



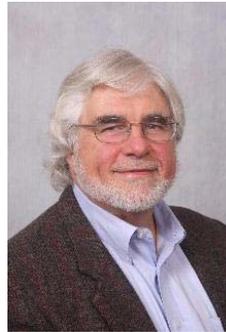
The Lighted Tower

January 2018
Volume 3, Issue 1

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The members of the Diaconate are pleased to announce that The Rev. Kendrick Norris has been hired as our interim minister, starting January 1, 2018. Rev. Norris earned his Master of Divinity Degree at Yale University and was ordained in 1977. He also earned his Doctorate of Ministry in Psychology and Clinical Studies at Andover Newton Theological School, and a PhD of Pastoral Psychology from the Graduate Theological Foundation in Indiana.

Rev. Norris was the Associate Pastor at First Church in Guilford, CT for 10 years and the Senior Minister there for 26 years. He states that his intent at First Church in Guilford was to grow a faith community where relationships were more essential than ideology. As Senior Minister there, he initiated a refugee resettlement ministry that welcomed over 150 refugees from every part of the world.

He most recently served as the Interim Minister at First Church in New Britain, where he initiated interest groups that got people together, instituting some new programs of hospitality and care, and engaging in Appreciative Inquiry sessions. The church is now ready to move forward with a new settled minister.

Rev. Norris resides in Guilford with his wife, Mary.

We look forward to working with him and furthering our ministry to serve God and grow in Christ. His first Sunday will be January 7th. We invite everyone to join us for a reception for Rev. Norris and his wife following the 10:00 worship service.

Welcome, Rev. Norris!

Center Congregational Church
474 Broad Street
Meriden, CT 06450
203-235-1389

PLANNING COMMITTEE

The Planning Committee began the process toward development of a strategic plan for our church in the summer of 2017. The Mission Statement was developed, shared for comment, revised, and then accepted by a congregational vote in November 2017.

We have used a "SWOT" analysis tool to identify our church's Strengths, Opportunities, Weaknesses and Threats for our efforts to move toward our Long Range Plan.

The Committee is proposing the following Center Church Vision (where we hope to be) and Values (guiding principles for our actions) statements for approval by the congregation. These will be companion pieces to the previously approved Mission Statement and provide guidance for development of church initiatives and goals and objectives.

MISSION STATEMENT:

The Mission of Center Congregational Church is to Honor God and Grow in Christ; Putting into action the message of God's love, welcoming all, serving the community and world through outreach ministry, and acknowledging the worth of All People.

VISION STATEMENT:

(proposed statement to be approved by the congregation)
The vision of Center Congregational Church, UCC, is to be God's beacon of love, justice, and hope in Meriden and beyond.

VALUES STATEMENT:

(proposed statement to be approved by the congregation)

Respect - As an Open and Affirming church we value and respect one another, strangers and visitors, those with differing opinions, and differences in gender, age, education, economic status, nationality, race, sexual orientation, and those with physical, mental and emotional disabilities.

Serving God - We support Our congregation through mission, outreach, and through caring for the homebound, those who are alone, sick, addicted; those needing spiritual or emotional support by the spiritually inspired use of financial resources, and supporting each other.

Creativity - We value creativity in worship, technology, programs for youth and adults, effective utilization of our facilities, resources, and our skills and talents.

Loving - We welcome all the children of God.

Our thanks to the following Planning Committee members: Jack Brooks, Debbie Gaffney, Karen Krick, Betty Leidy, Barbara Langner, Maggie Schillberg, and Mary Zysk. They will continue their work on a Long Range Plan this month.

GENEROSITY COMMITTEE

Total pledges received to date from 40 individuals is \$66,230 (2 new, 7 same, 25 increases, 6 decreased).

The budget figure is \$89,906. If you have a pledge you want to send in, please do it so that we can get closer to the budget figure.

Thanks,
The Generosity Committee

FROM THE DEACONS

Thank you to everyone who donated gifts and money for our December Gift Sunday. The agencies chosen this year were Rushford, Kuhn Center, Catholic Family Services, and the Albert J. Solnit Children's Center. Each agency received a box full of gifts and a check for \$250 to purchase gifts. \$217 was donated by members of the church, and the Missions Committee contributed \$783 for the gifts.

MISSION MOMENT

The Missions Committee received the following thank you note from Chrysalis in appreciation for our donation of \$544 and two boxes full of items for the shelter and the clients there:

“Wow! Thank you SO much. This year has been so rough for those we serve, and your very generous gift helps us make their time with us just a little brighter. Thank You.” Sharlene Kerelejza, Executive Director.

...and a thank you note from the Soup Kitchen for the special Veterans' Day meal, prepared by Bud Greenbacker, Ken White, Tom Schillberg and their crew, and paid for by your Missions donations: “Thank you for the Veterans' Day meal and all the trimmings. The delicious meal was much appreciated and enjoyed by all.” The Meriden Soup Kitchen served 10,831 meals between July and September 2017. Several other members of Center Church also served at the Soup Kitchen that day.

Thank you to everyone who donated canned goods and non-perishable food items to our November pantry project. Five large boxes of food were delivered to St. Andrew's Church's Pantry.

CHRISTIAN ED NEWS

Our 4PM Christmas Eve service was a beautiful time for families to celebrate the true reason for celebrating the season, and for our children and youth to share their joy.



The temperatures may be falling, but the children and youth of CCC are very busy this month nonetheless.

In January, the children in the Sunday School will be learning all about the Lord's Prayer and how to pray. There will be youth choir rehearsals on the 7th, 14th, and 21st.

The CCC Youth group will have a Video Game Tournament Lock-in beginning Friday, Jan. 12th at 5PM and running through the night until 9AM on Saturday the 13th. We will have make your own pizzas for dinner and a night full of fun activities and snacks. Invite a few friends to join in!

The Confirmation class will meet on the 14th after church to learn about beliefs and sacraments of the UCC.

Beginning Friday, January 26th, meeting at CCC at 4:30PM, and running through midday Sunday, Jan. 28th, the confirmation class will attend a UCC Confirmation Retreat at beautiful Silver Lake Camp and Conference Center in Sharon, CT. This is always a moving experience for all participants. We are extremely thankful for the support CCC provides allowing us to be able to attend this powerful retreat.



FELLOWSHIP NEWS

KOINONIA will meet at 10:30 am on Tuesday, January 16, in the Federal Room to plan our program for 2018. If you have any ideas for the programs please bring them with you.

Thank you to all the members of Koinonia who delivered poinsettias and cookies to the shut-ins for Christmas!

OTHER'S will meet on January 11, 2018. Please arrive at Zorba's at 6 pm. Zorbas is located on East Main St. Meriden. Pat Kenney is our Birthday gal this month. Others is open to all the women of the church. Please call Ardene if you plan to attend at 203 237-2375. We wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.

CENTERITES will meet on January 11 at 6:30 pm at Henry's Restaurant at 337 No Colony Street, in Wallingford. Please call Randy Stack at 203 265-0543 for more information and to let him know if you plan on going.

Colonial Tymes Christmas Fair

Thank you to everyone who helped our church raise almost \$6,000 at our Fair. We thank all who worked on our Fair, donated to our Fair, and those who came and enjoyed our Fair. All of us working together made our Fair a success – both in fellowship and financially.

UPCOMING EVENTS

- Adult Bible Study – Wednesday mornings at 10:30 a.m.
- Jan. 1 Office Closed
- Jan. 7 Reception for Rev. Norris
- Jan. 8 – Diaconate
- Jan. 9 – Trustees
- Jan. 11 – Others
- Jan. 11 – Centerites
- Jan. 12 – Youth Lock-in
- Jan. 14 – Confirmation; Missions
- Jan. 16 – Koinonia
- Jan. 25- Church Council
- Jan 26 – 28 Conf. Retreat
- Jan. 30 – Central Association Meeting

Sunday Worship

- 8:30am - Chapel Service – enter by rear parking lot, 30-minute service – Communion 2nd and 4th Sunday of each month.
- 10:00 am. - Worship in Sanctuary
- Holy Communion first Sunday of each month and all are welcome

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Here are a few opportunities for you to share your gifts with Center Church:

Join the Care Team – We have established a Care Team whose members will visit shut-ins, those in the hospital, or any member needing a visit. A training session will be held in this month. Please see any member of the Diaconate if interested.

Greeters are needed on Sunday mornings to welcome those attending and hand out the bulletins. If you are willing to do this, please contact Jack Brooks (203-238-2827) or any member of the Diaconate.

Ushers are also needed on Sunday mornings to take up the offering. Please contact Jack Brooks (203-238-2827) or any member of the Diaconate if you are willing to do this.

Lay Readers for Sunday worship services. A sign-up sheet is in the Federal Room, or contact the church office.

Coffee Hour Hosts are needed two Sundays each month. Please see a member of the Diaconate for more details and to sign up.

Thank you for considering these opportunities to help at Center Church. Sign-up sheets are available in the Federal Room during coffee hour.

MEMENTOS

Many of you saw the wind chimes made from the church's old silverware, and the lamps made from the old spindle screen in front of the choir loft that were for sale at the church fair. We have one chime set and one lamp still available for purchase. If you would like either of these, please contact Jack Brooks. We also have one old refurbished pew available. The proceeds from these items go to the Capital Fund Campaign.

IN OUR THOUGHTS AND PRAYERS



Dorothy LeGendre
Betty Karpinski
Dorothy Churchill
Gloria Iwerks
Barbara Newell
Betty Weiland
Kay Janiga
Mary Volker
Ray Moore



JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

Caitlin DePalma
3 Patricia Kenney
4 Susan Arrigoni Meador
14 Phyllis Todd
21 Roy McNamee
22 Tim Kenney
23 Randy Stack
25 Jennifer Gordon
Eleanor Hurlburt
26 Diane Stolting
31 David Macomber

WANTED

Adult bicycle for a youth member of our church to use for daily transportation.

