



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

www.uccnorwichny.org



CONTACT US

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

office@uccnorwichny.org

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. Glenn Mahaffey

Moderator: Deb Phelps

Director of Music Ministries: Mary Williams

Organist: David Burch

Director of Children/Youth Ministries: Ericka Tyler

Parish Coordinator: Cheri Oakley

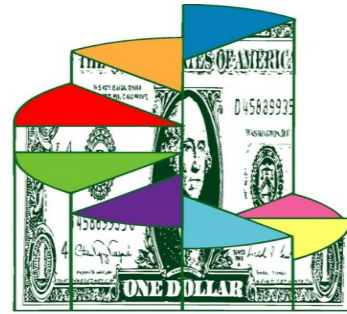
Financial Assistant: Jennifer Mallozzi

Sexton: Eric Burgher

Budget Meeting

Sunday October 19 in the Founders Room after the Worship Service

All are encouraged to attend this informational budget meeting and presentation of a draft of the 2026 budget.



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UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

First Congregational of Norwich, NY

From the Pastor

Rev. Glenn Mahaffey

Dear sisters and brothers,

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, who gave himself for our sins and set us free from the current evil age, according to the will of our God and Father, to whom be the glory forever and ever. Amen

(Galatians 1: 3-5, NSRV)

These words from St. Paul to the Christian communities in Galatia speak to our lives today. Many people gloss over the introductions to Paul's Epistles. Yet, if we put ourselves in place of the Galatians, as if Paul is writing to us, the opening statements can sound very relevant in our current time. *Christ has set us free from the current evil age, which is according to the will of our God and Father.* This statement has just as much meaning in today's world as it did in Paul's!

Here, when we are a part of this UCC family, we too are free of the current evil age. We live our lives together with the rule of love, compassion and service. Unlike much of the larger society around us, we celebrate that we are multiracial, multicultural, Open and Affirming, a safe place where we seek to be Accessible to All (A2A). This is a church family that actively tries to live out Paul's words from Galatians 6:2 in bearing one another's burdens and thereby fulfilling the law of Christ. This is a faith community that actively seeks to produce the fruits of the Spirit in our life together: love, joy, peace, patience, generosity, kindness, gentleness and self-control. (Galatians 5:22-23).

How important a place of acceptance, respect, love and encouragement is in the midst of today's world!! This Church acts as a beacon of hope in the midst of a society which is beset with fear, ignorance and unawareness. One of our challenges then becomes how do we make people in our community aware of who we are and that they are welcome to come in our doors for worship and programs without having to fear being judged or feeling "less than" others? The Executive Committee is working on a new sign that will help our building stand out. If we combine this with other methods to make people aware of where we are and who we are, it can provide increased opportunities to be known by people in our community who are searching for a place of acceptance and freedom.

I am so grateful to be here as your settled pastor. I pray that we may have many years of joyful meaningful conversations and experiences.

In Christ's never ending love,
Glenn

Scholarships for Music Lessons



If you know anyone taking private music lessons, they can get a scholarship from UCC's Music Committee to ease the burden before the holidays! Call the church office and it can all be set up very easily.

Children and Youth Ministries

Ericka Tyler, Director

SUNDAY SCHOOL

Greetings to all of you on this much needed wet and dreary fall evening! Indeed, autumn is trying to work its colorful and cooler way into our area, but for many it has already been welcomed into our hearts and homes. School is well on its way into the new year, new schedules are becoming routine, and the initial chaos just *may* have been reduced to a daily feeling of craziness. It is my hope that you are settling into your new school grade, course schedule, extracurriculars, and all of the new demands that go along with growing up!

Our Sunday School students this year could potentially range in age from about 3rd grade up to 12th grade. I want to assure both parents and students that if and when this happens, I will have assistance in the Sunday School room from either one of our new Nursery Attendants, Delilah or Rosey. Our Sunday School time together will loosely follow this schedule:

1. Whole group discussion time (content modified to include younger students)
2. Individual group activity time (split younger and older; older students w/ Ms. Ericka for more challenging content, younger students w/ Nursery Attendant for related activity)
3. Whole group-Fellowship/Free time/Short game



Now, let's take a look at what we will be discovering in October/November as part of our Grow curriculum during Sunday School! Our new series is entitled Unafraid, a four-week series from the Old Testament on trusting God. What are you afraid of? Do you think you trust in God through your fears? Riding an amusement park ride can spark joy or leave you feeling more than a bit scared. There are twists, turns, and sometimes, a little bit of pain, too. Those things are true in life too, so how can we learn to overcome those feelings of fear when we experience them? In this series, we'll look at stories

where people trusted God to help them through their difficult moments. From these stories, we'll see that God can turn our fear into courage, our hurt into hope, turn our wrongs into rights, and transform our worry into trust.

FREE 2B ME YOUTH GROUP

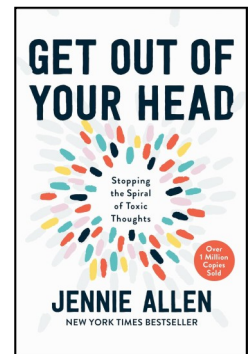
The Youth Group plans to meet most Sunday afternoons from 12:30-2:00 pm in the Youth Room upstairs. Announcements regarding youth group can be found in our weekly church email, bulletin, and monthly newsletter, as well as via text upon request! (please text Ericka @ 607-373-0538 and ask to receive Free 2BMe announcements!)

Please ALWAYS feel free to bring a friend (or two!) to youth group. It's a great environment to relax in. Let's hang out, have some snacks, and maybe even try the new card game I just ordered!

BOOK OF THE MONTH

This month, let's talk about a book that might just help out the entire family. Have you ever felt stuck in your head? Maybe you've felt stuck in a certain pattern or way of thinking? Or maybe you have felt your thoughts sort of spiraling and you have no control to stop them? Toxic thinking patterns are more common than you think! The best part is, you don't have to stay stuck there. You are not a victim of your thoughts.

How do we break free from these patterns? God gives us the power to fight them! How does God equip us to do this? You'll just have to check out the book entitled *Get Out of Your Head* by Jennie Allen! Here's what I know; it all starts in your head!



As you go forward this fall, remember that fear and uncertainty may visit, but it doesn't have to stay; trust God with your worries and let God's peace steady your heart. And when life grows busy and you feel like it's demanding all your attention, keep God at the center of your days. How can you do this? Invite God into your daily plans, take rest in God's promises, and let God's presence shape and mold your priorities. Here is what I know to be true about faith in God; with it as your anchor, you will find the courage for each step!

Blessings,
Ericka

Check out any Sunday School updates for the upcoming month below:

Oct. 5- **NO** Free 2B Me Youth Group!

Thomas Keesecker in Concert @ 3pm (UCC)

Worship Team

Mary Williams, Chair

A New Birthday And Anniversary Blessing Song Will Be Introduced in October

Our former Interim Minister, J.K. Boodley, encouraged the congregation to recognize birthdays and anniversaries on the first Sunday of each month by singing the traditional “Happy Birthday” song. In that spirit, the Worship Team would like to continue the practice by incorporating a new blessing song sung to a familiar hymn tune. The text was written by Rev. Martha Sipe, of Christ the King Epiphany Church of Wilbraham, Massachusetts. The Worship Team hopes that the congregation will find this to be meaningful to our church family.

*Bless, O Lord, these sons and daughters with another year of grace.
Give them peace and health and blessing, all their sins and fears erase.
Help them always sense you near them, help them know your constant care.
Lord, unite us in this family, your amazing love to share.*

The Worship Team Would Like to Hear Your Ideas!

Pastor Glenn and the Worship Team are working together to create a worship service that is meaningful to the congregation. This month, everyone will be invited to respond to a survey about which parts of worship are especially important to you. The survey will be available digitally and hard copy.



All Saints Sunday - November 2

It is an ancient practice in a number of different religious traditions to remember those who have gone before. In Buddhism, the feast of Vu-Lan is practiced in the Fall with pictures of beloved relatives all around the Temple. In Hinduism, the Pitru Paksha is celebrated each Fall to honor ancestors. Dia de Muertos is celebrated on November 1 (All Saints Day) each year in Hispanic religious tradition. In some communities the celebration is on October 31 (All Souls Day) which American culture celebrates as Halloween. People are fascinated by the lives of their ancestors, attested to by the success of Ancestry.com.



FOR ALL THE SAINTS

As part of this ancient Christian tradition, we would like to invite members of the congregation to bring pictures of their loved ones who have died, which we will put on the altar with candles to signify their lives still present in our minds and hearts. During the service we will also read a “necrology”, a list of those who have died. **If you have people you would like to have remembered in the reading of the Necrology, please have the names to the office no later than Friday, October 24th. This is not limited to those who have died in the past year, or members of UCC, any of those we love can be remembered in this way.**

Please plan to participate in adding names to the Necrology list and/or bringing a picture of your loved ones for the All Saints altar that morning. We hope everyone will participate in this celebration.

Thomas Keesecker *in Concert*

**Sunday, October 5
3:00 p.m.**

United Church of Christ, 11 West Main St., Norwich

*...known around the
country for his sensitive,
delightful, and
meditative piano
arrangements of
hymns...*



Thomas Keesecker, a composer as well as performer, will share music from his bestselling piano collections in a 75-minute concert. He is known around the country for his sensitive, delightful, and meditative piano arrangements of hymns. At this concert, we'll be able to sing some of them together, as well as listen to his interpretations. The hymns will be interspersed with poetry by Mary Oliver and Wendell Berry, two of the most beloved and profound poets of the 20th and 21st centuries.

Free Will Offering for Neighbors in Need Fund.

*A Potluck Dinner for everyone to follow at 4:15 p.m.
RSVP by 10/1 for dinner to contacts below.*

Information: 607-334-3434 or office@uccnorwichny.org

Music Ministries

Mary Williams, Chair

Who is Thomas Keesecker and why is he coming to Norwich?



On Easter Sunday this past year, the choir sang a lovely anthem, "Alleluia", composed by Thomas Keesecker. The music flows and swells to a joyful statement; "Christ is risen. Alleluia! Amen." The music floated out over the congregation, as the choir was positioned in the choir loft. (You can revisit the anthem by searching our church website under the livestream -archived services tab, and typing in easter 2025 in the search field. The service will load and you can advance to 22:46 to hear the anthem.) During the following week, the church office received an email from the composer and a dialog was begun:

Please direct this to Mary Williams. Your choir's performance of "Alleluia" was beautiful. I was wondering if your church offers concerts? I travel and give concerts of my piano music. I can give you more info in an email.

Thanks, Tom Keesecker

Hello Thomas!

I'm so touched that you have heard our performance of your lovely anthem which we used as an introit Easter morning! The anthem suited our small ensemble perfectly. It is such a haunting piece. I really loved performing it. These days, I am seeking simple yet elegant music for unison choir or 2 part choir, something which allows flexibility. I will be using your "Higher Ground" anthem as a SSA virtual choir project at the end of May. Yes, we would be interested in hosting you for a concert. We have hosted Allen Pote, Joseph Martin and Lloyd Larson over the years. Let's talk a little more!
Mary Williams, Director of Music Ministries

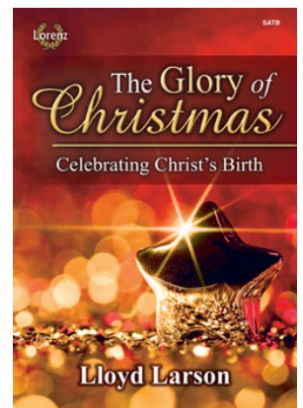
Our church will be hosting Tom on Sunday October 5. I invite you to attend the morning worship service and afternoon concert on that day. It is meaningful to share in the ministries of others and to experience a time of peace and beauty during the very noisy world around us. I hope you will join us afterward for a potluck supper. The concert begins at 3:00 and the dinner will follow at about 4:15pm.

Singers Wanted!

Cantata preparations will begin this month. Singers of all ages are invited to join in singing *The Glory of Christmas: Celebrating Christ's Birth* by Lloyd Larson. The cantata features parts for a children's choir and several familiar hymns for congregational singing. The leadership team is composed of Meena Conant, who will work with the children; Dave Burch, our accompanist, who will also lead sectional rehearsals; and Mary Williams who will conduct the whole ensemble.

The first rehearsal will be held on Sunday October 19 from 3:00 - 5:00pm.
Remaining rehearsals will be held on Sundays through December 14 from 3:00-5:00pm.
A Dress Rehearsal will be held on Saturday December 20 from 10:00 a.m. - Noon.
The performance will be Sunday December 21 at 4:00.

Singers are asked to register online at that [church website](#) or by calling the church office.




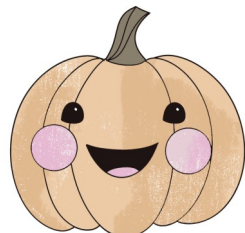




OCTOBER

The Norwich Muslim Community meets upstairs every evening and Friday afternoon



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 10:00am Ecumenical Prayer & Coffee. See p. 10. 7:00pm Choir	2	3 October 3 - 4 Rummage and Bake Sale at Broad St. United Methodist Church Friday 9am - 6pm Saturday 9am-2pm	4
	5 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship/Communion, Sunday School Neighbors in Need Offering 11:00am Coffee Hour 3:00pm Thomas Keesecker Concert. See p. 5. 4:15 p.m. Potluck	6 12:30pm Tutoring, Kitchen 1:00pm Ministers Mtg., Chapel 2:00pm Tai Chi. Founders Rm. 7:00pm Monday Evening Musical Club. See p. 10.	7 10:00am Helping Hands, VFW, (until 1pm.) 1:00pm Worship Team Mtg., Chapel, Zoom 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 5:15pm Free meal, St. Bartholomew's 7:00pm Executive Council, Chapel, Zoom	8 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 10:00am Ecumenical Prayer & Coffee. See p. 10. 7:00pm Choir	9 1:00pm Piecemakers Monthly Meeting, Founders Rm.	10 
12 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship/Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 11:30am Handbells, upstairs 12:30pm Youth Group, upstairs 1:30pm Chenango Change, Founders Rm.	13 Indigenous Peoples Day <i>Church Office Closed</i> 10:00am Knitting, Kitchen 12:30pm Tutoring, Kitchen 2:00pm, Tai Chi, Founders Rm. 6:15pm Bible Study at BSUMC. See p. 10	14 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 5:00pm Pride Alliance Mtg, Founders Rm. 5:15pm Free meal, St. Bartholomew's (doors open at 4)	15 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 10:00am Ecumenical Prayer & Coffee. See p. 10. 4:00pm Laundry Love, Byrne Dairy, Norwich 6:00pm Democratic Committee, Founders Rm. 7:00pm Choir	16 4:30pm Free meal at Emmanuel Episcopal Church	17	18
19 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship/Sunday School 11:00am Budget Meeting 11:15am Coffee Hour 11:30am Handbells, upstairs 12:30pm Youth Group, upstairs 3:00pm Cantata Rehearsal 4:30pm Free Community Dinner at Broad St. UMC	20 12:30pm Tutoring, Kitchen 2:00pm, Tai Chi, Founders Rm. 6:15pm Bible Study at BSUMC. See p. 10	21 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 5:15pm Free meal, St. Bartholomew's (doors open at 4)	22 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 10:00am Ecumenical Prayer & Coffee. See p. 10. 7:00pm Choir 	23	24	25 9:00am Diaper Give away at First Baptist Church (until 11:00am)
26 9:00am Nursery 10:00am Worship/Sunday School 11:00am Coffee Hour 11:30am Handbells, upstairs 12:30pm Youth Group, upstairs 1:30pm Chenango Change, Founders Rm. 3:00pm Cantata Rehearsal	27 10:00am Knitting, Kitchen 12:30pm Tutoring, Kitchen 2:00pm, Tai Chi, Founders Rm. 5:00pm Town & Country Garden Club, Founders Rm. 6:15pm Bible Study at BSUMC. See p. 10	28 1:00pm Piecemakers, Kitchen 5:15pm Free meal, St. Bartholomew's (doors open at 4)	29 10:00am Prayer Circle, Zoom 10:00am Ecumenical Prayer & Coffee. See p. 10. 7:00pm Choir	30	31 Halloween 	

Spreading the love one stitch at a time: Together In Love

An Initiative of the UCC New York Conference



What do you get when you cross talented knitters or crocheters with yarn, prayers and love? You get Prayer Shawls! As announced in June at the UCC New York Conference Annual Meeting, conference wide prayer shawl ministry to help spread more love in our world that really could use it has been launched. All UCCNY congregations, big and small are invited to ask the talented knitters in their pews to create prayer shawls to give away to people in their own congregation or community.

Gifting someone a prayer shawl knitted by the hands of our congregation is a way to be **Together in Love**. Anyone who has suffered the loss of a loved one, a natural disaster or is ill or anyone who is celebrating a baptism, a confirmation a new member or any other celebrations in our church is the perfect recipient of a prayer shawl.

The UCCNY Conference thinks this endeavor is so important that they have set up a contest. The contest started back on **August 20th, 2025** and it will end on **Easter Sunday (4/5/26)**. All shawls must be made **AFTER** August 20 (no fair using a stockpile) and given away by **Easter Sunday (4/5/26)**. All they ask is that we take a few pictures and send them to the conference at communications@uccny.org.

What's in it for us? Well, the congregation that makes and gives away the most prayer shawls will receive **free registration** for their **pastor and their delegate(s)** to next year's NY Conference Annual Meeting!

Our Knitting Group meets every other Monday from 10:00 – 11:30 a.m. in the kitchen – all are welcome to join. You can also participate by knitting or crocheting on your own. Talk to Jane Prime or Naomi Mahaffey for more information.



Rarely have I seen a church without some form of ministry that helps feed people. From community meals to food pantries, churches across the country make sure people have enough to eat. But I always wondered, wouldn't it be better if none of these services had to exist. What if everyone simply had enough to eat?

Our churches share compassion by not only providing for the basic needs of our neighbors but also asking deeper questions of why these inequalities exist in the first place. Our immediate call to alleviate the suffering of those around us is paired with a prophetic witness calling for systemic reform.

All congregations in the United Church of Christ are invited to take part in the Neighbors in Need offering to address just this. Two thirds of the offering support justice and witness ministries of the United Church of Christ with one third of the offering given to the Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Your gifts directly fund the Neighbors in Need grant program. This grant, for UCC congregations and partners, offers funding for both direct service and advocacy projects.

Thank you for your generosity!

The Rev. Rachel McDonald

Generosity Officer, OCWM and Special Mission Offerings, National Ministries of the UCC

At Emmanuel Episcopal Church for their 150th Anniversary Celebration on September 7.



Our monthly worship service at Chenango Valley Home on September 7.





Coffee and Prayer Ecumenical Group

Led by Linda Guinn
All are welcome.

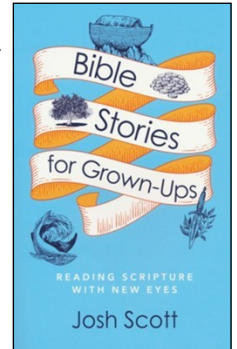
Wednesdays 9/17 to 11/5
10:00 - 11:00 a.m.

at De Ja Brew 17-19 South Broad St.

- Week 1: Seeking God
- Week 2: Being Led
- Week 3: Being Open: Do you hear God? Are you open to Following what he says?
- Week 4: Have you seen God working?
- Week 5: God's Help when you call? How did he answer you??
- Week 6: God's Time / Time of Waiting
- Week 7: Blessings / Thankfulness
- Week 8: Prayer / Ways to talk to God

Monday Night Bible Study at Broad St. UMC

Bible Stories for Grown-Ups: Reading Scripture with New Eyes looks at familiar Bible stories and reveals new details and interpretations for an adult audience. Author Josh Scott reimagines these stories and opens new visions for readers to understand well known pieces of Scripture in our current cultural environment.



Join us in the Lounge on Monday evenings starting October 13 from 6:15 - 7:30 p.m. to explore well-known Sunday School stories with new eyes and deeper understanding. Each week is a stand alone week, so come as you are interested. This is a video series followed by discussion. The optional book is available through Thriftbooks, World of Books and Amazon.

- October 13: Story of Noah
- October 20: Binding of Isaac
- October 27: Story of Jonah
- November 3: Parable of the Talents
- November 10: Story of Zaccheus
- November 17: Healing of the Blind Man

About the author

Josh Scott has been a pastor for the last two decades. He currently serves as the Lead Pastor at GracePointe Church in Nashville. The focus of his work is reimagining, reframing, and reclaiming faith through a

Monday Evening Musical Club presents



**Piano Recital
by Anita Humer**
Monday, October 6 at 7:00 p.m.
in the Nave.

*Anita will play works by Chopin,
MacDowell, Schumann,
Ginastera, Granados and more.*

Open to the Public.

Free will donation to benefit the scholarship fund.



WE NEED YOUR HELP

1. **Donate Non-Perishable Food (no glass): Rolled Oats, Vegetables, Cranberry Sauce, Gravy, Stuffing Mix** - Bring in anytime on or before November 10th. A container will be available in the Founders Room.
2. **Money** to help purchase food in bulk. Bring to the church office or put in the offering plate. Be sure you mark it for Thanksgiving Boxes.
3. **Volunteer** - There will be a sign up sheet available later in October.

For more information, talk to Jessica Strough (607-373-7158).

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



Celebrations

OCTOBER Birthdays

- 3 Leona Tyler
- 6 Pat Evans
William Kolb
- 8 Shea Breese
- 9 Josiah Tyler
- 10 Kyle Conant
- 11 Carol Nassar
- 12 Destinie Smith
- 16 Tim Burgher
Justin Posner
- 20 Debra Phelps
Mya Yantz
- 21 Jennifer Mallozzi
- 26 David Hall
- 30 Jill Mallozzi

OCTOBER Anniversaries

- Terri & Jason Yantz 10/09/2004
- Cheri & Kevin Oakley 10/12/2019
- Steve & Melissa Emmons 10/15/2016

Our Daily Bread Food Pantry

located in Emmanuel Episcopal Church
37 West Main St (across from Greater Opportunities)
Monday, Wednesday, Friday
10:00 a.m. - 12:00 p.m.

Roots & Wings Food Pantry

105 Leiliani Way (off of East River Road)
Monday through Friday
10:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
(closed 12:00 - 1:00 p.m.)

Helping Hands Give-away

Personal Care Items, Food, Clothing, Pet Food
At VFW, 61 Main St., Norwich
First Tuesday
10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m.

Norwich Community Soup Kitchen Dinner

(during the school year)
St. Bartholomew's Parish Center (81 East Main St.)
Every Tuesday
Doors open at 4:00 p.m., Service starts at 5:15 p.m.

Soul Kitchen Dinner Free Hot Meal

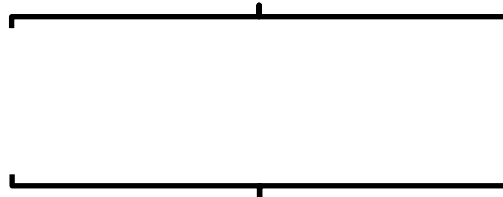
(September through May)
located in Emmanuel Episcopal Church
37 West Main St (across from Greater Opportunities)
Second Thursday of the month
5:30 p.m.

Diaper Give-away

at First Baptist Church
West Park Place, Norwich
Fourth Saturday
9:00 - 11:00 a.m.

Laundry Love

Laundry Assistance
Byrne Dairy Laundry
East Main St., Norwich
Third Wednesday
4:00 - 6:00 p.m.
Sign in prior to loading the washer.



ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

11 West Main Street
Norwich, NY 13815-1612

