



a just
world
for all
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uccNews

March 2019

The Church Will Leave the Building March 10



Our Congregational tradition is clear about this: the building in which we meet for worship is called a meeting house. The people are the church. And the church, will be

leaving the building March 10th. Our morning service will be held at Chenango Valley home at the usual 10:00 a.m. time. The bell choir will play the anthem. All are welcome to join us.

A monthly publication of
United Church of Christ, First Congregational

11 West Main St. Norwich NY 13815 607-334-3434

www.uccnorwichny.org

The Rev. Mr. Joseph Connolly, Pastor and Teacher

facebook

CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

Monday—Thursday 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m., 1:30 - 3:30 p.m.

Friday 8:30 a.m.—12:30 p.m.

WORSHIP SERVICE: Sunday, 10:00 a.m. (Nursery provided)

From the Pastor

Dear Friends in Christ,

I am going to do something in composing this letter I do not think I have ever done before. I am going to steal some of what I said in a recent sermon.

Here is where the stealing starts: from time to time many of you have heard me say I have Jesuit training. My follow up line after that is, “Scratch a Jesuit, you get a Protestant.” That would be me.

I was, however, never in a classroom taught by Jesuits. Rather, since my father taught at a Jesuit High School for his entire working career, Jesuits were my friends.

Jesuits came to family parties. I went on trips with Jesuits. I played softball and basketball with Jesuits. Jesuits staffed the Summer camp I attended.

Question: most of the time how do we really learn, especially how do we learn about life, about how to behave, about how life should be lived? We learn from family. We learn from friends.

A competent teacher will tell you a significant chunk of learning happens outside any classroom wall. When Jesuits are friends of the family, it is hard to not be influenced by their thinking, to not learn from their thinking.

Jesuits have an interesting practice of which I know. Every ten years they publish a list of four priorities which will be the “mission of the Jesuit order” for the next ten years. They just published a new list.

First, “show the way to God through discernment and spiritual exercises.” Next, “walk with the poor, the outcasts of the world, those whose dignity has been violated, in a mission of reconciliation and justice.”

Third, “accompany young people in the creation of a hope-filled future.” Last, “collaborate in the care of (the earth) our Common Home.”

Let me sum up that ten year program with just several words: discernment; reconciliation and justice; the creation of a hope-filled future; the earth, our Common Home.

Here is my take away from that: Christianity is not about a set of rules. Christianity is about a way of life. That is one reason why each time the Jesuits post a program it’s for ten

years.

This list is about a ten year exercise in practicing a way of life with specifics. To practice a way of life takes time.

Will anyone *ever* be perfect at the practice? No. The idea is to practice and strive to improve every day.

Perhaps more importantly the idea is to strive, as well as we are able, to see the world as God sees the world. How does God see the world?

God sees the world as a place where justice and equity and reconciliation and peace and hope and freedom and life and joy and love are all constant possibilities. These are the building blocks of the Dominion of God.

But God also understands that it is up to us, the children of God, to act on those possibilities. It is up to us, the children of God, to make those possibilities a reality.

We all know this is a classic question at this time of year: “What are you giving up for Lent?”

Me? Nothing. I don’t give up anything. I say if I give things up that will not help the world be a better place one bit.

On the other hand, if I (and others also!) strive to conform the world to a vision of God as God sees the world, then I am working with God on that project. And, to reiterate, God sees the world as a place where justice and equity and reconciliation and peace and hope and freedom and life and joy and love are all constant possibilities.

Also to reiterate, here is my take away from that: Christianity is not about rules. Christianity is about a way of life.

That leads to two obvious questions: to where does God call each of us? Each of us needs to answer that for ourselves.

The second question is a communal question. To where does God call this church?

As the transition progresses that will be a topic of discussion for this church in the coming months. I will not and should not be involved in that discussion.

I can say this (as I reiterate it one more time). We need to remember that Christianity is not about a set of rules. Christianity is about a way of life.

And this church, any church will never be perfect at the practice of this way of life. The idea is to practice and strive to

improve every day.

I have every confidence that this church can follow the Christian way of life. Why am I confident? For twenty three plus years I have seen the members of this congregation strive to do that.

So, at least for a couple of months I can still say this: see you in church. Church— where we strive together to follow a way of life often labeled as a Christian way of life.

In Faith



Joe Connolly



*Tea Party
in honor of
Bonnie Connolly*

April 27 at 3:00 p.m.

Mayflower Room

All women in the church family are invited.

Please RSVP by April 12 to 334-3434 or office@uccnorwichny.org.



March 10

Daylight savings time begins.
Turn your clocks ahead one hour.

Director of Children and Youth Ministries

Linda L. Oehme

During the month of March, we begin with our 5th Unit entitled, *Tending the Garden*. This unit theme of the garden as an image for Lent grew out of the writers' reflection on the meaning of the season. Lent is a time for reflection and sorting out of our priorities—a time to prepare our lives for fresh growth. The biblical passages speak of choices, of failure to bear fruit, of God's patience, judgement and grace, and of Mary of Bethany's extravagant gift of love. We are asked to consider the way we are growing—or failing to grow.

Gardens are wonderful: they can be things of beauty, they provide food, they help the land by holding it together, and they cycle valuable nutrients, being a vital part of our survival. And gardens take work: they need planting, watering, care and nurture. The Bible begins in a garden and many of its stories concern our desire to restore the garden of paradise on Earth. For this to happen we are all called to tend the garden... TOGETHER!

The scriptures during Lent are frequently about growth, reminding us of what God and others do to nurture us, and challenging us to help others. When we open ourselves to God, and when we help each other, God's garden can grow and flourish!

The children will be making, *The Garden of Lent Banner*. We hope to display it each week as the growing grape vine takes shape into a symbol for personal and community growth during the season of Lent.

STAY TUNED: Vacation Bible School plans are in the works

Queen Size Quilt Raffle

to benefit Chenango County Habitat for Humanity. To view the quilt and purchase tickets during March, visit the Artist's Palette in downtown Norwich. Tickets are \$1.00 each, \$2.00 for three or \$5.00 for ten. Info: Rita Kane (895-6024).



That They May All Be One

(A Pastoral Letter from the UCC General Minister and President)

Dear Partners in Christ:

The vision of a body united— in purpose, in mission, in vision— is one that inspired the birth of our denomination. All of our spiritual impulses reverberate in an effort to call us into a more perfect union. Throughout our shared history as a people of faith and as a part of the Body of Christ, we have challenged ourselves to widen the circle of inclusion.

Widening the circle has always come with growth pains as we shed old skins and welcome those whom we had previously thought unwelcome. And, with each new articulation of a more fully expressed Body of Christ we have realized new joy. Through it all we remain focused on the call to be one and committed to meeting the challenges inherent in that call.

We are now living in and through a season when the threats to unity are legion. Talk of walls that mark refugees as threats, labels like ‘terrorist’ that attach too easily to Muslims, overt racial bias that normalizes fear and hatred, a pandemic of abuse to women with the trigger reflex to forgive the men who author that abuse have turned America into a land many of us no longer recognize and that too many of us are finding harder and harder to reconcile with our faith.

Now more than ever, the Holy Spirit of the Living God and the Risen Christ is seeking to partner with anyone committed to unifying the human community. The gospel mandate to love our neighbor as we love ourselves resonates deep within us. It calls for the better angels among and within us to always resist impulses to hate, to condemn, to vilify, or to castigate. In such a time as this, the United Church of Christ’s call to fulfill the prayer of Jesus, that they may all be one, stands as an urgent mandate to disciples who envision a just world for all.

United with you in God’s service,
The Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President

Letters

Dear Friends in Norwich,

I thank you, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the New York Conference, UCC, for your continuing support of our ministries, and especially for increasing your 2018 giving over the previous year. Your gifts, your participation and your prayerful support mean more than you know to our staff and volunteers.

You make a difference! Thank you, thank you, thank you.

Rev. Barbara Wright
Secretary, UCCNY

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ and Happy New Year 2019. Thank you for your gifts to Hope House Orphanage in Ndola, Zambia during the year of 2018.

Because of your faithful support, we continue to see many lives change and flourish as little ones receive food, clothing, education, medical care and spiritual training.

Barbara E. Hust, President
Hope Ministries, Inc.



Pet Food Sunday - March 3

Bring in pet food for donation to Our Daily Bread Food Pantry. A basket for donations will be in front of the communion table.



Paper Products Sunday - March 17

Bring in toilet paper, paper towels, toothpaste, shampoo, razors, etc.

March 2019

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 2:00 p.m. Muslim Community 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	2 12:00 p.m. NHS Musical Boosters, Kitchen 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community
3 8:30 a.m. Church School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship/Communion <i>Pet Food Sunday</i> 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. Hand Bells 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	4 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 2:30 p.m. Tai Chi 3:30 p.m. Tutoring 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	5 1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	6 - Ash Wednesday 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 3:45 p.m. Humer Lessons 5:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:00 p.m. Ash Wednesday Service, Christ Lutheran Ch.	7 9:30 a.m. Tai Chi 11:30 a.m. Conant Lessons 4:00 p.m. Interfaith Council, First Baptist Church 7:30 p.m. Muslim Community	8 2:00 p.m. Muslim Community 5:00 p.m. Wedding Rehearsal 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	9 3:00 p.m. Hatton/Buttleman Wedding 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community 
10 10:00 a.m. Worship Service at Chenango Valley Home 4:00 p.m. SAME Meeting, Kitchen 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community <i>Daylight Savings Time Begins. Spring ahead one hour.</i>	11 8:30 a.m. Interfaith Council 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 2:30 p.m. Tai Chi 3:30 p.m. Tutoring 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 6:30 p.m. MEMC Meeting 7:30 p.m. MEMC Concert 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	12 1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community 	13 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 9:30 a.m. CAM, Homer 1:00 p.m. GMT, Homer 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 3:45 p.m. Humer Lessons 5:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Choir	14 9:30 a.m. Tai Chi 11:30 a.m. Conant Lessons 6:00 p.m. Piecemakers, 7:00 p.m. Transition Comm. 7:30 p.m. Muslim Community	15 2:00 p.m. Muslim Community 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	16 9:30 a.m. Piecemakers, Founders' Rm., Kitchen 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community
17 8:30 a.m. Church School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>Paper Products Sunday</i> 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. Hand Bells 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	18 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl 2:30 p.m. Tai Chi 3:30 p.m. Tutoring 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	19 9:00 a.m. Head Start Policy Council 1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	20 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 3:45 p.m. Humer Lessons 5:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:00 p.m. Democratic Comm.	21 11:30 a.m. Conant Lessons 6:00 p.m. Alzheimer's Support Group 7:00 p.m. Executive Council 7:30 p.m. Muslim Community	22 2:00 p.m. Muslim Community 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	23 Minck Birthday Party, Founders' Rm., Kitchen 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community
24 8:30 a.m. Church School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. Hand Bells 1:00 p.m. Confirmation Class 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	25 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 2:30 p.m. Tai Chi 3:30 p.m. Tutoring 5:30 p.m. Tai Chi 7:00 p.m. Trustees Mtg. 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	26 1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	27 9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 3:30 p.m. Conant Lessons 3:45 p.m. Humer Lessons 5:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Choir 7:00 p.m. Chenango Change, Founders' Rm.	28 9:30 a.m. Tai Chi 11:30 a.m. Conant Lessons 7:30 p.m. Muslim Community	29 9:00 a.m. Mail Newsletter 2:00 p.m. Muslim Community 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community	30 9:00 a.m. Home Bureau, Founders' Rm. 10:00 a.m. UCCNY Board Mtg., Syracuse 8:00 p.m. Muslim Community
31 8:30 a.m. Church School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship <i>One Great Hour of Sharing</i> 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour 11:30 a.m. Hand Bells						

Transition Committee

Linda L. Oehme

The Transition Committee is continuing to work with Marsha Williams on the Interim Profile. Just a couple little tweaks and it should be good to go. As we patiently wait for the process to continue, we will be studying and discussing the book, Interim Ministry in Action. This has been a great resource for us and we will continue to use this to help us with the interim process. We'll keep you informed as we go. Please be patient with us and pray for discernment for God's plan.



Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper



Tuesday March 5th

5:00 - 7:00 p.m.

Christ Lutheran Church.

*pancakes, sausage, real maple syrup,
homemade applesauce and beverage.*

\$8.00 for adults \$4 for children 5-10 years old
under 5 free.

Live Music - Take Out available



Ash Wednesday

Ecumenical Service

March 6th - 7:00 p.m.

Christ Evangelical Lutheran Church

UCC NY Women Annual Conference Retreat on May 2 - 4.



Keynote and Closing Worship
Rev. Rachel Hackenberg

*Worship-Workshops-Music-Choir
Mission Projects-Crafts-SERRV Store
Swimming*

Registration forms are available in the office.
For details talk to Bonnie Connolly.



Revised Common Lectionary

You may be aware that the readings used at services of worship in most Mainline Protestant churches and in Roman Catholic Churches are from the list of assigned readings known as The New Revised Common Lectionary. In our Congregational tradition, while pastors are encouraged to use the assigned readings, it's not mandatory. This is published in the hope that some may use these readings in their personal prayer and devotional time.

First Sunday in Lent - March 10

Deuteronomy 26:1-11; Psalm 91:1-2, 9-16; Romans 10:8b-13;
Luke 4:1-13

Second Sunday in Lent - March 17

Gen. 15:1-12, 17-18; Ps. 27; Phil. 3:17-4:1; Luke 13:31-35 or
Luke 9:28-36, (37-43a)

Third Sunday in Lent - March 24

Isa. 55:1-9; Ps. 63:1-8; 1 Cor. 10:1-13; Luke 13:1-9

Fourth Sunday in Lent - March 31

Josh. 5:9-12; Ps. 32; 2 Cor. 5:16-21; Luke 15:1-3, 11b-32



United Church of Christ, First Congregational, Norwich, NY has a long history of gifts bequeathed by former members and memorial gifts given by family and friends. To recognize and honor our past and encourage growth in our future, our scholarship program is supported by some recent generous gifts. Scholarship amounts vary up to \$1,000.

General Information

- ◆ The successful candidates will be chosen by the Memorial Gifts Scholarship Committee.
- ◆ Scholarships can be used for post-secondary undergraduate education.
- ◆ Preference will be given to UCC members, UCC employees, and the children/grandchildren of UCC members and UCC employees.
- ◆ Awards for graduating seniors will be presented at the Dollars for Scholars Presentation.
- ◆ The awards will be made on character, service, scholarship and financial considerations. Some awards have additional criteria as noted.

Scholarships for Applicants who are Covenant Members of UCC, First Congregational Norwich:

Memorial Gifts Scholarship (number of scholarships varies)
Alexander and Alice Neill Scholarship (1 scholarship)

Scholarships for All Applicants

Donald Tracy Scholarships (4 scholarships)
Theodore Dolgos Scholarships (2 scholarships)
Theron and Margaret Hust Scholarship (1 scholarship)

Applications will be available from the church office or online at <www.uccnorwichny.org> after February 15.

Deadline for applications is April 15.





Rethink Your Drink Chenango: Drink Water

Small changes to your daily eating or drinking habits can make a positive difference to your health. The Chenango County Health Department 2019 health campaign encourages you to **RETHINK**

YOUR DRINK CHENANGO: DRINK WATER. Drinking water is important for overall health and well-being. It is a simple change that anyone can make in their daily lives that can greatly change overall health for the better.

Heart Disease is the number one cause of premature death in Chenango County, ranking #1 in NY State. Four out of ten adults living in Chenango County are obese. This high incidence of obesity directly affects health outcomes such as diabetes and cardiovascular disease. Chenango County ranks #4 for its rate of hospitalization with diabetes as primary diagnoses. 35% of our residents suffer from high blood pressure. Three out of five children are affected by tooth decay. The numbers tell us that we have a lot of work to do to achieve better health.

Drinking water can reduce your risk for the following conditions: Obesity, Dental Caries, Heart Disease, Stroke, Type 2 Diabetes, Liver Disease, Kidney Disease

Drinking water is a healthy alternative to sugary drinks such as soda, fruit drinks, energy drinks or sports drinks. Many of these types of drinks contain more sugar than people often realize, giving them unwanted extra calories and causing tooth decay. Popular soda brands contain approximately 15-18 teaspoons of sugar in one 20 ounce bottle and 275 calories. Some sports drinks, iced teas and flavored waters that people often view as healthier alternatives to soda contain 8-12 teaspoons of sugar in one 20 ounce bottle and 160 calories. It is very important to read labels when choosing these drinks.

Drinking one 12 ounce soda a day can lead to a weight gain of 15 pounds a year.

The Chenango County Health Department will be doing a variety of education and awareness this year focused around ***RETHINK YOUR DRINK: DRINK WATER.*** We will be

visiting medical providers, educating community partners, creating displays, posters and print materials, along with radio spots and variety of other activities. All new parents will receive information about drink recommendations by mail, including when to introduce juice and how much. Here is a short list of some of those tips:

- NO juice for under 12 months old, unless recommended by your child's doctor
- Limiting to 4 ounces of juice per day for 1-3 year olds, 6 ounces of juice per day for 4-6 year olds and 8 ounces of juice per day for 7 years old through adulthood.
- Exclusive Breastfeeding is encouraged and recommended for 6 months and continued to 1-2 years of age.
- Toddlers should not be given juice or sugared drinks from bottles or sippy cups that allow them to easily drink throughout the day. Constant exposure of sugars on the teeth leads to decay.
- Children should be encouraged to eat whole fruits that provide more benefits and dietary fiber than juice.
- Add fruit to water to make it more appealing such as lemon, cucumber, berries, or mint.
- Only use 100% fresh or reconstituted fruit juice when given.
- Order water when you eat out or when you have fast food. It is often given for free.

The purpose of the **RETHINK YOUR DRINK** Campaign is to increase the public's awareness of the importance of good nutrition. You can start by choosing more water. Your body depends on water to survive, making up 60 percent of your body weight. It helps to get rid of waste, regulate temperature, lubricate joints, make healthy skin, and protects sensitive tissues. Every cell, tissue and organ in your body needs water to work properly. We encourage you to make a small change for your health and **RETHINK YOUR DRINK: DRINK WATER CHENANGO.**

For more information contact the Chenango County Health Department at 607-337-1660 or visit <https://www.co.chenango.ny.us/public-health/nursing/drinkwaterchenango.php>

Prayer Concerns

Let us keep in our prayers the following concerns:

- ◆ families, families that may be going through particularly difficult times, families seeking God's guidance;
- ◆ those who are moving because of their work, those looking for work, and those looking for meaning in their work.
- ◆ those who are ill, who are recovering from illness or surgery, or who anticipate going to the hospital.
- ◆ those who grieve over the death of someone they love.
- ◆ our church, that it might be faithful to its calling, our pastor, all staff members and committees.
- ◆ peace in the world.
- ◆ gay, lesbian and bisexual and transgendered persons, and all those who feel isolated and alone.



CONGRATULATIONS TO Jack Brereton and Cynthia Maynerd for their recent marriage.

Visitors to Our Church During February

Jerry & Sally Filiatraut, Gabriel Swaby, Potsdam NY
Connie Gaines, Norwich
Ryan Milliken, Norwich
Shannon Richards, Sherburne



March Birthdays

1 Liam Hunter	7 Rena Hall	17 Edwin Tucker
Cheri Willard	9 Eric Burgher	25 Ryan Johnson
6 Chris Mallozzi	11 Steve Craig	28 John Koopman

If you know someone on this list, or even if you don't, feel free to wish them a Happy Birthday. More importantly, strive to hold each of these people up in prayer on the anniversary of their birth. Please contact the church office with additions or corrections.

United Church of Christ
First Congregational
11 West Main Street
Norwich, NY 13815-1612



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ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

Ministers: **All the People**
Pastor and Teacher: **The Rev. Mr. Joseph Connolly**
Moderator: **Robert Oehme**
Director of Children/Youth Ministries: **Linda Oehme**
Director of Music Ministries: **Mary Williams**
Financial Secretary: **Donna Wood-Craig**
Parish Coordinator: **Cheri Willard**
Counselor, Family Counseling Ministry: **Joanne Ferguson**