December 2013

Noroton Presbyterian Church 
www.norotonchurch.org
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203-655-1451

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### What's Next? Christmas, C.S. Lewis and John Knox

tremendous Celebration Sunday, November 3rd for our 150th anniversary (complete with candles blown out by our most senior member who is 99 ½, Maude Pettus and "Happy Birthday" sung by our children), people are wondering, "what's next?" How can you top that? Our Christmas services are always beautiful and inspiring, so please bring your families and friends to any and all of those (listed on page 2). I can't wait for our church to unwrap our new and improved facilities, but that will not happen in 2014. Construction should begin in earnest in the spring of 2014 and take at least until the summer of 2015.

Before we get to unwrap our new and improved church campus, we do have something special to sign up for <u>in 2014</u>. Consider joining us on our next Noroton Church Pilgrimage. Once a year, I or Pastor Greg, try to lead a group of pilgrims to a spiritually inspiring location like Israel, Turkey or Greece. These are study trips that deepen our understanding of our faith and provide wonderful fellowship. This next summer happens to be the 500th anniversary

of the birth of the founder of the Reformation in Scotland – John Knox. 2013 is the 50th anniversary of the death of C. S. Lewis – the greatest Christian writer of the 20th century (who is finally being honored with his own memorial in Poet's Corner of Westminster Abbey). So in 2014 we are pleased to announce a trip to Scotland and England to examine the "Roots of our Faith" from the English Reformation to C. S. Lewis. July 12-21 we will tour the important cities of John Knox like Edinburgh and St. Andrews. Then we will ride through the English countryside to York and Cambridge, seeing the university that educated Tyndale and other Reformers. Next we spend time in London, worshipping at Holy Trinity Brompton, where the Alpha program was born, touring the great cathedrals of Westminster Abbey (home to our Westminster Confession) and St. Pauls, with a side trip to see Biblical era artifacts in the famous British Museum. We will end our tour at the place C. S. Lewis lived and taught for over 30 years - Oxford. A once-every-three-year C. S. Lewis symposium will start just as our trip concludes for any who want to extend their tour and enjoy lectures from Lewis experts from all over the

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#### Worship Schedule

Chapel - 8:00 a.m. Sanctuary - 9:00 & 10:30 a.m. Open Doors - 5:00 p.m.

#### **Upcoming Preaching Schedule:**

12/1/13 - Pastor Brandi Drake

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- 12/8/13 Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 12/15/13 Pastor Sam Schreiner

12/22/13 - 8:00 a.m. Chapel Special Worship service
9 & 10:30 a.m. with
Children's Christmas Pageant
5:00 p.m. Open Doors
"Advent Unplugged"
Special service with lessons and music in the Sanctuary

- 12/24/13 Christmas Eve services: 3 & 5:00 p.m. - Family service lessons and carols 8 & 10:00 p.m. -Traditional Service lessons and carols
- 12/29/13 9 & 10:30 Services Only Pastor Greg Doll

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world.

What are these trips like? Here are a few quotes from our members who just returned from Turkey and Greece this fall.

- These trips are an extraordinary opportunity to go to exquisite sacred places with kindred spirits from our own church community... Best of all -I I days with fellow NPC friends who feel like family by the end of the trip.

- I found the trip incredibly educational.

- For me, the extended fellowship with the other pilgrims was the trip's highlight.

Join us for fellowship, spiritual enrichment, and a chance to deepen your faith as we study those who laid their lives on the line to bring the Bible into our language and church's life. Brochures are available in the church office or contact my assistant Leslie Ezzo (leslie.ezzo@norotonchurch.org). An important meeting is planned for January 27. We would love to have you travel with us to see what God has next for us all.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,

Sam Schreiner

P.S. Pastor Greg plans to lead a trip to Israel in 2015 for those who have been waiting to join that pilgrimage.

### **Christmas Worship Schedule**

December I - Ist Sunday of Advent Pastor Brandi Drake

December 8 - 2nd Sunday of Advent Pastor Sam Schreiner

December 15 - 3rd Sunday of Advent Pastor Sam Schreiner

December 22 - 4th Sunday of Advent 8:00 a.m. Chapel Service

Special Worship service at 9 &10:30 a.m. with *Children's Christmas Pageant* 

> 5:00 p.m. Open Doors - 4th Annual Advent Unplugged in the Sanctuary

Christmas Eve - December 24 \*3:00 & \*5:00 p.m.-Services for Families

with Lessons and Carols \*Childcare available 3 years and under

8:00 and 10:00 p.m. Traditional Lessons and Carols with Choir and Orchestra

December 29 - 9 & 10:30 services ONLY in the Sanctuary Pastor Greg Doll

### Prime Timers CHRISTMAS LUNCHEON

Thursday, December 12th 12:30-2:00 p.m. in Horton Hall!



Please join us for lunch, cookies, Christmas memories and carols with Mickie O'Donnell, Director of NPC Children's Ministry.

If you plan to attend, please call either Marlene Moffett (203-655-1451, ext 49) or Rita Hornlein (203-357-1504) by no later than December 8th to reserve your spot.

# FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

### December 2013 Progress Report

The Foundations for the Future project is about to move into a phase of visible changes and the inevitable, accompanying inconveniences for our congregation, staff, Nursery School and Tot Drop students, parents and teachers. As we await the final P&Z approval for the major construction, we are moving ahead with some significant repairs and improvements to the Children's Education wing. Making changes to the CE wing are a little like trying to change a jet engine on a 747 airplane while it is in flight! It requires planning, choreography, patience and opportunistically using all our school breaks. Safety is our utmost concern.

With that in mind, we anticipate utilizing the school break between Christmas and New Year's to replace the windows in our CE wing. But removing the old windows requires a very safe, state approved process for lead abatement, which for everyone's safety requires that we close that part of the building. There may also be times during that project when for safety reasons we have to close other parts of our facility - most likely the staff offices. Although the weeks leading up to Christmas, including Christmas Eve, are busy and joyous times for us, we also know that the week after Christmas tends to be a pretty quiet time. So we ask for your patience during this week if you find areas of our building "closed" to the public. Just remember we are closing some doors so we can open some new windows!

As we approach the end of 2013, we have a lot of new beginnings to look forward to. We want to thank our congregation and staff for their ongoing support and prayers. We also want to thank our Building Committee for the many hours of study and discernment they are devoting to this project. And finally, we want to thank our donors who are diligently fulfilling their pledges. As of November 15th, we have received \$8,095,587 or 60% of our pledges. If you have the means to make a contribution now, it will go a long way to insuring we have a firm financial foundation for our construction project. And if you have not made a pledge but would like to, please contact Dan Rosa, NPC Business Director at 203-655-1451 or *dan.rosa@norotonchurch.org.* All are welcome on this journey to glorify God!

> In His Name, Dick and Jean Ann Bollman Tom Taylor Foundations for the Future Progress Team





# **Adult Spiritual Formation**



### Noroton Lectures 2014

am very pleased to announce that our Noroton Lecturer for 2014 will be the renowned C.S. Lewis scholar, Dr. Jerry Root. The dates for this year's lectures will be February 8-9.

Dr. Jerry Root is an associate professor at Wheaton College where he teaches graduate courses in the MA in Evangelism and Leadership Program as well as courses in the undergraduate Christian Formation and Ministry Department. In addition, Jerry is a visiting professor at Biola University and Talbot Graduate School of Theology (La Mirada, Calif.). He is also the director of the Evangelism Initiative at Wheaton College and associate director of the Billy Graham Center Institute of Strategic Evangelism.

Jerry has written C. S. Lewis and a Problem of Evil: an Investigation of a Pervasive Theme, co-authored The Sacrament of Evangelism, and also co-authored and co-edited The Soul of C. S. Lewis: A Meditative Journey through Twenty-six of His Best Loved Writings. He is co-editor, with Wayne Martindale, of the best-selling and award-winning The Quotable C. S. Lewis. Jerry has authored numerous articles and contributed many

chapters to other books on topics related to C.S. Lewis. Jerry is also the consulting editor of the new Harper Collins *C. S. Lewis Bible*. He has lectured on C. S. Lewis at 52 college or university campuses and in 15 countries around the world. He has taught college and graduate courses on C. S. Lewis for 32 consecutive years.



Jerry and his wife, Claudia, have four married children, seven grandkids, and a Welsh Corgi; they live in Wheaton, Illinois.

> Peace and blessings, Pastor Greg Doll Pastor of Adult Spiritual Formation and Outreach

### Noroton Lectures 2014

#### Featuring Guest Speaker: Dr. Jerry Root, renowned C.S. Lewis scholar February 8 & 9

#### 8:00-9:30 a.m. - Men's Breakfast

Saturday, February 8th in Horton Hall All men are invited to join us for a continental breakfast, fellowship and a lecture.

#### 10:00-11:30 a.m. - Women's Coffee

Saturday, February 8th in Horton Hall All women are invited to join us for coffee, refreshments, fellowship and a lecture.

### 7:00-8:30 p.m. - Keynote Address

Saturday, February 8th in Horton Hall All are welcome to the evening lecture.

#### Sunday, February 9th - Worship Services

8:00 a.m. - Chapel / 9 & 10:30 a.m. - Sanctuary Join us for any of our Sunday morning services.

Registration will begin on December 2, 2013 through our website www.norotonchurch.org or by contacting Marlene Moffett at marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451, ext. 49.

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# Caring & Women's Ministries



Monday Lunchtime Study: 12:00-1:30 p.m. in the Parlor. *No meetings in December, resumes Jaunary 13th.* Join this thoughtful group of women as they pour through scripture and support one another in prayer! Led by Beth Peelle: 203-856-7092.

**Tuesday Morning Bible Studies:** Celebration blast on December 10th, we resume on January 7.

**6:15-7:15 a.m. in the Parlor:** We always have coffee, and the circle of women is filled with insight, support and prayer! Topic of study is TBD.

**9:30-11:15 a.m. in Horton Hall** This is a larger group, with music, a lecture/re-flection, and small group discussion. New topic is the Book of James.

**OASIS Moms Ministry:** Brunch on December 5th, we resume on January 9th. Thursdays 9:30-11:00 a.m. in Horton Hall. This is a study especially for moms with young children. How can you honor God as you love and raise your kids? Come to learn, meet other moms, and be comforted. This morning program is led by a team of veteran moms—what a beautiful group! Childcare waiting list only.

**Moms of Teens:** Meets December 5th at SHAC upstairs and December 12th at Sallie's home for lunch. No meeting December 19th.

Thursdays 12:00-1:15 in the SHAC. This group of moms have lots in common as they walk through the adolescent years of their kids together! B.Y.O. lunch and we spend time praying and reading relevant books! Led by Sallie Schmidt and Laurie Bessey. Books will be available in the office by January 12th.

You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy...for to us a child is born, to us a son is given... (Isaiah 9:3, 6)

He was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. (Isaiah 53:3)

t gets me every year. The beauty, joy and hope of the Incarnation exists in mandatory partnership with the sorrow and grief of the cross. There is so much to process.

The way that God makes himself vulnerable in the form of an infant, and then conquers death by suffering? I marvel at the juxtapositions.

The strongest being –the one who was not created becomes most vulnerable of created beings.

God, who experienced the greatest grief any will ever know —is the source of our joy.

Jesus Christ is the incarnation—the savior that we need --but not the savior we seek or want.

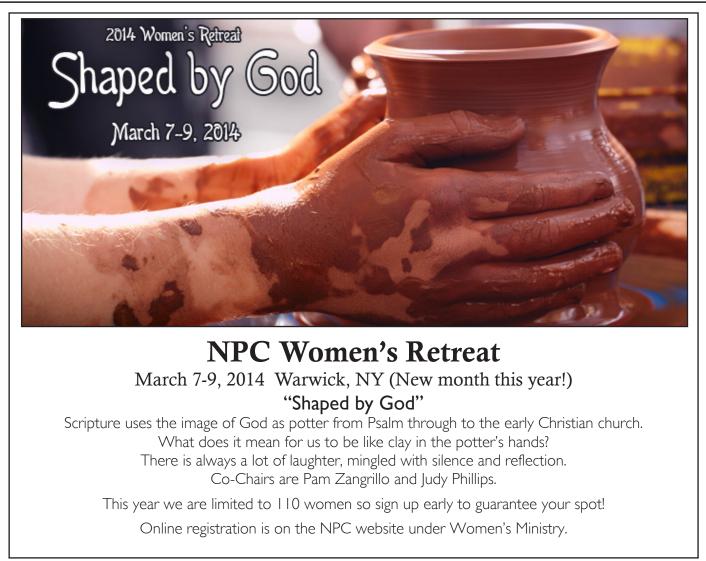
One of my favorite hymn writers, Sylvia Dunstan, puts it this way, and sets it to the music of *"Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence"* You may want to sing this aloud!

You, Lord, are both Lamb and Shepherd. You, Lord, are both prince and slave. You, peacemaker and sword-bringer, of the way you took and gave. You the everlasting instant. You, whom we both scom and crave.

Indeed. May we once again be captured by the mystery of the Incarnation and drawn to the one who knows intimately both grief and joy.

> Pastor Brandi Drake, Pastor of Caring & Women's Ministries

# **Caring & Women's Ministries**



### Youth Ministry Task Force

Greetings from the Youth Task Force! (Elliott Etheredge, Bobby Winsor, Sandy Henry, Kalie Riordan, Cindy Smith, Seana Turner, Sally Vosburgh, Burt Palmer and Pastor Brandi Drake).

The task force has been organized to gather information from the NPC youth, the congregation at large, the community and other successful youth programs and their leaders for the purpose of making a recommendation to the Session. The recommendation to the Session will be more about the holistic approach to youth ministries at NPC. We are not the search committee for a new youth pastor.

Our team is in the process of gathering information. We have met with each of the youth groups, hosted congregation. We have also met with youth leaders ranging from Young Life leaders to youth pastors at other thriving ministries in Fairfield County to former Pastor Mark Orr, who now leads REACH Youth New England.

We still have a lot of work ahead of us, but our intention is to provide a recommendation in early 2014 to Session, at which time a search committee will be called to finalize the job description and commence the search for the person God intends to lead NPC's Youth Ministries.

We ask for your prayers as we discern God's will for this exciting and important work.

# **Children's and Youth Ministries**



### Minute with Mickie Wondering about how to keep Advent 'stress-less'

Spire.

t's here!! Advent Season. How exciting. A time to prepare and wait for the celebration of Jesus' birthday. We will help you do that in ways that are meaningful, purposeful and without

stress. One thing a Church family should do is make sure everyone in the family has a wonderful time during the Christmas Season, keeping the focus on the ONE we are celebrating, not ourselves.

When my children were young, my mother-in-law used to make such a big deal over Christmas that she spent months ahead of time shopping, wrapping, making baked goods and decorating her home. Yes, it was lovely, but the thing that always bothered me was that once the Christmas meal was eaten she would go to bed - exhausted. Rarely did she witness her grandchildren playing with their gifts. I never had the pleasure of standing and talking with her while clearing dishes or putting leftovers away. No. She just felt ill, crashed physically and emotionally and went to bed. She died in her 60's and I always felt a bit cheated out of really knowing her. Isn't it sad that this is even my memory of her to this day? Here at NPC we don't want you exhausted over being here for Christmas. We want to provide you with Worshipful experiences that lift your spirits and provide you and your children with memories of being together to celebrate the most wonderful birthday in the world - Jesus. So, make a commitment to be 'stress-less' this year. Here's what is available for you:

• Daily Advent Devotions delivered to your "In-Box" with a special "Family Fun" activity to do together – for kids all ages.

• Friday night **December 6** at 6:30 p.m. Join the Children's Ministry Team for our annual **Caroling by Candlelight**. ALL ARE WELCOME to this Advent Event. We begin in the chapel and conclude with fellowship and treats in Horton Hall. Bring a pot luck dessert & drop it off in Horton Hall on your way to the Chapel. Go to the Children's Ministry page on the NPC website *www.npckids.com* for more information. Free Advent Calendars, Family Advent Devotionals, hot chocolate and cookies!!

keep Advent 'stress-less'
December 6-8th with Duffy Robbins. Special sessions for parents to learn how to help your children become Christ's Disiciples. See special notice on page 9 of the

• Sunday, December 15th: Two opportunities – Youth Ministries Progressive Dinner and Vespers.

• Sunday, December 22nd during 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. Worship Services. Pastor Brandi, Dwayne and I are planning a wonderful service of worship involving our children presenting the traditional Christmas Pageantry. We will unpack the Christmas Story and create the beauty of the Nativity Scene right before your eyes with those children in the service.

•Sunday, December 22nd at 5:00 p.m. – Advent Unplugged Open Doors Service.

• Christmas Eve, December 24th at 3:00 & 5:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols Family Style. Keeping it simple for our hurried families, these services will keep both children and adults focused on the importance of the mystery of the Birth of our Savior, Jesus Christ. This worship experience should be 'stress-less' not a crazy hurried experience.

### • Christmas Eve, December 24th at 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. Lessons and Carols with the Chancel Choir.

NPC is the church family that wants to help you celebrate Jesus birth without exhausting you. We are the place where you can come and sense that you have stepped into a sacred moment with God. We want that for you and for your children. How I wish my motherin-law could have experienced this kind of Christmas Season with us. Please choose to make 'stress-less' memories of peace and joy this Christmas season.



For the Love of Wonder, Mickie O'Donnell Director of Children's Ministry & Interim Director of Youth Ministry

# **Youth Ministry**

### Exciting News – A New Youth Ministry Coordinator is Here! We are pleased to announce the newest member of our Youth Ministry staff, Sarah Swible

Sarah Swible received her Bachelor of Arts in Youth Ministry and Spanish from Eastern College in 2011. She spent a semester in Seville, Spain and has several years of youth ministry experience not only while at Eastern but most recently at Bethany Church in Raymond, New Hampshire where she has been the solo Director of Youth Ministry. A New England girl born and raised, she is the God-sent perfect fit for us.

The Youth Ministry Team is excited to have her here and we look forward to her getting to know you and your teens. Please pray for Sarah as she leaves her home and family and becomes familiar with so many of us here at NPC. Also pray for her to find a roommate and the best living arrangements possible in Darien. Think about what you and your family can do to make her feel welcome.







ith Christmas right around the corner, it's easy to get tied up in the holiday season. In December we have a few events that can help take us out of our busy schedules and bring us into

fellowship with one another.

The weekend of **December 6th**, we are hosting **Duffy Robbins** as he communicates with us during different sessions about the impact of ministry and relationships on our youth. We are very excited to be hosting him and are looking forward to this incredible experience.

On **December 12th** we will be having our **Middle School Extravaganza/Christmas Party** at The Depot Teen Center. For this event, we partner with Darien Wyldlife to make sure we are having the most fun possible. All middle school students and parents are

### **Christmas Time**

welcome. There will be dinner and games as well as a short Christmas message. More details about this event can be found on the Youth Ministry website.

On **December 15th**, we will be holding our annual **Progressive Dinner.** This is a great event that allows us to get out of the SHAC and into the homes of different families in our congregation for meals and fellowship. This event begins at the SHAC at 6:00 p.m. and will end around 9:30 p.m. At the last home we will do a gift exchange and ask that everyone bring a wrapped gift that costs no one than \$10. This event is open to all high school and college students, and is a wonderful way to connect with your friends during this season.

Tom Fagan Youth Ministry Coordinator

# Youth Ministry

### Duffy Robbins Guest Speaker December 6-8

Duffy Robbins, Professor of Youth Ministry at Eastern University, St. Davids, Pennsylvania, is a thirty-six year veteran of youth ministry. Duffy speaks around the world to teenagers and people who care about teenagers.

Duffy has his D.Min. in Youth and Family Ministry from Fuller Theological Seminary, and he's the author of numerous books including *Ministry of Nurture*, *This Way to Youth Ministry: An Introduction to the Adventure*, *Speaking to Teenagers* (co-authored with Doug Fields), *Youth Ministry Nuts and Bolts, Enjoy the Silence* (co-authored with the lovely Maggie Robbins) and his latest book, *Building a Youth Ministry That Disciples*.

### Schedule for Dec 6-8 Weekend

FRIDAY, December 6 7:30-9:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary Coffee Reception afterwards in Horton Hall Topic: Big Ideas that Shape Youth Culture Audience: Area Youth Directors and Parents of Teens

### SATURDAY, December 7

9-10:30 a.m. in Horton Hall Topic: Understanding the Teenage Mind Audience: Parents Only

### SATURDAY, December 7

**5-7:00 p.m. in Horton Hall** with a light dinner Topic: Real Life. Discipleship. In the Real World. Audience: Parents and Teens

#### SATURDAY, December 7 7-9:00 p.m. in the SHAC Topic: Youth Event Audience: Teens Only

SUNDAY, December 8 9-10:30 a.m. in the Chapel Topic: Intentional Parenting Audience: Parents

#### Big Ideas that Shape the Youth Culture: A Short Tour of Big Ideas that Shape Youth Culture.

We hear about Lady Gaga and "sexting" and raves and Facebook. But, what does it all mean? And what kind of ideas drive the culture in which our teenagers live, breathe and consume? If youth culture is like a river, with it's big waves and deep troughs, this seminar will help you to better understand it's contours and currents, and how those contours and currents impact the way your teenage son or daughter sees the world.

You'll leave this seminar with a better understanding of:

- \* paganism, pluralism and postmodernism, and how these three strains of thought impact your teenager's world-view;
- \* some of the practical implications for raising teenagers in a "multiple choice" moral climate;
- \* the difference between "looking at" and "looking along", and how each approach impacts the way teenagers experience God.

#### Understanding the Teenage Mind:

# Getting Inside Their Heads: Understanding the Teenage Mind.

"Is life so different from when I was I 3?" What makes the teenage years so tough? This seminar will give you some insight into why your teenager acts the way they do...or the way they don't.

# **Youth Ministry**

### continued from page 9...

We'll look at some of these issues:

- \* How is growing up today different from twenty or thirty years ago?
- \* What makes adolescence such a perilous journey?
- \* What are the three key factors that shape the teenage experience in this second decade of the new millennium?
- \* What is adolescent schizophrenia, and how does it affect your child?

#### Helping Teenagers Grow Spiritually: Real Life. Discipleship. In the Real World.

At the end of the day, it isn't the church, the youth group, Oprah, Bono or Vegetales who is responsible for nurturing the spiritual lives of our children. That responsibility is ours; and what a precious, weighty, sometimes exhilarating and sometimes difficult calling it is! But, what does real life discipleship look like in the life of a teenager? Is there really any such thing as a teenage disciple? This seminar offers parents encouragement and practical guidance as we undertake this sacred task.

You'll learn some of the basic traits of teenage discipleship:

- \* A first-hand faith;
- \* A faith that affects the heart and the head;
- \* A faith that impacts everyday life;
- \* A faith that endures even in the midst of struggle;
- \* A faith that becomes flesh.

#### Practical Principles: Intentional Parenting - Practical Principles.

"The problem with parenting is that we have to practice on live subjects". Just when we think we've learned a little about how to do it better, another child comes along, with a different personality, and different issues, and different aspirations. And we have to learn all over again! But, there are some basic principles that encircle the whole process, and it's those principles we want to identify and affirm in this final session.

You'll leave this final session with some practical advice about:

- \* How to enforce rules without forcing away your child;
- \* How to build communication with a child who has stopped talking;
- \* The three most basic life skills a teenager needs to learn;
- \* Picking the battles that are truly worth fighting;
- \* How to turn the darkness of consequences into the light of discovery;
- \* How to talk about sex even if you don't want to.

# Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School



O ur month of November finished up with many exciting activities. The children collected over 100 bags of food for Person-to-Person. The items were delivered by the 4's and Pre-K classes in a parade from the nursery school to the Person to Person Food Pantry. The students

were able to deliver food items personally and see how the Food Pantry is used to help families in need. They were so concerned that there were families that didn't have the amount of food they needed. They also recognized how grateful they were for their own homes full of food. The students celebrated Thanksgiving with a Feast of Thankfulness. They focused on what they were each thankful for and shared that with their classes. The students continued a long time tradition at NPNS, by making Cranberry Relish for their families.

December is a short month at the nursery school, but full of activities. The children dove right into preparations to celebrate the birthday of Jesus. They looked forward to Miss Mickie's visit, to each classroom, where she shared the Advent Story. The children read about and acted out the story of Jesus' birth, using costumes from the Advent costume boxes. Our Pre-K students visited the Senior Center where they sang Christmas Songs and ate cookies with the Seniors. The students continued their love of caring for others by collecting mittens, gloves, hats and socks for our Mitten Tree. These items were taken to Person-to-Person, following our annual Family Christmas Chapel. We cherish this time of focus on the gift of Jesus Christ and the joy of sharing it with our students.

We wish you all a blessed Christmas season.

God Bless You, Martha Duff and the NPNS teachers and staff



Ms. Jen holds Emily up to meet a Boa Constrictor..



Patrick and Charlie build pattern towers.



Nolan spies through the fence to see the babies pig and their mama.



Callie builds a pyramid using lots of triangles.



Liam and Drew paint their dough ornaments.



Harris, Cameron and Jack build lite-up high-rises on the light table.

# Tot Drop



Noroton Presbyterian Church

Family Friendly Flexible Daycare

One more year is drawing to a close and with it should come time for reflection. As Director of Tot Drop I am aware of a few "givens" that in the hustle-bustle of the season as well as dayto-day events, can easily be overlooked—but shouldn't be.

First and foremost, I am so blessed to have a staff of teachers/caregivers who give and give, and love and then love some more-even on Mondays at 8:00 in the morning and Fridays at 5:30 in the evening. These women are all heroes in my book! If you don't know them, you are missing a big opportunity. It is a diverse, multi-cultural group (Chile, Guatemala, India, Jamaica, Pakistan, Peru, Nevis, Trinidad, with a few Americans thrown in for good measure!); they are bright, funny, hard-working, sincere and committed. They make Tot Drop what it is, pure and simple.

Second, but equally as loved and valued, are the children and their moms and dads. What a privilege to work

#### with such happy and responsive families. No day goes by without a story to tell about a humorous incident or a problem solved or a milestone achieved. I still get excited when a child achieves potty training, feeds himself—with yogurt or mac 'n' cheese from ear to ear to prove it-or accomplishes the biggest miracle of all, emerging into intelligible language.

Last on this short list of blessings is the privilege of working in a Christian environment where all those in the building are working toward the common goal of serving God and earnestly following our Master.

These are the greatest year-round gifts that come my way at Tot Drop. Hoping your holidays are as rich and full with gifts of love, joy and peace.

> In His service, Carol Scott Director of NPC Tot Drop

# **Congregational Life Ministry**



### Time to Celebrate YOU!

Every December, our team has the distinct pleasure of celebrating all the many volunteers that help keep all our ministry programs running!

We hold this celebration on the first Tuesday of the month, right before regular Team Night activities.

So, this year we will gather on **Tuesday, December 3rd** starting at 6:30 p.m.

(Note, this is the Tuesday following Thanksgiving weekend ... so don't forget to mark your calendars accordingly.) We provide hot and cold food and beverages, have some time

to chat-amongst-ourselves, watch a video loop on the 'big screen' (which attempts to capture as many of our volunteers from previous times during the calendar year), and end with some time singing Christmas carols together.

Whether you volunteered for fifteen minutes one time, or regularly for hours throughout the year ... you should have received a 'snailmail' invite to join in the festivities.

We invite you to come kick off the season ... relax and enjoy each other's company !



# **Congregational Life Ministry**

### Look for our Newest Members ...

You will find photos and bios of our twenty five newest members elsewhere in this issue of our Spire. There is ALSO a photo-board of them in the ramp hallway between the sanctuary and office.

PLEASE be sure to introduce yourself, welcome them, and see if you can be of assistance.

### 150th Weekend Celebration

#### In a word ... WOW!

Just about this time a month ago (Saturday/Sunday, November 2nd and 3rd) a large number of members/ friends gathered to celebrate the finale of our anniversary year!

A few pictorial reminders of the marvelous celebration/ fellowship that occurred follow ... !

### (For MORE photos, please refer to our website under the respective events.)

#### A word of thanks ...

The 150th Committee would like to thank the photographers who graciously used their talents to provide visual remembrances to be enjoyed for years to come: Stefan Baer, John Marr, Julie Magrath, Marilyn Parker, Steve Shabet, Shinhae Won.







Thanks for the memories!







### Saturday Night Hymn Sing (November 2nd)



We were honored to have three past pastors (Mark Orr, Connie and David Jordan-Haas) share remarks in between Dwayne's leading the congregational singing, as well as be blessed by two solo numbers performed by David Kyrk and Sophie and Nicky Condon.





Our pastors got to relax for the evening, and enjoy singing along with the congregation ... in the pews!



Light refreshments (including commemorative 150th cookies) were served in the Parlor, while our three guest visitors greeted members/friends anxious to share a few words and a hug!

# **Congregational Life Ministry**

### Sunday morning Celebration (November 3rd)

On Sunday, we held only two morning services (at 9 and 11 a.m.) to allow for a total church congregation fellowship time in Horton Hall.

Our guest pastors joined our current pastoral staff in serving communion to members/friends. We also welcomed 2 dozen new members.



The Anniversary/Birthday celebration served food using recipes from historic NPC Women's Guild cookbooks, or that has its origin in New England. A large group of volunteers prepared the foods/beverages and walked through the crowds to serve and engage in conversation.



There was of course the requisite birthday cake, and balloons for the children!

Our eldest member, Maude Pettus, assisted in blowing out the candles once 'Happy Birthday' was sung.

See for yourself the wonderful time of fellowship this morning was ...

The committee joins the pastoral staff in saying a GREAT BIG THANK YOU to everyone who helped make this weekend memorable!









This month, the Session expressed their appreciation to the 150th Anniversary Committee by expressing the following in their minutes. Well done one and all!

"The Session of the Noroton Presbyterian Church would like to express our deep appreciation to Rosemary Mace and all the members of the 150th Anniversary Committee –Bob Bromfield, Nancy Cammann, Nancy Dauk, Diane Gilliam, Chari LeMasters, John McLean, Dot Norris, Eleanor Palmer, Robin Salmans, Bill Tamme, Sally Vosburgh and Pastor Sam Schreiner, for their outstanding work researching, preserving and celebrating our history of service to our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. It was a rich and rewarding experience for the whole congregation learning about the faithfulness and sacrifices of our founders, Pastors and members."

### **Mission News**

Thank-you to everyone who has taken an Angel or Dove, or participated in the various other food drives we have been running over the past few weeks to help the needy in our local area. As we move into December we still have need for people

to help by delivering gifts and donations for the Dove and Angel programs. Please take a look below for details. At this time of year I often have people asking me if I know of anywhere for them to serve over the holidays. Below you can see a few local organizations that sometimes have volunteer opportunities. I have listed a website and phone number so that you can contact them directly. The other very important way you can help is to faithfully pray for God's provision and blessing on the ministries and missionaries we support and for the light and love of Christ to touch the hearts and minds of those they serve.

Thank you to all for your loving support of our NPC Mission to share Christ's love with our world.

Serving our Savior together, Stella Clarke *Mission Associate* 203-655-1451 ext 18

## **Mission Opportunities**

### Help Needed!

#### Dove Program



Loading and Delivering: December 15 Arrive at NPC 7:45 a.m. and help load Dove holiday meal gift boxes into minivans, SUV's or pick-up trucks. Four/Five large vehicles and volunteers are needed to deliver boxes to local area distribution agencies. Delivery by 8:30 a.m. so this is a

short time commitment!

For more information or to volunteer contact Sandra MacVicar at *smacvicar40@gmail.com* 

Angel Tree



Make a difference to a child with incarcerated parents this Christmas by helping to deliver a gift in late December. For more information or to offer your time please contact Dom Lettera at *dominicll@yahoo.com*.



Dove Program Gifts - December 2012

#### **Open Door Shelter**

NPC will be serving at the Shelter on January 4. Please contact Holly Hough *hhough7@optonline.net* to sign up.

#### Other Local Organizations

Bridgeport Rescue Mission: 203-333-4087 www.bridgeportrescuemission.org

New Covenant House Stamford: 203-964-8228 www.nchstamford.org

Inspirica Stamford: 203-388-0100 www.inspiricact.org

Bowery Mission New York: 212-674-3456 www.bowery.org

# **Mission Ministry**

### Joyce Aoko Aruga

oyce Aoko Aruga is the recipient of one of the Noroton Presbyterian Church's *Foundations for the Future* Scholarships. Joyce is an amazing young woman. She was selected as one of 100 women from around the world to participate in the 100 Women Project, sponsored by the British Broadcasting Company (BBC), and held in London in October. She was the only participant from Kenya.

She comes from an extremely disadvantaged background but, through hard work and determination, she completed two years of college and received a teaching certificate. She currently teaches in a school in one of Nairobi's informal communities and is using the NPC scholarship to complete, on a part time basis, her

BEd Degree. She is a woman of deep faith and an example of Christian life to all that know her.

After her return from London she was interviewed (via the internet) by John Parker a member of the NPC Mission Team. John and Marilyn have known her for seven years.

John: Before we explore your recent experience, tell us about the 100 Women Project.

**Joyce:** The 100 women project was started by the Suffragette movement in the UK. This movement was to campaign for women's voices to be

heard more clearly. It was to fight for equal rights of women. The project tries to bring together real women from all over the world to share their real experiences. These women are able to open up, share, talk and make themselves heard. (Note: The term "Suffragette movement" is still used in England to describe what we would call the women's movement.)

**John:** How did you find out about the 100 Women Project?

**Joyce:** I came to know 100 BBC Women through the internet. It was an open application. All women were invited to apply. And so I tried my luck! The BBC stated the qualities that they required from the applicants and I felt that I had all that they needed.

They required:

- A young, disadvantaged woman
- Able to speak English
- Who is doing extra ordinary things
- A person who is interested in politics and social work.

**John:** What did you do to apply and then be selected for this honor?

**Joyce:** I gave them my story. I told them the difficulties that I have gone through. I told them that I have been living in a children's home. I also mentioned my family background. My application was also accompanied by recommendations from the church and the chief.

I believe that it was through the grace of God that I travelled to London. I remember the day I applied to the 100 BBC Women it was not an easy task, so I had to go to my church and asked the congregation to help me in prayer so that God may open the way for me.

**John:** Getting a Visa is usually a difficult process. What was your experience?

**Joyce:** I want to thank the church mostly the pastor who stood firm by my side. When I applied for the Visa, it was clear that I could not get my Visa in time (October 23). I was told to collect it on October 31. I tried to plead with the Visa people but they could not listen to me.

I got the information that the Visa process takes 10-15 days; by the time I applied it was 6 working days remaining. Immediately I realized something was wrong, so I decided to invite all my church pastors to help me in prayer.

When it came to Visa application, I never thought that to process Visa was all that expensive! In fact I thought it was just ksh 3,000 (\$36). But to my surprise, it was ksh I2,000 (\$144.) Where was I to get this money since I had nothing in my account? I thought that my visit to London was impossible. I went back to the church and where I work and told them my problem. I thank God because they all responded.



# **Mission Ministry**

It is true that what seems to be impossible before men is possible before the Lord.

**John:** What were your reactions to your first trip outside of Kenya?

**Joyce:** To me, travelling to UK was just like a dream! I felt like a king and I couldn't believe this! I also found that the two countries are totally different in everything. How I would wish that my country could be at that level.

John: What were your impressions of London?

**Joyce:** People in London are very social, lovely and welcoming. London is also a cosmopolitan place. My visit to London really inspired me. From there I got new ideas and plans. I met new and different friends from different countries.

**John:** You attended the meeting on Friday that was telecast by the BBC. What were your impressions?

**Joyce:** Every session during the meeting was very meaningful to me. I enjoyed every single minute that I was in the hall. I was really happy and wish to attend such a meeting again! It was fantastic! Thanks a lot to the BBC organizers.

**John:** You were interviewed by several radio and TV stations. What sort of things did they want to know about you?

**Joyce:** Most of the interviews wanted to know the challenges that I have gone through and how I have managed to go through.



John: You were assigned a mentor while you were there. Tell us something about her.

Joyce: My mentor is Clare Short. She is a British politician, a Member of Parliament for 27 years and a former International Development Secretary. Clare is not just an ordinary woman, but an extraordinary woman. She is a woman full of inspiration.

John: Tell us about some of the other women that you met and who made an impression on you.



**Joyce:** I met women from all corners of the world. Almost all of the 100 women impressed me. This is because all of them had different stories and more so challenges which made me to be strong! But I was mostly inspired by Zainab Hawa Bangura who is now UN special representative on sexual violence in conflict. She comes from Sierra Leone. Zainab comes from a very poor family and her father wanted to marry her off at the age of 12 years but she refused and ran away. All these challenges did not stop her from getting what she wanted! She is now a great person. I can also become a great person despite my background.

**John:** How has the experience affected your own goals and ambitions?

**Joyce:** The seminar was of a great importance to me. I was strengthened, my ambitions increased and I have a strong desire to work tirelessly, without looking back, in order to achieve my goals. I now understand and appreciate that nothing comes easily; one has to struggle in order to get the best! I now have big dreams and I believe they will come true. I met new people who are now my friends.

John: Is there anything else you would like to add?

**Joyce:** I would like to thank 100 BBC Women event, John and Marilyn Parker, David Mace, my church leaders and members, Mcedo School Head Teacher, Candace, Dean, Judy Webb, Clare Short, John, family and friends who made it possible for my visit to London. God bless you all.



### Save the date for the next New Member Class!

We will meet on Saturday, January 11, 2014, from Noon to 5:30 p.m. Classes are interesting, faith-deepening and fun! Please contact me for more information and to register. New volunteers for the class are always welcome -- for small group facilitation, hospitality, photography and music.

In faith, Julie Colbath Director of Membership julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451 ext 14

# Please Welcome Our Newest Members!



Arlis Baird was born in Long Beach, CA. She married in 1955 at Downey First Presbyterian Church, the same church where she was baptized, and raised six children. In those years she held various positions in education. In 1976 they moved to Show Low, AZ where she was employed by Navapache Hospital as the Dir. of Materials Mgt. She has also lived in Hawaii where she worked with children. In her final job before retirement she was a realtor. Care-giving for seniors has occupied much of her retirement, for which she feels blessed to have enjoyed and served. Her most recent Church is First Presbyterian Church, Hemet, CA,



Doug Campbell has lived in Darien since 1983. He is an Executive and CEO Coach for growing companies and top performing executives. Since 1984 he and his wife Gwynne have owned the Sylvan Learning Center, a K-12 tutoring center in Darien. He is involved in micro lending in El Salvador with Worldvision and speaks Spanish. Doug enjoys golf, kayaking, biking, and hiking.



Michael and Janet Cling moved to Darien from NYC at the end of the summer. They have a one year old daughter, Reagan, and a second daughter arriving in Feb. They both work in the finance industry and very much enjoy traveling to new countries and learning about various cultures. Janet is an avid photographer of landscape, family and children, while Michael enjoys participating in triathlon races. Over the summer, he completed the Norseman Xtreme Ironman distance race held in Norway.





Deborah Beams moved to Norwalk in Nov. 2012 from Dallas, TX. She is a CPA on a two-year fellowship with the Governmental Accounting Standards Board. She spent most of her growing up years in Illinois and Wisconsin. Deborah has played the violin since elementary school and enjoys reading and travel.

# **Membership Ministry**



Hank and Jane Cuthbertson are retired and live in Stamford. Jane's son, Derek Phillips, his wife Judy and their twin sons are members of NPC. Hank worked at UBS before losing his vision and still plays a mean guitar! They both enjoy jazz as well as discovering new wines and foods.



Greg and Katherine Grambling currently live in NYC with plans to move to Darien in 2014. They have an 18 month old daughter named Samantha and a second baby due in April. Born and raised in Darien, Greg works in finance in NY. Katherine grew up in Cincinnati, OH, and enjoys being a mother after five years of teaching. They like spending time as a family, traveling to Nantucket and going on weekend adventures.



Holly Hanes resides in Fairfield and is employed as a VP and Asst. Secretary at a reinsurance company in CT. She is originally from Lloyd Harbor, NY and attended St. John's Episcopal Church in Cold Spring Harbor before moving to CT. Holly attended Denison University in Granville, OH. She enjoys sailing, reading, traveling, gardening and spending time at the beach.



David and Devon Eagle have two children, Louisa "Lulu" (2) and Audrey (2 mos.). They have lived in Darien for two years, after moving from NYC. Devon grew up in Montclair, NJ and New Canaan, while David is from Yorktown, VA. Devon graduated from Lynchburg College and worked in fashion, and David graduated from UVA and Wharton, and works in finance.



Brian and Cindy Handy have one child, Grace (6 mos.). Brian attended the U. of PA for undergraduate and Northwestern U. for his M.B.A. Cindy attended UVA for undergraduate and the U. of PA Law School. They currently reside in New York City where Brian works as a mergers and acquisitions investment banker.



John Long and Ashley Hinchman live in Darien, recently relocated from Manhattan. John is from Ann Arbor, MI and a graduate of U. of Michigan. Ashley was born and raised in Richmond, VA and is a graduate of UVA. They married in 2009 and have a two year old daughter (Grace) and a three year old Portuguese water dog (Effie). Ashley works in hospitality and John works for an investment firm. During their spare time they like to play tennis, read, travel, and watch college football.



# **Membership Ministry**



Scott and Michelle Robertson have resided in Darien since June of 2010. Their children Connor (9) and Campbell (6) attend Royle School in 3rd grade and kindergarten, respectively. Scott works in investment banking in New York City, and Michelle runs her own public relations business.



Paul and Karla Schimmeck have two children, Andrew (11) and Sofia (7). They were previous members of the Bronxville Reformed church in NY before moving to Darien. Paul works in finance in NYC. Their family enjoys skiing and tennis.



Laura Trask is a resident of Darien. She has two children, Annie (16) and Perrin (11), and a golden retriever Putter (8). She attended Catholic University of America where she studied fine art. She is an artist and works out of her home studio where she paints both canvas and furniture. She and her girls enjoy music, cooking, travel and spending time with family.



Peter Saverine is a Darien native now living in Stamford, and is a graduate of Amherst College. He has four grown children (two of whom, Justin and Lauren, are members of NPC with their spouses), and two grandchildren. Peter previously owned a florist business for 20 years and was Exec. Dir. of the Bartlett Arboretum & Gardens in Stamford. He is currently the Dir. of Development at STAR in Norwalk, a not-forprofit organization serving people with disabilities. Peter has been active in the Darien and Wilton Chambers, United Way, and is currently an advisor for Builders Beyond Borders. He is also the author of two children's books and enjoys landscape painting!



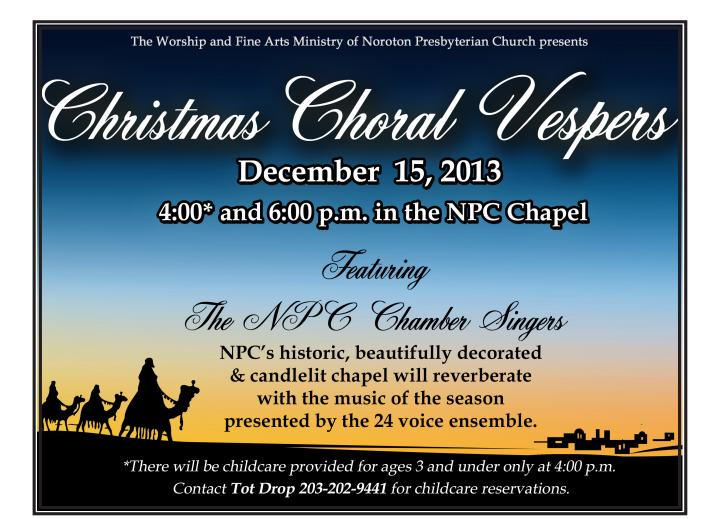
Andrew and Charlotte Symons live in Norwalk with their son Henry, who was born on Sept. 3rd, and their dog Murphy. Both originally from CT, they moved back to the area in 2012 after living in Manhattan for seven years. Charlotte is currently taking time off from her job as a learning specialist at the Fairfield Country Day School. Andrew works for a boutique investment banking firm in Manhattan.





Joanne Greenwood Turner lives in Darien with her husband, Brian, and her daughters Lindsey (8) and Emelia (6). She was born and raised in Maine. After graduating from the U. of Maine, she relocated to NYC to pursue an additional degree from F.I.T. in Interior Design and fulfill her dreams of becoming an Interior Designer. She and her husband remained living and working in NY for over 10 years until relocating to the suburbs to start a family. Joanne volunteers at Hindley and for the Girls Scouts. She has also started her own design business. In her spare time Joanne enjoys walking the family dog, kayaking, skiing, playing tennis and spending time with her husband and children.

### **Music & Fine Arts**

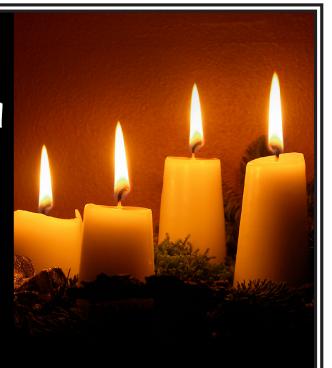


# Open Doors Advent Unplugged

December 22, 2013

### 5:00 p.m. in the Sanctuary

Come join us for this "lessons & carols" style service in the beauty of the NPC Sanctuary.





### Many hands make light work!

Please join the flower team on Wednesday, **December 4th** and Saturday, **December 14th** in the Sanctuary, and Friday, **December 6th** in the Chapel to help decorate for Advent and Christmas.

All are welcome to join us!

Please email us at *flowersnpc*@gmail.com for more information.

### **2013 Memorial Donations for Advent Music**

If you would like to make a donation in memory of a loved one towards the cost of Advent and Christmas Eve music, please fill out the form below and place it in the offering plate or bring it to the church office. Please make your check payable to NPC and note in the memo section "Advent Music". Memorial donations can be given in the amount of your choice.

Donations Should Be Received No Later Than:

### Wednesday, December 18, 2013

On Christmas Eve we will glorify God and the memory of those special people.

In loving memory o	f: (   )
	(2)
	(3)
	(4)
Given in love by:	

For more information contact Sheila Haskell, sheilahaskell@gmail.com

Sunday I	Monday 2	Tuesday 3	Wednesday 4	Thursday 5	Friday 6	Saturday 7
9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -5th Grades 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. Ignite		6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Sudy 6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Sudy 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Sudy (NYC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Sudy 6:30 p.m. Volunteer Celebration 6:30 p.m. Volunteer Celebration	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M 7:00 p.m. Harbor 7th-8th Grade	7:15 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis Moms Brunch 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mrg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Reh.	6:30 p.m. Caroling by Candlelight 7:30 p.m. Duffy Robbins - Big Ideas that Shape Youth Culture	9:00 a.m. Duffy Robbins - Understanding the Teenage Mind 5:00 p.m. Duffy Robbins - Real Life. Discipleship. In the Real World. 7:00 p.m. Duffy Robbins - Youth Event
8	6	01	=	12	13	14
<ul> <li>9 &amp; 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's - 8th Grades</li> <li>9:00 a.m. Confirmation Class</li> <li>9:00 a.m. Duffy Robbins - Intentional Parenting</li> <li>10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class</li> <li>5:00 p.m. Ignite</li> <li>6:30 p.m. Ignite</li> </ul>		6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Sudy 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Sudy (NYC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Sudy 8:00 p.m. Session Christmas Party (Schreiner Manse)	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M	<ol> <li>7.15 a.m. Men's Bible Study</li> <li>12:00 p.m. Men's Bible Study</li> <li>12:30 p.m. Prime Timers - Christmas Luncheon</li> <li>15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg.</li> <li>7:00 p.m. M.S. Extravaganza</li> <li>00 p.m. Chancel Choir Reh.</li> </ol>		
15	16	17	81	61	20	21
<ul> <li>&amp; 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th Grades</li> <li>9:00 a.m. Confirmation Class</li> <li>9:00 a.m. Confirmation Class</li> <li>10:30 a.m. Christmas Choral</li> <li>Vespers</li> <li>5:00 p.m. Open Doors</li> <li>6:00 p.m. Progressive Dinner</li> <li>6:00 p.m. Progressive Dinner</li> </ul>		6:15 a.m. Wornen's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M	7:15 a.m. Men's Bible Study 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 7:00 p.m. Handbell Choir Reh. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Reh.		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
9 & 10:30 a.m. Special Service Children's Christmas Pageant 5:00 p.m. Open Doors Advent Unplugged		<b>Christmas Eve</b> *3:00 & *5:00 p.m Family Service Lessons & Carols *Childcare available 3 years and under 8:00 and 10:00 p.m. Traditional Lessons and Carols with Choir	Christmas Day			
29	30	31				
9 & 10:30 a.m. Services Only						

Decemper 2013

# NPC News

### In Loving Memory of...

November 5th: Margaret "Peg" Platten

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



DivorceCare is a confidential weekly seminar for people who are separated or divorced. It is a safe place where people can be around others who understand what they're experiencing, and where they can learn valuable information about healing from the hurt of divorce.

Come once or often for support and care. Join at any time! Non-members welcome.

Mondays, January 6 – April 7, 2014 in the Parlor, 7:15 - 9:00 p.m. No meetings on Jan. 20 and Feb. 17.

\$15 for workbook with scholarships available.

# Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

November 3rd:

Joanne Greenwood Turner (adult) and daughters, Emelia Sophie and Lindsey Marie Turner

> November 17th: Grace Harper Handy, daughter of Brian and Cindy Handy

#### Upcoming Baptism Dates: 12/15 and 1/19 10:30 a.m.

**Sanctuary service.** To schedule a Baptism please call Leslie Ezzo at203-655-1451, ext. 33.

If you would like to submit an article for the January 2014 issue please submit it before December 15 to Rose Cunningham by email at rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.

### NPC Program Staff

Pastor Samuel A. Schreiner IIIext.
Pastor and Team Leader
Pastor Brandi Drakeext. 21
Pastor of Caring and Women's Ministry
Pastor Greg Dollext. 23
Adult Spiritual Formation
Valerie Mullerext. 48
Director of Congregational Life

Dwayne Condonext. 45
Director of Music & Fine Arts
Mickie O'Donnellext. 34
Director of Children's Ministry
& Interim Director of Youth Ministry
Stella Clarkeext. 18
Mission Ministry Associate
Carol Scottext. 46
NPC Tot Drop Director

Martha Duffext.	35
Director Noroton Presbyterian Nursery Scho	ol
Julie Colbathext.	14
Director of Membership	
Dan Rosaext.	43
Business Administrator	
David Leeext.	26
Director of Properties	