

*THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS*  
*September 2015*

*North Madison Congregational Church*  
*United Church of Christ*  
*1271 Durham Road*  
*Madison, CT 06443*

From Pastor Jim . . .

Our summer GFWP (Getting Focused with Purpose) potlucks have really been a hit! When we planned these back in June the GFWP leadership team was hoping for 40-45 participants in five locations. But when the eighth one is finished this Thursday, August 20, we will have had well over 70 participants. Wow! These have clearly been a very significant and meaningful "event" in the life of our congregation.

A special thank you goes to those who opened their homes to host these potlucks: Jim and Christine Farrales, John and Orlene Gallops, Roberta Hanlon and Dick Pryor, Maureen and Clarence Jones, Sandy Dickson, Frank Walsh and Ingela Helgesson, Kathy and Peter Meier, and Pastor Jim.

Our next step will be for the GFWP leadership team to process the results of the potlucks, and then for us to have another, and probably final, all-church event after worship on Sunday, October 25. Please mark your calendars and look for communication about how you can participate.

What has made these so popular? The purpose of these, and the overall GFWP initiative, is two-fold:

- First, to craft an NMCC Purpose Statement that truly reflects the aspirations of our congregation and the impact we perceive God is calling us to have in our wider external community;
- Second, to deepen and enrich our relationships with each other and with the living God so as to have a more engaged congregation.

Here are a few representative quotes from participants:

- What fun to have the opportunity to spend several hours with folks we see only briefly on Sunday mornings and to share thoughts and feelings about things that truly matter in our lives instead of the surface chatter we often experience at "dinner parties..." --- but sharing lots of laughs at the same time!
- I came away with an even greater appreciation of fellow church friends and much gratitude for the chance to look deeper into what it means to be a church.
- We got so much out of the discussions. I am excited about the future of NMCC!
- I'm so glad I gave myself the gift of a fun, authentic, delicious dinner with interesting people. There was no pressure. It was an amazing opportunity to just be yourself....in a God-centered place.
- Last night's dinner was an opportunity to really connect with people whom I've known casually, as well as to meet and connect with folks for the first time. I will never forget this experience! While it wasn't a "round table" there was something of an Arthurian vision about the power of sitting down together, sharing food, and talking from the heart, all on the same level.

- I came away realizing that the people in our church are actively building a stronger foundation for the church in order to remain alive and relevant for the future. I was able to hear many different points of interest and also able to express and explore my own thoughts.
- It was a good way to be able to get to know people and learn where they are in their journey of faith and why. Intellectually stimulating!

Clearly, we relish hearing each other's stories – learning things about each other that we had no idea of – stories of breath-taking loss, stories of discovering internal “resources” that buoy and strengthen us, stories of romance, stories of heart-opening service, stories as powerful as some in the Bible.

Our stories reveal that we have a great variety of theologies (understanding of “God,” the “Holy”), that we place a high value on being non-judgmental, and that we love to serve others – especially those who cannot pay us back. Our stores are indeed “scripture.”

It's clear that we have discovered a format that many NMCCers find enriching, stimulating and clearly want more of. Going forward, let's all be thinking about how to continue this format in ways that enable us to experience this blessing on a regular basis.

Your friend on the Journey,

Pastor Jim

## Included in this Newsletter:

### **Letter From Pastor Jim**

### **Getting Focused with Purpose**

### **Christian Education**

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### **In the News and Noteworthy**

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Clarence Jones - Mike DiGiorgio

## - 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?*

As you've seen in Pastor Jim's message in this month's newsletter (above), our summer has been put to good use and given great joy as we got to know each other and have the kinds of discussions that we don't normally take the time to have during worship or in other activities.

As a reminder, on June 14<sup>th</sup> the Engagement and Discovery Teams lead 5 small work teams - 42 participants in all - through a discussion on the components of a proposed purpose statement. Not surprisingly, each team took a different approach but shared some common themes.

Rather than take the summer off, and keeping in mind our goal to have a purpose statement in place in the Fall, we were invited to gather in small groups in a host home where we listened to each other's stories of how we have been inspired or moved, our hearts opened in unexpected ways, compassions stumbled upon or simply taken to a deeper level of our humanity/divinity through some experience.

We then asked ourselves how we could cultivate these same experiences for those outside of our church and use those experiences to engage in relationships with those we serve.

Each group then worked on its version of a purpose statement, with each later group having the opportunity to discover what other gatherings had done and take elements from each or add its own flavor. We came away with 8 versions of our purpose statement with several common themes that will serve as the basis for the next step.

Yet another reminder that our next GFWP activity will take place on Sunday, October 25, lunch included, where we expect to come to an agreement so we can move forward and take action.

We look forward to seeing you on October 25.

## - Christian Education -



**Christian Education and our kids:** Summer is just about over, so grab those fall calendars and save these dates!

Children's Church - preschool-8th grade begins on **September 13**.

Junior Youth Group - 7th and 8th grade gathers **Friday September 18**

Senior High Youth Group - 9th-12th grade is meeting **August 30th** from 5:30-7:30pm at church

Confirmation - 8th graders and parents meet **September 13**

You should have received information in the mail. If you haven't, please contact Rene Chin at o2bachin@comcast.net.

Before summer truly ends, please know that if your child attended a summer camp at Silver Lake in either July or August, the Board of Christian Education has scholarship money available. While there

is a limited amount and the total cost of the camp may not be fully covered, the Board will be sharing the funds among the families that have participated. Please email Rene Chin at [o2bachin@comcast.net](mailto:o2bachin@comcast.net) with the dates that your child participated.

**If YOU are wanting to spend time with our wonderful children, please consider teaching Children's Church or conducting a Children's Message. Please contact Rene Chin to sign up TODAY!**

## - Fund Raisers -



**NMCC Virtual Tag Sale:** Have an item you'd like to donate for resale or consignment? 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** - if you donate a portion of the sale to NMCC, contact Roberta Hanlon.
- **Buy NMCC items** posted on Craig's list.

Currently available today:

"Wood Mobile Pet Pen" \$40 <http://newhaven.craigslist.org/for/5160267793.html>

"China Cabinet Vintage Glass Door" \$75

<http://newhaven.craigslist.org/atq/5160322163.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.



**Grocery Card Fund Raiser:** Feed the church when you buy groceries using grocery cards purchased at NMCC. Grocery cards are available every Sunday morning after service in fellowship hall for Stop and Shop, Robert's, Big Y, and Shop Rite. Buy these grocery cards from us to use at the grocery stores where you normally shop. You pay face value, your grocery card is worth face value, and NMCC earns five cents on the dollar of every grocery card you purchase. It's really that simple! We're looking for volunteers to help sell cards after church. Please contact Calvin Price at [wildwood9@msn.com](mailto:wildwood9@msn.com) or 203-245-8566 if you're able to help out.

## - 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).



**Summer Worship Hours Ending:** We will resume our regular 10am start time on September 6.



**Homecoming Sunday – September 13:** We will celebrate homecoming Sunday on September 13. Children’s Church will resume and we will install our Deacons and Jr. Deacons.



**Calling All Singers** Are you a person with enthusiasm? Do you love to sing? Then our church choir may be the place for you!!!

When do we rehearse? Thursday nights at 7:15 and Sunday mornings at 9:15. Our first Rehearsal is Thursday, September 17 in the Community Room (Sunday mornings in the sanctuary).

This year the choir will be making another CD --- come and be a part of the fun!!!

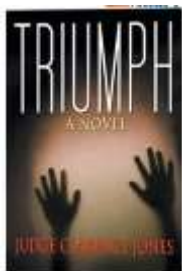


**Yoga:** Autumn... yes the days are shorter and those yellow school buses are rolling again, but fall also means pumpkin spice lattes and Monday night yoga at NMCC! Come join us for our next session of yoga with our very popular teacher, Ellen Seipold. Ellen is wonderful at adapting the class for all levels for both new and experienced yogis. Just wear comfy clothing and bring a mat. Our first session begins on Monday September 14<sup>th</sup> from 6:30-7:30pm in Fellowship Hall and will run for seven weeks until October 26<sup>th</sup>. The price remains at \$49.00 for the session or \$9.00/class for drop in. All are welcome, so bring a friend and start your week doing something wonderful for your body and spirit. Any questions contact Karen Chapman at (203) 421-4834 or [krchapman@comcast.net](mailto:krchapman@comcast.net).



**Fire in the Kitchen Concert – Calan (Friday) September 18 7:00 pm:**

Long-time followers of our series will remember Grada, one of my all-time favorite Irish traditional/progressive bands. I’ve been sorely missing their energy and flat-out skill. I’ve been moping. But no longer. Calan, from Wales, is the ultimate defibrillator. I’ve been shocked back to life. We’re opening the fall with a bang, and I have no problem saying that you will be blown away. Adults, \$25, kids high school and under, \$5.00 And yes, a workshop the following Saturday morning at 10. Check out two additional concerts coming in October: <http://northmadisoncc.org/calendar-events/fire-in-the-kitchen/>



**Triumph in Juvenile Justice, with Clarence Jones - September 20 at**

**11:45 am:** As part of the ongoing Adult Enrichment offerings, Clarence Jones, former Superior Court Judge for the State of Connecticut, will present an informative program and book signing on his recently published novel *Triumph* at North Madison Congregational Church on September 20.

Jones has been involved in the juvenile justice system in Connecticut for much of his

career. As such, he presided over neglect and child-abuse cases and reviewed hundreds of status reports for children and their parents. He directed the first Truancy Courts and has been a Special Master, United States District Court, District of Connecticut. Additionally, he has served as Commissioner and Chair of the Connecticut State Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, as well as Executive Director for the Center for Advocacy, Research, and Planning, an arm of the Greater New Haven NAACP.

The novel *Triumph*, published in January, was inspired by cases over which Jones presided as a Superior Court Judge. Annually, a quarter of a million children enter the foster care system in the United States because of abuse and neglect. The novel tells the story of one girl's Triumph over death-defying situations and her efforts to aid other foster care children. Told through the eyes of the trial judge – and extrapolated from actual cases – the novel gives the reader an insider's view of how the cloistered juvenile court system actually works in its effort to safeguard families and protect society.

To quote one reviewer: The book is a “powerful, unsettling, and ultimately victorious story about the juvenile court system. . . . The book explores connections between the children, law enforcement, social workers, government officials, and volunteers. Both an educational and enjoyable reading experience.”

The event will include an introduction, a reading from the book, and an opportunity to “Meet the Author” and have him sign your copy of the book. The program will be held in the Sanctuary and Fellowship Hall of NMCC at 11:45 a.m. We encourage you to invite friends and family.



**Fellowship Church Family Picnic – September 27:** Kick Off To The Fall Season! Fellowship Family Picnic - Sunday, September 27th - 1 PM - 4 PM at the Blundon's home.

A sign up sheet will be posted in Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions contact Orlene Gallops at [orlene1@comcast.net](mailto:orlene1@comcast.net) or 869-339-5844.

Come for fellowship, games, and lots of fun...



**Baptism Renewal:** On Sunday October 4 during our worship service, we will focus on Jesus' baptism (which inaugurated his public ministry) and will invite all of us to renew our baptism. Many UCC churches and other Protestant denominations offer an annual time for people to remember their identity as followers of Christ, to recall the claims of God on their lives, to renew the promises which were made at their baptism and affirmed at their confirmation.



**New Member Orientation – October 11:** Is it time for you to learn what it means to become a member of North Madison Congregational Church? New Member Sunday takes place this Fall on Sunday, October 25 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. To become a member we invite you to join us on October 11 after Fellowship to learn what membership means. If you are interested in joining, please contact Pastor Jim or Roberta Hanlon.



## 12<sup>th</sup> Annual Roslyn Young Memorial Concert - "A Mozart

**Afternoon":** Sunday, October 11<sup>th</sup> at 4:00 pm at First Congregational Church on the Green in Madison. The concert, which is part of the Music at the Meetinghouse series, will feature Mozart's sublime Clarinet Quintet in A major, with soloist Matthew Goodman and the New York-based chamber ensemble, Circle of Friends. Also featured is Mozart's monumental Piano Quartet in E flat major, with past performer in the series, pianist Julia Bady, joining Circle of Friends. There will be a pre-concert talk at 3:15 pm, and a reception following the concert. Tickets are \$20 at the door, under 18, free. Roslyn Young, sister of Linda Young, grew up in Guilford and became a professional violist, performing in the Connecticut-New York area, and throughout the US and Europe.



## Our Whole Lives (OWL) Sexuality Classes for Grades 7-9 - Fall 2015:

As a result of conversations that began at NMCC in 2009, we will for the third time, this fall, offer the OWL (Our Whole Lives) value-based sexuality-education program for youth in grades 7-9. Pastor Jim, the CE Board and the Executive Committee each wholeheartedly endorse the OWL Program.

OWL was co-developed by the United Church of Christ and the Unitarian Universalist Association. Several of our members have been trained as facilitators (teachers). OWL programs exist for youth in grades K-1, for adults, and all age groups in between. The websites of both the UCC and the UUA may be consulted for a deeper understanding of the OWL program. Parents are key partners in the program.

Several parents have already indicated interest in enrolling their youth in grades 7-9 for classes to begin in late September or early October. Commitments will be requested early in September. A parent orientation session is part of the program. At these sessions, scheduling is determined, the curriculum is presented, and all questions answered. Please contact Peter Meier ([peterm190@yahoo.com](mailto:peterm190@yahoo.com) or 203.421.8377) for further information.

We are again cooperating with our friends at SUUS to offer the 2015-2016 classes. (Incidentally, should you be interested, the OWL class for grades 4-6 will be taught this fall at the Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Society in Madison.)

The youth who participated in OWL during the previous two offerings and their parents/guardians are the best endorsements we have for the importance of and the value of the OWL program.

Pastor Jim summed it up pretty well, saying, "Since our sexuality is given by God, I can think of no better place than a loving community of faith to guide us in understanding it in a way that is spiritually and emotionally healthy."



**Fellowship Hour:** Think of the many times you've lingered over a good conversation, inspired by a piece of home-made zucchini bread with a cup of fresh coffee, snacked on some hummus or cheese and crackers or enjoyed the simplicity of mouth-watering grapes, strawberries or water melon. Is it your time to join the many members who make Fellowship hour a special gathering by signing up to bring the food we all enjoy each Sunday? Deacon Services will gladly set it up - all you need to do is bring it in!



**Be the Church Mug:** Inspirational UCC mug available for sale (\$10) in Fellowship Hall: Protect the environment. Care for the Poor. Forgive often. Reject racism. Fight for the Powerless. Share earthly and spiritual resources. Embrace diversity. Love God. Enjoy this life. Great reminders for your morning coffee of the many ways in which we serve.



## - 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!

**Olivia Chasse** - Yale University Congratulates Outstanding Students from Haddam-Killingworth High School, Higganum in the New Haven Register in August. Olivia was one of 6 students chosen by their high school as representing the best and brightest in the young people of their community.

Olivia is the daughter of Scott and Robin Chasse and Olivia will attend Lafayette College and major in Civil Engineer and International Studies (Spanish). Her accomplishments include G.P.A of 4.145, National Honor Society, Spanish Honor Society, Dartmouth Book Award, NCWIT Award for CT Aspirations in Computing – Runner up; Excellence in Spanish 4, Excellence in Principles of Engineering, Class Officer – 4 years; and Student Council 4 years.

**Andrew Murphy** was pictured in the August 20 edition of *The Source*. The Madison Chamber of Commerce awarded him one of two scholarships given to Daniel Hand High School graduating seniors. He will be attending Bentley College this fall and will pursue a career in business.

**Amanda Bernier** (and baby Arabella) were featured in an article from the *Madison Patch*, "Madison Woman Battling ALS Calls on Jimmy Fallon for Help", along with a video of her Ice Bucket Challenge, where Amanda calls out Pastor Jim for the challenge. Here's the link: <http://www.shorelinetimes.com/articles/2015/08/25/news/doc55dc9c64051d2870623882.txt>

**Ryan McAnaney** - In the August 27 issue of *The Source* Ryan was celebrated as a standout player for the Post 79 Seniors baseball team in Madison, which features Ryan's role as a leader in the dugout and for the 4-man starting pitching staff for the Post 79 Senior Legion baseball team this summer.

**Skunk Ramblers Fiddle Club** - with a story lead photo on the front page of **Ann and Melinda Clemmons** and a photo of their float in the 4th of July parade, the article tells about how the group got started in North Madison Congregational by **Charlie Shafer** and others as a community project 18 years ago. The history continues with how it has evolved to not only an active fiddle club that performs random acts of music (aka rehearsals) in public places like the Madison and Guilford greens but eventually led to the Fire in the Kitchen concert series, the first 5 of which were a featured side bar at the end of the article. Two full pages plus the intro on the teaser on the front page.

**Clarence Jones** - In the calendar section of the August 27 issue of *The Source*: an event at RJ Julias on September 3 at 7:00 pm: **Judge Clarence Jones, Triumph.**

**Mike DiGiorgio** - In the August 27 issue of *The Source* Mike's illustration, *True Katydid*, was featured in the article about a book by John Hummelman, *Night-Singing Insects of the Northeast*. This book will be used as one of many as part of a Bauer Farm walk September 5. The article noted that Mike is a Madison Land Trust board member and illustrator of the book.

## Office, Board and Committee Contacts:

Rev. Jim Latimer, Pastor	203-421-3241	Office Managers, Cathy Meier & Jackie Fix	203-421-3241
Christian Education, Rene Chin	203-421-3498	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, Jim Farrales	203-421-9323
Members of the Board of Deacons*:	See Below
Clerk, Eileen McCann	203-318-0068
Assistant Clerk, Calvin Price	203-245-8566
Treasurer, Holly Francis	203-245-7331
Assistant Treasurer, John Gallops	860-460-8573
Financial Secretary - Disbursements, Cathy Meier	203-421-8377
Financial Secy. of Receipts, Susan O'Connor	203-457-1559
Asst. Financial Secretary - Disbursements - Open	
Asst. Financial Secretary - Receipts - Open	

\* Roberta Hanlon 203-421-4891; 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; Kristin Polisky 203-421-1175; Carol Anne Bachhuber 203-747-4840; Ann Damarjian 860-669-5639; Miles Dunn 203-988-1993

### BOARDS/COMMITTEES

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Board of Deacons Chair, Roberta Hanlon	203-421-4891
Board of Finance Chair, Jim Farrales	203-421-9323
Communications Chair, Roberta Hanlon	203-421-4891
Deacon's Service Chair, Melissa Blundon	203-996-0671
Fellowship Chair, TBD	
Human Resources Chair, Holly Francis	203-245-7331
Missions Chair, Kate Summerlin	203-453-0700
Music Chair, TBD	
Nominating Committee Chair, Peter Haff	203-421-0295
Pastoral Relations, Chair, Peter Meier	203-421-8377
Property & Planning Chair, TBD	
Quiet Ministry Chair, Linda Young	203-457-0723
Stewardship Chair, TBD	



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