

The Spire

Noroton Presbyterian Church ■ www.norotonchurch.org
2011 Post Road, Darien, CT 06820 ■ 203-655-1451

Ring out the Old, Ring in the New



As we say goodbye to another year (and close out a decade on our calendars as well) I thought it might be good to share

with you how God has been at work in our midst - and to take a peek at what may lie ahead in 2011. 2010 was a very joy filled-yet -challenging year as we saw many of our ministries grow while we kept our budget trimmed in times that were tight for all non-profits. Here are some facts, figures and changes you might have noticed at NPC this past year.

- Our youth and students continued their high-energy expansion and service by sending over 30 young people to West Virginia, and sending other students on an international mission trip to the Dominican Republic.
- Our Music ministry continued to shine on Sundays while giving a Spring concert, attended by 200 people and our Christmas Vespers Service which packed the chapel twice.
- Our Nursery School is now in the very capable hands of Martha Duff who took over from Cathie

Viola. They are doing a wonderful job of educating 175 pupils each week.

- We sent Mike Orr and his new bride Tara off to Fuller Seminary (almost a tradition now for our Student Ministry Assistants) and will soon welcome Ben Valentine - a Fuller Seminary graduate - to our staff as Mike's replacement.
- We welcomed Stefanie Deleo as our new Director of Children's Ministry and said goodbye to MaryAnne Northrop after ten + years in support to our Music ministry and New Members ministry (God bless you - MaryAnne).
- We once again saw the town rally together to pack over 225,000 meals in the Feed My Starving Children Program - with Noroton sending the most volunteers!
- We served over 50 moms in our mom-to-mom ministry each week - with so many children to care for we had to turn the library into a nursery each Thursday!
- We continued to have 110+ women and 80 men engaged in adult Bible studies each week.

Continued on page 2...

Worship Schedule:

Chapel - 8:00 a.m.
Sanctuary - 9:00 & 10:30 a.m.
Open Doors - 5:00 p.m.
(service in Horton Hall)

Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

1/2/11 - Pastor Stuart Smith
1/9/11 - Pastor Sam Schreiner
1/16/11 - Pastor Stuart Smith
1/23/11 - Pastor Greg Doll
1/30/11 - Pastor Sam Schreiner

Upcoming Baptism Dates:

10:30 am Sanctuary service:
1/16/11 and 2/20/11

To schedule a Baptism please call
Leslie Ezzo at 655-1451, ext. 33.

Happy New Year!!

Table of Contents

Adult Spiritual Formation.....	2-3
Caring & Women's Ministry.....	4
Children's Ministry.....	5
Tot Drop.....	5-6
NPNS.....	6
Student Ministry.....	7-9
Congregational Life Ministry.....	9
Membership Ministry.....	10
Mission Ministry.....	11
NPC News & Staff List.....	12
NPC Calendar of Events.....	Insert

Pastor Sam's article continued from the cover...

- Last year, over 500 volunteers served the Lord through the ministries and missions of our church.
- Vacation Bible School once again had 165 students and 130 volunteers sharing the Gospel for a week of the summer.
- *This all makes our building very well used and our property staff directed by David Lee very, very busy.*

So what lies ahead for 2011? We still expect this ministry to be alive and active while our buildings and systems continue to show signs of stress, fatigue and aging. Our chapel was built in 1863 (so our 150th birthday will be in 2013!), our Sanctuary was constructed in 1953, our Christian Education wing in 1959, and the Shac in 1963.

These buildings have held up well but they are wearing out! We have outdated electrical and heating systems, leaky windows and roofs, overtaxed phones, failing sound systems and in the words of one architect we consulted we have, ***“an over performing ministry in under performing facilities.”*** Your leaders are wrestling and praying with how we need to tackle these challenges sooner rather than later. 2011 will be the year we share all of this with our congregation as we together, “Ring in the New Dreams” God will put before us. Are you excited about this? I sure am. These new dreams were fueling my prayers as that ball dropped on Times Square and welcomed us into what God has in store for 2011!

Your Pastor, Partner and Friend,
Sam

Adult Spiritual Formation



SOMEONE TO LOOK UP TO

Meeet Bay Forrest, Guest speaker at the Men's Retreat 2011.

Bay was a 6'10", three-time All-American at Grand Canyon University before he turned down an NBA contract in order to play basketball with Athletes in Action (Campus Crusade for Christ). He then played with the Phoenix Suns until a back injury forced his retirement. He spent the next seven years in Colorado as a youth pastor and retreat speaker.

In 1986, he left with his family for Kenya, East Africa, where he and his wife, Peg, served with Africa Inland Mission for five years as dorm parents and teachers at Rift Valley Academy, a school for missionary children.

In 1992 Bay, Peg and their four children returned to Pagosa Springs, CO, where they base FOCUS Ministries (Fresh Outlook Centering Upon the Savior). Believing that the Christian life is both relevant and exciting, their desire is to lead both teens and adults to a deeper spiritual level and an intimate walk with God.

Using stories and illustrations from his experiences in sports, Africa and life, Bay speaks at universities, conferences, retreats, and churches, calling Christians to stand up and live a “sold out” life for Jesus Christ.

SAVE THE DATE FOR:

***The Men's Retreat
March 25-27, 2011***

Incarnation Center in Ivoryton, CT

Bay and his wife, Peg, speak at a wide variety of events ranging from church camps, youth, men's, women's and couples retreats to large evangelistic and revival services throughout the US and several foreign countries including Kenya, South Africa and Cuba.

Together, Bay and Peg have enjoyed co-speaking at seminars on a variety of subjects combining their experiences in over twenty years of ministry.

Visit our website www.norotonchurch.org and click on the Men's Ministry link to download the registration form. Please make your checks payable to NPC.



All God's Richest Blessings,
Pastor Greg
Pastor of Adult Spiritual Formation

Adult Spiritual Formation continued...

Israel - Winter break 2011 **Travel dates: February 16-27** **Space is still available**

In the June Spire we launched the next tour with Pastor Greg to the Holy Land during the Darien school winter break 2011. We will visit the places where Jesus grew up, healed the sick, fed the hungry and taught the multitudes. You will be immersed in the sights, sounds, smells, tastes, culture, and geography of the Bible – forever transforming the way you read and understand the scriptures.

The total estimated cost of the trip per person including airfare is \$3600. This price includes everything...round-trip flight to Tel Aviv from JFK, airport transfers, airport taxes and assistance in TLV, all entrance fees, all tips and portage, bus, driver, guide and a selection of study materials.

The hotels are a combination of 4-star and 4-star kibbutz hotels and low-end 5-star hotels. Everything is based on half-board meals (breakfast and supper daily).

If you are interested in participating and would like more information, please contact Marlene Moffett at 203-655-1451, ext. 49 or email marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org.

Please note: This trip is an intensive study tour of Israel. All children must be 12 years of age and traveling with an adult.



Women's Lunchtime Study,

Monday 12:15 p.m. in the Parlor:

Our study resumes on January 10th. Please bring your lunch and join us. Contact Lori at 203-655-1451 x. 44 or lori.nelson@norotonchurch.org.

Moms of Young Adults, 11:30 a.m. -1:00 p.m. in

the SHAC: Our meetings resume January 11th. Questions? Call Claudia at 203-253-6795 or Linda at 203-536-6110.

Men's Study Tuesdays in NYC 7:30 a.m.

Fridays in Darien 7:15 a.m.:

Our focus this fall will be on Paul's letter to the Galatians. We have begun our 4th year gathering on Tuesdays in NYC from 7:30-8:30 a.m. at 144 East 44th Street, Suite 710 (steps from Grand Central) or on Fridays in Horton Hall from 7:15-8:15 a.m. Continental breakfast at 7:00 a.m. included. For more information contact Pastor Greg Doll at greg.doll@norotonchurch.org.

Women! Tuesday Morning Happenings:

6:15 a.m. in the Parlor: Our study resumes on January 4th.

9:30 a.m. in Horton Hall: New study will begin on Jan 11th on the life of Jacob, using Craig Barnes' book, "Hustling God." Contact Lori at 203-655-1451 x. 44 or lori.nelson@norotonchurch.org. Look for "Women's Ministry" on the NPC website.

Men's Study at the Sugar Bowl

Wednesday 7:00 a.m.:

Led by different men from the group. We gather for breakfast, fellowship and reflection on a passage of Scripture.

Senior Fellowship - Thursday, January 20th, 2:00 p.m.:

Flip Terhune, NPC member who has years of experience as a sheriff, will speak about his role as "The Law's Messenger." For more info contact Marlene, marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451, ext. 49.

Weekly Prayer Meeting:

Every Thursday in the Parlor from 1:15-2:15 p.m. Come and pray for needs of our church family. Everyone is welcome – no prayer experience necessary! For more info contact Marlene, marlene.moffett@norotonchurch.org or 203-655-1451, ext. 49.

Wanna Stay Connected and Join Our Email List??

We have email blasts to the congregation with general church updates, prayer requests, special events and more. If you're not receiving these email notices and would like to, please contact Claire Bragdon in the church main office, 203-655-1451 x. 40 or email claire.bragdon@norotonchurch.org to be added to the list. 3

Caring & Women's Ministries



Women's Retreat Time is Here!

Last year, I attended my first retreat, and I wasn't really sure what to expect. I knew enough about Noroton to trust that it would be good, but, it still felt a bit risky to be going! (Even though it was a part of my job!)

Would I be forced to participate in things I'm uncomfortable doing? Would anyone actually sleep? Would it be non-stop chatter? Would it be too emotionally intense? Would I find any women who could be my friends? Would I come home really exhausted?

I am happy to report that the answers to all of those questions last year were positive!

Here is why I think every woman at Noroton should prayerfully and openly consider coming:

- **SHAKE THINGS UP!**
We all need to get pulled out of our everyday contexts.
- **DRINK FROM A DEEPER WELL:**
We're all thirsty for more of Christ. This time is set apart to explore scripture, and our interaction with it.
- **PEACE AND QUIET!**
Actually, we each will have the opportunity to exercise a 'Discipline of Silence'—and try to listen to Christ and to ourselves.
- **REMEMBER HOW TO LAUGH**
—we balance the quiet intentionally with time to chat, and if last year is any indication, there are giggles, guffaws and knee slappers.

- **RENEW YOUR SISTERHOOD:**
The women on this retreat are strong—and there are many lingering mealtime conversations, good prayer, and friendships formed.
- **BE YOUR CORE SELF:**
Of course, I believe that who we are, at our core, is beloveds of God, created in His image. But sometimes we forget who we are. This weekend is especially designed to bring us back to our original identity.

Hopefully, these reasons are enticing to you. I know Christ has good things in store for us together. Won't you come?

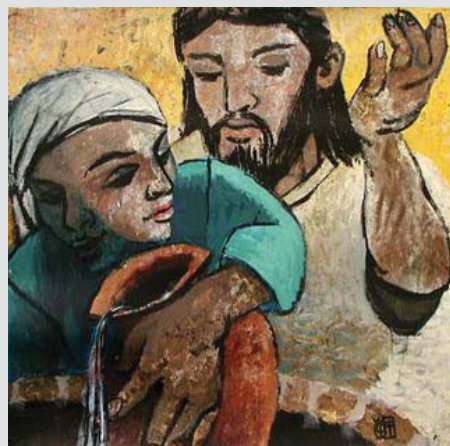
Pastor Brandi,
Pastor of Caring & Women's Ministry

REGISTER NOW!!

Annual Women's Retreat
January 28-30, 2011
Stony Point, NY
Co-chairs: Debra Smith
& Marianne Bickford
All women warmly invited!

Pastor Brandi will be our speaker this year and she will be teaching us about "Drinking from a Deeper Well; Noticing Christ." Co-chairs Debra Smith, stude-smith@yahoo.com, 203-253-6931

and Marianne Bickford, mkbick@optonline.net, 203-323-0746. All women are warmly invited to this special weekend! \$185 with scholarships available. Registration deadline is January 4th, 2011. Brochures in Kiosks around the church or download on line at www.norotonchurch.org. Contact Lori Nelson at 203-655-1451 x. 44 or lori.nelson@norotonchurch.org for more info.



Children's Ministry

Happy New Year! It's that time of year again for all the January inspired resolutions, with uninspired February amendments. We resolve to lose weight, save money, be a better friend, travel more, learn something new, get more organized, read the Bible cover to cover and so on... We are incredibly motivated, but more often than not, come February, we are altering our resolutions to something more attainable. Instead of going to the gym everyday, I'll try to go at least once a week, or once a month, or at some point this year!

Children's Ministry isn't guided by resolutions or once a year bursts of motivation. We are an ongoing ministry that resolves everyday to minister to our children and create Disciples of Christ. With the holiday season put aside for another year, and we enter the clutches of winter, the CM office looks forward to all the upcoming opportunities to minister to our children!

On January 2, the children will be in the sanctuary for worship, where they will be provided with their own bulletin to help them follow along throughout the service. We hope that you will enjoy guiding your child throughout the service as they take part in the singing, experience the offertory, pray and engage in the sermon. The following week, January 9, the kids will return to Horton Hall where our winter Sunday School curriculum will begin. In Horton Hall, they will continue to worship through song, learn foundational Bible stories and understand the reverence and relevance of their role in the body of Christ.

Lastly, though VBS (Vacation Bible School), seems far off on the horizon, we are already beginning to look for people who would like to help out. Over the next few weeks, please start letting us know if you would be interested in ministering to our children in one of CM's biggest events of the year!

We hope you had a blessed new year, and look forward to the journey we take with you as we daily resolve to bring up children as active members in our greater church community.



At that time the disciples came to Jesus, saying, "Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven?" And calling to him a child, he put him in the midst of them and said, "Truly, I say to you, unless you turn and become like children, you will never enter the kingdom of heaven." Matthew 18:1-3

In His Grace,
Stefanie DeLeo
Director of Children's Ministry

Tot Drop



Reviewing 2010 we note strong growth at Tot Drop with well over 100 families registered and 75

families actively using our services. Life in Tot Drop is generally busy; many days there is no room to spare for last minute childcare requests. What follows is a reflection on current usage and a glimpse into the year ahead.

The Three and Up Room is licensed for 14 children who must be three

to five years of age and toilet-trained. For the first time, we are seeing this room almost used to capacity. An interesting area of growth in this room has been requests for afternoon sessions, with children coming down for child care following a morning session in the Nursery School. Some days we have as many as ten or eleven children enrolled in afternoon sessions in this room. The New Year suggests that it may rise to capacity with children from the Toddler Room who are turning three.

The Infant and Toddler Rooms are both licensed for 16 children, eight on each side of the divided

space. We purposely don't fill these rooms to capacity; 14 is the usual maximum, because one additional child in each space makes a notable difference! The one exception is on Mom to Mom days when we provide care for the children of attending moms. The demand for Mom to Mom is so strong and childcare such an important support to the Mom to Mom ministry that we use every space possible—and more! This year many of you may have heard that we have "annexed" the Library on Thursday mornings to provide childcare (unlicensed space but with the same standards as Tot Drop). Children currently on the Infant side 5

of the room are ready to move to the Walking One Year Old side of the room as soon as a few of those children turn two and move to the Toddler Room. The New Year looks like it may bring a few openings at Tot Drop for Infants under the age of 12 months.

We try to maintain a balance between those children who have standing reservations and those with “as-needed” reservations who can call or email beginning on the 15th of the current month to reserve space for the following month. It is a challenge to offer both standing and as-needed reservations because scheduling is very challenging—no day is the same as any other. Some standing reservations are for five days a week, some four, three, two

or one! Some as-needed reservations are for morning or afternoons only; some need to add lunch (12:00-1:00pm) or the evening hour (4:00-5:00pm) to the morning or afternoon session; some request our extended day (8:00am-5:30pm) some need our full day (9:00am - 4:00pm). Colleagues in other daycares in the area think we are nuts to have an unpredictable schedule and revenue stream! They don't grasp the ministry opportunity and potential of Tot Drop.

Our waiting list is long in both the Walking Ones and the Toddler (two year old) Room and more modest in the Infants under twelve months and the Three and Up Room. Maintaining space for as-needed reservations, for ministry activities such as Mom

to Mom, and the timing of birthdays all impact movement on the waiting list. We could definitely use more flexible space to accommodate the demand. Our outstanding staff is a leading factor of Tot Drop's success and the word gets around!

This reflection would not be complete without expressing my personal gratitude as I start my third year as Tot Drop director for the most challenging, but fun and rewarding job (hugs from the little ones is the best perk of all!) I have had since I left the classroom ten years ago.

Wishing a joyous and blessed New Year ahead for this ministry and all the others at NPC,

Carol Scott,
Director of NPC Tot Drop

Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School



December was a short, but full month at the nursery school. Upon returning from Thanksgiving break the children

dove into preparations for Christmas. Our families gifted us with ornaments that hung from our ceilings and made the entire school feel festive. Christmas music was playing and stories of the baby Jesus were being read in all the classrooms. Pastor Stuart visited the classrooms to share the Advent Story with the children. Each class had use of the Advent costume boxes and was able to learn about and act out the story of Jesus' birth. Our Pre-K class visited the Senior Center to sing Christmas songs and share cookies. The children continued to learn valuable lessons about giving. They brought

in gloves, mittens, socks, and hats to decorate the Christmas tree. We ended the month with our annual Christmas Chapel and by donating the “tree decorations” to Person-to-Person. We wish you all a blessed holiday season and we look forward to an exciting new year with the children.

Martha Duff
Director of NPNS



Pastor Stuart sharing the Nativity Story



Pre-K Class singing at the Darien Senior Center



Kai Sparks giving his autograph to a fan at the Senior Center

Spring Break Mission Trips



I am excited to share the details of the Fourth Annual Spring Break Family Mission Trip(s). This year we are heading to New Mexico to serve the Navajo and Zuni Native Americans. I am also excited to share that we will be taking two trips this year! First in

March during the private school break March 20-25 and the other trip during the Darien break April 17-22.

What are we doing?

- These trips will give participants an opportunity to serve and learn more about the Native Americans. The reservations where we will be serving are a self-governed nation that has been striving to sustain a self-sufficient economy while still maintaining their more traditional lifestyle. For many, this includes incorporating their strong spiritual beliefs into their daily life, for some the struggles have led to heavy amounts of alcoholism and drug addictions as well as a high suicide rate. Many people find themselves without hope and entire families are torn apart by these struggles, thus creating huge rifts in the culture's most integral core elements—the family clan system.

We will be serving with churches on the reservations sharing the transforming love of Jesus Christ. We will work to build relations with the Navajos and Zuni people as they are cautious around visitors. We will participate in activities like community dinners, youth services, one-on-one discipleship, and repair or maintenance work on homes. Primarily we will be working to re-establish a sense of purpose and worth with those we serve to affirm that their lives matter to people outside the reservation.

Who can come?

- These trips are open to anyone in the NPC family. We welcome all adults and students in middle school and high school to join us. Children grades 3-5 are welcome to come provided at least one parent comes too.

What about the logistics?

- We will be flying from La Guardia to Albuquerque, NM then driving in rental vans to the ministry site near Gallup, NM, about a 2.5 hour drive. The March trip and April trip have different flights. Participants can either travel with the group or purchase their airfare separately and meet us in Albuquerque.

March Trip - American Airlines departing from La Guardia - Fare: \$545.35

- 3/20: Flight #709; La Guardia to Dallas, TX
Depart 8:05am, Arrive 11:15am
Flight #369; Dallas, TX to Albuquerque, NM
Depart 1:05pm, Arrive 1:55pm
- 3/25: Flight #1192; Albuquerque, NM to Dallas, TX
Depart 12:10pm, Arrive 2:50pm
Flight #742; Dallas, TX to La Guardia
Depart 4:35pm, Arrive 8:55pm

April Trip - Delta Airlines departing from La Guardia - Fare: \$580.05

- 4/17: Flight #721; La Guardia to Dallas, TX
Depart 9:50am, Arrive 12:50pm
Flight #477; Dallas, TX to Albuquerque, NM
Depart 2:05pm, Arrive 2:45pm
- 4/22: Flight #2134; Albuquerque, NM to Minneapolis, MN
Depart 2:10pm, Arrive 5:47pm
Flight #1596; Minneapolis, MN to La Guardia
Depart 7pm, Arrive 10:51pm

- We will be staying in bunk houses with mattresses, bathrooms, and eating area all together. Meals will be provided by the local ministry.

Continued on
page 8...



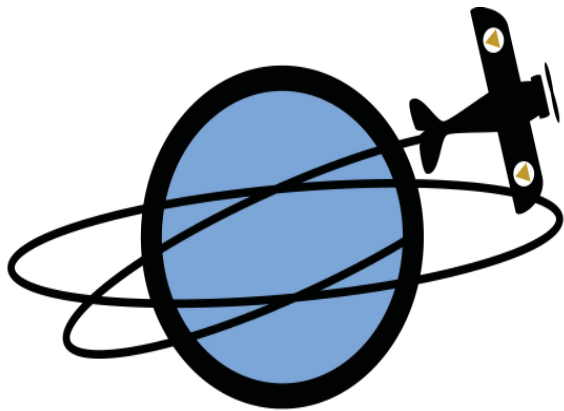
Student Ministry continued...

Continued from page 7...

The total cost of the trip is \$1100 per person including airfare or \$525 without airfare. Payment plans and scholarships are available. This price includes all ministry supplies, meals, accommodations, and transportation once in New Mexico. **To sign-up each participant will need to fill out an application and pay a \$200 deposit by January 5 for the March trip and February 1 for the April trip.**

You can learn more about the trip and our ministry partner, Adventures in Missions by visiting their website at adventures.org. Please contact Pastor Stuart if you have any additional questions or need to inquire about scholarships or payment options.

Pastor Stuart
Pastor of Student Ministries



MISSION
TRIP

Welcome Ben Valentine - our New Guys Ministry Coordinator!



On February 1, NPC will welcome our new Coordinator for Guys Ministry Ben Valentine. Ben and his wife Anna will be returning to the northeast after living in southern California for the past three years. While in California,

Ben earned his Masters of Arts degree in theology from Fuller Theological Seminary. He grew up in Connecticut except for six years when he lived in France while his father was serving as a pastor. Ben graduated from Houghton College in Houghton, NY earning his bachelors degree in French Literature. While at Houghton he was in the ROTC program and is now serving in the U.S. Army reserves as a chaplain. Ben has a great education and experience that will bless our ministry. There will be specific times to welcome Ben and Anna sometime in February.

Student Ministry continued...



Happy New Year! I hope you had a blessed holiday season and a great New Years. In Student Ministries we're already thinking about the next holiday weekend-- the Martin Luther King holiday! We are excited to announce our second annual Church Family Potluck which will be held that Sunday, the 15th. Never been to a potluck before?

Here's what it's all about. Our church family will be getting together for dinner in Horton Hall starting at 7 pm and eating...whatever you want to bring! The beauty of a potluck dinner is that the menu's a mystery until you get

there and see what everyone's brought. Feel free to make your favorite food/dessert, or bring something store-bought! We had everything from sushi to home-made entrees to KFC and Heights pizza last year. No sign-up or RSVP is necessary... everyone in the NPC family is welcome, and encouraged to bring friends of all ages. We can't wait to share a meal with you.



Abby Young
Girls Ministry Coordinator

Congregational Life Ministry



A Grand Time...!!

... was had by many members as we gathered for our annual Volunteer Celebration on December Team Night!

This is when we say a GREAT BIG "THANK YOU!" to all who volunteer in one way or another throughout the year!

Horton Hall was converted into a festive reception room, with ornaments hung from the beams, lighted/decorated Christmas trees, and most importantly festively-dressed volunteers!

About 125+ (or just about a quarter of the 500 invited!) joined in a few hours of fellowship, eating, laughing, and caroling.

Dwayne again treated the group to very upbeat caroling ... topped off with the now-traditional Twelve Days of Christmas participatory sing-a-long!

This year we also offered a daytime celebration the following day, serving brunch to a smaller group, who enjoyed quieter conversation while listening to Christmas music and watching the photo-review of many of the volunteers in service.

Pictures say it better than words ...



Twelve Days of Christmas Sing-A-Long!



Crowds gather at the food tables.



David Norman & Tom Geraghty

Blessings as we enter another New Year!
Valerie Muller,
Director of Congregational Life



Claudia Roux & Kalie Riordan



Membership Ministry



An Easy New Year Resolution

Some New Year's resolutions are harder than others to achieve. We have an easy one for you: TO GET YOUR PICTURE TAKEN FOR THE NEW CHURCH DIRECTORY!

About 40% of the congregation has had a picture taken so far (thank you!).

However, for most churches the participation rate is 75%. We really want to make sure you are included. The directory is a handy reference tool and a great way to build community.

Please help us make this directory as complete as possible by scheduling your appointment for one of the remaining days in January (THREE NEW DAYS HAVE BEEN ADDED TO THE SCHEDULE):

You can have your picture taken on one of four days this month:

- Tuesday, January 4, 2 PM to 8:15 PM
- Wednesday, January 5, 2 PM to 8:15 PM
- Saturday, January 8, 9:30 AM to 3:15 PM (NEW DATE ADDED)
- Sunday, January 9, 9:30 AM to 5 PM (NEW DATE ADDED TO SCHEDULE!)
- Sunday, January 23, 9:30 AM to 5 PM (NEW DATE ADDED TO SCHEDULE!)

REMEMBER: this is not just a one pose church photo. The photographers will take multiple poses of you and your family. It's a great opportunity to get professional family portraits taken with no obligation or minimum! Plus the photographers have been getting high marks from fellow church members for quality, patience and friendliness.

To see the schedule and sign up on-line go to www.norotonchurch.org and click on the link. If you need help, contact Julie Colbath, 203-655-1451, ext. 14, or julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org. Volunteers to help with the directory can also sign up on line.

Winter New Members Class

The next New Members Class will take place on **Saturday, January 22, noon to 5:30 PM**. For more information or to register for the class, please contact Julie Colbath, 655-1451, ext. 14 or julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org.

The membership class is a great way to learn more about NPC, build connections with other new members, better understand how the church can help you, and discover how you can be of service.

If you are feeling a nudge toward exploring membership, please call to have a comfortable open conversation to discuss your questions. If you are already a member, please pass the word to friends, neighbors and family who might be considering membership that a class is being held in January and they should feel free to contact me.



In Faith,
Julie Colbath
Director of Membership

***Get your picture taken
for our new church
directory!!!***

Hanna Massad NPC Mission Partner - Amman, Jordan



Hanna Massad is an NPC mission partner who lives in Amman, Jordan. In Amman

he pastors a small Christian church whose members are from Iraq, Sudan, Philippines and Jordan. In addition, he teaches at the Jordan Evangelical Theological Seminary in Amman. He also regularly visits a small Christian community in Gaza. I met with Hanna in October when I was travelling in Jordan.

A native of Gaza City, Hanna worked in a private hospital after high school for four years before God called him into ministry. He was ordained in 1987 and served as pastor of the Gaza Evangelical Church while he pursued a BA from Bethlehem Bible College, which he received in 1991. Former President Jimmy Carter helped Hanna secure a visa so he could leave Palestine and continue his theological education in the United States. He earned a Ph.D. from Fuller Seminary and obtained full citizenship in 2000. Hanna is married to Suhad, a biologist, and they have two small children, Joyce and Jolene.

In 2007 he was pastoring the Christian church in Gaza when a 29 year old assistant and member of his congregation was kidnapped by militant Muslims and executed, leaving a pregnant wife and two small children. This incident, coupled with the turmoil in Gaza, caused Hanna to return to the United States with his family. In the United States on sabbatical leave, he studied at the

Overseas Ministry Study Center in New Haven. Despite opportunities available to Hanna in the United States, he returned to Jordan at the completion of his sabbatical where he pastors a small church in Amman, teaches at the seminary and regularly travels to Gaza to pastor the small Christian community there.

When he was studying in New Haven, he addressed the NPC Mens Study Group that is taught by Pastor Greg Doll. He also met members of the Mission Team. As a result of these meetings, the Mission Team decided to help support of his ministry in Amman and Gaza on a modest scale.

Gaza is an area that is seven miles wide and thirteen miles long. It has a population of about 1.5 million people. It is regularly in the news, most recently for the Israeli attacks to destroy Hamas. It takes about two and a half hours to drive to Gaza from Amman. However, due to the many Israeli checkpoints, Hanna enters Gaza by going through Egypt, an eighteen hour trip.

Hanna is living in Jordan on an annual visa. His wife is Jordanian but he is a Palestinian. In his church in Amman, Hanna would preach about the terror felt by Christians in Gaza as they practiced their faith in a land of militant Muslims. He would talk about his young assistant who was murdered by militants. When he applied to renew his visa this year, he was told he had to speak with the Jordanian security service. At that interview he was shown a large file on his case and was advised not to include any further mention of his assistant's murder in his sermons. Apparently, one of the members of his congregation was informing the Jordanian security service about Hanna's sermons.

This struck me as another chilling example of the difficulties that Christians face practicing their faith in the Middle East. Although Jordan is viewed as one of the more progressive countries in the Middle East, Hanna's experience shows that, even in Jordan, non-Muslim religions are closely monitored. I was deeply touched by the strength of Hanna's faith and dedication to the Christian minorities in Amman and Gaza. I am grateful that we are able to help Hanna and know that our mission dollars are very well spent.

Written by: John Marr

How Can You Serve? Local Mission Opportunities

Monday - Friday 10am - 3 pm.

Tutoring in the computer lab. Come any time. St. Luke's Lifeworks, Stamford. Contact Jerre Skeats 203-216-5236, jskeats@optonline.net.

Help plan or participate in Career Fair at Carver Center, Norwalk.

January 13, 2011. Contact Jane Malcolm 203-655-0649, jkmalcolm1@gmail.com

Open Door Shelter, Manna House Soup Kitchen, South Norwalk.

Help prepare and/or serve a meal to homeless at the Shelter with other NPC volunteers. Two hour time commitment. No experience required. Contact Chuck Richardson, chukr@optonline.net or Shepard Halsch, skcakes@mac.com

Pray for the missionaries supported by our church:

Scott Brill and Artie Van Sciver (U.S.), Bob and Jennifer Chedester and Caroline King'Ori (Kenya), Tom and Dora Becker (Czech Republic), Hanna Massad (Jordan) and Jairton de Melo (Brazil).

NPC News

In Loving Memory of...

December 12th:

Donald Miller

*...now home to be with the Lord.
(Philippians 1:23)*

Join us in celebrating the following Baptisms...

December 19th:

Alexander Lucas Blake,
son of Barry and Lisa Blake

It's Easy to be of Service!

Got 15? Minutes, that is, just once a month! Your smiling face and warm handshake will help make our church a welcoming place. Greeters are needed before the 9 and 10:30 services. Please contact Julie Colbath, ext. 14 or julie.colbath@norotonchurch.org.

If you would like to submit an article for the February 2011 issue please submit it to: Rose Cunningham by email to rose.cunningham@norotonchurch.org.

NPC Staff here to serve you!

Pastor Samuel A. Schreiner III.....ext. 11 <i>Pastor and Team Leader</i>	Valerie Muller.....ext. 48 <i>Director of Congregational Life</i>	Martha Duff.....ext. 35 <i>Director Noroton Presbyterian Nursery School</i>
Leslie Ezzo.....ext. 33 <i>Session, Weddings & Baptisms</i>	Claire Bragdon.....ext. 40 <i>Assistant</i>	Barbara Magee.....ext. 37 <i>NPNS Office Manager</i>
Pastor Brandi Drake.....ext. 21 <i>Pastor of Caring and Women's Ministry</i>	Dwayne Condon.....ext. 45 <i>Director of Music & Fine Arts</i>	Julie Colbath.....ext. 14 <i>Director of Membership</i>
Gale Baldwin.....ext. 47 <i>Parish Associate</i>	Jenifer Condon.....ext. 45 <i>Music Associate</i>	TBD..... <i>Assistant</i>
Lori Nelson.....ext. 44 <i>Assistant</i>	TBD.....ext. 22 <i>Assistant</i>	Dan Rosa.....ext. 43 <i>Business Administrator</i>
Pastor Stuart Smith.....ext. 28 <i>Pastor of Student Ministry</i>	Josiah Armes..... <i>Sanctuary Organist</i>	Claire Bragdon.....ext. 40 <i>Assistant & Bookkeeper</i>
Ben Valentine.....ext. 24 <i>Boys Ministry Coordinator</i>	Bunny Ericsson..... <i>Chapel Organist</i>	David Lee.....ext. 26 <i>Director of Properties</i>
Abby Young.....ext. 25 <i>Girls Ministry Coordinator</i>	Stefanie DeLeo.....ext. 34 <i>Director of Children's Ministry</i>	Julio Yika, Luis Toro.....ext. 26 <i>& Brian Wood, Weekday Sextons</i>
Kara Thompson.....ext. 19 <i>Assistant</i>	Samantha Theoret.....ext. 31 <i>Children's Ministry Coordinator</i>	Tony Dimeglio, Giovanni Morle, Herold Robert & Lenin Vargas.....ext. 26 <i>Night & Weekend Sextons</i>
Pastor Greg Doll.....ext. 23 <i>Adult Spiritual Formation</i>	Liz Morelli.....ext. 15 <i>Assistant</i>	
Marlene Moffett.....ext. 49 <i>Assistant</i>	Carol Scott.....ext. 46 <i>NPC Tot Drop Director</i>	
	Claire Bragdon.....ext. 40 <i>Assistant</i>	