



THE CIRCUIT WRITER

News from the United Methodist Church of Naugatuck

October 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

SPECIAL APPEAL

Dear the Members of Naugatuck United Methodist Church:

Greetings in the name of our risen Lord Jesus Christ!

God has led us through our church in His mercy almost for two centuries. Our forefathers in faith built our church here long ago and the numerous fellow Christians have served God sincerely through it since. However, in the midst of the lingering recession in recent years our church has been facing the unprecedented financial challenge. If this trend continues through the year, we will be able to fulfill only a small portion of our obligation to the conference. We must make a substantial change to the current situation. Otherwise, I am concerned that our church might see a structural change in the coming months.

I have prayed for this unusual situation throughout the summer and ended up making a special appeal to you. To begin with, I will give the church extra \$1,000 on top of my tithe. I urge all the church families to respond to my initiative in making a matching contribution. I understand that \$1,000 is a considerable amount of money during these difficult economic times; you, therefore, might prayerfully consider an alternative amount. Please pray for this and be guided by the Spirit of God.

Jesus says, *'Seek first his kingdom and righteousness first, and all these things will be given to you as well. (Matthew 6:33)'* I firmly believe the truthfulness of this statement in my faith.

Please make your check payable to: **Naugatuck United Methodist Church**
with the description of *'Pastor's Special Appeal'*

May God guide our church and bless your family in His abundant mercy!

Thank you.

In Peace,

Pastor Steven Kim

Work Has Started

- Mary Hope-Ross
Board of Trustees



The Board of Trustees is very excited to announce that work on installing the wheelchair lift has begun.

In June, 2011, we signed the contract with Hudson Accessibility to

have a wheelchair lift installed, and they have started preparing the space for its installation on Monday, the 19th of September. Despite the flooding and the current condition of our basement we will have a brand new wheelchair lift and handicapped accessible bathroom very soon.

Thank you everyone for your support for this much needed improvement to our facilities. Someday soon we will have our basement all fixed up and **everyone** will be able to access it and all our trials and tribulations in getting there will be just a fading memory.



I don't know what God is, the being of God, but I know it's a shattering experience. It opens you to the world. It takes you out of your narcissistic ego trip and says, look, see the other. Show strength through compassion, through love, not through violence. And to be reminded each day of those achievements. Not simple, but I'm still hoping. I'm still hoping. It's not easy to be a religious man. It's hard to be an awakened human being.

- Rabbi David Hartman

Book Talk

Check Out the New October Arrivals at our Lending Library



BONHOEFFER Pastor, Martyr, Prophet Spy By Eric Metaxas – A New York Times Best Seller – A captivating and inspiring read from start to finish. Metaxas tells Bonhoeffer's story with passion and theological sophistication

Good Food for Life Planning, Preparing, and Sharing by Maggie Davis. Good Food for Life is like having a nutritionist in your kitchen. This helpful guide will challenge and inspire you to navigate the food landscape, asking all the right questions, and finding the answers that work best for you. Life and food should always be nourishing and satisfying!

- If you would like to donate books, please see Gretchen Usawicz so she can label the books with our church identification.
- Just a reminder...we use the honor system for returning books.

Be Inspired!

Read a book and share with a friend...



The United Methodist Church
of Naugatuck, Connecticut
208 Meadow Street 203•729•4236
Naugatuck, CT 06770 www.numcct.org

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

The Reverend Steven Kim, Pastor

Gretchen I. Usawicz, Editor, The Circuit Writer
gusawicz@region15.org 203•729•0572

Our *Mission* Opportunities

NEON

Naugatuck Ecumenical Outreach Network

If you did not have an opportunity to volunteer to help out with the NEON free community dinner on September 24, you will have other opportunities: October 22 and November 19 are the next two dinners - please mark your calendars and join us. These dinners provide fellowship and a hot meal to community families who may need a helping hand or to those who would just like to fellowship with neighbors without having to cook the meal themselves. As new members of NEON we are committed to sharing in the responsibilities of putting on these meals. It only takes a few people from each church to make the meal happen. We are one of six churches from Naugatuck in the Network. The meals take place at St. Michaels Church, which has a Health Department compliant kitchen, on a Saturday dates, once a month from 5:00 to 7:00 p.m. Workers should report between 4:00 and 4:30 p.m. Help is needed to setup, serve, and clean up. Questions? See Pastor Steven or Ethel Grant.

Operation Christmas Child



The shoeboxes are on the way - they will be distributed soon to members who wish to fill a box for a needy child in a third world country or depressed area. Last year we packed 76 boxes and the community contributed another 154

boxes. You may also donate individual items. There will be a collection box in the Narthex. Lists of items will soon appear in the bulletin. Once again we will be a drop off point for shoeboxes from the Naugatuck Valley - November 14 through November 20. If you would like to volunteer to man the drop off site (Memorial Room), see Ethel Grant or Linnea Behlman.

Look to the Future

Church-Wide Mission Trip

We are planning a mission trip for **July 22 through 28, 2012**, to a Connecticut city or town with the United Methodist Army (UM Army). The UM Army provides Christ centered quality work camps that serve people in need and promotes spiritual growth and leadership in youth. This mission trip is open to **adults and children in the seventh grade and up**. Here is a little about the UM Army:

UM Army offers 'high quality weeklong mission camps for youth and young adults that serve people in need and build leadership skills in young people. Participants sleep, eat, worship and enjoy fellowship at a local church beginning on Sunday evening and ending on Saturday afternoon. Each weekday, small teams consisting of one adult and three to five youth set out to a worksite in the local area. Additional adults act as support to the teams...worksite projects can be painting, small home repairs, construction of handicap access ramps, etc...clients are generally elderly, or families who are unable to do the work because of finance or health reasons."

There will be a fee for expenses (accommodations, food, etc). We will fund-raise as much as we can so that as many as who like to join us, can do so. Our expert leader for planning this event is Debbie Torrice. Debbie has led our youth on several UM Army trips in the past. She will share some of those memories with us in the near future and answer questions you may have. We will need to send in our registration with names of adults and youth who plan on going on this mission trip, by **December, 2011** - so mark your calendars and let us know that you will be joining us. This promises to be a most rewarding service event. Please contact Pastor Steven, Debbie Torrice or Ethel Grant to sign up.

THRIFT SHOP NEWS

There will be a Bag Sale the first two weeks of October - Come fill a bag with clothing, shoes, linens, etc. for under \$5.

There is a great selection of items - stop by or drop off your gently used clothing.

Thrift Shop Hours:
Thursday and Saturday
9:00 a.m. to Noon.



A Report on our Basement Facilities

The Reverend Steven Kim
Pastor

Since we have the flood by the sewage back-up in August, we have diligently worked on repairing our facilities in the basement in partnership with Church Mutual, our insurance company.

Unfortunately, it has taken more time than we first thought, and the repair work is in the process. Eventually, they are going to replace all the wooden walls, the kitchen refrigerator, the bottom half of the kitchen cabinets, and the floor tiles.

Simultaneously, another contractor has recently begun installing the much-anticipated electronic chair-lift and the handicapped bathroom. We hope all these works would be finished within October. Please have this matters in your prayers.

Until then our Sunday School will use the alternative facility upstairs. May God hold our Sunday School in His mercy during this transitory period. Finally, we give thanks to the members of Board of Trustees for all their strenuous work for these projects.



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



Generous living is not just about giving money, or even just about giving. It has to do with the whole of who we are and how we care for our neighbors (see Mark 12:28-31). Each of us brings our heart, mind, soul, and strength. The Old Testament word for "heart" is literally the leaning or thrust of our lives. We might call it our lifestyle or nonverbal witness. In other words, it is how we steward 100 percent of our lives, not just the "religious" sector or the percentage we give away.

-Excerpt From GBOD

October Servers

Liturgists – Check on Line at www.numcct.org

2 October Wayne Zirolli
9 October Susan Agamy
16 October Jeff Hunt
23 October John Hope-Ross
30 October Deb Torrice

Church Calendar

October 2 World Communion Sunday
Sunday School begins
Holy Communion
October 9 Seventeenth Sunday after Pentecost,
Baptism of Myla Derosa
October 16 Laity Sunday, Shared Ministry Sunday
October 22 NEON serving day (5~7 p.m.) at St.
Michael's Episcopal
October 23 Hymn-Singing Service
Nineteenth Sunday after Pentecost
October 30 Healing Service. Reformation Sunday
November 6: All Saints Sunday, World Community
Day, Daylight Saving Time Ends
November 10 Charge Conference
Thursday



Body and Soul: Stewardship That Works
by Betsy Schwarzentraub

With these words, the Rev. Odette Lockwood-Stewart, pastor of Epworth United Methodist Church in Berkeley, California, preached about stewarding the gift of life, including our bodies and souls. She envisioned a three-month Pentecost adventure to pursue:

- Physical health awareness with positive support for healthy habits and choices;
- Spiritual renewal by encouraging prayer, meditation, study, and service;
- Nurture of mental health through reading and conversations; and
- Community growth by gathering, knowing, and praying for one another.

Together We Make A Difference Through Shared Ministry Apportionments!

Helping the Kingdom Come About

- By Henri J. M. Nouwen
Excerpt from [A Spirituality of Fundraising](#)

What is the kingdom? Jesus is clear that if we make the kingdom our first priority, "all these other things will be given you as well" (Matt. 6:33, NJB). The kingdom is where God provides for all that we need. It is the realm of sufficiency where we are no longer pulled here and there by anxiety about having enough. "So do not worry about tomorrow: tomorrow will take care of itself." (Matt. 6:34, NJB). Jesus also compares, the kingdom to a mustard seed, "which, at the time of its sowing, is the smallest of all the seeds on earth. Yet once it is sown it grows into the biggest shrub of them all and puts out big branches so that the birds of the air can shelter in its shade" (Mark 4:31-32, NJB).

Even a seemingly small act of generosity can grow into something far beyond what we could ever ask or imagine (see Eph. 3:20): The creation of a community of love in this world and beyond this world; because wherever love grows, it is stronger than death (1 Cor. 13:8). So when we give ourselves to planting and nurturing love here on earth, our efforts will reach out beyond our own chronological existence. Indeed, if we raise funds for the creation of a community of love, we are helping God build the kingdom. We are doing exactly what we are supposed to do as Christians. Paul is clear about this: "Make love your aim." (1 Cor.14:1,NJB).

*The 16th of October is
our
Shared Ministry Sunday.*

Bridging the Gap

"Hallelujah!" On a bright sunny day at the end of September, I exclaimed as I drove toward the Glendale Nursing Home to lead a service. This was the first time I drove on the Naugatuck Bridge since the half of it has been reconnected the second time over the past two years. For those who do not know of the saga of the bridge, let me recap what happened to it.

The half of the bridge had been under construction all year last year. In just three days it was re-opened, however, the part of the newly-built bridge was smitten to rumbles again by the gigantic crane. They had been reconstructing it again since. Now, finally we have the full four-lane bridge first time over the past two years. So, you would understand the delight I took while driving on the bridge freshly paved with dark pitch and shiny yellow traffic lines and dots on it.

Interestingly, Jesus never mentioned a bridge in his parables and teachings. I think that is because a river is something you cannot find commonly in Israel. If you have visited Israel, you would know what I mean. Think of the Jordan River. It certainly has a big name both biblically and politically. However, the Hudson River would get insulted if we put the two of them side by side. In fact, it is just as wide as the Naugatuck River.

Furthermore, Jesus had no river in his hometown Nazareth. I can attest to it as the one who had visited the place before.

Yet, I think Jesus liked a bridge a lot. Let me tell you why. He always liked the idea of bringing together different parties, different classes, different cultures, different genders, and different races. He called it 'making peace.'

So, he says in Matthew 5:9, "Blessed are the peacemakers, for they will be called children of God." In other words, peace-making is a crucial potion of Christian life.

How can we become peacemakers in our life? Let's put aside the world peace for a second. We can be peacemakers by bringing two different parties together in the name of God. Then the world will know that we are the

peacemakers. They will call us the children of God. The same is true in our church life, too. A church is the community in which the peacemakers are needed more than any other places.

I would enjoy driving on the revamped bridge in the coming days. I love it not only because it helps the two different sides of our town get connected to each other but also it reminds me of Jesus' call to become a peacemaker.



In Peace,

Pastor Steven Kim

A Meditation for October

The Grateful Heart

-By Stephen P. West
Pastor of Grade United Methodist Church
Huntsville, Alabama



Jesus said some strange things. At times his words project the radical values of the kingdom of God. At other times I wonder if he simply intended to stump his critics. When he says,

"Give to Caesar what is Caesar's, and to God what is God's" (NIV) he is doing some of both. Jesus certainly knows the hypocritical attitude of those quizzing him about taxes. But he answers the question nevertheless

It is hard to live from your center when people seem to be plotting against you! Yet Jesus does not couch his answer in a way that takes sides. Instead it has spurred imaginative thought for generations. For Jesus, the way of gratitude boils down to a core question, How much of who we are belongs to God?

Gratitude is not a matter of tipping God for services rendered or volunteering a portion of our time. Our giving reflects our living. My favorite phrase in the wedding liturgy is spoken at the exchange of rings: "With all that I am and all that I have, I honor you." We might best direct that phrase to the one who gives us live itself.

May commitments occupy a role of importance in daily life, spanning everything from family to church, from community to career, from nation to denomination. Jesus' saying on taxes ironically holds both sides of a proverbial coin in tension. It is not that we can only serve *one or the other commitment*. The question is how we honor God in the midst of all commitments.

Giving is a spiritual discipline that cultivates a grateful heart. Jesus said, "Where your treasure is, there your heart will be also" (Luke 12:34). We do not give only to change world. Our giving also changes us.

Take time to meditate over your checkbook, credit card statement, or bank account. How might you live in a way that honors God more completely? Pray for renewal.

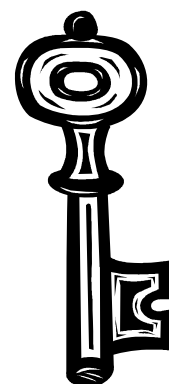


Making Meals Matter

-By Maggie Davis
Excerpted from Good Food for Live

Seven Secrets to Make Your Meals Sacred

1. Express your thankfulness for each meal you eat.
2. Make your meals a time-out from the hectic pace of life.
3. Eat only in designated dining areas such as the kitchen, dining room, or backyard.
4. Don't bring your worries or conflicts to the table.
5. Laugh together at the table; share a joke or a funny story every night.
6. Set the table to reflect the importance of the meal and those you are serving. Play music to change the mood. Light candles whenever you can at dinner. Enlist the help of others to set the table, serve the food, or clean up afterward.
7. "Break bread together" whenever you can with those you love.





Good Fridays Coffee House

- Rob Petro, Coordinator of the Good Fridays Coffee House

Always Fun! Bring a Friend! From 8 to 10 PM! There is no cover charge, and we offer free refreshments and snacks.

DATE	BAND/PERFORMER	WEBSITE	MUSIC DESCRIPTION
October 21	Further Still	http://www.furtherstillmusic.com/	Alternative/Blues
November 11	Allergic to Bees	http://www.seymourebc.com/bees/thebees.html	Folk/Contemporary
December 2	Patrick Destoop	http://www.myspace.com/patrickdestoop	Country/Folk
9	Redeemed	http://www.redeemedct.com/index.html	Rock/Jazz/Christmas/Blues

Questions: Call Rob at 203•419•0890



You're blessed
when you stay on course,
Walking steadily on the road
revealed by God. You're blessed
when you follow his directions,
doing your best to find him

Psalm 119: 1-2
The Message



UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF NAUGATUCK

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

208 MEADOW STREET

NAUGATUCK CT 06770

Address Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
US Postage
PAID
Permit #16
Naugatuck, CT

The Deadline for
the November Issue
of The Circuit Writer
is the 19th of
October.
Thank You.

