

The Spire

Noroton Presbyterian Church ■ www.norotonchurch.org
 2011 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820 ■ 203-655-1451



The Crisis of Our Day

In 2007 John Marr and I showed up unannounced at Gordon College in Rawalpindi, Pakistan. My Grandparents had lived around the corner from this institution in the early 1900s and I wanted to see the place for myself. The students were gone, but as soon as the President of the School learned that Americans were on campus (I'm sure many didn't come there), he summoned us to his office and promptly served us tea. Over tea and cookies, he proceeded to share with us, in perfect English, his disappointment with US intervention in Afghanistan, Iraq and Pakistan. I reminded him, as politely as I could since we were his guests, that we had been attacked first, and we appreciated Pakistan's help (which President Musharraf had offered) to root out the terrorist bases that sat on the border. All in all, it was a pleasant and memorable experience reminding me that in most places in the world, **hospitality could trump politics.**

A few weeks ago, Chris George, the Director of Integrated Refugee & Immigrant Services (IRIS) of New Haven, spoke at our church about the current worldwide refugee crisis. He

too had found that in his visit to refugee camps overseas, hospitality would trump politics as he was warmly received by even the poorest families. That sort of graciousness fueled him to work on this issue of welcoming refugees to the state of Connecticut for the last ten years. What Chris told us dispelled many myths and informed our growing concerns about welcoming refugees. Here are some of the important points we heard.

- A "refugee" is someone who has crossed an international border fleeing persecution or the threat of persecution.
- There are 19 million refugees fleeing persecution all over the world today. The largest group is Syrians (about 4 million).
- Most of these refugees are in temporary camps where the UN certifies them as legitimate refugees and then the US Department of Homeland Security has to clear them before we would accept them. This clearance takes about two years and is very thorough. It is based on biometric information shared with all international databases

continued on page 2...

Worship Schedule

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

Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

- 12/6 - 2nd Sunday of Advent
 Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 12/13 - 3rd Sunday of Advent
 8:00 am & 5:00 pm
 Pastor Jimmy McPherson
 9:00 & 10:30 am
Children's Christmas Pageant
- 12/20 - 4th Sunday of Advent
 8:00, 9:00, and 10:30 am
 Pastor John Seiders
 5:00 pm Open Doors
Advent Unplugged
 Pastor Brandi Drake
- 12/24 - Christmas Eve
 3:00 & 5:00 pm
 Services for Families
 Pastor Brandi Drake
 8:00 & 10:00 pm
 Inspirational Music and Carols
 with Choir and Orchestra
 Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 12/27 - 10:30 am Service Only
 Pastor Jimmy McPherson

Table of Contents

APNC	2
Adult Spiritual Formation	3-4
Caring & Women's Ministries	5-6
Children's Ministry	7-8
NPCC	8
NPNS	9
Youth Ministries	10
Congregational Life Ministry	11
Membership Ministry	12
Mission Ministry	13-14
Music & Fine Arts	14
NPC Event Calendar	Insert
NPC News	16

continued from front page...

- to screen out suspected terrorists. (Safety TRUMPS hospitality).
- The US has 350 centers for resettlement all over the nation which use public and private funds in a challenging program that pushes for financial independence very rapidly (a six month time frame was described).
 - Connecticut takes about 500 refugees a year. To handle the humanitarian crisis of our day (equal to the refugee crisis of World War II), we could double that number to 1,000.
 - Connecticut only takes families or single women with children.
 - When a family is placed at one of the 350 centers, the US government regulations say that they are to be served a, “culturally appropriate hot meal” within two hours. That is the warm welcome we try to give to them.
 - Chris George’s organization will train resettlement partners and back them up with social services to make the placement successful.

Noroton has had a history of helping refugees recognizing that our Lord had to flee persecution and need to be resettled (see the flight to Egypt in Matthew 2:13-15). After World War II NPC had a Hungarian family living in a house where the Memorial Garden is now. In the 1970s we took in a Laotian family that Sandy Henry and Holly Jespersen remember because they helped their moms assist this family. So what about us? What about now? Couldn’t we help a family fleeing terrorism find a welcome and a new life in America? Could our Christian calling of hospitality trump politics (but not safety)? The Christmas story reminds us that when claim to have, “no room at this inn,” we may miss out on the best gift of all – God in the flesh arriving at our doorstep.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend
–Sam Schreiner

PS. If you would like to help us discover what hosting a refugee family would entail, drop me or our Mission Associate Stella Clarke an email at stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org, or sam.schreiner@norotonchurch.org.

Israel Trip

Pastor Sam will be leading a trip to Israel to explore the Biblical sites of our faith. The trip will be over the April school break.

Brochures with details of the itinerary and cost are available around the church and in the church office.

Deposit due: Dec. 31st.

APNC

The Associate Pastor Nominating Committee (“APNC”) is pleased to provide an update to the congregation on the search process. The APNC was called and formed in July, and has spent several months in a study and discernment process. During this time, we have met with several committees, and many members of the Session and staff, and have sought and received broad input. We have assembled a Ministry Information Form (“MIF”), which has now been approved by Session and by the Presbytery of Southern New England. The MIF has been posted on the Church Leadership Connection website, and we have begun receiving Personal Information Forms, which we will now evaluate.

We thank you for your prayers, and ask that you continue to pray for the work of the APNC, that through this process we may discern the Pastor that God has intended for our congregation. At this time, referrals can be particularly helpful. Should you, either through experience at prior churches or through your relationships, know of a Pastor who might be a fit for NPC, please let us know. May God continue to guide us!

Members of the APNC are:

Greg Brown (gbbrownmd@gmail.com)
Dom Lettera (dominicLL@yahoo.com)
Betsy Mettler (betsyuva@hotmail.com)
Erik Schroeder (erik.schroeder@mac.com)
Cindy Smith (CTCindySmith@gmail.com)
Mary Thompson (mmasb@optonline.net)
David Travers (davetrav@gmail.com)
Sally Vosburgh (mrsv70@optonline.net)

Adult Spiritual Formation



Dear Friends:

It has been a privilege these past few months to be walking through the Scriptures with you (#togetherinthistory). The Old Testament points to the coming of a King, our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. My hope is that we do not miss him as we journey through Advent and celebrate Christmas.

As we approach Christmas, I would like to highlight a few opportunities that you will want to mark on your calendars – the majority of which will be in the New Year.

First, the Celebration of Volunteers on Tuesday evening, December 1st.

Second, all four of our Pastors will take turns leading a Sunday morning class during the 10:30 hour in the Post Road/Mission Room for 4 weeks highlighting the major flow of Biblical literature beginning **January 10th**. It will include: The Pentateuch and Historical Books, Poets and Prophets, The Gospels and Acts, and the Epistles and Revelation.

Third, **Noroton Lectures** will feature Dr. Lynn Cohick on **February 6th-7th**. Dr. Cohick is Professor of New Testament at Wheaton College in Wheaton, IL. She earned her Ph.D. from the University of Pennsylvania in New Testament/Christian Origins and is quite an engaging speaker. More information will be available in the coming weeks.

Please mark your calendars for these opportunities of fellowship and growth as followers of Jesus Christ, the Coming and Promised King.

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



Men's Studies

Men's Bible Study

- Will resume in January, 2016. Study Title and dates will be announced at a later date.

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.

Come and See the New Testament

Seeking a deeper and renewed understanding of the New Testament in preparation for Advent?

One path to this goal is the daily readings offered in Bible 365 v5.0, which takes you through each chapter of every book in 90 days, began in October and ends with the final chapters of Revelation on Dec 31st.

You can sign up at www.listeningforGod.org to receive daily emails with links to Scripture, reflections, and applications. The mail arrives in the early morning, but you can open it at your convenience. Bible 365 is produced by Ted Sanborn and family with insights from other readers and biblical experts such as William Barclay, Eugene Peterson, NPC Pastors, and others.

*"Nazareth! Can anything good come from there?"
Nathanael asked. 'Come and see,' said Philip
(John 1:46)."*

Adult Spiritual Formation

Resource During Busy December ...

As we rush through the next weeks with one activity after the next, let's stop to stay connected to each other.

One way is to be involved through reading/studying the same Scripture.

On the NPC website

We'd like to remind you that there is a resource easily available to help.

- **'Together In The Story'** Participant Discussion Questions



Weekly Pastor-written guides have helped us (individually or collectively) go a little deeper into the Scripture used for each Sunday's sermon. They are perfect to help us 'pause' during our hectic schedules, and reflect on what God has to say to us.

Please note that we will take a break in weekly offerings for Advent, and resume again in

January when we move into the New Testament, picking up with Matthew.

The September/October/November weekly studies will remain on the website (Ministries menu tab → Small Groups → Together).

- Perhaps you missed a week or two, and can "catchup" in December!

Pastor Suggested Readings

There are three additional resources listed on our website for those who are looking for inspiration in further individual reading as we as a congregation hear about the Bible's narrative on Sundays, and/or go deeper during the week in study groups.

- *How to Read the Bible For All It Is Worth*
- *The Bible Reader's Companion*
- *The Heart of the Old Testament*

More suggested Bible Reading Plan resources will be recommended in January as we move into the New Testament (Matthew) for our Narrative Lectionary/Together In The Story sermon/study initiative.

MERRY CHRISTMAS

Many God Bless you this Christmas Season,
Valerie Muller
Director of Community and Communication
(Including ASF's Small Group Ministry)



Caring & Women's Ministries



It's Advent. Things are dark. Mornings are dark. Afternoons are dark. News seems even darker than usual. My heart is wary of hope, and on some mornings would prefer to stay in the dark, sleeping—or watching reruns of the Simpsons.

Hope feels like too much effort. Too risky. This is Advent: A posture of waiting in the darkness. Hope is important, but hope is not some smiley-faced optimism that ignores the darkness. Hope endures the dark night because it is facing the horizon with trust that the sun will yet rise.

*My soul waits for the Lord.
More than a watchman for the morning,
More than a watchman for the morning.*

Psalm 130:6

On her Facebook page after the Paris and Beirut bombings, Anne Lamott wrote this:

Where do we find grace and light? If you mean right now, the answer is Nowhere. It's like after an unexpected death. Grace always does bat last, and the light always overcomes the darkness—always, historically. But not necessarily later the same day, or tomorrow, or after lunch. Wendell Berry told me 25 years ago, in Advent, the darkest shortest days of winter, "It gets darker and darker and darker, and then Jesus is born." But it is only November 13! It gets even darker.

So weary ones, Christ is coming! Christmas will arrive, and with Him—more light. We have reason for hope. Hope in the surprising, vulnerable gift of a babe born to peasants in a nowhere town. Hope in the truth that not only was Jesus born, but: Christ has died, Christ has risen, Christ will come again. And Christ bats last.

May you know hope in the darkness—hope in the Advent—as we trust in the ability of God to make manifest God's grace.

Gratefully,
Pastor Brandi Drake,
Associate Pastor of Caring & Women's Ministries

Women's Studies

Tuesdays:

6:15 am Bible Study in the Parlor. Study will end on **December 15** with a **Celebration Breakfast** and resume on **January 7** with the study on Matthew by N.T. Wright.

9:15 am Bible Study - Study will end on **December 15** with a **Celebration Brunch** and resume on **January 7** with the study on Matthew by N.T. Wright

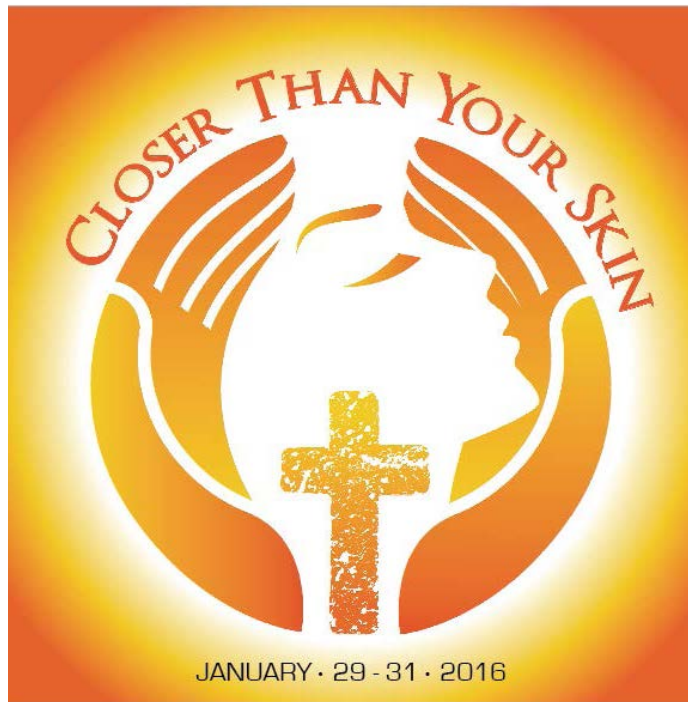
Thursdays:

9:30 am Oasis Mom's Group - Will end on December 10 with a Celebration Brunch and resume on January 7. Online registration is requested*. This is a special group for women with children who range in age from infancy through elementary school. We meet from 9:30-11:30 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 – 12:00-1:30 pm. We gather in the SHAC. We are discussing "Be a Parent, not a Pushover" by Mary Ann Rosenthal, Ph.D. Come as often as you are able.

**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 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.*

Women's and Caring Ministries



Women's Retreat

January 29-31 at
Incarnation Conference Center

REGISTER NOW!!

We're excited to have Susan Hill as our speaker this year. When you register, online or with Marlene, there will be a copy of Susan's book, *Closer than Your Skin*, a gift to you, available for pickup from Marlene at NPC. We are in for a treat as we go away together to notice the presence of God!

Register online at www.norotonwomen.com. If you have questions, would like help with registration or more information, please contact Marlene at 203-309-5620 or marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org.

*"You will seek Me and find Me, when you search for Me with all your heart.
And I will be found by you." Jeremiah 29:13-14a*



Prime Timers

December 10, 2015

12:30 pm for Lunch

in Horton Hall

Christmas memories, Carols and Birthdays (October –December). John Sanden will talk about the portrait of Jesus he so generously offered to paint for NPC. John has been one of the nation's leading Portrait artists for more than four decades.

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



Minute with Mickie – #TogetherInTheStory - Jesus' Birthday

This is really what the month of December is all about – Jesus' Birthday. Oh, I know that we call it Advent and Christmas. We think of Santa Claus, the Elf on the Shelf, reindeer, presents, cookies and candies, family traditions, Christmas pageantry and singing carols, but what's the reason we do all of this? It's because back in 350AD, Pope Julius, the First, set aside December 25th as the day to celebrate the coming of the Messiah who came to defeat the darkness of this world. We keep forgetting that part.

In our study in Horton Hall, the Elementary students have been finding ways to see themselves in the stories of the Old Testament as we've listened to the stories of Moses, Joshua, Samuel, Solomon, Namaan and Elisha, Hezekiah and Sennecherib and the Prophets. While watching the "What's in the Bible with Buck Denver" DVD on the Prophets of God, we could really see ourselves in the story of how people only wanted to listen to the false prophets who told the people that everything was great and they could do whatever they wanted, instead of listening to the prophets of God who said things would be bad if people kept disobeying God and ignoring God's Word. We could see that today we are living in a world very much like the one to which the Prophets were speaking. Look around you. It seems as if most people just want to believe their own ideas instead of obeying God's Word. Yet, all through the Bible we see God rescuing people from these poor decisions out of God's incredible grace and love for us. God even became a human person to help show people what God was actually like. God did this not by showing up as a full grown adult, but as a baby. God ushered in the greatest rescue plan for human wrongdoing by being a baby and growing up here among the people God would actually die to save. This is an amazing story.

So, the question for us this month could be: where do we see ourselves in this Christmas Story? I wonder. With whom do I identify? Mary and Joseph? I could. I've given birth and have been a parent. I've shared my children's pain and triumphs. I have an everlasting connection to my children that time and distance cannot destroy. So like Mary and Joseph I can identify with their story as Jesus' earthly parents. The Shepherds? I could. I remember that when I was told about Jesus as a child. I responded by wanting to see Him and know Him. I was eager to see if what my parents had told me was really true and I found that it was. The Magi? Perhaps. I've looked in the wrong places for Jesus, like they did arriving in Jerusalem. But I have also tried to give Jesus the gifts



that I have, hoping they will be used by God for His Kingdom. How about Herod? He too can be found in me. As much as I hate to admit it, there have been times when I turned my back on God, wanting to follow my own path and doing so was like trying to get rid of Jesus. It didn't go well for me those times. Or what about Anna and Simeon? Remember them? They were the elderly people who never gave up hope that the Messiah would truly come. Can I find myself in their part of the story? Oh, I hope so! I want to be like

them, always looking now for the hope of Jesus' second coming. I want to be like them and stand daily in the House of the Lord, teaching the Good News of the Bible and always looking with expectant eyes to see where God might be at any moment. And I want to be ready when Jesus comes again.

So how about you? Where are you in this story? This is the greatest story ever and God wants us in this story with Him. Jesus came to rescue us, to save us from our sin and give us a new story, an everlasting story. I pray that this December you and your family will take the time to find yourself in Jesus' Story. Celebrate Jesus' birthday and realize how much God loves you.

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Children's Ministry

Children's Ministry Events to help you be #TogetherInTheStory:

December 4: Family Fun Night:– *Caroling By Candlelight*. A family friendly worship experience for all ages, to help set the tone for the Advent Season. 6:30 pm in the Chapel with refreshments and fellowship in the Skylight Fellowship Lobby

December 13: *Children's Spontaneous Christmas Pageant* during 9:00 and 10:30 Worship Services. Once again our Elementary children will re-create the story of

Christ's Birth as the sermon for this Worship Service. Truly they will be Together In The Story! You won't want to miss it.

December 24: *Christmas Eve Family Worship* Experience at 3:00 pm and 5:00 pm.

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

NPCC



'Tis the Season to Reflect On Our Blessings

The Christmas season is already upon us, and it provides the perfect time to reflect on our blessings –joyful children, a dedicated staff, involved parents, and an inspiring church. There are so many meaningful ways in which your support and kindness have impacted our program.

This December, NPCC would also like to thank a number of families and organizations that have donated to our program. Their gifts, both new and used, have arrived in the form of furniture, books, toys, manipulatives, baby products and art supplies.

We are grateful for the donations from the following families: Donzeisers, Eckerts, Eisings, Gilliams, Grant-Ludwigs, Heins, Hoyts, Kwuns, McGees, Parsons, Schroeders, Tidricks, Squillaros, and Yasanliels. And the following organizations: Grace Christian Preschool, NPNS, and Tommee Tippee.

For those of you that I have neglected to list, please accept my sincere apology. I assure you that your donations are greatly appreciated by the children at NPCC.

Peace and Joy,
Beth Aparicio
Director of NPCC



Indira Basdeo(C), Crystal (L) and Colleen (R) enjoy a story that was donated by Grace Christian Preschool while sitting on a couch donated by NPNS.



Kate Reed (L) and Carolyn (R) share a story in a rocking chair that was donated by the Squillaros.



The month of November was filled with many activities. The children again participated in collecting food items for Person-to-Person, which they then delivered on our annual walk. It was a brisk fall day and the joy in the children's eyes as they crunched through the leaves, was delightful. Engaging the children in conversations about how they can help others in need gave them an opportunity to be grateful for their own homes full of food. The students celebrated Thanksgiving with a Feast of Thankfulness, where 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. As December arrived with a flurry of activity, the children are very busy preparing themselves for the best Christmas present. While all of the children love talking about what they hope they will receive under their tree Christmas morning, the teachers have begun focusing on the true meaning of Christmas, Jesus. The children are looking forward to Ms. Mickie and Miss Susanne coming around to each of the classrooms sharing the Christmas story and teaching the children about Advent, The Season of Waiting. It is hard for all of us to wait, and especially hard for children at this time of year. So I encourage all of you to take a few moments each day to sit and read a Christmas story with your children, listen to them retell the story of Christmas, and to enjoy this most wonderful and magical time of year. We wish you all a blessed Christmas season.

God Bless You,
Kalie Riordan and the
NPNS teachers and staff



Room 15 at the Cherry Lawn Gardens



Still Life Paintings in room 10



Loose Parts exploration in room 14



Room 11 Field trip fun



MISSION GUIDE 2016

BRIDGE TO CITY I - Private School Students

March 12-14

One of three urban mission experiences in NYC--each designed to provide students (ages 14+) and parents with the opportunity to participate in local mission during the school break while also leaving ample time for vacation plans with family and friends for the remainder of the break. Cost: \$150. **Registration is due by January 1st.**

SOUTHWEST MISSION - Private School Students

March 12-18

Attention private school and boarding school students on break in March... We're assembling a team of students (grades 8-12) and parents to serve with YWAM on the Hopi reservation in Arizona. Work will include construction projects and community engagement. Estimated cost: \$1,000. **Registration is due by December 18th.**

BRIDGE TO CITY II

April 9-11

One of three urban mission experiences in NYC--each designed to provide students (ages 14+) and parents with the opportunity to participate in local mission during the school break while also leaving ample time for vacation plans with family and friends for the remainder of the break. Cost: \$150. **Registration is due by February 1st.**

BRIDGE TO CITY III

April 15-17

One of three urban mission experiences in NYC--each designed to provide students (ages 14+) and parents with the opportunity to participate in local mission during the school break while also leaving ample time for vacation plans with family and friends for the remainder of the break. Cost: \$150. **Registration is due by February 1st.**

VWAP: WEST VIRGINIA

July 2-10

Students currently in grades 6-12, parents, and families are invited to be part of a week serving in Dunlow, West Virginia this summer. We will be partnering with the Cabwaylingo Chapel/Dunlow Community Center once again to put on a VBS program along with some other community service projects. Cost: \$600. **Registration available beginning Jan. 1st.**

NEW for 2016! Post-Mission Retreat in West Virginia. This special 3-night retreat will be an additional \$150.

HOPE MISSION (EAST AFRICA)

August 1-16

Students currently in grades 8*-12 and parents are invited to be part of a special mission experience partnering with the work of New Hope Uganda. Ministry at NHU will include work projects around the school and housing areas, working in partnership with native people to the surrounding community, and more. Estimated cost: \$3,500. **Registration is Due December 1st.**

Register online at: www.norotonyouth.com

Pastor Jimmy McPherson
Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries

Congregational Life Ministry



Merry Christmas!

The timing of your receiving the December Spire coincides with our annual *Volunteer Celebration*, which is held on Team Night, **December 1st** this year! We will be gathering in the Skylight Fellowship Lobby which will be festively decorated by our very talented Flower Team! We are grateful for the embellishments to our new facility that they provide week-after-week ... and we hope many of them will be with us for the Celebration!

If you have served in any way during 2015, whether 15 minutes or 15 hours ... we hope you will join us for the evening's festivities so that we can say *Thank You!*

You may be interested to know that NPC was blessed to have over 400 individuals participate in serving in one or more ministries this past year. You are an invaluable asset, without which ministry-as-we-know-it could not happen.

If you have not yet figured out where you might grow in your faith by serving others, I would be happy to help you discern a place where your interest lies and your skills can be utilized. Use the contact info below to get in touch, and we'll go from there. An inquiry is not a commitment, so let's have a chat.

We will document the evening photographically, and share in this space next month.

It's a fun evening of fellowship across all the ministries of the church ... so a great opportunity to see others who may worship in a different service than you do, or participate in a different ministry or event(s).

Lots of Christmas Events this month ...

The Volunteer Celebration is usually the first in a series of activities leading up to Christmas to help members/friends spend time together as we together prepare to celebrate the birth of our Lord.

Check elsewhere in this issue, on the website, or in the weekly Noroton Notes for specifics. Also, watch for the annual letter which includes a handy postcard that summarizes the main activities ... designed to minister to all ages.

We look forward to seeing you *REGULARLY* throughout this month of intensified activities! Come and enjoy refreshments/chats as frequently as your schedule will allow.

And, as we near Christmas Day, may we all turn our thoughts and hearts to the greatest gift of all ... our Saviour ... and give thanks to God, who knows us all by name. Thanks be to God.

In fellowship together,
Valerie Muller

Director of Community and Communications
(including Congregational Life)

valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org

203-309-5650



MERRY CHRISTMAS

Membership Ministry

Welcoming And Membership Events



Be part of the “7-Minute” Welcoming Team... we really need new volunteers!

Did you know it takes just 7 minutes for visitors to form a first impression of our church? We have a beautiful new space and want to warmly and helpfully welcome newcomers and regular worshippers to it!

Volunteers help for 15 minutes on Sunday mornings. Sign up as your schedule allows:

- Just once to try it out
- A few dates you select
- Regularly once a month

Be part of a stronger welcoming team!



“ALPHA” IS COMING... January 2016

The Alpha Course is an opportunity to explore your unanswered questions about Christianity in a safe environment.

There will be an Introductory Dinner (no-commitment) on Monday, January 11 to learn more. The course will meet for 10 weeks on Mondays, 7 – 9 pm, January 25th through April 4th, with a Saturday Retreat on the Holy Spirit on March 12th.

Each meeting begins with a delicious dinner, followed by a thought-provoking talk on an aspect of the Christian faith and then a discussion in small groups.

Mark your calendars now and tell others! If you've already been to Alpha, think about who you'd bring to the Introductory Dinner.

Online registration for the Introductory Dinner and the Alpha Course is at www.npmlink.com/alpha.

For more information, contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org or Claudia Roux (croux28@gmail.com).

Becoming a Member of NPC... Join NPC in the New Year!

**HOLD THE DATE: New Member Class will be
Saturday, Jan. 23, 2016, 12:30 to 5:30 pm**

The class is interesting and enjoyable! Here's what recent new members had to say:

- *I loved the experience and the time flew by. I feel better informed about NPC and the devoted staff, and my own budding faith was reinforced.*
- *Looking forward to becoming a part of this community.*
- *I thought it all made for a well-rounded experience and it was very meaningful to me.*
- *Thanks for a lovely learning experience. Five hours have never flown by so quickly.*

During the class you will have an opportunity to:

- Explore what it means to be a Christian and to follow Jesus
- Discuss the significance of membership and being a Presbyterian
- Learn about NPC ministries/programs, and how to get involved
- Meet others joining and expand your faith community.

It's also an option to attend the class for information only, and choose to join within the following year. Free professional nursery care is provided for children 3 months to 4 years.

Pre-registration is needed. To register on-line and for more class information, see the membership ministry page on the NPC website (www.norotonchurch.org).

Please contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org for more information or to sign up..

Working our faith,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership

News from Scott Brill – InterVarsity Christian Fellowship

"I'm so glad I went. I haven't been involved in religious activities for a while, and I really missed it. So at first I was a little nervous to go but I really loved talking about the Bible in such an open way. I definitely plan on being a regular! Thank you so much for reaching out to me. I felt so welcome and I really look forward to next Monday!"

That's an excerpt from an email I received the day after our first Assumption InterVarsity Bible study of the year. "M" is a junior who's never really been involved in anything with Campus Ministry before. Not only did she come the first week, but she brought three friends who've also been faithfully coming since then. "B" is a first year student who brought two of her friends to the second study. Last week, "T" (one of "B's" friends) brought two other friends. "S" is another first year student who brought along a friend ("N") a couple weeks ago. After last week's study, "N" told me that she has a lot of doubts about God and what it means to trust Him, but that the Scripture was having a big impact on her and she can sense herself opening up to Jesus.

These are just a couple of the highlights of what has been an amazing first six weeks of the Monday night Bible study. There is a core group of about 15 students coming regularly, inviting friends (there's been at least one new student every week so far), and taking steps of faith in applying the passages. And we've grown so much this fall, we had to get a bigger room!

Remember in my previous prayer update that I said I couldn't shake the feeling that we were "warming up" for something new and powerful that God wanted to do on campus? I think we're beginning to see the first fruits of that work. Thanks for the part that your prayers have played in this! And keep praying!!

Scott Brill

InterVarsity Christian Fellowship Asst Regional Director
– focused ministry to Catholic Campuses
and Catholic students

Scott Brill



Scott Brill from InterVarsity (NPC supported missionary) came to visit and meet with NPC on November 3 sharing news of his ministry to Catholic Colleges in New England. Scott brought us lots of encouraging news, telling us that there was the

highest ever number of commitments to Christ made by students last year. InterVarsity is also at an all time high for numbers of colleges with active InterVarsity chapters on campus. Scott spends approximately 35% of his time at Assumption College doing campus ministry and has built great partnership with the Catholic campus ministry staff who invited Scott to come in and provide ministry to the Protestant students there. This is a great example of the partnership between evangelical/catholic ministries. There is a very fruitful ministry to the girls crew team and good opportunities for continued

growth on this location. Another 20% of Scott's time is spent as Regional co-ordinator for InterVarsity's mission to the 20 Catholic colleges in the North East. When



Scott first started this unique outreach there were chapters on 2 of the Catholic campuses. Now there are Chapters on 7 of the 20 and several more doors

Mission Ministry



opening on the remaining campuses who do not yet have an InterVarsity presence. Scott sees this as a time of great opportunity and he is very excited about these developments and fully committed to making the most of them. Scott also shared how he is spending about 30% of his time on the Institute of Christian Unity which is a ministry which he and a partner have developed. In this unique time of Catholic/Evangelical partnership Scott is working on building unity in order to help breakdown the divisions amongst Christians that prevent the effective proclamation of the Gospel.

Ways to Serve and Learn about Mission

Serve at the Open Door Shelter in Norwalk

The next NPC service date will be December 5th. If you are over 16 and interested in helping set up or serve the lunch at the Open Door Shelter please contact Holly Hough to sign up hhough7@optonline.net.

Welcoming Refugees to Connecticut

If you are interested in helping new refugees as they resettle in Connecticut please contact Stella Clarke.

Angel Tree and Dove Program

Interested in helping deliver packages, please contact Stella.

Questions? Please contact
Stella Clarke
Mission Associate

You can find me in the East Wing
Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday or

contact stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org or 203-309-5645

Music & Fine Arts



Upcoming Music Department Events

Our annual **Advent Vespers** will be held in NPC's historic chapel on **December 13**, at 4:00 and 6:00 pm. This service features our NPC Chamber Singers, soloists, and the Fontenay Chamber Players. Please come and soak in some of the wonderful music of this holy season.

On **December 20**, at 5:00 pm, we will have the annual **Open Doors Advent Unplugged** service. This service features our Open Doors singers and instrumentalists and adds strings and woodwinds.

Plan on joining us for our **Christmas Eve** services **December 24**, at 8:00 and 10:00 pm. These services include quite a lot of music by the Chancel Choir and Chamber Orchestra.

Blessings,
Dwayne Condon
Director of Music



Worship Schedule

The Worship and Fine Arts Ministry of
Noroton Presbyterian Church
presents

Advent Choral Vespers

December 13, 2015
4:00* and 6:00 pm
in the NPC Chapel

Featuring
The NPC Chamber Singers
and
The Fontenay Chamber Players

NPC's historic, beautifully decorated
& candlelit chapel will reverberate
with the music of the season
presented by the 24 voice ensemble.

*There will be childcare provided for ages 3 and under only at 4:00 p.m.
Contact NPCC at 203-202-9441 for childcare reservations.

Noroton Presbyterian Church
presents

Open Doors Advent Unplugged

December 20, 2015
5:00 pm in the
Skylight Fellowship Lobby

Come join us for this
Special Service
of Reflection

Christmas Worship Schedule

12/6 - 2nd Sunday of Advent
Pastor Sam Schreiner

12/13 - 3rd Sunday of Advent
8:00 am & 5:00 pm
Pastor Jimmy McPherson
9:00 & 10:30 am

Children's Christmas Pageant

12/20 - 4th Sunday of Advent
8:00, 9:00, and 10:30 am
Pastor John Seiders
5:00 pm Open Doors
Advent Unplugged
Pastor Brandi Drake

12/24 - Christmas Eve
3:00* & 5:00* pm
Services for Families
Pastor Brandi Drake

**Child care available 3 years and under*

8:00 & 10:00 pm
Inspirational Music and Carols
with Choir and Orchestra
Pastor Sam Schreiner

12/27 - 10:30 am Service Only
Pastor Jimmy McPherson

OPEN DOORS

during Advent (Nov. 29-Dec. 20)
will be worshipping in
the *Skylight Fellowship Lobby!*
Come join us at 5:00 pm.

NPC News

In Loving Memory of...

September 22nd:
Elizabeth "Lee" Lane

October 19th:
William Saunders

November 4th:
Mary Townsend

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

Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

November 15th

Johanna Brennan Knudsen

Upcoming Baptism Dates

12/20/15, 1/17/2016 and 2/21/2016 at

10:30 a.m. Sanctuary service.

To schedule a Baptism please call Leslie Ezzo
at 203-309-5618.

*If you would like to submit an article for the January 2016 issue
please submit it before December 11 to Rose Cunningham by email
at rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.*

NPC Program Staff

Pastor Samuel A. Schreiner III 203-309-5618
Pastor and Team Leader

Pastor Brandi Drake.....203-309-5620
Associate Pastor of Caring & Women's Ministry

Pastor Jimmy McPherson 203-309-5619
Associate Pastor Youth

Pastor John Seiders.....203-309-5619
Interim Associate Pastor Adult and Outreach Ministries

Valerie Muller..... 203-309-5650
Director of Community and Communications

Dwayne Condon.....203-309-5614
Director of Music & Fine Arts

Mickie O'Donnell..... 203-309-5622
Director of Children's Ministry

Stella Clarke..... 203-309-5645
Mission Ministry Associate

Beth Aparicio203-309-5605
Director of Noroton Presbyterian Child Care

Kalie Riordan 203-655-3223
Director Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School

Julie Colbath 203-309-5615
Director of Membership

Dan Rosa..... 203-309-5608
Business Administrator

David Lee..... 203-309-5609
Director of Properties

December 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	5
		6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study(NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study 6:30 pm Volunteer Celebration	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	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.	6:30 pm Caroling by Candlelight		
6	7	8	9	10	11	12	
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's-5th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 10:30 am HS SnapShot 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry		6:15 am Women's Bible Study 9:15 am Women's Bible Study 8:00 pm Session Christmas Party	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	9:30 am Oasis 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 12:30 pm Prime Timers 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.			
13	14	15	16	17	18	19	
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services Children's Christmas Pageant 10:30 am HS SnapShot 4 & 6:00 pm Advent Choral Vespers 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry		6:15 am Women's Bible Study Breakfast 9:15 am Women's Bible Study Brunch	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 6:30 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.			
20	21	22	23	24	25	26	
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's-8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 10:30 am HS SnapShot 5:00 pm Open Doors Advent Unplugged 6:00 pm High School Ministry			7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	Christmas Eve NPC Offices Closed at Noon 3 & 5:00 pm Family Christmas Service 8 & 10:00 pm Service with Inspirational Music and Carols	Christmas NPC Offices Closed		
27	28	29	30	31			
10:30 am Sanctuary Service Only							