



We Are Going on the Road !

Sunday, March 8 at 10:00 a.m.

We will hold our regular Sunday worship service at the
Chenango Valley Home.
24 Canasawacta St., Norwich



The Handbell Choir will play the anthem.
Coffee hour after the service.

A monthly publication of
United Church of Christ, First Congregational
11 West Main St. Norwich NY 13815 607-334-3434
www.uccnorwichny.org
Rev. John Steitz, Interim Pastor

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

Rev. John Steitz

Peacemaking Circles

A process for solving problems and building community

The peacemaking circle is a process that brings together individuals who wish to engage in conflict resolution, healing, support, decision making or other activities in which honest communications, relationship development, and community building are core desired outcomes.

"Circles" offer an alternative to contemporary meeting processes that often rely on hierarchy, win-lose positioning, and victim/rescuer approaches to relationships and problem solving.

Derived from aboriginal and native traditions, circles bring people together in a way that creates trust, respect, intimacy, good will, belonging, generosity, mutuality and reciprocity. The process is never about "changing others", but rather is an invitation to change oneself and one's relationship with the community.

Circles intentionally create a sacred space that lifts barriers between people, opening fresh possibilities for connection, collaboration and mutual understanding. The process works because it brings people together in a way that allows them to see one another as human beings and to talk about what matters.

Circles can be understood in terms of the values and principles upon which they operate, and the structures they use to support these values and principles.

Values and Principles - Though each circle develops its own values and principles, all peacemaking circles generally:

- are designed by those who use them
- are guided by a shared vision
- call participants to act on their personal values
- include all interests, and are accessible to all
- offer everyone an equal, and voluntary, opportunity to participate

- take a holistic approach, including the emotional, mental, physical and spiritual
- maintain respect for all
- encourage exploring instead of conquering differences
- invite accountability to others and to the process

Structure - Circles provide effective support to groups seeking to stay on course with the values and principles they have established for their circle.

The circle process is "simple but not easy," and must be experienced to be fully grasped and replicated. There is an intangible quality to circles that must be experienced to be understood. However, there are some key structures that help to define the circle.

- The *meeting space* is the most visible structure. Participants are seated in a circle focusing on the center where symbolic objects may be placed to remind participants of values shared among those in the circle.
- A *talking piece* is used as a way to ensure respect between speakers and listeners. The talking piece is passed from person to person within the circle and only the person holding the piece may speak.
- Two "*keepers*" of the circle have been identified. The keepers guide the participants and keep the circle as a safe space. While it is possible to have only one keeper, generally a team of two is preferable.
- *Ceremony and ritual* are used to create safety and form.
- *Consensus decision making* honors the values and principles of peacemaking circles and helps participants to stay grounded in them.

Benefits of Circles - Circles strengthen relationships and build community. They do so through the *process* they use to deal with specific issues around which a peacemaking circle might be called. As they experience circles, participants begin to develop the physical, mental, emotional and spiritual habits of peacemaking. The circle process helps to shift old patterns in how individuals and communities interact, a shift that over time becomes reflected in interactions outside the circle.

Circles:

- build relationships
- foster open dialogue
- encourage values-based action
- provide a space to acknowledge responsibility
- facilitate innovative problem-solving
- address the deeper causes of conflict
- empower participants and communities
- break through isolation
- bring healing and transformation

When to Use Peacemaking Circles - There are different reasons for bringing people together, and so circles are used for different purposes. Circles may be called for conflict, talking, healing, brainstorming and management, court-related issues, art, support, and family issues. Circles are appropriate in business, family, judicial, social service, artistic and other settings.

Circles are effective in any group settings in which there is a desire for:

- Healing rather than coercion
- Individual and collective accountability rather than only individual accountability
- Democratic, egalitarian and spiritual values
- Focusing on the commonalities, instead of the differences, between people
- Building community
- Individual and collective change and transformation

*"I felt finally like we were a part of something,
that we were finally 'together'
on something that was so powerful
. . . and it felt like community."*

Sources: Carolyn Boyes-Watson, Suffolk College; Jon Prichard, University of Maine; Pranis, K., Barry Stuart and Mark Wedge, 2003, Peacemaking Circles, From Crime to Community, Living Justice Press.

Transition Committee

By Linda Oehme

Your Transition Team has been diligently working on developing our Local Church Profile. The Profile is divided into three sections: “Who are we?”

“Who is our neighbor?”

“Who is God calling us to become?”

These are important and necessary steps in the process of calling our next Pastor. We now need your input as we begin the task of answering, “WHO ARE WE NOW?”

The primary concern in this section of the Profile is entitled, “Congregational Reflections.” In order to have the input of our entire Church Family, the Transition Team developed and mailed questions to our members and regular church attendees. These questions were developed to help you think about the positive and negative things that are unique to UCC Norwich. The questions are designed to be engaging and thought provoking... and, if you so choose, anonymous.

We are also developing “house meetings” where you will have an opportunity to speak with some of the Transition Team at Coffee Hour or informally at designated homes. This is an exciting time in the life of our church. And NOW is YOUR TIME to HELP us in this endeavor.

Remember, this is not a race; it is a long and deliberate journey! These “Stepping Stones” will help us stay on the path God has for US. We need to take time to listen and discern God’s plan for US. Continue to keep us in your prayers and have patience with us and the process.

WHO ARE WE NOW Congregational Reflections (1)

1. What aspect of the Worship service is most important to you?
2. In what ways do people share their gifts in Worship?
3. What do you appreciate most about our music ministry?
4. How has a sermon, prayer, hymn or other element of Worship helped you live your life?

Conversations with Pastor John: A Lenten Bible Study/ Quaker Query Process

During Lent Pastor John will lead a series of discussions on several biblical passages. With each passage we will then use a Quaker “Queries” process, focused questions to grow spiritually in faith and practice. We will hold these conversations at Wednesday at 6:00 p.m.

- March 4 The God Conversation Exodus 3:1-15
- March 11 The Gift Conversation 1 Corinthians 12
- March 18 The Passion Conversation Micah 6:8
- March 25 The Spiritual Growth Conversation Romans 13:1-2
- April 1 The Opportunity Conversation Colossians 3:17



Hospice & Palliative Care Announces Spiritual Support Volunteer Program

The Spiritual Support Volunteer program is seeking individuals who reside in or near Chenango County and are looking for a flexible volunteering opportunity. This is an ideal volunteer role for either lay people or clergy who wish to volunteer their time in our Spiritual Care Services Program as a visitor to our patients and their families to provide emotional and spiritual support. Spiritual Support Volunteers will work under the guidance of a hospice chaplain staff person. Training will include: Roles of patient/family volunteers, spirituality and religion, cultural diversity, death and dying, professional boundaries, active listening and how to support and provide relief to patients/families as part of their end of life care. An information meeting will be held on **Monday, March 9** at 4:30 p.m. at Hospice, 21 Hayes St, Norwich. Please RSVP to Sarah Green, Volunteer Coordinator by Wednesday, March 4 at 334-3556 or or sgreen@hospicechenango.org.

Letters

Greetings from Maine!

We wanted to let you know we purchased a home and have moved into a small condominium in Brunswick. **Our new address is: 9 Ward Circle, Brunswick, Maine 04011.**

Thank you to everyone for staying in touch. We hold our memories of Norwich close to our hearts. We hold the friendships we made even closer.

Joe and Bonnie Connolly

Meet the Pastor

“Meet the Pastor” Gatherings will be taking place in the next few months in people’s homes and at church. These meetings are informal and will be made up of about 4-6 people. Hosting involves providing a comfortable meeting space and perhaps a light refreshment. If you would like to host one (or more) meetings, please sign up in the church office.

Special Easter Event

Sight & Sound Theatres® presents: **JESUS**, The Inspiring Musical on the big screen **April 7, 9 & 11** - More than one million people have experienced the live performance of **JESUS** at Sight & Sound’s theater in Lancaster, PA. Now, audiences across the country will have the opportunity to witness this awe-inspiring spectacle at the Fathom Events screenings. Filmed in front of a live audience, **JESUS** is the action-packed musical stage adventure that takes audiences on a miraculous journey alongside the most famous person ever to walk the earth and the everyday people whose lives He changed forever. This is a wonderful show to experience during Easter week.

There are three showings of the film in Syracuse at the Regal Destiny Stadium Theater, 9586 Destiny USA Dr., Syracuse.

Tuesday, April 7 at 6:30 pm; Thursday, April 9 at 6:30 pm;

Saturday, April 11 at 12:55 pm

Tickets are \$15 for children and seniors, \$18 for adults and can be purchased online. For tickets and information go to <jesusevent.com>

March 2020

LENT

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 9:45 a.m. Coffee Hour 10:00 a.m. Worship/ Communion, Founders' Rm. 4:00 p.m. SAME Meeting, Kitchen</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl 3:00 p.m. Tai Chi 6:00 p.m. Deacons Mtg.</p> 	<p>3</p> <p>1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen/Founders' Rm. 4:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p>	<p>4</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm. 3:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>5</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Oehme Lessons 10:30 a.m. Tai Chi 12:00 p.m. Conant Lessons 6:30 p.m. Transition Committee</p>	<p>6</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 6:00 p.m. The Place Youth, Youth Room.</p>	<p>7</p> 
<p>8</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Worship at Chenango Valley Home</p>	<p>9</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Mediation, Chapel 11:00 a.m. Doug's Fish Fry - See p. 13. 3:00 p.m. Tai Chi 7:30 p.m. Monday Evening Musical Club. See p. 15.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>1:00 p.m. Piecemakers, Founders' Rm./Kitchen 4:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p> 	<p>11</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm. 3:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>12</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Oehme Lessons 10:30 a.m. Tai Chi 12:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p>	<p>13</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 6:00 p.m. The Place Youth, Youth Room.</p>	<p>14</p>
<p>15</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl 3:00 p.m. Tai Chi 7:00 p.m. Trustees Mtg. 7:00 p.m. Garden Club Mtg., Mayflower Rm.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:00 a.m. Head Start Policy Council 1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 4:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm. 3:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal 7:00 p.m. Democratic Committee, Founders' Rm.</p>	<p>19</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Oehme Lessons 10:30 a.m. Tai Chi 12:00 p.m. Conant Lessons 6:00 p.m. Alzheimer's Support Group, Founders' Rm. 6:30 p.m. Helping Hands, YMCA. See p. 14.</p>	<p>20</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 6:00 p.m. The Place Youth, Youth Room.</p>	<p>21</p> <p>9:0 a.m. Piecemakers, Founders' Rm.</p> 
<p>22</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship OGHS Offering. See p. 11. 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour</p>	<p>23</p> <p>3:00 p.m. Tai Chi</p> 	<p>24</p> <p>1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 4:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p>	<p>25</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep, Founders' Rm. 3:00 p.m. Devine Lessons 6:00 p.m. Bible Study 6:30 p.m. Chenango Change, Founders' Rm. 7:00 p.m. Choir Rehearsal</p>	<p>26</p> <p>10:30 a.m. Oehme Lessons 10:30 a.m. Tai Chi 12:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p>	<p>27</p> <p>9:00 a.m. AARP Tax Prep 6:00 p.m. The Place Youth, Youth Room.</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>8:30 a.m. Sunday School 9:30 a.m. Nursery 10:00 a.m. Worship 11:00 a.m. Coffee Hour</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Prayer Shawl 3:00 p.m. Tai Chi</p>	<p>31</p> <p>1:00 p.m. Quilters, Kitchen 4:00 p.m. Conant Lessons</p>				

*The Chenango Muslim Community meets daily at 9:30 p.m. and Fridays at 1:30 p.m.

Director of Children and Youth Ministries

Linda L. Oehme

During the month of March, we begin with our 5th Unit, *The Tree of Faith*. This unit theme focuses on the wonderful narratives from the Hebrew scripture. These stories, from our faith “family tree”, tell of our ancestors in the faith from whom we can learn. Like us, they lived lives in which times of courage and faith were mixed with times of fear and turning away from God. They did not always choose well. Their experiences can help us understand our own feelings of estrangement from God, and God’s constant seeking for an intimate relationship with us.

The image of the tree emerges in our story of the Garden of Eden on the first week. On the last week, we have the story of Jesus’ entry into Jerusalem where branches of palm tree were waved in Jesus’ honor. Also, that last week we read of Jesus’ death on a cross which is referred to by both Peter and Paul in sermons recorded in Acts as “the tree” on which Jesus was put to death.

Lent is a time to focus on the working of God within our lives, our community, and in the world in which we live. In doing so, we open ourselves to see the continuing renewal God seeks to bring to humanity. We think about how the values of God’s reign —peace, reconciliation, forgiveness, and justice for all— are being lived out in our lives and our communities. We reflect upon the promises made at our baptism and confirmation and prepare to renew our covenant with God. We begin Lent with Ash Wednesday, a time of confession and absolution. Knowing and experiencing God’s forgiveness allows us to honestly examine our lives. Without that assurance, the task would be overwhelming. Are the choices we make and the actions we take compatible with God’s will?

STAY TUNED: Vacation Bible School plans are in the works.

One Great Hour of Sharing Offering - March 22

Through One Great Hour of Sharing, lives are literally changed daily. Your support provides clean water, food, medicines, shelter, healthcare, education and so much more. In 2017, the OGHS offering was over \$2 million. An additional \$3 million was given to the United Church of Christ Disaster Ministries in support of specific disaster relief efforts.

What is One Great Hour of Sharing®?

One Great Hour of Sharing, as part of Our Churches Wider Mission, is the special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that carries God's message of love and hope to people in crisis. The UCC works with international partners to provide sources of clean water, food, education and health care, small business micro-credit, advocacy and resettlement for refugees and displaced persons, and emergency relief and rehabilitation. OGHS also supports domestic and international ministries for disaster preparedness and response.

Who participates in One Great Hour of Sharing?

Several Christian denominations - American Baptist Church, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Church of the Brethren, the United Church of Christ, and Church World Service work together to develop common promotional materials thereby sharing ideas, costs, and a commitment to faithful service. Each denomination receives and manages its respective OGHS offering.

How is the United Church of Christ's offering used?

60 percent of the UCC's offering supports international development initiatives, including annual support for missionaries. Currently, there are 2 OGHS supported missionaries and 1 Global Mission Intern working in disaster relief, health care, education, sustainable agricultural development, and refugee support. The offering also funds disaster preparedness and response, and disaster-related volunteer initiatives in the U.S.

Where and how are OGHS funds shared?

The United Church of Christ responds to humanitarian and development needs in the world. Specifically, we support sustainable development and refugee needs internationally and provide disaster relief and immigration assistance in the United States.

The United Church of Christ responds as a member of organizations such as Church World Service and the ACT Alliance. We also support the direct mission efforts of churches and church-based organizations that the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) have direct partnerships with through Global Ministries. Nearly one-fifth of the UCC's OGHS offering is shared through Church World Service to support refugee, and disaster programs worldwide.

How many dollars are given to the UCC's OGHS offering?

In 2017, the OGHS offering received over \$2 million. Nearly sixty-five percent of UCC congregations participate annually.

What percentage of OGHS donations are used directly for the mission?

On average, of every dollar given to One Great Hour of Sharing, 95 cents is used directly for mission programming; and 5 cents for interpretation materials. The associated administrative costs are paid by gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission National Basic Support.

How are decisions made to fund the various projects?

Most of the expenditures are put into the budget to support long-term sustainable development. All funding is reviewed and monitored by a leadership committee that also reviews grant requests for long-term disaster rehabilitation initiatives.

How can I contribute to One Great Hour of Sharing?

Our church will be collecting donations for One Great Hour of Sharing during the worship service on March 22. If you can't be here that day, feel free to send in or drop off your donation made out to "United Church of Christ, Norwich" with OGHS in the memo line and we will get it where it needs to be. Or go to www.ucc.org/oghs and click on the "Donate" button.



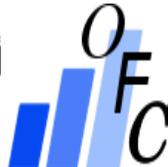
United Church of Christ, First Congregational, Norwich, NY has a long history of gifts bequeathed by former members and memorial gifts given by family and friends. To recognize and honor our past and encourage growth in our future, our scholarship program is supported by some recent generous gifts. Scholarship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

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

Deadline for applications is April 15.



**Monday, March 9
11 a.m. - 6 p.m.**

www.dougsfishfry.com

Fundraiser for Opportunities for Chenango, Inc.
44 West Main Street, Norwich

To call and place orders until 4pm: 607-753-9184 ext. 2
Prices include Tax. Major Credit Cards Accepted.
ITEMS ARE FRIED IN 100% PEANUT OIL



Helping Hands Needs Our Help!

On the third Thursday of every month, Helping Hands distributes various items for free at the Norwich YMCA from 6:30 - 7:30pm. If you want to volunteer, just arrive at 6:00 p.m. - no need to call in advance. In March, the distribution will be **Thursday, March 19th**.

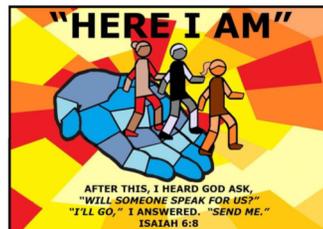
Can't Volunteer? Here is another way YOU can help!
Each month our church will be collecting different items.

During March we are collecting **Baby Wipes and Hand Wipes**. (Don't worry about the size of the package; they will be divided into smaller packages.)

A barrel for your donations is in the Founder's Room next to the Deacon's Book Rack. Each month, the item we are collecting will be in the church bulletin and newsletter. It will also be displayed on the collection barrel. Drop off your donations any time the church is open!

If you have questions see Ericka Tyler.

UCC NY Women Annual Conference April 30, May 1, & 2 at Watston Homestead, Painted Post



Keynote and Closing Worship
Rev. Dr. Donna Schaper

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

Registration forms will be available in the office.

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.
- ◆ the Transition Team



Monday Evening Musical Club
invites you to a

Music in our Schools Month Concert

 **March 9, 7:30 p.m.** 

in the Nave

Reception will follow. Free and open to the public.

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

Please call the church office with additions or corrections.

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

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**
Interim Pastor: **Rev. John Steitz**
Moderator: **Jamie Maholchic**
Director of Children/Youth Ministries: **Linda Oehme**
Director of Music Ministries: **Mary Williams**
Financial Secretary: **Donna Wood-Craig**
Parish Coordinator: **Cheri Oakley**
Family Counseling: **Jocanne Ferguson**