

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.”

November 20, 2011 • 9:00 & 11:15AM
The Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

A Season for Pledging at NCC:

Trust • Nourish • Pray • Leap with Faith

Thanks-for-Giving

WE GATHER AS THE CHURCH

HYMN SING

SHARING OF PARISH ACTIVITIES

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. Prayer requests will be collected during the second hymn.

A SIGN OF OUR UNITY AND RECONCILIATION

Please greet those around you, wishing them “peace” or “the peace of Christ.”

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

INTROIT

"Rooted and Grounded in Love"

Hamm



Root-ed and ground-ed in love, root-ed and



ground-ed in love, here in this place we find



mer-cy and grace, root-ed and ground-ed in love.

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CALL TO WORSHIP

One: People of God, we are here to practice thanks-giving.

Many: Thanks to our Creator, who lovingly provides far more than we could ask or imagine: all praise and honor to God!

God has made us and all creatures, all growing things and the nurturing earth.

And we are the bearers of God's blessing and love for the earth and its people.

Everything that we are, everything that we have, belongs to God! We belong to the One who gives life and abundance: through joyful times and troubled times, God leads us to wholeness and harmony, justice and joy.

In this holy hour, set apart to remember who we are and Whose we are, we practice our gratitude. Thanks be to God! Thanks be to God! Thanks be!

✦ HYMN #694

"Come Ye Thankful People, Come"

ST. GEORGE'S WINDSOR

CALL TO REFLECTION

In the safety of this sacred place I invite you now into a time of silence.

(Silence)

May our ears be attuned to hear the great symphony of the universe, and the solo song of every beating heart.

(Silence)

RESPONSIVE PRAYER OF CONFESSION

Mighty and tender God – the deep within all; the encompassing heart of all – we enter now into your kin-dom, your community of wholeness, a realm of peace.

**We bring our hunger,
and the hunger of the world.**

**We bring our inner stranger,
and the exiled of the world.**

**We bring our hurting selves,
and the hurting of the world.**

**We bring our separation from you,
caused by what we have done and what we have not done.**

We open ourselves to your healing forgiveness.

Inspired by your grace, we dare to imagine integrity in our inner life, our relationships, our planet, and all the ways we live together.

**We dare to imagine the reign of Christ,
love's Servant and love's Self:
your heart given freely
to heal and renew each of us and all the world.**

(Silence)

ASSURANCE OF PARDON

God searches for the lost,
and finds us;

God invites the hungry to the table,
and feeds us;

God sends Jesus,
and frees us from death's prison;

God forgives all who sin,
and heals us with mercy and grace.

Thanks be to God! Amen.

THE LORD'S PRAYER (*trespasses*)

WE PROCLAIM THE GOSPEL

A THOUGHT FOR YOUNG MINDS

✠ HYMN #157

“Jesus Shall Reign Where'er the Sun”

DUKE STREET

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

SCRIPTURE READING: Ephesians 1:15-23

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

“Endless Energy, Boundless Strength”

John A. Nelson

CALL TO PRAYER

One: God be with you.

Many: And also with you.

May the peace of Christ dwell in your hearts.

Christ is our peace, our light, and our hope.

Let us pray.

PRAYERS OF THE PEOPLE and PASTORAL PRAYER

(9:00AM) ANTHEM

“Thanks Be To Thee”

Handel

WE FEAST IN GOD’S LOVE — THE AGAPE MEAL

LITANY OF THE AGAPE MEAL

Leader: The Lord be with you,

People: And also with you.

Lift up your hearts!

We lift them to God.

Let us thank God:

It is good to thank God.

God, as we prepare to share our Agape meal, we remember that you are always feeding us, always nurturing us, always drawing us into community, and we are grateful.

God our ruler, giver of all gifts, we thank you for the many blessings which you have given to this family of faith: the promise of your covenant; the power of your presence; the mystery of your love.

We thank you for the rich history of this congregation: for all our forefathers and foremothers who, throughout the past two hundred and ninety-two years, have given of their time, their financial resources, and of themselves to make this church the place of trust, nourishment, prayer, and faith that it is today.

We thank you for gathering us as a new family: bound together by shared life in you. We thank you for the ways you are guiding us into new days of joy and justice, harmony and hope. With you, our cup of blessing overflows!

We thank you, God, that we can speak freely, that we can gather freely and, most of all, that we can worship you freely. Help us to give ourselves to you, as we live out the mission of your church to feed the hungry, clothe the shivering, bind up the spirits of the discouraged, serve your peace, and proclaim your kingdom with joy.

As we share in the gifts of this table, we also bring forward our tithes, our offerings, and our pledges of financial support for our church in the coming year. We do so because we have experienced the ways that you, God, are causing us to grow, teach, rejoice, and care. We give, because you first gave.

We wish to live in an attitude of thanksgiving and generosity.

We thank you for this food, provided by your earth and assembled by our hands, for the flavor is rich and good. We thank you for this small feast, which we call Agape. It reminds us of the great feast that comes from you: a creation bountiful enough to feed the world; a community with care enough to fill our hearts with goodness.

**We give ourselves, our gifts, and our pledges
to your vision of goodness for all. In Christ and for Christ we pray; Amen.**

RETURNING OUR OFFERINGS AND PLEDGES
TO GOD'S WORK IN OUR CHURCH

✠ 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.**

✠ UNISON PRAYER OF DEDICATION

**God our Creator, you have blessed your world
with riches beyond counting.
Stretch our imaginations so that we live
in the confidence of your abundance: enough for everyone, everywhere.
Bless each offering and commitment to our church
that we have placed before you,
and bless the mission and ministries to which they are given.
Thy kingdom come! Thy will be done!
Let our hearts be filled with thanksgiving for you,
from whom all blessings flow! In Jesus' name, Amen.**

WE DEPART TO SERVE GOD'S KINGDOM

✠ HYMN #715

"Rejoice, the Lord Is King"

DARWALL'S 148TH

✠ BENEDICTION AND THREE-FOLD AMEN

(Hymnal, 898)

POSTLUDE

“Now Thank We All Our God”

Rawsthorne

**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, Sue Anglim,
Doris Beebe, Neil Passman
Worship Leader: Ned Ruete

11:15AM

Ushers: Carol Donovan, Rich Morrill
Worship Leader: Nancy Hunt

Preacher: Pastor John A. Nelson

Parish Host: Candy Neilson

Flowers have been placed in the sanctuary to the Glory of God and
In Loving Memory of William and Valerie Lange,
by Luane Lange.

✠ All who are able may stand at these times

Call to Worship & Confession adapted and reprinted from "Lectionary Liturgies" by the Rev. Thom Schumann © 2011 (lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com). Used with permission. "You Call Us Lord, to Be" words adapted from Jane Marshall (1924-) © 1992 Hope Publishing Company. Reproduced with permission under license #1367 LicenSing Copyright Cleared Music for Churches. Prayer of Dedication from the Iona Community (adapted).

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:

Shirley and Warren • Katie, diagnosed with adenocarcinoma • Henry Reed, cancer • Michael Polesky, cancer • Kenny O'Brien, cancer surgery • Andy, recovering from stroke following bypass surgery • Kathy, recovering from surgery.

Continuing concerns:

Families and individuals struggling economically • Homeless children • Women who are victims of domestic violence

Mark and Kit, praying that they will find each other again • Andy, recovering from surgery • Healing for Allie, with sprained elbow • Howard White, Davon, and family • For the power of forgiveness and understanding; for strength while dealing with personal struggles • Norm Ruderman, surgery • Paul Cianci, debilitating stroke • Marie Hall, surgery • Healing for Richie after lung transplant, and prayers for donor's family • Judy, recovery from surgery • Healing for Walter • Penny Briggs, recovering from ankle surgery •

healing for Linda Helvig • Denise Golden, surgery • for caregivers • for those of us seeking renewal of faith • Natalie Kaplan, recovering from surgery • Marie Hall, kidney disease • support and comfort for Melissa • Dot, lung cancer surgery • Denny, recovering from surgery • Safe travel for family and friends • Alma, Sue, Dan, Conner, Phyllis, Aunt Lyla.

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.

•

In treatment for cancer:

Brian Chaffee, diagnosed with stomach cancer
• Al, in chemotherapy • 6-month old Jillian Rose, chemotherapy • Mark Stanberry, bladder cancer • Steve, with stage 4 cancer • Becky Fraser, chemotherapy • Stephen, stomach cancer • Deb and Bob, in chemotherapy • Tina Daniels, breast cancer • Dan Dailey • Ed Painter • Clara Ball — and their families, friends, and caregivers.

Friends and family now serving our country in the armed forces: Scott Basham; Greg Balsmeier; Robin Bourne (in Afghanistan); Josh Earnhart; Matt Fergione; Tony Fergione; Paul Harper; Matt Liebal; J.P. Neilson; Thomas Miller; Brian Perchal; Zachary Peters; Peter Rondeau; Rich Smith (in Afghanistan); Caitlin Strauhall; 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:

Stephen Wood • Brian Dagle
Jeanne Payton-Van Orman • Graham Locklear
John Morrisette • Paul Leka
Paul Swann • Barbara Silvia
Samantha Sterenchock • Janet Bernardini

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:

Finance Committee Ralph Bates; Jerry Gilstad; Cindy King; Tami Scace; Annette Silvia; John Whritner; *Treasurer* Linda Leavens; *Asst. Treasurer* Carol Donovan; *Financial Secretary* Judith Layden; *Bookkeeper* Sandy Kuchta.

Praise and Celebration:

Birth of Lorin Anne Peters, daughter of Zachary and Katie, granddaughter of Jolie Peters • Marie Hall, for good news in treatment of kidney tumor • Muriel Briggs' birthday milestone • Miracle Voices 30th anniversary celebration • Marriage of Dan & Molly Burgess • A wonderful week with a dear friend • For a friend who found a job after two years of unemployment • For kindness and support while recovering from injury • 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 GIVING THE USE OF YOUR PROPERTY TO YOUR HEIRS FOR THE DURATION OF THEIR LIFE, but having the property left at their death pass to the Church as a memorial. Your surviving beneficiaries will have the use of the property for their life. The property will help support the ministry of the Church after their death.

A CHRISTIAN LOOK AT CAPITAL PUNISHMENT CONTINUES THIS SUNDAY IN ADULT CHURCH SCHOOL. We are hearing from Sister Helen Prejean-a long-time advocate to abolish the death penalty-speaking on DVD. Be ready for some lively discussion! Class starts at 10:15 AM in the Fellowship Room; we'll see you there!

OUR 24 FOOT PORTABLE LABYRINTH HAS ARRIVED ! A small group will be meeting soon, to plan the future of our labyrinth ministry. If you feel called to this ministry, please let me know. Patty Chaffee, (860)739-6208.

PRAYER SHAWL KNITTING GROUP Tuesday, November 22nd 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.

THE CHRISTMAS TOY PROJECT IS FAST APPROACHING. The wrapping day at NCC is Wednesday, December 14 from 9:30 -3:30, with set up on December 12 and 13. Please join us any day that you are able to help with this annual effort. We need your donations of toys, gift cards, books, etc. for boys and girls ages infant- 16 and holiday gift wrap, ribbon, gift tags, and tape, too! Please drop off in the gift wrapped boxes in the narthex or outside the church office beginning Sunday, November 20. These toys will be sent to the children of mothers at York Correctional Institution. Any monetary donations may be made payable to NCC with Christmas Toy Project Postage or Christmas Toy Project Gifts in the memo line of your check.

NEXT SUNDAY MORNING, November 27th. Worship Services at 9 & 11:15am; 10:00-11:00am "Between Hour Café;" 10:15am Adult Church School. Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching. Scripture readings: Isaiah 64:1-9; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19; 1 Corinthians 1:3-9; Mark 13:24-37.

THE MITTEN TREE GIFT TREE is up for your selection during Coffee Hour. Gift cards will go to Covenant to Care, Care and Share, and the NCC Care Fund. Our congregations will be donating gift cards members have purchased from their choice of: Tri-Town, ShopRite, Stop and Shop, Target and WalMart. Choose a mitten and sign the gift list. By December 11, place the gift card and mitten in an envelope and place it into the special mitten box that will be at the tree on Sunday, and in the office during each week. Cross

your name off of the list. Givers can decide on the amount to donate via the gift card. Please....if your gift card does not have the amount printed on it, mark the card with the amount before placing the gift card in the donation box. (Otherwise, we must go to the store to scan it before we distribute it.) Remember all donated gift cards need to be received by December 11. Thank you so much for taking a mitten! The Outreach Committee

THANKS TO Nori Lembree and family for the tasty pasta snack supper Sunday evening at Youth Fellowship! Mmm! And to Leena Faulkner for her helping on the downstairs bulletin boards, posting some more recent youth and children's pics...Looking good! Many thanks to Cathleen Donovan for meticulously putting the Children's Center back together after the Jack Frost Bazaar, and to Caroline Gonsalves and Marissa Mirecki for re-setting Russ' communion ware display, very artistically, I might add. Thanks, also, to Mary Mirecki and the folks of the Jack Frost Bazaar for the extra leftover goodies stocking the youth pantry!

SEVERAL SENIOR YOUTH and their parents met Tuesday night, November 15, and excitedly chose the great city of Chicago for our next YouthWorks summer mission trip. We have reserved 20 slots for the trip, and they are available on a first come, first served basis, so register now! At least 4 of those slots must be adults. The actual dates at the site are June 24-29, 2012; details are still being worked on regarding total cost, travel dates and such. For more information on the work site, [click here](#). Our first meeting to plan fundraising will be Tuesday, November 29th at 7 PM in the Fellowship Room.

THIS YEAR OUR CHILDREN'S CHURCH SCHOOL AND YOUTH we will be celebrating an "Advent of Giving" each of the four weeks leading up to Christmas. This is a wonderful opportunity to learn to give--not just receive--at Christmastime, and we will be doing something different each weekend. It kicks off Thanksgiving weekend Sunday when our bell choir conductor Lynne Floyd will teach the kids some Christmas songs on bells that we will use to ring in Advent with our church. More info on "Advent of Giving" is on the way!

SUNDAY, NOV. 27: ONE ROOM CHURCH SCHOOL SPECIAL EVENT: Christmas bell ringing with Lynn Floyd!

DEMOCRACY IS NOT A SPECTATOR SPORT! INTERFAITH JUSTICE ISSUES ASSEMBLY TUESDAY, NOV. 29 IN MIDDLETOWN. Faith communities across Connecticut interested in cooperating more effectively on social and economic justice issues impacting our people, will gather Tue. evening, Nov. 29, from 7-9 p.m. at St. Pius X Parish Hall, 310 Westfield St. in Middletown. Churches, synagogues, mosques and other faith groups are invited to send teams. Interested individuals are also welcome, including small business owners, health care professionals, students, those currently unemployed or underemployed,

recent immigrants, etc. The program will include a brief panel presentation by: Dr. Steve Smith from the National Physicians' Alliance; Lorella Praeli from CT Students for the Dream; and Peter Thor from AFSCME Council 4. Discussion/Strategy breakouts will follow focusing on health care reform, immigration reform, jobs/economic supports and other issues that may be raised. The goal is the shaping of an action plan for 2012. Admission is free but reservations are encouraged due to limited seating. To RSVP, for rides or further info, please click on the link or call United Action Connecticut (UACT) at 860-882-3849.

**Volunteers Needed
to Help Serve Community Meal
Over the Holidays.**

Since this becomes a hectic time of year I thought I would start early lining up volunteers to help with our Community Meal in November (Saturday, November 26th) and December (Saturday, December 24th). We find that 6 volunteers are just about right. Over the holidays members of the congregation often ask about serving with their children. When this request comes in just before the meal, I often don't have a spot to accommodate them. Please let me know as soon as possible if you are interested in helping at the November or December meal. Thank you NCC. Anne Davis (860-739-7455).

"Throughout over 40 years NCC has offered summer suppers. These have required tremendous hours of work and talents on behalf of the congregation. During the last 3 years there has been a drop off in attendance and revenue from our four suppers. Profit has gone down over \$1800 (to \$3890). There has also been difficulty in finding workers for the suppers. At its November meeting Prudential Board will consider a motion to discontinue summer suppers for this upcoming summer. In 2013 there would be an evaluation of other ways to raise funds for NCC. Please let the officers and members of Prudential Board have your views prior to their November 21st meeting."

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 NOVEMBER 20

- 9:00AM Worship Service
10:00AM Nominating Comm. (Parish Life Office)
10:00-11:00AM "Between Hour Café" (Dining Hall)
10:15AM **Adult Church School** – Questioning Capital Punishment "Next Steps" (Fellowship Room)
11:15AM Worship Service
5:00PM Youth Fellowship-6th-12th (Dining Hall, Multipurpose Room)

MONDAY NOVEMBER 21

- 7:00PM Men's Choir (Sanctuary)
7:00PM Prudential Board (Fellowship Room)
7:00PM Toastmasters (Multipurpose Room)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22

- 7:15AM Breakfast Bible Study (Niantic Diner)
5:30 PM Children's Choir (Sanctuary)
6:00PM Youth Bells (Multipurpose Room)
6:15 PM Gospel Choir (Sanctuary)
7:00PM Boy Scouts (Dining Hall)

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 22 CONTINUED

- 7:00PM Adult Bells (Multipurpose Room)
7:00PM Prayer Shawl Knitting Group (Fellowship Room)

WEDNESDAY, NOVEMBER 23

- 9:30AM Disciple I (Fellowship Room)
7:30PM NA (Dining Hall)

THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 24

- Thanksgiving Holiday – Church Offices and Children's Center closed*
8:00PM AA (Dining Hall)

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25

- Thanksgiving Holiday – Church Offices and Children's Center closed*
2:30 PM Community Meal Prep (Kitchen)
7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 26

- 9:00 PM Community Meal Prep (Kitchen)
10:00-11:00AM AA (Multipurpose & Fellowship Rooms)
7:30PM AA (Dining Hall)

PLEASE RECYCLE THIS BULLETIN!

Niantic Community Church

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