



# THE CIRCUIT WRITER

News from the United Methodist Church of Naugatuck

November 2011

*A community of God seeking, serving, and growing in Christ  
with open hearts, open minds, and open doors.*

203•729•4236 ❖ [www.numcct.org](http://www.numcct.org)

## Count Your Blessings

Each year, as the pumpkins at our Pumpkin Patch site are about to disappear, we know it is the Thanksgiving season. It is the good season to sing or hum the hymn "Count Your Blessings". Here's how the first verse goes:

*When upon life's billows you are  
tempest-tossed,  
When you are discouraged, thinking  
all is lost,  
Count your many blessings, name  
them one by one,  
And it will surprise you what the Lord  
hath done.*

*Count your blessings, name them  
one by one,  
Count your blessings, see what God  
hath done!  
Count your blessings, name them  
one by one,  
Count your many blessings, see  
what God hath done.*

The lyrics of "Count Your Blessings" were written by a Methodist minister, the Reverend Johnson Oatman, Jr. (1856-1922), a New Jersey native. Later on, it became one of the most endearing hymns in Great Britain, and America as well. In fact, it was the most popular American hymn during the great revival in Wales. It was sung at every revival event. *The London Daily* depicted it as follows, "The men sing it, the boys whistle it, and the women rock their babies to sleep on this hymn."

Days ago, I spoke with a friend of mine in Seoul, South Korea. His father who had suffered from Alzheimer's disease for years passed away two weeks ago. It was only three months after he lost his mother. He was in India on a business trip when he got the sad news of his father's death. I tried to pass some words of condolence over the international call.



He told me, "I am heart-broken but also thankful. My dad had lived for eighty one years. He didn't suffer much during his final days. My family had lots of support in the midst of the funeral process. And by the time I got the news in India, I was pretty much done with most of the projects, so that I didn't do harm to my company. Now I feel like I am an orphan but feel the presence of God closer than ever." His words were inspirational and

touched my heart. He didn't mention the words 'count your blessings' but that was actually what he was doing in the midst of sorrow.

Friends, it is the Thanksgiving season. Let us find many good reasons of Thanksgiving toward God. I bet you would find plenty. Let's make the hymn our theme song in November. Let's sing it, hum it, and meditate on it during the daytime and at bedtime as well. The blessing of God will be upon you abundantly. Praise the Lord!

In Peace,

Pastor Steven Kim

# FYI from the Pastor

## Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service

The Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service will be held at the Hillside Covenantal Church on Sunday, November 20 at 5:00 p.m. The service will be followed by a fellowship hour, which will be provided by the hosting church.

Anyone who wants to be part of the combined choir for the service is encouraged to be at the Hillside Church by 4:00 p.m.

## Youth Advent and Christmas Gatherings

Five Fridays at 5:30 p.m. – 7:30 p.m.  
Dates: December 2, 9, 16, 23, 30

Each session starts with a pizza party at 5:30 p.m., and ends with a special activity according to the theme of the night. There is no participation fee.

December 2: Theme: Star Gazing/ Activity: Making an Advent Wreath

December 9: Theme: Star Power/ Activity: Shopping

December 16: Theme: Star Struck/ Activity: Advent and Christmas Quiz

December 23: Theme: Star Child/ Activity: Christmas Caroling

Dec.30: Theme: Star Attraction/ Activity: Advent and Christmas Quiz

## Advent Bible Study

During this Advent Season, come join us at the Advent Bible Study at the parsonage.

Gathering dates: Sundays (December 4, 11, 18, 25) at 4:30-6:00 p.m.

Text: 'Shine! Light for All People, written by Patricia Farris

First Week of Advent: The Light in the Window

Second Week of Advent: The Light of the World

Third Week of Advent: Shine a Light!

Fourth Week of Advent: The Horizon Is Bright

## Advent and Christmas Worship

On each Sunday during this Advent and Christmas season, we will invite a Sunday School class (4<sup>th</sup> graders and up) to take charge of the service including the candle light and special litany.

## Charge Conference

Due to the health issue of our District Superintendent, the Reverend Kenneth Kieffer, our Charge Conference has been postponed until Sunday, January, 15, 2012, at 12:15 p.m. Rev. Paul Hibbard of Watertown UMC will preside over the event.

## Call to Action Workshop

Recently, our Conference Bishop, the Reverend Jeremiah Park has urged the local churches to implement a church revitalization program called 'Call to Action.' As an initial stage, the pastors are asked to lead three preliminary workshops in order to bridge to the main program, which will take place next year. All church leaders are encouraged to be part of these sessions. The details will be announced soon.



The United Methodist Church  
of Naugatuck, Connecticut  
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Naugatuck, CT 06770 www.numcct.org

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The Reverend Steven Kim, Pastor

Gretchen I. Usawicz, Editor, The Circuit Writer  
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# OUR MISSION OPPORTUNITIES

## NEON

Naugatuck Ecumenical Outreach Network

On September 24, we volunteered for our first community dinner with NEON a network of area churches who provide free monthly meals to families who may need a helping hand or just need some fellowship experiences. Pastor Steven, Dawn Mundry, Jeff Hunt, Ed Usawicz and Ethel Grant volunteered as servers at St. Michael's Church. St. Michael's is the home base for NEON. The experience was very rewarding. October 22 was the second dinner. Stay tuned for future dates. Dinnertime is 5 to 7 p.m. You can volunteer for an hour or more – contact Pastor Steven or Ethel Grant with questions.

caps, sunglasses, personal notes and photos of your family. New items only please, and no liquids, toy guns or any item that could be harmful to a child. Donation envelopes with the complete list can be obtained from the Narthex or Church Office.

Once again we are a shoebox drop-off site for the Naugatuck Valley. Please volunteer to receive shoeboxes during the morning (in the Memorial Room) of the week, November 14 through November 20. There is a sign up sheet in the Narthex or contact Linnea Behlman or Ethel Grant to volunteer. Thank you for your generous contributions to this mission outreach.

## PICK UP AND FILL UP OPERATION CHRISTMAS CHILD



Our annual shoebox drive is underway. Shoeboxes are available at the Church. Pick them up and fill them up. Let's top last year's collection of 76 boxes. The filled shoeboxes go to needy children in third world countries and depressed areas, and they are received with many, many grateful smiles. Funds are also need for shipping.

If you would like to donate individual shoebox items instead of filling your own box, here is a list of items that can be dropped off in the OCC box in the Narthex

School supplies, small toys (batteries if needed), hygiene items, t-shirts, socks, ball



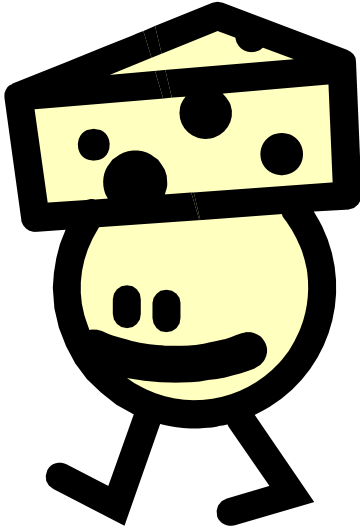
*Just a Gentle  
Reminder...*

When you are shopping, please keep the food pantry in mind. Also, consider taking advantage of a 'buy one, get one free sale,' and donating the "free" item to the food pantry. All donations are always gratefully accepted.

Please remember, the  
FIRST Sunday of the month is  
Food Bank Collection Sunday

## Let's Be Cheeseheads

- Elma Solomon



The Food Bank is projecting that we will have to prepare holiday baskets for 250 needy families this holiday season.

Our church is being asked to donate 300 boxes of "mac 'n cheese."

The deadline for the donation is Sunday,

the 20<sup>th</sup> of November.

We are asking that you please keep your mac 'n cheese donations separate from the first Sunday of the month donations, and we have provided a box in the Narthex for our mac 'n cheese donations.

Come on – let's make someone smile and say CHEESE!



*Lord of Wisdom, we faithfully believe in the promise of your Heavenly Kingdom. Yet we allow our personal living to determine our personal giving. Enable us to be generous givers whose giving is not controlled by our personal wants. Awaken our spirit to the knowledge that we have a limited time to give to your ministries. We pray in the name of your Son, who will come again as Jesus the Christ. Amen. (Based on Matthew 25:1-13.)*

- By David S. Bell

Vice-President of Stewardship

with the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan and Senior

Design Partner with Design Group International™.

You may contact him by visiting [www.DavidSBell.org](http://www.DavidSBell.org).

Revised by Ken Sloane, Director of Stewardship for GBOD.

## Flower Fund

### Altar Memorial Committee

- Bev Carrington

On Sunday mornings, the Church Altar is decorated with seasonal flower arrangements. Floral decorations can be ordered and dedicated in memory or in honor of a person, or to celebrate an occasion such as a birthday, anniversary, baptism or other special event. When in season, the flowers are supplied from the Carrington's garden, grown by Bev and Bill and arranged by Bev Carrington, or flowers are supplied from an alternative source in the winter months.

Easter morning the altar is amass with beautiful tulips, hyacinths, and lilies - all ordered and dedicated by church members. During the Christmas Eve service, the altar will be adorned with beautiful red and white poinsettia plants, and the dedication form will be in the December newsletter. The plants can be taken home after the Christmas Eve service or can be given or delivered to a shut in.

The proceeds from the altar flowers are added to the church flower fund and are used for various items, such as altar cloths, decorative banners, confirmation sashes, as well as other items.

Dedications and donations can be given to Dottie Sherwood, the Church secretary or to Bev Carrington, by mail or in the offering plate

Any questions about our Flower Fund can be addressed to Bev Carrington at 203-729-4075.



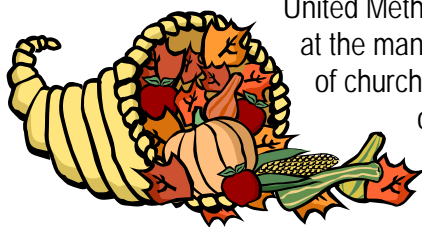
## November Servers

Liturgists – Check on Line at [www.numcct.org](http://www.numcct.org)

- 6 November ..... Jack Lewis
- 13 November ..... Ethel Grant
- 20 November ..... Wayne Zirolli
- 27 November ..... Susan Agamy

## Together We Make A Difference Through Shared Ministry Apportionments!

!— *From UMCGiving.org*



United Methodists may be amazed at the many organizational layers of church life, but members of other denominations have been heard to say: "If you want something done, get

the United Methodists to do it." Followers of the Wesleys are indeed "methodical" about their approach to mission and ministry. One reason United Methodists can do great things is the church's emphasis on "connectionalism." Sometimes United Methodist leaders speak of the denomination as "the connection." This concept has been central to Methodism from its beginning. No local church is the total body of Christ. Therefore, local United Methodist congregations are bound together by a common task and common governance that reach out into the world. United Methodist churches and organizations join in ministry with each other and with other denominations. Connectionalism comes to life through the clergy appointment system, through the outreach United Methodists do together and through giving. An example of connectional is Africa University, founded by The United Methodist Church in 1992 and already changing the face of the continent. No one congregation could have developed the university, but together we make a tremendous difference

**Our Shared Ministry Sunday  
is the 20<sup>th</sup> of November, 2011**

## The Soul of Tomorrow's Church

- By Kent Ira Groff

As C. S. Lewis said, "The charge is 'feed my sheep,' 'not run experiments on rats.'" There is a mountain of social-science research, and all has its place in determining, for example, how many denominations have lost members since the sixties or how prayer affects health. Yet our faith communities need ways of feeding sheep, being church for one another – the sensing nerves and pulsating muscles and discerning mind of the body of Christ. That is what those laboratory experiments are about.

In Switzerland, after sheep have grazed lush lowlands, they must scale the craggy slopes. The climb is hard, the grazing difficult. Old ewes and rams who have been there before resist. But shepherds have learned that if they pick up the young lambs and carry them, the older sheep will follow because they love their young. This is a parable for the soul of tomorrow's church.



**Just a Reminder...**

The Circuit Writer is on line at [www.numcct.org](http://www.numcct.org)

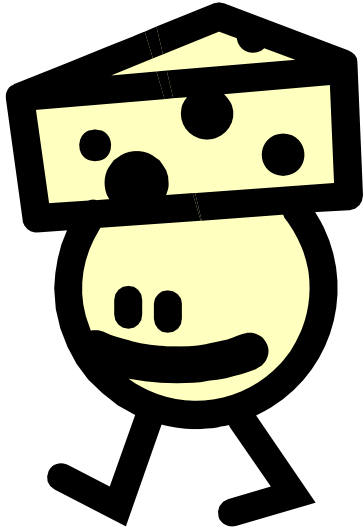
## Good Fridays Coffee House

- Rob Petro, Coordinator of the Good Fridays Coffee House

**Always Fun! Bring a Friend! From 8 to 10 PM!** Our Good Fridays Coffee House is back in town from a well-deserved winter recess and what a wonderful line-up of music and inspiration we have for you to enjoy. There is no cover charge, and we offer free refreshments and snacks.

DATE	BAND/PERFORMER	WEBSITE	MUSIC DESCRIPTION
<b>November</b> 11	Allergic to Bees	<a href="http://www.seymourebc.com/bees/thebees.html">http://www.seymourebc.com/bees/thebees.html</a>	Folk/Contemporary
<b>December</b> 2	Patrick Destoop	<a href="http://www.myspace.com/patrickdestoop">http://www.myspace.com/patrickdestoop</a>	Country/Folk
9	Redeemed	<a href="http://www.redeemedct.com/index.html">http://www.redeemedct.com/index.html</a>	Rock/Jazz/Christmas/Blues

Questions: • Call Rob at 203-419-0890



# Be A Cheesehead *Donate Mac 'N Cheese*

Our Contribution to the Holiday Food Bank Baskets



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF NAUGATUCK

*A community of God seeking, serving, and growing in Christ.*

208 MEADOW STREET

NAUGATUCK CT 06770

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The Deadline for the  
DECEMBER Issue  
of  
The Circuit Writer  
is 16<sup>th</sup> of November.  
Thank You.

