



*THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS*  
*March 2015*

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

From Pastor Jim . . .

Welcome to Lent 2015! Lent is the liturgical season inviting us to prepare our hearts, minds and souls for the wild miracle of Easter.

To help us, our worship theme for Lent is "Vessels of God." Each Sunday from February 22 through Palm Sunday, March 29, the sermon message and worship service will explore this theme.

Vessels are used frequently in daily human life for containing, dispensing, carrying and embodying all kinds of things: liquids, precious oils and perfumes, foods of all kinds. A vessel can also be a craft designed for water transportation, such as a boat or ship. It could also be a tube in which a fluid circulates like a blood vessel, or in which air circulates like a flute.

A vessel is holy or sacred when it functions for a godly life-giving purpose. The chalice used for Holy Communion and the font used Holy Baptism immediately come to mind.

As such, vessels are made of many different materials including clay, metal, wood, skin, glass and reeds. Taken together, composition, form and features suit them to their function.

In scripture, human beings are also referred to as "vessels." 1 Samuel 21:5 speaks of "the young men as being holy vessels and being sanctified for a godly task."

And this about the apostle Paul while he was still actively persecuting Christians: "...he is an instrument (vessel) whom I (God) have chosen to bring my name before Gentiles and kings and before the people of Israel." (Acts 9:15-16)

Later, Paul speaks of Christians having "this treasure in earthen vessels" - the treasure being the light and knowledge of the glory of God, the power of God.

Vessels can be holy - used by God - without being perfect. Few are. They can have cracks, missing pieces, even seemingly misshapen. I'm thinking of the bigoted self-centered man who shocked me with a courageous act of grace. His vessel may be a fragile clay pot with a narrow opening at the top and a crack from which the contents could leak without warning.

I'm thinking of the mother of a gay son who, though confused about her son's behavior, nevertheless chose to love him without judgment - empowering him to live into his created sexual orientation - to the chagrin of her other children and friends. Her vessel may be a big wooden bowl with a lip for pouring.

I'm thinking of Beth who had a way of receiving the sorrows, complaints and struggles of others and transforming them into joys. Her vessels may be a flute in which exhaled carbon dioxide turns it into beautiful music.

What kind of "Vessel of God" are you? How does your life point to God? Glorify God? Make God visible? In what way does your life, personality, or work carry, hold, circulate, bestow, decorate, embody, or equip for the sake of God's life-giving work in the world? God's love, mercy, generosity or justice?

- What do you **hold or carry**? Where does it come from? To where do you dispense it or carry it?
- What are the **features** of your vessel? Does it have a handle, spout, lip, big open top, narrow top, tall, short, shallow, deep? Is it a boat? If so, does it have a rudder, sail or motor?
- What **material** is it made of? Light like aluminum, heavy like iron, malleable like clay, fragile like porcelain? Is it sought after like fine alabaster or gold? Does it have a hole? It is cracked, broken, worn down, have a piece missing? Is it covered, open or waterproof, leaky?
- **Decorations**? Does your vessel tell a story? On its own? Does it incorporate "treasures" from others?

I invite you to bring your vessel to church. We're collecting them in the front of the sanctuary during Lent. It could be an object itself, or a photo, or words describing it and its relevance.

Blessings for Lent,

Pastor Jim

## Included in this Newsletter:

### **Getting Focused with Purpose Christian Education**

Children's Church - Junior Youth Group - Senior Youth Group

### **Missions**

Next Meeting

### **Fund Raisers**

Grocery Card Fundraiser

### **Get Involved / Stay Connected**

Fire in the Kitchen Concert - Nominating Committee Expo - Fellowship Dinners -  
Holy Week Schedule - Yoga - Sanctuary Cleaning - Volunteers Needed - Church Cancellations -  
Online Giving Now Available - Help Us Get the Word Out on Facebook - Photos Wanted -  
Coffee Hour and Flower Sponsors Needed

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

Fire in the Kitchen - Morgan Werth - Devon Piekarcz - Ryan Garb

## - Getting Focused with Purpose -



**Getting Focused With Purpose (GFWP):** On Sunday, March 1, we will gather again after worship from 11 to 12:30 to continue the discussions about matching our passions and gifts with the needs of the wider community. (The scheduled February 22 event was postponed due to the continued extremes in the weather.) Please join us, as your voice is vital to the successful completion of our (GFWP) initiative. Lunch and child care will be provided. Your ideas, views, and passions are all not only welcome but quite necessary.

The five leadership teams continued to work during February.

- The **Discovery** Team constructed a broad plan to thoroughly examine the needs of the community, both close to home and in a broader sense. Paul DiBello agreed to assist the team for data management.
- **Communications** added Carol Ann Bachhuber as a member and Phyllis Carlisle as a consultant. Their focus is graphic representation of the GFWP process, and several concepts were reviewed.
- **Measurement** added Dawn Barber to its membership and started working on publishable concepts to show the NMCC involvement in GFWP.
- **Engagement** conducted the post-worship January 25th event which drew 51 participants and celebrated the many reasons why NMCC is a community with harmony, welcome, and compassionate characteristics that we celebrate with each other and can share with the wider community.
- **Project Management** developed a team calendar, and continued to help the GFWP teams stay connected and on track. Project Management documented new decisions, updates, and changes, and reported our collective progress to the Executive Committee.

We all sincerely hope that you will all attend and participate in the next event on March 1<sup>st</sup>; perhaps even joining one of the five GFWP Teams. Also mark your calendars for the next GFWP activity after worship on March 22!

## -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, Sharon Mallon, Rene Chin, and Vera Levis, along with teen helpers Ryan Murphy, Erica Mallon, 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: Shining God's Light**

**Feb 22, March 1, March 8, March 15, March 22**

**March 29** – Palm Sunday. Our children will be making an appearance during our worship service before moving downstairs for their own Children’s Church lesson.

**April 5** – Easter Sunday - NO Children’s Church downstairs. Please enjoy worshipping with your family during our Easter services.

You will find our children experiencing **Communion** with the entire congregation as an extended church family and on these Sundays there will be no Children’s Message.

During the remaining Sundays, you will discover the talents of an entirely different group of volunteers from our congregation. Members are stepping forth and offering moving and personal messages for our children during the **Children’s Message** portion of our worship service and we are so appreciative of their talent and passion for providing for our children! **Thanks go to Julie Abbot, Jeff Ignatuk, and Rene Chin 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.**



### **Junior Youth Group 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders:**

**February** – This group of teens found themselves going around and around and around.....on roller skates! They continued to find fun in being together while they showed off their skills on a roller rink. Do they ever tire? We think not!



Our next dates to gather together are:

**March 20:** in house ART activity. Details coming soon! ☺

**April 24-26** Mission Trip to Boston, MA.

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 Group 9<sup>th</sup> - 12<sup>th</sup> graders**

**Bowling:** Professional bowlers they are not, but they had a lot of fun during our last meeting at the East Haven AMF Bowling alley on Jan 31. Twenty of the SYG tried their skills at bowling and whether they used the bumpers or closed their eyes, the bowling balls rolled toward the pins and camaraderie was built.



Tyler Phan (senior), Maggie Shea and Emma Connolly (sophomores)

**Our next SYG dates are:**

March 1: at the Church

March 28 or 29: TBD

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 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) or visit the SYG webpage at <http://northmadisoncc.org/youth/senior-high-youth-group/>.

**- Missions -**



**Next Missions Meeting:** Missions will meet on Wednesday, March 25, 2015 at 7:00 at Lynn Hidek's home (41 Olde Orchard Rd, Clinton). We invite anyone interested in NMCC's outreach to join us. For directions and to RSVP: [lynnhidek@sbcglobal.net](mailto:lynnhidek@sbcglobal.net).

**- Fund Raisers -**



**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).



**Fire in the Kitchen Concert: The John Jorgenson Quintet - Saturday, March 7, 7:00 PM:** It's the return of multi-Grammy winner John Jorgenson. He'll be bringing his award-winning Gypsy jazz quartet for a night of high-octane jazz. It's the music of Django Reinhardt and Stephane Grapelli, but played with such verve that many consider John the world's greatest guitarist. Those who know

John know his place in music history: a founding member of the Desert Rose Band, guitarist for Elton John's touring band for years, founding member of the Hellecasters, and the man chosen to play the legendary Django Reinhardt in the movie about Django. His band is equally accomplished, and those who have seen John at the Fire In The Kitchen concert series previously know that this is some of the most astounding music one will ever hear in a small venue. Adults \$25, kids high school and under, \$5.00. For Reservations or information, call 203-668-3735.



**Nominating Committee Expo March 8:** In Fellowship Hall after church on Sunday March 8 the nominating committee will be holding a gathering to highlight the NMCC committees, boards and various other volunteer activities that make our church what it is today.

Please stop by to talk to members from these various groups and learn more about the good things we are doing in our church and in the community.

Refreshments and other goodies will be served. Hope to see you there.

For Further information or questions please contact your nominating committee Peter Haff, Dawn Barber, Melissa Blundon, and Stacy and Charlie Shafer.



**Fellowship Dinners:** Do you look forward to seeing old friends and getting to know people better? Fellowship Dinners are coming again on Saturday, March 14!

Feedback from last year's events was very positive; both hosts/hostesses and their guests enjoyed an evening of getting to know others in the congregation in an intimate home setting.

#### **DO YOU:**

- Enjoy a wonderful evening with friends (old and new)?
- Look forward to meeting new people?

Then sign up to come to the 2015 third annual "Dinner with Friends" events in the home of one of our congregants. All you have to do is talk to your host/hostess (to be assigned-see below) about what to bring (the host/hostess provides the main dish and everyone else contributes appetizers, salad, dessert, etc.). A sign-up sheet is located in fellowship hall.

#### **DO YOU LOVE ALL OF THE ABOVE AND:**

**Cooking and entertaining in your home? Then you can sign up to be a host/hostess home without doing all the work!**

- Host a dinner in your home for about 8 adults. You provide the main dish and everyone else brings the appetizers, salad and dessert.
- We need 6 host homes to accommodate all who sign up. The Fellowship committee assigns your guests to your home; after that, it's up to you, and we stay out of your way! The Fellowship Committee is always available to you if you have questions.
- Once you sign up, someone from the Fellowship Committee will call you with the names of the guests who will come to your home.

- This year's theme is the crock pot--pick your favorite slow-cooked meal and ask your guests to bring appetizers, bread, salad and dessert.

If you have questions, please call Orlene Gallops at 860-339-5844 or email her at [orlene1@comcast.net](mailto:orlene1@comcast.net) or Joyce Rivera at [peterrievera@sbcglobal.net](mailto:peterrievera@sbcglobal.net).

Please join us for an evening of great food, conversation and fun! - The Fellowship Committee:  
Nancy Conover, Joyce Rivera, Orlene Gallops



**Holy Week Services: Invite a friend to join you for these spiritually rich special services:**

**Palm Sunday - March 29 at 10:00 AM:** This special service celebrates Jesus' entry into Jerusalem which begins with our children leading us in a procession waving palms, followed by an inspired performance by our choir. Join us for worship, the distribution of palms and the sharing of exquisite music.

**Maundy Thursday Fellowship Supper and Service of Remembrance - April 2 at 6:00 PM:** Join in our family-friendly potluck supper and service of remembrance this Holy Thursday. We remember the Lord's Last Supper and his prayers in the garden for guidance and strength. We will share communion and a service that celebrate the events of the Last Supper in manner of the first century church. Before there were churches and long rituals, the 'Lord's Supper' was simply done in the homes of the faithful. Everyone would gather for a 'pot luck' supper. During the meal, they would share their thoughts/experiences as followers of Jesus. When everyone had eaten, they would come together for prayer and share bread and wine repeating the words of Jesus as recorded in our Scriptures. At this table of fellowship and communion, they experienced forgiveness for sins, healing for their brokenness, and shared love which they could bring to the world.

**Service of Tenebrae on Good Friday - April 3 at 7:00 PM:** In this Tenebrae (Latin for "Shadows") Service, the most somber day of the Christian calendar, we follow Jesus from the prison all the way to the cross. This deeply moving service of lessons and hymns, accompanied by the encroaching darkness, recalls the trial and death of Jesus our Christ. We begin with light and music, and we end in silence and darkness. We invite you to linger in the darkness of the sanctuary, aware of your many feelings and thoughts as you contemplate the meanings of the death of Jesus, mourning the loss and considering all that it means for the hope of the world and the transformation of your life.

**Prayer Vigil - Good Friday - April 3 at 8:00 PM through 6:00 AM, Easter Morning - April 5 at 6:00AM:** Our Prayer Vigil begins after the Tenebrae service. You are invited to spend an hour praying in our sanctuary which is open all weekend until early Easter Sunday. To ensure continuous coverage throughout the Vigil, we encourage you to sign up in Fellowship Hall for a specific time to experience the quiet peace of the sanctuary.

**Easter Dawn Service - April 5 at 6:00 AM:** This special simple service recalls the gift of life eternal. It is held (weather permitting) at the NMCC Cemetery where all can experience the quiet beauty nature offers, while celebrating the Resurrection of Christ with music, readings and prayer. The cemetery is located less than a mile on the right on Route 80, east of the 79/80 Circle, just before Summer Hill Road.

**Easter Sunday Service – April 5 at 10:00 AM:** Join us in this communion service of celebration and the hope of everlasting life. The triumph of the Christian story is celebrated in this Festival of the Resurrection, characterized by a sanctuary filled with beautiful flowers, joyous music, inspired scripture and a special message to give God thanks for showering us with blessings.



**“Yoga at the Circle”:** Join us for our next session! Ellen, our much-loved Kripalu trained teacher, is leading us on Monday nights from 6:30-7:30 through March 23. Ellen is wonderful at accommodating a variety of needs and experience levels, so all are welcome, whether you have been practicing for years or are new to yoga. Teens are welcome to join us too. Wear comfortable clothing that will allow you to bend and stretch and bring a yoga mat (a necessity- available at discount

stores such as TJ Maxx for about \$15.00). The cost for the seven week session is \$49.00 (\$7.00/class). If you prefer to join us on a walk-in basis, each class is \$9.00. Checks should be made out to NMCC. Bring yourself, bring a friend. All are welcome! Questions: Contact Karen Chapman at (203) 421-4834 or [krchapman@comcast.net](mailto:krchapman@comcast.net).



**Sanctuary Cleaning – Volunteers Needed:** Volunteers are needed to clean the Sanctuary (and the rest of the upper level) once a week. Invite a friend or enjoy the solitude of our church by yourself. It takes approximately two and a half hours to vacuum the carpets, mop the floors, clean the bathrooms and empty the trash. Cleaning of the upper level can be completed anytime during that week based upon your schedule (and church functions). No prior experience needed as we can train you. There

is a sign-up sheet on the church bulletin board for your convenience. If you would like more information, please talk to Jeff Chin, [jrchin5@comcast.net](mailto:jrchin5@comcast.net) / 203-421-3498 or Tom Lauher, [thomaslauher@sbcglobal.net](mailto:thomaslauher@sbcglobal.net) / 203-530-7467.



**Church Cancellation:** Notifications are available on NBC, CBS (WFSB) and ABC (both channel 8 and Mytv9). We will also post cancellations on the home page of our website, [northmadisoncc.org](http://northmadisoncc.org), and on the church answering machine (pending our ability to get into the church to access the voicemail system) shortly after 8:00 am.



**Sunday Coffee Hour/Flower Sponsors Needed:** If you would like to donate flowers for a Sunday, or “sponsor” coffee hour by providing snacks (like bagels, muffins, fruit, cheese & crackers, etc.) or with a monetary gift, please sign up on the bulletin board

in Fellowship Hall or contact the church office at [office@northmadisoncc.org](mailto:office@northmadisoncc.org).

## - 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!

There were more great **Fire in the Kitchen** write-ups in *The Source* and *New Haven Register* about the Reveler's visit to NMCC in February. Keep an eye out for upcoming articles on future groups. We're also getting press in the Chamber of Commerce's publication and a new monthly circular, *Madison Neighbors Magazine* sent to all households within a 3 mile radius of Madison center, with additional copies available in stores.

**Leslie Jaluria** of Jaluria Law, LLC was highlighted as a new member of the Madison Chamber of Commerce in the January 29, 2015 edition of *The Source*. Jaluria Law's mission is to provide compassionate, high quality, competent and professional legal services throughout the Connecticut shoreline, from Fairfield, New Haven, Middlesex, and New London counties.

**Morgan Werth** and **Devon Piekarz** were mentioned in the article "Hand Cheerleading Wins Co-ed Division for First SCC Title" in the February 12, 2015 edition of *The Source*. This is the first conference crown for the Tigers' cheerleading squad.

**Ryan Garb** was pictured in the February 19 edition on *The Source* as one of five Hand skiers who qualified and participated in the Connecticut Interscholastic Ski League's annual competition called the Shoot Outs held February 24 and 25 at Mount Southington.



**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 →



## 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
Circle Nursery School Co-Directors: Donna Perry, Kathy Niejadlik	203-421-0997		

### OFFICERS

Executive Committee Chair, Tom Lauher	203-245-1203
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, Dawn Korik	203-298-8574
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