. 1
- 1/14, 10:15 AM: Back to Basics pt. 2
- 1/21, 10 AM: Youth in Worship
- 1/28, 10:15 AM: Topic TBD



Kids in preschool and kindergarten can come to First Friends!

Our first meeting for 2024 is January 7th from 11:15-12 PM! We are going to learn a new song, do a craft and have a DANCE PARTY! Parents are welcome, but not required!



Kids in 1st thru 5th grade can come to Kid's Group!

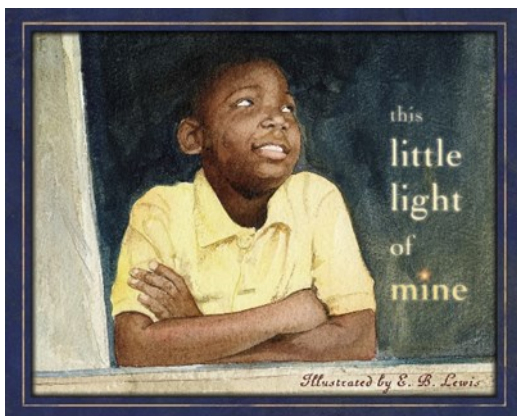
Our next meeting will be on January 14th from 11:15-12 PM! We are going to usher in our year by celebrating EVERYONE's Un-birthday with a cake decorating contest and service project for kids who need help celebrating their *real* birthdays! Please RSVP to Meg by 1/10 to let her know you are coming!



With Jesus' birth in December, the children in Sunday School are now solidly in the New Testament! Here are the plans for January!

- **1/7:** Wise Men (Matthew 2:1-12)
- **1/14:** Jesus' Baptism (Matthew 3:13-17)
- **1/21:** The Disciples (Matthew 4:12-23, 9:9-13, 10:1-4)
- **1/28:** The Lord's Prayer (Matthew 6:5-15)

This past fall, we had 23 children ranging from grades preschool to 4th grade attend Sunday School at Lighthouse Landing! Class sizes averaged about 6 students weekly in our PreK-2 class and 4 students weekly in our 3-5 class. It is so wonderful to see our church kids being busy learners every Sunday! See you in the New Year!



We own a great collection of books about Jesus, available in Meg's office to borrow through our church Lending Library program. Here are some that bring the life of Jesus (and his teachings) to life!

- The Light of the World: The Life of Jesus for Children by Katherine Paterson
- God's Dream by Archbishop Desmond Tutu and Douglas Carlton Abrams
- This Little Light of Mine illustrated by EB Lewis
- My Jesus Story Collection by Archbishop Desmond Tutu

Mission News



Christmas Joy Offering

Thank you to Ginni Condo for organizing the Christmas Joy Offering. NSPC participates in this offering yearly and she did a wonderful job with all the publicity and organization.

Wawa: Thank you to the Wawa volunteers for December: Grant Snyder, Cindy and Kevin Lemaster, Nancy Kermon, Joe Kasuska, Doug and Laurie Lynch, Rich Digby, and Rev. Nancy Holt Timothy



Flip Tops: Our bins, bags and jugs are overflowing, thanks to you. Would anyone be interested in dropping off our NSPC donations to the Ronald McDonald House on Chestnut Street? A driver and passenger are needed in order to have someone stay with the car and someone deliver. The flip tops help pay for the Utility Bills at Ronald McDonald House.

Print Cartridges: There is an orange tub on the Mission Table. Please save your used cartridges for the rebate that Staples offers our church as they are turned in.



Food: Our Food Donation Baskets always need replenishing. Feel free to donate any nonperishable items. If you need a specific idea, perhaps soup for January.

Gemma Christmas: Thank you for your donations to the various mission projects to help Gemma Services. We collected all envelopes for the pre-purchased toys. Thank you.



The toy box is now empty thanks to you. All items were delivered to Gemma by Ginny Berman and Sue Bechtold.



Thank you for continually filling our Cradles to Crayons basket! You are amazing and Cradles to Crayons is very appreciative. Winter coats and clothing are always a need, so please keep our basket in mind as you clean out your closets!

Christmas Turkey Dinners

Thank you all for your donations toward the cost of the 12 turkey dinners and turkey donations. The dinners were delivered on Thursday, December 21st to Garrett's Way for needy families.

This community outreach has been in place now for about 20 years! Newtown Square Presbyterian Church generous members help fund this yearly project, which is a success every year.

Thank you very much to all our delivery drivers and to Bob Bechtold for his thrifty shopping!



The NSPC Christmas Giving Tree

I wanted to take a moment to express our heartfelt thanks for your generous donation of mittens, scarves, gloves, and hats for local kids in need. Your kindness and warmth will make a significant impact in keeping the little ones (and teens!) cozy during the colder months ahead. Our final count of items donated is: 32 scarves, 10 gloves/mittens, and 32 winter hats.

Christmas generosity involves sharing not only material gifts but also compassion, understanding, and a sense of community. The fully decorated Christmas Giving Tree was a beautiful display of how our NSPC members embraced the generous spirit of the Christmas season.

We are truly grateful for your support and caring spirit. Thank you!

~Siobhian Robinson
Giving Tree Chair



NEW: Outback Steakhouse Rise Against Hunger Fundraiser



Dear Friends,

Once again, we will be doing our 7th multi-generational packaging event for Rise Against Hunger (RAH) on March 10th, 2024. **RAH is a global movement to end hunger by empowering communities, nourishing lives, and responding to emergencies.** To date NSPC has packaged in excess of 120,000 meals. **Our goal for this spring is to package another 20,000 meals.**

As this is not a budgeted mission for our church, fundraising is a major part of this event, and we are most fortunate to have an opportunity to partner with OUTBACK STEAK HOUSE in Springfield.

Outback's offer is for NSPC members and friends to pre-purchase a \$25 gift card. **The card can be redeemed at the Springfield Outback Steakhouse from January 1-January 28, 2024.** For every card redeemed, the Springfield Outback will only charge us food costs for the item ordered, roughly between 40-50%. This is a very generous offer.



The card can be redeemed for one of the following meals.

- Victoria's Barrel-Cut Filet Mignon 6 oz.
- Outback Center-Cut Sirloin 11 oz.
- Perfectly Grilled Salmon
- Alice Springs Chicken

This will include 2 sides (10 to choose from) and an alcohol-free beverage (with free refills).

NO SUBSTITUTIONS

The cards will be sold through January 20th at the church. Feel free to take an order form and ask friends and family to purchase them.

*The card does not cover the tip.

*It can be used for dine-in or curbside pickup.

Location: Outback Steak House
Olde Sproul Shopping Village
1118 Baltimore Pike
Springfield, Pa. 19064

(Between the 2 Targets on Baltimore Pike in Springfield, close to the Springfield Mall)

This Outback is rated 4.2 out of 5 on Google. They are #1 in the Tri-State Area. The Bechtolds and the Corles recently had dinner at the Springfield Outback. We can personally vouch for the excellent food, service, and cleanliness of the restaurant.



BUILDING & GROUNDS

An Update from your Building and Grounds Commission

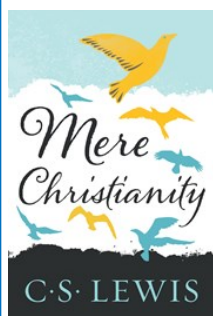


Let There Be Light: We are excited to announce the fruition of years of planning. As you know, as part of the remodeling process, the township required that we install a walking path from our parking lot to the corner. Since the previous wiring for our sign failed, B&G had the forethought to place PVC piping under the new walkway as part of the walking path installation. For a period of two years, we struggled to find the funding for the wiring, lighting, and contractor fees.

B&G was shocked a few months ago when a member came forward and donated the funds for the entire project. On behalf of the church and B&G we are most grateful for this family's generosity.

Two New AEDs: A sincere "thank you" to our Presbyterian Women and the NSPC Preschool who each donated a new AED for our facility. One is now located partway up the ramp in our Gathering Room and the other outside the Preschool Office in the education wing. Our church now has four AEDs available in case of emergency. The other two are located in the Social Hall and across the hall from Jeanne's office.





Men's Bible Fellowship

This newly named group will be meeting ***every other Tuesday morning at 8 AM***.
We will meet on January 2nd, 16th, and 30th.

The current study will be the book, Mere Christianity by C. S. Lewis.

All are welcome...no advanced degree in theology needed...
just know this will be a lively and enlightening discussion!

Offering Envelopes



2024 Offering Envelopes

Our 2024 offering envelopes have arrived!
If you regularly receive envelopes or are a new member,
please pick them up in the Narthex.



Sign-ups for weekly chancel flowers and fellowship hour for 2024 are available.
Please consider signing up for one of these wonderful missions.

You can sign up using this link: https://www.signupgenius.com/go/20F0949AFA629A5FE3-46157576-2024# /
or contact Heather at nspc3600@gmail.com to signup for a date. Thank you!

WEEKLY FLOWERS FOR THE CHANCEL:



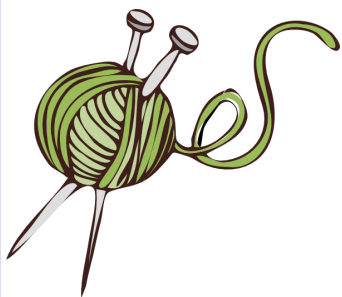
The flower arrangement will be delivered from the Media Florist and placed on the Chancel prior to Worship. The cost for donating the flowers for one Sunday is \$20. Please make all checks out to NSPC and write "Chancel Flowers" in the memo section. You are welcome to take the flowers home with you or donate them to someone in our congregation who is feeling under the weather. The Delivery Deacon will ask you.



FELLOWSHIP HOUR COFFEE/REFRESHMENTS IN THE GATHERING ROOM:

Following Worship, coffee, cold beverages and light snacks are provided in the Gathering Room. This is a short but very worthwhile activity as NSPC friends gather to greet each other and have friendly conversation. Hosts can share the duty and provide this time of refreshment.

Thank you from the Deacons of NSPC!



Knitting

Our knitting group will meet January 8th at 10 AM in the Gathering Room. Anyone who would like to join us is most welcome. In the past, we have made scarves, hats and small baby blankets. Please don't hesitate to join us even if you are a bit out of practice, we have our "in house master knitter" Joey Yocum, who will help. We also have yarn for you to work with. Come and check us out! If you have any questions please contact me: Marg MacDonald 610 353-8297



Women's Ministry

Women's Christmas Luncheon

On a chilly Thursday in December, 25 ladies from our church gathered for a Heavenly Ham Box Lunch in the Gathering Space. It was a big success. Everyone who attended thoroughly enjoyed each other's company. A gift swap added laughs to the gathering as some kept a gift and some stole a gift. Such fun for all. A devotion was offered highlighting the 12 Days of Christmas Song with the original and the Christian version. Our benediction was a lovely prayer which was first offered several years ago by a dear member, Jane Williams. We lost Jane several years ago but her legacy of being a strong Christian woman lives on.





Women's Ministry

January Women's Meetings

All women are welcome.

Join us for fellowship, and personal and spiritual growth.



Presbyterian Women's Bible Study

Date — Monday, January 8

Time — 1:00 PM

Location — Gathering Room

Lesson 4—"Mary & Martha Encounter Jesus"

Study Leader — Dolores Hart

Hostess—Lois Peck

Thank you to everyone involved with the Women's Tea from set up, decorations, clean up, hosting, and the delicious food donations. Everyone attending had a great time and enjoyed the many delicious sandwiches, cookies, and punch.





January Birthdays

1/5 — Kristy Ebersole

1/6 — Kim Hewes

1/8 — Cole Robinson

1/8 — Courtney Seltzer

1/11 — Jim McCarry

1/12 — Bernice Eder

1/12 — Kristina Schultz

1/12 — Sean Smitheman

1/14 — Lois Ashman

1/14 — Tami Kliefoth

1/14 — Beth McCarry

1/19 — Scott Hess

1/22 — Pat Deluca

1/24 — Collins Vokhiwa

1/24 — Riley Rustam

1/27 — Francis O'Donnell, Jr.

1/28 — Judy Niggeman

1/29 — Jenna Baradic

1/30 — Ginny Berman

1/30 — Lynne Corle

1/31 — Siobhian Robinson

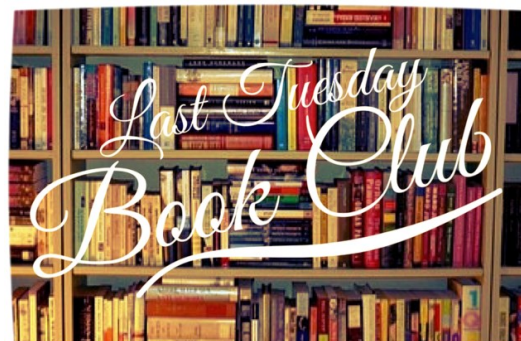
The Last Tuesday Book Club

Our next *Last Tuesday Book Club* will take place on January 30th at 1:00 PM. Jean Bowen will be leading our discussion of the Pulitzer Prize novel So Big by Edna Ferber.

Our book club meets in NSPC's Conference Room.

Feel free to join us each month or try us out for just one meeting because the title intrigues you. New members are always welcome and feel free to bring a friend.

For more information, contact Lynne Corle at (610-563-5355) or Lcorle217@gmail.com



Happy Reading!

January 30, 2024	Jean Bowen	<u>So Big: A Novel</u> By Edna Ferber
February 27, 2024	Carol Guest	<u>Know My Name</u> By Chanel Miller
May 28, 2024	Jan Gauger	<u>Things I Wish I Told My Mother</u> by Susan Patterson



January

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 NEW YEAR'S DAY	2	3	4 6 pm AA	5	6
7 10 am Worship/SS 11 am Fellowship 11:15 am First Friends	8 10 am Knitting for Peace 1 pm Women's Bible Study	9	10 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study 7 pm Deacons	11 6 pm AA	12	13
14 10 am Worship/SS 11 am Fellowship 11:15 am Kids' Group	15 MLK Day 10 am Knitting for Peace	16	17 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study 7 pm Session	18 6 pm AA	19	20
21 10 am Worship/SS 11 am Fellowship	22 10 am Knitting for Peace	23	24 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study	25 6 pm AA	26	27
28 10 am Worship/SS 11 a m Annual Mtg & Luncheon	29 10 am Knitting for Peace	30 1 pm Last Tuesday Book Club	31 10:30 am Pastor's Bible Study			

In Ministry Together at Newtown Square Presbyterian Church:

Pastor The Rev. Dr. Jeanne Thomas
 Parish Associate The Rev. Dr. Nancy Holt Timothy
 Director of Music..... Ting Ting Wong
 Director of Youth & Family Ministry Meg Hess
 Church Office Manager Heather Impriano
 Sunday School Teachers..... Paige Fiore & Brad Kohlhepp
 Nursery Attendant..... Jeannette Giovanetti
 Co-Directors, Newtown Square Presbyterian Church Preschool Jane Fioravanti & Meghan Kazanjian
 Clerk of Session Buff Biddle
 President, Board of Trustees..... Jim Shea
 Treasurer Dave Sampson
 Head Usher..... Grant Snyder
 The Sacristy Guild of St. Martha..... Carol Guest
 Presbyterian Women Ginny Berman

Plus... all the members of NSPC**SESSION/BOARD OF TRUSTEES**

Moderator: The Rev. Dr. Jeanne Thomas

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Sue Bechtold	Rebecca DiPersia	Ed Arraya
Lynne Corle	Joe Falcon	Buff Biddle
Siobhian Robinson	Laurie Lynch	Jane Fioravanti
Debbie Weiss	Jim Shea	Joe Marchesani

BOARD OF DEACONS

Moderator: Marg MacDonald

<u>Class of 2024</u>	<u>Class of 2025</u>	<u>Class of 2026</u>
Nicolle Arraya	Betsy Bender	Kathy Donovan
Sara DiGirolamo	Rich Digby	Margie Garwood
Jennifer Gries	Robbyn Marchesani	Lauren Jacobs
Debbie Villano	Barbara Nicolardi	Marg MacDonald

Church Contact Information:

Church Office and Study Phone.....610-356-8063
 Rev. Thomas (cell)610-368-1637
 Ting Ting Wong (cell):412-608-5588
 Meg Hess (cell):508-843-0008
 Rev. Thomas (email):jeannethomas@comcast.net
 Ting Ting Wong (email):ttwong827@gmail.com
 Meg Hess (email):NSPCyouth@gmail.com
 Church Email:nspc3600@gmail.com