

# The Spire

Noroton Presbyterian Church ■ [www.norotonchurch.org](http://www.norotonchurch.org)  
2011 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820 ■ 203-655-1451



## Leaving the Light On

There is a whole new generation of Americans growing up outside of any organized faith. Researchers from Pew and Gallup have identified this group of drop outs as the "Nones." When asked what religious tradition they belong to, a growing number of people are saying, "none" - hence their designation. Pastor James E. White has written a book about this group which he cleverly entitled, *The Rise of the Nones*. Today there are more "Nones" in America than Southern Baptists. A third of those under age 35 claim to be "Nones." 44% of those under age 35 say that, "they spend no time seeking eternal wisdom." If you are thinking that, "most young adults have always had doubts about faith," think again. That statement is true, but this group with no faith whatsoever is 4 times as likely as previous generations to be labeled, "agnostics or atheists."

Okay, if they don't believe in God, what do they believe in? They believe in the Internet. Young adults born after 1980 were the first to enter a world with the personal computer in the classroom and the reality of the world wide web

and they can barely remember a world without the cell phone. They are the first "digital natives" and since there are 92 million of them, this age group is larger than the Baby Boomers and affecting everything they bless or ignore. They have little use for cars because they can summon a ride through Uber. They don't read newspapers because their Twitter feeds and Facebook pages keep them informed. They don't trust the church because they grew up in the age of the clergy sex abuse scandals of the Catholic church. They do believe in protecting the environment, stopping human trafficking, black lives matter and gay rights. They would like more wage equality, many are saddled with large college debt, they aren't sure about marriage but they are quite willing to have children before having a spouse.

So how do we reach this wonderful and perplexing generation, who make up my children and many of yours, with the grace and truth of the gospel of Jesus Christ? In the words of one young person in a bar who learned of a friend's faith, "I'm not interested in your **creed**, I'm interested in who you **care** about." This is a justice-oriented, compassion-oriented age group. We need to do what God wants us to do,

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### Worship Schedule

Chapel - 8:00 am  
Sanctuary - 9:00 & 10:30 am  
Open Doors - 5:00 pm

### Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

#### Continuing Together in the Story

4/3 - NPC Service Day  
8 am and 5 pm service only  
Pastor Sam Schreiner  
Nursery Care: 3 mos -3yrs at 5pm only

4/10 - Pastor Brandi Drake

4/17 - Pastor Jimmy McPherson

4/24 - Pastor John Seiders

### Upcoming Baptism Dates

4/17 & 5/15 at the  
10:30 am Sanctuary service.  
*To schedule a Baptism please call  
Leslie Ezzo  
at 203-309-5618.*

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outside the walls of the church, "letting our light shine" as Jesus put it in the Sermon on the Mount – so they can see us "walk the walk" and not just "talk the talk." Our ministry to the poor, our mission trips and causes, our willingness to recycle and care for the environment, our speaking up for fairness for all people, will demonstrate the gospel to this wary and watching generation. This is one reason (among so many) that I am excited about our whole church Service Day on April 3<sup>rd</sup>. This is a wonderful opportunity to show our friends and nearby neighbors how much we care about them and our community as we visit shut-ins, give food to first responders, pray for prayer requests, sing at Maplewood and pick up litter in the park. Let's share with those we care about, and let the light of Christ shine all around us. And then let's wake up every day and be available to do this again, and again, and again. Maybe some of the "Nones" will join us as we care together for all of God's creatures.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,  
Sam Schreiner

P.S. Several NPC historical photos (from 40's/50's) are being used in a 30 minute documentary on the changing landscape of organized religion, looking at where the millennial generation finds God and spirituality. This will air on CBS affiliates starting April 3<sup>rd</sup>. (NYC's WCBS, April 10<sup>th</sup>, at 12:30 pm). Also, online at [www.cbsnews.com/religionandculture](http://www.cbsnews.com/religionandculture).

## Prime Timers

**April 21, 2016**

**2:00 pm in the Post Rd/Mission Room**

Beth Aparicio, Director of Noroton Presbyterian Child Care and Kalie Riordan, Director of Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School will talk about our day care and education programs.

If you have questions, or would like more information, please contact Marlene at 203-309-5620 or [marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org](mailto:marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org).

## Children's Ministry is excited to announce new things for Ms. Liz!

For over 7 years, Liz Morelli has been the administrative backbone of NPC's Children's Ministry and we are so grateful. Now we are excited to announce that Ms. Liz has a new title, a new role and expanded responsibilities. As the new "Administrative Assistant to Children and Youth and Children's Ministry Associate," she will be here on Sundays working along side Mickie as well as being here during the week. This new title more accurately reflects the work she has been doing, and brings recognition to her unique gifts and talents. Thanks Liz for all you do and thank you NPC Session for recognizing and honoring our Children's Ministry needs for expanded staff leadership as we go into the future. Please congratulate Liz when you see her.

## Mission Ministry



**It's not too late to participate!**

**NPC Service Day - Serving our community with joy!  
Program of Events Sunday, April 3<sup>rd</sup>**

8:00 am - Worship with Communion in the Sanctuary

8:45 am - Commissioning in the Skylight Fellowship Lobby

9:00 am - Activities begin on and off site

5:00 pm - Celebration Worship with Communion in the Sanctuary

6:00 pm - Celebration Fellowship and Refreshments in Skylight Lobby

**Sign-up online or show up on Sunday!**

Stella Clarke  
Director of Missions

# Mission Ministry continued...

## Summary of Activities on Service Day

**April 3, 2016**

### **9:00 am**

- Children Record/Video a Song for Our African Partners 9:00 am
  - Pivot Fruit Salad Preparation 9:00 am - 10:00 am
  - World Vision Promise Pack Event 9:00 - 10:30 am
  - Pray for community prayer requests 9:00 am - 11:00 am
- Take Refreshments to sports fields around Darien 9:00 am - 11:00 am
- Helping NPC seniors with small home projects 9:00 am - 12:00 pm
  - Yard work for At Home in Darien 9:00 am - 12:00 pm

### **9:30 am**

- Open Door Shelter Painting Playground /Equipment/Landscaping 9:30 am - 1:00 pm
  - Green Team - Picking Up Litter 9:30 am - 11:30 am
  - Cooking Soup for Homebound 9:30 am - 11:30 am
  - Baking Brownies 9:30 am - 11:30 am

### **10:00 am onwards**

- Children's Craft/Gift for Children at Nambale and City of Hope 10:00 am - 11:00 am
  - Sunday Waveny Helper 10:15 am - 12:15 pm
  - World Vision Promise Pack Event 10:30 am - 12:00 pm
- Party For Special Needs Children at YMCA 10:45 am - 12:15 pm

### **11:00 am**

- Pray for community prayer requests 11:00 am - 1:00 pm
  - Visit Homebound 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
- Package Goodies for Delivery 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
  - Knitting for Hopeline 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
  - Choir Visit Waveny 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
- Assemble Baby Care Packages 11:00 am - 1:00 pm

### **Noon onwards**

- Deliver Goodies to First Responders 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm
  - Green Team - Picking Up Litter 12:00 pm - 2:00 pm
  - Yard work for At Home in Darien 12:00 pm - 4:00 pm
- Landscaping at Pivot Ministries in Bridgeport 12:30 pm - 4:00 pm

### **1:00 pm onwards**

- Pray for community prayer requests 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
  - JAM Singers visit Maplewood 1:00 pm
- Help Prepare & Serve a Meal at the Open Door Shelter 1:00 pm - 3:00 pm
- Open Door Shelter Painting Playground /Equipment/Landscaping 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
  - Helping NPC Seniors with Small Home Projects 1:00 pm - 4:00 pm
  - Painting/Cleanup Project with Darien Land Trust 1:00 pm - 4:30 pm
    - Visit Homebound 1:30 pm - 2:30 pm
  - Assemble Baby Care Packages 1:00 pm - 2:00 pm

### **2:00 pm onwards**

- Visit Homebound 2:45 pm - 3:30 pm
- Pray for community prayer requests 3:00 pm - 5:00 pm
- Help Prepare & Serve a Meal at the Open Door Shelter 3:00 pm - 4:30 pm
  - Care Packages for InterVarsity 3:30 pm - 4:30 pm



*“Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.”*

Matthew 5:16

Please sign up at  
[www.norotonchurch.org](http://www.norotonchurch.org)  
or  
call 203-309-5645

**CLICK HERE TO  
REGISTER ONLINE**



### **Coming up :**

**May 7th: Serve at the  
Open Door Shelter**  
Please contact Holly Hough  
at [hough7@optonline.net](mailto:hough7@optonline.net)  
if you would like to sign up  
to serve lunch at the  
Norwalk Shelter.

# Adult Spiritual Formation

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Dear Friends:

I love the spring - the warmer weather, the leaves coming out on the trees, planting gardens - a time when the earth springs back to life. I always look forward to the spring and the promise of new beginnings. Spring is one of the natural ways in which the creation points us to resurrection and new life.

Each year after celebrating Easter I enjoy reading the post-resurrection texts in the Gospels. They are full of reactions and responses to the resurrection of Jesus Christ. First, unbelief; then, putting the pieces together which leads to wonder and awe as people experience the reality of the Risen Christ!

This month the ASF Team has chosen to provide an opportunity to have what we are calling a Sermon Talkback. On April 10, Pastor Brandi is preaching. After the 10:30 service there will be a time for her to share some additional background on the text she preached, some thoughts regarding her research and study, some further application, as well as entertaining questions that may have been raised for you during the sermon. Hope to see you there.

Peace,  
Pastor John Seiders  
*Interim Associate Pastor of Adult and Outreach Ministries*

## **Men's Studies**

**Men's Bible Study:** *Meandering with Matthew: Men's Musings on a Meaning-filled Message*, led by Pastor John. Tuesdays at 7:30 am in NYC at the Yale Club, 50 Vanderbilt Avenue. Thursdays at 7:00 am in Post Rd/Mission Room, Darien.

**Men's Study at the Sugar Bowl: Wednesdays 7:00 am:** Led by different men from the group gathering for breakfast, fellowship and reflection on a passage of Scripture.



## **Small Group Curriculum**

**For Individuals, as well as Groups**

**April: Post-Resurrection Appearances  
Gospel of John and Acts**

**Check online** for weekly Discussion Questions -  
can be used for individual study if not in an at-home small group.  
Leader Guides available too.

Contact: Valerie at [valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org](mailto:valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org) or  
Marlene at [marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org](mailto:marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org).

# Women's and Caring Ministries

## Women's Studies

### Tuesdays:

**6:15 am Bible Study -**  
Study on Romans

**9:15 am Bible Study -**  
Study on Matthew by N.T. Wright

### Thursdays:

**9:30 am Oasis Mom's Group -**  
This is a special group for women with children\* who range in age from infancy through elementary school. We meet from 9:30-11:00 am for reflection and teaching about a common interest, and then break into small groups with moms who have children at the same stages: Mentor moms are the secret ingredient! Who doesn't want a wiser woman as a mentor and 'shepherd' through these years? Come once and check it out! We think it will be a great gift for you!

**Mom's of Teens** – We gather in the SHAC on Thursdays from 12:00-1:30 pm. We are reading, *The Gift of Failure: How the Best Parents Learn to Let Go so Their Children Can Succeed* by Jessica Lahey.

\*Child care is provided from 9-11:45 am for children 3 months to 4 years. Registration, including CT Early Childhood Health Assessment form, is requested three weeks prior to your child's attendance and can be found on our website [www.norotonchurch.org](http://www.norotonchurch.org) or by contacting Marlene. Note, medical form must be signed by a doctor. Once completed, child care and medical forms should be sent to Marlene Moffett at NPC, 2011 Post Rd., Darien, CT 06820.



## The Drakes are going on Sabbatical!

I love Noroton Church. It is such a gift to serve in this place at this time. And the time has flown by! I can hardly believe I've been here long enough for a Sabbatical- but it's been seven years, and it's time. I'll be away from the office from May 28-August 28. I will spend time studying food/communion and cooking, and our family will take two trips - one to Nambale School in Kenya, and the other to Montana.

Below is a part of what I wrote in my Lilly Endowment application - "It's all about Grace."

*Grace. For 17 years of full-time ordained ministry, Grace has been the word that chases me. I have seen it in the beauty of worship. I have heard it celebrated at recovery meetings. It is evident at funerals. It has been my privilege to walk with women and men as it dawns on them that the Grace of God is indeed enough (2 Corinthians 12:9). Perhaps it's a professional hazard: I seem to be able to accept grace in the lives of other people more easily than I accept it in my own life. This past year, I have been chewing on a phrase that has been an epiphany for me: "Grace: It's not just for other people." This encompasses my role as a pastor, and my role as a wife, mother, and daughter.*

*The community I serve is hungry for grace, but seems trapped in the forced rhythm of 'accomplishment.' Wake up early for that 5:30 train to the city. Make sure your children are on the road to an academic or athletic scholarship. You deserve the best. You earned the right to your comforts. There isn't enough room at the top for everyone. You have to take what you want: it will definitely not be given to you. If it isn't excellent, don't bother. This drive is implicit and explicit in our schools, on our sports fields, and it knocks on the doors of our Sanctuary. Over and over again in pastoral counseling sessions I listen and pray with people who are wrapped up in this life-draining rhythm, who wonder whether they will ever be able to do enough-to accomplish enough- to earn enough.*

*The purpose of my upcoming sabbatical is to enter the unforced rhythm of Grace. Nowhere is grace more evident to me than in the sacraments, whether celebrated inside or outside the four walls of a sanctuary. I love the way that God sustains us with food: giving Christ himself to us as the bread of life. Some of my happiest hours are spent preparing food in the kitchen, setting a table for family or guests,*

# Women's and Caring Ministry continued...

and sitting at 'communion' with family, friends, or strangers. In baptism, I am often moved to tears as the congregation acknowledges that the Grace of God reaches out to our children before they are able to respond. During the summer, some of my more intimate moments with Christ occur on the water, in prayer on my Stand Up Paddleboard (SUP). What renews my spirit? Grace through Sacrament: At the table, and on water. With friends and family, and alone.

Eugene Peterson's Message translation of Matthew 11:29 is 'learn the unforced rhythms of grace.' Indeed, the rhythm of Grace is not forced. Nevertheless, the Grace of Christ is perhaps the most irresistible force in my life. It is my desire to spend Sabbatical reminding myself of and re-entering this irresistible, unforced grace.

There are three main sections to these three months:

The first is in learning communities which will focus on food and cooking. The second will be spent with my family in service to a community in Kenya. The third will also be with family, resting and re-creating in Montana, where I first learned the grace-filled rhythm of full-time ministry. During the in-between weeks at home, I will spend time daily on Long Island Sound, praying and enjoying God's gifts on my SUP. I will end the three months with a 3 or 4-day silent retreat in New England, to reflect and synthesize the experience, and to prepare myself to re-enter my role as pastor—as a woman charged to point people away from the forced cadence of unattainable achievement, toward the unforced rhythm of grace.

In Joyful anticipation~  
Pastor Brandi Drake

Associate Pastor of Caring & Women's Ministries

## Get inspired, uplifted and energized to give your relationships a 'spring cleaning'

April 18-May 16, 7:30-9:00 pm

Modern research shows that human connection and attachment are essential to feeling happy and healthy. Specifically, we need emotional connection with other people in order to thrive.

Join us **Monday, April 18<sup>th</sup>** for a workshop led by Amanda Craig\* focused on how to develop, maintain and repair the emotional connection between romantic partners, and between parents and children. Topics include:

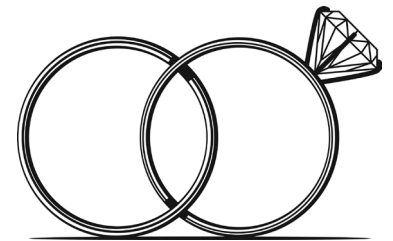
- ways to foster productive communication
- ways to notice and share your partner's wins
- ways to find time and energy to be present

We will also delve into a 'secret' ingredient of great connections: self-care. The workshop consists of a lecture followed by a question and answer period.

**Looking for more?** Join us **four Mondays starting April 25<sup>th</sup>** to watch and discuss Andy Stanley's *Staying in Love Series*. It is sure to be insightful, inspiring and change the way you bring Christ into your marriage.

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\*Amanda Craig, PhD, LMFT, is a licensed marriage and family therapist in NY and CT and an AAMFT board-approved clinical supervisor. Dr. Craig works with individuals, couples and families to help them overcome issues of depression, anxiety and addiction, as well as achieve personal, relational and work-life harmony.

Dr. Craig owns and practices at Manhattan Marriage and Family Therapy, a multi-provider practice in midtown Manhattan which uses emotionally focused therapy (EFT), cognitive behavioral techniques and a strength based approach.



## H.E.R.O.E.S. CARE: Stories of God's Goodness

### Homefront Enabling Relationships, Opportunities, and Empowerment through Support



In 1999, I became a Stephen Minister at NPC and ever since, I have been so grateful for the training that I received which prepared me to become a caregiver. One of the training materials was the book, *Speaking the Truth in Love: How*

*to Be an Assertive Christian* by Ruth N. Koch and Kenneth C. Haugk, which became one of my favorite books and one that I have shared with family and friends.

Following September 11<sup>th</sup>, I prayed for the opportunity to help fellow citizens who were actively serving in the military as well as veterans, and their families. I prayed to help in a big way. On a few occasions, my family and I helped in *small* ways. In retrospect, I realize that our small contributions were actually big in God's eyes, especially through prayer. I was grateful for those opportunities, but I longed to do more.

Then in 2014, a dear child of God and sweet sister in Christ, Evie Knight, introduced H.E.R.O.E.S. Care to NPC and welcomed Stephen Ministers to become Hometown Support Volunteers (HSV) by participating in a one-day, in-depth, interesting, and heart-felt training session led by Rev. Brandon Dunman. Brandon is a recruiter and trainer for caregivers across the country as well as the liaison for military families. He and I have something in common. Neither of us have served in the military and we both have responded to a Christian calling: To devote our "skills and energy and serve those who serve."

Most of the NPC volunteers in H.E.R.O.E.S. Care have not served in the military but all of us have volunteered, again, to serve those who serve. And, I believe, more members in our church family would like to help but wonder, "How?" The Hometown Support Volunteers at NPC consists of dedicated members who are always interested in recruiting new volunteers. I've been wondering how to encourage people to get to know us better, learn more about H.E.R.O.E.S. Care, and engage in the training process. So, I asked my husband, Ted, a regular layperson, a few questions for the purpose of seeking his perspective about Stephen Ministry and

H.E.R.O.E.S. Care as he has been a witness to my service in these ministries. Both of our fathers served during the Korean War. Ted's Dad served in the Army Corps of Engineers, stationed in South Korea and mine as a Judge Advocate in the Marine Corps. My dad was on his way to a plane leaving for Korea when at the last moment, was called off because they needed lawyers on the base. My only other personal relationship with the military was my childhood babysitter who lost a brother in Vietnam. Then she tragically died during college in a car accident. I've been remembering her family for my whole life.

After listening to Ted's responses, I felt uplifted and encouraged to share his words about the genuine nature of our Christian faith, which is caring. Here is a short excerpt of our interview:

1. What do you know about Stephen Ministry? It is named after the Apostle Stephen who designed a model of caring (Acts, Chapter 6) and now in modern times, a Stephen Minister is a good listener and a caregiver of spiritual needs.

2. And about H.E.R.O.E.S. Care? Taking care of the needs of military families and veterans.

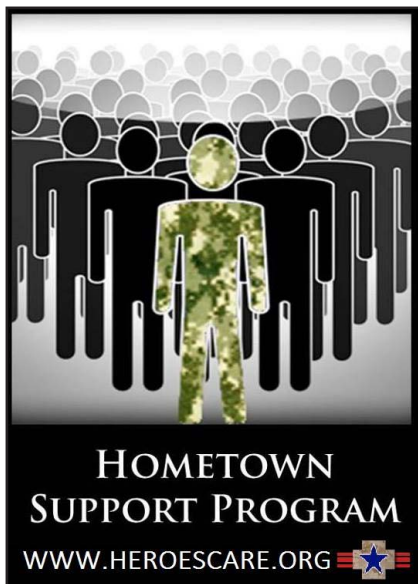
3. Hometown Support Volunteers? Giving back to the military community in special ways. On a number of occasions a sincere effort by the HSV, multiplied by prayer, resulting in gifts of time or materials that overwhelmed the receivers in a positive way. They are grateful for the time and care from strangers and their response has been very meaningful for the Hometown Support Volunteer.

4. More thoughts? H.E.R.O.E.S. Care has been a successful ministry at NPC in a short time without a lot of hoopla. Stephen Ministry and H.E.R.O.E.S. Care serve in the same capacity by fulfilling the same goals – giving care. (Thank you Ted!)

The major common denominator between Stephen Ministry & H.E.R.O.E.S. Care is a compassionate heart. If you are longing to offer your care, support, and encouragement as a HSV, please act upon your calling to first become a Stephen Ministry, which will prepare you for further training with H.E.R.O.E.S. Care. The H.E.R.O.E.S. Care ministry at NPC has the opportunity

# Caring Ministry continued...

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to honor our military in Connecticut and give so much care to so many who deserve it.

Personally, my heart swells with the honor I feel in connecting with military care receivers, learning about their lives, helping, and giving thanks for their sacrifice. Our presence means so much.

*“God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love—like Christ in everything. We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very breath and blood flow through us, nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.”*

Ephesians 4:15-16 (The Message)

Sheree Sanborn

## Prayer

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### **Prayer Testimony: Another anonymous installment in an occasional series!** **What has God shown you in prayer?**

*So often we try to do in our own strength what God promises to do for us.  
And worrying is completely useless. Worry does not empty tomorrow of its sorrow;  
it empties today of its strength.*

Sometimes I pray and God answers, but just not in the way I had planned. I am learning to hear and see God's responses to my prayers in new and different ways.

I recently had a friend who passed away suddenly after a very brief battle with an aggressive tumor. Through many days of sitting by her bed and praying with her, she left this world and her beautiful family and went to be with Jesus. There was a mighty group praying with and for her during this 70-day battle – we prayed for curative treatments and miraculous healing, but we felt our prayers were not answered because she was not cured. Or so I thought. I now realize that she was healed - her soul was saved. Only a short 12 months prior to her life ending battle, she became convicted to know God. In what may be considered a premonition, she voraciously read and studied the Bible, she attended prayer groups and engaged in church fellowship. She introduced her children to Young Life and got them to attend camp and begin a journey of faith. In a very short time, she became on fire for Jesus and shared it with all around her. They say that a sign of

a saved life is a changed life – and there was no doubting she was saved.

Who knew that this life changing zeal for God, would be the treatment that would ultimately save her? Her faith and trust carried her through a courageous 70 days. I witnessed her poise and grace throughout this battle and never saw her afraid, resentful or angry. In her final hours, I spent time with her praying, reading Scripture and playing worship music on her iPhone. After she passed from this world, I wondered why God had not answered our prayers, and then I realized that He had. For each one of us, the purpose of our short journey on this earth is to prepare us and others for our next life in eternity. My dear friend was more than prepared for her final life and she graciously showed me a glimpse of that preparation. I am now convicted more than ever to know God through Scripture and prayer and I thank my lovely friend for sharing her journey. I praise God that He truly saved her.





## Minute with Mickie – Wondering how NPC helps kids and families grow spiritually.

Easter is past and we will be having a wonderful opportunity to serve our community together on **April 3<sup>rd</sup>**.

This is an exciting way to grow in our faith – put it to work! That reminds

me of the old expression “*put your money where your mouth is!*” If we say we believe that Jesus is God and that he died for us to bring us new life and we are called to be “like Jesus,” shouldn’t we be inviting people to church, or Sunday School, or Bible studies, or Vacation Bible School? We can tell our friends how Jesus loves us and saves us by telling them the Bible stories we know and sharing our personal faith testimonies. We can show them God’s love by serving and caring. This reminds me of another expression; “*People don’t care how much you know, until they know how much you care!*” Our time on April 3<sup>rd</sup> is just the beginning of showing our community the care and love of Jesus and how we actually believe what we say we believe.

Another way for your family to keep growing spiritually will be through our Sunday morning worship and Horton Hall experiences. From now through June 12, your children will learn the stories of how the risen Jesus appeared to various people, how he proved that he had died and came back to life, and how Jesus ascended into heaven. We will play games, watch movies, learn to re-tell the stories so that these wonderful Biblical stories become very real to your children. They will have opportunities to re-tell these stories too so that they can share them with you and others. Watch these stories on video every week on the [www.npckids.com](http://www.npckids.com) website. Watch how to do the activities too. You can learn the Bible stories and do the activities even if you can’t make it on a Sunday morning. I know things

are busy, so I’m trying to provide your family with what you might need and enjoy to continue to grow together in faith. The website is just another way to be #TogetherInTheStory. [Npckids.com](http://Npckids.com) will help you stay connected when you are on spring break too. Check it out!

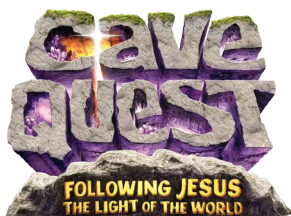
I have another way to grow spiritually too - Have you emailed me for your special invitation to the Right Now Media website? (<https://www.rightnow.org/Library>) Email me your interest and then I will sign you up to receive an invitation to set up a password, after which you can log in from anywhere or anytime to watch great Bible study teachers (Ravi Zacharias, Francis Chan, John Ortberg, Andy Stanley, Kevin Lehman, etc.), VeggieTale movies, What’s in the Bible with Buck Denver, and other kid friendly media – all for FREE. It’s such a great resource for us all and it really costs you nothing.

Next, we will all grow spiritually when we serve together at Vacation Bible School. Go online and see how you can help. We need lots of hands to meet the high expectations of having VBS at NPC once again, especially in our new space.

Finally, let’s support our Music and Worship Ministry on **May 15<sup>th</sup>** as the JAM singers bring us the message of God’s Word through their musical “*Make a Joyful Noise.*” Invite friends with kids to this at 9:00 and 10:30 am.

Let’s continue to grow spiritually together – use the tools we have for you and please share with me your stories. God is at work!

In God’s Service,  
Mickie O’Donnell  
Director of Children’s Ministry



**On Your Mark....Get Set...GO!!! Registration for VBS is OPEN!!**

We are back at NPC and ready to go on a “CAVE QUEST.”

**Dates are Sunday, June 26 from 2-5 pm then**

**Monday, June 27-Thursday, June 30, from 9 am-12 pm.**

Price includes t-shirts, music CD, snack and activities.

Go to [www.npckids.com](http://www.npckids.com) and register NOW before we fill up!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

# Youth Ministry



The Presbyterian Church USA's Book of Confessions begins with two ecumenical creeds—the Nicene and Apostle's Creeds. The inclusion of these creeds not only affirms our denomination's historic rootedness with the global church but also remind us of our continued commitment to participate in ecumenical dialog and partnership. Now I have to admit here that this all sounds quite academic—doesn't it? But here's the thing—our commitment to ecumenical partnership is not only a real thing, but something that is an important part of our youth ministry.

Last month, more than 30 youth and adults from our congregation joined well over 250 others from across Fairfield County for the Winter Summit retreat at Camp-of-the-Woods. The Summit weekend is a collaborative effort developed by Christian youth leaders across the county who then lead various parts of the weekend. In addition to joining with groups across the county for the retreat, our friends from St. Paul's Darien joined us for the ride up and back this year—even more partnership!

This year's Summit welcomed Mark Ostreicher (MarkO), former head of Youth Specialties and currently with The Youth Cartel, as retreat speaker. MarkO did a terrific job of connecting with our students through his talks, speaking in a clear and engaging way, and understanding what it means to live a life of faith. During the weekend, several students from our group indicated that they

wanted to follow Christ. Along with the teaching sessions with MarkO, the weekend also included powerful times of singing led by Granby, CT band *I Am Clay*. A tremendous weekend, indeed.

As a youth worker who has participated in and led a number of retreats over the years (and at one time a student who participated in a few youth ministry events) one part of the weekend that I am particularly appreciative of is the contribution made by adult



volunteers who donate a weekend of their time to invest in the lives of our young people. Our youth were blessed beyond words by the excellent service of three very caring adults from NPC, who included: John Gill, Andrea McPherson, and Becky Thompson.

Our ministry to youth not only appreciates their service, but is made better by their support.

Why not get involved yourself? Perhaps you have considered partnering in ministry, specifically ministry to youth in our community, but are not sure how to get involved? I would love to hear what God is doing in your life and to share ways that you might join in ministering to youth in this community. Give me a call in the main office or email me at [jimmy.mcpherson@norotonyouth.org](mailto:jimmy.mcpherson@norotonyouth.org).

Grace be with you,  
Pastor Jimmy McPherson  
Associate Pastor of Youth Ministry

# Congregational Life Ministry



## 5th Annual Chili Cook Off ... another FUN evening!

Some NEW 'Chefs' and 'Tasters/Judges' joined those who have enjoyed this evening of friendly competition for the last four years!

To let you in on the fun, check out the 'names' of the dishes prepared:



### CHILI

- |                        |                            |
|------------------------|----------------------------|
| Best Beer Chili        | Mama Liz's Texas-Style     |
| Bob Dil's Famous Chili | Pork Chili Verde           |
| British Beef           | Smokin'                    |
| Chili Chicks           | Soul Satisfied             |
| Chili Da Bomb          | Tailgate Chili             |
| Chili Kwun Carne       | Warm & Cozy; Sweet & Smoky |
| Chunky Chili           | White Chicken Chili        |
| Cincinnati Chili       | Wonder Chili               |
| Komodo Fire            |                            |

### CORNBREAD

- Butterscotch Cornbread
- Herve's Habanero Cornbread
- Jalapeno Bacon Cornbread
- Liz's Just-Corn(bread)
- Sweet Potato Cornbread

We had many 'return chefs' in the winners' circle, and also 'newbies' stepping up for prizes! 'Winners' were determined by 'most popular' amongst tasters.

- 1st, 2nd and 3rd prizes in the Beef and All-Other meat categories
- 1st and 2nd prizes in the Spicy and Cornbread categories
- 1st prize in the Poultry category



There were chicken nuggets and homemade mac & cheese and salad for those not enamored with chili; and a crafts table to keep our little attendees busy while tasting/judging occurred.

*Actually, everyone who attended was a winner!*

**Thanks to ALL** who helped make this evening so much fun for members and friends.

Valerie Muller  
Director of Communications and Community  
(including Congregational Life)

# Welcoming Ministry

## Please Welcome Our Newest Members!



David and Joy Langston met in Atlanta. Joy was a divorced single mom with two sons. The family moved to Stamford in 1988, where they still live in Shippan. Growing up, both were active in their churches including youth groups and summer camps. They are raising their grandchildren, Stephanie and Isaac. Stephanie joined NPC in 2014 and Isaac is in the current Confirmation class. David owns a corporate branding agency and Joy is the office manager for All County Pest Control. The family is active in paddle boarding, swimming and water polo. They are joining NPC because they feel it is the right fit for their family.



Lori Slotkin grew up and went to college in CA. She moved to NYC to pursue fashion design, working for 10 years for Ralph Lauren and other brands. She also met and married her husband Daniel there, who was raised Jewish. Seeking an alternative to Catholicism because the Church in NY seemed too traditional, Lori attended many denominations and fell in love with the Presbyterian Church. She has two boys (7 and 11). They have lived in Darien for 2 years and love the community.



Ken and Brenda McDermott were raised Catholic, and both had first marriages in the Catholic Church. They were married by a Unitarian Universalist Reverend and moved to Darien in 2001. They attended St. Luke's, where their children, Kerry (now 14) and Jack (now 11), were baptized. They moved to the First Congregational Church in 2008 where they were active in church leadership. Seeking a strong youth program, they began attending NPC in 2013. Kerry is in this year's Confirmation class and Jack regularly attends Harbor.



Scott Holcombe just moved to Stamford after 13 years in Manhattan, where he has worked in commercial real estate since 1974. He was active in Fifth Avenue Presbyterian (including Trustee and Elder). Scott had been a member of NPC in the 1990s, and has attended the Men's Retreat for 21 consecutive years. He graduated from Beloit College and has an MBA from the U. of Pittsburgh. He is also a former Navy carrier fighter pilot. He and his wife, Eileen, have a home in Martha's Vineyard.



Andrea McPherson lives in Darien with her husband Jimmy (Pastor Jimmy) and their two dogs Molly and Otis. She graduated from the U. of Washington (go Dawgs!) and is currently an RN at Greenwich Hospital, specializing in oncology. Andrea enjoys going to NYCFC (soccer) matches with her husband and watching the Seattle Seahawks. She also enjoys coffee, baking and eating yummy food.



Liz Morelli lives in Norwalk and works at NPC in Children's and Youth Ministry. She has a BA in Business/Finance, ran a preschool prior to coming to NPC and has many years of experience in Children's Christian Education. She is married to John and has two beautiful daughters (Lexi and Missy) in high school. Being a full blooded Italian and second generation American, she loves to cook, bake and feed people!



Peter and Julie Moeller live in Darien with their three children (ages 5, 3, and 8 months). They met at James Madison University and moved to Darien after 14 years in NYC.

# Welcoming Ministry continued...



William and Jenny Jarvis currently live in the Shippan Point neighborhood of Stamford where they are raising their 2 daughters, Ellie (4) and Holland (3). William works in NYC in Sales and Trading. When she's not driving the kids to school and activities, Jenny enjoys photography and running.



Jacqueline deMontravel is an editor, stylist and author from Darien, CT. She moved from Laguna Beach, CA three years ago and grew up in Larchmont, NY. She previously attended Little Church by the Sea in Laguna Beach. Her interests are reading, writing, design, travel and skiing.



Roberta (Bobbie) Zuber resides in Darien and works in HR. She grew up in Philadelphia and attended Rowen University in NJ. Bobbie enjoys reading, old movies, and walking. She moved to CT to be closer to her daughter and son-in-law.



## Be part of the Welcoming Ministry: Share God's Love through Service to Others

If you feel you have a gift for hospitality and outreach, please join the Welcoming Ministry (aka the 7-Minute Team because it takes that short a time for people to form a first impression of a church).

We are in great need of volunteers to:

- Greet in the lobby for 15 minutes before the 9 and 10:30 services, and/or
- Help at the Welcome Station for 15 minutes after the 9 and 10:30 services

Sign up as your schedule allows:

- Pick a Sunday of the month (1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> or 4<sup>th</sup>) that works with your schedule OR
- Help regularly for a stretch of time when you know you are "around"
- Volunteers needed through mid-June when beach service starts
- Subs available if you have a last minute conflict

Contact [julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org](mailto:julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org).

## "Get Connected"

Sunday, April 24, 10 to 10:30 am  
(between services in Mission Room)

- Are you new to NPC and curious to know more?
- Have you been attending, but desire to be more engaged?
- Do you have friends and neighbors you'd like to introduce to NPC?

Please join us for conversation and light bites. Informally chat with pastors, staff and members about our mission, and ways to get more connected to your faith and others in the NPC community.

Contact [julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org](mailto:julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org) for more information.

## Interested in Becoming a Member of NPC?

### Hold the Date for the Next New Member Class

**Saturday, June 11, 12:30 to 5:30 pm.** New members will be welcomed into the Congregation at the 10:30 service the next day, June 12. Free professional nursery care is provided for children 3 months to 4 years.

A recent new member said this about the class: *"I loved the experience and the time flew by. I feel better informed about NPC, and my own budding faith was reinforced."*

Pre-registration is needed. To register online and for more class information, see the membership ministry page on the NPC website ([www.norotonchurch.org](http://www.norotonchurch.org)), or contact [julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org](mailto:julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org).

Working with Faith,  
Julie Colbath  
Director of Membership

# Half Year Anniversary

**Celebrating our 'Half-Year' ...**

**In case you are unaware of how well used the Skylight Lobby and adjacent Post Road/Mission Rooms are, here's a pictorial overview.**

Who could foresee how many different ways we might arrange the space, and the wide variety of activities/events we could hold in this beautiful, spacious area ...



Dedication Sunday – September 20th



Jesus by the Sea - Portrait Unveiling



Parenting Speaker



Caroling By Candlelight



Tuesday Morning Bible Study



Volunteer Celebration



# Half Year Anniversary



NPNS Book Fair



NPNS Drop-off



ALPHA classes – dinner & small groups



Golden Senior Sunday Reception



Open Doors Setup



Pivot Choir at Open Doors



Adult Sunday School



Sunday Fellowship Time



Prime Timers - Monthly Meeting

## In Loving Memory of...

**February 24th:**  
Joan Weed Young

**February 27th:**  
Bennett Thornton Wood

**March 2nd:**  
Harold B. Simpson Jr.

**March 3rd:**  
Richard Castle

*...now home to be with the Lord.  
(Philippians 1:23)*

## Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

**March 20<sup>th</sup>**

Luc Sonnett deMontravel Rosen,  
son of Jacqueline deMontravel

Reid Asher Xiaolun Cling, son of Michael and Janet Cling

*If you would like to submit an article for the May 2016 issue please submit it before April 8 to Rose Cunningham by email at [rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org](mailto:rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org).*

## NPC Program Staff

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Pastor Samuel A. Schreiner III 203-309-5618 <i>Pastor and Team Leader</i>	Valerie Muller..... 203-309-5650 <i>Director of Community and Communications</i>	Kalie Riordan ..... 203-655-3223 <i>Director Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School</i>
Pastor Brandi Drake..... 203-309-5620 <i>Associate Pastor of Caring &amp; Women's Ministry</i>	Dwayne Condon..... 203-309-5614 <i>Director of Music &amp; Fine Arts</i>	Julie Colbath ..... 203-309-5615 <i>Director of Membership</i>
Pastor Jimmy McPherson ..... 203-309-5619 <i>Associate Pastor Youth Ministry</i>	Mickie O'Donnell..... 203-309-5622 <i>Director of Children's Ministry</i>	Dan Rosa..... 203-309-5608 <i>Business Administrator</i>
Pastor John Seiders..... 203-309-5619 <i>Interim Associate Pastor Adult and Outreach Ministries</i>	Stella Clarke..... 203-309-5645 <i>Director of Missions</i>	David Lee..... 203-309-5609 <i>Director of Properties</i>
	Beth Aparicio ..... 203-309-5605 <i>Director of Noroton Presbyterian Child Care</i>	



# April 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	2
					3:00 pm Middle School Game-a-thon		
<b>3</b> <b>NPC Service Day</b> 8:00 am Sanctuary Service 8:45 am Commissioning 9:00 am - 4:00 pm Service Opportunities On & Off Site 5:00 pm Sanctuary Service of Celebration 6:00 pm Fellowship Celebration	<b>4</b> 7:00 pm Alpha	<b>5</b> 6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 pm Team Night Fellowship 7:45 pm Team Night	<b>6</b> 7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	<b>7</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:30 am Oasis 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b> 6:00 am Bridge to City (Youth) (ends 4/11 at noon)	
<b>10</b> 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -5th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 11:00 am Sermon Talkback with Pastor Brandi 5:00 pm Open Doors Service	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>16</b>	
<b>Darien Public Schools Vacation Week</b>							
			7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl	1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.			
<b>17</b> 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry	<b>18</b> 7:30 pm Alpha Marriage Course	<b>19</b> 6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study	<b>20</b> 7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	<b>21</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:30 am Oasis 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 2:00 pm Prime Timers 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	<b>22</b>	<b>23</b>	
<b>24</b> 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9:00 am Confirmation Class 10 & 11:30 am Congregational Meeting 10:00 am Get Connected 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry	<b>25</b> 7:30 pm Alpha Marriage Course	<b>26</b> 6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study 4:00 pm Confirmation Make-up 8:00 pm Session	<b>27</b> 7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	<b>28</b> 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 9:30 am Oasis 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	