

THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS

April 2019

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

Interim Pastor's Notes

Spoiler alert: this column ends with Easter joy

by Rev. Matt McCaffrey

Kindness and generosity radiate in unexpected and sometimes unknowable ways.

That message was front and center this past week as over 30 members of our beloved community watched two TED (Technology, Entertainment, Design) Talk speakers describe how gestures of kindness had affected their lives.

One described his wonder at how a kind gesture offered by him had a profound effect on the person receiving it. The other testified to the kindness of neighbors and the tenacity of a mother in shaping the person she had grown up to be.

The impression we could take away was that a kinder, more generous world would help us all reach our potential as human beings. And I believe that happens to be true. If our everyday encounters with other people were uniformly about reciprocal acts of kindness; if we were able to give and receive without regard to the cost; if our experience of the world reinforced a philosophy of abundance and forgiveness...we would find ourselves thriving in a vibrant and healthy environment.

And, discussions about kindness and generosity wouldn't need to be in our everyday conversation.

I'm thinking about this as we approach our "high holy days" of Palm Sunday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, and Easter Sunday. A continuing conversation among Christian disciples is whether events of two thousand years ago – stressful, poignant, sadistically cruel, and mysterious – should be lifted up in our contemporary faith journeys. Should we focus regularly on the passion and death of Jesus, or should we be looking more to the hope embodied in the story of his rising?

If the world were a generous and kind place, I wonder if it would be necessary to observe Holy Week.

But, it's not. The macro-cruelty of our society confronts us every day. For every safety net that has managed to survive, we can cite three examples of vulnerable human beings tossed aside and left to fend for themselves. For every small step toward humane and enlightened judicial policy, we are stricken by the knowledge that fellow humans are incarcerated as the "collateral damage" of a failed war on drugs. For every gesture of understanding and reconciliation among cultures and racial groups, an appalling or even deadly gesture of hate surfaces.

Our world has the potential to be a better place. But as it stands, it is not.

To me, right now, this is a good reason to recount the stories of Holy Week.

I don't *want* to relive the suffering. But, I want to hear the words of tenderness, forgiveness...and yes, even kindness...that Jesus offered in his passion. I can't get close enough to hear them, and understand them, without experiencing his pain.

That's what I need as a powerful model for how to be kind in a world of cruelty, and how to be generous in a world of parsimony. That's what strengthens me, lifts me up.

That's what makes it possible for me to experience Easter Day with knowing joy.

Yours in Christ,



Rev. Matt

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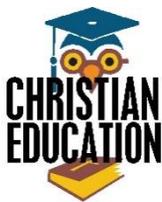
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We're Hiring - Director of Christian Education and Youth Groups: North Madison Congregational Church, an Open and Affirming Congregation of the United Church of Christ, seeks a motivated person with strong spiritual values and experience working with children and youth to serve 20 hours per week as Director of Christian Education and Youth Groups. Consistent with our purpose statement and

congregation-centric orientation, the successful candidate will work with the Pastor and the Board of Christian Education to recruit and support volunteer teachers, collaborate in selecting curriculum, organize special children's events including Vacation Bible School, speak as part of the Sunday Children's Message rotation; co-lead a Confirmation program with the Pastor; schedule and run youth groups at Junior and Senior High levels, including outreach, personal growth, and Mission Trip work; and associated administrative activities. A Bachelor's Degree is required, preferably with a major in Education, as well as two years' minimum experience teaching and/or working with children and youth in an organized setting. A full job description is available on request. Inquiries by email to office@NorthMadisonCC.org.

- Community Outreach / Fund Raisers -



Governance Team Update: The Ministry Resource Team has been launched! As you may recall, last year over the summer we held pot luck dinners and then had a workshop in September that brought all of your ideas together about our approach to outreach ministries. Based upon your input, we then proposed, and you supported the creation of the Ministry Resource Team that oversees the Outreach Ministry which is made up of our Ministries (organizations and programs) that serve our local, regional and international communities. The Executive Committee approved the membership and wasted no time in getting started on their work. Please welcome and we invite you to support Roberta Hanlon, Gail Faithful, Sandy Dickson, Cal Price and E.I. Lyn Boling. Check out the launch article in this newsletter which speaks to their progress!

The Governance Team has continued working on our structure and in March made recommendations to the Executive Committee to support changes to our Pastoral Relations Committees and Music Committee which you will be hearing more about at our May Annual Meeting. We are also working with the existing Generosity Team and Communications Team and hope to have a proposal to you at the May Meeting as well.

As always, we welcome any ideas you may have about our structure or ways for us to break down barriers to full participation on the part of our church members/friends in doing the work of the church. Please feel free to contact us with your ideas or to ask questions.

Happy Easter from the Governance Team
Holly Francis, Roberta Hanlon, Tom Lauher, Keith Luckenbach



Ministry Resource Team Launches Search for Outreach Ministry Champions:

The MRT oversees the launch of NMCC's Outreach Ministry. In its first 2 months the MRT has begun creating processes and tools that will shape the way the Team does its work. Through the end of April, we are focused on identifying Champions who are moved by the Spirit to lead the Ministries (organizations and programs) we supported in 2018 and will continue to serve in 2019.

Champions are key to the success of the Outreach Ministry. In their role the Champions develop the plan for their ministry including gathering a team, creating activities and new ideas that will engage members to serve. Champions are already developing proposals for the following Outreach Ministries - if you are interested in joining these teams, contact the Champions listed below:

- Columbus House - Roberta Hanlon
- Connecticut Quest for Peace - Gail Faithfull
- Continuum of Care - Mental Illness: Adults - Jim Farrales
- Youth Continuum - Lyn Boling
- Yoga - Karen Chapman

We need you! If you are interested in being a Champion for one of the Ministries, we supported in 2018, please contact any member of the MRT. For details of our 2018 activities, visit our Serve the

Community <http://northmadisoncc.org/get-involved/serve-the-community/> or Serve the World <http://northmadisoncc.org/get-involved/serve-the-world/>.

- Book Club – topics related to our Outreach Ministry
- Families ReEntry – Prison
- Habitat: Raise the Roof – Affordable Houses for Families
- LOVE 146 – Child Trafficking (international)
- New Reach – Homeless Families
- St. Martin de Porres Academy – Education and Opportunity for Children
- Shoreline Kitchens and Food Pantry – Hunger and Loneliness (food collection)
- Unidad Latina en Accion – Social Justice
- Women & Family Life Center – Women and Families in Crisis

If you have any questions or are interested in becoming an Outreach Ministry Champion, please contact any of these **Ministry Resource Team Members**: Sandy Dickson, Gail Faithfull, Roberta Hanlon, Cal Price, E.I. Lyn Boling or ex officio Rev. Matt McCaffrey.

Not interested in these but are moved by the Spirit to propose a new Ministry to the MRT? Please contact member Cal Price, wildwood9@msn.com or 203-245-8566, to start the conversation. We're ready to share your passion!



Yoga: Monday night sessions will run until 4/29 from 6:30-7:30, as usual. Session price is \$60.00. Thursday night sessions will run until 5/2 with no class on Maundy Thursday (4/18). Thursday nights continue to meet from 6:15-7:15 (come on all you choir members!) and the cost is \$50. If you sign up for both sessions the cost is \$105. Busy spring? Drop-ins continue to be welcome at \$10/class. Questions? Contact Karen Chapman at (203) 314-9299 (evenings only please) All details are also posted on the 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.



Potluck of Kindness: A Pot Luck Dinner was hosted by both the Generosity Team and Men’s Group Wednesday night, March 27, 2019 from 6 – 8 pm. There were 32 members and friends in attendance. The Pot Luck Dinner featured not only great food and desserts but also two separate TED (technology, entertainment, design) Talks.

Following the TED Talks, Ken Nichols facilitated an activity with each table discussing a different focus question as it relates to Love, the Ten Commandments, Christianity, Justice, and the teachings of Jesus. After each table discussion, a representative from each table shared a summary of their respective discussions. A special thanks to Ken Nichols, Frank Walsh, Rev. Matt McCaffrey, Peter Haff, John Gallops, and Jim Farrales for making the night a success.



Intergenerational Choir: On April 7, we will present our final Intergenerational Choir selections of the year. It has been exciting to have young voices join with our NMCC choir for three special Sundays! We will sing two anthems on April 7 and the Benediction song features Emily and Lucy Alletzhauer on hand chimes.



Adult Enrichment: We are following the MLK celebration and speaker’s theme of racial justice with the showing of the movie “13th” - Rated TV-14 . Netflix’s describes this movie as a “combination of archival footage with testimony from activists and scholars”. Director Ava DuVernay examines the US prison system and looks at the country’s history of racial inequality.

Please join us on April 9, Tuesday evening, 7 to 9pm for a viewing of the movie, followed by a discussion.



Pastoral Search Committee: On March 20 the Pastoral Search Committee had the first of two meetings with Rev. Mary Nelson, our regional minister, to receive her feedback on the draft of our Local Church Profile. She gave us many good suggestions of ways to tighten up our information and make our profile stand out, and we have already begun revising based on her input. We have one more meeting scheduled with her on April 9. After that meeting we hope to have a final draft ready within a few weeks. We are in the home stretch of this phase of our process!



Holy Week Schedule:

Palm Sunday - April 14 at 10:00 AM: On Palm Sunday, once again our NMCC choir will be offering a presentation of extra special music. This year, they are pleased to offer a collection of several stunningly beautiful anthems of composer Rene Clausen focusing on Praise, Thanksgiving and Love.

Clausen, Professor of Music at Concordia College and director of their renowned choir, has been described as one of the very few composers having the ability to bring music from the "heart" as well as the mind and the spirit onto the musical page.

Please join us on April 14 for an experience of exquisite music.

Maundy Thursday Fellowship Supper and Service of Remembrance - April 18 at 6:00 PM: Join in our family-friendly potluck supper and service of remembrance on Maundy Thursday. We remember the Last Supper and Jesus' prayers in the Garden of Gethsemane for guidance and strength. We will share communion following the meal.

Service of Tenebrae on Good Friday - April 19 at 7:00 PM: In this Tenebrae (Latin for "Shadows") Service, the most somber day of the Christian calendar, we follow Jesus 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. We invite you to linger and contemplate all that it means for the hope of the world and the transformation of your life. Our friends from First Congregational Church in Madison will join us in presence and participation.

Prayer Vigil - Good Friday - April 19 at 8:00 PM through 6:00 AM, Easter Morning - April 21 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 for a specific time to experience the quiet peace of the sanctuary. Our tradition is for this to be a solitary or with friends or family experience. Someone will be in the church office during the night hours.

Easter Sunrise - April 21 at 6:00 AM: Join us as the dawn breaks and we lift up our hearts with music, readings and prayer, celebrating together God's gifts of new life and wholeness. There are two services this year. First Church, Madison, and NMCC will offer a shared service on Long Island Sound at the Madison Beach Hotel, led by Rev. Matt, and Revs. Todd and Sarah Vetter. Our traditional "home" service will be led by Deacons at Summer Hill Cemetery. The cemetery is located less than a mile from NMCC on the right on Route 80, east of the 79/80 Circle, just before Summer Hill Road.

Easter Sunday - April 21 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. Our sanctuary will be filled with beautiful flowers, joyous music, inspired scripture and a special message of hope celebrating God's love for the world.



Spring Cleanup: The P&P Committee has scheduled the Spring cleanup for Saturday, April 13th, from 10am to 2pm. Calling all volunteers to help! Work will begin at 10:00am, but stop by at any time you can! Bring your rakes, leaf blowers, tarps and brooms. We'll also be doing some cleanup inside the church. Our goal is to muster enough workers to tidy the Church property, and to finish by Noon. If you have any questions, please contact Tom Lauher, 203-530-7467, thomaslauher@sbcglobal.net.



"A Caring for All Creation Clean-Up:" We will meet in the parking lot behind the church on Saturday, April 27, from 9:00-12:00. Part of our purpose statement states that we should, "care for all creation." On April 27, the town of Madison will be doing a community-wide town clean-up. Come join Kristin Polisky and Heather Crawford as we do our part to clean up some of the land surrounding our church. We will provide gloves and bags. You just need some sturdy boots and a willingness to clean up a small part of Mother Earth. There will be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall so that we will know how many supplies are needed. This activity is recommended for teens and adults. Feel free to bring your pruners in case you feel like cutting back some invasive plants.



Consociation Choir Festival: Looking ahead to May...
SAVE THE DATE for the 19th CONSOCIATION CHOIR FESTIVAL!
Sunday, May 5 at 4:00 PM... East Haven Congregational Church
Our own choir will be participating and would LOVE to have some "cheerleaders" from NMCC in the congregation! It is always an exciting afternoon of amazing music from our area UCC churches, ending with anthems by all the combined singers!!



Help us start our video channel on YouTube. We need 100 subscribers to have an easily-found and -remembered address for YouTube. No big commitment: just go to this temporary address and click "Subscribe": <http://bit.ly/NoMadVideo>



Share your church in the community through social media: We are on Facebook, Instagram, Pinterest, and Twitter. Find any or all of our pages on those sites by typing @NoMadUCC into each network's search bar.



FREE PIANO!!! We are looking to give away a spinet piano! It has been stored in the community room closet for the past few years and we need it to find a good home soon. Please speak to Linda Juliani or call the church office if you are interested!

- 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!

Danielle Farrales was pictured and quoted in articles on Patch and the *New Haven Register* and *The Source* along with the Daniel Hand VIBE choir. VIBE beat out 10 other show choirs from around the nation, to add six more awards to their collection.

Our **Martin Luther King Event** was featured last month on the cover of *The Source*. Here's a link to photos taken during the event and posted online:
<https://www.zip06.com/apps/pbcs.dll/gallery?Site=Z6&Date=20190122&Category=MEDIA02&ArtNo=122009989&Ref=PH>

People in the News – *The Source* – March 21

Dean's List Fall Semester, 2018: University of Rhode Island: **Nicole Farrales**; Roger Williams College: **Erin Shafer**; University of Vermont: **Conor Dickson**; Connecticut College: **Abby Murphy**; University of New Hampshire – **Parker Boling** with honors; Quinnipiac University – **Sabrina Colonese DiBello**

Academic and Extracurricular: Quinnipiac University - **Sabrina Colonese DiBello**, Academic Honor Society: Communications; Clemson University – **Morgan Werth**, *summa cum laude*; Gettysburg College – **Reed Berestecky** studied abroad in Spain for the semester

Melinda Clemmons was featured on the front cover of the Continuum magazine, with mention of the NMCC **Knitting Club** inside.

In The Community

Retrospection, Introspection and Perspectives on Race: First Congregational Church in Madison is hosting conversations on race on March 24, April 28 and May 19 from 7:00 – 8:30 pm. Refreshments will be served and a free will offering will go to Equal justice Initiative. Please RSVP to svetter@fccmadison.org – or be spontaneous.

Meet the CTUCC Legislators: Friday, April 5 from 10-11am at Legislative Office Building, 300 Capital Avenue, Hartford CT. We encourage you to set up a meeting with your State Senator and State Representative either before or after the meeting. State Representative Anne Hughes, State Senator Tony Hwang, State Senator Christine Cohen, CTUCC Conference Minister the Reverend Kent Siladi, CTUCC Legislative Advocate Michele Mudrick, and other CTUCC members will attend. RSVP to Michele Mudrick at michelem@ctu.org or (860) 796-3822.

Parents Night Out: Drop the kids off and enjoy a night out on April 5, from 6 – 10 pm at First Congregational Church in Madison in Hubley Hall. Children from preschool – grade 6 can enjoy board games, fun cool crafts, pajama party, free play and more. All proceeds will support Daniel Hand students' mission trip to Dominican Republic. Sign up now to reserve your space. Four hour flat rate is \$25 for 1 child, \$20 for each additional sibling. Contact Stacey at MadisonParentNightOut@gmail.com or text/call 203-843-5919.

Building Bridges Ministry: St. George Church, 33 Whitfield Street in Guilford invites you to a special event on Sunday, April 7 at 4:00 PM in the Father Sullivan Center located behind the main church.

During Lent we invite you to reflect on the voices and perspectives that are often not heard in the church - to listen and to engage in conversation with people and communities that are different from your own, to be open to God's voice in the most unexpected places. Please join us for a presentation by parents of LGBTQ+ children as well as members of the LGBTQ+ community. Our panelists will share their stories, their blessings, their needs and their dreams for their children and/or themselves. Please join us as we learn from our LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters how we can support them and make them feel welcome in our communities. A time for questions and dialogue will follow. For more information, please contact Margot at margotburkle@gmail.com or Diana at ddartharris@gmail.com.

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; * Kate Summerlin 203-453-0700; Kristin Polisky 203-421-1175; Karen Miller 203-915-2989; Scott Conover 203-453-1733; Keith Luckenbach 203-421-5054; 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



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