

The Spire

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



What “Quarter” Of Life Are You In?

I don't think Connecticut takes football as seriously as other states in our nation (think Ohio, Pennsylvania and Texas), but I know more than a few of us are passionate about “our team.” Baseball may be the “national past-time,” but football seems to be the Fall obsession. I do like games with a time clock – but I wish there weren't so many commercials and time outs. After four quarters and sixty minutes, we always know that a game will be decided – unless it's tied and goes into overtime! Coaches and players will tell you that football tactics are tied to “situational awareness” - “where are we on the field, which way is the wind blowing if we have to kick or throw, do we have another half to try for a score or are we 4th and 1 with 2 minutes to go in the fourth quarter?” There are countless situations and each demands a carefully considered approach based on the needs and the talents of the team.

Life can be a lot like a football game – especially when we think of our span of life in terms of four quarters where we try to play our best in each

quarter until the last seconds tick off the clock. The optimism of the first quarter can turn to pessimism in the third quarter if we fall too far behind. The first quarter mistakes won't matter if we finish strong in the fourth quarter. A superb third quarter followed by a disastrous fourth quarter can wipe out any gains. Based on our own “situational awareness,” we make different choices at different stages of life.

While no one is guaranteed 80 years on this earth, most of us operate as if we will live that long. Have you ever seen your life span as four – twenty year quarters? Does a 20-40 year old (someone in the second quarter of life) focus on the same projects with the same energy as someone 60-80 (in the fourth quarter)? Aren't the quests and questions of the first two decades of life (the first quarter in our analogy) vastly different from the final quarter questions we have (age 60 and beyond)? The successes and set backs in the second quarter (age 20-40) and third quarter (age 40-60) can be some of our most defining moments in life. I believe that our spiritual questions change in each quarter of life. “Thirty-somethings” aren't asking the same questions as seventy-year-old saints. Will the

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Worship Schedule

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

Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

10/5/14 - Confirmation Sunday
Pastor Greg Doll

Sermon Series
“A Faith Game Plan for the 4 Quarters of Life”

10/12/14 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
Mark 10:13-16 “A Strong Start in Life's First Decades”

10/19/14 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
Matthew 13:1-9 “Finding Focus in Your 30's and 40's”

10/26/14 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
Ecclesiastes 5:18-20 “Reaching Your Stride in Your 50's and 60's”

Upcoming Baptism Dates:

10/19, 11/16, 11/30 & 12/21 at the 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Service
To schedule a Baptism please call Leslie Ezzo at 203-309-5618.

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faith we had in our 20's, handle the questions we have in our 50's if we don't do some new reading and exploring? After thinking and praying about this concept for several years, I'm excited to share with you a four-week sermon series, "Faith for the Four Quarters of Life", that we'll "kick off" on October 12. Join in as we look at the questions of each quarter and the ways we might encourage growth in our relationship with God in each of these critical periods of life. The Bible tells us that there is a "time for everything, a season for every activity under heaven." In this Fall's football season, I invite us to pursue a deeper faith - whatever quarter of life we are living.

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,
Sam Schreiner

Update from APNC

The Nominating Team wanted to update you on the search for a new Youth Pastor or Youth Director. We are prayerfully meeting each week and are in the process of interviewing our top candidate. We ask for your prayers as we get down to final decisions. Most of all we know that this is the Lord's timing and we will honor that.

Weekly Prayer Meeting: Every Thursday in the Parlor from 1:15-2:15 p.m. Come and pray for needs of our church family. Everyone is welcome – no prayer experience necessary! For more information please contact Marlene at 203-309-5620.

Would You Like to Stay Connected and Join Our Email List?

We send email blasts to the congregation with general church updates, prayer requests, special events and more. If you're not receiving these email notices and would like to, please contact Claire Bragdon in the church main office, 203-655-1451 or email claire.bragdon@norotonchurch.org to be added to the list.

Prime Timers

Thursday, October 16 at 2:00 p.m.
at Maplewood*, Darien.

Jenifer Menedis Condon
will tell her inspiring story of
God's healing work in her life.

For more information contact Marlene Moffett
(203-309-5620)
or Rita Hornlein (203-357-1504).

*DIRECTIONS - NPC TO MAPLEWOOD/
CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH AND BACK

1. Travel 2 mi. east on Boston Post Rd/US-1 through town.
2. Maplewood 599 Post Rd on left across from Congregational Church.
3. Park under Maplewood or in parking lot for Congregational Church. **Please do not park right across from Maplewood in the parking area for the Center For Hope.**
4. If at Congregational Church parking lot, wait for someone to shuttle you across street.
5. Shuttle available to return to church parking.
6. Travel 2 mi. west on Boston Post Rd/US-1 to NPC.

FOUNDATIONS FOR THE FUTURE



Re-building has begun in earnest ...

We are all witnessing a great amount of re-building these past weeks ... how exciting!

We hope you received/read the comprehensive mailing sent end of September. This mailing is also available for a re-read online at www.norotonchurch.org.

The Noroton Avenue end of the parking lot has been paved, and will soon be open for use!

Foundation footings, including 'prayer stones' that our members/friends prayed over for the past two years, were poured at the end of summer. In Mid-September steel beams were put into place, to begin construction of the core building! The 'final steel beams' were available one Sunday for member/friend signatures, and a crane placed them high into the structure. Trust in God bottom to top.

We are well on our way ... and again thank you for your patience and continued prayers in this process.



Tom Taylor, Jean Ann
and Dick Bollman
Foundations for the Future Progress Team



Adult Spiritual Formation



Introducing...the Holy Spirit

Near the end of my time in seminary there was a great buzz around campus in anticipation of the arrival of a world-renowned theologian. He was scheduled to deliver a series of afternoon lectures on the topic that had put him on the theological map – the Holy Spirit. Unfortunately, I also had a full-time job in the afternoons so I would have to hear about it second hand. The first report arrived from one of my classmates who described the first lecture as somewhere along the lines of “*scintillating, yet disturbing*” (emphasis mine). The first adjective I expected, the second threw me. Of course, I asked him to elaborate. He said that he began the lecture by saying a lot of wonderful things about our esteemed seminary. We all knew that he had been a wildly popular professor during the 1970s. But then he made a comment that made a lot of folks uncomfortable. He referred to our seminary as a “wonderful, Binitarian seminary.” Binitarianism, is the “belief that the Father and the Son are two persons in one God (similar to the theory of the Trinity being 3 persons in one God) and the Holy Spirit is simply the operational power of God, but not a person.” For a school that prided itself on offering a classical,

historical and orthodox theological education this was a knee-buckling accusation. What did he mean, we are *Binitarian*?!! He told us that he wasn’t suggesting that we didn’t believe in a Triune God but that we gave so little attention to that third member of the Trinity in our teaching that we were functional Binitarians – whether we liked it or not. I got the impression that the crowd walked out of the lecture with their tail between their legs.

That same accusation might be fair for many churches. And I suspect that it would be for a variety of reasons -- fear, confusion, misunderstanding, uncertainty, hearsay, innuendo etc.

This fall and spring the men and I will give our attention to looking closely at all the passages of Scripture that address this mysterious, oft-neglected member of the Trinity. My hope and prayer is that during our search for understanding of the person of the Holy Spirit, He shows up...reveals Himself to us...and renews us for the glory of the Father, Son and *Holy Spirit*.

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

Men’s Bible Study

Tuesdays at 7:30 a.m. in NYC at The Yale Club, 50 Vanderbilt Ave, corner of 44th across from the west entrance to Grand Central.

Thursdays at 7:00 a.m. in Horton Hall with continental breakfast.

Men’s Study at the Sugar Bowl: Wednesdays 7:00 a.m.

Led by different men from the group gathering for breakfast, fellowship and reflection on a passage of Scripture.

Our annual Men’s Retreat

Saturday, November 1 to Sunday, November 2, 2014
at the Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, CT.

Sign-up and payment options online at
www.norotonchurch.org under Men’s Ministry.

We will be joined again by our brothers of Macedonia Church. Our featured speaker will be Dr. Jerry Root, the 2014 Noroton Lecturer. Jerry has been studying C. S. Lewis and a constellation of subjects related to Lewis since 1970. If you have any questions, please contact Clay Colbath, Retreat Leader at clayhamiltoncolbath@gmail.com or contact Marlene at 203-309-5620.

Caring & Women's Ministries



*I have told you these things that my joy may be in you,
and your joy may be complete.*

Jesus, in John 15:11

Ever heard of the *happiness paradox*? It goes something like this: If the primary goal in your life is to be happy, then you will never be happy.

So? Do I want to be happy? Do you? I hope the answer is yes!

And beyond happy, there is joy.

The Apostle Paul knew this. He did not pursue happiness. He did not pursue comfort. He pursued purpose. He pursued Christ. He pursued humility. And he got joy!

Our 9:30 women's bible study will be exploring this kind of unconditional joy as we open up the book of Philippians together this Fall. Paul uses the word joy 14 times in this 3-page letter, which was composed while he was in chains. The key to his contentment, it would seem, was that he had found his purpose: He lived big because he didn't live for himself.

What does it look like in our lives when Christ captures us and uses us for his purposes? Happiness? Maybe sometimes, but mostly it should look like joy. Ladies—let's gather and consider what this word may mean for each of us.

I'm really excited about our new format for Tuesday morning 9:30 groups. We are going to meet in homes! My prayer is that this will open the groups up to welcome in friends and neighbors who would love to explore a Bible Study, but who aren't interested in walking through the doors of the church.

So come along! And invite someone to come with. (Please go to www.norotonchurch.org and look under women's ministry to register.)

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

Women's Ministries for Fall

Tuesday morning Bible Studies:

- **6:15 in the Parlor.** Join us early Tuesday mornings for some spiritual nourishment! Current study is on Psalms.
- **9:30 will begin on October 7.** We meet on the first Tuesday of the month in Horton Hall and the remaining Tuesdays we will meet in homes (schedule will be provided). We will be working our way through the book of Philippians.

Professional childcare is provided.*

Thursday morning Moms Oasis*:

- This study begins on **Oct. 2.** Thursdays from 9:30 to 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary. **Professional childcare will be in Horton Hall***

***Professional childcare** is provided from 9-11:30 a.m. based upon availability and pre-registration is required. A current immunization and health record signed by a doctor is necessary. Please contact Tot Drop at 203-202-9441 or email totdrop@norotonchurch.org with further questions. To obtain forms go to www.norotonchurch.org and click on Tot Drop for child-care registration and health assessment forms. All forms go to Tot Drop.

Moms of Teens:

- The group will be reading *Bonding with your TEEN through BOUNDARIES*, by June Hunt. The first meeting will be in the Parlor at NPC (feel free to bring a lunch) on **Thursday, October 2, 12:00 – 1:15 p.m.** Come as often as you are able. This group is led by Sallie Schmidt and Laurie Bessey. For more information contact Sallie at sallieschmidt@gmail.com or Laurie at thebesseyfamily@yahoo.com.



Minute with Mickie Wondering about Learning the Bible

We are off to a great start this Fall at NPC in both Children's and Youth Ministries. It feels good to be back in the routine. During the 2014/15 School year our focus will again be about learning the Bible, not just *about* the Bible. Creative methods will be used to help all our students and facilitators re-tell Biblical stories, wonder about what God is trying to say through these stories and pray about how to use the Bible to guide our lives and inform our behavior. This is a radically different model for Christian education and disciple making than what has been used in the past.

For more years than we would like to admit, the local church has been trying to redeem the "Schooling" model of education for Christian Discipleship making with children and youth. Since the 60's and 70's churches held Sunday School "classes" that were modeled after the public school "instructional" model. Then in 1976, John Westerhoff warned church educators in his book *Will Our Children Have Faith* that using the traditional schooling-instructional model for imparting the Christian faith will probably simply produce "educated atheists." Interestingly enough, many of today's adults grew up during those years when churches struggled with this "instructional" methodology. Then in the later years from the mid-80's through today, churches pushed for a more topical approach to Sunday School with emphasis on entertaining children and teens. One mega-church stated that its goal for Sunday school was: "We want SS to be the most fun hour of a child's week." A youth club mentality seeped into Sunday morning and soon Sunday school time was a glorified "hang-out" session for teens and hyper active games for children with little if any content. As a result of both approaches we have seen a couple of outcomes.

1. We see today that many adults have become educated atheists. They are moved and swayed by the culture we live in, no longer finding truth in the Biblical texts.

2. Young adults and families bounce from church to church looking for the next fun experience they can find.

The local church will not survive if we continue relying on either of these methodologies as the only way to make disciples. Instead it is time to help our children, youth and adults actually know the Biblical texts, hold to a Biblical world-view so that we all are filled with the knowledge of God. What better way is there to get to know God than to know the Words that God wrote to us. Just as we get to know our friends and family members by hearing their life stories, even re-telling some of our favorites in their absence, we, as the people of God's Story, should be able to tell and re-tell God's Word so that these stories of faith strengthen us, impact others and bring people into the Kingdom.

It is really that simple. The Bible. God's Word. Hebrews 4:12 tells us that Scripture is alive and active, more powerful than a two-edged sword. If we truly believe this, than it is important for us to know the Biblical narratives, not just know about the Bible. In discipleship making at NPC, we should tell the stories of the Biblical text naturally in and throughout our conversations. We are still an "oral" culture. Who doesn't love it when someone says "That reminds me of a story?"

God wrote the Bible as narrative. 75% of the text is in story form. Easy to learn and to re-tell. 15% of the Bible is poetry and song. Easy to sing and repeat. Only 10% of the Biblical text is of didactic teaching or basic theology and even still that 10% is wrapped in a narrative. God gave us Story. Not in a "once upon a time" fairy tale, but a historical narrative outlining God's work on earth with humankind, leaving nothing out concerning human frailty, failure, and disobedience. But it is also the true story of God's saving grace, overriding love and God's amazing rescue plan. When speaking of the Bible I often say to the children and youth that the Bible is totally true but it's not always happy and the people don't always do the right things, but God loves us and the stories show us how God worked to

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Children's & Youth Ministries

fix everything that people ruined. In this way, I am trying to circumvent doubts that may come from future conversations these children will have with their peers who say things like "How can you believe the Bible when it shows people doing such bad things?" Or "How can you believe in a God who let those things happen?" The Bible is a historical record and, like the story of when my 2nd child was about to be born and we were in a car accident, it's not always a happy story – it's just true.

This Fall, we will continue this simple, but God-empowered approach in our educational ministry. Please join us in the Sanctuary, and help out in Sunday School with your children and youth. It will be life-transforming because we study The Bible, God's written Word.

See you on Sunday!!
Mickie O'Donnell
*Director of Children's Ministry
& Interim Director of Youth Ministry*

★ FAMILY GAME NIGHT! ★

★ October 17, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. ★

Come join us for fun and food in Horton Hall. Bring your own board games. Dinner served at 6:30. Go to www.npckids.com to find the sign-up link. Please let us know you are coming so we can have enough food.



🎃 THIRD ANNUAL 🎃 Trunk or Treat

Saturday, October 25 from 4-6:00 p.m.
in the church parking lot.

Decorate your car, wear your fun costumes, open your trunk and fill it with candy so kids can go "Trunk to Trunk" for their treats. Fun and safe for all ages.



You Can Make A Difference Too!

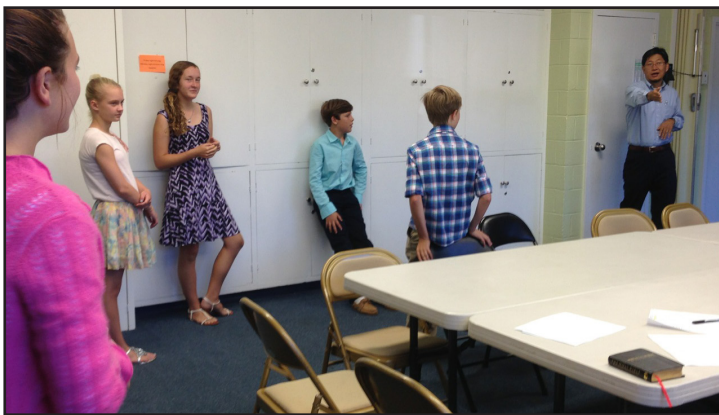
With the start of school, there has been a lot of kick-offs happening in youth ministry. High School Small Group, Ignite, Confirmation, Middle School Sunday School and Harbor are all back in gear. The High School boys got to enjoy some time with Charlie at the movies, while the High School Girls came to the SHAC for a sleepover, art projects and to hear from Intervarsity Greek staff member Meaghan Graham, who shared her story, as well as what it's like to do ministry with sorority and fraternity students. It was amazing and so much fun.

During the season of waiting and preparing for a new Youth Ministry Pastor or Director, Mickie and I are asking for adult participation to help with our students.

Go to www.norotonchurch.org and check out the Youth page to find the places to sign up to get involved. We have lots of Middle School students on Sunday morning for class (9:00 and 10:30 a.m.) and need some adults to hang out with them and help with small groups while I teach. You don't need to have a teen to get involved. If you are used to signing up to help with Children's Ministry you'll love being involved with youth too! The more the merrier. Our students are busy with so many things that sap the life out of them so we want to be sure that our activities bring them life and energy. Adults who connect with our students can make a huge difference. Please email me anytime!

Sarah Swible,
Youth Ministries Coordinator
sarah.swible@norotonchurch.org

Children's & Youth Ministries



Events and Happenings for Middle School and High School Students

Confirmation classes: are held in the Parlor during the 9:00 and 10:30 services (unless otherwise indicated on the class schedule). Makeup classes will be held on Wednesdays at 4:00 p.m. in the Parlor. Please visit www.norotonyouth.com for registration and class schedule.

Harbor (Middle School Youth Group): Wednesday nights in Horton Hall, 7-8:30 p.m.

- **Harbor Event:** Where's Waldo- **October 29** during Harbor.

Middle School Sunday School: Sunday mornings, 9:00 and 10:30 a.m. in the Gym.

High School Bible Study: High School students are welcomed to join us at the SHAC for a small group Bible study that focuses on Judges, and 1 & 2 Samuel. We would love to have you. This Bible study will run every Monday from 6:30-8:00 p.m.

Ignite (High School Youth Group): Sunday nights at the SHAC, 6:30-8:00 p.m. *Please see Ignite topic below.*

Trunk or Treat (all ages welcome): **October 25th** at 4:00 p.m.

DOES YOUR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENT have questions about their faith?

- Do they wonder why God allows suffering?
- Do they know how Satan works in our culture?
- Do they ask if the Bible is Reliable?
- Can they articulate God's Big Picture on Redemption?



These are big questions! In October and November NPC will pilot a program specifically targeted for high school teens on Sunday evenings from 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the SHAC, as they explore specific questions of faith and develop an anchor to navigate the waters of life. Sign up at www.norotonchurch.org.

Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School



The 2014-15 school year began with our annual retreat at St. Brigitta's Convent. We were blessed to have Rev. Dr. Heather Wright, Director at the Center for Hope & Renewal in Greenwich, come and speak to us about the importance of influence and motivation in our jobs as educators. Her message was a blessing for us to hear at the start of our new school year.

Our classroom set-up days followed the next week and ended with Classroom Visitation Day. It was a delight to see and hear the excitement in the children as they walked into their new classrooms for the first time, to meet their teachers and see old friends and begin to make new ones. The transition back to school has been a smooth one and we are so thrilled to be back with our fellow staff members and students.

The beginning of October brings the start of our Extended Day program. Offerings this year include, Friendship Lunch for our 3's, Little Chef's, Introduction to Karate, Little Athletes & Good Sports, Super Science and Fitness Fun for our 4's. October also brings with it the beginning of Music with Mr. Robert and, for our older

students, weekly Chapel with Miss Mickie and Junior Naturalist with Miss Emily. Our 4's and Pre-K students will also attend their first field trips.

Our staff continues to meet together every Wednesday afternoon for Staff Development and Trainings. Our parent-led board meets the second Tuesday of every month. Our parents are particularly busy planning our annual NPNS fundraiser. This year's event will be held on November 14th. If you would like to donate any services or items to the silent auction, please contact Karalesa DiFabio at karalesa@gmail.com.

The goal of the Nursery School is to help nurture children to become confident and eager learners. Our staff works hard to insure that attention is placed on every area of development: cognitive, social, spiritual, physical and creative. I look forward to sharing with you the growth of our program and students over the school year. We thank the NPC Pastors, staff and church members, NPNS families, teachers and support staff for their dedication to this program and our precious students.

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



Drewe Chipoletti first day of school



Conrad Hill exploring the blocks



Alexander Blake, Issac Marshall and Conner Dey from afternoon 4's explore the new construction

Tot Drop



The following letter was sent to and received by the August Session. I hope the NPC members can understand and feel just how much this work has meant to me.

August 26, 2014

Dear Pastor Sam, Pastor Greg, Pastor Brandi and Session Members,

Almost six years ago, through God's unerring direction, I was guided through the doors of NPC to serve Him and this church as Director of Tot Drop; it has been a remarkable opportunity to minister in meaningful ways to parents and their children. I have been blessed by this work many times over. I have loved the challenge, loved my remarkable staff and loved my daily dose of hugs, smiles—and even tears—of the children (and parents) we care for. Now, I believe God is calling my husband and me to move closer to our own grandchildren to play a greater role in their lives.

We put our home in Stamford on the market recently and were happily surprised at the volume of interested buyers. We are going into contract at this time and if all proceeds as expected we will close on the sale at the end of October. This means that it is time for me to resign my position at Tot Drop effective Friday, October 10, 2014.

I want to sincerely thank the members, Pastors, directors, and office staff who have supported the progress of Tot Drop and given their time, attention, prayer and love to me and my staff. I know that the same level of care will be extended to my successor. At Pastor Sam's direction, I will be notifying parents of my decision and assuring them that Tot Drop will continue to meet their needs.

Thank you again for an amazing and growth-inspiring five and one-half years at NPC.

With great gratitude,

Carol V. Scott

Congregational Life Ministry



Fall is definitely here ...



Fall has always meant the 'beginning of another year' whether I was of school age and starting a new grade, or an adult starting another chapter in work, sports, life-in-general. It signals an opportunity to look at new things, or at least to look at things in a fresh way.

I hope this is true for you, as we continue our pilgrimage together here at NPC!

Part of what the Congregational Life Ministry does is to host churchwide events to help our members and friends have a reason to gather and hang out together a little longer or on more occasions than only Sunday worship.

Another part of our role is to encourage all of our members to be engaged in ways comfortable to each of you respectively ... maybe even to step out of your comfort zone a little to try something new and/or to meet some additional people not in your current 'circle of friends'.

Fall always signals the start up of multiple activities here at NPC ... for adults, children, youth, seniors; everyone! Maybe this is the year for you to accept someone's invitation to try something new (for you), or perhaps to be the one to issue just such an invitation to another!

We are a little challenged this year with some inconveniences surrounding aspects of our building project, but there is still A LOT happening! (Just check out any ministry page in this Spire!)

Hoping many of you had the opportunity to stop and have lunch with your church family the last weekend in September! One 'advantage' of the current construction is that we needed to hold the patio/lawn cookout on either side of the main entrance to the Sanctuary! So, we got to at least offer a cup of coffee to those unable to stay longer and enjoy the grilled foods and salads! Look on our website www.norotonchurch.org under Events for some photos of folks enjoying their extended time together!



We encourage you to visit our website throughout the month to check for updates and announcements of activities each ministry area continually posts. If you do not use the Internet frequently, make sure to watch for posters around church, and check out Noroton Notes on Sundays.

If we do not know each other yet, please introduce yourself to me (you have my photo on this page) and let me help you get connected with what interests you! (As Mikie's brother always said ... 'try it; you'll like it.')



In fellowship with you,
Valerie Muller
Director of Community and
Communication
valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org or
203-309-5650

Membership Ministry

Why Sign the Friendship Pad?

You may have noticed that at each service, the Pastor asks us ALL to sign and then pass the navy blue "friendship pad" in each pew. (It moves from the end of the pew at the center aisle, down to the other end of the row, and back again.)

While it is certainly voluntary, I thought it might help to understand that there are **several reasons** we ask regular attenders, as well visitors, to let us know they are at worship:

- update contact information for regular attenders
- help worshipers and staff to learn names (sneak a peek in your pew, match the names to faces, and greet someone by name)
- notice if someone has been missing for a while so we can check on them
- observe and gather information on congregational attendance patterns of members, regular attenders and visitors
- identify and welcome visitors and new residents with a follow-up note or call

It's a big plus if you **WRITE LEGIBLY** and provide **complete information**. For example:

- *Include your first and last name* – this helps us to greet each other more easily, and avoid confusion over common last names such as "The Smiths".
- *Note your complete address if you have moved or are a visitor* (street, town, zip).
- *Share your email and phone number if they have changed recently, or if you are a visitor.* Note that we contact visitors by mail, email or phone to extend a warm welcome and

thank them for coming to worship. No one is added to the church mailing list unless they request it.

- *Always check the box that applies to you* – member, regular attendee, wishing to join, desire a call, new resident or visitor.

So, now that you know... next time and every time, **please take a moment to complete the friendship pad and pass it on to the person next to you, encouraging them to sign it as well!**



Membership Class Starts Oct. 19... It's not too late to sign up!

The next class will meet four Sundays: **Oct. 19, 26, Nov. 2 and 9**. Free childcare is provided for infants and toddlers, and older children can attend Sunday school. The first three classes meet from 10:15 to 11:30; the fourth class from 10:15 to Noon, followed by a reception for new members and their families. New members will be welcomed into the congregation on Nov. 16.

For registration and information, contact Julie Colbath (203-309-5615 or julie.colbath@nortonchurch.org) or go to the Membership page at www.nortonchurch.org.

Working our faith,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership

Music & Fine Arts

The Only Thing Missing is You



As I write this, we've just had our first Sunday back in the Sanctuary with the Sanctuary choir, and the Open Doors service has moved back down to Horton Hall. It was wonderful to see so many singers filling the chancel, but don't let that stop you from joining us!

Our music departments depends on gracious volunteers giving of their time and talents in rehearsal and during worship services. While I'm so grateful to everyone who participates, the simple fact is that we need more people: more choir singers, more instrumentalists, and more soloists. Please consider having a role in making music to the Lord. I'm sure that

if you ask anyone who regularly participates they will tell you that it's a spiritually rewarding experience. You can contact me via the email listed below.

If you don't feel that this is right for you, you can continue lifting your voice in praise during our worship services. I LOVE the sound of our congregation in song! If you have any questions about being involved in the NPC Music Department feel free to contact me at dwayne.condon@nortonchurch.org.

Blessings!
Dwayne Condon,
Director of Music & Fine Arts



Presentation on Iraq and Cuba by Dr. Rob Weingartner of the Outreach Foundation

What do you think of when you think of Iraq?

In answer to this opening question Dr. Rob Weingartner of the Outreach Foundation, said he thinks of his friends.... Pastor Haitham Jezrawi, and Elder Samir from the Presbyterian Church of Kirkuk and he went on to describe other brothers and sisters in Christ that he has met on his visits to Iraq. He shared some of their stories of suffering but also of love and hope.



Displaced families that have moved into the Presbyterian Church in Kirkuk, Iraq

Pastor Haitham asked Dr. Weingartner to bring a message to our church.... He wants to communicate heartfelt thanks to our congregation for the gift of \$10,000 that we have just sent. These funds enable his church to buy supplies for the displaced families which provide sustenance and comfort but also hope for the future. 14 families are living in the Kirkuk church and the church is also caring for another 60 families in the area housed by other churches. With 1 million displaced people the need for help is great and the local church is a great partner to work with, having ready access to the food and supplies needed which they can purchase when they receive donations such as ours. Our funds will provide groceries and blankets which Elder Samir will be taking to the 1,800 families living in tents in Kirkuk to protect them as winter approaches.

Dr. Weingartner also shared some stories of how the moderate Muslims in Iraq have been protecting Christians.

He also told us that in the city of Basra, which is a Shia area, the churches are freer and run a Christian radio station which is the favorite channel for the local taxi drivers. This radio station has government approval.... The station announces every morning that this is only for Christians and so the government allows the broadcast. This church also runs a loving kindergarten program caring for 300 local children which has won favor and respect in the eyes of the local Muslim community. Pastor Haitham says the people are more hopeful now that they know there is a coalition of countries committed to help oppose ISIS.

On World Communion Sunday, October 5th, there will be an opportunity for the congregation to contribute to an additional special offering which will be sent to Pastor Haitham and the church in Kirkuk to further help their ministry.

The church in Cuba

Dr. Weingartner also spoke about the opportunities to support the work of the church in Cuba. The need of the church is largely in the area of leadership development and helping churches build the capacity to share the Gospel.



Students at the Evangelical Theological Seminary in Matanzas, Cuba

Cuba is a country of 11 million people of whom 20% call themselves Christian. There are 35 Presbyterian churches divided into 3 Presbyteries. There are only 28 Presbyterian Pastors so the need for training of new Pastors is crucial. The Presbyterian Church in Cuba has existed since the 1890's when missionaries went there from the U.S. Several Cubans were studying at Princeton Seminary when Castro overthrew the Bastista regime. They re-

Mission Ministry



Ofelia and Rosa, members of the Church at Jaguey Grande

turned to Cuba to celebrate the victory of the rebels and stayed ever since. 70-80% of the Christians in Cuba are new converts and thus the churches are filled with young people, so there is a great need for leaders to teach and disciple the church. The Matanzas Evangelical Theological Seminary is governed by a Presbyterian and Episcopal board and was established in 1946. The Seminary is playing a crucial

part in training new leaders not just in ministry, but also in organic gardening which helps them to minister to the local population when they go out to pastor churches. The Seminary would value help from American churches. The challenge for the church is to demonstrate the Gospel in a thoroughly secular environment. The Cuban Council of Churches is having 1 million Bibles printed in China this year for distribution in Cuba.

The government of Cuba is no longer atheistic, but is now secular. While the government doesn't interfere with the life of the church, they would not tolerate any criticism of government policies.

While there are financial needs to build and repair buildings, the greater need is to form lasting relationships which can bind one congregation to another.

Transportation to Cuba is much easier these days. There are daily charter flights from Miami (\$400 round trip from Miami to Havana). Several tour companies organize trips for Americans who wish to visit. A religious visa which is easily obtained is needed to enter the country.

The Mission Team will be discerning if there may be a role for our church to play in building a relationship with the seminary or the local church of Cuba. If you are interested in this ministry please get in touch with Stella Clarke, Mission Associate.

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

Mission Prayer Focus

Please support our mission partners by lifting up the following prayer requests:

- For the refugees from Iraq and Syria undergoing intense suffering and especially for the persecuted Christians.
- For Forman Christian College which is badly affected by severe flooding. Pray for the recovery efforts and for the resources to fund this process.
- For the joint churches Feed My Starving Children host team as they prepare for the MobilePack and for protection, wisdom and joy for Ginna Yerrall as she leads the team.
- Pray that all the mission partners and the ministries we support will bring light to the world, will be strengthened, protected and upheld by the power of the Holy Spirit and that their work will bear much fruit.

Mission Opportunities

Feed My Starving Children MobilePack:

October 18-19 at Middlesex Middle School

This event hosted by the churches of Darien needs volunteers not only to pack meals but also to help run the event.... If you can help with set up, check-in, or clean up during the weekend of Oct 17-19 please contact Ginna Yerrall at gmdar@optonline.net. Volunteers are also needed to pray for God's blessing on this event, our community and the children who will receive the meals. All are welcome to join the **Joint Churches Prayer Service on Wednesday, October 15 at 7:30 p.m. at St. Paul's, Mansfield Ave., Darien.**

Open Door Shelter – next NPC lunch time service dates **October 4** and **November 1**. (Set up shift 11:00-12:30 p.m. - 16 and older, Serving Shift 12:30 -2:00 p.m. -18 years and older) To sign up please contact Holly Hough (hough7@optonline.net).

October 2014

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
8:00 a.m. Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -5th 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. Ignite	6:30 p.m. High School Bible Study	6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NIC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 p.m. Team Night Fellowship 7:45 p.m. Team Night Presentation 8:00 p.m. Team Night Meetings	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M. Choir 7:00 p.m. Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	7:00 p.m. Confirmation Dinner/ Session Meeting	
8:00 a.m. Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th 9 & 10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. Ignite	Columbus Day 6:30 p.m. High School Bible Study	6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NIC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M. Choir 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Make-up 7:00 p.m. Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 2:00 p.m. Prime Timers - Maplewood, Darien 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	6:30 p.m. Family Game Night	
8:00 a.m. Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th 9 & 10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 10:15 a.m. New Member Class 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. Ignite	6:30 p.m. High School Bible Study	6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NIC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study 8:00 p.m. Session Meeting	7:00 a.m. Men's Study-Sugar Bowl 4:00 p.m. J.A.M. Choir 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Make-up 7:00 p.m. Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal	4:00 p.m. Trunk-Or-Treat	
8:00 a.m. Chapel Service 9 & 10:30 a.m. Sanctuary Services 9 & 10:30 a.m. Classes for 3's -8th 9 & 10:30 a.m. Confirmation Class 10:15 a.m. New Member Class 5:00 p.m. Open Doors 6:30 p.m. Ignite	6:30 p.m. High School Bible Study	6:15 a.m. Women's Bible Study 7:30 a.m. Men's Bible Study (NIC) 9:30 a.m. Women's Bible Study	4:00 p.m. J.A.M. Choir 4:00 p.m. Confirmation Make-up 7:00 p.m. Harbor 6th-8th Grade	7:00 a.m. Men's Bible Study 9:30 a.m. Oasis 12:00 p.m. Moms of Teens 1:15 p.m. Prayer Group Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Chancel Choir Rehearsal		

Small Groups at NPC ...

(We would appreciate your input.)



As we move into Fall, our desire is to be much more *intentional* about our Small Group Ministry! So, if you have been thinking about (or asking about) joining/starting a group, be sure to get in touch with me! (My contact info is at the bottom.)

Session voted to make my staff position full time mid-summer, so that I could add the role of Director of Small Group Ministry to my existing assignment ... how wonderful for me! I have been passionate about this ministry for some time; and was actually in a small group here at NPC BEFORE I formally joined the congregation! The conversations/discussions and confidential support I experienced with this group of adults was influential in my decision to become a full-fledged member of the greater church community.

- If you are already part of a small group and happy with the timeframe, curriculum, dynamics ... **great!**
- If you are NOT in a small group, and would like to be ... **super!**
- If you have been 'waiting' to be included in a group ... **we are ready** to help make that happen!
- If you are in one type of group (e.g., same-gender; day-time, etc.), and would ALSO (or instead) like to be part of another type (e.g., couples; evening, etc.), Please make sure to **let me know**.

We are including a (very brief) survey in this October Spire.

We need (and appreciate!) your input to help us formulate offerings that meet YOUR needs! You can respond online and return electronically at www.norotonchurch.org. Or you can return the hardcopy form by placing it in the offering plate, leave in the basket in the mailroom (look for sign), or mail to NPC main office (2011 Post Rd, Darien CT 06820).

We will be sharing more in the weeks to come about how this ministry is developing, and how you can be a part of it! We have plans for offerings post-retreat, post-new members class, a Fall fellowship gathering (for both existing and future small group members), and curriculum and training resources ...

In our spiritual growth journey together,
Valerie Muller

Director of Small Group Ministry
Director of Community and Communications
203-309-5650 - direct line (at Thorndal Circle)
valerie.muller@norotonchurch.org

Questionnaire about Small Groups at Noroton Presbyterian Church October 2014 (Your input requested please.)

Your church is interested in your ideas. Your answers will be invaluable to strengthening the small group Bible study experience.

The purpose of a small group is to study the Bible, help each other understand how to apply biblical principles to our lives for spiritual growth, and organize a group mission service. A small group at NPC might include 10-16 people who gather weekly or bi-monthly, during the week or weekend for 1½ to 2 hours.

[Click Here for Online Questionnaire](#)

Please answer the following questions to help us to manage the small group program:

1. Which book or topic in the Bible are you most interested in studying?

2. How comfortable are you with the idea of participating in a small group of 10-16 people?
 Very comfortable
 Somewhat comfortable
 Comfortable
 Not comfortable
 Very uncomfortable

3. A typical small group meeting includes:
 Social Time and Refreshments
 Devotional Time
 Bible Study and Discussion (bulk of time)
 Sharing Concerns and Praises for Prayer
(Confidentiality is critical to the success of group sharing.)
 Participating in Group Mission Service

Please put check marks next to the parts of the small group meeting that are most interesting to you. Check as many as you like.

4. Which part is the least interesting?

5. Which of the following group demographics would be most interesting to you:
 Couples Only
 Singles Only
 Female Only
 Male Only
 Mixed couples, singles, genders
 Open to any demographic

6. In your view, what would be the characteristics of an ideal small group Bible Study?

Please return electronically (norotonchurch@norotonchurch.org), place in offering plate, drop in box in mailroom, or mail back to us.

Thank you for your time.

The Adult Spiritual Formation Team
Pastor Greg, Jeff Myers, Lou DeLoma, Deb DeLoma, Audrey Hutter, Jeff Marston,
Valerie Muller, Ed Pak, Sheree Sanborn, Sally Vosburgh

In Loving Memory of...

August 19th:
Ellsworth F. Benson

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

Please Serve Once a Month as a Worship Greeter!

The commitment is just once a month for 15 minutes, and something you can do as a family. With construction at the church, it will be even more important to have greeters in place to both welcome visitors and regular worshipers, and to help everyone navigate the parking lot and building. Please contact Julie Colbath.

If you would like to submit an article for the November 2014 issue please submit it before October 15 to Rose Cunningham by email at rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.

Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

September 21st:

Sutton Alexandra Barnett, daughter of
Andrew and Tori Barnett

Hunter White Grambling, son of
Greg and Katherine Grambling

Catalina Abigail Schreiner, daughter of
Samuel and Chantal Schreiner

Join us in celebrating the following Weddings...

August 9th:

Laura Anderson and Kenneth Weiss
Ceremony in Litchfield, Rev. David Anderson

September 20th:

Ashley Challinor and Jordan Lipp
Noroton Presbyterian Church, Rev. Brandi Drake

Kelsie Bickford and Daniel Droppa
First Presbyterian Church Greenwich, Rev. Erin Keys

Ashley Gabriel and Matt McGowan
St. Luke's Church Darien, Rev. Gregory Doll

September 27th:

Jessica McNell and Ryan McKinney
Noroton Presbyterian Church, Rev. Brandi Drake

NPC Deacons

Officers

Moderator - David Kyrk

Treasurer - James Long

Secretary - Lucy Moore

Committee chairs:

Ushering: Tim Hesselsweet, Derek Phillips

Refreshments: Francie George

Memorial Receptions: Gail Reynolds

Homebound:

Meal Delivery: Marilyn Huffman

Open Doors Meals: Linda Yim

Deacons currently serving:

Arlis Baird,
David Chamin, Phebe
Gardner, Francie George, Tim
Hesselsweet, Marilyn Huffman,
Carolyn Hurst, Scott Isherwood,
Kristin Jordan, Mike Keehlwetter,
Phil Kwun, David Kyrk, Debbie
Lang, James Long, Alphyn Moore,
Lucy Moore, Derek Phillips, Gail
Reynolds, Erik Schroeder, Tony
Scolaro, Andrew Symons, Andy
Vineyard, Andy Wainwright,
Fred Wilms, Linda Yim, Sara
Zagrodzky

Youth Deacons:

Julia Evans
Melanie Turner
Michael Yim