



*THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS*  
*May 2015*

*North Madison Congregational Church*  
*1271 Durham Road*  
*Madison, CT 06443*

From Pastor Jim . . .

*You Are the Answer to a Prayer*

The Spirit has moved powerfully through our faith community recently judging from your feedback about Holy Week and Easter worship services, our Vessels for God Lent theme, and GFWP.

In fact, the Vessels for God theme segued seamlessly into our GFWP (Getting Focused with Purpose) initiative. I am delighted at how the GFWP initiative has firmly taken hold. During our third GFWP all-congregation event on April 19 we focused our attention externally: Violence, Environment, Inequalities, Discrimination and Health. Discussion was lively. Minds and hearts were engaged. New possibilities arose for particular ways God is Calling us to serve our community.

Through the GFWP process we are discerning our particular features collectively as a Vessel for God in living into our mission of "seeking to do justice, to love kindness and to walk together humbly with our God."

Put another way - in what particular way is God calling you and me to be the answer to another person's (or others') prayers?

I'm reminded of our Easter Sunday scripture from John 20 where Mary Magdalene arrives at the tomb in the dark of that first Easter morning only to find it empty. The risen Jesus is standing by her but she doesn't recognize him until he calls her name, "Mary!" He entrusts her with a message to her fellow disciples who were hiding in anxiety and fear, feeling lost in light of their master's death. They were praying for God to show them the way forward: What do we do now? Did Jesus abandon us? How do we protect ourselves from those who are hunting us down? Do we continue Jesus' work? How? Where?

Knowing their state, Jesus entrusts Mary with a life-changing task, "Go to my brothers and tell them, 'I ascend to my Father and your Father, my God and your God.'" That is, I am alive! Death does not have the last word. Love is stronger than fear!

She was the answer to the prayer of those "brothers."

Can you imagine yourself as the answer to someone's prayer? Surely you are. To someone somewhere. That's how God works - how God brings "dead" people back to life - how God brings hope to hopeless situations. God answers prayer through you and me.

Imagine yourself as the answer to someone's prayer. How might that be? Sometimes that answer is hidden inside you - the real 'you' that you hide. The 'you' someone near desperately needs to see and to experience and to connect with. Sometimes you have to leave something behind to be that answer that Jesus wants you to be. Mary had to leave behind the nature of her old relationship with Jesus.

When we respond to Christ then he can answer prayers through us.

Who needs you to be the answer to their prayer?

## Included in this Newsletter:

### Getting Focused with Purpose Christian Education

Children's Church – Teachers Needed - Junior Youth Group – Senior Youth Group –  
SYG Mission Trip - Confirmation Sunday – Silver Lake Summer Camp

### Fund Raisers

NMCC Virtual Tag Sale

### Get Involved / Stay Connected

New Member Sunday - Annual Consociation Choir Festival – Fire in the Kitchen Concert –  
News from the Generosity Team – Pot Luck Dinner - Raise the Roof - Spring Wildflower Hike –  
New Haven East Consociation Annual Meeting - To Our Parents of Younger Children –  
Graduates - Yoga – Caring Ministries Looking for Yard Clean Up Help - New Art Exhibit

### In the News and Noteworthy

Sue Frankenbach – Morgan Werth – Fire in the Kitchen

## - Getting Focused with Purpose (GFWP) -



*GFWP is a process designed to help us effectively link the internal with the external by matching the gifts/talents of NMCC with the needs of the wider community. Or, how do you as a vessel of God use your gifts to become to a vessel for God in our community?*

After worship on April 19<sup>th</sup>, 40 of us enjoyed fellowship over lunch and enthusiastically participated in the third GFWP event. This time we examined ways in which we could be **BRAVE** in living up to our historical Mission Statement (We are a community seeking to do justice, to love kindness, and walk together humbly with our God).

Guided by members of the Discovery and Engagement Teams, we transcribed our ideas in five groups as to how to be **BRAVE** in doing justice, loving kindness, and walking humbly in five different areas of **NEED** in our local, state, country and world communities. The Discovery Team prompted us with a booklet that listed data and concerns under the topics of:

- INEQUALITIES
- VIOLENCE
- HEALTH
- DISCRIMINATION
- ENVIRONMENT

The discussions were active, and the passion evident for many of the ideas presented. Soon, we hope to “marry” our gifts and passions with the needs of our communities. Many common areas are beginning to emerge, and the entire GFWP process is bearing rich fruit.

The easel pages we generated on Sunday are now posted in Fellowship Hall for your review. If you have additional ideas or were unable to participate in the 3<sup>rd</sup> GFWP activity, you are invited to pick up one of the markers and add your thoughts. After a couple weeks our works will be transcribed and available for distribution. Note: The transcriptions of the second GFWP on congregational engagement were distributed at the April 19<sup>th</sup> meeting and are available by contacting the office. The GFWP Initiative will be reviewed at the Annual Meeting on May 17<sup>th</sup>, along with an updated timeline for the next activities. Please plan to attend and to share your gifts and passions as we progress towards a fall implementation.

## - Children and Youth Ministries -



### **Children's Church** *preschool - 8th grade*

Thanks to the many volunteer teachers, our children are greeted with love, care and loads of fun filled Sundays when they enter a Children's Church classroom. **Special thanks go to our volunteer teachers who just finished working with our children: Karen Murphy, Missy Belcourt, Dan Mallon, and Rene Chin, along with teen helpers Ryan Murphy, Erica Mallon, Gen Garceau, Hayley Murphy, and Elizabeth McCann.** We are currently running three classrooms: preschool -first grade, 2<sup>nd</sup>-4<sup>th</sup> grade, and 5<sup>th</sup>-8<sup>th</sup> grade.

### Current Rotation: Ranch House Kids

**April 12- June 7**

**May 25** - Memorial Day weekend - NO Children's Church downstairs. Please enjoy worshiping with your family during our Sunday services.

Our children continue to experience **Communion** with the entire congregation as an extended church family and on these Sundays there will be no Children's Message.

The talents of our congregation continue to be highlighted during our **Children's Message** portion of our worship service and we are appreciative of the talent so many volunteers are bringing to our children! **Thanks go to Kristin Polisky, Peter Meier, Elizabeth McCann, Erica Mallon, Vance Taylor, Sanna Stanley, and Heather Crawford for conducting Children's Messages!**

Please email either Rene Chin at [2bachin@comcast.net](mailto:2bachin@comcast.net) or Karen Murphy at [timmurphy6050@att.net](mailto:timmurphy6050@att.net) to ask questions, receive emails **or VOLUNTEER to help with our lovely group of children.**



**Teachers Needed for Children's Church:** Volunteering with children calling your name? We're looking for teachers to help with our next rotation in Children's Church. Please contact Rene Chin at [02bachin@comcast.net](mailto:02bachin@comcast.net) or Karen Murphy at [timmurphy6050@att.net](mailto:timmurphy6050@att.net) to teach, lead a Children's Message, help with Junior Youth Group, join the Board of Christian Education or help in other ways.



**Junior Youth Group** 7<sup>th</sup> - 8<sup>th</sup> graders: Our next dates to fellowship together are: **March 20**: sadly this gathering was canceled due to a random snow storm. Not a surprise after the winter we had!

**April 24-26** Mission Trip to Boston, MA. Details of our experience in the next newsletter. hint: sandwiches, giggles, lots of walking, personal stories of strength from recipients of our work with City Mission of Boston and serving the homeless...

Please email either Rene Chin at [2bachin@comcast.net](mailto:2bachin@comcast.net) or Karen Murphy at [timmurphy6050@att.net](mailto:timmurphy6050@att.net) to be added to the email distribution list OR for any questions about our next event.

## Senior Youth Paintball



With Spring just around the corner, the Senior High Youth group took aim at each other with an afternoon of paintball. A torrential rain storm the day before paved the way for a beautiful Sunday afternoon (March 29) when 18 youth ran around the fields with masks and paintball guns. A big thanks goes out to Mr. Segnere, Mr. Connolly and Mr. Mallon for volunteering their time to drive (they also played).

### Our next SYG dates are:

May 3: at the Church - Cooking food for others in need

May 31: an activity TBD

June 14: SYG BBQ

## Mission Trip SYG Mission Trip 2015:



### Christmas in July? Giving gifts to help the Senior Youth Group Mission trip

The Senior Youth Group is in the midst of planning their Mission trip to Blue Knob, PA from July 26 to Aug 1 and they would like your help. Twenty SYG youth along with Pastor Jim, Karen Murphy, Roberta Hanlon and Jeff Chin will be working with TeamEffort (Teameffort.org) and families in need, for their 2015 Mission Trip. The cost for one SYG member to participate in the Mission trip is \$700 while the chaperones volunteer their time. Donations to support the SYG and their Mission trip are appreciated. If you would like to make a donation, please contact Jeff Chin. A donation of any amount would be a present to all of our SYG.

The Senior Youth Group is a part of the NMCC family and is open to all high school students that are willing to have some fun, volunteer helping others, and are open to spiritual based belief discussions. SYG meets twice a month at the church and during the summer goes on a week-long Mission trip. If you are interested in being a part of the SYG or have any questions please contact: Jeff Chin ([jrchin5@comcast.net](mailto:jrchin5@comcast.net), cell: 203.901.3498).



### Confirmation Sunday

**Confirmation:** Our 7 confirmands have been exploring their faith as they gather together twice per month either in Fellowship Hall or in their mentor's homes. Under the leadership of Pastor Jim and Rene Chin, mentors Diana Boice and Kevin Kane, and Junior Deacon Chris Parker, these confirmands have explored concepts such as God being female not male, the many different kinds of prayer, writing and running their own worship and baptism, and deciding what the main criteria is for having trust in another person. They have been moved by videos outlining what the world would be like if we were only 100 people. They have offered their individual prayers at the closing of every gathering. This group of young teens have experienced serving others at Columbus house and sharing worship at congregations that differ from ours. As they prepare for their Confirmation Sunday at the end of May, let us hold them close to our hearts and deep in our prayers.



**Silver Lake Summer Camp:** Close your eyes... Imagine playing games in a field, cooling off in the lake, making pottery, facing your fears on the ropes course, singing songs, meeting old friends and making lots of new friends.

Ok, open your eyes... If you are going into 4th grade or above, then you can do all this and more by spending a week at Silver Lake! Registration is open now on-line. Just visit [silverlake.ctucc.org](http://silverlake.ctucc.org) and check out all the different conferences available. Check out the calendar on the Church school bulletin board in the hallway between the bathrooms.

## - Fund Raisers -



**NMCC Virtual Tag Sale:** After our very successful 2014 tag sale we agreed the effort involved required too many resources to repeat it in 2015. However, we did experiment with some of the unique remaining tag sale items by posting them on Craig's list (we have an NMCC account) and reaching out to local consignment and resale shops and dealers with some success. Optimistic, we decided to move forward with a "Virtual Tag Sale" in 2015.

Here's how you can participate:

- **Donate items** - To make this worth the time involved, our goal is to sell each item (or collection) for at least \$25 profit to NMCC.
- **Consign items through NMCC account** - if you have a pricey item you'd like to sell and are willing to donate a portion of the sale with NMCC, let's talk about how we can make that work. Contact Roberta Hanlon.

As you know we have very limited space to store items but for safety sake, we'd like to stage the items at NMCC for viewing and pick-up so the number of items we can handle depend on their sizes!

You can also be a buyer! As we post items on Craig's list, we will provide you with the link to the item so you can make arrangements to view and purchase on site! The two items we have now are:

**Wood Mobile Pet Pen - \$50:** <http://newhaven.craigslist.org/for/4909679588.html>

**Petmate Ultra Vari-kennel - \$25:** <http://newhaven.craigslist.org/for/4909666801.html>

For questions or to donate, please send a photo and description of the item (dimensions, condition) to Roberta Hanlon. [robertahanlon@msn.com](mailto:robertahanlon@msn.com) or call/text 203-500-8311 for consideration, pricing and handling.

## - Get Involved / Stay Connected -



There are so many ways to get involved in making NMCC a vibrant community not only through the work of the Missions Committee but helping out, sharing your skills, learning new ones enjoying the fellowship that naturally follows through working on projects together. Visit our "[Get Involved](#)" web page for ongoing news at [northmadisoncc.org](http://northmadisoncc.org).



**New Member Sunday - May 3<sup>rd</sup>:** New Member Sunday takes place this Spring on Sunday, May 3<sup>rd</sup> during the worship service. This is always a special time where we welcome and commit to our new members in a simple ceremony, followed by our new member reception. If you are interested in joining, please contact Pastor Jim, Roberta Hanlon or Dawn Barber.



**Knitting Ministry:** "Bless my handiwork as it travels to bring comfort and peace to someone in need of your warming embrace."

Chris Bailey, who leads our Knitting Ministry, invites you use your gift of knitting, crocheting, or sewing to give someone in need, the gift of a warm, cozy prayer shawl. You may supply your own yarn or use some of the yarn that has been donated. It only needs to be soft to give the receiver a warm hug when wearing it. You can knit just a prayer square to be held in a pocket or sewn into a larger patchwork or knit an entire shawl.

We will meet every other month as a group. If you are interested in getting started or resuming our knitting circle, contact Chris Bailey, [colorfulchronicles@gmail.com](mailto:colorfulchronicles@gmail.com). Sunday, May 3, we will meet after service in Fellowship Hall to regroup and knit if you have time from 11:30 -12:30. We would like to make this ministry fun and easy. If you have an interest but limited time, or want individual instruction contact Chris.

If you need a prayer shawl, please submit your request to Chris Bailey or Peter Haff, [pbhaff@sbcglobal.net](mailto:pbhaff@sbcglobal.net).



**Annual Consociation Choir Festival - Sunday, May 3 at 4pm at the North Haven Congregational Church!** Come for the joy of hearing wonderful music from area UCC choirs, including OURS! Wonderful MEN'S CHOIR anthems, featuring men's voices from NMCC and North Guilford. The finale includes ALL the choirs singing . . . very powerful!

Our choir loves looking out into the congregation gathered and seeing smiling faces of NMCC members!!!! COME --- ENJOY --- and cheer your choir on!



**Fire in the Kitchen Concert - Alasdair Fraser and Natalie Haas, May 10, 6:30 PM:** Alasdair and Natalie are the absolute undisputed King and Queen of Scottish music. That may sound like it's saying a lot, but it understates their influence and talent by a country mile. They can take one ancient tune, and it will sound just like it did when it was played 300 years ago, and then, in the same set, launch into a contemporary Celtic-inspired tune that makes jaws around the world drop. Their music spans

the history of the violin. You can talk about Natalie's Juilliard training, or Alasdair's world-renown Valley Of The Moon music camp, but it doesn't begin to describe their influence in contemporary fiddle music. In the Celtic world, they are the gold standard. Sorry, everyone else... Adults, \$25, kids high school and under, \$5.00. Reservations or information: 203-668-3735. Artist website: [www.alasdairfraser.com](http://www.alasdairfraser.com)



**News from the Generosity Team:** The Generosity Team is once again putting together a collection of generosity moments experienced by members/friends of the NMCC church family. Please consider taking a few minutes to write something that we can include in a booklet to be available for the 2015 Spring Season. Typewritten responses can be emailed directly to Jim Farrales at [farnavos@comcast.net](mailto:farnavos@comcast.net) For those who would rather handwrite their stories, we've attached is a form at the end of this newsletter with printed lines that you can use. Handwritten responses can be mailed to the church office or handed to a member of the Generosity Team after Sunday service. Also, we ask members of our Junior and Senior Youth Groups to consider submitting something as well. In order to have this booklet available before the summer season, we're asking that we receive all the responses by Friday, May 15, 2015. Thank you and looking forward to sharing the Generosity.



**Family & Friends Pot Luck Dinner:** The Generosity Team will be hosting our last Pot Luck Dinner of the season on Friday, May 15<sup>th</sup> from 6:00-7:30 pm. We invite you to join in fellowship, meet others in the congregation, and bring a friend or neighbor. Come hear about some generosity moments. Please sign up in fellowship hall to bring an entrée, starch, side, salad or dessert. Appetizers and soups are also entirely appropriate. As always, we welcome volunteers for setup and

cleanup. Please sign up if you're able to help. For more information please contact Jim Farrales [farnavos@comcast.net](mailto:farnavos@comcast.net) or Peter Meier [peterm190@yahoo.com](mailto:peterm190@yahoo.com).

**Generosity Team:** Jim Farrales; John Gallops; Miles Dunn; Sanna Stanley; Peter Meier; Michele Mauro; Ann Damarjian; and Frank Walsh



**Raise The Roof - May 16<sup>th</sup> on the Guilford Green:** Volunteers needed to form a team of seven to represent NMCC. The requirement - ENTHUSIASM - and 90 minutes of your time to construct walls. No experience necessary and hammers supplied. We need **one more person** to join the team at 9:00 am for the first shift!! Sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall. See or contact Frank Walsh (203-458-

2230) after worship for additional information or visit <http://raisetherooft.org/page/25894-Build-on-the-Guilford-Green>.

The Junior Youth Group will also gather on the Guilford green to "Raise the Roof!" We will be leading a fun activity/ fundraiser to help this wonderful cause. Details coming soon.



**Spring Wildflower Hike:** Now that it's finally spring, let's rejoice in the beauty of Nature! This May, the Adult Enrichment team would like to offer an opportunity to join with the Madison Land Conservation Trust in a Wildflower Hike at the Rockland Preserve in North Madison. The hike is scheduled for Saturday May 16 and will be led by Yale University botanist Michael Donoghue. Donoghue is the recipient of the Botany Society of America's highest 2014 Merit Award and is a past director of the Yale Peabody Museum. We will explore

nature's spring flora and learn about early wildflowers. Meet at the trailhead at Renee's Way off Dorset and Devonshire Lanes before 10:00 a.m. Or if you wish to carpool, pls. indicate on the sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall and meet in the church parking lot at 9:40. (Sorry, but dogs are not invited on the hike.)



**Call to the New Haven East Consociation Annual Meeting:** The New Haven East Consociation of Churches and Ministers will hold their annual meeting on Sunday, May 17, 2015, at the North Branford Congregational Church, Foxon Road, North Branford, CT

6:00 pm gathering for reception and fellowship

7:00 pm worship

Program and business meeting to follow worship

At the business meeting we will be revisiting the Unified Fitness Review document in order to take a vote. Questions contact: Jean Green, Registrar at [jcrgreen@sbcglobal.net](mailto:jcrgreen@sbcglobal.net)



**To Our Parents of Younger Children:** Does your little one get antsy during service? Do they need a little time downstairs taking a break from being quiet? We have many great places for your toddler to regroup downstairs, but please be aware that some of the rooms are the primary classrooms for Circle Nursery School and we would appreciate you cleaning up after your little one, so that the staff of the preschool comes in on Monday with classrooms ready to accept their students. Our NMCC nursery/toddler room is available for your use as well. Thank You! ☺



**Graduates:** If you or someone in your family is graduating from High School or college, please let the church office know at [office@northmadisoncc.org](mailto:office@northmadisoncc.org) or 203-421-3241.



**Yoga:** Take some time for yourself this spring and join us on Monday nights for Yoga at the Circle! Our current series began on Monday April 6, and classes run each Monday evening from 6:30-7:30 until May 18th. The session price will continue to be \$49.00 (7 weeks) or drop in at your convenience for \$9.00. New participants are always welcome. Blocks and straps provided, just bring your own mat.



**Caring Ministries Looking for Yard Clean Up Help:** If you willing to help with Spring yard clean up in a couple of member homes, please contact Peter Haff (include email and cell) or sign up in Fellowship Hall. Schedule and tasks needed are dependent on weather and crew availability.



**New Art Exhibit:** Come view our new art show in Fellowship Hall, featuring the photographs of Kevin Kane. Kevin's photos are responses to a wide variety of subject matter and interests, including family, pets, and landscapes. Kevin attributes his inherent curiosity of the world to his training as a newspaper reporter.

## - In the News & Noteworthy -



**NMCC and Members in the News:** We often spot an article in the local paper, *Patch* or in other news outlets, and have been posting them on our bulletin and our Facebook page. We'd like to expand the coverage and add a feature about this type of news in the monthly newsletter. Please send or drop off the news articles you find to the office at [office@northmadisoncc.org](mailto:office@northmadisoncc.org) and we'll be sure to include them!

**Sue Frankenbach** was pictured in the March 31 edition of the *New Haven Register* with the Madison Historical Society board of trustees who recently dedicated its boardroom in honor of former board members and town residents Robert and Shirley Green.

**Morgan Werth** was pictured in the 4/9/15 edition of the *Shoreline Times* as one of Hand's top five golfers. The golf team at Hand is preparing to make another state tournament run.

**Fire in the Kitchen** concerts continue to receive publicity! There were nice write ups about the Katie Glassman and her band Snapshot's concert held at NMCC on April 18 in the *Shoreline Times and the Source*.

## Office, Board and Committee Contacts:

Rev. Jim Latimer, Pastor	203-421-3241	Office Managers, Cathy Meier & Jackie Fix	203-421-3241
Christian Education	203-421-3241	Minister of Music, Linda Juliani	860-399-0210
Senior Youth Group Leader, Jeff Chin	203-421-3498	Choir Director, Bill Clemmons	203-421-3484
Junior Youth Group Leaders, Rene Chin or Karen Murphy	203-421-3498 203-481-7597	Circle Nursery School Co-Directors: Donna Perry, Kathy Niejadlik	203-421-0997

### OFFICERS

Executive Committee Chair, Tom Lauher	203-530-7467
Executive Committee Vice Chair, John Nassif	203-421-5374
Members of the Board of Deacons*:	See Below
Clerk, Eileen McCann	203-318-0068
Assistant Clerk, Eric Piekarz	203-421-8569
Treasurer, John Gallops	860-460-8573
Assistant Treasurer, Calvin Price	203-245-8566
Financial Secretary – Disbursements, Cathy Meier	203-421-8377
Financial Secy. of Receipts, Susan O'Connor	203-457-1559
Asst. Financial Secretary – Receipts, Mike Effenecy	203-457-6901

\* Roberta Hanlon 203-421-4891; Karen Chapman 203-421-4834; Peter Haff 203-203-421-0295; Bruce Whittaker 860-669-5208; Jim Connolly 203-421-1184; Kate Davis 203-421-5848; Dawn Barber 203-457-1868; Sandy Dickson 203-421-1178; Beth Berestecky 203-421-3210

### BOARDS/COMMITTEES

Board of Christian Ed Chair, Rene Chin	203-421-3498
Board of Deacons Chair, Roberta Hanlon	203-421-4891
Board of Finance Chair, John Nassif	203-421-5374
Communications Chair, Roberta Hanlon	203-421-4891
Deacon's Service Chair, Melissa Blundon	203-996-0671
Fellowship Chair, Orlene Gallops	860-339-5844
Human Resources Chair, Holly Francis	203-245-7331
Missions Chair, Kate Summerlin	203-453-0700
Music Chair, Eileen McCann	203-318-0068
Nominating Committee Chair, Peter Haff	203-421-0295
Pastoral Relations, Chair, Peter Meier	203-421-8377
Property & Planning Chair, Jeff Chin	203-421-3498
Quiet Ministry Chair, Linda Young	203-457-0723
Stewardship Chair, Jim Farrales	203-421-9323



**Online Giving Available on our Website:** Visit the church website at [www.NorthMadisonCC.org](http://www.NorthMadisonCC.org), click on "Online Giving" in the headers at the top of the page and follow the instructions. Or scan to pay or give →



