



A monthly publication of  
United Church of Christ, First Congregational, Norwich, NY

[www.uccnorwichny.org](http://www.uccnorwichny.org)



**CONTACT US**

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**CHURCH OFFICE HOURS**

*Monday, Tuesday, Thursday*  
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m. (Closed for lunch 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.)  
*Friday*  
8:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

**WORSHIP SERVICES**

Sundays, 10:00 a.m. in the Nave  
[Click here for live stream.](#)

Ministers: All the People  
Pastor: Rev. James K. Boodley  
Moderator: Pete Williams  
Director of Music Ministries: Mary Williams  
Organist: David Burch  
Director of Children/Youth Ministries: Ericka Tyler  
Parish Coordinator: Cheri Oakley  
Financial Assistant: Jennifer Mallozzi  
Sexton: Eric Burgher



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# From the Pastor

## Rev. James K. Boodley

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### Being Relentless Advocates

These past few weeks, we've been looking at how to maintain a sense of stability in one's life by taking care of ourselves physically, mentally, and spiritually – essentially getting an early start on our New Year's resolutions. That way, by this time next month, we'll be much more likely to follow through on them for the foreseeable future. As we do so, a question we might ask is, "To what end?" That is, "Why are we doing this?" Not feeling tossed around by the storms in life is important, however, there's something to be said about using the time to get ready for the rainbows that often follow those storms – or even appear in the midst of them.

On the topic of storms in life, early in my ministry I was an on-call chaplain at our local hospital. From the caregivers with whom I interacted – nurses, especially – I learned two important facts: 1) You (either patient or family) must be relentless in advocating for yourself or your loved one. While everyone wants you / your loved one to be well again, it's your responsibility to demand answers to your questions about how to achieve that goal. 2) Patients who are a royal pain-in-the-ass stand the best chance of recovering. Yes, they make caregivers' lives miserable, but they're also (secretly) admired by their caregivers as the patients who will most likely leave the hospital alive. Those patients who were quiet and docile? Their outcome was *much* less positive. And if there was a coffee cart outside of a patient's room – the coffee cart of death? Death was imminent.

Coming back to our own lives, while we work to gird ourselves for the uncertainties – and storms – next year will bring, now is the time to ask, "What does a healthy *society* look like and how can I help ensure that outcome?" More specifically, "What does a healthy society look like for the most vulnerable?" Remember how I told you about the person who called to thank the church for a pair of socks in her Thanksgiving box? A pair of socks?! My heart broke when I heard that. Then there was the person who called to say their house burned down, they lost everything, and their Thanksgiving box was the only food they had after that disaster. Heartbreak again. "But those needs are so easy to meet," we sigh!

Throughout Scripture, we find examples of God being concerned about "the least of these" in society. Jesus called them "members of my family." If Jesus claimed the marginalized – the sick, lonely, naked, those in prison, homeless (and others) – as members of his family, then it's imperative we do the same, especially if society doesn't seem willing to see them as worthy of esteem or, even worse, regards them as subhuman. One of my mantras to someone on the receiving end of abuse is, "The most loving thing you can say to anyone who is abusing you is, 'Enough! This abuse stops now!'" Unfortunately, the power difference between abuser and someone being abused is the latter doesn't have the strength to be an advocate for him- or herself. That's when we as people of faith have the responsibility to step in and say, "Enough!" Advocating for "the least of these" has been – and always will be – one of the most sacred responsibilities we have as people who model ourselves after the man whose birth we'll be celebrating in a few weeks. Let's gird ourselves to take that responsibility seriously – and relentlessly – now and for the foreseeable future until Jesus comes back again.

In faith – and in hope,

J.K.



Glory to God  
*in the highest*  
and on earth peace,  
good will toward men.

Luke 2:14, KJV

# Children and Youth Ministries

Ericka Tyler, Director

Greetings! Our Sunday School students have recently finished up their unit on what it means to be a great leader. We found out that great leaders follow through on their words, choose love, have integrity, and follow God's lead! There was a lot of great discussion each week on how we can practice being good leaders in our schools and at home.

As the Thanksgiving holiday approaches, we move to a new unit on the topic of generosity titled *Over the Top*. Have you ever seen one of those random acts of kindness that tend to trend online? Maybe someone gives a stranger an envelope full of cash or the keys to a free car. Maybe they pay off all their bills or cover their college tuition. While these moments of "over the top" generosity can be inspiring, they're not things most of us will ever be in a position to give away. But if we can't give away any brand new cars, what can we give that would make a difference in the world? In this four-week series, we'll see what the book of 1 Thessalonians shows us about loving others through what we *can* give. We'll discover how to make a big difference by being generous with our **time**, being generous by **sharing the good news**, being generous by **caring for each other**, and being generous with our **encouragement**.



In other news, our Free2BMe youth group is enjoying some brand new coloring books! We continue to meet most Sunday afternoons and have a great time talking, playing games, coloring and interacting with our mascot, Xiva! A schedule for the youth group is below as we have now moved into a busy time of year!

We will meet on: 12/1, 12/8 and 12/22, 12:30 - 2:00 p.m.

We will **NOT** meet on 12/15\* and 12/29

\*Be sure to come see the Christmas Cantata at 4:00 p.m.

Remember, amidst all of the chaos and busyness, this is a time of year for generosity and giving from the heart. Let's practice being great leaders for God and remember to be generous. We may not have a lot of money, but we do have our time, the ability to share the good news, the amazing ability to care for each other when in need, and the ability to encourage those around us who may be struggling. God loves you and is urging you to follow in God's lead. How is God calling you to be generous today?

God bless,  
Ericka

**Church Office  
Christmas Schedule**

**December 20 - January 3**  
*Hours by Appointment Only*

**12/25, 12/26 and 1/1**  
*Closed*

# Music Ministries

## Mary Williams, Director

### Mark your calendars!

Singers from area churches and the Norwich community will join together on Sunday December 15, 2024 at 4:00 p.m. to perform *The Star Arising: A Cantata For Christmas*. The program will be directed by Mary Mayo Williams and accompanied by David Burch. According to the composer Joseph Martin, the cantata is a “celebration of light and joy, filled with beloved carol tunes and original seasonal selections, set in a traditional style. The program is free and open to the public. A free-will offering will be taken to benefit the UCC Christmas Fund.



The following people are scheduled to participate:

**Sopranos** - Grace Burke, Pat Burke, Kathie Burnside, Meena Conant, Jennifer Oliver, Debra Sanderson, Destinie Smith, Jessica Strough, Brenda Thall

**Altos** - Jan Burch, Valerie Diefenbacher, Jane Ford, Miranda Hunter, Joyce Lawson, Jen Mallozzi, Donna Moren, Amy Rogers, Paula Van Tyle

**Tenors** - Colin Bussing, Kathy Glavin, Dave Kirsch, Michael Moren, Pete Williams

**Basses** - Craig Lawson, Bob Oehme, Gerry Ruestow, Lee Wilhelm

### From the Worship Team and Music Ministries

Monthly services will resume at the Chenango Valley Home for the first time since March of 2020 when the facility was closed to visitors due to the pandemic. Our church music leaders along with members of the choir will be joining Pastor JK Boodley on the following dates: December 1, December 22, January 5 and February 2. Members of the congregation are encouraged to attend as well. The services will start at 1:00 p.m. and will last about 30 minutes.



In Advent, we will begin our services with a reading and the lighting of an Advent candle. Each week, we will celebrate a different theme as we anticipate and prepare for the birth of Jesus: Hope, Peace, Joy, and Love. A canticle, which incorporates music from the cantata, will be sung by the choir.

Please join us for **Christmas Eve** services beginning at 4:45 with an extended prelude, communion, candlelight, and carols! Sunday December 29 will be a service of lessons and carols.

### Special Music in December:

December 1 Handbell Choir *Epiphany Carol* (Prelude) and Michael Moren singing *Unto Us* based on Isaiah 9

December 8 Averie Fink (trumpet) and Liam Hunter (Horn) will play a duet *O Come, O Come, Emmanuel with O Come, Divine Messiah*

December 15 Clarinet Trio Fiora Breese, Heavenly Mahaffey and Lily Turnbull, playing *Patapan*

December 22 Bella Johnson and Dave Burch will play a piano duet, *The First Noel*



A few photos from our Thanksgiving Basket Distribution on November 21 and 22. A more detailed report will be in the January newsletter - but in brief our church put together 100 boxes. Then the community basket drive brought in another 132 boxes, three additional gift cards and a box donated from the Nursing Program at SUNY Morrisville, for a total of 236 baskets and/or gift cards out our doors. Thank you to everyone who helped!





# Order Your Poinsettias

Poinsettias will be decorate the church from December 7 through Christmas Eve. You have the opportunity to provide one in memory or honor of someone. Please return this form to the church office by **December 17<sup>th</sup>**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Yes, I would like to dedicate a poinsettia**

(circle one) IN MEMORY or IN HONOR of:

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Choose one:**

- Please bill me \$15.00
- Payment enclosed
- I will bring in a poinsettia.

**Choose one:**

- The Deacons can give my plant to a homebound person.
- I will pick up my plant after the Christmas Eve Service.



**Bring in new mittens, hats and scarves of all sizes to decorate the Mitten Tree in the Founders' Room. After Christmas we donate these items to Perry Browne School.**



In case of inclement weather, please don't take any risks to get to church on a Sunday morning. You can tune in to the live stream at <[www.uccnorwichny.org/worship](http://www.uccnorwichny.org/worship)> If we cancel church all together, we will post on Facebook and Instagram, and also with a message on the church phone (607-334-3434).



“ ...the Glory of God shone around them... ”  
Luke 2:9

Offering Envelopes will be in the bulletins December 22 and December 24. Checks can be made out to our church with CHRISTMAS FUND in the memo.



Donate Online Here!

## Be the Light

Thanks to your generosity, last year the Christmas Fund provided over \$1.9 million in pension and health benefits, emergency grants, and thank-you checks to retired church servants and their families. Every gift came from people like you. This year, please give what you can to continue supporting those who've devoted their lives to serving others.



**DECORATE**  
the Church

**Saturday December 7**  
**10:00 a.m.**

**Come and Help!**



*Community*  
**Advent**  
BOOK STUDY


**What:** *Prepare the Way for the Lord: Advent and the Message of John the Baptist*

**When:** 11:30 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. Tuesdays for 4 weeks (Nov. 26, & Dec. 3, 10, 17)  
Lite Lunch & Fellowship: 11:30 a.m.  
Lenten Study: Noon - 1:00 p.m.

**Where:** Broad Street United Methodist Church (74 N. Broad St. Norwich)

Feel free to contact Rev. Mary Rublee at Broad St. United Methodist Church with any questions regarding this study.

**HOSPICE LIGHT UP A LIFE**  
**December 5, 5:30 p.m.**  
**The Jewish Center,**  
**72 S Broad St., Norwich**



Join us for a memorial tree lighting service to honor the lives of our loved ones who have passed away.

*(If there is inclement weather, the event will be postponed to December 12.)*


For more information, please call (607) 334-3556.




**Blue Christmas Service**

**Monday, December 16, 7:00 p.m.**  
at Broad St. United Methodist Church  
(74 N. Broad St., Norwich)

*For many people, the approaching Christmas holiday doesn't bring with it the joy and happiness that's advertised in the media or in greeting cards. This service is intended to provide a sacred, reflective, and safe gathering time and space for people to grieve yet will focus on the message of comfort and hope that God offers to all of us during difficult times. Everyone within the community is welcome to join us for a quiet, spiritual time in the midst of this busy season.*











**BUDGET VOTE**

**Sunday, December 15**  
In the Nave after the worship service.  
Members are encouraged to attend to vote on the 2025 budget.

# DECEMBER



Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>1</p> <p>First Sunday of Advent - Hope</p> <p>9:00am Nursery</p> <p>10:00am Worship/ Communion</p> <p>11:00am Coffee Hour</p> <p>12:30pm Youth Group</p> <p>1:00pm Service at Chenango Valley Home</p> <p>3:00pm Cantata Rehearsal</p>	<p>2</p> <p>10:00am Knitting Group, Kitchen</p> <p>2:00pm Tai Chi, Founders Rm.</p> 	<p>3</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./Kitchen</p> <p>11:30am Advent Book Study at BSUMC. See p. 7.</p> <p>1:00pm Piecemakers Circle, Kitchen</p>	<p>4</p> <p>10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom</p> <p>4:00pm Transition Committee, Founders Rm., Zoom</p> <p>7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./ Kitchen</p> <p>5:30pm Hospice Light Up a Light Ceremony. See p. 7.</p> 	<p>6</p> 	<p>7</p> <p>10:00am Advent Decorating - All welcome</p> 
<p>8</p> <p>Second Sunday of Advent - Peace</p> <p>9:00am Nursery</p> <p>10:00am Worship</p> <p>11:00am Coffee Hour</p> <p>12:30pm Youth Group</p> <p>3:00pm Cantata Rehearsal</p>	<p>9</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./Kitchen</p> <p>2:00pm Tai Chi, Founders Rm.</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./Kitchen</p> <p>11:30am Advent Book Study at BSUMC. See p. 7.</p> <p>1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen</p> <p>5:00pm Pride Alliance Meeting, Founders Rm.</p>	<p>11</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./ Kitchen</p> <p>10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom</p> <p>7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>12</p> <p>12:00pm Piecemakers Holiday Meeting, Founders Rm.</p>	<p>13</p> 	<p>14</p> <p>10:00am Cantata Dress Rehearsal</p>
<p>15</p> <p>Third Sunday of Advent - Joy</p> <p>9:00am Nursery</p> <p>10:00am Worship</p> <p>11:00am Budget Vote</p> <p>11:10am Coffee Hour</p> <p>4:00pm Cantata Performance, Nave</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:00am Knitting Group, kitchen</p> <p>2:00pm Tai Chi</p> <p>7:00pm Blue Christmas Service at BSUM. See p. 7.</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./Kitchen</p> <p>11:30am Advent Book Study at BSUMC. See p. 7.</p> <p>1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen</p>	<p>18</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./ Kitchen</p> <p>10:00am Prayer Circle</p> <p>6:10pm Democratic Committee, Founders Rm.</p> <p>7:00pm Choir</p>	<p>19</p> <p>9:00am AARP Tax Training, Founders Rm./ Kitchen</p>	<p>20</p>	<p>21</p> 
<p>22</p> <p>Fourth Sunday of Advent - Love</p> <p>9:00am Nursery</p> <p>10:00am Worship <i>Christmas Fund Offering</i></p> <p>11:00am Coffee Hour</p> <p>12:30pm Youth Group</p> <p>1:00pm Service at</p>	<p>23</p> <p>2:00pm Tai Chi, Founders Rm.</p>	<p>24</p> <p>Christmas Eve</p> <p>4:45pm Prelude</p> <p>5:00pm Service with Communion and Candlelight <i>Christmas Fund Offering</i></p>	<p>25</p> <p>Christmas Day</p> <p><i>Church Office closed</i></p> 	<p>26</p> <p><i>Church Office Closed</i></p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p>
<p>29</p> <p>9:00am Nursery</p> <p>10:00am Worship</p> <p>11:00am Coffee Hour</p>	<p>30</p> <p>10:00 a.m. Knitting Group, Kitchen</p> <p>2:00 p.m. Tai Chi, Founders Rm.</p>	<p>31</p> <p><b>New Year's Eve</b></p>	<p>1</p> <p><b>New Year's Day</b></p> <p><i>Church Office Closed</i></p>			



United Church of Christ presents



# *The Star Arising*

A CANTATA FOR CHRISTMAS

by **Joseph Martin**

Mary Williams, Director of Music Ministries

David Burch, Accompanist

*Featuring singers from local churches and the community.*

**Sunday, December 15, 2024 at 4:00 p.m.**

In-Person at  
**United Church of Christ, 11 West Main St., Norwich**

Livestream available

[www.uccnorwichny.org/livestream](http://www.uccnorwichny.org/livestream)



**Free and Open to the Public**



607-334-3434

[www.uccnorwichny.org](http://www.uccnorwichny.org)

## Letters - Emails - Notes

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To the Congregation at United Church of Christ,

In reviewing the construction status and financial status of the restoration project at BSUMC, I want to acknowledge receipt of your amazing third check toward our steeple/roof fund. Please accept my apology for not getting back to you sooner. Time goes by so fast when concentrating on this huge endeavor as well as others. Please know that we deeply appreciate your kindness and generosity. You really are an example of extending God's blessings.

I can tell you that your donations have helped to bring us along quite far. ALL inside work under the roof is completed and strengthened. As indicated in my last note to you, we had to go to the back of the roof exterior i.e. Phase 6. That is now completed. In the spring of 2025 the entire main roof will be done at a cost of approximately \$500,000. Needless to say, we will be continually raising money. We also do many fundraisers. The ultimate goal will be to finally shingle the two steeples.

Thank you, thank you for your continued generosity.

God Bless.

Bernie Windsor

To Our Dear Friends at UCC,

Thank you for the very generous donation you have made to the Fourth Saturday Diaper Distribution. Your generosity will help us continue to provide assistance to caregivers in our community in need.

Nicole Iseman, Program Coordinator

First Baptist Church

Dear UCC,

The Town & Country Garden Club would like to thank you for allowing us to use your space. We appreciate having a safe open space to hold our meetings. Thank you!

Town & Country Garden Club

Dear UCC,

Thank you for your donation. The mission of helping others wouldn't be possible without you! We appreciate your monetary support.

Lorri Race, Founder

Helping Hands

Dear UCC,

On behalf of the volunteers and clients that are part of Our Daily Bread Food Pantry, we want to thank you for your donation in November. The money donated will be used for the purchase of food for the pantry. We certainly appreciate your continued support. In October we provided food to 114 families/651 people. We are happy that we can be there to assist families.

Barbara and Gary Tompkins, Co-Coordinator

Our Daily Bread Food Pantry

Dear Friends,

I am delighted to acknowledge your recent gift to the Annual Fund at Lancaster Theological Seminary. Your support is invaluable, and I am truly grateful for your generosity. Your gift to the Annual Fund helps make theological education affordable for every LTS student. Last year, 42 students received nearly \$260,000 in scholarship support to attend LTS. Your donation has directly impacted these students, allowing them to pursue their calling and contribute to their communities.

Thank you for supporting our mission to educate and nurture leaders to join in God's redemptive and liberating work. It is a historical year at LTS as we celebrate our seminary's 200th anniversary and Santee Chapel's 100th anniversary! I am thankful for your commitment to the future of LTS and our students. Your generosity not only supports them in their journey to becoming compassionate leaders, but also empowers them to make a profound impact in our world.

Kristin Warner, Associate Director of Engagement & Philanthropy

Lancaster Theological Seminary

# 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 people of Ukraine, Russia, Israel, Gaza, Haiti



TO FULFILL WHAT THE LORD HAD SPOKEN BY THE PROPHET.

*Matthew 1:22, ESV*

## DECEMBER

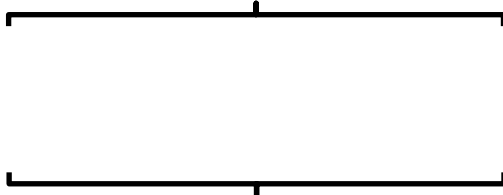
### BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Pat Whitmore
- 3 Pete Williams
- 10 Bonnie Carpenter
- 11 Judy Smith
- 12 Jamie Maholchic
- 13 Donna Moren
- 14 Elizabeth Bronson
- 16 J. R. Hamilton
- 18 Margaret Burke
- 27 Mary Carson

### ANNIVERSARIES

- David and Rena Hall 12/01/07
- Matt and Jamie Maholchic 12/18/05





ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

11 West Main Street  
Norwich, NY 13815-1612



*The Place*  
ANNUAL HOLIDAY  
WREATH FUNDRAISER

**FRASER FIR WREATHS \$35**  
10" ring (25" tip to tip), provided by Pires Flower Basket

**RED POINSETTIAS \$15**  
placed in a 6" pot

Tickets available for purchase at The Place,  
Cottage Bakery, or from a Place Board Member  
(Warren Nash, Matt Boland, Deb Sanderson, Lois LoPresti, Norma Kinney, Krista  
Porter, Stephanie Lockwood, Jeanne Urie, and Linda Hopson)

Pick up by December 20th at  
The Place  
22 East Main Street, Norwich, NY 13815

FOR MORE INFORMATION:  
EMAIL: [EXECDIRECTOR@THEPLACENORWICH.COM](mailto:EXECDIRECTOR@THEPLACENORWICH.COM)  
CALL: (607) 336-9696 EXT. 103