



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

www.uccnorwichny.org



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CHURCH OFFICE HOURS

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday,
8:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
(Closed for lunch from 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

**Remember to change your clocks
on Saturday night, March 8.**

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From the Pastor

Rev. James K. Boodley

Welcoming Immigrants



Last week, I had the pleasure of attending the naturalization ceremony for people from around the world at the U.S. District Court for the Northern District of New York. (See photo.) The judge presiding over the ceremony and various state and national representatives spoke passionately about the U.S. being a nation of immigrants and the importance of welcoming new people to our country. I was also struck by the oath of allegiance all of the citizen-candidates were required to take:

"I hereby declare, on oath, that I absolutely and entirely renounce and abjure all allegiance and fidelity to any foreign prince, potentate, state, or sovereignty, of whom or which I have heretofore been a subject or citizen; that I will support and defend the Constitution and laws of the United States of America against all enemies, foreign and domestic; that I will bear true faith and allegiance to the same; that I will bear arms on behalf of the United States when required by law; that I will perform noncombatant Service in the Armed Forces of the United States when required by law; that I will perform work of national importance under civilian direction when required by the law; and that I take this obligation freely, and without any mental reservation or purpose of evasion; so help me God."

As I was listening to the oath, I wondered to myself, "How many of us who were born here would be willing to take this oath?" (By the way, if you were a Jehovah's Witness, who wasn't allowed to take an oath to a country or to bear arms for religious reasons, you'd be able to take an alternative oath.) Then there are various passages from Scripture about being strangers in a strange land:

"You shall not wrong or oppress a resident alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 22:21)

"You shall not oppress a resident alien; you know the heart of an alien, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt." (Exodus 23:9)

"When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall not do him wrong. You shall treat the stranger who sojourns with you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." (Leviticus 19:33-34)

"You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt." (Deuteronomy 10:19)

"I was a stranger and you welcomed me." (Matthew 25:36b) And the alternative:

"You that are accursed, depart from me into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels, for I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me nothing to drink, I was a stranger and you did not welcome me... Truly I tell you, just as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me." (Matthew 25:41-43, 45)

Then there was the story of Jesus' own family escaping the threat of death from King Herod:

"Now after they [the three wise men] had left, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, 'Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt, and remain there until I tell you; for Herod is about to search for the child to destroy him.' Then Joseph got up, took the child and his mother by night, and went to Egypt and remained there until the death of Herod." (Matthew 2:13-15)

Most of the above passages from Scripture insist readers have compassion for the strangers among them because their ancestors were once strangers in a strange land. I'm especially struck by the passages from Leviticus and Deuteronomy about *loving* the strangers among us. Jesus makes the importance of that clear when he states the second commandment is to "love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:39) Then there's his family's own experience of escaping King Herod's death squads at the direction of one of God's angels. Taken together, having a sense of compassion – especially for those who are coming to this country to escape death in their own countries – would be an exceptionally good idea. Avoiding the consequences of *not* doing so (Matthew 25:41-43) would also be an exceptionally good idea.

Once again, love and compassion are the better options.

In faith and in hope,
J.K.



You're Invited! Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

Featuring pancakes, sausage, homemade applesauce and syrup, and live music!
A fun evening for all!

March 4, 2025 4:30 - 7:00 PM

Christ Lutheran Church
94 North Broad Street, Norwich

**Free will donations to benefit local food pantries,
Our Daily Bread and Roots & Wings**



ASH WEDNESDAY - MARCH 5

DRIVE THROUGH AND RECEIVE ASHES
3:30 - 6:00 P.M.

AT CHRIST LUTHERAN CHURCH,
94 N. BROAD ST., NORWICH

Music Ministries

Mary Williams, Director

Passing the Peace

Singing a song following the passing of the peace became part of our worship service in the Spring of 2023. The congregation learned *Peace Be To You in All You Do*, composed by Judy A. Rose. In the Spring of 2024, *Bind Us Together* was introduced. The composer, Bob Gillman (b. 1946 East London, England) says this about the song: “I remember a group of us were all praying together; I had such an emotional feeling come over me, and I felt a real need to do something concerning the unity of God’s people. It was then that the words “Bind Us Together” dropped into my mind; they were immediately followed by “With cords that cannot be broken,” and “Bind us together with love.” Also, a tune popped straight into my head, and I stood up and sang it out to share it with everybody.” In March and throughout Eastertide, a verse from the hymn *Blessed Be the Tie That Binds* will be sung. Whatever song we sing, we are reminded of the peace and love that comes from God, and that we are connected as the body of Christ.



Our Handbell Choir will be ringing as part of the worship services during Lent. On February 23, the following members performed during worship

(pictured left to right):
Heavenly Mahaffey, Destinie Smith,
Lilit Danielyan, Amy Rogers,
Ericka Tyler, Megan Carpenter,
Mary Williams, Pete Williams,
Maxine Gage, Dave Burch, John Kolb.

Greetings from the Bench!

It is hard to believe it has been a year and a half since I started as Church Organist at the United Church of Christ in Norwich. It has indeed been an honor and truly wonderful experience serving in this position to date, and I am moved at the positive response and assistance from the leadership and members of the church. When I first started, I was offered the opportunity to take organ lessons from Bob Oehme, Organist Emeritus at UCC. Having Bob as my organ teacher is beyond rewarding for me. I have respected Bob’s work for years, knowing he brings years of experience as an organist, educator and composer/arranger within his repertoire. The organ is, shall we say, daunting to learn and play. As a new organist, Bob has worked patiently with me, focusing on technique, organ settings, foot pedaling, and music selections for Sunday worship. He offers all of these instructions with patience, wisdom, and his own unique brand of humor we all love! Bob and I have been fortunate to play two organ/piano duets for the congregation, and I look forward to more collaboration with Bob in the future. I am beyond blessed to have incredible music mentorship here, with both Bob and Mary Williams guiding me forward. Thank you to all, and see you Sunday!



MARCH 2025



The Norwich Muslim Community meets upstairs every evening and Friday afternoon.

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
						1 8:00am Colorscape Board Retreat, Founders Rm.
2 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship/ Communion, Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 12:30pm Youth Group 12:45pm Service at Chenango Valley Home 1:30pm Chenango Change, Founders Rm.	3 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm 1:00pm Worship Team, Zoom 2:00pm Tai Chi, Mayflower Rm.	4 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 4:30pm Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper. See p. 3. 5:15pm Free Dinner at St. Bart's Catholic Church (doors open at 4)	5 Ash Wednesday 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 3:30pm Ashes-to-Go - Christ Lutheran Church. See p. 3. 7:00pm Choir, Nave	6 <i>Church Office Closed</i> 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm,	<div style="border: 2px solid red; padding: 5px; text-align: center; color: white; font-weight: bold;"> CLOSED </div> <p style="text-align: center; color: red; font-weight: bold;"> Church Building Closed Today for repair work. </p> 7:00pm Newsies at NHS	8 <i>Daylight Savings starts. Turn clocks ahead 1 hour tonight.</i> 7:00pm Newsies at NHS
9 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship, Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 1:30pm Chenango Change, Founders Rm. 2:30pm Newsies at NHS	10 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm 10:00am Knitting Group, Mayflower Rm. 2:00pm Tai Chi, Mayflower Rm.	11 11:30am Lent Study. See p. 8. 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 5:00pm Pride Alliance Meeting, Founders Rm. 5:15pm Free Dinner at St. Bart's Church (doors open at 4)	12 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00pm Choir, Nave	13 1:00 p.m. Piecemakers Monthly Mtg., Founders Rm. 	14 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, Kitchen	15 9:00am Piecemakers Quilting Day, Founders Rm, Kitchen, Parking Lot
16 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship, Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 12:30pm Youth Group 1:30pm Chenango Change, Founders Rm. 	<p style="text-align: center; font-weight: bold;"> St. Patrick's Day </p> 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, 2:00pm Tai Chi, Mayflower Rm. 7:00pm Monday Evening Musical Club, See p. 9.	18 11:30am Lent Study. See p. 8. 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 7:00pm Executive Council, Chapel, Zoom 5:15pm Free Dinner at St. Bart's Church (doors open at 4)	19 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, Kitchen 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 4:00pm Laundry Love at Byrne Dairy 6:00pm Democratic Committee, Founders Rm. 7:00pm Choir, Nave	20 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, Kitchen 5:00pm Free meal at Emmanuel Episcopal 6:00pm Helping Hands at YMCA	21 	22 9:00am (until 11:00am) Free Diaper Giveaway at First Baptist Church
23 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship, Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 12:30pm Youth Group 1:30pm Chenango Change, Founders Rm. 5:00pm Free Meal at Broad St UMC	24 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, 10:00am Knitting Group, Mayflower Rm. 2:00pm Tai Chi, Mayflower Rm. 5:00pm Garden Club, Founders	25 11:30am Lent Study. See p. 8. 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 5:15pm Free Dinner at St. Bart's Church (doors open at 4)	26 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, Kitchen 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 7:00pm Choir, Nave	27 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, Kitchen	28	29
30 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship - Rev. Ryan Hendersen - <i>OGHS Offering</i> See p. 10. Sunday School 11:00am Pot Luck 12:30pm Youth Group	31 9:00am AARP Tax Prep, Founders Rm, 2:00pm Tai Chi, Mayflower Rm.					

Update from the Local Missions Committee

Pete Williams, Action Committee Chair

I would like take this opportunity to share the status of the Local Missions Action Committee as we approach the end of the first quarter of 2025. The Local Missions Action committee has been challenged to identify organizations our Church will be supporting. It has been our procedure to submit recommendations of local organizations on a quarterly basis for the support distributions to be sent out. The majority (if not all) of the organizations supported have come from requests of local organizations or from organizations that support the local and area communities. Below is a partial list of organizations supported in 2024.

- After Prom Party-NHS
- Aunt Mary's House
- BSUMC Community Dinner
- Chenango County SPCA
- Chenango Family Food Co-op
- Family Planning of South Central NY
- Friends of Rogers
- Habitat for Humanity
- Hospice & Palliative Care
- Mothers & Babies Prenatal Network
- Red Cross of Southern New York
- The Impact Project
- The Place

We are always looking to support organizations that support the local and area communities and are open to anyone who would like to get involved with this action committee and help with the process of distribution of these funds. As the current chair of this action committee, I am looking to relinquish my role as the chair and allow the opportunity to be carried by another interested person. It is quite rewarding when the thank-you notes and letters are received and you realize the appreciation of these organizations and the difference the funds have made in the work they do.

This year we have a budget of \$15,000 to be distributed throughout the year to organizations of our choosing as well as supporting the Turkey Basket program in November. Please consider your involvement in this action committee. It is always nice to get fresh thoughts and ideas as the decisions are made for each quarter. Please let me know if you have any interest in this action committee.

Letters - Emails - Notes

Dear UCC,

The Friends of Rogers Board of Directors and staff want to thank you for your generous donation. Rest assured funds will be used to continue to provide outstanding educational opportunities that excite, inspire and motivate people of all ages. The hiking trails and programs we make available are designed to allow all to enjoy, understand, appreciate and protect our natural environment. Your support has helped make this possible. We realize you have options to support various other organizations and your decision to aid us in our mission for a protected environment is very much appreciated. Thank you again for all you do!

David Carson, Executive Director
Friends of Rogers

Dear UCC,

Thank you for your monetary donation and continued support. The mission of helping others wouldn't be possible without you.

Lorri Race, Founder
Helping Hands

Thank you Letters were also received from:

American Red Cross
Our Daily Bread Food Pantry.

Children and Family Ministries

Ericka Tyler, Director

Greetings on this freezing, COLD winter day! Here's a look at what we've been teaching in February and what's in store for March during Sunday School! In February, after a minor delay due to teacher illness, we began an exciting new series entitled *RHYTHM*, a four-week unit from 1 & 2 Corinthians on Spiritual Growth.

For a lot of us, music is a central part of our lives. In the car, at school, or walking through a store, music gives us a steady rhythm that plays in the background. But the predictable beats and patterns of our favorite songs can do more than just entertain or inspire us — they can teach us something about growing closer to Jesus, too. While growing in our faith can sometimes feel difficult to measure, the right rhythms can help us keep moving in the right direction. In this four-week series, we explored passages of Scripture from the Gospels, epistles, and Psalms that help us develop spiritual rhythms that help us grow. Together, we were challenged to create more predictable patterns in four key ways: by creating rhythms for spending time with God, using our gifts, sharing our stories, and spending time with others.



In March, our new series, entitled *Justified*, will focus on dealing with anger. Anger is such a big, powerful emotion. When we're angry about things that matter, our anger can lead us toward action. Anger can even inspire us to make the world a better place! But other times, our anger can lead us to make choices that are harmful to ourselves or others. There's no escaping situations or people who make us angry, but how we respond when we're angry is up to us. So if we can't completely avoid getting angry, what can we do? In this four-week series, we'll explore four passages of Scripture from both the Old and New Testaments that might challenge our view on anger.

We'll learn practical skills like when we feel angry, pause to ask God why. We'll see how, when we're angry, Jesus shows us how to respond. And in our anger, we'll be challenged to show grace and not get hurtful.

FREE 2B ME YOUTH GROUP



We currently have three very active young members. The group loves to play card games, color, and listen to music. They have also enjoyed playing with (and teasing) our group mascot Xiva. We continue to meet most Sunday afternoons from 12:30-2:00 p.m. in the Youth Room upstairs. Announcements regarding youth group can be found in our weekly church email, bulletin, and monthly newsletter, as well as via text upon request! (please text Ericka @ 607-373-0538 and ask to receive Free 2BMe announcements!)

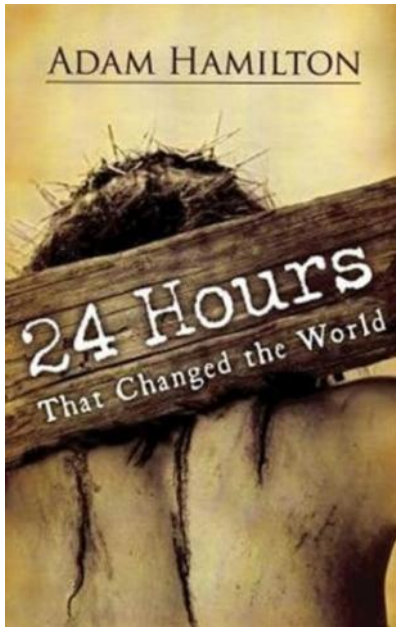
There will be NO youth group on **Sunday March 9** due to the local performance of *Newsies* which involves two of our teens! Check out the performance on Friday 3/7 or Saturday 3/8 at 7:00 p.m. or Sunday 3/9 at 2:30 p.m. at the Norwich High School auditorium. Admission is free.

Keep your EYES AND EARS OPEN for announcements regarding a possible outreach/mission project the youth group could participate in to benefit those in need in our local community. This might be something we could even do during our youth group time. More details to come soon!

Lastly, are you looking for something new and insightful to read? Check out *3 Big Questions That Change Every Teenager: Making the Most of Your Conversations and Connections*. This book combines in-depth interviews with data from 1,200 diverse teenagers. Kara Powell and Brad M. Griffin offer pastors, youth leaders, mentors, and parents practical and proven conversations and connections that help teenagers answer their three biggest questions and reach their full potential. Check it out today!

God Bless and stay warm!





Community Lenten Study

24 Hours That Changed the World by Adam Hamilton

Five Tuesdays - March 11, 18, 25 and April 1, 8)

11:30 a.m. Lite Lunch & Fellowship

12:00 - 1:00 p.m. Lenten Study

NEW LOCATION:

Christ Lutheran Church, 94 N. Broad St., Norwich

Over this 5-week Lenten Study, we will discuss the following events:

- The Last Supper
- The Garden of Gethsemane
- Condemned by the Righteous
- Jesus, Barabbas, and Pilate
- The Torture and Humiliation of the King
- The Crucifixion
- Christ the Victor

Books are provided.

Feel free to contact Pastor Laura Wade at Christ Lutheran Church with any questions regarding this study.

All Are Welcome!



Music Lesson Scholarships Available

Do you know someone taking private music lessons? Financial assistance is available.



Dear Music committee,

Thank you for the generous scholarship to continue my guitar lessons. I love to play the guitar because it makes me very happy. I hope I can continue to get better at the guitar and learn more styles and techniques. Thanks again

From, Heavenly Mahaffey

It's a simple application - here's how to get one:

- Contact the church office
607-334-3434
office@uccnorwichny.org)
- [Click Here](#)
- Go to :
www.ucnorwichny.org/links
- Scan this QR code





ATTENTION! **High School Seniors** **& College Students**

DEADLINE TO APPLY
MARCH 30

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. 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 NHS 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 in the guidelines.

Applications and guidelines are available from the church office or online at www.uccnorwichny.org/links

Deadline for applications is MARCH 30.



Monday Evening Musical Club
invites you to

Music in our Schools Concert
March 17 at 7:00 p.m.

Free and open to the public.
Offering taken to support the scholarship fund.



United Church of Christ, 11 West Main St., Norwich
Livestream on Facebook.com/Mondayeveningmusicclub



Easter Memorials

Donations in honor or in memory of a loved one can be made to the Memorial Gifts Fund and will be listed in the bulletin. Please use this form to make your donation.

DONATE TO THE MEMORIAL FUND \$ _____

IN MEMORY OF / IN HONOR OF (CIRCLE ONE) OR OTHER MESSAGE:

FROM: _____

Please return this form to the church office no later than Tuesday, April 15.

Be the Light

One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS) is a vital special mission offering of the United Church of Christ. It connects you to disaster relief, refugee assistance, and development efforts around the globe. When disasters strike, or when individuals are displaced due to violence or poverty, OGHS ensures immediate response and ongoing recovery.

Through your support, OGHS funds comprehensive development programs in areas such as healthcare, education, agriculture, food security, microfinancing, and women's empowerment. By partnering with Global Ministries and international response networks, OGHS maximizes its impact. Your contributions help meet urgent needs while addressing the root causes of vulnerability, ensuring long-term, sustainable solutions for affected communities.



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



- 1 Liam Hunter
Cheri Oakley
- 6 Chris Mallozzi
- 7 Rena Hall
- 9 Eric Burgher
- 11 Steve Craig
- 13 Michael Moren
- 17 Edwin Tucker
- 18 David Burch
- 21 Elspeth Hunter



The season of Lent, starting on March 5 this year, is six-and-a-half weeks of spiritual preparation for the celebration of Easter. During this time of self-reflection and drawing nearer to God, many people make personal sacrifices as they contemplate the sacrifices that Jesus made on his journey to the Cross. In his 2021 message for Lent, Pope Francis' gave the following list of what we might want to let go of during Lent.

Do you want to Fast this Lent?

from Pope Francis's 2021 message for Lent.

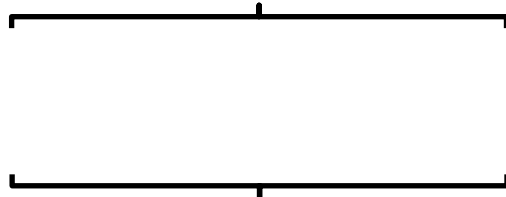
- Fast from hurting words and say kind words.
- Fast from sadness and be filled with gratitude.
- Fast from anger and be filled with patience.
- Fast from pessimism and be filled with hope.
- Fast from worries and trust in God.
- Fast from complaints and contemplate simplicity.
- Fast from pressures and be prayerful.
- Fast from bitterness and fill your heart with joy.
- Fast from selfishness and be compassionate to others.
- Fast from grudges and be reconciled.
- Fast from words and be silent so you can listen.



New Date - Sunday, March 30 after the worship service.

Rev. Ryan Henderson from the UCC NY Conference share the Word and join us for lunch to talk about the search processes.

Bring a dish to pass - Table Service and Beverages provided.
A sign-up sheet is available in the church office.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

11 West Main Street
Norwich, NY 13815-1612

