



THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS

December 2020

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

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- Pastor's Note -

Last year in my December newsletter article, I reflected that centuries ago, a community of people deeply familiar with long nights of deep darkness began to detach the wheels from their family wagons, scrub them clean, lay them at rest on their rims, and set lit candles along their circumferences. In this quiet, magical way, ancient Scandinavians called upon the gods to turn the wheel of the seasons and return the light of heaven to bless and warm the earth once more. Solstice celebrations across time and Northern European cultures reflect the longing of human beings to live in warmth and light – to be relieved of the cyclical visits of cold, darkness, and scarcity of nourishment and comfort.

The candlelight, bonfires, prayers, singing, and carousing of solstice celebrations marked a welcome annual turning point as winter darkness began to fall away again, giving way once more to light and life.

Early Christians carrying the message of Christ along trade routes into these lands appreciated the hopeful, resilient message they encountered in solstice practices. They recognized a familiar thread in the anticipation of dawning light – “The people who lived in darkness have seen a great light!” “A light shines in the darkness, and the darkness will not overcome it...”

Now, centuries along in our Advent and Christmas practices, as the cold darkness of winter gathers in upon us again, we find ourselves in a year in which we have journeyed through long months of anxious waiting for COVID to lift. Last year’s Lenten journey wandered unresolved into this year’s Advent...our months of waiting and wandering linger on as we prepare to set out our circles of candles and evergreen branches once more, enacting our rituals of hope and faith in gathering light and the tenacity of love.

We will gather virtually this year to sing the familiar carols; to look inward to the darkest, most broken places of our hearts, and outward to the darkest, most forgotten and oppressed corners of our world as we rekindle the lights of waiting for the rebirth of Emmanuel, God with Us. We will light the fluttering but tenacious flames of justice, healing, peace, and love. We will watch the sky, and our own souls, for God’s promised light to swell up from the shadowy horizon and rise!

These hopeful, expectant weeks of waiting in darkness are perhaps darker than we have felt them to be before, as individuals and as part of a nation in turmoil and pandemic, suffering together but separated by masks, quarantine, ideologies, and seemingly untraversable physical and philosophical distances.

These midwinter days may feel bleaker than we are used to. Perhaps, though, this is their power. We do require the darkness to see the light. The druids and early Christians honoring the darkness as Light’s birthplace literally lived in a deep darkness most of us have never known – no streetlights, no ambient glow of cities or highways, no electric interior lighting--just small flickering circles of candle, fire, or lantern.

How much more powerful was Advent’s growing light in that setting? How much more stirring, hopeful, enthralling? How much more was joy kindled when relationship with its birthing darkness was so present, long-lasting, and deep?

Perhaps this is an invitation to us this year. Not to resist and bemoan the long shadows of the historical moment through which we enter now Advent, but to turn toward the womb of darkness to more fully embrace all that she may birth.

Love, blessings, and Advent darkness and light to us all... My heart is warmed and my heartlight kindled to cross Advent’s threshold with you.

Heather

- Advent -



Welcome to Advent: It has been a long, challenging year. Welcome to the season of waiting and of growing light, the four weeks of the Advent of Emmanuel, "God with Us." In these hopeful, expectant weeks of waiting in darkness to rekindle the lights of hope, how wonderful a gift it is to gather (through the wonders of technology) and watch what paths God's light will illuminate for our journey together in the unfolding days ahead. Advent begins Sunday,

November 29th with the lighting of the first Advent candle. The Clemmons family will light and reflect for us on this first candle, the candle of Hope. As a different NMCC household lights our Advent candles each week during worship, we will reflect on that week's Advent theme--hope, love, joy, and peace as we journey toward Christmas. If you have made an Advent wreath (see Sue Timony Hall's invitation!), you may follow along at home in lighting your own wreath each week with us during worship.

In the twelve days of Christmas to follow Christmas Day, we will reflect on the light of the new year and the star of Epiphany.

You are an important part of this journey. A community that journeys together travels far. Please join us in our virtual worship, our special virtual gatherings (like our Longest Night prayer gathering), and our Christmas Eve services. Please invite your friends and family to join in as well. This year, old and new friends and family near and far can worship together without leaving their living rooms. What a wonderful gift in the midst of such a challenging time! The Zoom links will be sent in the weekly all church email for each of the following worship services. (Please don't share the zoom link publicly on Facebook or other social media platforms--that enables zoom bombers--if sharing the zoom link, please just text or email it to people you know and love.)

Virtual Longest Night Service - December 21 at 7:00 p.m.: Our annual Longest Night Service is held on the evening of the Winter Solstice, recognizing that, in what is generally considered a joyous time of the year, many of us experience sadness, melancholy and depression that is amplified in these days of long nights and shortened days. The cold and loneliness of winter, memories of lost or distant loved ones, worries and challenges in our lives and the lives of those about whom we care, are amplified this year, especially. The Longest Night service is a safe, healing, place to express and attend to these sadnesses through meditation, readings, and gentle music in quiet candle light.

The Longest Night tradition continues this year in our virtual sanctuary via Zoom. Our time together will conclude with naming names and lighting candles for those we wish to remember. We invite you to have an unlit candle (or two) prepared in your space by your zoom screen. We will transition to our "virtual fellowship hour"-style space (as we do after our Sunday worship services) at worship's end so all worshippers can be seen and be invited to share the names or prayers of our hearts we wish to lift up, and to light our own candle as we do. This will be a moving and beautiful way of sharing our prayers with one another. You may leave your home prayer candles glowing in your worship space for as long as you like into the evening.

Christmas Eve--December 24 at 4 and 10 p.m.: Our Christmas Eve worship will, in keeping with all of our worship services, be virtual. While we will miss one another terribly, our virtual worship team, music team, ministry staff, pastor, and choir are preparing rich, touching, worship experiences to

warm our hearts even at a social distance. This is a wonderful opportunity to share in worship with friends and family across the nation! Anyone may tune in via Facebook live or our zoom worship links.

December 24 at 4:00 p.m.: The Children's Christmas Pageant will be the centerpiece of our Christmas Eve Family worship this year. Our children, families, and gentle beasts are preparing already for a beautiful virtual retelling of Jesus' birth story amid Christmas carols and all the Christmas Eve magic. Please have a candle and a way to light it near your screen for our singing of Silent Night at the conclusion of the service.

December 24 at 10:00 p.m.: This beautiful Virtual Candlelight Carol Service of readings, reflections, carols, choral anthems by our amazing virtual choir and other special music and our traditional candle-lit singing of "Silent Night" will warm your heart and set your soul at peace for your long winter's nap into the wonder of Christmas morning. Please have a candle and a way to light it near your screen (and be prepared to become visible to other worshipers--if you choose) for our singing of Silent Night at the conclusion of the service.

- Children and Youth Ministries -



UPDATE - YOU ARE INVITED TO PARTICIPATE! - Heart Houses - Community Art Project: You are invited to pick up & paint a little birdhouse at home - they are on the Sanctuary Steps outside church. We have 12 available - please help yourself. First come, first served. Create a poem, design, reflection to add to the collection.

Sanna Stanley invites NMCC to participate in a larger community art project to help us share and process the grief we have collectively and individually experienced during 2020. Our art will be collected with art from other communities along the Shoreline and displayed this winter/spring. Location TBD.

KIDS: Our kids and teens are invited to pick up little birdhouses from church to paint as a way of expressing feelings about Covid and other issues we have faced in 2020.

We have included instructions to provide guidance with the birdhouses to help you think about what you may want to create.

ALL AGES: Drawings, word art, poetry and written reflections are also welcome from everyone. Please feel free to consider the questions below and send answers directly to Sanna or use your answers/thoughts to create a poem, design, or write a reflection.

Questions for reflection:

- *What is in your heart this year?*
- *How did the events of 2020 (or one of them) impact you and your norms?*
- *What/who do you miss?*
- *What are you grateful for?*
- *What have you learned?*
- *What do you wish?*

- *If you could help someone (specific) who would it be and what would you do?*
- *What have you done that expressed caring this last year?*

Sanna says, "We have all been through so much this last year together, yet often in separate and even isolated ways. This project is designed to bring people in the community together by sharing our expressions of emotion and reflections on this last year and then listening to and viewing the expressions of others.

It is a different way of building community by sharing our vulnerabilities in safe ways through visual arts and writing. Any contribution is welcome (family-appropriate language and imagery please) even if it is only a thought, a prayer, a list of losses, or a discovery you made. "

Please contact Sanna to submit completed art, smsanna@aol.com.

Let Sue know if you need some art supplies, stimonyhall@hotmail.com.



Important Conversation about Diversity - Part 2: 4th - 7th Graders, we will be joining our HS friends who are doing racial justice work in our community for part 2 of our conversation VIA ZOOM, Dec. 4. Time to be confirmed, tentatively 6:30-7:30.



SYG: As we are now unable to meet again for a bit, you are invited to participate in a secret santa gift exchange. Please let Sue know if you would like to participate. \$10 price limit, Sue will draw names, please deliver your gift to your person by specified date TBD.



Christmas Pageant: There is still time to jump in on the fun! Please let Sue know ASAP if your child/teen would like to participate in our virtual pageant, and/or if your family would like to sing a carol to be included in the pageant. We will also have a Christmas Eve prelude by our family orchestra.

Parts, scripts and costumes will be given out in early December. Then all participants need to do is have someone video them in costume doing their scene. We will even have local animals in cameo roles. Then join us on Christmas Eve at Family Worship to enjoy our telling of The Christmas Story!



Advent Wreath Kits: You are invited to make an Advent Wreath to enjoy at home!

Our wreath kits are ready to pick up on the Sanctuary steps. 16 kits have been reserved and there are some additional kits still available. No need to reserve - just pop by the church and help yourself to a bag with a heart on it. Reserved bags have names on them.

As we continue to be physically distant but spiritually close this Advent season, we would like to invite you to reserve an advent candle wreath set to enjoy at home. The wreath bases, greens, florist wires, and candle sets are packaged up and ready for pick up outside NMCC on the Sanctuary steps.

All you need to do is bend the greens around the base and affix with florist wire. When you add the candles you will have a pretty centerpiece leading up to Christmas.

Here are the advent candle lighting liturgy that we will be using this year in Worship, if you would like to use it at home when you light your candles: [One Candle liturgy](#)

As each set cost \$10, we will gratefully accept donations if you wish. There is a box on the Sanctuary steps.



Confirmation: Attention NMCC Families of Confirmation-age Students:

We enthusiastically invite your teen to join our newly forming Confirmation community, assembling for the first time on Sunday, Dec. 13 with the start of the new liturgical year (the church year - or liturgical year - begins in Advent). We will be gathering via zoom from 2:30-4:00 on the 13th to launch the new program, and hope you will be with us.

During the zoom, will share program details and determine together a time for ongoing gatherings. We are eager to walk alongside our Confirmands and their mentors as we explore what it means to be, and live as, a part of the Jesus movement in today's world.

To join us, please RSVP to Sue, ce@northmadisoncc.org or text 203.843.6206.

Pastor Heather and Sue are looking forward to being with you on this journey.

- Music -



Choir Notes: MUSIC has always been a most exquisite part of Christmas at NMCC! Your dedicated choir usually starts rehearsing pieces for Advent and Christmas as early as October – and this year is no different. We all want you to know that we are working diligently (though from our own separate homes) to bring you the special music and carols we always do! With Scott Chassé's help, we will share choir anthems, solos, duets and carols with both piano and organ. Thank you so much for continuing to give your financial support to make this all possible.

So, when Thanksgiving Day has passed, get out your Christmas CD's (hope you have the one our choir made a few years back!) and start singing!!



An Invitation from the Music Team: In the past eight months, since our church building has been closed, our choir and other musicians have worked hard to bring you heartfelt and engaging performances for our virtual worship services each week. The effort and ingenuity this requires have truly been amazing, and we thought you might like to know about some of the "backstage" preparations that go into producing our songs and other presentations.

To begin with, our dear Minister of Music, Linda Juliani, creates 6 to 8 rehearsal videos every week – instructions, voice parts, and accompaniment – which allow our singers to learn and rehearse their parts and prepare to record themselves for our choir pieces! Musicians have used their creativity to set up home “recording studios” in a variety of configurations – from devising makeshift tripods for cell phone cameras, to taping sheet music to shower stall walls, to blocking curious pets from the recording sessions! If the camera were to “pull back,” you would be amazed at the logistics employed to pull off these soundtracks and the number of “takes” required to get a usable recording from just one person!

You might be intrigued to see how these voices all come together. Each choir member submits a separate video to Scott Chasse. Then Scott works with Jack DiMatteo, our technology wizard, to “massage” the individual voice videos and compile them to create the montages you see online. Each montage requires hours of work before it is ready to be presented in worship. This is a truly a labor of love and talented expertise.

Unfortunately, with the rise in COVID cases as we go into the winter season, even though vaccines are thankfully on the horizon, it does not seem that we will be able to meet in person anytime soon. Thus we have so much more we would like to bring you in terms of virtual music presentations, some of which go beyond the participation of our choir and may involve YOU! In addition to our efforts to include you in singing hymns with us, we have some other ambitious ideas. For the online pageant this year, we are hoping to assemble a group of young musicians to play and record Christmas songs. And we are currently brainstorming ways we can sing Christmas carols together and reach out to our home-bound parishioners.

But our continued production of such offerings will require additional funding. Unfortunately, this year’s Music Committee budget was not designed for pandemic contingencies! We so much appreciate all of those who have stepped up so far to support the music presentations each week, and our prodigious thanks go to the Chasse family for underwriting a lion’s share of our financial needs. Might you also become a musical philanthropist? At this point we are in need of weekly donors, patrons and benefactors to help fund our endeavors. If you would like to see our Sunday worship and fellowship opportunities enhanced by the virtual technology required, we ask you to consider making a donation on behalf of the music productions at NMCC. You can send a check to the church office or make a donation through the donation page on the NMCC website.

We thank everyone for your support and look forward to bringing you high quality virtual music offerings for as long as we are physically apart.

- Community Outreach and Fundraisers -



Ministry Resource Team: In November we began our season of Thanksgiving by providing financial support to those serving clients of Raise the Roof/Shoreline Connection Habitat for Humanity and Youth Continuum. As we begin our Advent season, there are 3 outreach ministries for which you can express your generosity as you are able: Columbus House (yes, it’s different this year), Continuum Care (and enjoy a rock concert!) and Loaves & Fishes. Finally, to help you with managing stress during the season, we’re offering live Zoom Community Yoga!



Columbus House - Christmas 2020: As with everything this year, our traditional Christmas Eve Morning at Columbus House has been completely reworked to reflect the realities of providing winter housing for people in New Haven this season across multiple shelters. This year, with your help, our goal is to provide gift bags and Dunkin Donut gift cards.

We will deliver these items to Columbus House on Friday, December 18 so they need to be mailed to or dropped off at the church by December 17. Since we are not at the church, please notify Roberta robertahanlon@msn.com or text 203-500-8311 with what you plan to donate and when you plan to or have dropped off the items so we can plan accordingly.

Gift bags - there are 3 ways you can help us assemble our goal of 100 gift bags:

- You/your family is invited to fill a **gift bag** with all 5 of these items (please mark M/W based on the socks):
 - 10 hand warmers (10 or a 10-pack)
 - 1 pair of warm socks
 - 1 Chapstick (or like product)
 - 1 packaged snack (like a granola bar)
 - 1 greeting Christmas/holiday card with a message of encouragement from you/your family, noting you're from North Madison Congregational Church
- OR provide some or all the items and our elves will assemble them for you.
- OR donate online or send or drop off a check to fill in items we need, noting it's for Columbus House.
- Leave the items at NMCC in the bin at the top of the ramp at the office door

Gift Cards - we ask for **\$10 Dunkin Donut gift cards only** - the clients have easy access to the store across the street from their hotel:

- Mail them to NMCC 1271 Durham Road, Madison, CT 06443 - put Columbus House on the envelope
- Or drop them off at the church in an envelope marked Columbus House and put them in the black mailbox by the back door at the top of the ramp.

If you've already begun shopping for gloves, scarves, hats, you can simply wrap and label (M/W) and drop them off.

If you need these items to be picked up, or have any questions, please contact Roberta robertahanlon@msn.com or text 203-500-8311. Thank you so much for supporting this very special Outreach Ministry we've been serving for over 30 years.



Continuum of Care: *New Date, New Time* Rock with Nunz n Pepin

Continuum of Care is happy to announce the new date and time for their virtual charity concert Rock with Nunz n Pepin: Friday, December 11 at 7L00 p.m.



Join them for a fun time jamming to classic rock. Enter the raffle and you may win a prize. Even better ... it costs nothing to attend.

[Register or Purchase a Raffle Ticket Here](#)



Loaves & Fishes Ministry: Please join us in providing the Clinton and Madison Food Pantries with \$25 gift cards to supplement the foods distributed by these organizations. You may send a check to NMCC at 1271 Durham Road, Madison, CT 06443 or donate online [Online Giving \(northmadisoncc.org\)](http://northmadisoncc.org). Please note "Food Pantry" on the check. A reminder, if you set up a payment from your bank, NMCC receives the entire amount of your donation. Otherwise, you may pay debit or credit card. Please note it's for "Food Pantry".

As you can imagine, food insecurities have worsened in the recent months. Although we've not been able to donate food since March, we have continued to provide Ministry Resource Team funds, with a final check going to out in early December. Any additional help you provide are much appreciated. John Gallops, Loaves & Fishes Ministry



Raise the Roof/Shoreline Habitat Connection: Heather and Barb certainly Raised the Roof for the Shoreline Habitat Connection 2020 Gala of the Stars! And did they ever Dance for the Cause with their amazing dance shoes and smooth moves! In memory of Frank Walsh and for the joy of community, we watched, we cheered, and we voted all month long until the

big day on November 13 when our favorite team raised an historic over \$17,230!!! What better way to celebrate Frank's life and help a family build a home. Overall, 9 couples raised over \$100,000! The entire event is posted on [2020 Gala of Stars Live Stream - YouTube](#). For additional details visit www.raisetherooft.org.



If you are interested in continuing Frank's legacy of serving Raise the Roof as its new Champion, please contact Pastor Heather, harcovitch@gmail.com or Cal Price calvinkprice@gmail.com.



Youth Continuum: In support of homeless and at-risk youth (aged 14 to 24) living in apartments provided by Youth Continuum in New Haven, we have sent a final gift of \$500 to purchase gloves, hats, scarves, winter face shields/warmers, and \$20 gift cards that will be distributed to these young clients during Christmas. Thank you for your generosity all year long including your donations that provided 48 Stop & Shop gift cards (\$25) August. Lyn Boling, Youth Continuum Champion



Join us for NMCC Zoom Yoga! NMCC has offered community yoga classes since 2013. Most of the students are “from the community”, and classes have been held year-round until early March 2020. In September we enjoyed outdoor Yoga and we just completed our first 5-week series via Zoom led by Vicki Earl. Vicki has been member of our class for several years and recently certified as a yoga instructor this summer, just when we needed a teacher! [Click here to read about Vicki.](#)

Many thanks to Vicki for stepping in to lead our 5-week outdoor classes and then her willingness (with help from her technical advisor: her son) to research and practice before our first class so our classes ran smoothly from the beginning! As one of our students noted when she signed up for our second Zoom Yoga class: “ I really enjoyed the class Vicki did a great job.”

Our next 5-week series begins on Monday, November 30 at 6:00 pm and runs through December 28. The cost is \$35 for 5 sessions. Because of the challenges with viewing students remotely, we recommend students have previous experience with yoga classes. To join our class, please email Roberta robertahanlon@msn.com indication your interest and mail a check to the NMCC office at 1271 Durham Road, Madison, CT. Please mark your envelope and check with “Yoga”. We will send out the Zoom link before our next class on Monday!

We look forward to having more members and friends of our NMCC join us! If you have any questions, contact Roberta.

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.



COVID Mask Making Ministry: Since launching this Ministry, our Angel mask makers have made 484 masks, all but 6 of which have been in response to a request of 500 masks for Continuum of Care, an NMCC Outreach Ministry. Let Karen Miller be your inspiration to begin or resume making masks - this month she delivered 48 more masks for a total of 419 out of the total of 532 produced. And many thanks to Robin Chase 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.



Book Discussion Group: We're reading "Sing for Your Life" by Daniel Bergner. We will meet either together or virtually or both on December 1 at 7:00 p.m. to share our thoughts....follow the NMCC Weekly Updates for meeting news.

RYAN SPEEDO GREEN had a tough upbringing in S.E. Virginia. At age 12 he was sent to Virginia's juvenile facility of last resort and placed in solitary confinement as 'uncontrollable and uncontainable' – with little hope for the future. Today he is a rising star at the Metropolitan Opera in NYC and other prestigious venues around the world. SING FOR YOUR LIFE chronicles his suspenseful, racially charged and artistically intricate journey from prison to stardom. A story of redemption which sheds unique light on the enduring and complex realities of race in America.

You are invited to read this book and join us for the discussion. Please address any questions or comments to Peter Meier (peterm190@yahoo.com).



Tuesday's in the Garden: Bedtime....

As Ecclesiastes reminds us, *To everything there is a season - a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted!* Now that November is here we have arrived at that time to put our gardens to bed and with it our Tuesdays in the Garden series.

Starting at the end of March 2020, NMCC gardeners provided us with short videos of their gardens, their speciality plants and helpful tips to make gardening more successful. Over the past 7 months we've traveled all over the shoreline from large backyard vegetable gardens to small secret gardens to a community garden and two small farms. Twenty gardeners participated in our project and each one shared their green thumbs and loving hearts. Staying connected during the COVID pandemic was our original goal but in the process of creating weekly videos we learned more about each other, our world and all the many ways we connect to honor the living garden we all share.

Though Tuesdays in the Garden is finished for the 2020 season we will be back in the spring when the earth rebirths and we too will put on our gloves, bring out the shovels and start the beautiful process of gardening all over again. Stay tuned.

You can catch up on past videos you may have missed on [YouTube](#) or our [Church Website](#).



Congregational Meeting: There will be a meeting for Members of North Madison Congregational Church on Sunday, December 13, following virtual coffee hour. The purpose of the meeting is to approve the church's 2021 budget, and conduct any other business that comes before the group.



NMCC Family Christmas Caroling: Join us on Friday, December 18 at 7:00 pm to enjoy Christmas Carols with Pastor Heather! There are several ways you can join in!

- Family video - pre-record your family singing a favorite carol and we'll play it for a sing along; contact Linda Juliani if you need her to provide you with piano accompaniment and let Ann Clemmons (william.clemmons@snet.net) know what you'll be recording - first come first to claim a carol so we don't have duplicates.

- Sign up with Ann Clemmons (william.clemmons@snet.net) to lead a carol live! Let her know what you'd like to sing.
- Join us and sing!



Celebrate the Christmas Season with Silver Lake! Did you know that Christmas is not just a one-day celebration, but a holiday season that lasts for 12 days?

The traditional Christmas season goes from Christmas Day on Dec. 25 through Epiphany on Jan. 6. This year, we are celebrating the 12 Days of Christmas with you and your family!

Silver Lake's 12 Days of Christmas At Home Box will bring you 12 days of activities to enjoy with your family between Christmas Day and Epiphany. [Read more about the boxes here.](#)

[Purchase your boxes through the online store today!](#) Order by December 11 to ensure delivery by Christmas. In addition, we have added another date to our in-person Christmas at the Lake! Saturday, December 12, enjoy the season of Advent with a family day at Silver Lake. [Find more details and the link to register here.](#) Masks and physical distancing required.

Christmas
AT THE LAKE

*Begin the season of Advent
with a family day at Silver Lake.*

Cider & Cocoa by the Campfire
Christmas Crafts • Advent Reflection
Adventure Program • Lunch & Snacks

\$50/\$40 tiered pricing per person • masks and physical distancing required

in person!
DEC. 12, 2020
10 A.M. - 4 P.M.
**Registration open
now at
www.silverlakect.org.**

CAN'T MAKE IT TO CAMP ON DEC. 12?
Celebrate the 12 Days of Christmas with a Silver Lake
Christmas box! www.silverlakect.org/Christmas

223 Low Road, Sharon, CT • www.silverlakect.org • 860-364-5526




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.

Wednesday Virtual Office Hours from 12:00 - 1:00 p.m. with Pastor Heather: Drop in virtually and visit with Heather. Share your ideas, questions, thoughts, or just say, "hello!" No appointments needed, and no agenda provided – we'll talk with whomever turns up about whatever comes up. The Zoom link can be found in the Friday all church email.

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!



Creamed Onions Recipe: Many of you asked Linda Young for her recipe for Creamed Onions. Here it is. Enjoy!

Creamed Onions Recipe from "Frugal Gourmet Celebrates Christmas"

3 lbs small yellow onions (larger than pearl onions)
2 cups Chicken Stock
3 Tbsps butter
6 Tbsps all-purpose flour
1 cup half-and-half

¼ cup dry sherry
Salt and freshly ground white pepper to taste
½ tsp ground nutmeg
2 Tbsps chopped fresh parsley

Trim the ends of the onions and peel. Place the onions in a saucepan and add the chicken stock. Bring to a boil, cover and simmer 10 minutes, or until just tender. Strain, reserving the stock, and set the onions aside. Return the stock to the pan and bring to a simmer.

In a small frying pan, melt the butter and add the flour. Cook together to make a roux. Do not brown. Add the roux to the hot stock and whisk until smooth and thickened. Stir in the half-and-half and sherry and simmer 2 minutes more. Add salt and white pepper to taste, the nutmeg, and parsley. Combine the cream sauce with the onions and place in a small round ovenproof casserole. Bake in a preheated 375 degree oven for 35 to 45 minutes until hot and bubbly. Brown the top under the broiler, if you wish.

- 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 and we'll be sure to include them.

Makayla Stella was pictured on the front page of the *The Source* on October 29 decorating a cupcake at the Madison Arts Bard.

Congratulations to NMCC Person of the week, **Karen Miller!** You can read the article '[Karen Miller: Knowing Her Values and Living Them](#)' [here](#) in the Zip06 article online.

And ANOTHER NMCC Person of the Week. Congratulations to **Pastor Heather!** Read the article [here, NMCC Pastor Heather Arcovitch Finds Community Connections While Dancing for a Cause for Raise the Roof."](#)

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
Property Manager: Tom Lauher	203-530-7467
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
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

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Please donate to support our Virtual Choir! We estimate that each anthem costs us approximately \$45 to produce. Donations in all amounts are welcome. If you would like to honor, remember, or celebrate someone, we will prepare a worship slide naming this in worship. Thank you!