

Tidings

Monthly news for members & friends from Niantic Community Church

October 2009

FROM THE PASTOR AND TEACHER

Dear Friends,

Grace and greetings, in the name of God our creator and Jesus Christ, our brother and savior!

A few weeks ago we made the shift in our schedule: Sunday School for all ages, between our two morning worship services. On each of the three Sundays in September, we've had 45 to 60 adults and up to 75 children and youth in classes. I truly believe there is joy in heaven, for what is happening here! All those minds and hearts, being shaped and stretched by reflection on God's Word and God's activity in our lives. I do not cease to give thanks.

And particular thanks are due from all of us, to the many people who are making possible this essential ministry. The Christian Education Committee has poured itself energetically into the effort. The "Divine Activity Time" for younger children has been graciously and lovingly led by a number of our members. Paul Helvig, our congregation's president (and a teacher by training and spirit) has recruited members and friends of the congregation to lead the discussions in our adult classes. Thanks to the church leaders who host the "Between Hour Café," there's a new level of hospitality in the dining hall.

Oh, yes — and let's not forget Jess Bunger! Jess is leading our educational and youth ministries with extraordinary skill, devotion, energy, and faithfulness. All of those qualities have been abundantly clear in our new emphasis on life-long learning. She is a blessing to us.

Prayer, Learning, and Service

Recently I was searching for a metaphor, to make a point about the importance of prayer and learning in the life of faith. I had learned long ago to think of prayer as breath: what happens if we push that image further? ***In the life of faith, prayer is breath; learning is nourishment; service is exercise.***

Prayer is breath: the most basic of all needs in the life of faith. Without prayer, faith cannot survive, just our bodies cannot survive without breath. Sometimes we fool ourselves into thinking that prayer is something extra, or addition, or best done by the pastor — but in fact, it is the most immediate and essential activity for a living faith.

Learning is nourishment. Just our bodies cannot survive long without food and water, faith depends on a regular, healthy diet of reflection on God's Word.

Service is exercise. Exercise works on mind and body, making them fit and healthy: strong enough to face the demands of the day and better able to fight off illness. Service fills the same function in the life of faith. God has made us not for ourselves, but for others: through service to others we keep our faith nimble and strong.

Are you breathing, eating, exercising? Are you praying, learning, exercising? A modest amount every day will yield amazing results.

God's richest blessings to you,

Pastor John

Worship in October

Sundays at 9 & 11:15am

October 4th: 18th Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: 1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching: "Stewards for Life"

October 11th: 19th Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Job 23:1-9, 16-17 and Psalm 22:1-15 (or Amos 5:6-7, 10-15 and Ps 90:12-17); Hebrews 4:12-16; Mark 10:17-31

Christa Swenson, preaching

October 18th: 20th Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Job 38:1-7 (34-41) and Ps 104:1-9, 24, 35c (Isaiah 53:4-12 and Psalm 91:9-16); Hebrews 5:1-10; Mark 10:35-45

Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching: "Locard's Principle"

October 25th: 21st Sunday after Pentecost

Texts: Job 42:1-6, 10-17 and Psalm 34:1-8 (19-22) (or Jeremiah 31:7-9 and Psalm 126) Hebrews 7:23-28; Mark 10:46-52

Pastor John A. Nelson, preaching: "The Question of a Lifetime"

... and Sundays at 5:00pm

**Seashore Praise
Contemporary Worship
All ages welcome**

Sunday School for Adults

Between Sunday morning services

October 4th

- Crossing the Racial Divide: "The Spirit is Moving"
- Dream: "Jesus"

October 11th

- Crossing the Racial Divide: "Strategies to Move Us Forward"
- Dream: "Risk"

October 18th

- Sermon talkback
- Think: "Thinking Theologically"

October 25th

- Spirit of Fire: "Faith, Art, and Action: Spiritual Improvisation"
- Think: "Taking the Bible Seriously"

Crossing the Racial Divide

Go beneath the surface of diversity rhetoric and get to the heart of your assumptions about race and privilege in the United States. Voices from the

streets and from the gospels provide insight into institutional racism and give cause for pause and reflection. How does our faith guide us through?

Dream & Think

What is Christianity all about for the world today? Starting with the foundation of "Love God with all your heart, soul, strength, and mind" (Luke 10.27), **Dream•Think•Be•Do** features the insights of over twenty-five theologians and teachers. Jump in at *any* time for conversation about following Jesus in today's world.

Spirit of Fire

A 4 week study and art-filled resource that explores the passionate and often contentious relationship between art and the church. Where might artists and people of faith find common ground and common values? How can the gifts of each come together to catalyze social change?

Sermon Talkbacks

Pastor John had his say, now you have yours! A discussion about the sermon and God's Word for the day.

Committee News

PRUDENTIAL BOARD

Paul Helvig

Divine Activity Times (DAT's). Sermon talk-backs. Adult Christian education classes on Sunday morning. Christian education for all ages at the same time. Between Hour Café. The 11:00 service becomes the 11:15 service. Middle School Youth Fellowship meets at 12:30. There are many things that are new—or changed—at Niantic Community Church this fall. All of these are responses to the challenge we heard to become more faithful disciples of Jesus Christ—to grow in faith, to grow in love for our God and our sisters and brothers in the human family. Growth. Change. Faith. Love. These are challenging goals, but they are also a part of the vision we believe we are called to embrace as “a community of Christians learning God’s ways, sharing God’s love, extending God’s peace and healing grace to all” (NCC vision statement). So how are we doing? Part of the motion approved by the church members who voted to adopt these changes was the stipulation that we would periodically review the effectiveness of the changes we were about to implement. It’s a little early for a formal review, but the Prudential Board, including your pastor and church officers, welcome your comments at any time. We appreciate the efforts of all who have helped to shape and implement our new Sunday morning schedule, and we’re anxious to hear what your experiences have been during this transitional time. So please share your stories with any of us—or all of us. We want to hear from you, both the obstacles you’ve encountered as well as the blessings you’ve realized. Thank you for your input as we begin our journey down this new path.

PARISH LIFE MINISTRIES

NED RUETE

Get your smoke detectors ready for the 2nd Annual NCC Chili Cook-Off on Saturday, October 24. With chili for all tastes, some 4-alarm versions are sure to be available, along with home-made pies, chips, coffee, cider – and hot dogs for the less adventuresome. Prizes will be awarded to the top three vote getters, plus this year we’re introducing a “secret” celebrity judge who will award a special judge’s prize (it’s Kevin Hogan from Channel 3!). We’re putting together some dynamite prize baskets for our winners. The field is limited to 25 entries, so if you have a special chili recipe, sign up soon! Entry forms are available from Patty Chaffee or the church office. Entry fees is \$15. Admission to eat, drink, and take part in the fun is \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 12 and under or a max of \$30 per family. Proceeds from this event will once again be earmarked for the Accessibility Fund.

Help us Out!

You don’t need to be on the Parish Life Committee to be a part of parish life. We have many chances for service that you can sign up for on a one-time or as-needed basis. Some are available right now:

- If you are interested in helping out at the Chili Cook-Off, please let Patty Chaffee know at 739-6208.
- We also need pies for the Chili Cook-Off. Please contact Patty.
- We are always looking for people to provide finger desserts for funeral receptions and to prepare and deliver meals for families who have had emergency situations arise. To be part of Operation Love, contact Patty Chaffee, Doris Beebe (739-8401) or Cindy King (739-0189) to get on their list of providers.
- We are putting together instructions for doing funeral receptions, making it possible for you to sign up to coordinate just one reception – you don’t have to be the “go-to” person forever. Contact Doris Beebe at 739-8401

We are in the process of updating our brochure to match the new Church-wide “look and feel.” Watch for our new release to find other ways you can share your time and talents with your church community.

This being fall, we are also looking for new members for the Parish Life Ministry committee. In addition to the “task work” above, we need people to do the very important “committee work” that makes the ministries possible. A particular need is for one or several people to coordinate Operation Love – to contact and schedule family meal providers and coordinators, workers, and cooks for funeral receptions. Contact any current committee member of Parish Life or Nominating.

MUSIC & WORSHIP ARTS

The men’s choir, which is directed by Nan Rigdon, sang during the summer and has received a very positive response. They will be raising their voices in prayer at both services on November 1st, All Saints Sunday, and are still recruiting! Rehearsals are every Wednesday at 7:00. Anyone interesting in joining this group, please see Nan Rigdon.



Seashore Praise and Worship

NED RUETE

Seashore had a wonderful summer, with most weeks enjoying nature's bounty of sights, sounds, and sensations down by Dodge Pond. We've moved inside and back to Sunday evenings at 5:00 for the school year, but the praise is just as heartfelt.

The main focus of our worship from now to Advent will be "Ten Prayers God always says 'Yes' to." We'll be building off the ideas in a book by Anthony DeStefano, and often relating the prayers to what is going on in the church life or the theme of Pastor John's sermon. In particular, October 4th is World Communion Sunday and Seashore will be celebrating with elements blessed in morning worship that day.

Many members of our church family will be presenting how these prayers touch their life, faith, and spiritual journeys. Pastor John will be speaking twice this fall. Keep an eye on the bulleting and the Wednesday email for events and sharers of the message.

Help us Out!

We're looking for ideas for one-week musical blocks. If you would like to put together a list of songs that you could lead and/or accompany, we'd love to have you join us for a week – or for several! Contact Ned Ruete at 739-8401 or any member of the Seashore Planning Team.

SERVICE FOR HEALING AND WHOLENESS PLANNED

"Where two or three are gathered in my name," Jesus said, "there I will be". As we gather to lift up to God our prayers for the things in our lives that need God's intercession, there is power in doing it with others. On November 1st, we will have a service for healing and wholeness with anointing of oil at Old Mystic UMC starting at 3pm.. You are cordially invited to join us for this experience of prayer and healing. Old Mystic UMC is situated on Rte.27 in Old Mystic. For more information, contact Rev. Claire Harris at 245-0680 or e-mail to claireharris1@comcast.net

2009 Summer Supper Update

The official tallies are in and our four summer suppers served 1,025 meals and raised \$5,636.50 (profit after all expenses were paid). We appreciate all church members, community friends and visitors from afar that were able to indulge in the bounties of the suppers. Special thanks to all of you that helped to plan, prepare, serve and clean-up. Your talents, service and dedication to this church fundraiser are vitally important and dually noted. Bless you and thanks be to God!



Women's Christian Service Association

The Women's Christian Service Assn. will hold its October meeting on Wed., the 21st at 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Room. Our speaker will be Kitty Stahlburg from the High Hopes Therapeutic Riding program in Old Lyme. We urge all interested women to join us. There will also be a short business meeting and refreshments. Call Doris Beebe 739-8401 or the church office for information or transportation.



The 2010 Stewardship Campaign

This year we will continue to build on the success of the last two year's stewardship campaigns and continue to celebrate the generosity of the Niantic Community Church, *A Harvest of Faith*. During this time we will continue to focus on what your pledge supports and why giving is important to you as we share in the mission *to call all to be in relationship with Christ that we may be sent into the world to be ministers in Christ's name*. Below will help you understand our 2010 Stewardship Campaign that will occur over the next few months.

Background

- There are 28 faith leaders that will have approximately 10 families/members (pledging units) on their team.
 - Each faith leader will be responsible for distributing pledge packets and collecting the pledge cards commencing on Stewardship Sunday (you may hear from your faith leader prior to that).
- Your pledge will be sealed in a smaller envelope and then placed in the team packet so as to maintain confidentiality.

Sunday, October 4, 2009 Stewardship Kickoff

- All services on the 5th will include Stewardship moments - individual experiences and why giving is important to them.
- After the services the faith leaders will start distributing their team packets and talking with members (some leaders may choose to mail the packets to team members).
- Food and beverage will be available after the services along with the proposed budget and other budgetary information.

If you so choose, you may turn in your pledge card immediately in a sealed envelope to your faith leader during this time.

Sunday, October 11th through 19th

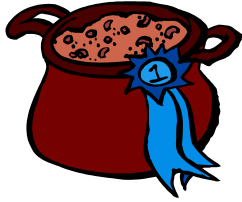
- The faith leaders continue to facilitate the collection of pledge envelopes within their team.
- During the services there will again be stewardship moments emphasizing the importance of giving to the Niantic Community Church..

Sunday, October 25th Pledge Sunday – *A Harvest of Faith*

As the congregation stands for a prayer of consecration of pledges the faith leaders will bring the pledge packets to the altar.

In the next few weeks, please consider the importance of the work that Niantic Community Church does in our community and God's world. Please carefully consider your pledge for 2010 and be prepared to participate in our campaign.

2nd Annual NCC Chili Cook-Off



Saturday, October 24th
5:00-9:00 p.m.

Chili Cook-off and Storytelling 'round the campfire with celebrity guest appearance by WFSB-3 reporter Kevin Hogan. Live music with John Wood (Woody). Support your favorite chili cook or enter your own recipe. Call to enter the competition. Rain or shine. 739-6208.

Menu: All you can eat chili, hot dogs, tortilla chips, pie, coffee and cider, fun fun fun!

All Inclusive:
\$ 10 Adults
\$ 5 Kids 12 and under
\$ 30 Per family (max)

This fun raiser is a fund raiser for our Accessibility Fund.

64th Annual

Jack Frost Bazaar

Saturday, November 14, 2009
9:30 a.m.—2:00 p.m.

- Antiques
- Attic Treasures
- Baked Goods
- Books
- Cookies
- Decorations
- Hand Mades
- Jewelry
- Pecans
- Precious Past
- Silent Auction
- Toy Tent
- Mrs. Santa
- Alternative Marketplace

Luncheon Served 11 a.m.—1 p.m.



Co-Chairs:

Jen Datum 434-7399
Susan Brown 460-7414

Help Needed:

- Donate
- Volunteer
- Create
- Bake
- Shop
- Spread the Word

News for Youth from Jess Bunger, DRE-YM

Middle School Fellowship Schedule

October 4 from 1pm-3pm

Apple Picking

Meet at Scott's to pick some apples, go through the corn maze, and have some fall fun!

Columbus Day Weekend—NO MSF

October 18 from 1:00pm-2:30pm

Meet at Conn College Arboretum ~ rain activity is the Calendar Shoot

October 25 from 12:30pm-2pm

Pumpkin Carving/Painting

Bring a pumpkin to the dining hall so we can carve or paint them to take home. A few pumpkins will be provided in case someone forgets to pick one up for the meeting.



High School Fellowship Schedule



Every Sunday from 10:15am-11am

Java and Jesus—Meet in the youth room for discussion, fellowship, study, and food

October 4th from 10:15am-11am

2010 Summer Service

Trip Meeting—Meet in the youth room to go over details about the trip tentatively planned for July 18th-23rd, 2010. Parents are welcome to attend however their presence is not mandatory.

October 4th from 6pm-8pm

Shelter Night—Meet in the back parking lot of NCC to carpool to the shelter. We will serve a meal and fellowship with our friends at the shelter.

October 18th from 6pm-8pm

St Luke/NCC Combo Night—Meet at the dining hall to make some ice cream creations with our friends at St Luke in Gales Ferry.

October 24th at 6pm

Annual NCC Chili Cookoff

Maybe the high school youth can enter a chili together?!?

Wanakee Alumni Weekend has been cancelled however we hope to set one up for the near future, keep your eye out for more details.

Please be present at the high school youth Sunday school class on **October 4th at 10:15am** if you would like information on the **Annual Summer Service Trip for July 2010**. Parents are welcome to attend but their presence is not necessary as all information will be provided in writing and sent home with the youth. If you are unable to attend this meeting please contact Jess Bunger at 860-739-6208 or jess-bunger@nianticcommunitychurch.org for information packets.

Divine Activity Time (D.A.T.) has begun taking place during **both** worship services for children 4th grade and under. What is D.A.T.? Well D.A.T. is the time during worship when younger children are invited to join a group in the multi-purpose room for multi-age activities including music, art, drama, and games. Children in 5th grade and above are invited to stay for the duration of worship and participate, however, arrangements can be made ahead of time for older children to help volunteer with the younger children as needed. If you have questions please contact Jess Bunger, Director of Religious Education and Youth Ministries via phone or email at 860-739-6208 jess-bunger@nianticcommunitychurch.org

Adult Education Classes on Sunday mornings and Wednesday evenings are in full swing.

Please take advantage of some of these wonderful opportunities to continue to nurture your faith each week. While the Wednesday evening classes require fairly regular attendance, the Sunday morning offerings provide enough flexibility to step into a class at any time and still have a full and engaging experience. Explanations and schedules for Sunday morning classes are available in the Christian Education office or by contacting Pastor John, Paul Helvig, or Jess Bunger.

Community Minister - Patty Chaffee



Greetings from the Parish Life Ministry Office! As I write this it is the first day of Autumn. Change is all around me as I celebrate this time of year. It is my favorite season. Our church is alive with change these days and it is exciting to see it embraced in such a positive

way.

The Parish Life Committee is a great vehicle for change. Programs sponsored by Parish Life are often the result of one person sharing an idea. Next thing you know someone on the Prudential Board is seconding a motion and so it is. The openness to new experiences and shared opportunities always amazes me in this congregation.

That drive to explore our deepest inner places where God dwells, is what brought 11 women to Painting from the Source recently. Most, with no previous painting experience, they were willing to tap into their source and put what they discovered on paper. Extraordinary creative expression manifested itself and these beautiful souls were rewarded with work that was awe-inspiring.

Sure to be an equally moving event, a Song Writing Workshop is scheduled for Saturday, November 7th from 10-2:30 when music producer Adam Gootkin returns fresh from his honeymoon to give the musical spirits of NCC a chance to explore their creativity in another way. There have been lots of inquiries about this one and space is limited so register early.

See you among the falling leaves....

Patty Chaffee
Community Minister

History Quiz & Trivia

Many of us remember when churches only had one worship service on Sunday mornings usually at 11 AM. The question this month is when did our church change to two worship services on Sunday and why.



Song Writing
Workshop

Saturday, November 7th
10:00-2:30

Music Producer Adam Gootkin, owner of Onyx Soundlab will offer his expertise for the event. A light lunch is included. Visit www.onyxsoundlab.com

\$25 donation requested.

Advance registration required.

Space is limited.

739-6208

(Scholarships always available)





Marie LaTourette
Ralatourette@aol.com

www.Angelfoodministries.com This a web site you want to check out! "For \$30, those who sign up for the national nonprofit program receive a package of fresh and frozen foods worth about \$65-staples for four for a week.. The package contains typically steak, chicken, eggs, pasta, vegetables, milk and other items. You check out the menu each month and order if you wish. There are other packages with different prices also. I placed an order for my mom and will pick it up on September 26th at First Baptist Church in Waterford. Feel free to talk to me about this program.

Smart Balance has far less trans fat than most other leading spreads and no hydrogenated oils in its ingredient list. If you have Land O' Lakes, Country Crock, Blue Bonnet or I Can't Believe It's Not Butter in your fridge...Throw it out!

Have you been abused? "My Avenging Angel Workshops" Get started on a new life by conquering self doubt, discovering hidden talents, healing the wounded spirit and creating a new future for yourself. Workshop is free with two sessions coming up, Saturday October 10 and 17 in Avon, Ct and Saturday November 14 and 21 in Wethersfield, CT. To register call Hartford Hospital Health Referral Service at 1-800-545-7664 or visit www.myavengingangel.com

Awakening the Imagination of Medicine at the Sheraton, East Hartford, October 26th, \$50 pp. 8 a.m.- 4:45 p.m.
"Explore deep images in illness and healing and re-imagine what medical practice is and could be." This conference announces a turning point in the way we understand health and treatment". Speakers- James Hillman, Michael Kearney, Marcus Mc Kinney, Thomas Moore, Sharon O'Brien. Register online www.stfranciscare.org or 1-877-783-7262.

I cannot urge you enough to get a Flu vaccine this year. You cannot afford to be debilitated by the regular flu if H1N1 arrives. Take care of yourself, get plenty of liquids, sleep, use the hand wipes at the supermarket and wash your paws often. This could be nothing or something big. I attempted to offer N.C.C. as a site for flu vaccination but VNA said no that they needed bigger sites.

"Underneath all the twists and turns of relationships, love is the only and ultimate truth between souls"
Rev. Kathy Hearn

Happy Fall!
Marie

History Quiz Answer

Answer: In March of 1962 the Niantic Community Church took a big step to add a second morning worship service at 9 AM. This was not done because of the sanctuary being overcrowded, but to make worship available to more people at different hours.

Mission Opportunity

Hazardville UMC is planning a mission to the United Methodist Economic Ministry (UMEM) in Salem, ME to take part in their housing ministry. UMEM provides a varied list of services to hard-pressed families in the economically depressed Western Maine region including the housing repair ministry.

On November 7, 2009, from 9 am to 12 noon, Hazardville UMC will be holding an information and orientation event about UMEM and the planned mission. David Stackpole, United Methodist Volunteer in Missions (UMVIM) Co-ordinator for the New England Conference will be the leader for this event.

If you are interested in attending this event, contact Sandra Butcher at 860-749-0478 or by email at sgbutcher@hotmail.com. A headcount prior to November 5 would be appreciated.



Niantic Community Church

170 Pennsylvania Avenue
Niantic, CT 06357

(860) 739-6208

NianticCommChurch@sbcglobal.net

www.NianticCommunityChurch.org



Sunday Morning Schedule

8:45AM Nursery care begins

9:00AM Worship service I
(Pre-K to 4th graders may leave after ~20 minutes for “Divine Activity Time”)

10 – 11AM “Between Hour” Café

10:15AM Sunday school for all ages

11:15AM Worship service II
(Pre-K to 4th graders may leave after ~20 minutes for “Divine Activity Time”)

12:30PM Nursery care ends

Pastor & Teacher: John A. Nelson
Community Minister: Patty Chaffee
Dir. of Religious Education and Youth Ministries:
Jess Bunger
Church Secretary: Judy Snitkin
Parish Nurse: Marie LaTourette
Children’s Center Director: Kathleen Tiller

Tidings Volunteers:
Rachel Ayer, Clara Ball, Jan Brentlinger,
Jennifer Datum, Jeanne McNeil, Eleanor Shoop,
Jean Stamm, LouAnn Wilson

Deadline for the Nov. edition of Tidings is Oct. 15th. Please e-mail submissions to Tidings@TheDatums.com