

# NIANTIC COMMUNITY CHURCH

An Open, Affirming, and Reconciling congregation of the  
United Church of Christ and the United Methodist Church  
A Heritage of Faith since 1719 • Each Member a Minister

“Whoever you are;  
wherever you are on life’s journey:  
you are welcome here.”

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December 19, 2010 • 9:00 & 11:15AM

*The Fourth Sunday of Advent*



## FOR YOUR REFLECTION

Your vision will only become clear when you look inside your heart....  
Who looks outside, dreams; who looks inside, awakes.

*Carl Jung*

## WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

“From Heaven on High”  
“O Come All Ye Faithful”  
(Youth Bell Choir)

*Pachelbel*

RECEIVING GOD’S WORD AND CHRIST’S LIGHT IN OUR WORSHIP

CALL TO WORSHIP: THE FOURTH ADVENT CANDLE

Reader: We light the first candle, reminding us of God’s promise of peace on earth.  
We light the second candle, reminding us that we are to dispel the darkness of  
sickness, poverty, injustice, and suffering all around us.  
We light the third candle, reminding us to be constant and patient in our  
relationships and in our living.

Reader: *Matthew 1:18-25*

Reader: O God, we can only admire the righteousness and trust of Joseph, who — in the face of public scorn and humiliation — took upon himself the responsibility of caring for Mary and her unborn child. Joseph was faithful to your call.

**All: Lord, may the light of this candle illuminate our path through life, so that our way is the way of righteousness, trust, and faithfulness.**

RESPONSE IN SONG        “It Came Upon the Midnight Clear”

**It came upon the midnight clear, that glorious song of old,**

**From angels bending near the earth, to touch their harps of gold:**

**“Peace on the earth, good will to all, from heaven's most gracious King!”**

**The world in solemn stillness lay, to hear the angels sing.**

SHARING OF PARISH ACTIVITIES & RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

Those in each pew closest to the center aisle will please begin passing the Friendship Pads so that everyone has an opportunity to indicate their presence here today and make a note of any messages. After the sharing of parish concerns, all will be invited to greet one another in Christian fellowship and love. Prayer requests will be collected during the second hymn.

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Leader: Advent means waiting for a vision to come true — a new age, peace at last, and a savior who will lead us into God’s realm.

**All: We confess that it is hard to trust in the promise while we see war and hunger, people without homes or health care, broken relationships and unanswered prayers.**

Advent means that we take the risk of believing in angels, even though that makes us seem foolish.

**We confess that it’s easier to believe that someone with a story of visiting angels is crazy, and much harder to trust in the strange message of a miraculous birth.**

Advent means daring to place all our faith in an unlikely story.

**We confess that we have relied more often on our common sense, than we have trusted in God’s uncommon promise.**

WORDS OF ASSURANCE

Leader: But God’s promise has this characteristic: it is everlasting. God’s promise includes forgiveness — welcoming us whenever we turn back into God’s embrace. Sisters and brothers, know that God forgives you through Jesus Christ.

**Thanks be to God! Alleluia; Amen.**

THE LORD’S PRAYER (*trespasses*)





## Today's Worship Leaders

**9:00AM**

**Ushers:** Doris Beebe, Lew Meier, Bob Nielsen, Peg Herzberg  
**Worship Leader:** Ned Ruete  
**Advent Wreath:**  
Rich, Jan, Clayton, & Calvin Cushing

**11:15AM**

**Ushers:** Liz Buhler, Anne Davis  
**Worship Leader:** Terri McTigue  
**Advent Wreath:**  
The Helvig Family

**Preacher:** The Rev. John A. Nelson

**Parish Host:** Margaret Holmberg

Flowers have been placed in the sanctuary to the Glory of God and  
In Loving Memory of our parents,  
by Rich & Sue Basham.

A rose has been placed on the altar today in celebration of the  
adoption of William Michael Goeben, born December 12, 2010,  
son of Charlie & Susan Goeben, grandson of Dick & Ellen Goeben.

✠ All who are able may stand at these times

Advent Candle liturgy, copyright General Board of Discipleship ([www.gbod.org](http://www.gbod.org)). Used by permission.

## **OUR MINISTRY TEAM**

**Ministers:** All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

### **Worship & Music**

**Organist and Music Director:** Paul Althouse  
**Directors of Children's and Gospel Choirs:**  
Lee Wilkerson & Nikki Rollins  
**Sound Engineers:** Dick Robinson & Ron Deziel

### **Education & Youth**

**Interim Director of Religious Education &  
Youth Ministries:** Kayla Castronova  
**Children's Center Director:** Kathy Tiller

### **Caring & Community**

**Community Minister:** Patty Chaffee

**Parish Nurse:** Marie LaTourette

### **Holding the Parts Together!**

**Church Secretary:** Judy Snitkin  
**Church Officers:** Kim Kalajainen, *president*;  
John Whritner, *vice-president*; Avery  
Morgan, *clerk*; Linda Leavens, *treasurer*, Liz  
Kuchta, *historian*  
**Financial Secretary:** Judy Layden  
**Bookkeeper:** Maureen Godin  
**Librarian, Newsletter Editor:** Jennifer Datum

**Pastor and Teacher:** The Rev. John A. Nelson

## OCCASIONS FOR SERVICE, WITNESS, AND PRAYER

### In Our Prayers:

*We gladly list joys and concerns, and typically print them for four weeks after they are offered in worship. (Prayer requests may be renewed at any time.)*

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#### **New Concerns:**

Howard Christensen, recovering from surgery  
• Alan Mitchell, recovering from hand surgery  
• Persons addicted to pain medication, and family and friends who try to help • A friend struggling with depression and anxiety • Sakina King, cancer • Paul Jacobowski, cancer  
• Wendy, hip surgery • For those spending Christmas apart from loved ones • For those whose Christmas includes grief for loved ones who have died.

#### **Continuing concerns:**

John Messer, surgery for brain tumor, and parents Donna & Terry • For a friend & son who lost their jobs • Matthew Stollo, health concerns • Mary Brailey's sister Louise, recovering from surgery • for Margaret Gayda's return to health • The Rev. Barbara J. Libby, beginning her work as Interim Associate Conference Minister for Clergy Concerns at the Connecticut Conference (UCC)  
• Broken family relationships, in need of mending • Nephew Sam, back surgery • Jean Fanelli, recovering from stroke • Alice, who lost everything in a fire • Jean, recovering from neck surgery • For a safe delivery and healthy baby for Lewis and Andrea • Healing for Laurie, and restoration of eyesight • For travelers • Amanda Hines, in coma • Jeff & Cathy Dawley • Roc, hospitalized • Our children, in difficult circumstances • For the First Congregational of Essex, voting on becoming Open & Affirming • Elaine Steinhilber, knee replacement • Nancy, shoulder surgery • Friends who have to euthanize their beloved Golden Retriever •

Nancy, liver biopsy • Mary White, declining health • Mike, living with cancer • Neighbors who are homeless, now facing cold weather • Healing for Frankie Dallas • John Pellett, at Yale Hosp. with lung infection • Virginia, Aunt Lyla, Huey, and Connor • Alyssa, traveling in Prague • Paul Swann • Those suffering from depression and anxiety.

#### *In treatment for cancer:*

Mercedes, struggling with chemotherapy • Ken Esposito, health care organizer with the Christian Activities Council, pancreatic cancer • Missy Gardner • Ray Herzberg • Clara Ball – and their families, friends, and caregivers.

Those for whom the holiday season increases their burdens: the grieving, the financially struggling, those wrestling with illness, those separated from loved ones, those serving their country far from home.

Youth and families affected by the recent violence in New London

Partners of the Connecticut Conference (UCC) in the Kyung-Ki Presbytery and their communities on the Korean peninsula, with prayers for peace amidst great tension.

The nation of Myanmar, that the release of Aung San Suu Kyi may bring greater freedom to her fellow citizens.

The nation of Indonesia beset by volcanic eruptions and tsunami.

The people of Haiti in the cholera epidemic, and the people who seek to aid them.

*Friends and family now serving our country in the armed forces:* Scott Basham; Greg Balsmeier;

Alyson Barrett; Brian Donovan; Josh Earnhart;  
Matt Fergione; Tony Fergione; Matt Liebal;  
Nathaniel Lowe; Brian Perchal; Zachary Peters;  
Peter Rondeau; Caitlin Strauhal; Stephen  
Weiss.

All those serving or living in war or conflict  
zones around the world, particularly in Iraq,  
Afghanistan, Colombia, Gaza, Georgia, India,  
Pakistan, and the Sudan.

**Family & Friends  
who have passed away:**

David Pashley  
Ed Hayden • Rebecca Bibart  
Nancy Jeanne Jacobson • Mary White  
Joan LeFrank • Sally Stanton  
Alyssa Kristoff.

Servicemen and service women who have lost  
their lives in Iraq and Afghanistan

*We thank God for their lives, and offer prayers of  
comfort and support for family and friends who  
mourn their passing.*

**Praise and Celebration:**

For a granddaughter, Lucy Moore • For good  
test results • For successful hip surgery for  
Louise Corcoran • Tyler Page (son-in-law of  
Meg Mahon), now Doctor of Chiropractic •  
Ellie Harper Meier, born on Nov. 28<sup>th</sup> to Lewis  
& Andrea Meier • For support given to  
Michael Strollo in completing Eagle Scout  
project • Carl and Jean, 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary • For  
Cooper's 5<sup>th</sup> birthday • For the safe return of  
the 102<sup>nd</sup> Infantry.

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**IF YOU HAVE A PRAYER REQUEST OR WOULD LIKE A PASTORAL VISIT,** be sure to let us know by calling the church office (860-739-6208) or emailing Pastor John at [jnelson@nianticcommunitychurch.org](mailto:jnelson@nianticcommunitychurch.org). Sometimes we don't find out about an injury or illness or other need until long after — so please call!

**WE ALSO HAVE AN ON-GOING PRAYER CHAIN.** To add a prayer request to the Prayer Chain please send an email to [prayers@nianticcommunitychurch.org](mailto:prayers@nianticcommunitychurch.org), or call the church office (860-739-6208).

**THINK ABOUT THE PART THAT YOU WANT TO PLAY IN OUR CHURCH'S FUTURE.** You have the opportunity to support this ministry in many ways. Naming the Church as a beneficiary in your estate plan or the making of an endowment gift can assure your continued participation in this ministry far into the future.

Parents with young children are reminded that if they would like to participate in the yearly **LIVE NATIVITY AT THE 5PM WORSHIP SERVICE ON CHRISTMAS EVE** they should arrive at 4:30pm to choose a costume and receive directions for the service. There will be live animals once again this year thanks to the Christensen family.

**MIDDLE SCHOOL FELLOWSHIP** — Today, 12:30-2pm. Please bring a \$5 gift to swap as well as a food item to share.

**SENIOR HIGH FELLOWSHIP** — Today, 5:30pm. Please bring a \$5 gift to swap as well as a food item to share. We will also be attending the Carol Sing at 6:30pm.

**ALL YOUTH** who are interested in going on the YouthWorks trip, the \$65 deposit is due as soon as possible the spots are filling up.

**ANY FAMILIES INTERESTED** in participating in the 5pm Christmas Eve service please contact Kayla as soon as possible.

**TONIGHT** is the annual Carol Sing at 6:30pm. Please bring a toothbrush and toothpaste to donate as well as a desert to share after the sing. We hope to see you there!!

**WCSA MEETING**, Tue, Dec 21, 12:30PM, Fellowship Room - Please bring a "hearty hors d'oeuvre" to share, and a wrapped grab-bag gift, \$10.00 and under, for a Yankee Swap.

**NEXT SUNDAY MORNING**, December 26th. Worship Service at 9 with Devine Activity Time. Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching. Scripture readings: Isaiah 63:7-9; Psalm 148; Hebrews 2:10-18; Matthew 2:13-23.

**EPIPHANY PARTY** for all ages on Sunday the 9th of January 2011 between services. Admission to the party is a donation of hats, gloves, or scarves for the Homeless Hospitality Center in New London.

**NEEDED:** Advent Candlelighters for the Christmas Eve Communion Service at 11pm. Please speak with Pastor John or call the church office (739-6208) if you are interested. Thank you.

**DID YOU KNOW?** The Niantic Community Church Children's Center offers a school vacation day program for school age children – ages 5-12. Christmas week days will be December 27, 28, 29, and 30. Call Kathy Tiller, Director for more information (739-0877).

**PHOTOGRAPHS OF 2010 JACK FROST BAZAAR:** Do you know someone who may have taken pictures during this year's Bazaar? I am looking for photos of volunteers/workers, tables/displays, decorations, or any setup or cleanup activities. Please contact or send photos to [susanbrown655@gmail.com](mailto:susanbrown655@gmail.com) as soon as possible.

## THIS WEEK AT NIANTIC COMMUNITY CHURCH

We are a community of Christians:  
learning God's ways;  
sharing God's love;  
extending God's peace and healing grace to all.

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### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19

#### 9:00AM Worship Service

10:00-11:00AM "Between Hour Café"  
(Dining Hall)

10:15AM Sunday School for All Ages

**Adult Offerings:** Uppity Women of the  
Bible (Fellowship Room)

10:15AM High School Fellshp (Youth Rm)

#### 11:15AM Worship Service

12:30PM Middle Sch Fellshp (Youth Rm)

5:30PM Senior High Fellshp (Youth Rm)

6:30PM Carol Sing (Sanctuary)

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### MONDAY, DECEMBER 20

4:00PM Nominating (Parish Life Office)

7:00PM Men's Choir (Sanctuary)

7:00PM Toastmasters (Dining Hall)

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### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21

7:15AM Breakfast Bible Study (Niantic  
Diner)

12:30PM WCSA Holiday Potluck &  
Yankee Swap (Fellowship Room)

5:30PM Service of Light (Sanctuary)

5:30PM Children's Choir (Fellowship  
Room)

6:00PM Youth Bell Rehearsal (Mltiprpse  
Rm)

6:15PM Gospel Choir (Sanctuary)

7:00PM Adult Bell Rehearsal (Mltiprpse  
Rm)

7:00PM Communications Committee  
(Parish Life Office)

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### TUESDAY, DECEMBER 21 CONTINUED

7:00PM Boy Scouts (Dining Hall)

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### WEDNESDAY, DECEMBER 22

NO DISCIPLE I

6:30PM Painting from the Source (Intro)  
(Multipurpose/Fellowship  
Room)

7:30PM NA (Dining Hall)

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### THURSDAY, DECEMBER 23

NCC Children's Center closed

6:00PM Shoreline Food Pantry (Dining  
Hall)

7:00PM Adult Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)

8:00PM AA (Dining Hall)

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### FRIDAY, DECEMBER 24

Church Offices & Children's Center  
closed

**5:00PM Family Christmas Eve Service**

**8:00PM Service of Lessons and Carols**

**11:00PM Candlelight Communion  
Service**

7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

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### SATURDAY, DECEMBER 25

7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

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### SUNDAY, DECEMBER 26

**9:00AM Worship Service**  
and Devine Activity Time