

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.”

September 25, 2011 • 9:00 & 11:15AM

River and Ocean Sunday
Fourth Sunday of the Season of Creation

WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

PRELUDE

“Vision”

Rheinberger

SHARING OF PARISH ACTIVITIES & RITUAL OF FRIENDSHIP

Those closest to the center aisle in each pew 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. Prayer requests will be collected during the second hymn.

INTROIT #473

“Lead Me, Lord”

LEAD ME, LORD

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

CALL TO WORSHIP

One: In the name of the Creator, the fountain of life,
in the name of Christ, the pulse of life,
and in the name of the Spirit, the breath of life. Amen.

Many: Holy! Holy! Holy!

Earth is filled with God’s presence.

Christ, we come into your presence to worship in this sanctuary called Earth,
a planet alive with your presence;
a presence quivering in the forests;
a presence vibrating in the land;
a presence pulsating in the wilderness;
a presence shimmering in the rivers and ocean.

God, reveal yourself to us in this place, and show us your face in all creation.

Holy! Holy! Holy!

The whole earth is filled with your glory.

✠ HYMN (insert)

“Let All Things Now Living”

THE ASH GROVE

PRAYER OF CONFESSION

One: In this sanctuary, set apart to give praise to God,
we remember the sanctuary of God’s creation,
flowing with the power of life.

**We remember the rivers God created
in Eden and across our planet,
rivers that are the lifeblood of Earth
and the soul of all that lives.**

**We remember the sound, within sight of this building,
the power and beauty of water:
the seas that provide food,
the rhythms and movement of the ocean.**

Jesus Christ, water of life, hear our cry.

**We regret that we have become alienated from Earth
and treated this garden planet as a beast to be tamed,
as a domain to be dominated,
and as a place to be ruled for our gain.**

We remember and confess how we have violated and
polluted the rivers and oceans of our garden planet.

We are sorry.

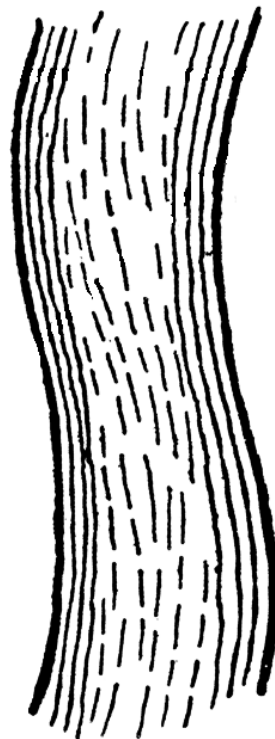
We have damaged your rivers with poisons.

We have treated oceans as waste dumps.

We have drained our wetlands of life.

We have turned living waters into currents of death.

We are sorry. We are sorry.



ABSOLUTION

Christ hears your confession from the Jordan, forgives your sins against the rivers
and oceans, and calls you now to open your ears and your hearts to revive rather
than to desecrate the waters pulsing through our planet.

**Christ, teach us to love Earth as our home
and all living creatures as our kin.**

Help us to return home to Earth.

I speak for Christ:
I invite you to come home to Earth,
and I call you to care for this planet with love,
to care for its rivers as I have cared for you,
and to join me in healing creation.

Shalom! Shalom!

We are coming home!

As we come home to Earth,

Lord, have mercy.

As we seek to love our home,

Christ, have mercy.

As we seek to care for our kin,

Lord, have mercy.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*trespasses*)

WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL IN WORD

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

✘ HYMN #400

“Come, Thou Fount of Every Blessing”

NETTLETON

Prayer requests will be collected; Children attending Sunday School (PreK–5th grade)
may leave during the singing of the hymn.

SCRIPTURE READING: Revelation 22:1-5

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.

SERMON

“Bright Water Flowing”

John A. Nelson

PRAYERS

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE

CREATION CREED

**We believe that God creates all things,
renews all things, and celebrates all things.**

**We believe Earth is a sanctuary,
a sacred planet filled with God's presence,
a home for us to share with all creatures.**

**We believe every creature joins us in praising God.
We see many suffer with Earth
because of human abuse and disrespect of creation.**

**We believe that God became incarnate as a part of Earth,
in the person of Jesus Christ,
that he lived and breathed and spoke among us,
suffered and died on a cross,
for all human beings and for all creation.**

**We believe that the risen Jesus Christ
fills the whole creation,
reconciling all things to God,
renewing all things.**

**We believe the Spirit renews life in creation,
groans in empathy with every suffering creature,
and waits with us for the rebirth of the whole creation.**

**We believe that with Christ we will rise
and with Christ we will celebrate a new creation,
reconciled, restored, and renewed.**

WE RESPOND IN PRAYER AND FAITH

OFFERTORY

One: Generous God, you pour goodness into all creation with the rush and power of a mighty river. We don't always notice. But you send your Word to remind us of the wonder in which we live — and we give thanks for your astonishing gift. With praise and gratitude, we return our tithes and offerings: a portion of the abundance you have given us.

All: With our gifts and with all creation, we bless our Creator God.

RECEIVING TITHES AND OFFERINGS

THE MUSICAL OFFERING

(9:00AM)	<i>"Sing a New Song"</i> (Adult Choir)	<i>Pethel</i>
(11:15AM)	<i>"Reverie"</i>	<i>Strauss</i>

✠ DOXOLOGY

**Praise God, from Whom all blessings flow;
Praise Christ, all creatures here below;**

OLD 100TH

**Praise Holy Spirit, comforter:
One God, Triune, whom we adore. Amen.**

✠ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

Creator God, your spirit hovered over the waters of creation, blessing them with your goodness. We were baptized in those same holy waters; we live with life-sustaining water inside us and around us. We bless these tithes and offerings, that they may serve your realm of grace, ever flowing through us and all creation. In Jesus' name; Amen.

✠ HYMN #723

“Shall We Gather at the River”

HANSON PLACE

✠ COMMISSIONING

One: Christ calls us to be his disciples, to serve him with love and compassion, to serve Earth by caring for creation, honoring the land that God has made alive so that we and all our kin may live.

**Many: We will follow our Lord, the risen Christ,
we will be partners with Christ in healing our planet,
we will join the Wounded Healer as he restores all things.
We will care for creation.
We will love our kin.
We will celebrate life.**

✠ BENEDICTION AND THREE-FOLD AMEN

(Hymnal, 898)

POSTLUDE

“Come Christians, Join to Sing”

Linker

**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, 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. CD recordings are also available 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 Bibles, Bulletins, and
Hymnals are available. Please ask an usher for assistance!**

Today's Worship Leaders

9:00AM

Ushers: Peg Herzberg, Germaine
Ruderman, Judy DeVey, Marion
McKenzie

Worship Leader: Ellen Ashburn

11:15AM

Ushers: Ocean Pellett,
Anne Davis

Worship Leader: Paul Helvig

Preacher: Pastor John A. Nelson

Parish Visitor: Lisa Gilmore

Flowers have been placed in the sanctuary to the Glory of God
by the Diaconate Board.

✠ All who are able may stand at these times

Call to Worship, Confession, Absolution, Creed of Creation, and Commissioning
adapted from seasonofcreation.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:

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:

Monty, recovering from ankle replacement • Healing for Tami Scace • Carole and her family, going through trying times • Dan and Jim • Aunt Lyla and John • Rose, with health problems • Jim and Holly Logan, liver and pancreatic cancer • Rich and all living with Crohn's disease • For success in a new business for Mary Ann Birch • Deb, in chemotherapy •

Continuing concerns:

Families and individuals struggling economically

Owen Duarte, for a successful school year and attention to special needs • Stephen, stomach cancer • Susan Brown, broken wrist • Leo Martin, broken ankle • Ashley Rotchford, studying in Cairo • Violet Rowles • Ophelia White, in rehab • Dawn, with brain illness, and family • Todd, in Afghanistan • Ginger

Ely, health concerns • Meloney and family, as she prepares for death • Holly, Tiffany, and Emily • Barbara Silvia, at Bridebrook rehab • Pat Spencer, recovering from heart attack • Roger Spencer, leg infection • Anna, with bipolar disease • Lisa, difficult pregnancy • Dan and Alma • Lila, Tom, Eleanor, and Phyllis • Traveling mercies for parents in Ireland • Dot Mike, at Bridebrook rehab • Paul Swann, in hospice care.

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:

Tina Daniels, breast cancer • Dan Daily • Ed Painter • Ellen Goeben, chemotherapy • Sandy Doboie, 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; Josh Earnhart; Matt Fergione; Tony Fergione; Paul Harper; Matt Liebal; 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:**

John Miller • Aunt Melony
Janine Theve • Traci Hart
Mary Kay Lescoe • Joyce Greineder
Martha Olsen

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:**

UMC Board of Trustees Ron Johnson;
Carl Putnam; Iva Thomas

Praise and Celebration:

Thanking God that testing shows the mass in Dawn's brain is not cancerous • Birth of grandson Brogan Ashburn, son of Octavia and Jason Ashburn • Marriage of Peg and Tom • Marriage of Kristen and Ryan • John Pyatt's 5th birthday • A job for Stefanie • For family visits • Nephew Forrest now able to walk, after recovery from broken leg & ankle • Anniversaries for Ashburns, Gilstads, and Grangers • The marriage of Anne Johnson and Justin Palmer, and the gathering of family and friends • For children and grandchildren • For family and friends giving support and guidance during a nervous breakdown • For all those bold enough to follow God humbly toward their goals and dreams!

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).

CONSIDER MAKING A GIFT OF YOUR PERSONAL RESIDENCE or farm now and continuing to live there until your death. An immediate income tax deduction may be available for this arrangement. Maintenance costs might also be shared. At your death the property would be available for Church use.

CHILDREN'S CHOIR rehearsals have begun on Tuesdays, 5:30-6:15. New singers welcome and encouraged in both groups! They meet in the Sanctuary.

GOSPEL CHOIR rehearsals follow the Children's Choir rehearsals, 6:15-7:00 All are still welcome to join us!

PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING GROUP Tuesday, September 27th at 7pm in the Fellowship Room. Please join us for uplifting conversation and knitting/crocheting. Lessons and patterns available. Call Jane Barth (860-739-6002) with questions.

JOIN US FOR A CELEBRATION OF THE ARTS AND ARTISANS, "Pictures in Paint, Poetry and Pixels," at Niantic Community Church on Friday, September 30th, 7-10pm. View the extraordinary work of artists from these nurturing faith ministry programs: Painting from the Source; Spirited Pens; The Healing Art of Photography.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING, October 2nd. Worship Services at 9 & 11:15am with communion served in the pews; 10:00-11:00am "Between Hour Café;" 10:15am Adult Sunday School. Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching. Scripture readings: Exodus 20:1-4, 7-9, 12-20; Psalm 19 or Psalm 80:7-15; Philippians 3:4b-14; Matthew 21:33-46.

BLOOD DRIVE set for October 4th, 1:30-6:30pm in the Dining Hall at NCC. To make an appointment to donate blood, call the American Red Cross at 1-800-733-2767.

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

MINISTRY OPPORTUNITY-Care to help spread word of the great work we do at NCC? Well, we can help you do it. One Table, Many Meals has been reduced to the overstock cookbook price of \$10. Yep, it's true! If only half of all church members bought just one cookbook to give away, we would be sold out! And our cookbook would be spread throughout the community. Give one to your mailman, your doctor, your hairdresser, your dentist, your neighbor, your Realtor, teachers and friends. Help us spread the word.... They are available in the church office. Or call (860)739-6208.

SACRED SOUNDS ~ An inspiring afternoon of song and poetry to benefit A Sacred Place will be held at the First Congregational Church of Old Lyme (2 Ferry Road, Old Lyme CT) today at 3pm. The program will feature internationally acclaimed soprano Susan von Reichenbach, virtuoso pianist and conductor Joseph D'Eugenio and award winning poet laureate Marilyn Nelson. Proceeds will support programs that promote transformation and healing for incarcerated women at York Correctional Institution in Niantic, CT. A Sacred Place offers spiritual studies, therapeutic art, poetry, meditation, yoga, and guidance for recovery from addiction, sexual abuse and domestic violence. Tickets are \$25.00. To reserve your tickets and for more information please call 860-739-4518 - www.asacredplace.org

NIANTIC COMMUNITY CHURCH CHILDREN'S CENTER is now enrolling for fall classes. We register children ages 6 weeks to 5 years. We are a small non-profit, family oriented childcare that is NAEYC accredited. We accept Care4kids and offer scholarships. Please call Kathy at (860)739-0877 or email at director@nccchildrenscenter.com

THE NEXT BOOK WE WILL DISCUSS IS "Unbroken" by Laura Hillenbrand. We will meet November 13th at 7 pm at NCC. Please join us!

"DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT: WITH YOUR VOICE JUSTICE CAN HAPPEN!!!" Save the Date: The evening of November 29th, United Action Connecticut (UACT) announces a gathering of congregations to inspire and motivate us as we move forward together. Location to be announced soon.

The **NCC Prudential Board** recently approved a revised policy on fundraising by church committees and individuals. This was part of a general review of all church policies to make sure we are consistent and clear in how we handle money (one of Jesus' principle concerns!)

If you or your church committee is planning a fundraiser, it is recommended that you ask for a copy of the policy (Policy #12) from the office before you start.

OUR RECORD OF FAITHFULNESS IN GIVING AND ATTENDING

Received to Date for 2011: \$304,949.88; Needed to be current for 2011: \$316,751.66
LAST SUNDAY'S ATTENDANCE: 9:00 a.m. - 178; 11:15 a.m. - 29; Church School - 32
Total: 239

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, SEPTEMBER 25

- 9:00AM Worship Service
10:00-11:00AM "Between Hour Café"
(Dining Hall)
10:15AM **Adult Sunday School**—First Light
"Resurrection as Resistance"
(Fellowship Room)
11:15AM Worship Service
5:00PM Youth Fellowship-6th-12th (Dining
Hall, Multipurpose Room)

MONDAY SEPTEMBER 26

- 7:00PM Men's Choir (Sanctuary)
7:00PM PPRC (Fellowship Room)
NO Personnel Meeting

TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 27

- 7:15AM Breakfast Bible Study (Niantic
Diner)
5:30 PM Children's Choir (Sanctuary)
6:15 PM Gospel Choir (Sanctuary)
7:00PM Boy Scouts (Dining Hall)
7:00PM Prayer Shawl Knitting Group
(Fellowship Room)

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 28

- 7:30PM NA (Dining Hall)

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 29

- 6:00PM Shoreline Food Pantry (Dining Hall)
7:00PM Adult Choir Rehearsal (Sanctuary)
8:00PM AA (Dining Hall)

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

- 7:00PM Pictures in Paint, Poetry & Pixels
(Multipurpose Room)
7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

SATURDAY, OCTOBER 1

- 10:00-11:00AM AA (Multipurpose &
Fellowship Rooms)
7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS BULLETIN!

Niantic Community Church

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Fax: 860-739-8308 • E-mail: NianticCommChurch@sbcglobal.net

www.NianticCommunityChurch.org

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