

The Spire

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



What a Blessing!

I just had one of those weekends that makes me grateful to be a Pastor and thankful to be a part of all that God is doing in and through our church. The weekend ended with our friends of the Macedonia Church as they re-consecrated their new church on West Avenue, Norwalk. For 37 years this congregation has been waiting for a true church home. Fifteen members began worshipping in the house of Pastor Steven's father, and this growing congregation has rented 7 other locations as they "wandered in the wilderness," moving from place to place without a permanent home. On Sunday night, Oct. 18, they finally reached, "the Promised Land." They completed Phase I of the renovations of their new building on 39 West Avenue in Norwalk, (the yellow "Pumpkin Church" as it was known when it was formerly owned by the Methodists) and celebrated the reopening of this 19th century house of worship with a two-and-a-half-hour service of re-consecration. About 20 members of Noroton joined with Pastor Dewitt Stevens, Jr., Macedonia Church members and visitors who formed a congregation of more than

600 people. Every seat was taken as we praised God for this permanent home. Macedonia is a vital congregation that has a tremendous vision to minister to the needs of their Norwalk neighbors. Being there that night has to be one of the highlights of my 30 years in ministry!

Pastor Stevens took time to personally thank us for the long-term support he and his church have received from Noroton Presbyterian Church. Grants from our *Foundation for the Future* mission grant process allowed them to begin the more than 1 million dollars of renovations needed to bring this historic treasure up to 21st century standards. What a great day it was to be your Pastor and receive, on your behalf, the heartfelt thanks of so many in this congregation for our partnership in this project. Psalm 133 reminds us, "*how blessed it is to be in unity*" with our brothers and sisters. In this day and age of great racial divide, I am profoundly grateful that our two churches have worked together for decades to bridge just such a divide. So thank you once again Noroton family for your gifts of generosity, to be a blessing to our brothers and sisters in this historic opportunity to grow their ministry.

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Worship Schedule

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

Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

"Together in the Story"
Sermon Series continues

- 11/1 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 11/8 - Pastor Brandi Drake
- 11/15 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 11/22 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
- 11/29 - Pastor Brandi Drake

Upcoming Baptism Dates:

11/15 and 12/18 at
 10:30 am Sanctuary service.
*To schedule a Baptism please call
 Leslie Ezzo at 203-309-5618.*

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On Saturday of this weekend I was blessed to pray, along with other clergy in town, during one of the packing shifts of Feed My Starving Children. This was an astounding program that packed 209,000 meals for the hungry over this one weekend. Noroton member Ginna Yerrall, was the overall coordinator of the hundreds of volunteers who came to serve. I know a team of volunteers worked together for a year to make this outstanding weekend run so smoothly. On the shift I prayed for, one could see Pivot House men, young children, teenagers, parents, senior citizens - all ages and stages coming together to make a world of difference in a two hour shift. We are blessed to have such town-wide cooperation to bring an event like this to Darien each year. Well done friends.

Sandwiched in between these two events, came the Skylight Lobby Concert put on by our talented music director Dwayne Condon and our outstanding choir soloists. A beautiful night of stirring songs was enjoyed in our wonderful new lobby. We are blessed with such rich talent, which was especially displayed through the challenging opera solos that our singers performed. It was well done and many attending voiced the hope that we might repeat such a night in the future. I love the way our new space is now allowing us to try some new things – giving us new opportunities to bless our friends and neighbors as we share the love of God through the gifts He has given us.

To top it all off I was able to sign dozens of Bibles handed out to our third graders by their parents and baptize our newest member whose parents joined our church Sunday morning (welcome to NPC, Jeff, Ashley and little Charlotte Czaplicki). Thank you Noroton for being such a rich place of service, energy and love for the Lord.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend
–Sam Schreiner

Israel Trip

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

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

A deposit is due on 12/31.

Email sam.schreiner@norotonchurch.org with any questions.

Prime Timers

November 19, 2015

2:00-3:30 pm

Post Rd/Mission Room

Sgt. Keri Isaacs, Officer Luke Adams & Detective Jeremiah Marron will share ideas for assuring our safety as we age.

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



**Now that we have completed our renovations
and are settling into our beautiful new building,
it is time to focus our attention
on the needs of our day-to-day ministry.**

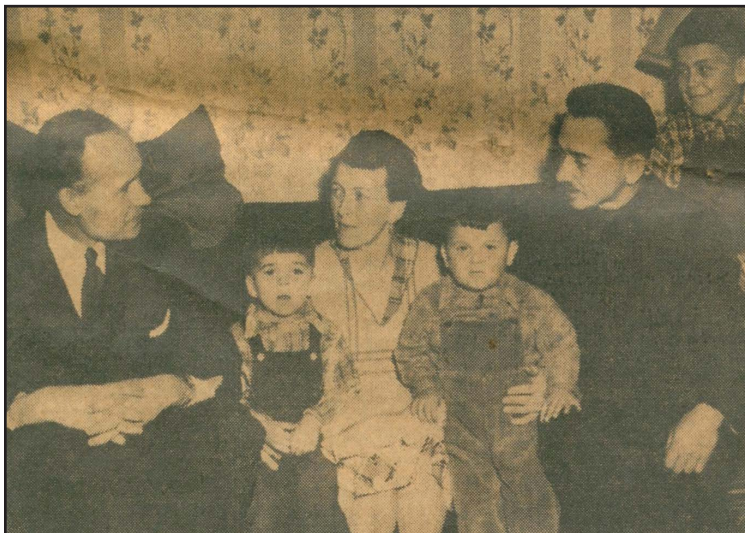


As of September 30, 2015 our ministry giving revenue is \$110,000 short of budget. Although we are trimming our expenses, we do not want to cancel programs or delay assistance to our mission partners. In your plans for year-end giving we kindly ask that you prayerfully consider giving to our ongoing ministry needs. If you need assistance with transferring a gift of stock; please call Dan Rosa in our business office at (203) 655-1451 or email him at dan.rosa@norotonchurch.org. We thank you for your continued support.

The First Thanksgiving

In 1949 when there were many “displaced persons” needing a safe home after the II War, our church decided to sponsor a family. At that time the church owned a house located where the Memorial Garden is today. Since it had belonged to the White family it was known as the White house. The lower floor was rented during the week by the Darien chapter of the American Red Cross. On the weekends, however, the space was used for Sunday School. The Session decided that the kitchen on the first floor plus the entire second floor could be made available to a refugee family. The rooms were painted and furniture was collected from church families.

On April 4, 1950 the Louis Orban family, refugees from Hungary who had been living in a displaced persons camp in Germany, arrived in New York City on a converted troop transport ship—the General Blatchford. It had been a navy ship during the war but was transferred to Military Sea Transportation Service where it carried many refugees to the U.S. and to Australia. A group of NPC members met the Orban family at the ship and brought them to their new home in Darien. The family was father Lajos (Louis), mother Ilona (Helene), and three sons Louis Jr. (9), Ervin (4 ½) and Gabor (3 ½). A fourth son, George, was born four months later in August in St. Joseph’s Hospital where the Tully Center is today. Louis Sr. was an engineer in Hungary but he began work for a member of the church who was a nurseryman. In a short while he found a job working for the Electric Specialty Company in Stamford.



The Orban family with Dr. Horton the day after they arrived in the U.S.



The White House, Post Road (Memorial Garden Location)

By March of 1951, less than a year after arriving, the Orbans began hoping to find their own home. By August of 1952 Louis Sr. had secured a good job in Kalamazoo, Michigan. He and Helene found a house near a Hungarian Reformed church with over 100 Hungarian families. At the time of their departure the church gave them furniture and a loan which was fully paid by March 1954.

Seven years ago, George, the son born in Stamford, contacted the church and said he was coming east and wanted to see where he was baptized on November 5, 1950. In his letter he said, “We will always be grateful to the Church for its support and kindnesses in getting our family started in the New World.” In the history files of the church there is an essay written by son Ervin when he was 16 years old. It is handwritten and his teacher has written the following on the top. “A+ This is really excellent. I have read it several times and get more from it each time.”

-Rosemary Mace

The First Thanksgiving (written 65 years ago by Ervin Orban)

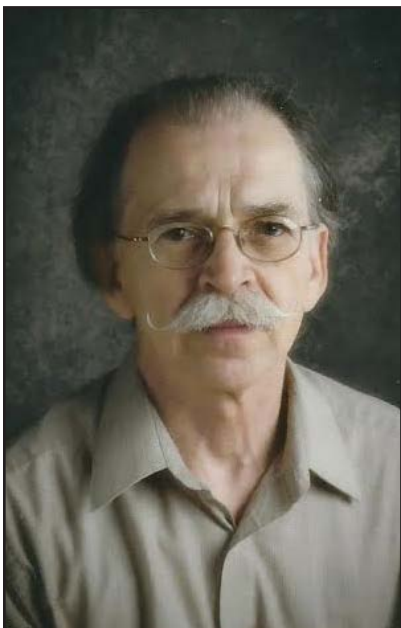
No doubt my title is somewhat misleading. You may think that I am going to tell about America’s first Thanksgiving. Yet, I am going to tell about the first Thanksgiving, my first Thanksgiving.

My family and I came to America in 1950 from Germany. My parents suffered great hardships and much dan-

NPC History

ger during the great War. They fled to Germany where I was born several hours after they arrived. In Germany we all suffered extreme hardships. I could truthfully say that a book could be written of my family's adventures in the War.

Late in the forty's things were getting so bad that it was doubtful if we could survive one more year and stay together. Through much work and luck, the news came to us that we were to go to America, where we were told we could get a new start in life, the third start from "scratch". I'll skip a lot of detail about how we got here and start with our arrival. We arrived in New York on a beautiful sunny day on April 4, 1950. We passed Miss Liberty holding high her torch of freedom and promise. When we docked, we were greeted by our sponsors. They were very wealthy people from Connecticut. They gave us a warm welcome and immediately took us to the village of Noroton on the seashore. That very night for the first time in over five years, including the ship, we slept on white sheets in a hundred year old beautiful old English style house. (It was more New England style than old English.) The house was owned by the church next door. This church was a sponsor for us. It was hard to believe, from the time of arrival to that same night, we moved into a completely furnished house, stocked with food and toys and clothing. I will never forget that night when I saw our playroom. How my mother cried. Everyone was so kind and friendly and helpful. Our friends took care of all our needs. We didn't have to pay rent, electricity or water. They found



Ervin Orban as an adult,
the author of the essay

a job for my father, for we were absolutely penniless. All the clothing we owned, we wore. To us, this was like landing in heaven.

In the following November of that year we observed the American holiday, Thanksgiving, at our sponsor's home. Here we came in contact with one of the American holidays. Our family will always remember and treasure this day. We truly had a lot to be thankful for. Most Americans don't realize fully what



George Orban visiting the Chapel

to be thankful for. Our country in the last century has never been invaded nor bombed. This country has never produced mass refugees. Thanksgiving was set aside, so that we could at least one day of the year count our blessings. To us, each day was a blessing. Each day in Germany was a blessing. We survived the bombing in Hungary, we escaped unharmed. For five years we lived in dire poverty in Germany with always a little something to eat. This was a blessing. True, we lost hope and despaired many times. But, somehow we made it. Our whole family of six (the sixth arrived in America) came through healthy, together and happy in America. We knew what to be thankful for. Each decent loaf of bread was a treasure. A new pair of shoes for the ones I lost was a miracle. My mother hauled wood and peat in three foot snow with a feeble pair of boots on. Yet she made it to America.

I won't go on anymore. I would just like to say that Thanksgiving at our home is an important day. We have been given immense wealth and richness through much suffering and tribulation. That day in Connecticut was and is a landmark in our lives, far from our home where my ancestors lie in peace and all my relatives live in continued misery.

Adult Spiritual Formation



Thankful

It is only a few short weeks until we will be celebrating Thanksgiving! There are a number of things and people for which I am thankful. I'd like to mention three.

First, I am thankful for those who spent a weekend together learning, worshiping and reflecting on what it means to live a life "Daring to be Better than Good" on the Men's Retreat. David Zuidema, one of our past members, helped us to consider how God might be challenging us to live out our faith in practical ways.

Second, I am grateful to God for those who have recently joined our Noroton Presbyterian Church family through the new members class. What a joy it was to spend an afternoon getting to know them and to welcome them into fellowship.

Third, I am thankful for those who have taken part in small groups as a part of our year-long series, #TogetherInTheStory. Continuing to learn about God's Story and thinking about how our stories of faith and life fit into it provides an opportunity to see where God is at work in our lives. In addition, it gives us the chance to join in God's work as well.

Psalm 136 has been a favorite of mine for a long time. It includes the refrain, "his love endures forever." As we enter into the season of Thanksgiving, may you know God's enduring and faithful love.

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

Men's Studies

Men's Bible Study Fall 2015 - 11 Week Study

Critical Challenges for Christian Men:

Living with Character in a World of Characters

- Tuesdays, 7:30 a.m. in NYC at the Yale Club, Clarence Day room, 50 Vanderbilt Avenue. Ends on Dec. 8th.
- Thursdays, 7:00 a.m. in NPC Horton Hall, Darien. Ends on Dec. 10th.

Men's Study at the Sugar Bowl:

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

NPC Christian Yoga!



Take a break to meditate on the goodness of God and improve strength, flexibility, and balance in a nonjudgmental, supportive space. No yoga experience is necessary. Feel free to invite others who may be interested, even if they are not otherwise participating at NPC. Please bring a yoga mat and join us on **Wednesdays, November 11th & 18th and Fridays, November 13th & 20th** at 9:15-10:15 am in Lower Level Classroom A. Suggested donation is \$5-10/ class.

Contact Jenny Voelker (RYT 200) at mjtvoelker@yahoo.com if you have questions.

Come and See the New Testament

Seeking a deeper and renewed understanding of the New Testament in preparation for Advent? One path to this goal is the daily readings offered in Bible 365 v5.0, which takes you through each chapter of every book in 90 days, beginning with Matthew 1 on Oct. 2nd and ending with the final chapters of Revelation on Dec. 31st.

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

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

Adult Spiritual Formation

Together In The Story *More Resources!*

Did you know?

... that the weekly Participant Discussion Questions **are available online** on the NPC website?

Simply go to www.norotonchurch.org to the Ministries menu tab on top of page.

Then, follow through to Adult Studies > Small Group > Together In The Story > Weekly Discussion Questions.

Questions are based on each week's Sunday Scripture, and are designed to be used either for small group study, OR for deeper individual study should you be unable to commit to a small group at this time. The goal is for our whole NPC community to be in conversation about the same Scripture throughout respective weeks. So it works whether you access these weekly or bi-weekly, and as a group or as an individual. There are nine discussion questions to consider each week, so tackle one a day, or a few at a time.

There are also weekly Facilitator/Leader Guides available for those who request them from the Main Office or by email request (below). We hope you will take advantage of deepening/strengthening your faith through accessing one or more of these resources.



Other Suggested Reading

Pastor Sam has also suggested some additional resources for anyone in groups, leading a groups, or looking at individually reading the Bible as we as a church make our way through the historical story each Sunday through Scripture/sermons/study.

"How to Read the Bible For All It Is Worth"

By Fee and Stuart

Handles the Genre of the story.

"The Bible Reader's Companion"

By Larence O. Richards

Summary and background on each chapter of the Bible.

Also charts, maps, placement in history.

"The Heart of the Old Testament"

By Ronald Youngblood

Key themes of sin, covenant, law, election, faith, redemption.

If you have questions, or need help with any of the above, please contact marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org or valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org at any time.

Valerie Muller
Director of Community and Communication
(Including ASF's Small Group Ministry)

Caring & Women's Ministries



It's that time of year again. You know the time I mean: Time when we're supposed to be happy, open our homes, attend parties... bake, wrap gifts, sing songs... decorate, dress up, light candles... Or, time to feel guilty if you don't do these things, or don't feel like doing them.

Some years in our lives are easier than others for this kind of merriment. Some years we're more aware of loss than other years. Perhaps you have an empty chair at Thanksgiving this year. Maybe you find yourself in a different financial situation than you had expected. Maybe the structure of your family has changed. Perhaps you're acutely aware of loss, and will find it a challenge to enter the celebrations around you.

The Monday night of Thanksgiving week, we intentionally push the 'pause' button for support and quiet worship as we embark on the Holiday Season.

On Monday, November 23 in the Chapel, we will have a prayer and worship service especially designed for those of us who are entering this season of festivity with heavy hearts. We will reflect, pray, and consider ways to approach grief in this season. Please consider joining us.

Monday, November 23

Service of Prayer and Reflection

7:30-8:30 pm

In the Chapel

Please feel free to invite others. It is a powerful witness that as we walk through these seasons of grief and celebration, we stand together.

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

Women's Studies

Tuesdays:

6:15 am Bible Study in the Parlor. Come and join a circle of wise women as we spend an hour Tuesday mornings unpacking and applying scripture to our lives. Open to any and all women! We have coffee, and you don't have to be completely awake to join us.

9:15 am Bible Study - Online registration is requested*. This Fall we will be exploring a few women whose lives are written about in the "Old Testament: Women of Valor." We will come together in the Skylight Fellowship Lobby.

Thursdays:

9:30 am Oasis Moms Group - Online registration is requested*. This is a special group for women with children who range in age from infancy through elementary school. We meet from 9:30-11:30 am all together for reflection and teaching about a common interest, and then break into small groups with moms who have children at the same stages: Mentor moms are the secret ingredient! Who doesn't want a wiser woman as a mentor and 'shepherd' through these years? Come once and check it out! We think it will be a great gift for you!

Moms of Teens - 12:00-1:30 pm We gather in the SHAC. We will be discussing "Be a Parent, not a Pushover" by Mary Ann Rosenthal, Ph.D. Come as often as you are able.

*Child care is provided from 9-11:45 am for children 3 months to 4 years. Registration, including CT Early Childhood Health Assessment form, is requested three weeks prior to your child's attendance and can be found on our website www.norotonchurch.org or by contacting Marlene. Note, medical form must be signed by a doctor. Once completed, child care and medical forms should be sent to Marlene Moffett at NPC, 2011 Post Rd., Darien, CT 06820.

Caring & Women's Ministries

Spiritual Connection of Marriage

If you ever get the chance to see the one-man comedy *Defending the Caveman* I highly recommend it. It plays all over the world and offers a comical yet honest depiction of male and female dating rituals. Describing men as hunters and women as gatherers, the ultimate goal is survival and two partners working together is better than one person working alone.

We have learned so much about the attachment between partners since the caveman era. Research in the field of couples therapy has found the essential element of a healthy marriage is actually not the way couples work together, have the same interests and opinions, or even share common traits. Rather, a healthy marriage is based on a couple's ability to be emotionally responsive. This is where individuals trust and connect to their partner in a way that assures them the other person will always be there when it matters most. The connection can be felt in many ways including the way we talk, make eye contact, fulfill the other person's needs, or say "thank you" when he or she impacts us during the day.

It is in the presence of the Holy Spirit that couples are able to love as Christ intended. When we are full of the Holy Spirit and recognize Christ's love we are able to give our partner the emotional responsiveness he or

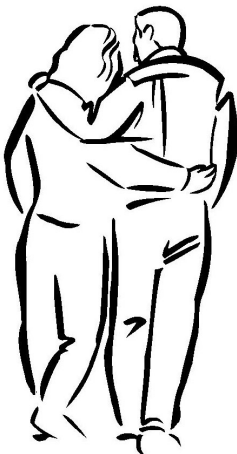
she needs to trust us and feel connected to us. If we do not feel the Holy Spirit we are more apt to selfishly take from our partner in hopes that this will fill us up. Paul's famous paragraph on marriage in Ephesians instructs us to love our partner the same way that Christ loves us. In Tim Keller's book *"The Meaning of Marriage"* he reiterates that couples should sacrifice for one another, consider the interests of their partner, build him or her up, serve them, put their needs ahead of your own, and serve each other in this way intentionally, intensely, and often.

How does this translate to everyday life? There are many opportunities throughout a day when we are asked to do things for our partner. Next time will you choose to serve your partner with joy of the Holy Spirit, and the love of Christ, or will you chose to meet your own needs first? A marriage will thrive when BOTH partners choose to serve. This is the moment we experience emotional responsiveness, trust our partner, and feel truly connected.

Amanda Craig, PhD, LMFT
NPC Member

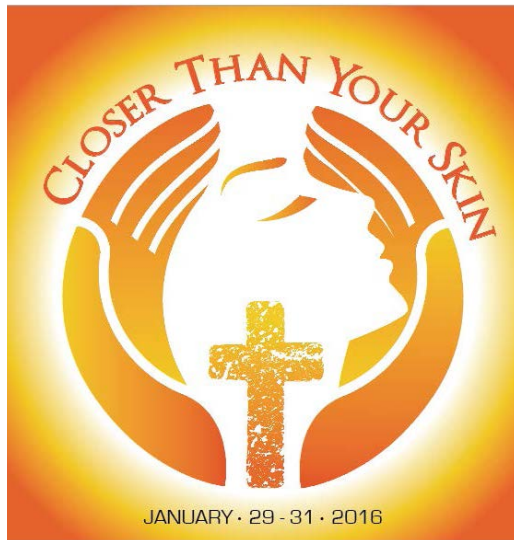
Learn more about these ideas by attending "A Map to the Landscape of Love" on November 9th from 7pm to 9pm. More information below.

Looking for a powerfully positive date night... attend ***"A Map to the Landscape of Love"*** on Nov 9th from 7 to 9 pm



Whether you have been married for decades or just a few months, are in a happy time of marriage or have been struggling, join George Faller for a couple's event focused on exploring the language of love. George will discuss the power of connection and ways for couples to maintain their positive cycle of responsiveness and improve negative patterns of interaction. Topics will include ways to foster productive communication, to notice and share your partner's "wins", and to find time and energy for passion. When partners find their positive cycle of responsiveness, they fall in love all over again. The speaker, George Faller, is a retired Lieutenant of the NYC Fire Department LMFT, a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist and an Approved Supervisor for AAMFT. Light refreshments will be served. Please go to www.norotonchurch.org to register and for more information or contact Marlene at marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org.

Caring & Women's Ministries



Women's Retreat

January 29-31 at Ivoryton Retreat Center
Registration available November 15!

We're excited to have Susan Hill as our speaker this year: writer of the book "Closer Than Your Skin." We're in for a treat as we go away together to notice the presence of God!

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

Prayer Team

Pray More!

You may remember from last month that there is a group of NPC-ers who are considering ways we can be more about prayer. Well... here is another true story about how prayer worked in the life of one of the group members. Enjoy.



In my version of religion, I just don't spend much time thinking about the devil. I'm wired to think more about the positive than the negative. The devil is Captain Negative, so I don't give him much attention. Or so I thought.

So about a year ago, in a breakout group at Men's morning study, an 80-year guy shared with us that he tries to avoid getting cross . . ."because when you let yourself get angry, you're opening a window for the devil to come into your thoughts." I'd stored that idea on my mental back-up drive, not that useful on a daily basis to a guy wired like me.

This past Monday, I was trying to have a meditative conversation with my Maker. Okay I was quietly praying. Unfortunately, my mind kept being drawn back to a situation at work about which I was rather annoyed. Okay I was mad. One of my project leaders, while very gifted in technical competency, had severely alienated almost everyone on the team (two dozen folks) because he missed all the clues on how to influence the team's

culture. *How could God gift this person so generously in valuable competencies, yet given the person so few skills in understanding the work culture? Really God, you can do better than this.*

My anger was holding my mind hostage, or according to my friend, I'd let the devil into my thoughts and thus blinded me to seeing God's plan in this situation. Once I pushed the devil back out the window, God's plan was an amazingly clear gift to me. I discovered on Tuesday I had a major technical project, not requiring cultural influencing skills, much better suited for this person to lead. God's plan also allowed me to lift up a young person with a healthy balance of competency and culture to lead the project the other person was mishandling. With a minor shift in my perspective, or improved listening skills to my Maker, three lives were made richer -- the prior manager was better applied, a new manager elevated, and my calm restored and appreciation for seeking God's plan for me reinforced. Thank you our Father. Amen.

Children's Ministry



Minute with Mickie – Wondering About Faith and Families

What a great October we had. I love being #TogetherInTheStory. Our children are learning the same stories parents are hearing through the sermons. Families can talk about what they heard and wonder about together. The "Together In The Story" Take-Home Booklet for elementary students allows kids and parents to stay in the story all week long, even if they miss church.




But I'm wondering if all our NPC families know that Children's ministries has been providing "At Home" Faith Formation resources for three years. This is not new and you, as a NPC family can find all kinds of helps to grow in your faith in Christ through the www.npckids.com website. So here are a few examples:

Curriculum we use on Sunday's is downloadable from the npckids website go to the website and see these options:



- Click on the Sunday School box and then you'll be able to click on the Grade School page
- Then you will see videos, so you can watch the stories
- There are links to download lessons and for helpful ideas:

Click around on all the various helpful tabs on our website. They are here to help you and your family grow in your faith.

<p align="center">Sunday School Every Week 9:00 and 10:30</p> <p align="center">click here to register online</p> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px;">  <p>Preschool Classes Nursery Care for babies through 2 year olds. Classes for 3's-K. click here to learn more »</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px;">  <p>Grade School Sunday School 9:00 and 10:30 - Start in Worship then come to Horton Hall 2015/16 We are #TogetherInTheStory - 1 Timothy 4:12 click here to learn more »</p> </div> <div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px;">  <p>Sunday School Volunteers click here to learn more »</p> </div>	<p align="center">Click on a DATE BELOW to download 2015-2016 Lessons</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • October 25 2015.pdf • October 18.pdf • October 11 2015.docx • October 4 Exodus 19-20.pdf • Sept 27 2015.pdf <p align="center">Previous Sunday School Lessons</p> <p align="center">See Below for helpful links for your family's Spiritual Growth</p> <p align="center">Worshiping with Children</p> <p align="center">Bible stories told by Storyteller John Walsh</p>
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Children's Ministry



Want to know more? Check the website and watch the explanation video.

Why does Children's Ministry do this? We want to help you, as a family, grow in your faith together. We know that life is busy and sometimes crazy. Maybe you can't always get to Worship and Sunday School as often as you'd like. So the website is mobile-optimized so you can learn "on the go" with one another. Listen to a story in the car on the way to the sports fields or dance practice. Download the lesson and do one of the activities or ask the WONDER Questions as part of the bedtime ritual or family devotions whenever you can. I am here to find ways for your family to be #TogetherInTheStory!

Click on the Upcoming Events tab to find out about our fun events. Mark your calendar now for a special **Family Fun Night** on **Friday, November 20** – called "*Eat Your Way Through Handel's Messiah*." It will be like nothing you've ever experienced before. A joint Music and Children's Ministry event, this will be for the whole family.

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

NPNS



October was such a fun month. Our students have gotten settled into their classes and have begun amazing learning projects. Our first field trip of the year, started with the 4's going to the New Canaan Nature Center to make apple cider, and our Pre-K visiting the Greenwich Audubon to take a fall nature hike.

Our specials have also begun with Ms. Emily's Junior Naturalist program and Mr. Al's music class. Extended Day is in full swing with Little Athletes, Super Science, Fitness Fun, Little Chef's and Friendship Lunch.

Our staff continues their training with a visit from Jennifer Carvajal from New Beginnings in NYC, who also spoke to the Darien Director about the importance of play in the development of children.

Our parent-led Board has been busy with monthly meetings, preparing for our annual fundraiser, and hosting the NPNS Movie Day at the Darien Playhouse. Parents have been busy at school as well. They have attended Parent-Teacher conferences, been Mystery Readers in the classroom, headed up cooking projects, helped students making play dough and carving pumpkins, attended birthday celebrations and chaperoned field trips.

We were very blessed to be able to open our new playground in the middle of October. The children have been exploring each of the new areas, as well as helping to come up with a list of new things they would like to see added. Please stop by for a visit and see our new playground.

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



Music fun with Mr. Al



Rainy day fun in the new atrium



Opening of New Playground

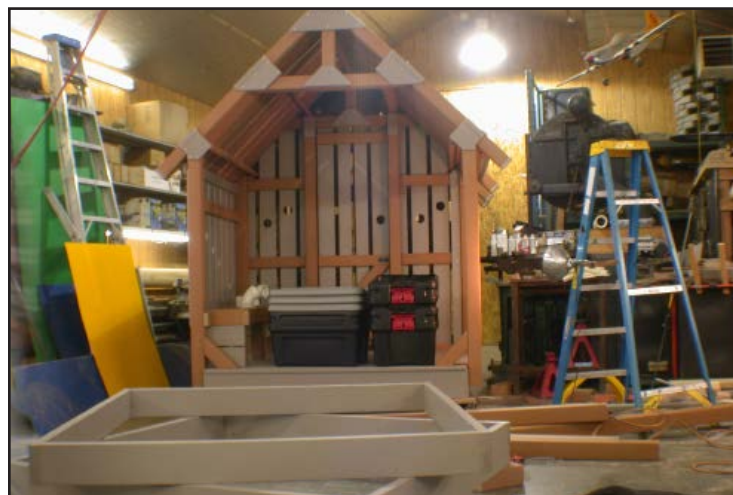
Noroton Presbyterian Child Care



How To Build A Playground



1. Start well in advance. Planning for the NPCC playground began in 2014, and underwent several revisions,



2. Find the right talent. We were fortunate to find Tom Bush, owner of KidSpace, Inc. His background in industrial, architectural, and playground design along with his experience, creativity, and team approach made him the ideal choice to custom build our playground.



3. Define your vision. When designing our playground, we envisioned an outdoor classroom that would accommodate children under five years old. We wanted our classroom to offer a variety of explorations including science (water, sand and gardening), math (loose parts for building), art (easel and chalkboard), music (musical fence), imaginative play (stage and playhouse) as well as active play (bike track and slide).



4. Keep it natural. There are a multitude of reasons as to why nature is beneficial to children. It supports creativity and problem solving, enhances cognitive abilities, increases physical activity, improves social relations, improves self-discipline and reduces stress.

Noroton Presbyterian Child Care



Noroton Presbyterian
CHILD CARE



5. Test it. It is extremely important to recruit the proper testers. The alternating looks on their faces of intensity and joy alone will tell you if you are on the right path to effective playground design.



6. Celebrate. We officially opened the playground gates on Wednesday, October 14. Needless to say, it was an incredibly joyful day!



7. Give proper credit and thanks. Pictured is Tom Bush (center left) with his assistant Sean Hutton (center right), along with a group of very grateful and appreciative clients.



8. Share. The playground is open to children under five with adult supervision during the hours that NPCC is not in session. We are excited to share the fun and learning the playground brings with the community.

Peace and Joy,
Beth Aparicio
NPCC Director

Youth Ministries



NOROTON
YOUTH
MINISTRY

More than twenty-five years ago I posed for a picture with other classmates as a student at Meridian Junior High (Kent, Washington).

If memory serves, my classmates and I were selected at random for the picture as we entered the building that morning—an effort to highlight a new mural that had been painted at center-court of the gymnasium. I had long forgotten about this picture and many of the people who posed along with me—until just recently.

Late last month, a fellow classmate of mine posted a copy of the picture online and invited fellow alums to tag ourselves in the picture. It didn't take long for me to find a much younger version of myself in the picture and to add my own tag. As I scanned the picture to survey others who had posed for the picture, I was instantly transported back to a time, that aside from some rather vague recollections, was almost entirely forgotten—or so I thought.



Our memories are funny like that. Sometimes the smallest object or faintest picture will trigger a whole flood of memories—people, events, and even past emotions that we thought were lost were merely tucked away. I certainly experienced that here, and wonder if our newest class of confirmands might one day find themselves having a similar experience in the future when they encounter pictures from this time? What will they remember?

In Deuteronomy 6:6-9, we read, *“These commandments that I give you today are to be on your hearts. Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up. Tie them as symbols on your hands and bind them on your foreheads. Write them on the doorframes of*

your houses and on your gates.” I think that this impressing, talking, tying, and writing is an effort to make a lasting memory for the younger generation—memories that will not only be recalled, but will actually help to shape faithful disciples.



We celebrated this past month the completion of confirmation with 29-students (pictured). At the same time, we are beginning a new class (that includes 40-more confirmands). And as we begin the journey with this new group, we are starting something new, though this is certainly not a new idea. Each confirmand will have a sponsor who will walk with them throughout the confirmation experience—meeting with them, praying with/for them, and being in conversation with them using a set curriculum. I think this is going to be an incredible experience for our confirmands—but an even greater experience for sponsors!

So maybe I'm being a little nostalgic here—but I am not sure if mentor entirely captures the sponsor role. Perhaps we might also consider these people as “memory makers”—and significant memory makers at that. Which leads me to this—are you interested in making this kind of investment in the life of another person? If you are, I would love to be in conversation with you about this. Let me know what the best way to reach you might be by emailing me at: jimmy.mcpherson@norotonchurch.org. Looking forward to a month ahead that we might just be talking about 25+ years from now!

Pastor Jimmy McPherson
Associate Pastor of Youth Ministries

Congregational Life Ministry



Good time for all ... At Church Fall Cook Out

We never know if we are going to have a hot sunny day (like last year) when we are hoping for a little shade ... OR, a more true autumn day of sunshine-but breezy day ... like this year!

As we gathered together in the 'adult green space' of the new Playground out back ... we were grateful for the protection of the adjacent building on the one side and the protective wall-screening on the other. (Neither could 'protect' us from the 'snow flurries' (yes, it's true!) that we were greeted with as the Cookout wound down ...)



The freshly cooked burgers and hotdogs (beef and chicken) tasted especially good, as they warmed our tummies. Special thanks go to our 'master grillers' who kept the hot goodies coming throughout the mealtime.

What a delight to have the children 'right there' intermingling with the crowd, and moms/dads being able to enjoy the company of other adults 'knowing' that their kids were in a totally safe environment and in no danger of running into cars in the parking lot!



If you were unable to attend, we hope a few photos will help you too experience the joy that those in attendance on October 18th had. Perhaps you'll join the group next year ...

Thankful ... especially this month when we as a country celebrate Thanksgiving ... for all that God has provided. May we all take a moment, pause, and offer thanks.

Looking forward to seeing you all around our new facility as we all 'live into' our new spaces.

Please let me know if I can help in any way.

In fellowship together,
Valerie Muller
Director of Community and Communications
(including Congregational Life)
valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org, 203-309-5650



Membership Ministry

Welcoming And Membership Events

"Get Connected" Luncheon

Sunday, November 22, 11:45 to 12:30 pm

...for those who are new and those who want to feel new!

Are you a newcomer to NPC who would like to learn more about what we believe and find ways to get involved? Or, have you been around for a while and desire to get more engaged, but wonder where to start? Either way, please join us for conversation and light bites.

Learn more about our mission. Informally chat with pastors, staff and members. Get ideas on how to become more connected to your faith and to others in the NPC community.

Contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org to RSVP and for more information.

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

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

We have a strong need for new volunteers to help for as little as 15 minutes on a Sunday morning. Serve regularly once a month or sign up as your schedule allows.

Be part of a stronger welcoming team! Contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org.

"ALPHA" IS COMING... January 2016

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

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

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

Mark your calendars now and tell others! If you've already been to Alpha, think about who you'd bring to the Introductory Dinner. Many volunteers will be needed for the Alpha Team. Contact julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org.



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

**The next New Member Class will be
Saturday, January 23, 2016, 12:30 to 5:30 pm**

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

The class is interesting and fun! During the class you will have an opportunity to:

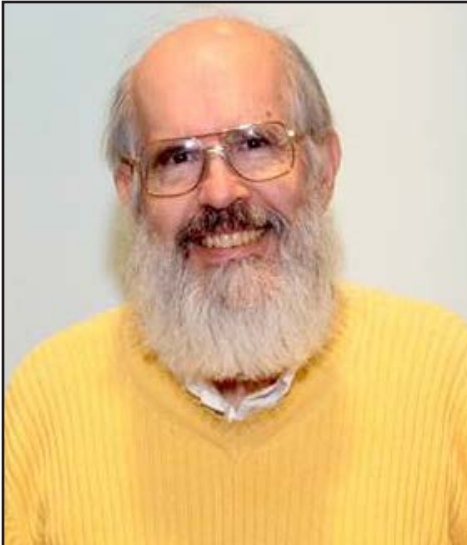
- Explore what it means to be a Christian and to follow Jesus
- Discuss the significance of membership and being a Presbyterian
- Learn about NPC ministries/programs, and how to get involved
- Meet others joining and expand your faith community.

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

Working our faith,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership

Membership Ministry

We welcome our newest members and encourage you to get to know them!



Richard Cunningham and his wife Linda have 12 married children, one of whom lives with them in Stamford. He is an attorney and writer, as well as a former state senator and representative. Richard graduated from MIT in 1967 with a degree in Political Science and minors in mechanical engineering and psychology. Three years later he graduated from Duke Law School and has taken graduate courses in management. He also served in the US Army as a commissioned officer.



Ken Magrath lives in Norwalk with his wife, Julie, and has two adult children, Peter (30) and Lizzy (27). Ken is a retired neuropsychologist who specialized in working with kids to assess their developmental strengths and needs. He likes all things Boston – Patriots, Red Sox and even Bruins – but has never lived there! He also enjoys biking and walking his dog, Alice. Ken served as a Deacon at the First Congregational Church in Ridgefield.



Jan Maier is a retired teacher. She has two sons, Marc and Kurt, and three grandchildren, Sydney, Mackenzie and Zachary. Jan moved to Connecticut from Nashville to be closer to Marc and his family. She enjoys exercise, reading, various kinds of needlework, music, theatre and spending time with her grandchildren.



Ashley and Jeffrey Czaplicki reside in South Norwalk. Jeffrey is employed as a digital Advertising Director in Manhattan while Ashley recently left her position as Event Manager for the New York Mets to start her own event business and raise their baby girl, Charlotte Emma. In their spare time, the couple enjoys family time with their daughter and dog Sammie.



Lindsay and Chris Kelly have two children, Liam (5) and Gwyneth (2). They live in Darien where they both work in the reinsurance industry. They were married in the First Presbyterian Church in Summit, NJ and recently relocated from Bermuda where both children were born. Their family enjoys being outside, watching sports (go Mets & Giants!) and socializing with friends.

Mission Ministry



Mission News

Norton Presbyterian Church Annual Mission Retreat took place on Saturday, Sept. 26 in the new Mission room.

Our special guests and partners in ministry were Pastor Dewitt Stevens, Jr. and Elders from Macedonia Church, Norwalk. Our partnership with Macedonia goes back decades and God has blessed our relationship. A *Foundations for the Future* Mission Grant has enabled Macedonia to carry out extensive renovations on a new permanent church home after 28 years of worshipping in a room above a store.

Pastor Dewitt Stevens of Macedonia Church opened with prayer, song and readings from I John 4:19 "We love because he first loved us." Along with Matthew 25:40 "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me."



Pastor Dewitt Stevens, Jr.

Pastor Stevens also updated NPC on the progress of the Macedonia Church. Pastor Stevens touched upon "The Great Commission" reading from Matthew 28:19-20 "Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and the Son and the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the world." As the church goes through this transition from the old space to the new location, their church is preparing to grow with more members, ministry and ways to glorify God.



Angelo Wilkes

Macedonia Ministries

Prison Ministry – Juan Sanchez and Ray Dancy both gave moving personal testimony about how this ministry has shaped their life and so many others. Many of Macedonia's members (including elders and deacons) have come through the prison system and are living productive healthy lifestyles. As of 9/1/15 there are approximately 842 incarcerated persons in Bridgeport Correctional Facility and between 40-60% identify as being protestant. Macedonia ministry goes in to lead Worship services and Bible Study and also visit on Christmas day to take gifts and Worship.

Average number of participates in:

Monthly services: 336 persons

Weekly spiritual development classes:

152 persons

Correspondence / letter writing:

25 persons

Families impacted annually: 40

Macedonia is working towards getting their half-way house fully operational. They are working with the director for the charity New Life for Girls in New York and eventually hope to see the house being fully utilized.

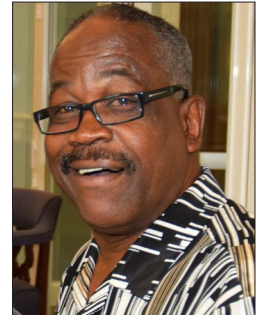
Care Unit Ministry – Sandra Hart explained how this ministry works to provide clothing and food to members of the church especially the men who were ministered to in prison. Some of the men just have the clothes on their back when they are released from prison and they are in great need. The church aids them, so they don't relapse and end up back in prison. Any family in need can receive from this ministry. At the holidays they partner with New Canaan Congregational Church to distribute between 75-100 food baskets. In the future they would like to work towards always having hot soup available to anyone who comes into the church and at the new church location having a fully stocked clothing room and food pantry.

Youth Ministry – Janeen Reid (Pastor Steven's niece) along with Dr. Rumble work with the youth providing an array of services for various needs including; academic, social, spiritual, substance abuse,

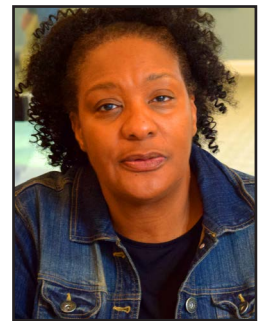
Macedonia Elders



Juan Sanchez



Ray Dancy



Sandra Hart



Janeen Reid



Angela Crawley

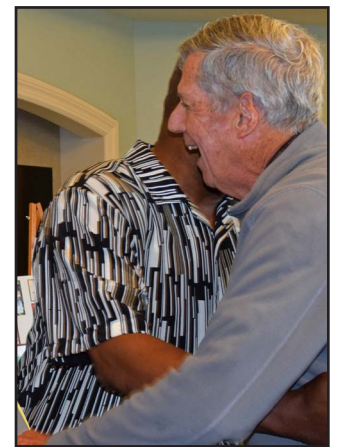
Mission Ministry



Angela Crawley and Sarah Papsun



Paul Williams



Chuck Richardson

depression, peer pressure and prevention of devious behavior. This ministry also does Angel Tree, sandwich making and offers social activities.

Outreach Ministry – Started as an AIDS Ministry this ministry has changed, as the disease has evolved into caring for HIV patients, families and a plethora of other services, including bringing people their favorite foods in the hospital and driving patients to appointments. Angelo Wilson and Addie Stevens have been helping coordinate these activities for many years and hope to see this ministry also grow with the new space. Pastor Sam offered that Macedonia is “filling the space that no one else is filling.”

Our mission team then laid hands and prayed for our brothers and sisters from Macedonia.

The retreat continued with some time for prayer, lifting up the various missionaries and ministries NPC supports. Pastor Sam presented a PowerPoint of the last time NPC welcomed an immigrant family during WWII and some of its challenges and highlights. It was established that the Mission team would like to further investigate this possibly of sponsoring a family from the refugee crisis. A “Missions Due Diligence Task Force” will be created and meet, pray and discern if we are ready to commit to sponsor a family or fill another need. Please contact Stella Clarke if you are interested in joining the team to research this opportunity or if you would like to help in any way.

The team discussed plans for ministry over the coming year. Pastor Sam closed in prayer and asked for discernment for the NPC mission ministry and for God to be glorified in all things as we serve him over the coming year.

Stella Clarke
Mission Associate

Ways to Serve and Learn about Mission

World Vision Trip to the DR - January 9-12, 2016

Are you interested in joining Liz Kirkpatrick, Paul Williams and Sue Bielstein on a visit to the Palmera ADP near Santo Domingo?

Pivot Food/Toiletries Drive - Sunday, November 8th

The drive will launch when the Pivot Choir visit NPC morning services. The Drive will run throughout the month. Please bring items such as shower gel, soap, shaving items, shower shoes, toothbrushes, laundry detergent, canned & nonperishable food items and place in bins around the church. Stop & Shop gift cards are also welcomed and can be placed in the offering in an envelope marked Pivot.

How can we help Refugees coming to Connecticut?

**Wednesday, November 18, 7:30pm
in Post Rd/Mission Room.**

Presentation by Chris George, Director of Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Services (IRIS) New Haven.

Angel Tree and Dove Program - Sunday, November 22

Sign-up in Skylight Fellowship Lobby after services

These programs are ways to get involved by shopping for gifts and food for the needy.

Questions?

Please contact Stella Clarke (Mission Associate)

You can find me in the East Wing Tuesday/Wednesday/Thursday or email stella.clarke@norotonchurch.org or 203-309-5645.

Golden Senior Sunday, October 25th



Two dozen of our 50 members who qualify to be called 'Golden Seniors' were able to join us on October 25th to be celebrated/thanked for their 50-or-more years of membership and service to NPC!

Church members/friends joined family members/friends in the Skylight Lobby following the second morning Sanctuary service for light refreshments, conversation, and walks down memory lane.

All three of our 70+ year members were in attendance! God is good indeed!
(More next month...)

In Loving Memory of...

October 2nd:
Ginny Miller

October 5th:
Julie Foster

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

Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

October 18th

Charlotte Emma Czaplicki, daughter of
Jeffrey and Ashley Czaplicki

If you would like to submit an article for the December 2015 issue please submit it before November 15 to Rose Cunningham by email at rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.

NPC Elders and Team Leadership

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

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

Julie Colbath 203-309-5615
Director of Membership

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

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

Dan Rosa 203-309-5608
Business Administrator

Pastor Jimmy McPherson 203-309-5619
Associate Pastor Youth

Stella Clarke 203-309-5645
Mission Ministry Associate

David Lee 203-309-5609
Director of Properties

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

Beth Aparicio 203-309-5605
Director of Noroton Presbyterian Child Care

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

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

November 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	7
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -5th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 10:30 am High School Snapshot 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:30 pm High School Ministry		7:30 am Men's Bible Study(NYC) 10:00 am Play Palisades - Middle School 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 6th-8th Grade	7:00 am Men's Bible Study 7:30 am Prayer Grp 9:30 am Moms' Oasis 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.			
8	9	10	11	12	13	14	
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9:00 am Confirmation Class 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:30 pm High School Ministry	7:00 pm A Map to the Landscape of Love - Marriage Seminar	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 9:15 am Yoga Class 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 am Men's Bible Study 7:30 am Prayer Grp 9:30 am Moms' Oasis 12:00 pm Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	9:15 am Yoga Class		
15	16	17	18	19	20	21	
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9:00 am Confirmation Class 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:30 pm High School Ministry		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 9:15 am Yoga Class 4:00 pm JAM Choir 7:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade 7:30 pm IRIS Refugee Crisis Presentation	7:00 am Men's Bible Study 7:30 am Prayer Grp 9:30 am Moms' Oasis 12:00 Moms of Teens 1:15 pm Prayer Group Mtg. 2:00 pm Prime Timers 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	9:15 am Yoga Class 6:30 pm Family Fun Night - Eat Your Way Through Handel's Messiah		
22	23	24	25	26	27	28	
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 9:00 am Confirmation Class 11:45 am Get Connected Luncheon 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:30 pm High School Ministry	7:30 pm Service of Prayer and Reflection	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 5:00 pm Harbor 6th-8th Grade - Thanksgiving Special 8:00 pm Chancel Choir Reh.	Thanksgiving NPC Offices Closed	Thanksgiving Holiday NPC Offices Closed		
29	30						
8:00 am Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 am Classes for 3's -8th grade 9 & 10:30 am Sanctuary Services 5:00 pm Open Doors Service 6:30 pm High School Ministry							