

Connections

News • Fellowship • Outreach • Events



A
“God Is Still Speaking”
Congregation

North Congregational
United Church of Christ

September 2014



*No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here!*



"Thus says the Lord, your Redeemer, the Holy One of Israel...I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert." Isaiah 43: 14a, 19

My father-in-law is a gardener. Not until I'd tasted one of his New Jersey grown "Big Boy" tomatoes did I know how wonderful fresh, ripe tomatoes can be, right off the vine, warmed by the sun, juice dripping down the chin! As for me, I am NOT a brilliant gardener. Or even an adequate gardener. At best, "reluctant" would describe my horticultural abilities. I do know, though, that good gardening takes some effort. Beyond the tilling, the planting, the watering, and much more, there is also the "need to weed." To keep the desired plants happy, healthy, and strong, to enhance their ability to bring forth wonderful produce or beautiful flowers, the gardener must get right down into the dirt and weed. The gardener needs to know what to weed and what to keep.

In her article "When is a weed a weed?" Terra Brockman* writes, "A weed is a plant in the wrong place at the wrong time." A weed is perhaps a perfectly good plant, with qualities that in another time and place would be highly prized. Dandelions are anathema to a green suburban lawn, but a delight if you own a Bearded Dragon! Ms. Brockman writes, "Amaranth, known as pigweed to most Midwestern farmers, is found all over the world and valued as a nutritious and delicious food from Asia to North and South America."

The point is that all things have their proper time and place, and sometimes choices are made to weed perfectly good things that belong to another time and place. We make these decisions in our lives, too. We weed some things from the daily routines to make room for other activities that have priority in the moment.

The Church needs to do some weeding, too. Not because what we've been doing is wrong, or bad, but because growth and change require it. That's what resurrection is about! God has given us the blessings of New Life that emerges out of what has come before.

God is continually “doing a NEW thing.” Our task is to open our eyes to “perceive it.” And how tasty THAT is!

September Blessings!
Pastor Koenig

*Article “When is a Weed Not a Weed” by author
Terra Brockman in The Christian Century, August 20, 2014.



The Diaconate

by Judi Lewis

We are having a celebration and you are all invited! On September 21, Pastor Sandy will be installed by the UCC to be our settled minister. The pastors from the churches in the Litchfield South Association of the United Church of Christ, as well as officers from the UCC in Hartford, and special guests have all been sent formal invitations.

The program begins in our sanctuary at 3:00 p.m., followed by a grand reception held downstairs in Fellowship Hall. Plan to join us on this special day. Here is your official invitation:

Come Celebrate with Us at the Installation of

REV. RICHARD A. KOENIG

As Our Settled Minister of
North Congregational Church UCC
11 Main Street North, Woodbury, Connecticut

Sunday, September 21, 2014
Three O'clock in the Afternoon





Moderator's Message

It's unofficial, but feedback from our church leadership has identified significant changes to help us grow and revitalize our church that include ideas around youth programs, living more like Jesus by sacrificing for others, and demonstrating (and communicating) the compassionate work we do outside of Sunday morning worship. These areas of challenge were identified at the leadership workshop held Sunday afternoon, August 17, at the church. The process of gathering additional information and ideas will continue into the near future. Following the workshop, Rev. Sandy and Susan hosted a picnic to encourage fellowship and get to know us in a casual setting.

Fifty church leaders gathered that day, during peak vacation season, to help begin charting a path forward for North Church (we have many more than 50 members committed to doing the work of God). The societal environment around religion in America has been changing for several years and the time has come to develop a plan that will increase growth, value our current members, and revitalize North Church. To that end, a planning and advisory task force has been convened to carry the process forward, to study and recommend changes we must make to address societal changes that are affecting us. Members of the task force include Peter D'Amato, Lindsey Monckton, George Kleros, and John Cunningham, with three others to be named. (Hopefully, before August 26.)

We are continuing a journey begun when Rev. Sandy (supported by Susan) agreed to lead North Church by accepting our call to be the Senior Minister. With his passion, vision, and leadership assisting the leaders of North Church (not to mention his exercise regimen), we look forward to completing a process that, with your help and God's omnipresent help, will revitalize our church.





**DAY BY DAY:
do not lose heart...inwardly we are
being renewed day by day
2 Corinthians 4:16**

Many of us have made the choice to walk as disciples of Christ in this world. Yet in 2014, we may sometimes feel like fish out of water: the world challenges us in ways that lead us to moments of self-doubt and wondering if God is with us. Come and be with sisters who know those feelings. Come, let us strengthen the gift of our 'day-by-day' conversations with others who know the journey, and the gift of prayer and meditation practices with God, so that we can regain our centeredness and deepen our faith and love. Come, let us strengthen the shining of our lights so that we can return to our congregations and help strengthen the shining of the light of Christ in the world.

WOMEN'S RETREAT, SPONSORED BY CT WOMEN OF THE UCC

Retreat Leader: Rev. Lee Ireland

September 27, 2014 - 8:30 am to 4:30 pm

First Congregational Church of Portland, CT

Cost - \$35 (includes lunch)

Contact: Susan Waldron, swaldron01@snet.net

Deadline is September 19. Detach the registration form below and mail with check (\$35) made payable to: **CT Women of the UCC** to **Liz Longacre, 115 Cook Hill Rd, Griswold, CT 06351**. For additional information contact: Liz Longacre, e-mail: jemlongacre@netzero.net or call 860-376-5837.

Name: _____

Phone: _____ Email: _____

Address: _____

Church: _____

Emergency Contact: _____

Phone: _____



Women's Fellowship

September Luncheon

On Thursday, September 18, the Women's Fellowship will feature a program titled, "Flander's Nature Center: The Legacy of Natalie Van Vleck." The luncheon begins at Noon. Please bring your own sandwich. A \$1.00 donation is requested for coffee, tea and dessert. Make your reservation to attend the event by calling Linda Coad at 203-264-8151 by Monday, September 15.

Ladies of The Evening

The Ladies of the Evening will be hosting an "Autumn Gathering" on Tuesday, September 16, at the home of Beverly Carlone, 618 Upper Grassy Hill Road, Woodbury. Ladies, please bring your favorite autumn dish. Sign-up sheet is located on the Ladies of the Evening bulletin board. Come and enjoy an evening of wonderful fellowship as we plan our mission projects for the coming year.

CT Women of the UCC Fall Retreat

A special retreat for CT Women of the UCC will be held on Saturday, September 27, 2014. The retreat, titled "Day By Day," will be led by Rev. Lee Ireland. It will be held at the First Congregational Church, Portland, CT from 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. The cost is \$35 and includes lunch. Registration forms are located in the Women's Fellowship Conference mail slot across from the church office. For additional information, please contact: Liz Longacre, email: jemlongacre@netzero.net or 860-376-5837. Registration deadline is 9/19/14.

Women's Fearless 2014 Retreat

Wonderful Weekend Getaways for Women: Berea Women's Retreat are offered on Friday to Sunday, September 19-21 and Friday to Sunday, September 26-28, 2014 at Camp Berea, Hebron, New Hampshire. One of the

engaging speakers will be Jodi Greenstreet. Offered also are a wide range of activities. The cost is \$160 and includes program, lodging, and meals.

You may register Online: www.berea.org, Fax: 603-744-6346, Mail: Camp Berea, 68 Berea Road, Hebron, NH 03241 or Call: 603-744-6344. Registration forms are located in the Women's Fellowship Conference mail slot across from the church office. Additional information may be obtained online at www.berea.org.



Board of Trustees

by Wayne Anderson

The trustees would like to express their appreciation for all those members of North Church who contributed their summer offerings, and prepaid in some cases, which allowed us to operate on a solid cash flow basis during this time. Thank you. As of the end of July, monies received from pledges and loose offerings totaled \$92,445. This is just less than the \$94,425 budgeted for the first seven months of the year. Expenses also remain within budget.

Now that we are in September and the start of a new church season, this would be a good time to remind those who need to catch up with their pledges and offerings to do so. This promises to be an exciting church year for everyone, so it is important for offerings to continue. If you can't make it to service, checks may be mailed to North Church, P.O. Box 473, Woodbury, or dropped off at the church office.

The Saturday Work Crew has been busy this summer constructing a private bluestone patio area behind the parsonage for Pastor Sandy and Susan. Thanks to the three anonymous donors who offset the cost of materials so there wasn't any cost to the church for this major property improvement. More importantly was the sweat equity contributed by master mason Chet Gage, and helpers Charles Bartlett, Paul Hinckley, Bob Travers and gofer, Wayne Anderson. Thank you.

North Church

- 9/7 Celebration of Worship
 Communion Sunday
- 9/14 Celebration of Worship
 Rally Sunday
 A Time for Special Prayer
- 9/21 Celebration of Worship
- The Installation of
Rev. Richard A. Koenig
at 3:00 pm
North Congregational Church
- 9/28 Celebration of Worship
 Food Offering for Woodbury Food Bank

Board & Committee Meetings

Women's Fellowship	Thurs. 9/4	10:00 a.m.
Diaconate Meeting	Thurs. 9/4	7:00 p.m.
Outreach-Peg Tester's Home	Tues. 9/9	7:00 p.m.
Council Meeting	Tues. 9/9	7:00 p.m.
Historical Anniversary	Thurs. 9/11	7:00 p.m.
Personnel	Thurs. 9/11	7:00 p.m.
Board of Trustees	Thurs. 9/18	7:00 p.m.

Music Rehearsals

Chancel Choir Wed., 9/10, 17 & 24 7:00-8:00 p.m.

September Calendar

Other Meetings

Monday 9/8, 15, 22 & 29:

Men's Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Wdbry/Bthlm Parents Connection	7:30 p.m.
Boy Scouts	7:30 p.m.

Tuesday 9/2, 9, 16, 23 & 30:

NA	7:30 p.m.
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Tuesday 9/9 & 9/23:

Women's Bible Study	7:00 p.m.
Kathrine Rutledge's Home 41 Owl Ridge, Woodbury	

Tuesday 9/23:

Woodbury Hill Condo	7:00 p.m.
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Thursday 9/11 & 9/25:

Knitting	10:00 a.m.
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Thursday 9/18:

Women's Fellowship Luncheon	12:00 p.m.
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Friday 9/5, 12, & 26:

AA	8:00 p.m.
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Saturday 9/6, 13, & 27:

Young Peoples AA	7:30 p.m.
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Music Notes

By John Wick

The expressions of music are expressions of emotion. It may be especially so in worship. Beyond merely entertaining, it hopes to evoke feelings in you, the singer, the listener. Beyond simply "happy" and "sad," hymns aim at more complex messages. Emotions like adoration and praise, joy and wonder at Jesus' birth, the awe of the Almighty, despair at the crucifixion, longing for the comfort of Christ (I Need Thee Every Hour), appreciation for the wonders of the earth, and so many more.

So music is all about emotion. The choir makes an effort to sing with feeling, to feel and convey the emotion of the anthem or the hymn. The organist, bells, trumpeter, all are at their best when they feel the mood of the music.

I invite you to do the same. Next time you are getting on your feet for a hymn, try not to just get through it. Give it a chance! Glance at the topic at the top of the page. Look at the words of the verse. Then sing as if you had written it yourself, and have a message to convey, with genuine feeling. Don't focus on the right notes or whether others may not like your voice, but sing like you mean it.

Wouldn't it be fantastic to have a full church singing with conviction?





SAVE THE DATE **for the All-Church,** **Holiday Festival** **Saturday, November 22**

Plans have begun for this year's All-Church event and we will need everyone's help to make it another great success. This is a great opportunity to clean out your closets or attic and drop off donations in the church office (please, no heavy equipment, large furniture, or clothing).

We need a Chairman for the Book Room – or two folks willing to co-chair – please call Nancy if you're able to lend a hand there. And of course we will need helpers in all of the rooms, kitchen, parking, clean-up, baking - there will be a job for anyone and everyone. Sign-up sheets will be available in the hall early in October, so please plan to come and pitch in!



Your event Co-Chairmen —
Bob & Nancy Grasing - 203-263-5953.

ALS Ice Bucket Challenge



At the recent Leadership Planning Workshop and Picnic that was held at North Congregational Church on August 17, Maggie Paquette took the "ALS Ice Bucket Challenge" and then challenged North Congregational Church. Pastor Sandy took the challenge, along with Lindsey and Jamie Monkton, and Church Moderator Dave Sonnemann, braving the freezing cold water.



Outreach Committee

by Cathy McMullin

We'd like to express our heartfelt thanks to the generous folks of North Church for your donations to the CSCW for this year's drive for "Back to School" supplies. The giant-sized collection box was overflowing three-fold with all the necessary items needed for excited school children of Woodbury returning to classes this month.

Along with our monthly food donations and fresh produce from the "Plant A Row" effort, we can certainly say that our neighbors in need are never far from our thoughts. Also in July, we treated our friends at "Loaves and Fishes" to a delicious summer meal of BBQ Chicken, baked beans, pasta salad, coleslaw and Grandma's Blueberry Buckle! A healthy bag lunch of tuna sandwiches, fruit, and cookies was sent home with each client as well. We all agree that there is no better feeling than to help feed those in need, from planning and shopping for the menu, preparing each course, the hustle and bustle in the kitchen, of setting up and readying the dining room for the one-hour dinner rush, happily dishing up second and even third helpings, sending each client home with a lunch, and finally saying goodnight to a room full of satisfied and thankful faces. We invite you to come along and share in this life-changing experience. Sign-up sheets are on the Outreach board for Sept. 30 and Dec. 30., 3 – 6 p.m.

During the month of SEPTEMBER your outreach efforts will once again be encouraged as we collect assorted toiletries and personal hygiene products to help stock the supply cabinets of Safe Haven of Waterbury. Safe Haven provides emergency shelter and free support services to victims and survivors of domestic violence and sexual assault. You can find the collection box under the Outreach bulletin board. Some of the supplies needed are:

Toothpaste • Shampoo • Conditioner • Body lotion
Feminine supplies • Toothbrushes • Soap • Deodorant

Thank you once again from the Outreach Committee -

Cathy McMullin, Cindi Hughes, Cathy Kleros,
Beverly Carlone, Peg Tester & Linda Leidel

Blessings to These Families

We welcome the following newly baptized members of the Church of Jesus Christ into our Faith Family.

Sailor Quinn Boncher, baptized July 26, 2014
(Daughter of Lori Boncher)

William Joseph Ludington III, baptized August 2, 2014
(Son of Kristina Shea and William Ludington, Jr.)

We congratulate Nicole Morson and Jonathan Vignola, who were united in the Covenant of Marriage on August 2, 2014.

Become a member of North Church!

Several people have shown interest in becoming members of North Church. Perhaps it has been on your mind as well. If so, all you need to do to get the ball rolling is to tell a deacon, speak to Pastor Sandy, or call the church office. We will be having a "Membership Sunday" sometime during the month of October. We would love to have those interested be a part of our family of faith.

Nursery care needed

We would like to have our adorable and very inviting nursery staffed on Sunday mornings by the good people of North Church. A brand new book for volunteer sign-up is located on the table just outside the sanctuary, along with the flower and hospital-ity sign-up books. So you won't feel like you are missing out on the service, did you know that there are speakers in the nursery for your listening pleasure? Most importantly, we'll be there for those who need us! Thank you!





Sunday School

by Lorna Eckman

"EVERY GOOD THING THAT HAS HAPPENED IN YOUR LIFE HAPPENED BECAUSE OF CHANGE."

There are a lot of changes going on in North Church lately, one being our new minister, Pastor Sandy. He has brought some energy back into the Sunday service and he is taking an interest in our Sunday School. We have been doing some brainstorming and there will be some changes in our program. This year we will be working with the Workshop Rotation with all of the children. The Pre-k, Kindergarten, 1st, 2nd and 3rd Grade will all be together and the 4th, 5th, 6th, and 7th Grade will be working together. We will have the Bible story one week with one group, while the others will either be in crafts or kitchen, and the rotation will continue for three weeks until both classes have completed all of the sections. We will be starting with the story of God's Creation of the Earth.

Rally Sunday is September 14 and we will welcome all of our children back for another exciting year of Sunday School lessons. Following the lessons, there will be cake and ice cream in the parlor. I hope to see all of you there to start this new year of change.

We still need people to sign up for the nursery and if anyone would like to sign up to teach the lessons, we could use your help. Pastor Sandy would like to have two people in each classroom, especially with the crafts and kitchen. The crafts are easy and the food is good, so please join us. Thanks and God Bless.

Bicentennial Planning Meeting

The North Church 200th Anniversary Committee will be holding its next planning meeting on Thursday, Sept. 11, at 7:00 p.m. in the conference room. All are welcome to attend; we invite you to join us in planning for this very special calendar of events.



SAVE YOUR RECEIPTS!

Just a reminder to please save your La Bonne's receipts, as we receive 1/2 of 1% of all the subtotals on these receipts. We can receive as much as the receipts total and last year we made about \$300.

There is a basket on the table above the Food Bank donations at the Washington Rd. entrance to the church. Please leave your receipts there at any time.

Church Officers

Pastor	Richard A. Koenig
Moderator	David Sonnemann
Vice Moderator	George Kleros
Clerk	Cindi Hughes
Treasurer	Danielle Michener
Trust & Investment	Nancy Grasing
Financial Secretary	Suzanne Anderson
Historian	David Strong
Member at Large	Diana Neal
Pastoral Relations/ Member at Large	Eve Alire Bartlett

Parish Administrator: Kathie Logan

Office Hours: Mon./Tues. 9:00 a.m. — 1:00 p.m.

Wed. Closed • Thurs./Fri. 9:00 a.m. — 3:00 p.m.

Phone: (203) 263-2410 Fax: (203) 263-2488

Email: nchurchct@snet.net

Website: www.northchurchwoodbury.org

Newsletter submissions can be put in the Parish Administrator slot or emailed to the Church Office

by the 15th of each month.

North Congregational Church
P.O. Box 473
Woodbury, CT 06798
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