

NIANTIC COMMUNITY CHURCH

An Open, Affirming, & 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.”

June 5, 2011 • 9:00 & 11:15AM

The Seventh Sunday of Easter



WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

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

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.

INTROIT

“High and Lifted Up”
Gospel Choir (9:00AM)

Brooklyn Tabernacle Choir

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: Praise God, who has raised Jesus Christ to reign in power!

Many: Praise God, who sends the Spirit to empower the church.

Praise God with the mighty sound of the organ; praise God with flute and harp!

Praise God with percussion and dance;

Praise God with heartfelt song!

All: Let everything that breathes praise God!

CALL TO CONFESSION

One: God’s love is steadfast, and God’s faithfulness endures from age to age. Our love falters, and our faithfulness waxes and wanes from day to day. In prayer, let us unburden ourselves, and declare our need for renewed relationship with God.

UNISON PRAYER OF CONFESSION

**Gracious God, you encourage us with your love,
bringing new life out of death. We confess
that we need your life-giving power in our lives and our relationships.
We have hurt others and been hurt by them.
We are often angry or afraid. We continue to live
in ways that imprison our spirits, and the spirits of others,
rather than following you boldly and creatively.
Forgive us, O God.
Pour your Spirit of wisdom and release upon us,
that in our lives and our loving we may glorify you,
through Jesus Christ, the Risen One. Amen.**

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

One: The good news is that God forgives us. God loves us, exactly as we are – and loves us too much to leave us that way. In Jesus’ name, we are forgiven.

All: Thanks be to God. Alleluia! Amen.

WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL IN WORD

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

Prayer requests will be collected; Children attending *Divine Activity Time* (for PreK–4th grade) may leave during the singing of the hymn.

SCRIPTURE READING: Acts 1:6-14

Reader: Let us prepare ourselves for the Word of God as it comes to us in the reading of Holy Scripture.

People: Our hearts and minds are open.

WE RESPOND IN PRAYER AND FAITH

OFFERTORY

Leader: We are often hungry for knowledge. So it may come as a relief to hear Jesus tell his followers to let go of the wish to know what is coming — and instead stay open to the power and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. That Spirit leads us, always, to care for all creatures and all creation, with awe-filled gratitude for God's abundant blessing. May we give generously of what we have, for the sake of that caring.

Let us gather our gifts with grateful praise, and offer them to God's purposes.

RECEIVING TITHES AND OFFERINGS

THE MUSICAL OFFERING

✠ DOXOLOGY

OLD 100TH

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;
Praise Holy Spirit, comforter:
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

This morning we add a special blessing for prayer shawls knitted by members and friends of our church, as well as baby blankets and baby hats. These will be delivered to those who are hospitalized, home-bound, or imprisoned, so that they may be warmed by our prayers and by the presence of God's loving spirit.

✠ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

We call nine blessings from above:

**In the name of God — the creator, the giver of life, the holder of time
In the name of Jesus — the savior, the healer, the lifter of pain
In the name of the Spirit — the comforter, the consoler, the sustainer of life**

**We bless these mantles of caring
We bless these mantles of protection
We bless these mantles of wholeness**

**We bless these mantles of strength
We bless these mantles of healing
We bless these mantles of patience**

**We bless these mantles to enfold our sisters
We bless these mantles to encircle our brothers
We bless these mantles to empower God's own beloved.**

Ever-present and loving God, your Word tells us to cast our cares on you because you care for us. In faith and trust we present all these gifts to you, and your vision of harmony, justice, and peace. Come, Holy Spirit! Amen.

WE MEET AT THE LORD'S TABLE

THANKSGIVING

We give thanks for the unfolding of matter, mind, spirit, and life that has brought us to this moment in time:
gifts from an Easter God.

All: We celebrate our common origin with everything that exists.

We celebrate the mystery we experience and address as "God":
ground and sustainer of everything that exists,
in whom we live and move and have our being.
And we acknowledge this mystery embodied
in every human person,
aware that each one of us gives God
unique and personal expression.

All: God is everywhere present.

In grace-filled moments of sharing.

In carefully created communities of loving solidarity.

We are one with everything, living and nonliving, on this planet.
Connected. Interrelated. Interdependent. Webs of life within a web of life!

THE STORY

We remember the stories from our tradition ...

... May the passion for life as seen in Jesus,
and in the lives and struggles of many other
committed and faithful people then and now,
enable us to dare and to dream and to risk...

All: Together may we re-imagine the world.

Together may we work to make all things new.

**Together may we celebrate the possibilities and hope
we each have and are called to share.**

BREAD AND WINE

We break the bread for the broken earth,
ravaged and plundered for greed.

All: May God lead us to heal our beautiful blue and green planet.

We break this bread for our broken humanity,
for the powerful and the powerless
trapped by exploitation and oppression.

May the Risen Christ lead us to the healing of humanity.

We break this bread for those who follow other faithful paths.
We break this bread in sisterhood and brotherhood with peoples of every nation,
clan, and tribe.

May the Holy Spirit unite us as one, conquering pain and woundedness.

We break this bread
for the unhealed hurts and wounds
that lie within us all.

May God make us new, for joyful, faithful living.

This is the cup of peace and of new life for all.

A sign of love for the community of hope.

**A reminder of the call
to live fully,
to love wastefully, and
to be all that we can be.**

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and THE LORD'S PRAYER (*trespasses*)

✠ ACT OF PRAISE (*sung*)

GREATOREX

Glory to the Creator, and to the Christ,

And to the Holy Ghost:

As it was in the beginning,

Is now, and ever shall be,

World without end. Amen; Amen.

SHARING THE BREAD AND THE CUP

We celebrate an open communion, and welcome every person to the table. We understand the sharing of the bread and the cup in Jesus' name to be a reenactment of an ancient vision of God's feast for all people. We don't require you to be a member of our church, or any church, to participate with us in this feast of grace: all that is needed is that you desire God's nurture. Today communion will be received in the pews. Please pass the tray before taking the bread or cup; allow your neighbor to serve you. We hold the bread until all are served to signify our unity in Christ. We take the cup as we are served, to signify our personal relationship with Christ. (We use unfermented grape juice.)

PRAYER AFTER COMMUNION

Divine Presence in all of life,
we give thanks that we have gathered together
in this sacred place.

**All: We rejoice in the giftedness of each person here.
We are grateful for who we are for each other.
May we continue to live in gratitude,
in all we do and in all we become. Come, Holy Spirit!**

✘ HYMN #334

“Sweet, Sweet Spirit”

SWEET, SWEET SPIRIT

✘ BENEDICTION AND THREE-FOLD AMEN

(Hymnal, 898)

POSTLUDE

**Please remain seated in silence during the Postlude
before going out to serve as Christ’s representatives in the world.**



WELCOME TO NIAN TIC COMMUNITY CHURCH!

A Heritage of Faith since 1719, and an Open, Affirming, and Reconciling congregation, Niantic Community Church is a federated congregation of the United Methodist Church and the United Church of Christ. It is also a welcoming home to people from a great variety of church backgrounds and life experiences. Your presence here today is a gift to us! We hope you will feel God’s Spirit here today through our worship and fellowship.

If you are a visitor, we invite you to sign our guest register by the rear entrance to the sanctuary. “Welcome” information packets, children’s bulletins, and toys are also available. Our services are recorded each week. You may listen to sermons online: from the home page of our website, click on the “Sermon Archive” link. Audio tapes are available in the church library or by calling the church office (739-6208).

**Please set cell phones and pagers to silent mode
(unless you’re expecting a call from Jesus)**

**Assistive Listening Devices, Large Print Bulletins, and Hymnals
are available. Please ask an usher for assistance!**

Today’s Worship Leaders

9:00AM

Ushers: Ellen Ashburn, Dan Scace,
Carol Donovan, Sonya Hoisington
Worship Leader: Joyce Wood

11:15AM

Ushers: Nancy Burkhardt,
Terry McNatt, Kim Peacock, Edna Gilstad
Worship Leader: Jeannette Woodworth

Preacher: Pastor John A. Nelson
Guest Musician: Richard Schenk
Parish Visitor: Georgie Granger

Flowers have been placed in the sanctuary to the Glory of God,
and with loving thanks for friends and family
as we celebrate our first wedding anniversary,
by Annette Silvia and Lisa Aschenbrenner.

✠ All who are able may stand at these times

Call to Worship and Prayer of Confession adapted and reprinted by permission of the publishers from
Touch Holiness, ed. Ruth C. Duck and Maren C. Tirabassi © 1990 The Pilgrim Press. Blessing of Prayer
Shawls adapted from Cathleen O'Meara Murtha, DW, on www.shawlministry.com

OUR MINISTRY TEAM

Ministers: All Participants in the Life of the Congregation

Worship & Music

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

Education & Youth

Director of Religious Education & Youth
Ministries: Russell Kirby
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: John Whritner, *president*;
Cindy King, *vice-president*; Avery Morgan,
clerk; Linda Leavens, *treasurer*, Liz Kuchta,
historian
Financial Secretary: Judy Layden
Bookkeeper: Sandra Kuchta
Librarian, Newsletter Editor: Jennifer Datum

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

OCCASIONS FOR SERVICE, WITNESS, AND PRAYER

In Our Prayers (offered by worshipers during previous weeks):

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.)

New Concerns:

Janine Schuliger, recovering from cancer surgery • Jodoin family, as their son joins the U.S. Army • Carl Stamm, lymphoma • Dan Daily, brain tumor • Marie, undergoing cancer therapy • Debbie Krasne, lung cancer treatment • Dorothy MacDowell • Matt Liebal, deployed to Iraq • For a family struggling economically • .

For those suffering the after-effects of natural and human-made disasters.

Continuing concerns:

Laureen McCarthy, struggling with persistent virus • Glenna Rondeau, with myasthenia gravis • Becky Fraser, new diagnosis of breast cancer • Beth Lanz, ovarian cancer • For those facing personal, financial, and faith struggles due to failed expectations • Juanita Durham, recovering from surgery • Helen (mother of Sue Smith), in rehab in Michigan • Healing for Billy • Support for Zach and Frankie • for families supporting loved ones dealing with substance abuse • Renewed health for Mary Kay and JQ, in cancer treatment • For two women opting for aggressive treatment of breast cancer • For Carol, Willy, and Jack • Healing and wisdom for a friend with a newly diagnosed condition • Ed Peckham, hospitalized with complications from open heart surgery • Rene Laurençot, Sr., complications from open heart surgery.

A note from NCC member Sandy Butcher:

“I have just been notified that the mother of one of our dear friends, Camilla Edmond, was killed yesterday in a tornado in Tuscaloosa. I

cannot even imagine the shock and pain that Camilla and her family are feeling. Would you please keep them in your prayers. Also, prayers for the others who are devastated because of the horrible storms.” • For the people of Japan, devastated by the earthquake and tsunami • The people of Libya • Paul Swann • Those suffering from depression and anxiety.

The homeless and the hungry: God, help us to remember that homelessness and hunger anywhere is our burden, as well.

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In treatment for cancer:

Joe, diagnosed with pancreatic cancer • Ellen Goeben, chemotherapy • Dorothea, breast cancer treatment • Sandy Doboë, multiple myeloma • Clara Ball – and their families, friends, and caregivers.

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Friends and family now serving our country in the armed forces: Scott Basham; Greg Balsmeier; Alyson Barrett; Josh Earnhart; Matt Fergione; Tony Fergione; Paul Harper; Matt Liebal; Nathaniel Lowe; J.P. Neilson; Thomas Miller; 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:**

Shari Scace

Jim Kopelke • Ellen Bailey

Eric Hamel • Fran Rago

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.

**Thanksgiving for
Ministers of our Church:**

Men's Choir: Rich Cushing; Jerry Gilstad;
Roe Granger; Ed Hemstreet; Ron Johnson;
Alan White; Nan Rigdon, *dir.*; Mary Mirecki,
accomp.

Praise and Celebration:

For Laura, doing well after years of struggle •
For Georganne's 16th birthday • For Ollie
York's 90th birthday • For the gathering of
family, to lay to rest Ray Herzberg's remains •
For the arrival of Russ Kirby, and his ministry
at NCC • For a first wedding anniversary! •
For Matthew Jacobsen's graduation.

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For the search committee that took on the
ministry of finding a settled Director of
Religious Education and Youth Ministries
(Dan Estey, Barbara Heaney, Ron Johnson,
Rebecca Keenan, Kathy Leindecker, Joyce
Wood), Amy Agles, our Acting DREYM, and
Russell Kirby, who has joined our staff. Thanks
be to God!

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. 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, or call the church office (860-739-6208).

LIFE INSURANCE IS A WAY TO MAKE A LARGER GIFT TO THE CHURCH than you might otherwise be able to afford. Consider naming the Church as a beneficiary of any insurance policy.

MIDDLE SCHOOL FELLOWSHIP TODAY, from 12:30- 2:00PM. Meet at the church for some games and then we will stroll to Dairy Queen. YUM. Let's hope for a sunny day! Russ Kirby, our new Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministries (DREYM) will be joining us, so we hope that you all will be able to attend.

HIGH SCHOOL FELLOWSHIP TODAY- Shelter Meal, St. James, New London. Meet at the church at 4:30PM to prepare the meal and desserts. Russ Kirby, our new Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministries (DREYM) will be joining us. We will leave the church for St. James Shelter at 6:00PM and we will return to the church about 7:45 PM.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING, June 12th. Worship Services at 9 & 11 am; Communion served in the pews. "Between Hour Café" 10:00-11:00am; Sunday School for all ages

10:15am. Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching. Scripture readings. Acts 2:1-21; Psalm 104:24-34, 35b; 1 Corinthians 12:3b-13; John 7:37-39.

HEIFER NEWS. Starting last October and running through the end of May our church has raised \$4634 toward our goal of an ARK! We only need an additional \$366 to have the requisite \$5000. We are doing it!! Just a little bit more and we'll be there. Will you help bring us out of the flood?! Gift cards are available from Tami Scace, Bill Wernau, or the church office.

THERE IS NO TAIZE WORSHIP in June, July, and August. Taize will begin again in the fall.

COME JOIN SARA for an evening of song and sweets and Simply Smiles coffee! **Date:** Tuesday, June 7th. **Time:** 6:00- 8:00 PM. Place: NCC Dining Hall. **Event:** Senior Recital-Coffee House by Sara Boike. Proceeds benefit Simply Smiles. (www.simplysmiles.org)

A WORK IN PROGRESS support group for those who are unemployed or expect to be, meets every other Wednesday, 9:30-11:00 a.m. The next support group is June 8th. Program is free but registration is preferred. Facilitated by licensed clinical social worker, Liz Pelissier. Call (860)739-6208.

GRADUATION CELEBRATION - SAVE THE DATE. The Pastor Parish Relations Committee invites all to gather Saturday, June 11, 2011 at 2:30 p.m. to celebrate Pastor John Nelson's graduation from Chicago Theological Seminary with his Doctor of Ministry in Preaching. Graduation date is May 14, 2011, but our local NCC celebration allows all of us to join in this joyous occasion with John's family, friends and colleagues. The celebration consists of a short ceremony in the sanctuary followed by a picnic. We will be giving John a gift on behalf of the congregation. Those wishing to contribute can do so by placing your donations in the offering labeled "Graduation Donation". For those NCC history buffs June 11, 2011 also marks the 50th anniversary of NCC moving into our current building. Sounds like another good reason for a celebration!

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL is just around the corner-July 11-15 from 9:00 AM-12:00PM. VBS will be led by Deb Fountain. Registration Forms are now available on the NCC website, in the church office, and in the narthex. Our theme this summer is "The Shake it Up Cafe". Craft Supplies are in. Could you help run the Craft Station? Please let Deb know (860-739-8586).

NEEDED: Leaders or assistants for our Live B.I.G. Summer One Room Sunday School. Hear, See, and Live your Belief In God! Live B.I.G. is based on three big truths- Think BIG because God is a great BIG God. God loves us with a great BIG love. We are part of God's great BIG world. Please see Amy for sign up. This Summer Sunday School which begins on June 19, will be available for children ages 4 through 4th grade during the Summer worship service at 9:00 AM.

CHILDREN'S SUNDAY is June 12. This is the first Sunday of our summer worship schedule with one service at 9:00 a.m. Worship will be led by children from pre-K through 8th Grade. The children will be planning the service this Sunday, May 22 and Sunday, June 5. It is important that they are part of the planning and rehearsing with their class. Thanks!

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP BOOK CLUB has chosen "Water for Elephants" by Sara Gruen as their next book. We will meet on June 26th at 7 pm in the Fellowship Room. All are welcome.

REMINDER: Signing up for weekly Wednesday email and our monthly newsletter, Tidings, electronically is easy. Just go to nianticcommunitychurch.org and follow the prompts.

THANKS TO EVERYONE who has contributed baby items for John and Angela's missionary friends. We will stop collecting as of Wednesday, June 8th.

OUR RECORD OF FAITHFULNESS IN GIVING AND ATTENDING

Received to Date for 2011: \$180,446.87; Needed to be current for 2011: \$181,504.18

LAST SUNDAY'S ATTENDANCE: 9:00 a.m. - 102; 11:15 a.m. - 115; Church School - 17;

Total: 234

THIS WEEK AT NIAN TIC 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.

SUNDAY, JUNE 5

- 9:00AM Worship Service
10:00-11:00AM "Between Hour Café"
(Dining Hall)
10:15AM Sunday School for All Ages
Adult Offerings: Embracing An Adult Faith
Community (Fellowship Room)
11:15AM Worship Service
12:30AM Middle School Fellowship (Dining
Hall)
6:00PM High School Youth (Shelter)

MONDAY, JUNE 6

- 6:00PM Outreach Committee (Multipurpose
Room)
7:00PM Christian Education Committee
(Multipurpose Room)
7:00PM Music & Worship Arts (Parish Life
Office)
7:00PM Toastmasters (Dining Hall)

TUESDAY JUNE 7

- 7:15AM Breakfast Bible Study (Niantic
Diner)
5:30PM Children's Choir (Sanctuary)
6:00PM Youth Bell Rehearsal (Multipurpose
Room)
6:15PM Gospel Choir (Sanctuary)
7:00PM Parish Life Ministries & Worship
Team (Fellowship Room)

TUESDAY, JUNE 7 CONTINUED

- 7:00PM Open, Affirming, & Reconciling
Committee (Parish Life Office)
7:00PM Boy Scouts (Dining Hall)

WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8

- 9:00AM DISCIPLE (Fellowship Room)
9:30AM Work In Progress-support group for
the unemployed (Parish Life Office)
7:00PM The Healing Art of Photography
(Fellowship Room)
7:30PM NA (Dining Hall)

THURSDAY, JUNE 9

- 9:00AM Newcomers (Dining Hall)
5:30PM Shoreline Food Pantry (Dining Hall)
8:00PM AA (Dining Hall)

FRIDAY, JUNE 10

- 9:30AM Painting from the Source
(Multipurpose Room)
7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

SATURDAY, JUNE 11

- 10:00-11:00AM AA (Multipurpose
Room/Fellowship Room)
2:30PM Service & Celebration for Pastor
John Nelson (Sanctuary/Dining
Hall/Outside Weather Permitting)
7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

Niantic Community Church

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www.NianticCommunityChurch.org

Church Office Hours: Monday-Thursday 8:30-5:00 p.m.; Friday 8:30-Noon