FROM THE TRANSITIONAL PASTOR

Dear Friends,

It’s baseball season! Funny thing is, as you know better than I, about one-half of Connecticut is for the Red Sox, and the other half for the Yankees, and then some. Blame it on not having a home team, ESPN in Bristol, which is equidistant from Boston and New York City, or the reality that life is not always one way or the other.

When my father graduated from school in Honolulu before World War II, he was scouted and joined a minor league baseball team. Mind you, those were the days of segregated teams, so he played with other Nisei’s, second generation Japanese Americans, and they travelled the Pacific Rim, mostly in California, Oregon, and Washington.

This explains why when I was growing up, I often found him reading the daily newspapers and studying the sports pages for baseball scores. I did not realize that he was, actually, a Red Sox fan until he and my family traveled to Steve’s and my wedding in Boston. On that occasion, he apparently excused himself from a trip to the Berkshires because he “wasn’t feeling so well.” But upon returning later that day, the family found out he had, alas, taken in a double-header at Fenway Park and even stopped somewhere for a lobster dinner!

Besides my father, who was posthumously named to the All-Star Team, our son played baseball in middle and high school, which once had us driving to Cooperstown, NY, to play a lively team from East L.A. I know that some of our members, middle and high schoolers, and college

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Celebrating Anne Davis’ dedication to the New London Community Meal Center for over the past 30 years!
Continued from Page 1

kids played or even still play this game. It has a way of magically drawing people from many different places and situations together, forming them into a real team, allowing them to play together, and even have fun “in the spirit of baseball.”

Baseball is sort of like an outdoor church. There is the owner, manager, team, umpire, fans and spectators. There is the stadium, out-field, in-field, four bases and orientation to home plate, There is the rules of the game, a scoreboard, order, rhythm of play, expected moves and surprising, unforgettable plays. There are the conditions of nature and human frailty. And there is a kind of hush-hush reverence for what is happening on the field, despite periodic shouts and cheers.

We in the church instead use words like, God, Jesus, pastor, members, friends; church, sanctuary, chancel, pulpit; orders-of-service, liturgy; natural and human particularities; quiet meditation and prayer along with energetic singing and “Amens.” But both baseball and the church, I think, understand that in what the participants engage there is decidedly something religious, holy, and transcendent at their very centers.

This summer, in addition to Sunday worship in our church, I encourage you to find your particular outdoor church, whatever it may be. Find quiet, reverence, joy, and refreshment. Find God, Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit present. Find other cordial, caring and like-minded people, who love the sport, play by the rules, and when a home run is hit cannot help but knowingly nod and point to heaven. Now, I say, get out there and “Play ball!”

Pentecost blessings,
Pastor Dianne

NCC PRAYER WALL

Visit the NCC Prayer Wall to review prayers, indicate that you have prayed for the concerns and joys submitted by others, and add your own prayer requests. You may also send prayer requests to prayers@nianticcommunitychurch.org. All posts are automatically added to the ongoing prayer chain.
http://www.nianticcommunitychurch.org/prayers

Going Home to God

Luane Lange
February 5, 1937 - June 22, 2017
Luane was born in Detroit, Michigan. In her life, she taught at all public school levels, with five years at East Lyme High School. She joined the faculty of the Cooperative Extension System at the University of Connecticut in 1977, retiring as professor emeritus in 2000. In her retirement she continued to share her teaching, writing, public policy, and organizational and community development experiences. She was active member of Niantic Community Church, the East Lyme Historical Society, PEO (a national philanthropic organization for women's education), CRIS Radio, the East Lyme Historical Properties Commission, East Lyme Democrats, and served on the Leadership Council for the State AARP in Hartford until 2009. A memorial service will be held at 11 a.m. Tuesday, June 27, 2017, at the Niantic Community Church. See more at:
http://www.legacy.com
Dear Members of the Congregation of NCC,

All nine members of the Committee charged by you for finding a new settled pastor, want to express our gratitude for the trust you have placed in us. Recently we met with Rev. Tom Clough, the UCC Regional Minister. He will be working closely with our committee in our quest. In this letter we wish to share with you a brief summary of the Search and Call process of The United Church of Christ. By vote of the Congregation, we will be seeking a UCC minister to fill the position vacated by Rev. Nelson.

1. We will seek your views on our church and its ministry through a survey and Cottage Meetings. We expect the survey to be given in September and to start Cottage Meetings in member's homes in August. Your ideas will be incorporated into a “Local Church Profile,” a comprehensive document that shows our financial data and all pertinent information describing our Church, its members, and the perceived strengths and weaknesses of NCC. We expect this document to be completed after input from all church committees by November.

2. Our vacancy will then be listed in “UCC Employment Opportunities.”

3. Persons who have been authorized to complete a UCC Ministerial Profile will submit profiles for our committee through the Conference/Association office. The Ministerial Profile includes information about the candidate's educational background, experience, a detailed faith statement, eight written references, a background check form, and a criminal background check.

4. The names of candidates will be held in strictest confidence within our committee. We ask all to respect the essential confidentiality of this process. We will keep you informed – on a regular basis – about our progress.

5. We will share our Local Church Profile with candidates, and begin to follow up with persons in whom we have a particular interest. Follow up will include telephone reference checks, telephone interviews, and requests for sermon tapes. While pursuing these steps, we will also continue to evaluate new Ministerial Profiles. This will be a rolling process until the absolutely right person is found.

6. We will select a small number of candidates for personal interviews. After an interview, if the candidate seems worthy of a follow up, we will make arrangements for Search Committee members to worship with them, most often in a church setting arranged by our Conference/Association office.

7. We will invite at least two candidates back for second interviews, following which we will seek God's guidance and prayerfully make a decision on a candidate.

8. If the candidate we recommend chooses to accept, compensation arrangements will be clarified, and a date for a “candidating Sunday” will be established.

9. All will have an opportunity to meet the candidate (and family) that weekend in an informal setting as well as a formal worship service where the candidate will preach. A congregational meeting following the worship service will offer each member an opportunity to ask questions of the Search Committee, and to vote on the Call of our new pastor.

Rev. Dianne will continue to provide excellent interim leadership to the congregation and guidance to the Search Committee during the process. Prayer is an essential part of the process we follow and we ask for your prayers as we undertake this task. We are members of an exceptional church. It is our task, with your help, to bring an excellent pastor, teacher and leader to our pulpit.

John A. Whritner
Search Committee Chair

Follow us on Twitter (@NianticChurch)
and like us on Facebook (facebook.com/NianticCommunityChurch).
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION & YOUTH MINISTRY NEWS

The summer program is under way! This summer the One Room Church school during the 9:30 service is using the Heifer Project International curriculum called Animal Crackers. [https://www.heifer.org/resources/faith/animal-crackers/index.html](https://www.heifer.org/resources/faith/animal-crackers/index.html) The children will save donations through the summer in their Heifer Project donation box and collectively donate money towards a llama. Each Sunday the lesson will cover a different farm animal and how it can positively impact the quality of life for a recipient family. There are videos, games, crafts and other fun activities. Thanks to all the volunteers who signed up to teach this summer!

The Middle school will continue to meet in the Fellowship room this summer.

VBS is starting soon! Get ready for a fun filled week July 10-14th, 9 a.m. – 12.00 p.m. Gear up for an amazing adventure to Experience and Discover God Everywhere! We are looking forward to all the youth and adult volunteers leading and teaching us about extreme sports and how God is our protective guide wherever we go. At camp we will collect donations to be sent to our local church camps, Silver Lake and Camp Aldersgate for their scholarship fund.

The Christian Education committee has decide to order new curriculum for the upcoming school year. We will be carefully considering a few options with a team of parents, teachers, and committee members. We plan to have lessons in place for all classes, Senior High, Middle School, and Elementary classes by September. Friendship Sunday is September 10th please join us for fun church school activities, meet your new teachers and learn all about our new curriculum. If your child is entering the 5th Grade they will be joining the Middle school class this fall.

Blessings,
Pam McCauley
Interim Christian Education Minister

congrats!
High School GRADUATES

Clayton Cushing
Rose Datum
Matthew Emery (Edie Watrous' grandson)
McKenna June (Carol June's granddaughter)
Hayley Mahon
Natalie Rugg
Quin Selmeski

Photos from the Senior High mission trip to Philadelphia. The pictures on top are at a community garden and the picture on bottom is at the Children's Mission.
UCC TRI-CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING

The Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conferences of the United Church of Christ voted decisively on Saturday, June 17th, in Hartford, CT, to move ahead toward forming a new combined Conference, so that they may have a stronger voice speaking for justice and may more effectively carry out mission and ministry together.

The votes, taken at the first-ever joint annual meeting of the three bodies, mean that Conference leaders will now develop a formal proposal for a new Conference which will be brought before a second joint Annual Meeting a year from now in Springfield, MA.

"I am proud of you," United Church of Christ General Minister and President The Rev. John Dorhauer told those gathered following the votes. "Your yes today matters, and your yes today casts a vision for the future that was not otherwise available to you. And, my covenant promise to you is that the entire denomination will walk side-by-side with you on whatever journey unfolds."

The votes were taken at separate, simultaneous Conference plenary sessions at the Connecticut Convention Center in Hartford. More than 1,000 people - lay and clergy from the three Conferences - gathered for the two-day meeting, with most of their time spent together in worship, joint plenary, hearings and shared meals. The Massachusetts and Connecticut votes were nearly unanimous; Rhode Island delegates approved the measure by a wide margin. Pam McCauley and Pastor Dianne Arakawa represented our congregation.

-- By Tiffany Vail
UCC/Associate Conference Minister for Communications

United Methodist New England Annual Conference
Manchester, New Hampshire
June 15-17, 2017

Ocean Pellett and Ellen Ashburn attended, worshipped, sang with and talked to fellow Christians.

A great/hard topic for circle discussion: racism.

The wonderful worship music was led by Mark Miller and ensemble. Our NCC choir is familiar with his work.

We heard sermons from the following: our own Bishop Devadhar (an immigrant from India), Bishop Cynthia Moore-Koiki (an African American woman from Chicago), lay speaker Steve Dry (white male millennium from Boston), and the Ziegler Award winner for excellence in social justice preaching Thomas Blackstone (white male from Watertown, Maine). Four of our former pastors were Ziegler award winners. These sermons inspired us and challenged us to: focus less on judgement and more on justice; stop thinking and start listening, especially in regards to racism; accept a challenge to churches to be more justice oriented; make love our working force; share our callings; don't ignore angels when they appear in our lives; take responsibility for our own racial bias.

Ordination and communion were spirit filled experiences. Many pastors retired this year to be replaced by ordained clergy and local pastors. New ministries have been started (thinking outside the box) to welcome new people into the faith and give others a reason to come back.

In our five state conference there are only three large cities (Boston, Providence, and Manchester, New Hampshire), cities which are very ethnically diverse. The majority of churches are rural and suburban and not very diverse. The big question is how do we respond to this dichotomy in the way of Jesus.

These are only bullet points of our experience at conference. See either Ocean or Ellen to hear more.

- Ellen Ashburn

L-R: Rev. Dianne Arakawa, Executive Director Marc Kosnoff, Board Members, Ocean Pellett & Ellen Ashburn
Get Ready for Worship!

Follow this link, “Preparing for Sunday” and you will find the scripture readings for the current week, a brief description to set them in context, a reflection on the passages, and a prayer starter.

It’s a great way to spend time with God’s Word — and since those passages are (often) the basis for services on Sunday morning, you’ll be adding a new ‘layer of richness and meaning to the experience of worship.

Adult Church School

In 2008, Karen Armstrong, a British author and former Roman Catholic nun, received the TED talk prize for her proposal to create a Charter for Compassion. The next year, the Charter was unveiled and since has been signed by many and diverse religious, social, and political leaders as well as other concerned world citizens.

On Sunday, July 9, the adult Sunday morning class will be viewing her TED talk and examining the Charter for Compassion. As with any of the classes, what an individual chooses to do in response to the presentation is a personal choice. But it may also be that the entire congregation will be inspired to respond. It’s a powerful message. So if you see your faith as something more than doctrine, dogma, and denomination. If you believe compassion lies at the core of Christ’s message. If you see your faith extending beyond Niantic Community Church to a global community of faith, then you’ll want to attend this class.

The class meets every Sunday in the Fellowship Room about 15 minutes after the end of the worship service—when the bell rings during Coffee Hour. However, for this presentation on July 9, the class will be meeting in the Sanctuary. Your attendance will be a blessing to you, to the class, and possibly to the world so badly in need of compassion.

- Paul Helvig

Jack Frost Bazaar… Did You Know???

- Did you know the Jack Frost Bazaar is an event that takes place here at NCC that attracts hundreds of people from far and wide, and has been for 71 years?
- Did you know it is made up of over a dozen areas that create a holiday experience for people which bring them back year after year, and takes over the entire church in a way nothing else does?
- Did you know it is a major fundraiser for the church, sponsored by the Women’s Fellowship, generating over $10,000 in operating income each year?
- Did you know it takes about 98 volunteers to make that happen?
- Did you know that most of those volunteers are so adept at running their areas each year, that it runs like a well-oiled machine? Little else has to be done.
- Did you know, this year, two volunteers are missing…. A Jack Frost Chairperson and a Luncheon Chair?
- Did you know without a Chairperson (or Co-Chairs), the 72nd Jack Frost Bazaar is in jeopardy of not taking place?
- Did you know that you can volunteer? We’ll show you how. Call Jane Barth at 860-739-6002.
- Mary Did You Know?  
  https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mxnU8fWv7uU

Upcoming hosts are:

July 2 - WCSA/Women’s Fellowship Board
July 9, 16, 23, 30 - Memorial/Old Stone Church/Endowment
Aug. 6, 13, 20, 27 - Communications/Maintenance
A summer tradition since 1966. Let us do the cooking and serve you too! Indoor & outdoor seating at 5:30 & 6:30 Take-out available

**Roast Beef/Turkey with all the fixins**
mashed potatoes, gravy, cole slaw, green beans, rolls, cranberry sauce and homemade desserts

$12 Adults/ $5 kids 12 & under (Tickets at the door)

Eat inside where it’s cool & air conditioned

(860)739-6208

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**Start Fresh - The Southeastern CT Refugee Resettlement Agency** is looking for help to pay for summer programming for our 13 refugee children. The children will be attending summer school (free), swimming lessons, daycare and camps. $1,000 has been raised but $1500 is needed as soon as possible. If you can possibly make a small contribution please make checks payable to Start Fresh and mail to: 70 Cross Road, Waterford, CT 06385 with summer camp/swim in the memo line. You can also make a donation on line at startfreshct.org - donation page.
Greetings friends. Hoping you are enjoying this beautiful summer season. I know I am. Lately I have become aware of how unique each of our ministries are at NCC. They all seem to have a life and character all their own. I sit on many committees and this is true of any time small groups of people come together for a purpose.

One that comes to mind lately is our Community Drum Circle. It draws folks who are NCC members as well as NCC friends who only come to church for Drum Circle. Kate Lamoureux is our leader, a trained music therapist with a generous spirit, who is expecting her first baby in the fall. It’s a very fluid group with great inconsistency. People drop in when they can, including folks who are highly skilled drummers who attend other drum circles regularly; newbies who have never attended a drum circle; folks from a group home; and summer folks who attend only when they are in the area. All here for the same reason. There is always a group of willing spirits ready to create that holy thunder, but who they are, varies like the New England weather.

Our Community Drum Circle needs a host who can attend each month from 6:30-8:30 p.m. on the 4th Friday. It is a two hour commitment, once a month. This opportunity includes unlocking the church, setting up the circle, participating in the group if you like, making sure everything gets put away and the church gets secured. That’s about it. Super easy. We do have one person who has generously done this when she is able, but we really need someone every month. If this speaks to your heart, let me know. We can talk more. I look forward to hearing from you.

Here is an article about drumming that you might find interesting. http://blog.x8drums.com/2011/01/why-participate-in-drum-circle.html

Abundant summer blessings to you,
Patty
Parish Life Ministry and Worship Team

Members gather at The Niantic Bay Yacht Club to celebrate their ministries in June. If this looks like fun, you should see what else they do. Feel called to this ministry? Give the church a call.

Mindfulness Meditation for Beginners

6:30 - 8:00 p.m.

Yes you can meditate! Come embrace the peace and inner tranquility of guided meditation. No experience or registration necessary. Wear comfortable clothing; bring water and experience calm and beauty. Light stretching done. This free program is held in the multipurpose room at Niantic Community Church and is suitable for all ages/abilities. Facilitated by Carol Vara, MSW, Meditation Certified.

For more information call (860)739-6208 or reach Carol at 401-487-3856 or email her at varavarac@gmail.com.

…minimize, simplify, organize

How it works:
1. Bring unwanted items that you want to give away. If you can carry it, you can bring it. Bring as much as you want.
2. Bring one non-perishable food item for the NCC Food Pantry and a brown bag lunch to enjoy following the exchange.
3. Each participant offers their items in turn. See what others have to give away and claim all you want. Any unclaimed items will be donated to charity immediately following our gathering.
4. Discover the spirituality of being organized during thoughtful reflections and discussion over lunch. **10 a.m. - 2 p.m. on 3rd Monday: July 17, Aug 21**

(Book Club)

The Women's Fellowship Book Club has selected "Homegoing" by Yaa Gyasi as their next book.

Each chapter in the novel follows a different descendant of an Asante woman named Maame, starting with her two daughters, separated by circumstance. Subsequent chapters follow their children and following generations.

Please join in a fun discussion on July 30th at 7 pm in the Fellowship Room. Any questions, contact Carol Donovan at carod3000@aol.com.