

The Spire

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



Lessons from a Pilgrimage

“How was your trip Sam?” is the greeting I’ve been receiving since returning from a pilgrimage to the Holy Land. 14 of us from Noroton, along with two couples who were friends of our members, just returned from our 12-day, more than 12,000-mile odyssey. With 8 days in Israel, 2 in Jordan and 2 for travel on either end – we packed a lot of learning and sight seeing into these days. We visited the Roman capital of Caesarea where Peter preached to a Roman centurion and Paul was held in prison. We visited Nazareth and then had a boat ride on the Sea of Galilee. There we saw a first century boat that had been reclaimed from the mud (they are smaller than you think). We visited the archaeological sites of cities that Jesus taught in like Capernaum and Magdala and even read the start of the Sermon on the Mount on the Mount of the Beatitudes. We visited the baptism site of John the Baptist on the Jordan (where one pilgrim was baptized and many of us renewed our baptismal vows) and floated on the salt saturated Dead Sea (the lowest spot on earth at 1,407 feet below sea level). We walked around Herod the

Great’s mountain top fortress – Masada – a place he never stayed in, and saw the streams of En Gedi flowing in the wilderness. After visiting Qumran, the site of the Dead Sea Scrolls, we went up – in elevation and mountain roads – to Jerusalem. Visits there included the water tunnel of Hezekiah, the Temple Mount and the Wailing Wall. We even walked the sites of our Lord’s suffering on the Via Delarosa ending at the church of the Holy Sepulcher. We broke bread and had communion in the Garden Tomb. And we visited Bethlehem and the Church of the Nativity too. Finally, a visit to Jordan took us to the well-preserved Roman city of Jerash, and the amazing hide-away of the Nabatians in Petra. We caught the same glimpse of the Promised Land from Mt. Nebo that Moses had, and we visited with our missionary in Jordan, Dr. Hanna Massad. We learned of Jordan’s water shortages and current difficulties of hosting almost 3,000,000 refugees from the wars in Syria and Iraq.

What are the “take aways” from a trip like this? We can now picture the landscape of rough hills and tufts of grass that inspired David to write the 23rd Psalm. We can read about the Lord

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Worship Schedule

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

Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

- 5/1 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 5/8 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 5/15 - Pastor John Seiders
- 5/22 - Pastor Brandi Drake
 (Last Open Doors service
 Summer break
 will return 9/11/16)
- 5/29 - Guest Preacher:
 Rev. Dr. Steve Crocco

Upcoming Baptism Dates

- 5/15 (10:30 am Sanctuary)
 - 6/19 (10:00 am Chapel)
 - 6/26 (8:00 am Weed Beach)
- To schedule a Baptism please call Leslie Ezzo at 203-309-5618.*

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finding peace and quiet to pray in the region of Galilee and know what the sights looked like since this corner of Israel is still unspoiled to this day. Passages of the Bible are more vivid and alive after visiting the lands where so many of the stories of our faith took place. We found the archeology astounding as it verified so many of the details of the persons, places and practices of the Scripture. Indeed the “stones cry out” and witness to the truth of our faith. We found friendly, knowledgeable Christian tour guides who spoke passionately about their country and invited tourists to come more frequently and share their historic treasures and incredible hospitality. And we found new friends as we shared so many meals, miles and meaningful moments together. If you have never taken a trip like this I encourage you to do so. It will touch the heart and soul like no other place you can visit.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,
Sam Schreiner

P.S. Hats off to our colleague, Rev. John Seiders who has earned his Doctor of Ministry degree this month from Gordon-Conwell. Well done Pastor John!



NPC Pilgrims share the Lord's Supper in the Garden Tomb area of Jerusalem – April 2016



NPC Pilgrims in Jerusalem

Special Guest Preachers

We are pleased to welcome to our pulpit two tremendous preachers who are experts in their fields.

On May 29, Dr. Stephen D. Crocco, head of the theological library at Yale University will be our guest. Dr. Crocco has served at three seminaries and the War College in Carlisle, PA. He and Pastor Sam met at Young Life in Pittsburgh where they went to High School together and attended the same church.

On June 26, we are pleased to welcome Dr. D. Michael Lindsay, President of Gordon College to our pulpit. Dr. Lindsay has conducted the Platinum study on leadership, interviewing over 550 top leaders from business, government, schools and the military. Gordon College is the largest evangelical liberal arts school in New England and one of the leading Christian colleges in the nation.

Adult Spiritual Formation



Dear Friends:

On April 12th I had my one-year anniversary at NPC! The year passed quickly and I have very much enjoyed serving the Lord and serving you – in the Sanctuary, on the beach in the Chapel, at the Thorndal offices, the Sugar Bowl, in New York City, and in other locales. As you are probably aware, my ministry at NPC is coming to a close at the end of this month.

Over the past year I have had the privilege of getting to know a number of you. In addition, I have had the opportunity to serve alongside a wonderful group of pastors and staff who give of themselves in many ways.

What does the future hold? That is a good question! Years ago a friend of mine once said, “While we don’t know what the future holds, we know who holds the future.” I trust that our faithful God will reveal what is next for me and for NPC. I will be moving to Massachusetts to be with my wife and continuing to discern my next steps in ministry. Here at NPC, I am confident that the pastors and the elders will continue to prayerfully consider the best ways to move forward with Adult Spiritual Formation, Outreach, and Men’s Ministry.

As I depart, I want to say thank you to the Session for inviting me to serve here at NPC, to the staff for giving me a warm welcome and answering many questions, and to you, the congregation, for allowing me to step in to your lives, worship and ministry for such a time as this. You have been a blessing to me far beyond what you will ever know.

May you know the richest of blessings as you faithfully follow our Lord!

Peace,
Pastor John Seiders

Interim Associate Pastor of Adult and Outreach Ministries

National Day of Prayer Thursday, May 5 - Noon – 1pm in the Chapel

*“Shout it aloud, do not hold back.
Raise your voice like a trumpet.” –
Isaiah 58:1a*

Join with millions of others across the country on May 5th for the 65th annual National Day of Prayer. This year’s theme is “*Wake Up America.*”

Many of us were re-awakened to God’s call in our lives and to the needs of our community through the gift of service on the 1st NPC Service Day. Whether you served, received, or witnessed this event, God’s loving power was on display.

We invite you to once again come together as a church and join in praying to our mighty God that His powerful hand would be at work among us:

- That each of us individually would be daily drawn closer to Him
- That NPC would continue to be a beacon of Christ’s love in our community
- That the needs of our community and of those we encounter on a daily basis would be met
- That His hand would guide our country, its people, and its leaders

All are free to stop in to the Chapel between noon and 1pm on May 5th. You can either pray from an available list of community needs or simply bring to God what is on your heart.

Can’t make it to the Church? We invite you to pray where you are. God has given us the incredible gift of direct access to Him through our Lord Jesus Christ.

“Upward falling. Spirit Soaring. I touch the sky when my knees hit the ground.” -- Hillsong United

Men's Studies

Men’s Bible Study: Tuesdays, NYC ends May 17; and Thursdays, Darien ends May 19.

Adult Spiritual Formation continued...



The devotional article which follows, written by Pastor Rick Warren, beautifully summarizes the importance of community.

- If you are participating (or have in the past) in a small group, you know the comfort, growth, and joy that can be experienced as you journey together through life's ups and downs.
- If you are not, we strongly encourage you to consider becoming part of one.

Do You Have a Safety Net?

By Rick Warren — Mar 30, 2016

“Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble”

(1 Peter 3:8 NIV)

As a pastor, I see situations daily that nobody should ever have to go through alone. Nobody should ever have to wait in the hospital while a loved one is in life-or-death surgery. No woman should ever have to wait alone for the lab report on a problem pregnancy. Nobody should ever have to wait for news from a battlefield alone. Nobody should ever have to stand at the edge of an open grave alone. Nobody should ever have to spend the first night alone when his or her spouse has just walked out.

Life's tough times and tragedies are inevitable; each of us will face them. But we don't need to go through them alone. We need God's safety net to help hold us up through these difficult times.

What is God's safety net? It is a group of other believers — a handful of people who are really committed to you. We call this kind of group a community. Here's God's plan for community: *“If one part suffers, every part suffers with it”* (1 Corinthians 12:26a NIV). Community is God's answer to despair.

Romans 12:15 expresses a similar idea: *“Rejoice with those who rejoice; mourn with those who mourn.”*

The first part of that verse is easy. When something good happens to someone, it's often easy to join in on the party.

But when someone is having a tough time, it can seem more difficult. But, really, it's simple. When you're going through a crisis, you don't want advice; you just want somebody to be there to sit with you, hold your hand, put an arm around your shoulder, or cry with you.

As Paul tells us, *“Therefore encourage one another and build each other up”* (1 Thessalonians 5:11a). Encouraging someone else doesn't always mean giving a pep talk or words of wisdom. Sometimes the best kind of encouragement is just sitting in silence, waiting and weeping with a friend.

Do you have a safety net — a group of fellow Christians you know you can count on in life's toughest times? If not, go out today and begin building those friendships. The hard times in life are inevitable, and only a fool would go into them unprepared.

Talk It Over

- Who is a part of your safety net? How do you build community with people and reach that level of commitment?
- What are the practical ways you can provide someone with a safety net?
- What is the difference in being part of a Bible study and being part of a community?

Make a Connection now ...

Contact Valerie or Marlene to answer questions and/or for assistance connecting with a group to help you build community.

valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org / 203-309-5650

marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org / 203-309-5620

Women's and Caring Ministries



Bear one another's burdens. In this way you will fulfill the law of Christ

~Galatians 6:2

We all have seasons in our lives in which we are especially mindful that we need God to be present: transforming, comforting, and challenging us. Perhaps it occurs when our circumstances change. A job is lost. A spouse falls gravely ill. A divorce looks imminent. A new child is more stressful than anticipated. A home becomes too much to handle, and a move is required.

Sometimes, we need a brother or a sister to walk with us, and remind us who we are, and to whom we belong. Here at NPC, we call these brothers and sisters Stephen Ministers.

One of the most beautiful slices of ministry that I have experienced here at NPC has been the training of a new class of Stephen Ministers. Every Wednesday night since January, a group of 13 trainees has gathered with leaders to intentionally learn how to serve individuals in our church family. We talk about ways to bring Christ into many different life circumstances. We learn how to listen with open hearts. We talk about different forms of crisis. We practice prayer.

On May 22nd in worship, we will be commissioning 13 new Stephen Ministers. Each have been through 50 hours of specialized training in Christian caregiving, and

join a team of already active Stephen Ministers here at NPC. They are each ready to provide confidential one-to-one Christian care to people experiencing a crisis or going through a difficult time. Stephen Ministers meet weekly with their care receiver for around an hour to listen, care, encourage, pray and provide emotional and spiritual support for the person. Caring relationships last for as long as the person's need persists.

I ask for you to pray for these soon-to-be-commissioned Stephen Ministers. Pray that God would bless their ministry and work through them to bring hope and healing to those they are serving. Please also pray for the continued ministry of our other active Stephen Ministers.

Perhaps you are reading this article and wondering whether God might use a Stephen Minister in your circumstance, or in the life of someone you know, to bring healing and wholeness. If you do feel that tug, please reach out to me. I would love an opportunity to talk more with you about receiving care through a Stephen Minister. You can reach me at the church office, or via email: brandi.drake@norotonchurch.org.

In Joyful anticipation~

Pastor Brandi Drake

Associate Pastor of Caring & Women's Ministries

Women's Studies

Tuesdays:

6:15 am Bible Study - Study on Romans

9:15 am Bible Study - Study on Matthew by N.T. Wright. *Child care is provided from 9-11:45 am for children 3 months to 4 years. Registration, including CT Early Childhood Health Assessment form, is requested three weeks prior to your child's attendance and can be found on our website www.norotonchurch.org or by contacting Marlene. Note, medical form must be signed by a doctor. Once completed, child care and medical forms should be sent to Marlene Moffett at NPC, 2011 Post Rd., Darien, CT 06820.*

Thursdays:

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

Caring Ministry



**In honor of Memorial Day,
please join NPC's H.E.R.O.E.S. Care Team
in a prayer of remembrance and appreciation.**

A Memorial Day Prayer

Heavenly Father,

It is nearly Memorial Day. We thank you for this opportunity to honor the men and women who so bravely served this country in the past as well as in the present.

Father, we ask you to bless and strengthen those brave souls who give of themselves without asking anything in return. Please heal our wounded warriors who return home in pain after giving their all for this great land. Bless them. Restore their souls. Heal their bodies. Bring salvation to the lost.

We ask you to bless the families of our military who stay behind while their loved one goes into battle. Keep them safe and provide for their needs according to your abundance.

Lord, we pray for a special blessing upon the families whose loved one gave his or her life in service of our country. Keep them safe and comfort their hearts.

Today, we remember in particular members of NPC, past and present, who served in the military--especially those who grieve wartime losses of friends and family.

Please anoint our Chaplains and others who bring the Word to our military. Bless their ministries and bring a great harvest of souls from their efforts.

And we think of our Combat Medics, too. Please give them technical and tactical expertise. If they are called to the battlefield, give them the courage to conserve our fighting forces by providing medical care to all who are in

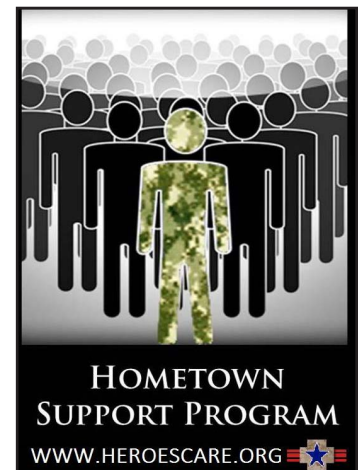
need. If they are called to missions of peace, give them strength to lead by caring for those who need assistance. Help them all to attend to their own spiritual, physical and emotional needs as they care for others.

Finally, Father, please forgive our forgetful ways: we forget to be grateful--we forget to be humble--we forget that our freedom from a shackled existence was won by the courage of others, sacrificing themselves on our behalf--*first and foremost by the courage and sacrifice of Jesus Himself.*

But now, in this moment, we do remember, and we humbly bow before you in gratitude--thankful for your love and mercy shown to us all.

In the Saving Name of Jesus, we pray. Amen

*H.E.R.O.E.S. Care provides one-on-one support to members of our military and their loved ones. We are a team of Stephen Ministers who have specialized training to serve this unique community. To learn more, please feel free to chat with any of us: **Bruce Baggaley, Cleve Cleveland, Jim Haffner, Evie Knight-Outpost Leader (Evie@optonline.net), Leslie Lloyd, Tom Mao, Pete Roux, Sheree Sanborn, Emily Shute, Cindy Terry.***



Caring Ministry continued...



Prime Timers

Pastor Sam's Pilgrimage to the Holy Land

May 19, 2016 at 2:00 pm in
the Post Rd/Mission Room

Pastor Sam will share with us his pictures and reflections on his recent trip to Israel and Jordan. He is excited to share with you new things he saw and learned on his 4th trip to the land of our Savior's birth.

For more information contact Marlene at 203-309-5620 .



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

Mondays, May 2-16, 7:30-9:00 pm

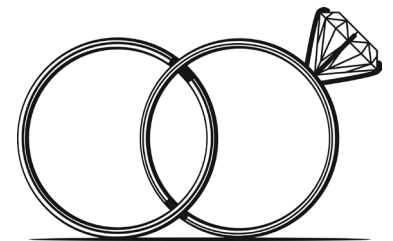
Modern research shows that human connection and attachment are essential to feeling happy and healthy. Specifically, we need emotional connection with other people in order to thrive.

Join us for a workshop on Andy Stanley's *Staying in Love* series for insight on ways to bring Christ into your marriage. Amanda Craig and her husband Doug will facilitate.

Come when you can, with or without your spouse. Location: NPC, room TBA

"This course was so helpful, thank you. It not only enhanced our relationship with each other, but brought us closer to the people in our church." NPC couple from last workshop

SIGN UP: www.npclink.com/marriage



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

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

Children's Ministry



Minute with Mickie – May – A month for Prayer, Praise and Purpose

May is a crazy month. We hear it all the time. “We are so busy in May.” Let me see if we can think through this month and turn it into a time for Prayer, Praise and Purpose instead of another crazy month of activities that send you into a tizzy.

So first, let's look at PRAYER – **May 5th**, the first Thursday of this month is *The National Day of Prayer*. Take some time to slow down your day on May 5th and pray together as a family. Here are a few suggestions:

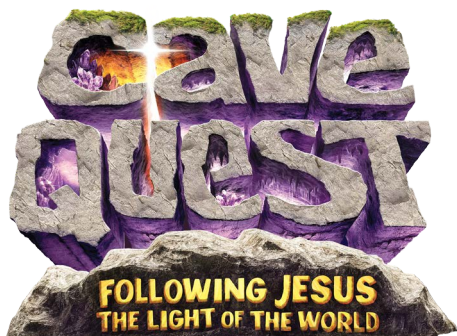
1. Wake the children up differently today. Go into each room and sit on the edge of each child's bed and say a prayer out loud for that child. Something like: “Lord, bless (child's name). Help him/her feel your presence today. Thank you that you gave this child to me. Help me to appreciate his/her special traits. In Jesus name, Amen.” Then wake them up with a silly song and a hug.
2. While driving in the car, ask your children to look out the window and say a prayer of thanksgiving for the things that they see.
3. When they get home from school, turn snack time into a time to pray for their school, friends and teachers.
4. At dinner time, hold hands around the table and pray the Lord's Prayer together.

5. Finally, at bedtime, talk about how praying together is important and that it has been National Prayer Day. Pray a favorite Bedtime prayer for good sleep, thanking God for a great day.

For PRAISE - May 1st our Horton Hall kids will be praising God as we study the incredible miracle at Pentecost. Doing experiments with Red Balloons, fire that doesn't burn, streamers, and watching Buck Denver, will make this Sunday a praise-filled day. Suggestions for how to praise God all month long will be on our website. Then to even keep PRAISE going into June, don't forget to set aside JAM Singers' Worship experience of Praise as they lead us to understand what God means when He tells us to “*Make a Joyful Noise.*” Watch for date and time to come soon!

What about PURPOSE? Every morning during this month, think about what is the PURPOSE of all this busyness. Do each of the activities in which you and your children are participating have a purpose that you can identify? Put a note on your refrigerator with these letters *WWJD?* – you know what they mean, right? *What Would Jesus Do?* You could make a chart with the activities and then leave a blank next to each one and have the kids fill it in with a *WWJD* thought. For example “Activity: School concert – Jesus would have his instrument ready and He wouldn't forget to bring it on time.” You get the drift. Liz and I will be praying for you.

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



VBS 2016

**Why not invite your neighbors too!
Not necessary to be an NPC member.**

Sunday, June 26 from 2 pm to 5 pm
then Monday, June 27 through Thursday, June 30 from
9 am to about 12 pm.

Registration ends May 31st!

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER ONLINE](#)

Children's Ministry continued...

VBS Volunteers

Ms. Liz and I are still basking in the warmth of NPC Service Day. Participating with our church family to serve in the name of Jesus is nothing short of joyful empowerment. Was it the same for you? Ms. Liz is wondering if you are looking for other opportunities to recreate that sense of joyful empowerment or even if you missed out and wish you hadn't... you're in luck. There is still an opportunity. Right now.

This is our first year back holding VBS for possibly 300 children in the upgraded, new and improved NPC Church building, and we need our NPC church family to make it over the top. No knowledge of the Bible is needed – for that matter – we guarantee you'll have a blast learning right along with our children! Our VBS



for both preschool and elementary aged kids begins on **Sunday, June 26 from 2 pm to 5 pm then Monday, June 27 through Thursday, June 30 from 9 am to about 12 pm.** But there's work to be done ahead of time as well.

Please prayerfully consider where you could plug in. Prior to VBS, during VBS, evening, weekends, at the church, or do at home. Busy work, hands on work, donating, Crew Leader, Station Leader, old, young, middle school, high school, there's something for everyone... give either of us a call/email to discuss or go right to www.npckids.com, click on the Cave Quest video/link and check out the descriptions there and pick one.

We'd love to share this experience with you, and so would our kids. What a great example we could set!

NPNS

NPNS Receives Raised Garden Beds as Eagle Scout Project

Jackson Huffman, a Life Scout with Troop 35 in Darien, constructed and installed three raised garden beds for Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School as his Eagle project. Jackson provided the plans, purchased the material and organized the work parties for building and installation of the planters. Volunteers from Troop 35 helped along the way.

Jackson even donated the organic soil the planters were filled with!

NPNS recently installed an adventure playground and the addition of the garden beds will add to the children's outdoor learning experiences, cultivate their wonder and appreciation for nature, enhance the children's appreciation for the natural world and increase their foundation for environmental stewardship.

The NPNS children and staff are humbled and grateful for Jackson's dedication to our school, his beautiful craftsmanship and his generosity.



Jackson Huffman and Scoutmaster Kevin Granath



Liam and Reed planting lettuce.



Emmy and Chip planting their lettuce seedlings.



Our Three's planting carrot seeds.

What Makes NPCC Meaningful

NPCC is a full-time, child care ministry that serves over 60 children and their families. At this point in time, 56% of our families live in Darien while 44% travel from Stamford, Norwalk, New Canaan, Weston, Southport, and Fairfield. Additionally, 54% of our families have more than one child enrolled in our program, while 39% of our families use our program five days a week.

We recently asked some of our parents why NPCC is meaningful to their families. Here are some of their written responses:

“NPCC has been such a huge part of our family's life. With both my husband I working full-time, it's such a comfort to know that our boys are in such great, loving care. If we ever need to check in during the day, we always get a return text/email/call promptly - very reassuring when we are not able to be there! The NPCC staff loves our boys like their own, and it really does feel like an extended family. We also love the amount of outdoor time the kids get – so important! And our oldest loves all the creative projects in the preschool class!” - Liz Heppermann

“My boys have been enrolled at NPCC since 2011... Each room that they have progressed through has a sense of warmth and structure and together with the Director and Assistant Director, every teacher strives to make each child feel loved and well cared. They engage the children in activities that is attributing toward their overall development. My children have learned to socialize in a pleasant environment where they are encouraged to be themselves and accepted for who they are. They feel very much at home when they are at NPCC and we feel good knowing they are gaining an exposure to God.” - Beth Bonnano

“NPCC has been a very special place for our family over the past 4 1/2 years. My daughters have enjoyed learning from their nurturing teachers and have created very special bonds with their friends.” - Kristen Binkley

“Having Jack at NPCC has been such a blessing. Every morning Jack literally runs down the hall and Miss Janice greets us with a warm hello and a big smile. Miss Linda & Miss Kate care for Jack like their own. They are thoughtful, compassionate and kind in everything they do with the children. It is amazing to think we carried him in the doors last year and now he is running down the halls! Jack has learned so much from NPCC and we feel honored to be a part of such a wonderful community.” - Megan Jones



Peace and Joy,
Beth Aparicio
Director of NPCC



In a community like ours, youth and families live busy lives running from one thing to the next. And in the midst of our busy-ness, it can be difficult for Christian disciples of all ages to find time to get away to participate in mission experiences—even when they want to. Seeking to address this, the Youth Ministry Team set out early last year to discern and identify a significant mission opportunity that would afford youth and their parents the opportunity to serve in mission while also allowing space to attend to the other demands of their schedule. The team discerned that this could be accomplished through a mission experience we call *Bridge to City*.

Bridge to City is designed as an urban mission experience in which youth and parents engage in mission service work over the course of a weekend. As part of the experience, participants: travel to and from the city via train, move about the city by subway and foot, and engage in mission service and guided spiritual reflection throughout the weekend. With this schedule, participants who need to be back at work on Monday morning are able to do so—and families that want to serve in mission during the school break while also planning time for vacation are able to do both.

Last month, eleven participants participated in the first Bridge to City mission experience. During the course of the weekend, the team served alongside residents of Brooklyn at East New York Farms—an organization

that is addressing food justice in that community through local sustainable agriculture and community-led economic development. Participants also met with Pastor James Steward at the South Bushwick Reformed Church—hearing his congregation’s vision for reaching the community and assisting with clean-up work in the church building (a building and congregation that was affected by a tornado that struck the city in 2007). In addition to these two sites, participants had the opportunity to visit with elderly in the community through a special program of DOROT.



The mission weekend concluded with a prayer tour of the city on Sunday afternoon. As part of this tour, participants were invited to see the city the way that God sees it—with the team stopping at points along the way to consider, reflect, and pray. An incredible experience for all of the participants—and a tremendous weekend of service.

With such a tremendous experience of prayer and service in this first Bridge to City, plans are already underway for Bridge to City 2017, which is tentatively scheduled for April 8-10, 2017. Additional information about this experience will be available beginning this fall.

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



Welcoming Ministry

"Get Connected"

**Sunday, May 15th (NEW DATE), 10 to 10:30 am
(between services in Mission Room)**

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

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

Contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org for more information.

Interested in Becoming a Member of NPC? Sign up NOW for the Next New Member Class

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

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

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

Be part of the Welcoming Ministry: Greeters Needed!



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

We are in great need of volunteers to:

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

Sign up as your schedule allows:

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

Contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org.

Working our Faith,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership

Praises for an Incredible Alpha Course

After a several year hiatus, we once again offered a powerful Alpha Course to about 40 people from January to mid-April. Alpha is a 10-week series of talks on key aspects of the Christian faith with dinner and small group discussions.

Feedback from the Alpha "guests" shows that the impact of the course on their thoughts, feelings and faith was significant:

- *I had a belief that was not clearly defined before Alpha. I feel more directed and focused now. I got excellent suggestions through the small group and videos to help practice my faith.*
- *I had been growing and questioning before Alpha. The course confirmed and answered questions for me. The videos made certain aspects of our faith easier to understand.*

- *My faith has been reinforced and re-invigorated. I benefited from new friends, and a greater comfort level in talking about faith.*
- *I was faithful but always had questions before Alpha. I feel reinforced and enlightened...inspired, educated and a deepened faith.*

Over 60 volunteers contributed to the effort by greeting, preparing and serving food, praying, and leading the small group discussions. We are grateful to our Lord for directing everyone's efforts into a beautiful symphony that clearly encouraged and enabled many to grow in their faith.

Let's pray for all those who took Alpha that the fire of faith that was stoked within them, will continue to grow in strength.



Congregational Life Ministry

Month of May: (Unofficial) 'Hospitality Month' at NPC ???



Step out of your comfort zone ...

A year ago we suggested (unofficially) making the month of May 'hospitality month' for our church community. I'd like to suggest that we try that again this year!

We had a new member class in March, with fifteen officially joining our congregation. I would like to challenge *EACH* of you to 'pick one of them' and search for them either in Sunday church service, fellowship coffee time, a weekday activity ... or, even if you shop at the same supermarket! ... and introduce yourself and welcome them to our church family!

(Go to the April 2016 Spire online ...
www.norotonchurch.org → Resources menu tab → Publications → April Spire ...
to find photos of these newest members.)

Sound hard? We can help ...

It is the practice of the Congregational Life team members *to be intentional* in reaching out to individual members who have recently joined NPC. We actually align our team members with members of the new member class ... with hopes of being available for sharing of information to help individuals acclimate to NPC, as well as introducing them to others in our community -- at service, coffee times, and/or other activities.



We encourage you to join us in this endeavor ...

and let's not restrict ourselves to just our newest members either.

There are new or infrequent visitors, as well as many who have been attending for some time and just 'not yet' found a comfortable way to connect. Wouldn't you love to be the means by which others find NPC to be their church community? Why not pray about being open/available to help someone just like that!

- It all starts with a smile and a friendly 'hello'!
- I'm willing to bet you will be met with a smile in return!



Let's commit to actively seek out someone during coffee time who seems to be standing alone ... and go over and get to know them. Then, introduce them to a friend or two, and help expand their community while having conversations you were going to have anyhow.

We invite you to try this experiment along with us! Let's see how many opportunities to smile we can provide!

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

P.S. Check out 'Get Connected,' May 15th, under *Welcoming Ministry!*

Mission Ministry



NPC Service Day – Serving our community with joy!

Our first NPC Service Day took place on Sunday, April 3, 2016 with opportunities for all of us to be involved in loving and serving our community and our mission partners. What a beautiful day filled with grace and joy! Over 400 of our NPC family got involved participating in the 25 service projects which took place all around Darien. It was evident from the many shared stories that this was a day which blessed both those serving and those served. Thank you for the way you took part in the day!

There is a video telling the story of the Service Day on our website and lots of photos on Facebook and a selection below. Praise and thanks be to God for this day of our church going out and being the church to our mission partners and neighbors! The day also created and renewed friendships within our church community, it was particularly a blessing to help some of our seniors, homebound and families with yard work, maintenance, homemade soup and spending time in conversation.

Stella Clarke
Director of Missions



[Click here to watch the NPC Service Day Video](#)

Coming up : May 7th:
Serve at the
Open Door Shelter
Please contact Holly Hough at hhough7@optonline.net if you would like to sign up to serve lunch at the Norwalk Shelter.



Mission Ministry continued...

“Let your light shine before others so that they may see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.” Matthew 5:16



In Loving Memory of...

April 17th:
Deborah Almy Chudy

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

If you would like to submit an article for the June 2016 issue please submit it before May 13 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 Jimmy McPherson 203-309-5619 <i>Associate Pastor Youth Ministry</i>	Mickie O'Donnell..... 203-309-5622 <i>Director of Children's Ministry</i>	Dan Rosa..... 203-309-5608 <i>Business Administrator</i>
Pastor John Seiders..... 203-309-5619 <i>Interim Associate Pastor Adult and Outreach Ministries</i>	Stella Clarke..... 203-309-5645 <i>Director of Missions</i>	David Lee..... 203-309-5609 <i>Director of Properties</i>
	Beth Aparicio 203-309-5605 <i>Director of Noroton Presbyterian Child Care</i>	

May 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	7
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -5th grade 10 & 11:30 am Congregational Mtg. 10:30 am High School SnapShot 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry	7:30 pm Staying in Love	6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 pm Team Night Fellowship 7:45 pm Team Night	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor/Harbor Preview Day (Grades 5-8)	National Day of Prayer 7:00 am Men's Bible Study 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 12:00 pm National Day of Prayer Service 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.			
8 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9:00 am Confirmation Class 10:30 am High School SnapShot 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry	7:30 pm Staying in Love	6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 am Men's Bible Study 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.		13	14
15 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 6th -8th grade Macedonia Trip Confirmation 10:00 am Get Connected 12:00 pm VWAP Training 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry	7:30 pm Staying in Love	6:15 am Women's Bible Study 7:30 am Men's Bible Study (NYC) 9:15 am Women's Bible Study 8:00 pm Session	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 am Men's Bible Study 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 2:00 pm Prime Timers 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.		20	21
22 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 11:45 am Youth Ministry Parent Meeting 5:00 pm Last Open Doors Service 6:00 pm High School Ministry	7:30 pm Staying in Love	6:15 am Women's Bible Study 9:15 am Women's Bible Study	7:00 am Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 am Men's Bible Study 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.		27	28
29 8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services	Memorial Day NPC Offices Closed	6:15 am Women's Bible Study 9:15 am Women's Bible Study					