

The Spire

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



What's Not To Like?

February – the month of Presidents, Noroton Lectures, Ash Wednesday and the start of Lent, and even a school vacation – what's not to like? George Washington and Abraham Lincoln are well deserving of the recognition of President's Day. Both of these men unselfishly served this country at pivotal times and both were often known to be on their knees in prayer for heavenly guidance and divine assistance. Washington will be remembered for stepping away from office after two terms, even though his popularity might have made him a "king." Lincoln's great legacy was his fight to preserve the Union and free the slaves and then, at the end of the war, calling a divided country to forgiveness and reconciliation in the best presidential speech of all – his second inaugural. These two men stand out because they courageously made the right calls at decisive moments. They made decisions that affected the destiny of the country in which we are now privileged to live. So don't just shop for cars on their birthdays, give a prayer of thanks to God that these men answered the call of duty.

February is the month to come and hear Dr. John Stackhouse (an expert on Christian faith and culture), our Noroton Lecturer this year. We are honored to have him join us, and like our previous speakers, I'm sure he will deepen our faith as he speaks in our lectures series - scheduled for Saturday morning and evening and Sunday morning services. We hope to see many of you on February 7 and 8.

Ash Wednesday falls on February 18 - in the middle of the Darien School vacation week. We will once again have brief services at noon and 7:30 p.m. (and a 4:30 p.m. Family service), to meditate on Christ's great love for us and to lead us reverentially into Lent together. Pastor Jimmy will be sharing a meditation at these services. At the close of our time together, worshippers will be invited to receive ashes - the symbol by which we remember our mortality and our dependence upon Christ for forgiveness.

Finally, February 22, we are delighted to welcome to our pulpit Dr. John Chacha, founder of Teamwork City of Hope. Dr. Chacha has launched Bible Schools which are educating thousands of students on five continents.

continued on page 2...

Worship Schedule

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

Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

- 2/1/15 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
 "Marriage in 3D"
 Genesis 2:18-25
- 2/8/15 - 8, 9, 10:30 a.m.
 "Is He Saved?"—and Other
 Questions Christians Shouldn't Ask
 Noroton Lectures: Guest Speaker
 Dr. John G. Stackhouse Jr.
 (No Open Doors service today)
- 2/15/15 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 2/18/15 - Ash Wednesday services
 Pastor Jimmy McPherson,
 12 noon and 7:30 p.m. NPC Chapel
 4:30 p.m. Family Service
- 2/22/15 - Guest Preacher,
 Dr. Chacha, City of Hope, Tanzania

Table of Contents

Adult Spiritual Formation.....	3-4
Caring & Women's Ministries	5-6
Children's Ministry.....	7
Youth Ministries.....	8
Tot Drop.....	9
NPNS.....	10
Membership Ministry	11
Congregational Life Ministry	12
Mission Ministry	13-14
NPC Calendar of Events.....	15
NPC News	16

continued from front page...

Several of our members have traveled to the City of Hope in Tanzania where a new community is being founded for educating children, building up agriculture and developing a medical clinic as a model for other regions of Africa. Dr. Chacha has been one of our men's retreat speakers and it is an honor to welcome him back to preach at our morning services on February 22. Don't miss this inspiring man of God.

I hope you are looking forward to February. I know that with these special guests coming, I sure am!

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,
Sam Schreiner

Notice to the Congregation

Immediately following the 9:00 and 10:30 services on Sunday, February 8th, a congregational meeting will be held to conduct the following business: to vote on the request of Pastor Greg Doll to dissolve his pastoral relationship with Noroton Presbyterian Church (effective 3/1/15). All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. Child care will be extended for this brief meeting.

Goodbye to Pastor Greg

If you would like to make a financial contribution to support the Dolls as they begin a new ministry venture in Darien, please send a check (made payable to NPC) to our Business Administrator, Dan Rosa, marked, "Pastor Doll" and either mail it to 2011 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820 or drop it off at 22 Thorndal Circle. If you would like to share a personal note or card there will be a basket in our mail room at the church and at our Thorndal office. Please remember to keep the Doll family in your prayers during this time of transition.

Register Now!

[\(click here to register\)](#)

Noroton Lecture 2015

Guest Speaker
Dr. John G. Stackhouse, Jr.



Event Schedule

Saturday, February 7

8-9:30 a.m.

Men's Breakfast

Topic: *The World Is Not Enough:*

Lessons on Masculinity from James Bond and Jesus Christ

All men are invited to join us in Horton Hall

for a continental breakfast, fellowship and a lecture.

10-11:30 a.m.

Women's Coffee

Topic: *Why Women Don't Lead... and Why All Women Should Care*

All women are invited to join us in Horton Hall

for coffee, refreshments, fellowship and a lecture.

7-8:30 p.m.

Keynote Address

Topic: *Doesn't Anyone Care about the Big Things?*

How to Commend the Gospel to a Busy Neighbor

All are welcome to the evening lecture in Horton Hall.

Please register for these events at www.norotonchurch.org.

Sunday, February 8 - Worship Services

8 a.m. - Chapel / 9 & 10:30 a.m. - Sanctuary

Sermon: *"Is He Saved?"—and Other Questions Christians Shouldn't Ask*

Join us for any of our Sunday morning services.

(No 5 pm Open Doors Service tonight)

Prime Timers

Thursday, February 19th at 2:00 p.m. in the Parlor

Pastor Sam will share about the Christian Faith of our Founding Father George Washington.

For more information, call Marlene Moffett at (203) 309-5620.



Good Resolutions

Sometime during the first week of January, I bumped into 2 separate lists of New Year's resolutions -- one from Pope Francis and the other from a prominent Jewish Rabbi named Jonathan Sacks.

I don't know why, but I was surprised by how much overlap I noticed between the two. I appreciated both of them and thought to myself, "This is too good not to pass along. It is too late for the January Spire but not too late for February." So...here you go.

Pope Francis

- "Take care of your spiritual life, your relationship with God, because this is the backbone of everything we do and everything we are."
- "Take care of your family life, giving your children and loved ones not just money, but most of all your time, attention and love."
- "Take care of your relationships with others, transforming your faith into life and your words into good works, especially on behalf of the needy."
- "Be careful how you speak, purify your tongue of offensive words, vulgarity and worldly decadence."
- "Heal wounds of the heart with the oil of forgiveness, forgiving those who have hurt us and medicating the wounds we have caused others."
- "Look after your work, doing it with enthusiasm, humility, competence, passion and with a spirit that knows how to thank the Lord."
- "Be careful of envy, lust, hatred and negative feelings that devour our interior peace and transform us into destroyed and destructive people."
- "Watch out for anger that can lead to vengeance; for laziness that leads to existential euthanasia; for pointing the finger at others, which leads to pride; and for complaining continually, which leads to desperation."
- "Take care of brothers and sisters who are weaker... the elderly, the sick, the hungry, the homeless and strangers, because we will be judged on this."

Rabbi Sacks

1. **Give thanks.** Once a day take quiet time to feel gratitude for what you have, not impatience for what you don't have. This alone will bring you halfway to happiness. We already have most of the ingredients of a happy life. It's just that we tend to take these for granted and focus on unmet wants, unfulfilled desires. Giving thanks is better than shopping – and cheaper too.
2. **Praise.** Catch someone doing something right and say so. Most people, most of the time, are unappreciated. Being recognized, thanked and congratulated by someone else is one of the most empowering things that can happen to us. So don't wait for someone to do it for you: do it for someone else. You will make their day, and that will help to make yours.
3. **Spend time with your family.** Make sure that there is at least one time a week when you sit down to have a meal together with no distractions – no television, no phone, no e-mail, just being together and celebrating one another's company. Happy marriages and healthy families need dedicated time.
4. **Discover meaning.** Take time out, once in a while, to ask: "Why am I here? What do I hope to achieve? How best can I use my gifts? What would I wish to be said about me when I am no longer here?" Finding meaning is essential to a fulfilled life – and how can you find it if you never look? If you don't know where you want to be, you will never get there, however fast you run.
5. **Live your values.** Most of us believe in high ideals, but we act on them only sporadically. The best thing to do is to establish habits that get us to enact those ideals daily. This is called ritual, and it is what religions remember but ethicists often forget.
6. **Forgive.** This is the emotional equivalent of losing excess weight. Life is too short to bear a grudge or seek revenge. Forgiving someone is good for them but even better for you. The bad has happened. It won't be made better by your dwelling on it. Let it go. Move on.

Adult Spiritual Formation

- 7. Keep learning.** I learned this from Florence in Newcastle, whom I last met the day she celebrated her 105th birthday. She was still full of energy and fun. "What's the secret?" I asked her. "Never be afraid to learn something new," she said. Then I realized that if you are willing to learn, you can be 105 and still young. If you are not, you can be 25 and already old.
- 8. Learn to listen.** Often in conversation we spend half our time thinking of what we want to say next instead of paying attention to what the other person is saying. Listening is one of the greatest gifts we can give to someone else. It means that we are open to them, that we take them seriously and that we accept graciously their gift of words.
- 9. Create moments of silence in the soul.** Liberate yourself, if only five minutes daily, from the tyranny of technology, the mobile phone, the laptop and all the other electronic intruders, and just inhale the heady air of existence, the joy of being.
- 10. Transform suffering.** When bad things happen, use them to sensitize you to the pain of others. The greatest people I know – people who survived tragedy and became stronger as a result – did not ask "Who did this to me?" Instead, they asked "What does this allow me to do that I could not have done before?" They refused to become victims of circumstance. They became, instead, agents of hope.

Life is too full of blessings to waste time and attention on artificial substitutes. Live, give, forgive, celebrate and praise: these are still the best ways of making a blessing over life, thereby turning life into a blessing.

Pastor Greg Doll,
Associate Pastor of Adult Spiritual Formation & Outreach

Starting New Small Groups

We need to hear from those interested in participating in Small Groups starting in February/March.

We plan to offer groups both on Sunday and a weekday evening.

We will recommend curriculum, and offer child care once we determine need.

Please contact us with your interest so we can begin putting groups together.

valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org and/or
marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org

Small groups are a great way to learn how others manage their day-to-day faith, and to develop friendships with others in our NPC community.

Let us help you find a place comfortable for you!



Valerie Muller
*Director of Community
and Communication*

Men's Studies

Men's Bible Study

- **Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. in NYC** at The Yale Club, 50 Vanderbilt Ave, corner of 44th across from the west entrance to Grand Central.
- **Thursdays at 7:00 a.m. in Horton Hall** with continental breakfast.

Men's Study at the Sugar Bowl:

- **Wednesdays 7:00 a.m.** Led by different men from the group gathering for breakfast, fellowship and reflection on a passage of Scripture.

Caring & Women's Ministries



On the day I called, you answered me. You increased my strength of soul.

Psalm 138:3

I love this verse. There are so many reasons for us to call out to the one who created us and loves us. Our beloved Noroton is in the kind of transition that makes my head hurt. Building. Rejoicing as we welcome Pastor Jimmy. Grieving as Pastor Greg transitions to a different ministry. People moving here and there. Not to mention our own lives: sickness, work stress, marital strife, kids in the midst of tough decisions. Oh my!

What does scripture tell us to do? To call out- to pray. I don't know about you, but I'm realizing more and more that the waters we navigate are deep: we can't keep treading the water of these depths on our own strength. We need the kind of 'strength of soul' that the Psalmist writes about.

There are lots of opportunities to present ourselves to God in prayer, for strengthened souls. Looking forward toward March, I want to make sure some of these opportunities are on your radar:

Women's Retreat- March 6,7,8 in Warwick, NY. Our theme this year is "Come as you are" and I'm so excited that one of my favorite mentors, Tammy Letts, will be our speaker this year. You can register online www.norotonwomen.com.

DivorceCare: Know of someone in the throes of separation or divorce? Consider bringing them to this group. I'm amazed every year to see people become strong in their soul as they seek support in such a devastating time of life. It's truly a special group.

We'll meet on Monday nights in the Parlor from 7:30-9:00 p.m., beginning on March 3. For more info please go to www.norotonchurch.org/divorcecare.

Women's Bible Studies: Our Tuesday 6:15 a.m. group is walking through 1-2-3 John, and the 9:30 a.m. group is studying the Psalms of Ascent (Psalm 120-134). Why not join us? There's also Moms of Teens, Oasis, and a monthly Monday afternoon group.

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

Women's Studies

Tuesday morning Bible Studies:

- **6:15 a.m. in the Parlor.** Join us early Tuesday mornings for some spiritual nourishment. Come when you can.
- **9:30 a.m. in living rooms around town:** Feb. 3, we are finishing up Philippians in Horton Hall! New Session begins Feb. 10. We will meet back at church, and walk through the Psalms of Ascent together. Interested? Contact Marlene (marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org) to receive your "location." Join us anytime! Childcare is limited so contact Tot Drop at 203-309-5605.

Thursday morning Moms Oasis:

- **Thursdays from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. in Horton Hall.** Childcare is limited so contact Tot Drop at 203-309-5605.

Moms of Teens:

- The group is reading *Bonding with your TEEN through BOUNDARIES*, by June Hunt. **Thursdays 12:00 – 1:15 p.m.** in the SHAC. Come as often as you are able. This group is led by Sallie Schmidt and Laurie Bessey. For more information contact Sallie at sallieschmidt@gmail.com or Laurie at thebesseyfamily@yahoo.com.

Women's Lunchtime Study:

- I am thrilled to tell you that Gina Blaze from the New England Prayer Center (NEPC) is back for the Women's Lunchtime Study. The group will meet in the church parlor the second Monday of every month, instead of every week. Study begins at 12 p.m. to chat and catch-up with a hard start at 12:15 p.m. and will end promptly at 1:30 p.m.

Caring & Women's Ministries



Born out of Stephen Ministry, **H.E.R.O.E.S. Care** exists to support members of all branches of the military and their families/significant others. While we target post 9/11 military and veterans and their families/loved ones (including reservists and members of the National Guard), H.E.R.O.E.S. Care also extends to veterans of any era, and never distinguishes between wounded/non-wounded veterans.

Why H.E.R.O.E.S. Care? Research has documented two acute issues facing deployed service members relating to their mental health. First is a deep, ongoing concern about the well-being of their families during their deployment. Second is a critical need for local post-deployment reintegration support. Both of these issues when addressed proactively increase the potential for psychological and emotional resiliency post-deployment. This is particularly the case among service members suffering with invisible wounds of combat deployments, including PTSD, Traumatic Brain Injury, and key precursors to suicide, now epidemic among post 9/11 veterans.

What do we do here at NPC? NPC is a H.E.R.O.E.S. Care Outpost, or home-base of activity. We are one of four such outposts in the state, and our area of coverage extends from New London/Groton on south through Fairfield County and into Westchester, NY.

Members of the military community who desire support are paired with extensively trained and vetted Hometown Support Volunteers (members of our NPC church family). Together, the two build a long-term, one-on-one relationship that is marked by consistency, confidentiality and proactive support.

This collaborative relationship helps to fortify the ingredients essential to emotional and spiritual well-being through deployment/recovery/life-after-service.

What else do we do? Anything at all within our means to support and encourage the military community in our congregation, town, county and state! Motivated by God's love and grace, we are eager to reach out to help bridge the cultural gap that exists between those who serve in the military and those who benefit from their service.

Trained Stephen Ministers are eligible to become Hometown Support Volunteers for H.E.R.O.E.S. Care.

Not involved with Stephen Ministry? That's okay; you are not disqualified. There are many ways to be involved. *And please be aware that a new Stephen Ministry Training Class will begin soon-- stay tuned!*

The need is great here in CT and all around our nation, and the time is right. For more information about serving in this unique mission field, please contact any of the NPC H.E.R.O.E.S. Care Team members listed below. We welcome your involvement and appreciate your prayers!

Outpost Leader:
Evie Knight, Evie.Knight.cact@gmail.com, 203-228-4228

Hometown Support Volunteers:

Bruce Baggeley
Cleve Cleveland
Jim Haffner
Leslie Lloyd
Tom Mao
Sheree Sanborne
Emily Shute
Sue Smirnoff
Cindy Terry

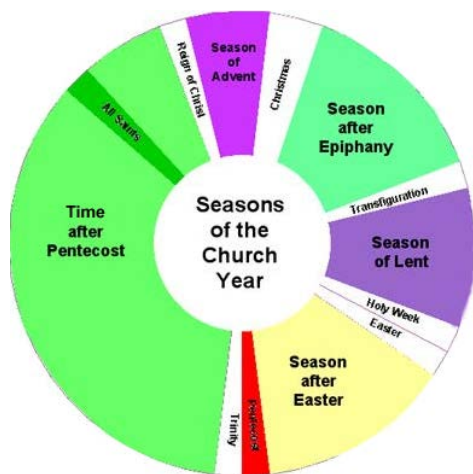


Minute with Mickie – What will we do in February?

We have skated through January really nicely, including a cancelled Sunday with the black ice. I skated around, did you? Children's Ministry here at NPC is about helping you, as parents, and as our children's church family, to help our children grow deeper in their faith and their understanding of the Biblical text. So in February we will continue our learning about the Sermon on the Mount and move into the stories of the Lenten Season so that we can understand how Jesus wants his disciples to live. Ask your children to use their Popsicle Stick Puppets to re-tell the stories to you. What fun!

On February 18 we begin the Lenten Season with Ash Wednesday. At 4:30 p.m. we will hold a Family Ash Wednesday Service in our historic Chapel. Lent will be explained in simple language, we will share hymns, read the Bible, offer our prayers of repentance and receive ashes. Lent is the period preceding Easter that is devoted to fasting, abstinence, and penitence in commemoration of Christ's fasting in the wilderness. This season goes from Ash Wednesday to Holy Saturday and includes forty weekdays, but not Sundays during this time. It is never too early to introduce wonderful Church traditions to our children. It connects us all to followers of Jesus worldwide and throughout time. How cool is that?

Children love ritual and routine and as we walk through the church year in Sunday School we use this chart to keep us grounded and focused. Lent is this wonderful season where we will focus on the stories of Jesus as he makes his way



to his crucifixion. Use this chart to ask your children about the season that precedes Lent – Epiphany. I think you'll love to hear what they have to share with you.

Beyond what we do on Sundays, in February, I will be leading a workshop on how to tell Bible stories to children. This is a workshop that will be beneficial to all parents. It is not really complicated and when you and your children take the time to share "stories" why not have them be Bible stories? Monday, February 9 this will be offered during the day and the evening. I'll send you an E-vite with more details. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that Scripture is alive and active, more powerful than a two-edged sword. If we truly believe this, than it is important for us to know the Biblical stories. In our discipleship-making, at NPC's Children's Ministry we should tell the stories of the Biblical text naturally in and throughout our conversations. We are still an "oral" culture. Who doesn't love it when someone says "That reminds me of a story"? Won't you come to one of our workshops? Bring your children and learn to share Bible stories with each other.

I look forward to February, to Lent and to telling more stories of Jesus. Like the old Gospel song says "they are the sweetest that I've ever heard." See you Sundays!

Have you "Liked" us on Facebook yet? NPCKids is on Facebook and we post various parental support articles and encouragement for these parenting years.

Have you visited www.npckids.com? At our website you will find links to other websites to help you in parenting, games to play, Bible stories to tell and you can see everything we are teaching from week to week for our Elementary students. You can also sign up online to take a turn to participate with your children in Horton Hall on Sunday morning AND you will get information on our Family Events. We do all we can to help you with your children's spiritual growth and empowerment.

See you on Sunday!!
Mickie O'Donnell
Director of Children's Ministry

Youth Ministries



Anyone who has undergone the process of relocating from another part of the country, or even from one country to another, will quickly recognize that such movements are not only full of adventure—but also represent a major disruption in the lives of those transplanted.

The comforts of home are replaced for a time with unfamiliar surroundings, the once established friendships with new and unrecognized faces. I imagine this was the experience of sojourning biblical figures of the past, women and men like Sarah and Abraham who moved in response to God's call. Or Naomi and her family, who moved to the country of Moab to escape drought in their homeland—and years later for Naomi to return “home” accompanied by Ruth, her widowed daughter-in-law and native of Moab, who herself would now experience the disruptions associated with relocating. Each lived by faith, and perhaps all the more, as they sought to establish a place in these new communities.

Andrea and I have moved into this community with similar feelings. In many respects this move is full of adventure—a new community, new surroundings, and new ways of doing things. And perhaps a bit like the biblical heroes of the past, we have sensed that God has called us to this place. But at the same time we feel disrupted, the depth of which we discover in new and

unexpected ways with each passing day. But these are not the only feelings we are experiencing. Instead, we feel a deep sense of welcome and love, the result of this congregation's many expressions—through encouraging words and cards, gifts, and support. Your kindness not only mitigated the disruption of the move, but actually serves to renew our spirits. To everyone who has participated in offering such great kindness (many of whom participated anonymously), please accept our deepest and most sincere thanks. Andrea and I are overjoyed to be part of NPC, all the more because of all of you.

And so begins our journey together. In the coming months you will read here about many exciting opportunities for youth and families in our congregation. Events like our Middle School (February 11) and High School (February 15) BLACK OUT events in preparation for the upcoming season of Lent. Or even mission experiences like New Hampshire (April 12-17) and West Virginia (July 5-12). However, if you would like more information about NPC's ministry to youth and families, please feel free to contact me on Facebook®, by calling the NPC main office, or email me at: jimmy.mcpherson@norotonchurch.org.

*Looking forward to our journey ahead,
Pastor Jimmy McPherson
Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries*

BLACK OUT

Middle School
Feb. 11th from 6:30-8:30pm

High School
Feb. 15th from 6:30-8:30pm



**Wear Black, Bring Spam,
Invite Friends, and Have Fun.**

More information available
at Harbor and our Sunday night
High School Ministry
in the coming weeks,
or by contacting
Jimmy and/or Sarah.

Nurturing Lifelong Learners... Our Teachers!



Early childhood education is a field that is rapidly advancing. Groundbreaking information about brain development and new knowledge about child development is introduced constantly. The practice of infant, toddler and preschool care and education is changing faster than the children themselves! It is no wonder that the state of Connecticut requires full-time early education providers to complete 20 hours of professional development per year. Listed below are several ways that Tot Drop teachers keep up with the latest knowledge and research on early childhood education:

Benchmarking – This month, Tot Drop teachers took a field trip to the Child Development Lab School at Norwalk Community College, where they had an opportunity to observe other teachers in action as well as the classroom environment.

Workshops – Margaret Dana-Conway, Professor of Early Education at NCC, is our education consultant at Tot Drop. She will host several workshops over the course of the year for our staff. In addition, this spring some of our staff will travel to Hartford for a math and science workshop.

Guest Speakers – Tot Drop staff has the opportunity to attend various presentations throughout the year. This month, several of our staff members attended a Parent Night by Amy Julia Becker, an author and blogger who explores faith from the perspective of a mother.

Friday Staff Meetings – Staff meetings are ideal for attending to procedures as well as training. These meetings enable our staff to discuss challenges in the classroom as well as watch videos on best practices.

Thursday Rest Time Readings – Every week, our staff commits one day during the rest time hour to reading the latest articles on early childhood education. In doing so, our teachers model the pursuit of lifelong learning, and that's a win-win for adults and children alike.

We're as excited to see our teachers learning and growing as we are about being part of the children's growth and development.

Peace and Joy,
Beth Aparicio
NPC Tot Drop Director



Veronica Pasten, Linda Orawsky, Veni Peter, Kate Reed and Zari Jafri tour the Child Development Lab School at Norwalk Community College.



From left to right, Elizabeth Watson, Cynthia McHargh, Pilar Yika, Amanda Davis, Janice Baryluk, and Amarilis Morataya at the NPC Tot Drop weekly staff meeting.

NPNS



January was a very busy month filled with more than 60 new families attending tours of NPNS. Classes started back with much joy, as the children and teachers were filled with excitement and eager to be back at school. We have begun new programs with Ms. Emily, our Naturalist, introducing the children to winter animal habits, and how to recognize animal tracks in the snow and mud. The children have had fun looking around the grounds for animal tracks. Room 12 visited the Darien Police Department and learned all about safety, and made many new officer friends along the way. Room 13 had Officer Beth in for a visit, to discuss what it means to be a “superhero”. The children were excited to hear all about what an officer does to keep people safe. Ms. Mickie and Ms. Liz have been teaching the children about Jesus’ children’s ministry, and how much He loves them. The children love chapel, and look forward to it each week. We are looking forward to celebrating Valentine’s Day and hopefully getting more snow to play in!

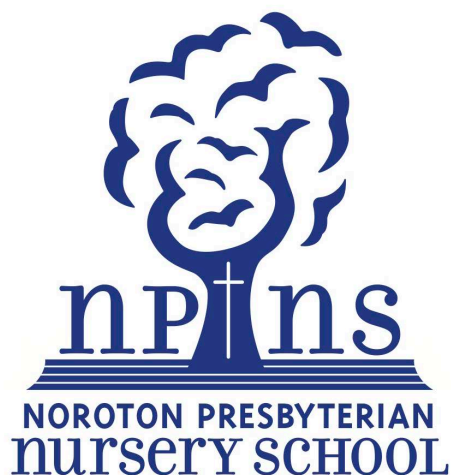
God Bless You,
Kalie Riordan and the
NPNS teachers and staff



Room 10, science experiments with ice.



Emmy Sakara & Grace Long working together to create winter pictures.



YOU ARE INVITED to a Sunday Morning New Member Class in March



For those wishing to join NPC, a three-part class will be held on consecutive Sundays, March 15, 22 and 29, (attendance at all three is necessary). The first two classes will meet from 10 to 11:30 a.m., and the third class 10 to noon. New members will be welcomed into the congregation on Easter, April 5.

Membership classes are faith-strengthening, interesting and rewarding!

Here's what three families that just joined had to say about their experience with the New Member Class:

"We LOVED the membership class! It was very thorough and the staff was extremely welcoming."

"Overall I thought it was a great introduction to the church. It was a very enjoyable experience and it was much better than I expected it to be. I think I learned things that would have taken me a long time to find out. Both my husband and I thought it was much better than the orientation we had to our prior church."

"All the leaders were very friendly, knowledgeable, and hospitable."

Free professional care is available on Sundays for children ages 3 months to 2 years, and children 3 years through 5th grade may attend Sunday school.

Registration is required and can be completed online at the NPC website using the membership ministry page (or we have a paper form you can complete). It's also an option to attend the classes for information only, and take your membership vows within one year of the class.

If you have questions or concerns about membership or the upcoming class, please feel free to contact me!

Working our faith,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership
203-309-5615 or julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org



Please Serve Once a Month as a Worship Greeter!

The commitment is just once a month for 15 minutes, and something you can do as a family.

With construction at the church, it is important to have greeters in place to welcome visitors and regular worshippers, helping everyone to navigate the parking lot and building.

Please contact Julie Colbath at 203-309-5615 or julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org.

Congregational Life Ministry



Get Ready for NPC's Chili Cookoff

Like to cook? Have a favorite recipe?

Or, enjoy tasting other's creations?

Either way ...this popular event could be just the winter fellowship opportunity for you!

It will be held Saturday evening, March 14th, 6:15-8:30 p.m.

Make plans now, and get your recipes ready!

Space is limited in Horton Hall, so we will ask for pre-registration to make proper arrangements.

We need tasters/voters to participate in the evening as well as cooks!

[Click here to register online](#) or look for one in the Narthex at church.

You are invited to join us for another great night of eating and laughing with friends.

Fun for all ages!



More fellowship time with friends ...

Make sure to sign up for Noroton Lectures sessions the first weekend in February.

Renowned scholar, author, lecturer John Stackhouse will provide inspirational lectures for men and women separately on Saturday morning, as well as a joint keynote lecture Saturday evening. Make sure to sign up to reserve your space for this educational opportunity; information elsewhere in the Spire and on our website.

Growing through fellowship,
Valerie Muller

*Director of Community and Communications
(Including Congregational Life Ministry activities)
valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org & 203-309-5650*

Mission News

Dr. John Chacha from City of Hope, Tanzania will be preaching at our morning services on Feb. 22

City of Hope's aim and mission is to redeem and save young people who have been forgotten by life, those whose dreams have been squashed and broken as AIDS, chronic poverty, illiteracy and lack of education take their toll. This project is about bringing hope to communities and to nations while changing lives for the better.

City of Hope transforms lives by:

- Giving children skills for life through education and training
- Bringing health care to a region that has none
- Building economies through micro-financing and farming

Conceived in the heart of Dr. John N Chacha, the first City of Hope is being built through a partnership with community leaders in western Tanzania. It is located in Ntagatcha village, about 45 miles from Lake Victoria, near the border of Kenya. NPC supports City of Hope financially and through the ministry of presence and service – several members have visited and served the community on short term mission trips. For more information visit www.teamworkcityofhope.com or talk to NPC Mission liaison Burt Palmer burt.palmer@gmail.com.

World Vision Sponsored Children Opportunity to send a gift!

The Palmers are going to the DR during February break to visit their sponsored children and they have kindly offered to take a small gift to the child you sponsor.

If you would like to send a very small package (there are 74 children sponsored by our group!) please put the gift in a sturdy business size envelope. Be sure to write the ID number and child's name clearly on the envelope and mark it for Palmera or Restauracion. Alternatively you could send a small letter enclosing some stickers.

Suggested items to choose from include:

A letter, family photo, girls hair accessories, baseball, stickers, crayons, coloring book, reading book (Barnes & Noble kids Spanish section), small calendar, paper airplanes, picture post cards, matchbox cars, jax, jump rope, small puzzle (please do not include liquids). Please drop off your gift by Sunday, February 8 at Eleanor and Burt Palmer's home, 14 Woodland Place - you can leave the package on the front porch.



Other Mission Opportunities

Open Door Shelter – next NPC service dates are February 7 and March 7. To sign up please contact Holly Hough (hough7@optonline.net)

Souper Bowl Sunday - We are collecting cans of soup for the Norwalk Open Door Shelter. Please bring your donations with you to Sunday Services on February 1st.

For more information about NPC mission please contact Stella Clarke at stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org or check the NPC website.

Serving our Savior together,
Stella Clarke
Mission Associate
203-309-5645 or stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org



Mission Ministry

Caroline Maina's experience as a Life Ministry Missionary in Kenya

Jesus' ministry was spent with the twelve disciples. He ate with them, performed miracles with them, shared the gospel with them - basically He shared His life with them. As we all know, these disciples were never the same after that - they turned the world upside down. Through them the good news spread like a bush fire - and that is why I am part of His ministry now.

I have been with Life Ministry for the last five years, trying to emulate Jesus' model - preaching the gospel to as many students as God provides. Many have accepted Christ over the years, which has been a great joy. But my greatest joy has been to have a few students every year who walk with me in the journey of discipleship.

One such girl is Linet, a fourth year student in Kenyatta University (KU). I met her when she was a first year student. She was yearning for someone to help her with her spiritual walk with God, and I took up the challenge. I started mentoring her, together with two others, Tabitha and Lucy, who finished university last year.

Linet changed her course - that's why she is still in school. She grew in her spiritual walk with God, and she passed on what she learned from me to other girls, who in turn did the same. When she was in second year, we had a discipleship program over the long holiday, and she lived with me for two months then. We cooked, ate, slept, jogged and discussed spiritual and other matters of life. She is now one of the team leaders of Life Ministry at KU, and she has also been involved in mobilizing students for prayer and mission work.

Her desire is to join full time ministry when she is finished with school. Because of her commitment to Christ, her mother, who never went to church, is now going to church with her - and it was a great joy for Linet when her mother gave her life to Christ early last year.



Most of the girls Linet has disciplined are also now leaders. One of them took a semester off to do ministry at Edgerton University. So I see generations of students coming to the faith through Linet, and more disciples than I can count.

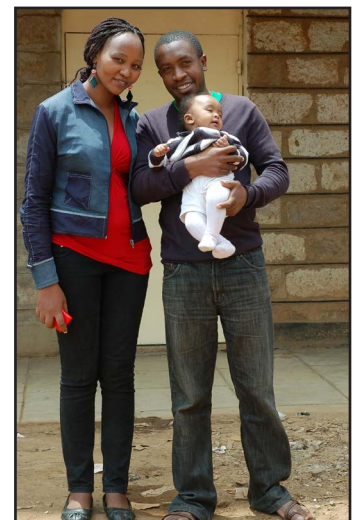
I am currently at University of Nairobi, where I am walking with five second year students and two third year students. While I was on maternity leave last year, I stayed in touch, though the phone, with these girls.

Tabitha from KU has now finished with school, and she is dating. She introduced me to her fiancée, and it is a joy for me to be walking with her in this phase too. We meet every month for three hours in our home.

Though I have led many students to Christ, I can only sing of those whom I have closely walked with, those whom I have watched grow. Like the parable of the sower, 'They fell on good soil and produced crop, yielding a hundred, sixty or thirty times what was sown' - see Matthew 13.

Caroline Maina

Caroline and Paul Maina are Missionaries with Life Ministries (the Kenya branch of Campus Crusade for Christ - now known as CRU) at the University of Nairobi in Kenya. NPC has been supporting Caroline for 5 years with funds from our NPC mission budget and with prayers. Although Caroline has not visited us, we have a close relationship with her, and her husband Paul and their little girl Tehillah (Hebrew for praise), since mission team members John and Marilyn Parker visit them when they spend their summers in Kenya.



February 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	7
9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -5th Grades 10:30 a.m. Marriage Course 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. High School - First Half Gathering	12:00 p.m. Women's Luncheon Study	6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Team Night Fellowship 7:45 p.m. Team Night	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M. Choir 7:00 p.m. Harbor 7th-8th Grade	7:15 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Reh.	9:30 a.m. Christian Yoga	Noroton Lectures 8:00 a.m. Men's Breakfast 10:00 a.m. Women's Coffee 7:00 p.m. Keynote Address	
8 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th Grades 9:00 a.m. Confirmation Class 10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 6:30 p.m. High School Ministry	12:00 p.m. Women's Luncheon Study	6:15 a.m. Women'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. Choir 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Make-Up 7:00 p.m. Harbor 7th-8th Grade - BLACK OUT EVENT	7:15 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Reh.	9:30 a.m. Christian Yoga		14
15 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th Grades 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. High School Ministry - BLACK OUT EVENT	16	8:00 p.m. Session	18 Ash Wednesday 7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 12:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service in Chapel 4:30 p.m. Family Ash Wednesday Service in Chapel 7:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service in Chapel	19 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 2:00 p.m. Prime Timers			21
22 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th Grades 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. High School Ministry	23 12:00 p.m. Women's Luncheon Study	6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study	25 7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M. Choir 7:00 p.m. Harbor 7th-8th Grade	26 7:15 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Reh.	9:30 a.m. Christian Yoga		28

NPC News

In Loving Memory of...

December 24th:
Debbra Jean DeLoma

January 23rd:
Peter Louis Truebner

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

Wellness and Worship Together!



Take care of yourself with Christian yoga in a safe, nonjudgmental space at NPC. Please arrive 5-10 minutes early so you have time to settle and begin with a quieting meditation. All ages and abilities are welcome. Suggested donation is \$5-10/class. We meet in Horton Hall on Fridays at 9:30-10:30 am. We will meet Friday, February 6th, 13th, and 27th (not on the 20th due to school break). Questions may be directed to certified yoga teacher Jenny Voelker (RYT-200) at mjtvoelker@yahoo.com. Please dress comfortably and bring a yoga mat.

Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

January 18th:
Olive Reese Stisser, daughter of Tim and Lauren Stisser

Upcoming Baptism Dates:

3/15 at the 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 March 2015 issue please submit it before February 15 to Rose Cunningham by email at rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.

NPC Program Staff

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