

The Spire

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



Happy New Year!

The year was 1863. Train tracks had been laid in town about a decade earlier, connecting New Haven and New York (actually in 1849) but little else was as we know it today. There was no electricity, no major highways and no Noroton Presbyterian Church here - yet. But that was about to change. Benjamin Weed, his family and a few friends, applied to the Presbytery of New York to found a Presbyterian Church in Darien. On November 4, 1863, The First Presbyterian Church of Darien was formed. Three years later the chapel was built and 90 years later, in 1953, the beautiful sanctuary on the Post Road was erected and dedicated to serve a growing, thriving community.

We are blessed this year to celebrate God's faithfulness to us throughout our 150-year history. We are also embarking on a program to strengthen our ministries and shore up our lovely facilities which previous generations have cared for and handed down to us. Last year, we came together in a venture of faith we called *Foundations for the Future*. Capital funds and pledges for missions were collected for repairs and desired expansion needs. Generous support from over 300

families have pledged contributed over \$11,975,000. Last summer critical repairs were done to our chapel's stained glass windows while replacement windows in the Sanctuary and Horton Hall were installed. We are currently working with our architect to finalize design plans for session's and town approvals. Our Building Committee (Mark Bielstein, Jerry Byrne, Karen Calby, Steve DeMott, Allegra Erickson, Tom Geraghty, Roger Knight, Jed Lawrence, David Lee, Elizabeth Queally, Brian Smalley and Ginna Yerrall) which was ably led for several years by Bill Reedy, has now been put in the hands of Brian Smalley, giving Bill a well deserved break. Brian's team is busy working with our principal architect, Dennis Kowal, civil engineers, attorney Bruce Hill, and project managers to draw up plans with cost estimates and suitable phases that we can afford now or in the future. This is a time consuming but critical phase in the process as we make sure all the "must haves" fit within the funds that have been pledged. We hope to have more about our progress to share in the coming months when our experts, working with our building team, have final plans to recommend to us. In the meantime, thank you for your gifts and please keep this important team in prayer.

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:

- 1/6/13 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 1/13/13 - Pastor Dale Paulsen, guest preacher (former NPC Youth Pastor)
- 1/20/13 - Pastor Stuart Smith
Matthew 5:10
- 1/27/13 - Pastor Greg Doll

Upcoming Baptism Dates:

1/20/13 and 2/17/13 at the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service.
 To schedule a Baptism please call Leslie Ezzo at 203-655-1451, ext. 33.

Table of Contents

<i>Foundations for the Future</i>	2
150 th Anniversary	3-4
Adult Spiritual Formation.....	5-6
Caring & Women's Ministry.....	7
Children's Ministry.....	8
Tot Drop	9
Student Ministries	10
NPNS.....	11
Congregational Life Ministry	12-14
Membership Ministry	15
Mission Ministry	16-18
Music & Fine Arts.....	18
NPC Calendar of Events	19
NPC News & NPC Staff	20

continued from front page....

Ten percent of the *Foundations* program was set aside to help our mission partners. How exciting it is to help grow God's mission all over the world in our 150th year. *Foundation Mission Grants* have assisted in adding a medical clinic to serve the students at Forman Christian College in Lahore, Pakistan. Transportation needs have been provided to our friends at Pivot House. Their halfway houses have also been rehabilitated with our Mission grant funds. A community center will be built in Dunlow, WV, the place we have visited for 18 years bringing the gospel through Vacation Bible School as part of our VWAP program.

As encouraging as it is to look back over our 150 year history, I'm beginning to think that maybe 2013 will be our best year ever! God is at work in us and through us and I can't wait for this year to unfold. Happy New Year and thank you Noroton Presbyterian for your love, service and faithfulness to the Lord.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,
Sam Schreiner

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE

January 2013 Progress Report



Thanks to your generous donations, *Foundations for the Future* has received \$3,428,510 (as of 12/12/2012). We are doubly blessed because our pledges have also increased to \$11,975,271.

Your contributions have enabled the Mission Grant team to fund major projects at 5 of our Mission Partners: Pivot Ministries, Forman College Infirmary, New England InterVarsity Chapter Planting, and more recently Cabwaylingo Youth & Community Center in Dunlow, West Virginia. The fifth one will be announced in January when our mission partner is visiting us...stay tuned for this exciting news!

As Pastor Schreiner noted on the front page, we have transitioned to a new Building Chairman, Brian Smalley. Brian has come on board very quickly and is guiding the building committee through a series of discussions, alternatives and plans. Much is happening and much is yet to come as the timeline below indicates. Please continue to keep this team in your prayers.



May God continue to bless this congregation and the foundation he is helping us to build.

Tom Taylor, Jean Ann and Dick Bollman
FFF Progress Team Leaders

Memorial Flowers

Anyone who wishes to give flowers to the glory of God and in honor or memory of a loved one should call Claire Bragdon ext. 40 in the Church Office. The cost is \$50 and the donor may request a date for the flowers.

Also, donations to the Memorial Flower Fund for decorating for the Advent Season and Easter are always welcome. A check payable to NPC may be placed in the Flower Team mailbox in the Mail Room. Thank you for your prayerful consideration.

150th Anniversary Celebration

In November, 2013 NPC will mark its 150th anniversary. As part of a yearlong celebration of that anniversary, an article will appear in *The Spire* each month discussing events and people who played significant roles in the life of the church. The first is below. The Anniversary Committee hopes that as you read these columns you'll be strengthened by the "great cloud of witnesses" watching over NPC's efforts to do God's work.

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by such a great cloud of witnesses, let us throw off everything that hinders and the sin that so easily entangles. And let us run with perseverance the race marked out for us, fixing our eyes on Jesus, the pioneer and perfecter of faith." Hebrew 12:1,2a



Rev. Arthur Requa

Noroton Presbyterian Church, The Beginning

What must the neighbors of the 16 women and 5 men who were NPC's charter members have thought when that group decided in the fall of 1863 to form a new Presbyterian church in the village of Darien, CT? Those neighbors could be forgiven for thinking the founders of NPC had taken leave of their senses. After all, the country was exhausted by a civil war that had been going on for over two years with no end in sight. Nearly every family in Darien had at least one man serving. And it wasn't as if Darien didn't have protestant churches to serve the needs of its citizenry; The Congregational Church, the United Methodist Church of Darien and St. Luke's Episcopal Church were all well established. Yet those 21 women and men felt God's call and pressed forward.

In September, 1863 they presented an application to the New York City Presbytery, and in the following weeks chose two Elders, one Deacon and 7 Trustees to guide the new church, which was to be called the First Presbyterian Church of Darien (the name change to Noroton Presbyterian Church remains shrouded in mystery). In November that same

year a commission from the NYC Presbytery formally organized the new church with its 21 members. In December NPC called its first pastor, the Rev. James William Coleman, who was installed in March of 1864. The new church needed a building and a place to put it. After fund raising drives, our Chapel was dedicated in May of 1866, having cost the congregation \$8000 plus \$720 for the land it stands on. (An interesting note regarding the Chapel. It is one of the first buildings in the northeast to be built of oversized clay bricks known as Foster blocks.)

NPC was up and running but the next several decades would be difficult. When the Chapel was dedicated, NPC's membership had grown to 45. It would be less than 100 over 40 years later. Money was tight, with Trustees regularly funding the church's operating and capital expenses out of their own pockets. The Rev. Coleman left in 1874 to take a position at another church, and for the next seven years NPC relied on theological students from Yale, a temporary minister, and whatever itinerant preachers could be located to provide its members pastoral care. In fact, it wasn't

until 1887 that NPC had another minister stay as long as three years.

None the less, during these lean years NPC's members and leaders remained faithful to God's call and to their church related duties. Services were maintained, the boards of elders and trustees met regularly and filed reports and minutes with the Presbytery, delegates to Presbytery meetings were always appointed, and Sunday School was efficiently managed. In fact, it was the Sunday School that led to the first major change to the church's campus when, in 1897, a generous contribution led to the building of a Sunday School behind the Chapel.

In 1887 NPC called Arthur Requa to be its pastor, and under his leadership (he served until 1903) the church finally began to experience steady growth. Rev. Requa was followed by Rev. Dr. Carlos Martyn, a NYC minister with great experience who was called by NPC in 1906 and served until his death in 1917. However, the modern period of NPC began with the coming of Dr. George R. Montgomery in 1925 (he served until 1940). Dr. Montgomery had an extraordinary range of talents. Born in Turkey

150th Anniversary Celebration

to missionary parents, he earned advanced degrees in theology, law and philosophy, taught at university, was a war correspondent, author of several books and served as an adviser at the Versailles Peace Conference. Due to Dr. Montgomery's gifts and to the general growth of Darien, it became evident to NPC's leadership that more space was required for the church to serve the needs of the community and especially to accommodate the increasing numbers of children in Sunday School. The Parish House (no longer standing) was constructed

in 1939 at a cost of \$15,000 to meet the need for more space, largely funded by a loan guaranteed by three trustees. Many in the congregation thought this project far too ambitious for a church NPC's size. Little did they know what the next decade would bring.

Bill Tamme
150th Anniversary Committee

Join Us on January 13!



NPC will begin the celebration of its 150th year with the return to the pulpit of former Associate Pastor, Dale Paulsen, on Sunday, January 13, 2013. Reverend Paulsen was youth minister at Noroton from 1977-1980 and he currently serves as Pastor of the Morro Bay Presbyterian Church in Morro Bay, California which he has served for 18 years. While pastor in Morro Bay,

Rev. Paulsen has served on the Committee on Ministry for the Santa Barbara Presbytery for 12 years and has served as its moderator. He has also been pastor in Yosemite National Park, in Fresno, CA and Malibu, CA. He is a graduate of Fuller Theological Seminary.

Rev. Paulsen and his wife Emily came to Darien in the summer of 1977 to be the new youth pastor and to be Assistant Pastor to the newly hired Reverend Ed Danks. Both Ed and Dale were from southern California. Dale and Emily restarted a youth ministry that had been non-existent for 10 years. Middle school and high school groups grew to more than 40 kids and activities were planned with the Young Life Club which together involved over 100 kids for some events. Youth events included ski week trips in Vermont and New Hampshire, summer camps in New Hampshire and a mission trip to Georgia for a week. Many weekends were spent with youth learning about Jesus and church membership. Some of the youth from those days are still involved in full-time Christian ministry. NPC supports two of those

influenced by Dale's ministry—Scott Brill with InterVarsity in New England and Bob Chedester with the Rift Valley Academy in Kenya. Dale also started a young adult group with over 30 in attendance, some of whom later helped in the youth ministry.

Dale and Emily have been married for 37 years. They are the proud parents of three sons (the first, Andrew, was born in Darien) and three daughters-in-law and four and a half grandchildren!

When the 150th committee was reading the history of our church the following was recorded in the minutes of August 11, 1980.

"Pastor Dale Paulsen and his wife Emily announced the establishment of a scholarship fund for young people of Noroton Presbyterian Church going into the Christian ministry. This fund was started with their contribution of \$1,100.00 realized from the sale of their house in Darien." They generously gave to help students going into ministry. Today, seminary education grants are provided by Noroton to members or staff of NPC.

It will be a great joy to welcome Dale and Emily back to Noroton.

150th Anniversary Celebration!

NPC Remembers...

Stephen Ministry

Coming in January, please check out our website www.norotonchurch.org to watch a monthly video series about our history.

Adult Spiritual Formation

Noroton Lectures 2013

“TRENDS IN GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY”

Featuring Guest Speaker: **Dr. Timothy C. Tennent,**
President, Asbury Theological Seminary,
Professor of World Christianity



Dr. Timothy C. Tennent has served as President since July 2009.

Prior to his coming to Asbury Theological Seminary, Dr. Tennent was the Professor of World Missions and Indian Studies at Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary where he served since 1998. Ordained in the United Methodist Church in 1984, he has pastored churches in Georgia, and in several of the largest churches in New England. Since 1989, he has taught annually as an adjunct professor at the New Theological College in Dehra Dun, India. He is a frequent conference speaker around the country and throughout the world, including numerous countries in Asia, Africa and Europe.

Dr. Tennent received his M.Div. from Gordon-Conwell, a Th.M. from Princeton Theological Seminary and a Ph.D. from the University of Edinburgh in Scotland. He is also a 2008 graduate of a three year mentor project in Academic Leadership sponsored by the Lilly endowment.

Dr. Tennent is the author of numerous books and articles. His books include, *Building Christianity on Indian Foundations* (ISPCK), *Christianity at the Religious Roundtable* (Baker Academic), *Theology in the Context of World Christianity* (Zondervan) and *Invitation to World Missions: A Trinitarian Missiology for the 21st Century* (Kregel Academic).

Dr. Tennent's wife, Julie, is also a graduate of Gordon-Conwell and has led numerous Bible Studies and is active in Friendship International in Lexington, Kentucky. She is a church organist and pianist, having produced several CDs and a cantata known as *All the Glory*. The Tennents have two children, Jonathan (27) and Bethany (25). Jonathan is currently a graduate student at the University of Kentucky and Bethany is a missionary serving with AIM in Tanzania.

Peace and blessings,

Pastor Greg Doll

Pastor of Adult Spiritual Formation and Outreach



Noroton Lectures 2013 Schedule **“TRENDS IN GLOBAL CHRISTIANITY”**

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

All men are invited to join us for a continental breakfast, fellowship and a lecture.

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

All women are invited to join us for coffee, refreshments, fellowship and a lecture.

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

All are welcome to the evening lecture.

Events listed above will be held on Saturday, February 2nd in Horton Hall.

Sunday, February 3 - Worship Services

Scripture: Matthew 11:1-12

Sermon: The Suffering, Advancing Church

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

Please Register on-line at
www.norotonchurch.org
for all the events scheduled
for Saturday, February 2nd
or contact Marlene at
marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org
or 203-655-1451, ext. 49.

Adult Studies

Men's Ministry Studies

Men's Bible Study: "Moses and Mark: A Modern Conversation."

This course will be an 8-month concurrent study of the Book of Deuteronomy and the Gospel of Mark. Join Pastor Greg each week on Tuesdays in NYC (Yale Club, 50 Vanderbilt Ave., 4th floor, Clarence Day room, 3 minute walk from Grand Central), 7:30 a.m.-8:30 a.m. (study resumes January 15th) or on Fridays in Darien at NPC in Horton Hall beginning from 7:15 a.m to 8:15 a.m., continental breakfast included (study resumes January 18th).

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

Women's Ministry Studies

MONDAY Women's Lunchtime Study:

Join us Mondays at noon in the Parlor. Contact Beth Peelle at 203-856-7092 or beth@peelleassociates.com.

Women! Tuesday Morning Happenings:

If you haven't tried Tues. morning Bible study yet, why not make this your year?

6:15 am: in the Parlor (study resumes January 8th). Up for an early challenge? We're studying Mark, guided by the book *King's Cross* by Timothy Keller. Come when you can!

9:30 am: in Horton Hall (study resumes January 8th). We're excited to be spending time in Mark. We worship in song, receive teaching from one of our leaders, and then break into small groups to apply what we've learned to our lives. Register online or contact Lori at lori.nelson@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451 ext. 44.

Moms of Young Adults Book Group:

We meet two Tuesdays each month 11:30 a.m.-1:00 p.m. in NPC's SHAC. We will study *Beyond Ourselves* by Catherine Marshall. For questions and sign-ups, please call leaders Linda Russell (203) 536-6110 or Claudia Roux (203) 253-6795. Next meetings are January 15 and 29.

Moms' Oasis Ministry: Study resumes January 10th. Have you ever sought guidance as you navigate being a Mom? Join us Thursday mornings 9:30 - 11:00 from Oct. 4 - April 4. Register early for TotDrop childcare. Check our website or contact Lori at 203-655-1451 ext. 44 or lori.nelson@norotonchurch.org.

Moms of Teens Parenting Book Group: Study resumes January 10th. Please join us on Thursdays at 12:00 noon in the SHAC. Led by Lisa Isherwood and Seana Turner. We have chosen a book called "*Parenting Is Your Highest Calling: And Eight Other Myths That Traps Us in Worry and Guilt*" - Leslie Leyland Fields. We look forward to seeing you then! Bring a friend! For registration and book, please contact Marlene Moffett at 203-655-1451, ext. 49 or email marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org. Questions? Email Seana (seanagt@aol.com) or Lisa (lisherwo@optonline.net).

PRIME TIMERS

Thursday January 17,
2 p.m in the Parlor.

Jamie McIntyre, Registered Dietician,
"Eating for Vitality and Wellness."

Marlene Moffett (203 655-1451, ext 49)
or Rita Hornlein (203 357-1504)

Seeking worthy New Year's Resolutions?

How about reading through the Bible in a year with the help of the online study, Bible365 v3.0? This study is produced by the Sanborn Family, is bolstered with insights from experts such as Eugene Peterson, William Barclay, and the Noroton Pastors, and is offered to the community as a gift. To sign up for daily emails or to learn more, go to www.listeningforGod.org

Small groups: are a great way to get involved and make friends in the church. Small groups are made up of 8 to 12 adults who meet weekly or every other week on various days or evenings of the week for friendship and Bible study, or to read a book together. Contact Marlene at 203-655-1451 ext. 49 to get plugged into a group that fits your schedule and interest. You can also visit the church website www.norotonchurch.org for more info.

Weekly Prayer Meeting: Every Thursday in the Parlor from 1:15-2:15 p.m. Come and pray for needs of our church family. Everyone is welcome - no prayer experience necessary! For more information please contact Marlene at 203-655-1451 ext. 49.

Caring & Women's Ministries



I pray that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have power to grasp how wide and how long and high and deep is the love of Christ... Ephesians 3:17

And so here we are once more. January. Time for our annual Women's Retreat. The older I get, the harder it is for me to wrap my mind around the passage of time. Something that happened 10 years ago feels recent! Last year was just a blink ago.

This year, we will be exploring Ephesians 3:17 with Debbie Schmidt. We'll be asking ourselves what it means to be rooted and grounded in the love of Christ. What are some things besides Christ that we are tempted to be rooted and grounded in? There will be time for walking, shopping, sleeping and kibitzing!

I hope that you are planning to join your sisters at the end of this month to explore the height and width and length of Christ's love for us! It's always a sweet time set apart. If you are planning on coming, please register soon! We are almost to capacity.

In Joyful anticipation~

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



NPC Women's Retreat

January 25-27, Warwick, NY

(NEW LOCATION!)

"Rooted and Grounded in Love"

Register Online Now!

We're excited to have Debbie Schmidt with us this year, speaking about the vast and beautiful love of God. Spend some time apart with your sisters in Christ! There is always a lot of laughter, mingled with silence and reflection.

For help, contact Linda Yim at yim.linda@yahoo.com or Lori at lori.nelson@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451 ext. 44.

stephen
MINISTRY.

Christ caring for people through people

Being the hands and feet of Jesus

On the very first Christmas, God gave the ultimate gift of his son so people could experience the healing touch of Immanuel – God with us. Christ is still with us, and *he is also with others through us*. Stephen Ministry is a beautiful reflection of this teaching. We are his hands and feet – those who represent Jesus with gentleness, with humility, and above all, with compassion.

This January marks the beginning of Noroton's Stephen Ministry training for the Class of 2013. We are blessed to have over 20 uniquely qualified individuals who are willing to spend 50 hours over the next 6 months nurturing their gifts and acquiring new skills so that they may bring Christ's healing love and care to hurting people.

*Behold the virgin shall be with child and shall bear a Son, and they shall call his name Immanuel, which translated means, "God with us."
Matthew 1:23*

Stephen Ministry at Noroton has been going strong for over 25 years. Over the life of our ministry, we have trained more than 200 Stephen Ministers and touched our community with over 500 caring relationships.

Please be sure to keep our past, present and future Stephen Ministers in your prayers. And most importantly, if you or someone you know could benefit from a Stephen Minister, please contact our Pastor Brandi Drake in complete confidentiality at 203-655-1451, ext. 21 or at brandi.drake@norotonchurch.org.

Children's Ministry



Minute with Mickie Wondering about 2013

We have had a wonderful 2012 in Children's Ministry. Our attendance on Sundays has increased, our children are regular participants in three of our Worship Services, and our mid-week program J.A.M. (Jesus And Me) is off to a great start. Our Children's Ministry Team, in cooperation with other ministries in the church, provided some special experiences: Trunk or Treat, The Fall Festival and Caroling by Candlelight – all attended full to capacity! We expect even more wonderful things to happen in 2013. Won't you wonder with me about what we can do?

Sunday morning Sunday School at both 9 and 10:30, our Preschool classes will be learning about Jesus' ministry on earth. In Horton Hall, we will continue to utilize our Tents and learn how to tell and re-tell the narratives of the Bible. Research is telling us that those who know how to re-tell Biblical stories have a higher understanding of the theology behind the Scripture and the power of Scripture takes root deeper into their lives. This is what we want for our children. We want them to KNOW the Bible so well that it stays with them for life. Some call this "Sticky Faith." I call it being a Disciple of Christ. God wrote His Word for us to be able to remember it and be able to re-tell it to ourselves and others, and be able to apply it to our lives, no matter what life circumstances arise. God's Word is

alive and active and we get excited seeing it take root in our children's minds and hearts. Beginning this month, we will be going into the New Testament, studying Luke and Acts as we investigate the Life of Jesus, the Lives of the Disciples and the Growth of the Church. To do this however, we need YOU to take a turn in one of the Tented areas. We keep it wonderfully simplistic for you. On our website, the story and activities are downloadable. Children meet in the Sanctuary first, and then come to Horton Hall for a large group gathering time to pray, take offering, welcome guests, sing the Doxology and hear the story told. In their small group tents the Horton Hall Huddle Leader (that's you) reiterate the story, use Bibles, games, drama, activity pages etc. to reinforce the re-telling of the story by the students. You can do this!! Sign up on www.npckids.com

Then there is our mid-week program for Grade school children called J.A.M. which stands for "Jesus And Me." It is growing and we need some interested adults to mentor our kids. We want to be able to offer some "electives" for our children to choose from so that smaller groups of children can focus on an activity for just 4-5 weeks at a time. Ever thought of teaching the Bible while building with Legos? Build a bird house? How about making dolls out of scraps of material? Painting murals? Doing a Puppet show? Using drama and sign language to act out the words of a Hymn? A Chime choir? Photography? Computer Tear-apart? These are the elective

options I would like to offer our children but we need some adults to care enough about our children to be here for a few weeks in a row on a rotating basis. This is not just for Moms and Dads to do – we are looking for a handful of retired folks who want to share their hobbies with some children. Pray about this. I have a sense that God is already moving in your heart to get involved. We'll supply the materials, you just come and hang out with the kids and keep your and their hands and minds busy and focused on Jesus. Call me 203-655-1451, ext. 34.

As we look ahead into 2013 we know that we want to provide the best in Vacation Bible School this summer. Mark your calendars now for the week of June 23rd in the morning and evening. Now is the time for us to decide on our Theme, our Team and the coolest music of all!! You are so needed to make this happen. Someone from the Children's Ministry Team will be calling on you so pray now for your involvement.

Believe it or not, I haven't been here a year yet. David and I did not arrive until February of 2012 and somehow you have embraced us so fully that we can hardly imagine being anywhere else. Together, with Jesus, you and I have made great strides with our children here in these 11 months. I can hardly wait to see what happens next!

For the Love of Wonder
Mickie O'Donnell
Director of Children's Ministry

Babies, babies, babies! What a difference a year (or nine months!) makes. 2012 was the year of the Infant at Tot Drop; so many wee ones born in September, October and November and all looking for daycare beginning in January, February and March 2013. Our waiting list is still substantial, with new inquiries added frequently. In contrast, last year we were looking under every cabbage leaf for babies to fill our cribs! The Infant



Peacefully napping in the Infant Room

side of the Crib room often has seven little ones eating, sleeping, burping, crawling or getting their diapers changed by two caregivers and sometimes a third.

Once an infant can walk independently and with reasonable stability, she or he moves to the “walking ones” side of the room. That’s another busy space! Usually scheduled for seven active explorers, these children are learning new things minute by minute! A large tunnel to crawl through is a favorite adventure; they love building block towers (AND knocking them down!), doing puzzles, manipulating different art materials and enjoying playground time. It is truly incredible that by naptime (from 1:00-3:00) the



Happy Infant in the Exersaucer

caregivers can have a quiet, peaceful room with 12-14 children sleeping all at once! (Remember how hard it was for you to get one child to sleep?!)



“Walking Ones” build a tower

Our Twos room welcomes children on their second birthday (although sometimes as young as 22 months) to their third birthday. Also a divided room (required by the state), it is running full most days with 14 children, seven on each side. It is pure joy to hear developing language and new ideas continually bursting from the minds and mouths of these amazing “creatures”! They are really social beings by this time and often make their teachers laugh with their unvarnished view of life. Many are working toward or achieving the rank of “potty trained” so they can move to the Threes room on their third birthday.



Our Threes room is growing slowly to capacity. It generally is two-thirds full these days but by spring many of our twos will turn three and move right in. That should ease the pressure in the Twos and restore a good balance. Our three year olds are capable, competent, independent thinkers and doers! They have boundless energy and hundreds of “Why?” questions!

Our Fours room, which opened this year and was highlighted in last month’s Spire, has several children who spend half a day at Tot Drop and the other half at NPNS. There is a lot of coming and going; its capacity is nine children and it’s a busy, happening space.

Enjoy a brief peek at a few of our younger Tot Drop children in the accompanying photos!

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



Two year old creating a picture with markers

Student Ministries

VWAP

It is just now 2013, but are you already thinking for summer? For over 18 years students and adults from NPC have served in the community of Dunlow, WV with our annual Vacation With A Purpose, a.k.a. VWAP. NPC is one part of the great ministry that goes on in Dunlow and we are excited that with a portion of the Foundations for the Future mission giving, they will be able to construct a new multipurpose youth building!

So this year's VWAP trip will have two purposes. We will continue to provide the VBS and time at the pool



as always, but this year we will also have a group of students and adults working on the construction of the new facility.

Signups will be available in the next few months, but if you want to mark your calendar it will be July 8-13. We will leave after the beach service on the 8th and return Saturday night the 13th. The cost will be \$200-250 depending on final expenses. We are excited about this great ongoing ministry and hope you can be a part of it too.



Peace of Christ,
Pastor Stuart
Pastor of Children's & Student Ministries



Family Ski Trip

This February marks our 2nd year making it a family trip, and we can't wait! So whether you enjoy skiing, snowboarding, or just hanging in the lodge sipping hot cocoa, join us for this memorable weekend of fun with students and families. The dates for the upcoming trip are **February 8-10, 2013**. We'll be skiing at Okemo Mountain and staying at the Combes Family Inn. This will be a great weekend for skiing, time with new and old friends, and a great way to get to know your church family. All NPC adults and children are welcome to join us. Students 6-12 grade are welcome to come with or without their parents

along with adults who might not have children. The cost per person is \$350 with lift ticket, \$250 if you do not need a lift ticket. *Space is limited... Scholarship money is available, you can make requests with Pastor Stuart.



Abby Young & Tom Fagan
Student Ministries Associates



Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School



These last couple of months have been so exciting at the nursery school. The children delivered many bags of food to Person to Person, right before Thanksgiving.

They then began to collect mitten, gloves, hats, socks and scarves for our Mitten Tree. These items were delivered to Person to Person after our wonderful Christmas Chapel. December our school was filled with the excitement of celebrating Jesus' birthday. There was Christmas music being sung, stories being read, the Nativity story being acted out, Gingerbread men hiding in the building, and "secret" gifts being made for parents. Our children have learned so much about the coming of Jesus, from their teachers in class and by Miss Mickie and Pastor Stuart sharing the Advent Story with them. The Pre-K students visited the Senior Center. They sang Christmas Carols and presented each senior with a beautiful handmade ornament.

We are so eager for the new year and all the wonderful experiences that will come; and hoping for snow, of course! January starts Orientations at the nursery school for next year. If you know of any families looking for a nursery school, please be sure to have them visit our website at www.npns.org and register for a tour.

We want to take this moment to thank our many supporters - our Board members, parents, church members and church staff, David Lee and his team of Sextons for keeping us clean and safe, Dwayne Condon for accompanying our programs, Mickie O'Donnell and Liz Morelli for presenting awesome Chapels each week, and all the Pastors for caring so much for the nursery school.

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



Ms Jen and Ms Jessica's 4 year olds prepare for the Thanksgiving Parade



Elizabeth Ekiss models her Pilgram bonnet



Charlie Williams, Benjamin Gatto, Max Childs, and Ty Hilleman share their family books with each other



Lilly Davenport and Caitlin Cronin make Cranberry Relish for their families



Ethan Wichman and Emily Riva act out the Nativity Story



Owen Woods plays the Angel while acting out the Nativity Story



The Pre-K class visits the Senior Center

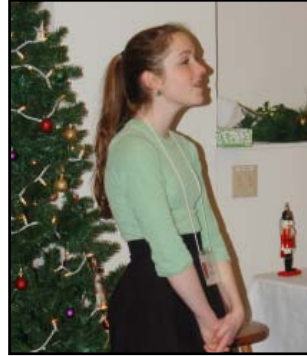
Congregational Life Ministry

Welcome 2013!

We have a great team ... all of whom wish our members/friends a glorious start to the new year!



Laura Smalley



Kelly Manhart



Lil Dedon



Trina Johnsen and Scott Henry



Dan McCollum



Judy Phillips

CHILI COOK-OFF!



Our NEXT church wide event is February 23rd ... for the much-requested return of another **Chili Cook Off evening!** So, get out your favorite recipe and join in the 'competition'; prizes awarded to 'audience favorites' in about a half dozen categories. More on this in the February Spire. But for now ... **MARK YOUR CALENDARS, and SAVE THE DATE!** If you do not have a recipe you wish to share, but DO enjoy tasting a wide variety of chili dishes, then simply come along and enjoy the food!



It is our fervent hope that each of you will make it a priority to spend time with others in our NPC family throughout the coming year. We will periodically provide church wide opportunities for this to happen in casual/easy ways, frequently over a meal or refreshments.

We're always looking for more NPC friends to join us in the FUN we as a team have in hosting these activities. If you would like to help out or be involved with one of our events, simply let me know (valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org). We can ALWAYS use extra hands; and, it's a great way to meet more people ... during prep time and/or as we greet/host!

Continuing our journey together,

Valerie Muller
Director of Congregational Life

Congregational Life Ministry continued...

Wrapping up 2012 ...

Despite all the draws/pulls of the season, about a quarter of our many (536-and-counting in 2012!) volunteers were able to take a little time out and enjoy themselves ... and each other's company at this year's annual Volunteer Celebration at the beginning of December!

The photos that follow speak for themselves ... fun and laughter, along with good company and tasty refreshments.



Congregational Life Ministry continued...



January spotlighting Mission Ministry

- Global Missions
- Local Missions
- Missionaries
- Mission Trips
- Foundations for the Future Grants



View short videos of some involved in this ministry on NPC's website ... www.norotonchurch.org ... at your leisure to learn more about hands-on experiences.

You can also interact with participants in Horton Hall following Sunday services.

Membership Ministry



Dear Friends in Faith,

As you enter the New Year reflecting on your goals and priorities, please consider the role that you personally can have in outreach to visitors, seekers and prospective members. Here are a few specific opportunities – brought to you by the Outreach and Membership Teams – to spread God's word, deepen your involvement at NPC, and strengthen your relationship with Christ:

Support New Member Classes: greet, take photos, prepare refreshments, or lead a small group. It's very meaningful to be of service to those whose faith journey has led them to NPC.

Serve as a Worship Greeter: warmly welcome both visitors and members for just 15 minutes before the 9 and 10:30 worship services with a smile and hearty "good morning!"

Learn People's Names: make it a resolution to use the new church directory (available in print and on-line) to match names with faces – especially new members – and to use the names when seeing people at church or in the community.

For more information on these opportunities, please contact me by phone (203-655-1451, ext. 14) or email (julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org).

Thank you for the opportunity to be of service,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership

BECOME A MEMBER: JOIN NPC IN JANUARY!

The half-day winter New Member Class for will be held on **Saturday, January 12, 2013, Noon to 5:30 p.m.** New members will be received into the congregation the next day, January 13, at the 10:30 service (optional but strongly encouraged).

- Have you wanted to take the membership class but somehow the timing was never quite right?
- Is the Holy Spirit working in you to quietly calm your anxiety or concerns about joining?
- Do you experience joy at worship or in Bible study, and feel convicted to take the next step?
- Are you new to this area or your faith, and seeking a strong, supportive community of believers?

Whatever your circumstances or faith journey, you will be welcome. The class is a great way to deepen your faith, learn what it means to be a Presbyterian and member, and build friendships with others joining. You may also take the class for information only. Free care is provided for children 3 mos. to 4 year olds.

For more information and to register, contact Julie Colbath. (julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451, ext. 14)

CHURCH DIRECTORY AVAILABLE ONLINE AND IN PRINT

Both formats provide great information and are easy to use. Try the print version in the kitchen and car, and the online version from your office or mobile device.

To access the secure ONLINE VERSION, use the link on the church home page (www.norotonchurch.org). If you have not already received the user name and password, contact Julie Colbath to request it (julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451, ext. 14). Be sure to check your contact information and send changes (including a photo if not submitted before) to Julie. Please keep the access info secure and remember the directory is for fellowship purposes only.

You can get the colorful, photo-filled PRINT VERSION from the church office during the week or contact Julie Colbath to arrange pick-up at your convenience.

Mission Ministry

Mission Ministry News



This month is Mission Ministry Focus Month. Please do come and visit with mission team members and see our display in Horton Hall after each service in January, we look forward to meeting you and sharing more

about how God has been at work through NPC mission. We will also have information about all the mission ministries we are involved with available on the NPC website as usual, along with new videos, which will give an overview of NPC Mission Ministry.

If you have a Facebook account please look for our new NPC Mission Facebook page. We will be posting regular updates there.

The latest *Foundations for the Future* Mission Grant has been awarded to **Cabwaylingo Presbyterian Chapel in Dunlow West Virginia**. Those of you in worship services on December 11 would have heard Abby Young, our Student Ministries Associate, sharing a “**Moment for Mission**” about our relationship with Cabwaylingo. The selection of this project is testimony to the important work of the youth of our church, in building and deepening relationships with our mission partners. I would like to share her words with you;

“18 years ago, NPC sent out a mission team of all ages to do a VBS and construction trip in rural Dunlow West Virginia. We’ve sent a team every summer since then, coordinating with the community and church leaders in that area to share God’s love and meet what needs that we can. Over the years the nature of the annual trip has changed to be a Student Ministries trip, with our student teams leading a week long VBS at the Cabwaylingo Presbyterian Chapel. We have loved partnering with Bill Likens to serve the Dunlow community, and many people have made this trip a permanent fixture in their summer plans, because of the way that they see God moving there, and in their own lives. Many students point to this trip, “VWAP”, as a life-changing event for them.

Today, the folks at the Cabwaylingo Chapel have a desperate need for recreational space -- the nearest is about 30 minutes away. Thanks

to *Foundations for the Future*, that will soon change. Session has approved a mission grant that will fund the first phase of a Youth and Community Center. Construction will start this spring and, by summer’s end, they’ll have a fully functional multi-purpose space. Think of it as a combination of our Horton Hall and gym. This space will allow several ministries to grow. Here are some of them:

- they will expand their youth programs to include Open Gym nights, house a new Young Life Chapter in development, and offer a variety of other programs.
- they will be able to host wedding receptions and other large community gatherings.
- there will be space for more mission teams involved in their housing rehabilitation ministry.

And NPC members can be part of it. We’re inviting anyone who might like to swing a hammer or or pick up a paint brush to come on our July mission trip to help make this new space a reality. We’ll have two teams working side by side doing our annual VBS and helping to construct the youth center.

Please look for more information coming soon, and talk to Pastor Stuart or myself if you have questions. We’d love for you to join us for our 19th trip to Dunlow!”



NPC is committed to fostering long term, deep relationships with the mission and ministry partners that we support. However each year there is a chance to introduce new ideas as the Holy Spirit leads us. Please do speak with one of the pastors, mission team elders, Renee Vasey or Sue Bielstein, or myself if you feel called to put forward a new partner who you feel passionately about.

Mission Ministry continued...

Many of those who currently serve on the mission team, joined the team after feeling called to get involved in one particular mission ministry. Some of the team members have kindly shared their thoughts about how being involved in NPC mission has affected their lives:

"Jesus said "If you love me, feed my lambs" – and we believe that he meant their minds and souls, as well as their bodies. We feel His joy, peace and love as we strive to help HIS needy children and young people in Kenya. This has radically changed the way we use God's gifts to us." - **John and Marilyn Parker**

"It has been an honor to serve on the Mission Ministry. Although I have been on several mission trips, I never fully appreciated the NPC's breadth in reaching so many in need both locally and around the world. It has awakened my awareness of how the Lord works through us to serve others. I feel privileged to have been exposed to NPC's mission work and know that it will remain an integral part of my life as I continue to grow in my faith." - **Ryan Gonzalez-Falla (Youth Representative on NPC Mission team)**

"Being on the NPC missions team has transformed my life because I know where our offering money is going and get to see and hear first hand how Christ's love and peace are being spread in our own backyard and all over the world" - **Sarah Papsun**

Carleton Cleveland writes... *"visit a sponsored child in the Dominican Republic, a child affected by the AIDS virus in Brasil or a town with no sanitation in Haiti and the NPC Mission credo of "Answering The Call of Jesus Christ to Love and Serve a Broken World" will become your personal mantra."*

Please continue to pray for our mission partners locally and globally

In Christ's Service,
Stella Clarke
Mission Associate

Mission Trips 2013

Our Student Ministries program leads several of the mission trips including the **March and April Mission Trips, Vacation With A Purpose, and the High School Trip to the Dominican Republic.**

March Mission Trip - March 17-22, 2013. Rebuilding in New Jersey
More information to follow

April Mission Trip - April 14-19, 2013. Rebuilding in New Jersey
More information to follow

Vacation With a Purpose - July 7-13, 2013 to Cabwaylingo Chapel, Dunlow, West Virginia. Two teams will be working side by side doing our annual VBS and helping to construct the youth center.

Dominican Republic – Foundations for Peace - High School Mission Trip - July 31- August 8, 2013. NPC will return to Zumbone to complete the project that we have been working on for the past 3 years.

Africa Trips 2013

This year there are two different opportunities to visit mission partners in Africa. One trip escorted by John and Marilyn Parker will take a tour of several of our long term partners spending a day or so with each, seeing their ministries. John and Marilyn have spent the past 8 summers living in Africa and are very familiar with the culture. The other trip is to City of Hope, for those looking for a chance to work "hands on" for a week at City of Hope, with a short safari included and this trip will be coordinated by Clare and Jeff Myers who have been involved with City of Hope for many years.



Africa - Visit to Ministry Partners – June 28-July 12.

Visit NPC Mission partners including Nambale Magnet School, Kenya; City of Hope, Tanzania; Presbyterian University of East Africa and scholarship students; Caroline King'Ori Missionary at Kenyatta University. Space is limited. Cost Approx \$4,000 for flight and accommodation.

Africa – Mission Trip to City of Hope, Tanzania. July/August 2013 dates to be confirmed. "Hands on" project work at the school/orphanage/hospital at City of Hope. Trip will be coordinated by Clare and Jeff Myers.

If you are interested in either of these trips please contact Stella Clarke as soon as possible since space is limited.
(stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org 203-655-1451 ext. 18)

Mission Ministry continued...

Local Ministries & NPC Liaison

- GW Carver Center**, Norwalk
Jane Malcolm: jkmalcolm1@gmail.com
- Inspirica**, Stamford
Jerre Skeats: jskeats@optonline.net
- Macedonia Church**, Norwalk
Chuck Richardson: chukr@optonline.net
- Open Door Shelter**, Norwalk
Chuck Richardson: chukr@optonline.net
- Pivot Ministries**, Norwalk
David Norman: dnorm@us.ibm.com
- Young Life**, Darien
Sarah Papsun: sarahworldtraveler@yahoo.com

Global Ministries & NPC Liaison

- Children of Bethlehem**, Brazil
Priscilla Hartokolis: spnhart@optonline.net
- City of Hope**, Tanzania
Burt Palmer: burt.palmer@gmail.com
- Feed My Starving Children**
Stella Clarke: stellaclarke@msn.com
- Forman Christian College**, Pakistan
John Marr: johnmarr@hotmail.com
- Nambale Magnet School**, Kenya
John and Marilyn Parker:
parkerj@asme.org
parkerma@juno.com
- World Vision**, Dominican Republic
Carleton Cleveland:
Carleton_cleveland@hotmail.com

Missionaries

- Tom and Dora Becker**, serving the Roma people in Czech Republic.
- Bob and Jennifer Chedester**, serving at Rift Valley Academy in Kenya.
- Caroline King'Ori**, serving college students in Kenya.
- Hanna Massad**, serving the people of Jordan and Gaza.
- Scott Brill**, serving college students through InterVarsity (New England).
- Lionel Nyange**, InterVarsity Chapter Planter, Connecticut College
- Joyce Wong**, InterVarsity Chapter Planter, Trinity College, Hartford.
- Artie Van Sciver**, serving college students through Campus Outreach at Elon University.
- Jairton de Melo**, serving the people of Brazil and supporting/liaising with Children of Bethlehem.
- Mark Orr**, serving youth workers in REACH Youth New England.
- Brandon Neike**, serving the youth of Darien with Young Life of Darien and Rowayton.

For more information visit NPC website

www.norotonchurch.org

or contact Stella Clarke,
NPC Mission Associate at
203-655-1451, ext. 18

or stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org.

Music & Fine Arts

Music Schedule



Chancel Choir - resumes on January 10th. Thursday nights 8-9:30 p.m. for rehearsal and Sunday mornings 8:30 for rehearsal and participation in the 9:00 and 10:30 Sanctuary services.

Handbell Choir - resumes on January 3rd. Thursday evenings as needed 7:00-7:45 p.m. Come hear the Handbell Choir on January 6th at the 9:00 and 10:30 Sanctuary services.

J.A.M. (Jesus and Me) - resumes on January 9th. Wednesday afternoons 4:00-5:30 p.m. in Horton Hall for singing, drama, and other exciting activities for kids in K-5!

NPC News

In Loving Memory of...

December 19th:
Zilita Black

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

Join us in celebrating the December Weddings...

December 15th:

Renee Vasey and William Vredenburgh

December 31st:

Alexandra Watts and John Sise

A "Take-It-Home" Event for children and parents of 1st Graders

January 13, at 4 p.m. in the Parlor
Family Service Projects

Learn together with your children about
how to help others in need in our own
community and the world.

Open Doors

ARE YOU ON FACEBOOK? So are we! "Like" our page -
"Open Doors at Noroton Presbyterian" - for updates on
sermon topics, links to cool sites, and to find out what's for
dinner. Questions? Contact Seana (Seanagt@aol.com) or
Steve (Steve@Stevodemott.com)

**Would You Like to Stay Connected and Join Our
Email List?** We send email blasts to the congregation
with general church updates, prayer requests, special
events and more. If you're not receiving these email
notices and would like to, please contact Claire Bragdon
in the church main office, 203-655-1451 ext. 40 or email
claire.bragdon@norotonchurch.org to be added to the list.

*If you would like to submit an article for the February 2013 issue please submit
it to Rose Cunningham by email at rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.*

Pastors & Directors

Pastor Samuel A. Schreiner III.....ext. 11 <i>Pastor and Team Leader</i>	Dwayne Condon.....ext. 45 <i>Director of Music & Fine Arts</i>	Julie Colbathext. 14 <i>Director of Membership</i>
Pastor Brandi Drake.....ext. 21 <i>Pastor of Caring and Women's Ministry</i>	Mickie O'Donnell.....ext. 34 <i>Director of Children's Ministry</i>	Dan Rosa.....ext. 43 <i>Business Administrator</i>
Pastor Stuart Smith.....ext. 28 <i>Pastor of Student Ministry</i>	Stella Clarke.....ext. 18 <i>Mission Ministry Associate</i>	David Lee.....ext. 26 <i>Director of Properties</i>
Pastor Greg Doll.....ext. 23 <i>Adult Spiritual Formation</i>	Carol Scott.....ext. 46 <i>NPC Tot Drop Director</i>	
Valerie Muller.....ext. 48 <i>Director of Congregational Life</i>	Martha Duff.....ext. 35 <i>Director Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School</i>	