

THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS

February 2019

North Madison Congregational Church

United Church of Christ

1271 Durham Road

Madison, CT 06443

Interim Pastor's Notes

The saint in the next seat over

by Rev. Matt McCaffrey

He was a quiet guy, with thinning white hair brushed straight back, and glasses. He sat in the choir loft, in the tenor section. There was an empty seat next to him.

I was a 17-year-old who had just graduated from high school, not sure what was next for my life. I had just stepped into a Protestant church for the first time in my life. I was a tenor. I took the empty seat.

When I met Larry, I had no idea what Protestants were (or that they came in different “flavors”). I had no clue that churches were more than very holy buildings where one came to have one’s Confession heard, and to hear Mass. I really thought that my Catholic background had to stay secret, because I’d been told what awful things Protestant boys would do to Catholic boys if they caught us.

Larry changed all that for me.

It turned out that Larry was a retired newspaper editorial writer – anonymously writing on the topics of the day, expressing the opinions of the newspaper editorial board. He was a humble man, who considered his vocal talents “middling.” He, and his spouse Gertrude, were quiet people, almost shy.

What I noticed was that Larry never missed a Sunday if he could help it. He listened more than he talked. He listened intently during the sermon, and he occasionally would wince if the preacher bungled a word or phrase. When the first-Sunday-of-the-month communion tray made its long journey to the choir loft, he would always pause for a moment before taking the elements. It did not delay anything, but it made an impression on me. This act of sharing a common meal really *meant* something to him.

So did music, and prayer, and even the preacher’s imperfect delivery. I never did ask him just what was so appealing to him about this Congregational practice, this United Church of Christ life. I didn’t have to. It was obvious that each day was another day on his journey of faith, and everyone and everything connected with his church family was important to that journey – including the young tenor sitting next to him.

Larry probably never knew he made a huge impression on me. He would have downplayed it, or perhaps smiled and said I could find better role models than him. If I could, I’d respond that he was the right role model, at the right time, for me.

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Starting this month, we will have some “right role models” working with four young people of our congregation. They will be sharing some experiences, discussing some history and stories, asking and answering questions of each other. Even though they will be working with a common curriculum, each one will see something unique about the other’s journey of faith. Glimpses will flash by of what it means to undertake such a journey, and what it takes to sustain it.

When the winter and spring have almost flown away, these four young people will be able to decide whether to affirm the baptismal promises made by parents, godparents, and church. Regardless of their decision, they will have learned from their role models what makes a life lived in faith so special.

We call the youth "Confirmands" and the adult role models "Mentors."
I call them "saints."

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Matt

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Danielle Feldman

- Children and Youth Ministries -



Senior Youth Group! We will be serving dinner at the New London soup kitchen on Sunday, 2/24. Meet at church by 3:15. We need to be there at 4:00. Serving would be from 5:00-6:00. Clean-up would be from 6:00-6:30. Then we will stop for ice cream on the way home. If you would like to come please rsvp to colindavies@sbcglobal.net.

- Fund Raisers -



Fire in the Kitchen Concert The Seamus Egan Project, Saturday, February 9, 7:00 PM: We're having Seamus back for the second year in a row, a rarity. A small part of it is because last year's shows got both cancelled and then severely dented by the string of Nor'easters. The main reason though, is because he's that good, and so is his band. Waxing poetically about how precise and beautiful and soulful and all that won't do, as I'll just screw things up grammatically. So just trust me and the millions of fans Seamus has around the world. As the founder of the Irish super-group Solas, he's the real deal, period.

Cohorts Moira, Kyle and Owen are pretty fantastic too. Adults \$25, kids high school and under, \$5.00. Contact Charlie Shafer at workdog@mindspring.com for tickets. Note: reserved seating is almost full (as of 1/12), walk-in area still available.



Yoga: Our Monday night session (6:30 to 7:30 pm) runs from 1/4 - 3/4 (no class on Presidents' Day 2/18). Thursday night's session (6:15-7:15 pm) runs from 1/17 - 3/7. Each session costs \$60 and there is a discounted price of \$115.00 for both sessions. Drop ins are offered at \$10.00/class. We welcome both experienced and novice students.

Questions? Contact Karen Chapman at krchapman@comcast.net or (203) 314-9299. Note: We follow the Madison Public Schools schedule in case of early dismissal or school closings. We also encourage you to check for updates on the North Madison Congregational Church website.



Tag Sale: For details, visit the postings on the Tag Sale page on our website, northmadisoncc.org. Questions? Contact Roberta Hanlon robertahanlon@msn.com or 203-500-8311.

- 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.



Intergenerational Choir: The next Intergenerational choir rehearsal is Feb. 3 in the sanctuary. We have a LOT of fun together and would LOVE to have all children participate! The Intergenerational Choir will sing during worship on February 10.



Pastoral Search Committee: February 1 is the last day to complete your survey for the Pastoral Search Committee. If you want your voice to be heard, please be sure to complete the survey!

The Pastoral Search Committee continues to gather information to allow us to complete the Local Church Profile that must be submitted in order for our position to be posted. On Sunday, February 10, we will hold an important town hall meeting for the congregation immediately following worship. This will be an opportunity for you to ask questions and to provide additional input to the committee before we finalize the profile. We hope to have the profile ready for review by our Connecticut Conference Regional Minister by the beginning of March.



The Living Waters Award Celebrating Laity: The CT Conference is currently seeking nominations for the 2019 Living Waters Award to be presented at the *Special Meeting of the CT Conference UCC on May 18, 2019.*

Persons honored by The Living Waters Award are those who work for justice, live ethically, build community, and promote the common good in their workplaces and in their communities. This award recognizes outstanding Christian ministry, life, and witness that is done OUTSIDE the church setting as an expression of one's faith.

Nomination Forms and more information, including a list of the previous award winners can be found at <https://www.ctucc.org/livingwaters>. Nomination forms should be sent to Sioux Wilusz at SiouxW@ctucc.org by February 15.



Healing Retreat: We are all in need of healing from events in our lives. If you have been looking for inspired ways to approach healing and opportunities for spiritual healing companions, we have a great offering for you!

This year we are building on the excitement generated from last Lenten season's Healing series facilitated by Rev. Sarah Vetter. In those sessions we used the teachings of Rev. Tilda Norberg from her book "Stretch Out your Hand."

This year, you can meet Rev. Tilda Norberg as she leads an event hosted by both the First Congregational Church of Madison and our North Madison Congregational Church. It is a one-day session offered on Saturday, March 2, 2019 at Mercy Center, 9am to 4pm. Thanks to the generosity of the First Church, the cost has been subsidized and reduced. Do not let cost be a prohibitive factor, if you need assistance, ask. We have scholarship money that can be made available.

Because the Holy Spirit is continually at work in each of us, pushing us toward wholeness...

You are invited to a **Healing Retreat**
Saturday March 2, 9:00 – 4:00 at the Mercy Center
Led by Rev. Tilda Norberg

Tilda has written 6 books on Christian Healing, led numerous spiritual growth retreats, training retreats, and maintains a private practice in Gestalt Pastoral Care. \$40 per person, lunch is included

Attendance is limited. Register soon with Sandy Dickson 203-376-7075, sandylynn dickson@gmail.com.



NMCC Expands Presence on 'Social Networks': So-called "social networks" are the Information Age's equivalent of coffee shops and water coolers. People connect with each other, share photos and life events, and plan get-togethers through various on-line relationships.

North Madison Congregational Church recently refreshed its social media presence, gathering existing and new accounts under one name: **@NoMadUCC**.

These "faces" of our church each have slightly different uses:

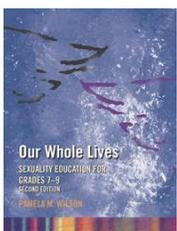
- *Facebook* (<https://www.facebook.com/NoMadUCC>) is for general conversation, event planning, and getting word of our church events out to a wide audience.
- *Instagram* (<https://www.instagram.com/NoMadUCC>) is for sharing photos and seeing other people's photos. It excels at publishing photos instantly during a live event.
- *Twitter* (<https://www.twitter.com/NoMadUCC>) is the service famous for brevity. Comments and alerts are its strength – and they are limited by design to 288 characters per message.
- *Pinterest* (<https://www.pinterest.com/NoMadUCC>) is an online idea "pin-board." It collects photos from other sites into photo boards on a topic of interest.

Our NMCC social media experts used all four of these online services to good effect for our Martin Luther King, Jr. service in January. They made people in our larger community aware of the event, and even had an effect on newspaper coverage because we "linked" to online newspapers.

Planning has begun for the Communication Team to sponsor an in-person, hands-on workshop in March. The various services will be demonstrated, and assistance offered to anyone who would like to sign up for their own accounts on the spot.

Even if you personally do not use online services or social media, it's good to support our church's online presence. The power of invitational welcome is extending far beyond our doors in a way that goes back to the very early days of the church: one to one invitation.

If you *are* on social media, please be sure you are linked to each of our accounts, and feel free to take part in the conversation.



OWL Updates – Teachers Needed and Fall Classes: Two OWL (Our Whole Lives) value-based sexuality education classes will be offered for two ages of students, beginning in the fall of 2019. The Shoreline Unitarian Community (SUUS) is coordinating classes for grades 4-6 and NMCC together with First Church will offer (for the fifth time) classes for grades 7-9.

More information on both offerings is available at the websites of the UCC and the Unitarian Universalist Association who jointly created the OWL program. All facilitators (teachers) are trained by OWL personnel from one of these institutions.

Description of **Grades 4-6 OWL** "Our Whole Lives values: Self Worth, Sexual Health, Responsibility, Justice and Inclusivity In 10 one-hour workshops, OWL models and teaches caring, compassion, respect, and justice. It helps children in Grades 4-6 understand the physical and emotional changes of puberty. Participants explore values, communication and decision making, as well as physical health and development. This ten-workshop curriculum is designed to help children ages nine through twelve to gain the knowledge, life principles, and skills they need to understand and express their sexuality in holistic, life-enhancing ways." For more on this program, contact the coordinator at SUUS - Ms. **Benna Lehrer** bennalehrer@yahoo.com.

In today's media driven world, many young adults in **Grades 7-9** are being educated by glorified and graphic images of sexuality. The objective of the OWL program is to equip youth with accurate age-appropriate information to help them clarify their values, build interpersonal skills, and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality. Over **20 NMCC youth** have completed the 7-9 program in years past. Parents of youth in grades 7-9 will soon be receiving a separate invitation to enroll their youth.

Facilitators (male and female) are needed for both courses. Please contact Peter Meier (peterm190@yahoo.com) or Rev. Sarah Vetter (sarahevetter@gmail.com) at First Church for more information and/or for parent references.



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, and on the church answering machine (pending our ability to get into the church to access the voicemail system) shortly after 8:00 am.



Main Sanctuary Doors: Please note, as we do each year, in order to keep the church clean and warm, we will be keeping the sanctuary doors locked during the cold winter months. Please use the Fellowship Hall or Narthex entrances. Thanks!

- 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 and we'll be sure to include them!

Our Martin Luther King Jr. event held on January 20 was featured on the front page of *The Source* on January 24. **Danielle Feldman** was pictured.

Office, Board and Committee Contacts:

Interim Minister: Rev. Matt McCaffrey	203-421-3241
Office: Jackie Fix, Office Manager; Susan O'Connor, Clerk	203-421-3241
Minister of Music: Linda Juliani	860-399-0210
Choir Director: Bill Clemmons	203-421-3484
Christian Education: Rene Chin	203-421-3498
Junior Youth Group: Jen Boyer	203-421-2918
Rene Chin	203-421-3498
Karen Murphy	203-481-7597
with support from Jen Davies	203-318-0829
Senior Youth Group: Jen Davies	203-318-0829
Circle Nursery School: Kathy Niejadlik	203-421-0997

OFFICERS

Executive Committee Chair, Tom Lauher	203-530-7467
Executive Committee Vice Chairs, Beth Berestecky and Bob Blundon	203-421-3210 203-996-0671
Board of Deacons Members*:	See Below
Clerk, Eileen McCann	203-623-9155
Assistant Clerk, Calvin Price	203-245-8566
Treasurers, Michele Mauro and Keith Luckenbach	860-663-8009 203-421-5054
Assistant Treasurer, John Gallops	860-460-8573
Financial Secretary - Disbursements, Open	
Financial Secretary - Receipts, Susan O'Connor	203-457-1559
Asst. Financial Secretary - Disbursements - Open	
Asst. Financial Secretary - Receipts - Open	

* Carol Anne Bachhuber 203-747-4840; Kristin Polisky 203-421-1175; Karen Miller 203-915-2989; Scott Conover 203-453-1733; Keith Luckenbach 203-421-5054; Ivy Alexander 203-668-7177; Kate Summerlin 203-453-0700; Orlene Gallops 860-339-5844; Sandy Dickson 203-421-1178; Susan Kenney 203-530-1153; Melissa Blundon 203-421-4465

BOARDS/COMMITTEES

Board of Christian Ed Chair, Rene Chin	203-421-3498
Board of Deacons Co-Chair, Carol Anne Bachhuber Co-Chair, Kate Summerlin	203-747-4840 203-988-1993
Board of Finance Co-Chairs, Beth Berestecky and Bob Blundon	203-421-3210 203-996-0671
Communications Chair, Roberta Hanlon	203-421-4891
Hospitality Chair, Christine Farrales	203-421-9323
Human Resources Chair, Holly Francis	203-245-7331
Ministry Resource Team, TBD	
Music Chair, Heather Crawford	203-421-5670
Pastoral Relations, Chair, TBD	
Property & Planning Chair, Tom Lauher	203-530-7467
Quiet Ministry Chair, Linda Young	203-457-0723
Generosity Team, Jim Farrales	203-421-9323



Online Giving Available on our Website: Visit the church website at 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 →

