



## THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS

March 2020

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

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**In the News and Noteworthy**

Fire in the Kitchen

Dear Friends and Spiritual Nomads,

On Ash Wednesday, we enter the season of Lent, the time of Jesus' formation in the wilderness for the ministry that would follow. His journey begins with the Spirit informing Jesus of his belovedness, and progresses into that same Spirit inviting Jesus, driving him actually, to retreat into deepening knowledge of and commitment to living that love. Jesus finds himself so committed to his love relationship with God that nothing else tempts him to sever or diminish it. This is the Spirit's gift to him; his acceptance of this journey is Jesus' gift to God and all of us.

The fruits of that wilderness journey form the foundation of Jesus' strength, his ability to love so tenaciously, gaze so unflinchingly, share compassion so courageously, speak out for justice and truth so relentlessly, and live with such complete freedom that he surrenders even his own life rather than turn away from what that time in God's wilderness has shown him.

As we stand on the threshold of this Lent, I feel sometimes like the whole world around is a barren wilderness. I have heard many of you express similar dismay. We feel in disarray as nation continues to rise up against nation; our national parties bicker and shout; our communities struggle with injustice and local uncertainties; we experience our own personal relationships with woundedness and wounding; and truth and the common good seem to have left the building. Sea levels are rising; plastics and other human bi-products overwhelm our ecosystems; light pollutes our skies; cruel factory farming persists; forests diminish; and we can't even agree that it is happening, never mind find a cure. Oy! It is easy to feel overwhelmed and insignificant in the face of it all.

Our Worship Team has been reflecting with great care and love about how we may weave worship experiences that sustain our hope, facilitate our healing, and invite us more deeply into a truer kind of wilderness, a wilderness not of fear but of deeper truth. A wilderness not of danger but of our vision's transformation.

Jesus might well have looked out at the ills and inhumanities of his own time and felt despair. He too lived in a time of a great empire's declining and knew all the cruelty that such upheaval brings. That is part of what makes his witness so powerful for us now. Jesus models for us not a cry of surrender, but a life lived in brazen hope and tenacious love. His story reminds us that the same Spirit that opens our eyes anoints our paths. That Spirit invites each of us now to come into the wilderness with Jesus and to grow as he did in our union and communion with our Creator and our Creator's astoundingly beautiful and complex Creation. We, too, are God's beloved. Jesus' call to ministry invites us to step away from the distractions of our lives and come away into the wilderness; to open our hearts and remember how connected we, and our journeys, are to one another, our God, and this wild planet on which we live...and how powerful we can be in saving it.

I can't wait to be with you again in the sanctuary. The Spirit is calling!

Love on the journey,  
Heather

## **- This Month In Worship! -**

Our theme for Lent is Caring for Creation as we journey with Jesus into the wilderness. Each Sunday worship service will center on an element of Creation with opportunities to focus our Lenten practice and prayer. A calendar of ideas will be provided in worship and email every Sunday for the week's focus.

- 3/1 Partnering with God in Creation
- 3/8 Creation
- 3/15 Forest
- 3/22 UN World Water Day
- 3/29 Dark Sky and Energy

*Looking Ahead~Mark Your Calendars:*

- 4/5 Palm Sunday Choir Celebration with Orchestra and Selections from Handel's *Messiah*
- 4/9 Maundy Thursday Potluck 6:00 p.m.
- 4/10 Good Friday Blues and Tenebrae Service 7:00 p.m.
- Prayer Vigil: April 10 at 8:00 p.m. - April 12 at 6:00 a.m. Easter Morning
- 4/12 Easter Sunrise Resurrection Celebration among the Saints in our Summer Hill Cemetery at 6 a.m. and Easter Sunrise Celebration at the Shoreline with First Congregational at Madison Beach Hotel at 6:30 a.m.
- 4/12 Easter Worship in the Sanctuary
- 4/22 Earth Day 50th Anniversary Celebration at 7:00 p.m.

# - Children and Youth Ministries -

## A Note from Sue Timony-Hall



Hi NMCC preteens, teens and families!

Can you believe that we are already heading into March and the Lenten season?

This year, our church's theme for Lent is creation care. We will be taking time as a community to reflect on what it means to be stewards of creation and to participate in spiritual lessons that center around care for all living creatures and our planet. We hope that you, your family, and friends will join us over the coming weeks as we prepare for Easter.

March also brings us multiple service opportunities in which we are invited to come together to assist our neighbors in various ways.

Please read on for details below.

Friends always welcome!

With love,  
Sue



**Volunteers Needed for Raise the Roof (RTR)/Habitat Build:** If you are age 16 or older and have some building/construction experience or are interested in learning, please join us on Saturday, March 21 to help on the newest RTR/Habitat build at 2 Button Street in New Haven. NMCC is hosting this build date and we need 10 volunteers. The First Congregational Church in Guilford will be joining us on March 21.

The new family of 5 is from the Philippines and need our help to not only build their home but to earn the 400 volunteers hours needed to become the new homeowners. So, what do you say? Can you help this family's dream come true? For more information and to sign up, please contact Frank Walsh directly: [frankxwalsh@comcast.net](mailto:frankxwalsh@comcast.net)



**UPDATE on JYG In-house Mission Weekend:** Our 7th and 8th graders are looking forward to their annual weekend of service and fun, beginning at dinner time Friday, March 27 and concluding after Worship on Sunday, March 29. In order to make this happen, we will need one parent (or more) to sleep at the church with me and our kids each night of that weekend - Friday, March 27 and Saturday, March 28. We will also need drivers/chaperones for Columbus House Saturday morning, March 28th, and continuing throughout the day on Saturday. I will send a sign-up genius out with time slots by March 15, but please email me to volunteer to sleep overnight and/or to drive to Columbus House asap - having those commitments sorted out will make planning much easier for me.



**NEW INVITE: SYG - New London Soup Kitchen Dinner:** HS teens - We are invited to serve dinner at the New London Soup Kitchen on Sunday, March 22. We will depart NMCC at approximately 3:30 and return at approximately 7:30. Due to the size of the space, only 8

teens are needed to serve. We will need one additional driver. Please reply asap to drive and/or reserve your spot. First come, first serve.



**Summer Mission Trip to Maine:** General Details: July 5th - 11th - H.O.M.E. mission trip to Orland, Maine to repair homes for the rural poor. \$450 per participant. Speak with Sue confidentially if this is cost prohibitive for your family. \$150 non-refundable deposit due by March 1st. Thank you to St. Andrew's for inviting us to join them, and thank you to Jen Davies and Ryan Murphy for leading this experience.

Sue can always be reached on her cell: 203-843-6206



**OWL March Update:** NMCC has joined the Shoreline Unitarian Universalist Society and The Madison First Congregational Church in presenting the OWL (Our Whole Lives) Program (sexuality Education) to our 4<sup>th</sup>, 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> graders. 18 children are enrolled. We are running two session each Sunday 12:30-1:45 and 2:30-3:45. We thought we would not be as effective teaching one large group. Next Sunday will be our 7<sup>th</sup> session (out of 10) and will cover "Reproduction and Staying Healthy." It is wonderful to see our children becoming comfortable with the topics and being very involved in the discussions and activities. Frank Walsh is co-facilitating the instruction with Elizabeth Hale from the Madison Unitarians. Instruction is held at First church in Madison.

## - Community Outreach and Fundraisers -



**Ministry Resource Team:** ".....now our service begins!"

The Camara-Sylla home has been blessed, a new build has begun, we're signing up to host dinner for Columbus House Abraham's tent participants at Orange Congregational church and we are in our final month to provide breakfast items for the Clinton Food Pantry.



**Breakfast at Columbus House:** The two Columbus House breakfasts in February were led by Heather Crawford and Sue Christiano. Upcoming dates are March 14 (led by Peter Meier) and March 28 when the JYG will join Roberta Hanlon to serve breakfast. Meet at Columbus House at 6:30 a.m. or join a carpool. Sign up (back hall) to purchase and prepare eggs, toast, juice, potatoes or sausages. If you would like to serve breakfast, but find the cost of purchasing difficult, please contact Roberta Hanlon [roberthanlon@msn.com](mailto:roberthanlon@msn.com) or Peter Meier [peterm190@yahoo.com](mailto:peterm190@yahoo.com) to be reimbursed. Roberta Hanlon, Columbus House Champion.



**A New Way to Support Columbus House:** Orange Congregational Church has invited us to support them in hosting Columbus House's Abraham's Tent ministry, in which unhoused men sleep for a week in a church. OCC has invited us to host supper for the sojourners and volunteers (20 adults) Tuesday, March 24, and to join in the celebration feast at the week's end (3/29). Please speak to Pastor Heather to help cook, host, or stay overnight with the men at OCC that night (two adults, including at least one male, are needed for the sleep-over night).

Supper is served at 6pm at OCC. We will decide together what to prepare and when and where to prepare it. Please join Pastor Heather in sharing NMCC hospitality with our friends!



**Loaves & Fishes Ministry:** This quarter (January - March of 2020) our food collection and monetary donations will provide food support in Clinton. We've been asked to focus on breakfast bars, juice and cereal. As the Madison Food Pantry's official "Tuna Church" we will also continue to collect canned tuna. Please leave your donations in the food pantry basket at the back of the sanctuary for pick up. If you have questions, contact John Gallops, Loaves & Fishes Ministry Champion, [jgallops@aol.com](mailto:jgallops@aol.com) or 860-460-8573. Attention all NMCC yogis or anyone interested in joining our warm, welcoming yoga.



**Raise the Roof/Habitat New Haven:** On Sunday, February 9, we celebrated the dedication of the home of Laye Camara and Fatoumata Sylla, Raise the Roof's sixteenth sponsored Habitat build Raise the Roof/Habitat. Pastor Heather and a local Imam invited by the family led the blessing and presented a copy of the Qur'an to the family. Frank Walsh served as the family partner for the Camara-Sylla family during their journey to build and own this home at 39 Elliott Street in New Haven. Dedication ceremony attendees honored their accomplishment. Read about their remarkable story on the IRIS web site: <https://www.irisct.org/a-home-of-their-own>. Our Family Partnership parents do not speak English very well and this would prevent them from access to the citizenship process. We are looking into the possibility of giving English instruction to Fatoumata and Laye.



Next NMCC build takes place at 2 Button Street in New Haven. Groundbreaking was on 2/15. A family of five from the Philippines will move in when the home is completed. Our first build date for this home is on February 29<sup>th</sup> and we are fully staffed with 10 folks, some of whom are from other churches.

Our next build date is March 21 - we will be joined by the First Congregational Church in Guilford. We need to register 5 volunteers by March 13 - will you be one of them? You can register here: <http://www.raisetherooft.org/page/17306-How-to-Help> - you will need to first set up a profile and then to go the calendar to select your date, and indicate you are with NMCC.

We are building the RTR Ministry through establishing partnerships with faith communities in the area. Nine have been contacted thus far and we received positive responses from four. We have received positive responses from four places of worship: Temple Beth Tikvah invited NMCC members to join them at an RTR build on April 19<sup>th</sup>. St. Andrews is interested in partnering with us and Christ Episcopal Church in Bethany very interested in working with us and is promoting this among their congregation.

Please remember that there are many ways to serve Raise the Roof and Habitat for Humanity. Go to the RTR website to sign-up. Contact Frank Walsh or Cal Price, Raise the Roof/Habitat New Haven Champions.



**Community Yoga:** Attention all NMCC yogis or anyone interested in joining our warm, welcoming yoga community. Our next yoga session begins the first week of March and runs through the end of April. Monday night classes meet at 6:30 and run from 3/2-4/27. The Monday night session price is \$65.00. Thursday night's session

begins on 3/5 and runs through 4/30. Thursday night classes begin at 6:15 and cost \$60.00. There will be no Thursday night class on 4/9 due to an Easter week program at the church. As always, sign up for both sessions and receive a discount- both evenings for \$120.00. Questions? Email Karen Chapman at [krchapman@comcast.net](mailto:krchapman@comcast.net) or text her at (203) 314-9299.

**Ministry Resource Team** members are Lyn Boling [lboling123@comcast.net](mailto:lboling123@comcast.net), Roberta Hanlon (Team Leader) [robertahanlon@msn.com](mailto:robertahanlon@msn.com) or Cal Price [wildwood9@msn.com](mailto:wildwood9@msn.com) if you have any questions.



### **Fire in the Kitchen Concert - Barefoot Movement - March 21, 7:00 p.m.:**

Charlie Shafer has always loved Barefoot Movement, and we've had them twice now for holiday shows. Those were great, but they never really had the chance to show what they're all about. Now they will. Once again, we're talking about four folks who can really play. But once again, they're well past the point of worrying about whether or not they're showing off chops. Killer harmonies, but used to just slay soulful and rocking old-time/bluegrass/soul/R&B inflected tunes that like every good thing are impossible to adequately describe with words. Take that you ad copy expository writing professor from back in college. Adults \$25, kids \$5. Email Charlie Shafer at [workdog@mindspring.com](mailto:workdog@mindspring.com) for tickets.



**Grocery Cards:** Please support our church by purchasing Grocery Cards on Sundays after worship in Fellowship Hall. There's no extra cost to you, but the church receives a percentage of the sales. Team members on duty are:

March 1 - Nora & Calvin Price

March 8 - Felicity Doyle

March 15 - Nannette Paul & Mike Efenecy

March 22 - Martha & Ken Nichols

March 29 - Karen Miller

Please see Calvin Price with any questions about the program.

## - Get Involved / Stay Connected -



There are many ways to be involved in NMCC's vibrant community – serving in an Outreach Ministry, mentoring and teaching our children, joining in musicmaking or worship planning, helping out around the church building, sharing the gifts God has given you, learning new skills from others, enjoying the fellowship of working on projects together. Visit our [Get Involved](#) page for opportunities at [northmadisoncc.org](http://northmadisoncc.org).



**Intergenerational Choir:** The final scheduled segment of the Intergenerational choir for this year will include three brief rehearsals in the Community Room at the beginning of Children's Church on Sundays March 8, 15, 22 with all the kids singing! Ann, Bill and Linda will head downstairs when the children leave worship to teach them "Look at The World" by John Rutter which they will sing with the adult choir on Sunday, March 29 – the final Sunday of our Lenten "Caring for Creation" theme!



**Ukulele Club:** Hey You! Sitting in that chair. Yeah, you. Looking for something fun to do? More fun than anything you're doing right now? Join the NMCC's fledgling Ukulele Club, where a bunch of amateurs with little to no experience on one of these little things get together and bang away on all sorts of tunes. We're just getting started, so there's virtually no level of skills yet, which means there's no reason to worry. Or no reason to come up with an excuse of why it's more fun to sit on the couch and read this as opposed to come play. We meet Monday evenings in the Community Room at 7:30, or reasonably close to it. Get on the mailing list, so you receive all the updates. Don't have a uke? We have a few, and can always find more. Any questions? Ask Pastor Heather or Charlie Shafer or just email the office and Jackie will forward it on. Any way you look at it, it's time to start.



**Congregational Life Ministry Team:** The Congregational Life Ministry Team was pleased to organize a series of Pot Luck Gatherings over the last two months entitled, "Kindling Spirit Winter Gatherings." A total of five different gatherings were held in members' homes with over fifty members and friends participating in these gatherings. These gatherings not only offered a more intimate setting to get to know our new settled pastor, Rev. Dr. Heather Arcovitch, but it also gave members and friends a chance to share in their spiritual journey. For some it meant rekindling old friendships; for others, it meant learning something new about someone that they might have known, and for others it meant developing a new relationship.

A theme we heard many times in these gatherings was justice. To continue in the spirit of reflecting on justice, we are planning a potluck in the Fellowship Hall after Easter. We will use a format similar to the one we used in the event we held in March 2019 with resources from TED Talks as discussion starters. Look for further information on this. The mission of the Congregational Life Ministry Team is sponsoring events for our congregation that will strengthen our bonds of fellowship. If you're interested in joining the Congregational Life Ministry Team, you can speak with Ken Nichols or Jim Farrales or email the office at [Office@northmadisoncc.org](mailto:Office@northmadisoncc.org) and someone from the team will be in contact with you.



**Book Discussion Group:** Our next meeting will be on Tuesday evening, March 24th, at 7 P.M. in the Library. The book is *Between the World and Me* by Ta-Nehisi Coates, who won a National Book Award for this non-fiction masterpiece. It is a profound work that pivots from the biggest questions about American history and ideals to the most intimate concerns of a father for his son. Contact Peter Meier if you have any questions, [peterm190@yahoo.com](mailto:peterm190@yahoo.com), 203-421-8377.



**Introducing our New Bookkeeper Rhonda Spencer:** Rhonda Spencer has been hired as our new Bookkeeper, replacing Susan O'Connor. A big thank you to Susan for all she has done! Rhonda will cover the office on Tuesdays, assume some new responsibilities to help with the Treasurer position, and back up Jackie. Rhonda lives in Madison with her husband, Tim and their two daughters, Lily (20) and Mia (17). She attends Christ Chapel Church in Madison. During her career, Rhonda has worked at Corning Incorporated in Corning, NY and the Corning Area Chamber of Commerce. She and her family also lived in Northern California for nine years. In addition to her work here, she also works part-time in the office of the Church of the Holy Advent in Clinton, and Nutmeg Twisters Gymnastics in Guilford.



**Have you "liked" us on Facebook?:** Please share the love and a glowing review there~tell our neighbors what you love about being part of NMCC and what God is doing here. You never know who may be looking for a welcoming church home as Easter approaches, or whom you may inspire!



**New Members' Class:** Anyone is welcome to worship and participate with us in all our ministries, regardless of official membership. And, we'd love to have you become a covenanted member of our congregation! If you would like to learn more about becoming a member of NMCC, we'd love to talk with you! A new members' class is forming now. And, members of this class will have bragging rights to joining on the same day as Pastor Heather and Barb! Please let Heather or the church office know you're interested.



**An Opportunity to Help with Our Video Ministry:** We record worship each Sunday and broadcast on local TV. We also post the sermon and other bits of the worship service online for members and friends who cannot be present in the sanctuary with us. We love this ministry, and there are openings for members to join in the rotation at the video camera. Can you help? You earn two extra stars in heaven! Please contact the church office or talk with Tim Murphy, [timmurphy6050@att.net](mailto:timmurphy6050@att.net) or Frank Walsh [frankxwalsh@comcast.net](mailto:frankxwalsh@comcast.net). Thank you!



**Another Way You Can Serve NMCC - Treasurer:** Are you looking for a new way to serve NMCC? Has God gifted you in the area of finance or accounting? NMCC is looking for a new Treasurer. As an officer of the church, the Treasurer must be a member in good standing and have a general understanding of generally accepted accounting principles (GAAP). Your time and talents will be needed at least two hours per week to review timesheets, sign paychecks and checks, review A/R for coding and proper documentation, and read and address the Treasurer's email. An additional 2-4 hours per month would be invested in reviewing bank reconciliation reports and the general ledger (including income and expenses) and preparing monthly reports and meetings with the Board of Finance and the Executive Committee. At year end, the Treasurer prepares annual financial reports and works with the Board of Finance in developing annual budgets with each of the Teams/Committees and Boards, and works with the Audit

Committee in carrying out an annual audit. If you are interested or would like to learn more please contact John Gallops, Chair of the Board of Finance, [jgallops@aol.com](mailto:jgallops@aol.com).

## - 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 board 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 was a **Fire in the Kitchen** Concert press release for the Youth in a Roman Field concert held on February 15 in the February 6 edition of *The Source*.

### Office, Board and Committee Contacts:

**Senior Minister:** Rev. Dr. Heather Arcovitch 203-421-3241  
**Office:** Jackie Fix, Office Manager; Rhonda Spencer, Bookkeeper 203-421-3241  
**Minister of Music:** Linda Juliani 860-399-0210  
**Choir Director:** Bill Clemmons 203-421-3484  
**Minister of Faith Formation & Youth Ministry:** Sue Timony-Hall 203-245-1531  
**Circle Nursery School:** Kathy Niejadlik 203-421-0997

### OFFICERS

Executive Committee Chair, Jim Farrales 203-421-9323  
Executive Committee Vice Chair, Tom Lauher 203-530-7467  
Board of Deacons Members\*: See Below  
Clerk, Eileen McCann 203-623-9155  
Assistant Clerk, Kate Davis 203-421-5848  
Treasurers, Michele Mauro 860-663-8009  
and Keith Luckenbach 203-421-5054  
Assistant Treasurer, John Gallops 860-460-8573  
Financial Secretary/Disbursements, Open  
Asst. Financial Secretary/Disbursements, Open  
Financial Secretary/Receipts, Susan O'Connor 203-457-1559  
Asst. Financial Secretary/Receipts - Calvin Price 203-245-8566

\* Kate Summerlin 203-453-0700; \* Sandy Dickson 203-421-1178; Susan Christiano, 203-314-8853; Peter Haff, 203-415-2773; Melissa Blundon, 203-421-4465; Orlene Gallops 860-339-5844; Dawn Barber, 203-457-1868; Susan Kenney 203-530-1153

### BOARDS/COMMITTEES/TEAMS

Board of Christian Ed Chair, Janice Wolf 203-809-0877  
Board of Deacons Co-Chair, Kate Summerlin 203-988-1993  
Co-Chair, Sandy Dickson 203-421-1178  
Board of Finance, John Gallops 860-460-8573  
Communications Team Leader, Roberta Hanlon 203-500-8311  
Hospitality Chair, Martha Nichols 860-346-2000  
Human Resources Chair, Jim Farrales 203-421-9323  
Ministry Resource Team Leader, Roberta Hanlon 203-500-8311  
Music Chair, TBD  
Pastoral Relations Contact, Carol Luckenbach 203-530-9903  
Property & Planning Chair, Tom Lauher 203-530-7467  
Quiet Ministry Chair, Linda Young 203-457-0723  
Cong. Life Ministry Team Co-Chair, Ken Nichols 860-346-2000  
Co-Chair, Jim Farrales 203-421-9323

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