



THE CIRCLE CHURCH NEWS

November 2021

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

On Sunday, November 7th, we will celebrate *Remembrance Sunday* and the entry into our Generosity Campaign Season. (We will also hold our celebrated Harvest Dinner post-meal food sale, but I digress! 😊) *Remembrance Sunday* is traditionally a time to read the names of those we have loved and lost in the year since last November 1st (Traditionally recognized as *All Saints' Day*), and hold one another collectively in presence and prayer, affirming that none of us grieves alone. The Generosity Campaign is a time of celebration of the gifts of God and this community in our lives, and the ways we respond with our gratitude and participation for all we have received.

This year (and a half) of pandemic, in addition to the names and gifts to be celebrated in our church family, we have each lost people, activities, and patterns of our days that were sources of comfort to us before the pandemic. The collective grief amassed in the last nineteen months, even for those who haven't lost a loved one due to the pandemic, is bound to bubble to the surface at some point, and often in strange ways.

I have heard from many of you, and experienced myself, moments of overwhelm, heightened emotions or disconnect, weariness, or agitation, that sneaks up unexpectedly and expresses itself sideways. On the whole, we've mostly been "holding it all together," but the magnitude of what we've been through is very likely to express itself sooner or later.

It also seems to be the case that, for many of us, we may find ourselves to be moving automatically through the motions of life, work, and relationship, not really recognizing or knowing how to name the grief, fear, loneliness, uncertainty, and even anger that is attached to all we have lost. Trying to keep up with our previous pace of patterns of life and responsibility, we may not understand the change we find in ourselves, or notice our need to take intentional time to slow down and invest in self-awareness and care.

Research by smart people is starting to note that many of us are experiencing something called "complicated grief." Complicated grief is distinct from the more familiar understanding of grief in that it is typically prolonged and distinguished by disbelief and an inability to come to acceptance. This complicates our ability to process what we have lost and move through the work of grief's journey (William Worden describes this work to be: accepting the existence of the loss, processing the pain, adjusting to a world without the departed person/reality, and finding an enduring memory connection while reentering new life.).

Living through a pandemic has increased our individual and communal susceptibility to complicated grief because of our isolation as we grieve—whether what we are grieving is beloved people or familiar/valued norms of life, or (very likely) both.

Not only have we been at times unable to be with loved ones we have lost, but we have been unable to engage in our usual (funerals, worship, weddings, Sunday dinners with grandparents, hugs, etc.) rituals and gatherings to fill the void of our loneliness and longing. Grieving from afar, rather than in one another's close presence, amplifies our sorrow in subtle and accumulating layers. This has been one of the most challenging and painful things most of us have ever been through.

One strategy for navigating our collective complicated grieving is to turn our focus from feelings of absence to cultivating the presence of memory.

To this end, November 7th will be a very special worship gathering. Our first sharing of Communion in the sanctuary in nineteen months, we will come to Christ's open table, as Jesus lovingly invites us, to remember, to grieve our collective losses, and to celebrate all we have shared. We will take time together to reflect on the things we miss and try to be self-aware about our hearts' collective weariness and strength.

We will stand together and remind one another that we are not alone, and that what has been lost is not forgotten. Even when we could not be in one another's physical presence, in many, many ways, we have been one another's support and community. When one of us rejoices, we all rejoice, when one of us grieves, we all have grieved.

There are 8 ½ x 8 ½ inch squares of colored paper in the sanctuary (you may make one at home, if you prefer) ready to receive the names of the people and activities or things that you are missing and want to remember together. Please consider, as an idea, writing something that someone you've lost would have said to encourage you when they were here, or perhaps add a drawing, poem, or picture that represents them for you. Bring your square (or email or snail mail it to the church office) for November 7th. We will gather the memory squares into a wonderful "quilt" of remembrance on the chancel wall in the front of our sanctuary as part of our *Remembrance Sunday* ritual of celebration. You need not be physically present to participate.

As we journey onward into this season and spirit of remembrance and generosity, may you feel God's loving companionship and the companioning presence of this community.

Love & Blessings,

Heather

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Happy November, friends!

Crisp, cool days are here and our nights are getting longer with each passing day. Here are a few resources that I hope you and your family may find fun, inspiring, or want to use as food for thought as we head into Thanksgiving. May you find warmth in your homes and in our NMCC spiritual community as we continue to journey together . . .

As always, I am available to chat via my cell or to meet in person. I look forward to talking with you whether it is sharing a concern, a program idea, or just a friendly hello.

And on a related note, each week I hear of so many wonderful ways that our NMCC kids and teens are participating in non-profit programs, school clubs, on teams, and in plays. I know that I speak for our community when I say how proud we are of each of our kids and teens, and that it is a joy to watch them develop gifts and skills that will help them to make our world better as they grow. Parents, if you let me know when there is an event where we can support your child, please let me know and I will spread the word.

Which leads me to highlighting a special workshop that we will be offering to local 3rd - 8th grade girls this month - Girls' Empowerment, designed by girls for girls to promote self confidence and self acceptance. Huge thanks to Sydney Aboulian for bringing this opportunity to us, and to Sydney and Delaney Belcourt for co-facilitating. Please read on for more details - and feel free to share with friends.

See you all at the Harvest Dinner!

With love and blessings,

Sue & your CE crew (Erica, Meredith, Missy, Lyn, Jill, Jeff & Jen)

- Music –



Music Notes: On October 31 we will be worshipping in the sanctuary together — with the choir singing joyfully and the organ sounding forth 🎵 YAAAAAAY!!!

Question : DO YOU HAVE FAVORITE HYMNS?

Since congregational hymn singing is not yet recommended for the congregation, each Sunday, you will be hearing a medley of hymn tunes played on the organ as you arrive. If you have any favorites you would enjoy hearing, please let Linda know and she would be delighted to include them!

email: dwightjuliani@yahoo.com text: 802-395-7201

Hopefully before long, we will all be raising our voices together in song — but meanwhile, hum the tunes and sing the words in your heart! ❤️

- Community Outreach and Fundraisers -



Ministry Resource Team: The SMPA bike drive wrapped up in October. The first Loaves & Fishes' food collection since March 2020 was delivered to the Madison Food Pantry. We welcomed and launched a new Ministry – the NMCC Prison Ministry. Finally, we plan the Shoreline Interfaith Resettlement project of welcoming refugees from Afghanistan.



Continuum of Care: We sent a \$500 donation to this Ministry in October. Jim Farrales plans to resume his proactive role as Champion for this ministry in 2022 with workshops we can lead and engage with the clients. If you have questions, contact Roberta Hanlon.



Columbus House

Columbus House: We may not be serving breakfast at Columbus House twice a month as was our tradition for many years, but we've

found a new way to help their clients! The clients we served breakfast are still housed and safe in hotels in the Long Wharf area. Sheree DiMario, their Volunteer Coordinator, learned of our Garden Tour (from Roberta) and she and a friend toured several of our gardens in June. Based on what she learned about us, she invited us to apply our gardening skills to 5 other properties in New Haven. We have so far completed 3 of the 5 gardens - mostly weeding, pruning and removing invasives.



We began at the Sojourner's place which provides permanent supportive housing to women who were homeless and are dually-diagnosed, i.e., have a history of both mental illness and substance abuse. We met a couple of the residents who were delighted to learn of our mission. Next, we visited the Recovery House for men dealing with addiction. This is a short-term program, focused on recovery and building habits and skills for them as they move onto permanent housing. Next, Harkness House for Veterans provides housing and support

for 14 homeless male Veterans, connecting them to services, expanding their social and employment skills, and encouraging reconnection to their communities. This was our most challenging opportunity - not only weeding and pruning, but removing 3 common and deeply-rooted Connecticut invasives: bittersweet, wisteria and burning bush. We arrived in New Haven at 8:30 on 3 consecutive Friday mornings and were on our way at 10 am! It's been a great way to serve with NMCC friends, be outdoors, caring for all creation and providing a much-needed service to staff and the clients who enjoy the gardens. We're taking a break to peel apples and make pies but will finish up the last 2 gardens in November. Roberta Hanlon, Columbus House Champion



Loaves & Fishes Ministry: Our Loaves & Fishes Champion, John Gallops, has retired from his role after 2 years of service. We have identified a new leader who is working on a proposal to lead this ministry forward. Your donations were dropped off at the Madison Food Pantry in late October. In the meantime, please continue to leave donations at any time outside in the box at top of the ramp near the office. Clearly mark Loaves & Fishes or L&F as the Prison Ministry is using the same container or leave them at the back of the Sanctuary starting on Sunday, October 31. We agreed (BC – Before Covid) to be their Tuna Church so let’s focus until we announce additional foods they like us to collect. We also plan to resume the Change for Food on the first Sunday of the month so save up your coins for that. Think about pairing donations with what they need to make a dish, a meal or a sandwich. Questions? In the meantime, contact Roberta for any questions.



Raise the Roof - Your Shoreline Connection Habitat: As noted last month we have been unable to find a new Champion to lead this Ministry to carry on the legacy of Frank Walsh of building Habitat homes in New Haven. We made a final donation of \$500 as a sponsor in Memory of Frank Walk of the Gala of the Stars fund raiser taking place on November 12 at 7:30 online:

[Raise the Roof - Home \(raisetherooft.org\)](http://raisetherooft.org). Contact Roberta Hanlon robertahanlon@msn.com

if you have questions.



Saint Martin de Porres Academy: Note from Allison – “Thank you for responding to the request for 4 more bikes for SMPA. I received 1 bike from an anonymous donor and 3 bikes from Marisa Abbott, to complete the 25 bikes that were requested. THANK YOU ALL! Please contact SMPA at 203- 772-2424, if you want to continue to donate to this exciting project.



Community Yoga: We began our Zoom Yoga classes over a year ago on Mondays and added Thursdays in early 2021. The current series runs through Monday, November 8 and Thursday, November 11. The next Monday series will begin on November 15 and the Thursday series on November 18th. You can join any time and try out your first class for free. Details on our web page: [Yoga \(northmadisoncc.org\)](http://northmadisoncc.org) For questions or to register, contact Roberta Hanlon robertahanlon@msn.com or 203- 500-8311.



Prison Ministry: We announced the NMCC Prison Ministry in mid-October and featured it in a Mission Moment during worship on October 17, led by Nora Price and Gail Faithfull. NMCC has been involved in Prison Ministry efforts over the last two years and now as an official NMCC Ministry, Nora and Gail plan to provide quarterly activities that will give you way to participate. The first opportunity is to once again partner with the Free Forever Prison Ministry in Hamden, with a collection that continues through Nov. 21. This program helps support families of

incarcerated people in New Haven. The items they particularly need are: SUGAR, CEREAL, BATH SOAPS, PAPER TOWELS, DIAPERS, COFFEE, TOOTHPASTE, DISH DETERGENT, TOILET PAPER, and NON-PERISHABLE FOOD. These items can be left on the ramp outside the church office in the bin and clearly marked “Prison Ministry” as other ministries use the same bin. In January and February, we will once again join with the Guilford UCC Church to fill backpacks for people newly released from prison. In April/May will be collect supplies for women at Niantic Prison. In addition, we will conduct book drives for inmates, and raise our awareness of the great need for prison reform, by participating in changing our penal system. Each activity will provide you with information about who are serving and the impact of your donations. Thank you for your support and we look forward to you joining us on this Prison Ministry journey. Nora Price (203-245-8335 or wildwood9@msn.com) and Gail Faithfull (203-689-5840 or galileomacgail@gmail.com, NMCC Prison Ministry Champions



Refugee Resettlement: Please help: In response to the overwhelming and urgent humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan and resulting U.S. influx of Afghan refugees, our congregation has joined with First Church Guilford, Temple Beth Tikva, and Christ Episcopal Church to form the Shoreline Interfaith Refugee Resettlement (SIRR) group in order to co-sponsor resettling a family in partnership with IRIS (Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services). The very good news is that we should have a family with us locally by mid-December at the very latest. To do this, IRIS requires that each community co-sponsorship group raises \$20,000 total to provide support to a family for their first 6 months in CT. NMCC's portion will be \$5,000 in two payments of \$2,500 each. Our first payment is due no later than November 15. So, we are asking that you prayerfully consider making a donation as soon as possible. We are gratefully accepting checks sent to the main office or donations made through our website. Please indicate "SIRR" in the memo line. Please also share this request far and wide.

You are invited: SIRR will hold our next large community meeting at 7:00 p.m. on November 3 at First Church Guilford in the Sanctuary, and all are invited to attend. If you are unable to attend in person but would like the zoom link to attend virtually, please let Janice Wolf know (janiceadam1@yahoo.com). We also have work groups that are up and running but could use more help, so please let Janice know if you would like more information.

Prayer request: Please join in praying for the family that we will soon meet, for all refugees, and for all people living in unstable and unsafe environments.



**North Madison
Congregational Church**

HARVEST DINNER!
Saturday, November 6, 2021
TAKE OUT or DELIVERY ONLY

5:00 – 8:00 pm

Delicious meals of pumpkin or cranberry muffins, roast turkey, stuffing, mashed potatoes and gravy, turnips, fresh green beans, cranberry sauce, ending with home-baked apple or pumpkin pie. Wow!

\$20 PER PERSON

RESERVATIONS REQUIRED
FOR ALL TAKEOUT AND DELIVERED MEALS

Email the NMCC office at: office@northmadisoncc.org and note on the subject line "Harvest Dinner" or call 203-421-3241.
Parties of 4 or more should send payment in advance to:
NMCC Harvest Dinner, 1271 Durham Road, Madison, CT 06443



Harvest Dinner - November 6th!! We are pleased to announce the Harvest Dinner, Covid-19 style, will take place on Saturday, November 6th! Many thanks for your insightful responses to our Harvest Dinner Survey which made it clear we should do a "Take-Out Only" version.

Our magnificent Jackie Fix has created this [SignUpGenious link](#) where you can click and sign up for donating various food donations and volunteering your time to help out with preparing the food and dishing it up for delivery. We need folks to cook turkeys, as always!

Please sign up early, so Eileen doesn't have a heart attack! Questions? Just give her a call or text: 203 623-9155.

Special Note to Turkey Cookers: To help out with the defrosting process, we have changed the pickup date to Monday, November 1 between 5-7 pm. Make a note on your calendar!

Credit Card Orders: A big thank you to Barb McDaniel Black for setting up our Shopify store for those who would like to order with their credit card. [CLICK HERE](#) to get to the site to order your dinners online.

If you'd like, you can also contact the church office, office@northmadisoncc.org to place your order and pay by check or cash. Please let us know the number of dinners, number of apple/pumpkin pie slices, number of cranberry/pumpkin muffins, and pickup time you'd like (15 minute increments between 5:15 – 8:00).

Also, please share [this website link](#) to invite friends and family to place their orders too!

We need "all hands on deck" and will be mindful of wearing masks and social distancing to ensure everyone's safety. We have many logistics to work out for the day of the event so stay tuned for more details. THANK YOU! Eileen McCann



Save the Date - Annual Holiday Craft Fair: We will be holding our annual Holiday Craft Fair on December 4 from 9:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. so get out your cookie recipes and mark the date on your calendar!

- 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.



Amend: The Fight for America: Please join us on Wednesday, November 3rd at 7:00 PM as we continue our viewing of "Amend", a Netflix series about the 14th amendment hosted by Will Smith. The Zoom link can be found in your weekly all church email.

This will be our final episode as we view "Promise". Immigrants have long put their hope in America, but intolerant policies, racism and shocking violence have frequently trampled their dreams. – Netflix

The hour-long episode will be followed by a short discussion. Thank you for joining us for this series, and we hope you have found it to be an enlightening perspective of the 14th Amendment!

Please contact Barb Black at babsyblack@sbcglobal.net or Nora Price for more information or if you have questions.



NMCC Needlework Ministry: Our fabulous and creative Knitters and Crocheters raised \$473 for the ACLU Foundation! They did this by selling colorful hats and scarfs at the Madison Pride Fest on October 16th. The ACLU is a legal organization that fights for the rights of the underrepresented.

Lyn Boling received the thank you letter below:

Dear Lyn, Thank you, and the NMCC Needlework Ministry, so much for your beautiful donation to the ACLU Foundation of Connecticut! We truly appreciate your commitment to justice and equity for all.

Here is a link to watch our mini-documentary and webinar from last Thursday, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hId2JnVRJ88&t=2s>. I hope you enjoy it! You can stay in touch with us on [Facebook](#), [Twitter](#), and [Instagram](#).

My best wishes to you and your loved ones for a safe, healthy, and happy rest of the year. Reach out anytime!

In gratitude and solidarity, Laura



File Cabinets Wanted: Do you have a file cabinet that's looking for a new home? The music department is looking for a few for music storage. If you can help, please contact the office, office@northmadisoncc.org, 203-421-3241.



Deacons

Letter of Resignation from the Co-Deacon chairs: After 21 years of combined service as acting Deacons, the time has come for us to step down and make room for new leadership. We are proud of the many accomplishments realized under our tenure. Over these many years we've played a significant role in the healing and community-building that has brought us to the spiritual vitality we recognize today. At this point in time we are closer, stronger and spiritually bound in relationship to each other. As one chapter ends another begins. We encourage new leadership to rise - the Diaconate is a road of endless possibilities and countless rewards for those who chose to make the journey.

Your servants in Christ,
Sandy and Kate



Ushers Wanted: If you're interested in being an usher during Sunday Worship, please contact Calvin or Nora price at wildwood9@msn.com.

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 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](#).

Wednesday Bible Study: Join Pastor Heather for bible study on **Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m.** The week's passages and Zoom Link to join can be found in the Friday all church email. Absolutely no previous scripture knowledge is required.

Sunday In-Person & Virtual Worship: Sunday worship in the Sanctuary and live streamed at 10:00 a.m. on Sundays on Zoom and Facebook. Dress warmly, as the windows will be open following Covid Protocol. The Zoom link can be found in the Friday all church email. The service is posted afterwards on Facebook, [YouTube](#) and our [Church Website](#). If you have problems logging into worship, please contact: Carol Luckenbach 203-530-9903 for tech support.

- In the Community –



[Silver Lake: Annual Appeal](#)

Silver Lake Conference Center. Silver Lake Conference Center is a ministry of the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ. Click here to read our Mission Statement. 223 Low Road | Sharon, CT 06069 | 860.364.5526 | Fax: 860.364.1000 |

slcc@silverlakect.orgslcc@silverlakect.org

www.silverlakect.org

- 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.

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	203-843-6206
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

*Peter Haff, 203-415-2773; Melissa Blundon, 203-421-4465; Carol Anne Bachhuber 203-747-4840; Dawn Barber, 203-457-1868; Susan Kenney 203-530-1153; Peter Meier, 203-421-8377; Sally Lottick, 570-510-8934

BOARDS/COMMITTEES/TEAMS

Board of Christian Ed Chair, Erica McMillian	203-895-2611
Board of Deacons, TBD	
Board of Finance, TBD	
Circle Nursery School, Meredith Young	203-410-4487
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, Carol Luckenbach	203-530-9903
Pastoral Relations Contact, Carol Luckenbach	203-530-9903
Property & Planning Chair, Tom Lauher	203-530-7467
Quiet Ministry Chair, Linda Young	203 645-7582

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, click "Online Giving" at the top of the page, and just follow the instructions! Or TEXT "Donation" to **833-948-2188**. Or, just scan here with your phone. Thank you for your love and support of NMCC and our ministries.

