



## THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS

September 2020

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

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

### **- Pastor's Note -**

Let us not become weary in doing good,  
For at the proper time we will reap a harvest  
If we do not give up!  
~Galatians 6:9

This will be my first Autumn back in New England for over 15 years (I did sneak one or two in there during that time.). It is Barb's first New England fall ever! As the light and the air begin to change, and the leaves with them, we are almost giddy to be here for this time of year.

Autumn is a time for gorgeous leaves, apples, hiking, hard cider, sweater-weather, pumpkin-everything, and, of course, gathering in the harvest.

Growing up on the Connecticut shoreline, I, like most of us, had not lived an agricultural life. My family and I enjoyed going pumpkining in October and taking the occasional hay ride with a church youth group, but the deeper meanings of these autumn traditions were simply symbolic to me. When I lived overseas (in Togo, West Africa) and in rural Missouri, I learned more about all that is required – and all that is invested and at stake – in running a family farm and living off the land. The feeling of turning the soil, planting food crops, and husbanding flocks of animals in the spring, in the hope that your hard work and God's

participation across hard-working summer months of watering, fertilizing, feeding, culling, protecting, and finally coming to harvest, is a whole different experience of partnership with Creator and creation. Those of us who have, even in fostering the growth of our home gardens, experienced what it is to partner with God to bear fruit in its season, know the hope, creativity, sweat, tenacity, bravery, sense of humor, and grit it can take.

Metaphors for planting, tending, and reaping are throughout our scripture. This is no accident, of course, because the parallels in the agrarian and the spiritual life are powerful. God places metaphors throughout to teach and inspire us. On the journey of life and faith, we till the soil of our lives, plant seeds – of relationships, habits, disciplines, and all sorts of investments – sometimes intentionally, sometimes accidentally or without thinking them through. What we plant grows, what we tend flourishes – for good and also for not-so-good. With God’s partnership, our lives begin to bear the fruits of our investments in them.

The church is a kind of practice field, a community in which we may engage the intentional cultivation of our souls and lives together. Jesus calls us to sew love in our lives, and the scriptures and (some of) our traditions teach us how to practice fruitful farming techniques for the reaping and distribution of a rich harvest.

This year, our Worship Team, Deacons, CE Board and I are exploring our cultivation of our love together in a new way. We are beginning to innovate ways we may cultivate our love more intentionally, through breaking down the component parts of godly love and identifying Christian practices and teachings we may begin to engage together intergenerationally to become an intentional community of practice – a family farm of Christian Love in action. Our Worship, Confirmation program, and intergenerational education and fellowship ministries will all be a part. We are very excited to share this journey with you as a collaboration. More to come in the weeks ahead!

With love and blessings for a rich autumn harvest,

Heather

## - Music -

**Choir Notes!** Traditionally in the September newsletter we are calling the choir BACK together after a summer hiatus and asking if there are new folks who would like to join us 😊

THIS year, our choir has been HARD AT WORK all summer long! When you see them all on screen singing “together” in separate little circles on a Sunday, it is difficult to comprehend the HOURS and HOURS everyone must put in to download rehearsal recordings from me, print out the music, find a way to tape it around the computer camera so that it can be viewed while singing, rehearse the music, trying to discern direction from Bill or me and then learn it well enough so their faces stay centered.... and on top of all that, I ask them to make sure that they SMILE ! 😊

THEN, they have to upload it to Scott Chasse’s Cloud and Scott and his able assistant Jack DiMatteo spend several MORE hours to try to line up all the individual recordings so they come out “together,” regulate volume balance etc.( THANK YOU for your continuing donations that make this work possible. Our dear Scott volunteers his time, but we hire Jack for his hours of expertise)

WHY IS OUR CHOIR WILLING TO DO ALL THIS ??????

They do it because they take their calling to be “ministers of music” seriously.

They do it because they love singing and enjoy making music together – however they have to do it!

They do it because they love our NMCC community and will do whatever it takes to keep us all connected in this COVID time....

They love “making a joyful noise” to our God – and for all of YOU !! ☺ 🎵 🎵 🎵

So... can we please give a SHOUT OUT to our dedicated choir friends? AND ALSO -- to all the wonderful folks from the congregation who have been willing to sing SHALOM on Sundays! AND ALSO – to all the other folks who are offering solos, duets or instrumental pieces!!! Isn't it special to see so many different faces – and many of them are NOT even in the choir?! We are so very blessed in our little church – not just with musical talent, but with the love and dedication it takes to keep the SPIRIT alive in so many musical ways....

THANKS BE TO GOD !!!!



**Invitation from The Music Team!** We would like to invite our members and friends to sponsor the music for a service in the same way that folks have previously sponsored flowers or a coffee hour. We anticipate a cost of about \$45 per song, but any gift is welcome! You can even designate your music support in honor or memory of a person or event, just as you would do if you provided flowers.

Checks made out to NMCC can be sent to the church office, with “service music” on the memo line. Online you can make a donation on our website and write “service music” in the donation box. Thank you in advance for your support of our virtual music ministry!



**Musical Musings from Linda:** Have you been keeping up with the Musical Musings from Linda each week? If not, you can find past editions on our church website under the Music Tab, [here](#), and there is a link to the new ones each week at the top of the all church email, click [here](#).

## - Children and Youth Ministries -



Plans are underway for a creative fall.  
Watch for a CE Email soon!

If you are not on our CE email list and would like to know what we're up to, please let me know – we'd love to add you!

Looking forward to seeing all of you on Gathering Sunday, 10/4/20!

~Sue Timony Hall



## - Community Outreach and Fundraisers -



**Ministry Resource Team:** "... now our service begins!" Thank you all for supporting our two August "Virtual Giving Tree" campaigns -helping Youth Continuum serve youth and young adults in New Haven and supporting scholars at St. Martin de Porres Academy during this difficult time. Your generosity is amazing!



**St. Martin de Porres Academy:** We received this note from Allison:

"The outpouring of support for the students at Saint Martin de Porres Academy was absolutely extraordinary!!! We are so pleased to report that WE MET OUR GOAL of securing 55 headsets. These will greatly enhance the educational experience of our kids - providing a way for them to focus on their learning and to be heard clearly in the classroom while logging on from home. Thank you to everyone who sent in checks to SMPA or NMCC or ordered headsets directly on Amazon. The students began classes on Monday, August 31<sup>st</sup> and are so excited to be back in school - connected with their peers and teachers. NMCC's collective care for these students in New Haven is appreciated beyond words. Thank you!

~With Sincere Gratitude, Allison Rivera, President"

YouthContinuum



**Youth Continuum:** Last week we delivered **48** Stop & Shop \$25 gift cards to homeless youth (aged 14 to 24) living in apartments provided by Youth Continuum. Lyn Boling received this note of gratitude from the director of housing at Youth Continuum: "...that is great news about the drive! Your church and team continue to be a real blessing to our programming." Youth Continuum is a multi-service agency that prevents and addresses youth homelessness for youth aged 14 to 24. Lyn Boling, Youth Continuum Champion.

SERVING NICARAGUA



**Connecticut Quest for Peace:** The Quest for Peace Continues - Please start collecting items for donations to Nicaragua, Paraguay and Appalachia. A shipment will be sent in November. Items needed are: warm and cold weather clothing, shoes, plastic dishware, pots and pans, tools, hygiene supplies, medical supplies (such as walkers, crutches, dressings, bandages etc.), student and classroom supplies, musical instruments, sports equipment, sewing items (such as material, thread etc.) and linens (such as towels and bed sheets).

Please place items in bags or boxes and label the content. Place warm and cold weather clothing in separate containers and label them WARM or COLD weather clothing.

CT Quest for Peace is a non-profit organization assisting people experiencing poverty and homelessness in Nicaragua, Paraguay and Appalachia.

Donations can be dropped off at Karen Miller's home - 7 Godman Road, Madison, on September 24<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup>. She will notify you of more dates for donation in October. If you have any questions, please call Karen at 203-915-2989 or e mail her at [dksamiller@msn.com](mailto:dksamiller@msn.com). Thank you for your generous donations!



**Continuum of Care:** Continuum of Care is so thankful to the Covid Mask Making Ministry Team. This team has literally provided life-saving support to the 665 clients served on any given day and over 1,500 over the course of the year. Continuum not only serves adults with psychiatric and developmental disabilities but many of them have underlying health conditions such as diabetes, heart disease, and/or other comorbid medical conditions placing them at a high risk. At the beginning of this pandemic, Continuum disseminated the handmade masks to many of the nearly 800 staff members to keep them from infecting clients who were sheltering in place. As a result of these masks, the infection rate of clients has remained under three percent. Since July when the state started reopening and clients started going out into the community, all masks were then only being given to clients especially since many of them have extremely low to no incomes and can't afford to buy masks. Thanks again to our incredible mask ministry team! Jim Farrales, Continuum of Care Champion

**Outreach Ministries** - Contact [Roberta Hanlon](#) if you would like to learn more our other Outreach Ministries whose Champions are working with other organization to identify how we can support them this fall, beginning with CT Quest for Peace. We're hoping to have news soon about Raise the Roof, Habitat New Haven Connection and Columbus House.



**COVID Mask Making Ministry:** In May, we announced this new Ministry and invited you to join us! At that time, we had been asked by local organizations, church members and friends to provide sewn fabric masks for added personal protection during this COVID crisis. Continuum of Care signed up for much-needed 500 masks for their employees and clients. Currently, we have 7 active mask makers (including 2 friends of Robin Chasse, plus members of the Killingworth Fire Dept and SBA). We have collected an amazing 445 masks so far, all but 6 of which have gone to support Continuum of Care. Many thanks to our Angel mask makers: Olivia Chasse, Kate Davis, Karen Miller, Merrie Harrison, Laura & Andi Roman (mother/daughter friends of Robin) and Kate Summerlin. A special shout out to Karen Miller who has made 310 masks (so far!) and plans to continue!! And many thanks to Robin Chasse and Jackie who make sure the masks are collected, counted and delivered.

Sewers needed! Join our fabric mask making ministry! It's making a huge difference. [Click Here](#) for full information.

## - Get Involved / Stay Connected -



There are many ways to be involved in NMCC's vibrant community – serving in a missional outreach ministry, mentoring and teaching our children, joining in musicmaking or worship planning, helping out around the church building, singing in the choir, 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.



**Regular Worship Hours Resume – Sunday, 10:00 a.m.:** Our regular worship time resumes on September 6 with worship starting at 10:00 a.m.



**Save the date! Gathering Sunday (Date Change):** At this time details are still in the works, but please join us on October 4 at 10:00 a.m. for Gathering Sunday!



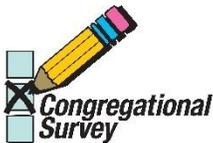
**An Invitation to Dream and Grow Together with Vibrant Faith’s Thriving Congregation’s Initiative:** We received an email last week introducing the program and inviting you to join in! If you missed it, [click here](#) for a link to the letter. Nominations for our Steering Team Members are due by midnight on Monday, 9/7. Please read about who we are looking for and make a submission! [The form is here.](#)



**Summer Reflections:** We love to learn from you and celebrate together! What have you discovered this summer? The Worship Team invites you to share...

- **What anchored you?** In these strange COVID days, what has become your refuge - a place, a person, pet, or practice?
- **Family activities.** What have you discovered about each other or enjoyed together?
- **Letting go of clutter.** What have you learned to let go?
- **Staying Connected.** How have you connected with important people in your life?

Please send photos, a poem, song, short (1 minute or less) video, artwork, or just a few sentences sharing your thoughts. We’ll compile them and use them for inspiration to be shared in worship this month. How have you been making a difference or getting through these days? We can’t wait to see! Please send content (and questions) by September 8 to Roberta [robertahanlon@msn.com](mailto:robertahanlon@msn.com) for the worship team. Thank you!



**Survey from COVID Task Force:** You received an email with a letter from Heather and a link to the COVID task force survey ([click here for email](#)). We have had 50 responses so far. Thank you, everyone! There is still time for you to share your thoughts if you haven’t--please [click this link](#) to complete the survey by September 15th. We want to hear from you – thank you for sharing your thoughts!



**The COVID 19 Property Usage Task Force** has been meeting weekly to determine plans for use of our building and outdoor spaces as we move into the Fall season. Currently, we are developing criteria for gatherings of 20 people or less both inside and outside our building and gatherings of 100 + people in our newly renovated outdoor space. Our decisions are informed by the updated CDC regulations, the latest information from the State of Connecticut Covid-19 Response and data collected from our recent COVID 19 survey. Our goal is to have a comprehensive set of usage criteria developed in the next month so that we can offer opportunities for small gatherings to both our congregation and members of our larger community.



## Miracles Happen

**Sharing Our Experiences of God:** Many, if not each, of us have experienced times when God has appeared to us in a very personal fashion. We heard a few of these during our worship service on August 30th.

Please share your story, if you wish, with the NMCC community. We invite you to write a short story or paragraph that communicates your experience or experiences...the time(s) you felt that God was very present in your life and speaking or communicating or revealing to you personally.

Let's try to send our stories by the end of September to the NMCC office. Questions? Speak to Pastor Heather or Peter Meier.

Thanks and best wishes to all who are moved to share. Shalom.

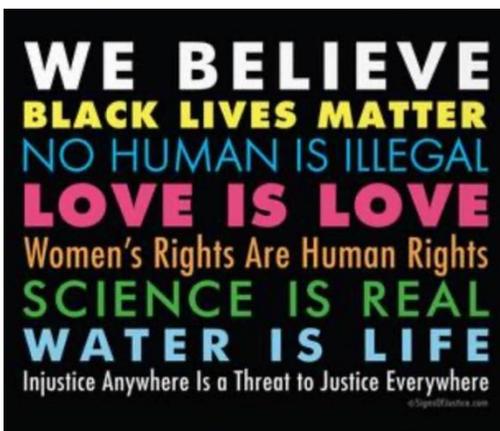


**Book Discussion Group:** For our next Book Discussion, we have selected "Eva's Cousin" by Sibylle Knauss. It is a memoir and novel based on true experiences of Eva Braun's cousin, Gertrude Weisker, who shared her memories with the author after more than fifty years of silence.

She is invited to a beautiful Bavarian retreat (Berchtesgaden) in the Alps by her cousin Eva Braun, Adolph Hitler's mistress, while the Fuhrer is off trying to turn the tides of war in 1944. Gertrude accepts the invitation against her father's wishes.

The discussion will be held on Tuesday, October 13th at 7:30 P.M. by ZOOM. A link will be sent a day or so before the meeting.

Please let Peter Meier (peterm190@yahoo.com) know if you would like to join with us...all are welcome.



### Yard Signs - Get Yours Before They're Gone!

You can stop by the church and pick them up on Tuesday, Wednesday, or Friday from 9:00 - 11:30 (*please call the office before coming at 203-421-3241 to confirm someone is in and to make sure we still have signs available*). Ring the doorbell at the top of the disabled-access ramp and we will bring your sign to the door. Or you can email the church office to schedule another time at [office@northmadisoncc.org](mailto:office@northmadisoncc.org). Signs are \$10/each and limited to two per person. (Cash- *exact change please*, checks also accepted).



**Thank you for your Support in these Strange Times:** Especially now, it's so important to support our church's financial health. Please keep your giving up to date, and purchase grocery cards which support our church, at no extra cost to you. [Click here to give online](#), or mail your check to the church office. [Click Here](#) to see more ways to give and other options to send your contribution.

## Ongoing Ways to Stay Connected

*Please let us know if you need help connecting with virtual ministries – we can walk you through logging onto Zoom, Facebook, etc. – we want you to be able to participate!*

*Please contact the office and we'll have a deacon call you to help.*

**Tuesdays in the Garden:** Posted Tuesdays on Facebook and also available on [YouTube](#) or our [Church Website](#).

**Wednesday Evening Vespers Prayer:** Join us Wednesdays at 9:00 p.m. on Facebook. If you don't have Facebook you can view them later on our [Church Website](#).

**Thursday Bible Study:** Join Pastor Heather Thursdays at 10:00 a.m. The week's passages and Zoom Link to join is in the Friday all church email each week. Absolutely no previous scripture knowledge is required.

**Sunday Virtual Worship:** Live streamed at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays on Zoom and Facebook. The Zoom link can be found in the Friday all church email. The service is posted afterwards on Facebook, [YouTube](#) and our [Church Website](#). Virtual fellowship time is held immediately following the service for those who wish to participate – see and talk with your church friends near and far (in tiny but amusing little boxes on your screen!).

If you have problems logging into worship, please contact: Sandy Dickson 203-376-7075 -- Orlene Gallops 860-339-5844 – Carol Luckenbach 203-530-9903 for tech support.



### Have you “liked” us on Facebook or subscribed to us on YouTube?

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, or whom you may inspire!

## - 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.

## Office, Board and Committee Contacts:

<b>Senior Minister:</b> Rev. Dr. Heather Arcovitch	203-421-3241
<b>Office:</b> Jackie Fix, Office Manager; Rhonda Spencer, Bookkeeper	203-421-3241
<b>Minister of Music:</b> Linda Juliani	860-399-0210
<b>Choir Director:</b> Bill Clemmons	203-421-3484
<b>Minister of Faith Formation &amp; Youth Ministry:</b> Sue Timony-Hall	203-245-1531
<b>Property Manager:</b> Tom Lauher	203-530-7467
<b>Circle Nursery School:</b> 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
Treasurer, Ryan McMillian	203-895-2611
Assistant Treasurer, John Gallops	860-460-8573
Financial Secretary Receipts/Disbursements, Susan O'Connor	203-457-1559
Asst. Financial Secretary, Receipts/Disbursements, 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
Circle Nursery School, Laura Prohaska	203-467-2558
Communications Team Leader, Roberta Hanlon	203-500-8311
Cong. Life Ministry Team Co-Chair, Ken Nichols	860-346-2000
Co-Chair, Jim Farrales	203-421-9323
Generosity Team, Jim Farrales	203-421-9323
Hospitality Chair, Christine Farrales	203-421-9323
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
Vibrant Faith Nominating Team, Carol Luckenbach	203-530-9903

**Make a Gift on our Website!** It's easy! Have a special occasion for which you'd like to thank God? Want an easy way to make your weekly offering? Like to establish a monthly automatic donation as a sustaining member? Visit [www.NorthMadisonCC.org](http://www.NorthMadisonCC.org), click "Online Giving" at the top of the page, and just follow the instructions! Thank you for your love and support of NMCC and our ministries. Or, just scan here with your phone ☐

