



New Milford United Methodist Church

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February 2012

Pastor's Message

Participating in the Vital Congregation Process: Learning New Ways to Be in Ministry With the Community

I know the plans I have for you, says the Lord, plans for your welfare and not for harm, to give you a future with hope. (Jeremiah 29:11).

You church has already begun to kick off a goals-setting process to engage the community in ministry in exciting ways. Already folks have begun to return some of the questionnaires to help our Vital Congregation Planning Team clarify our strategic context. That strategic context will be further fleshed out in focus groups that will be convened on February 19 between worship services.

The process will pay attention to these three areas successively over the next three months:

- 1) *Context* - Who are we and what are the strategic challenges that we face, based on our place in time, location in our community, and qualities as a congregation?
- 2) *Content* - What resources and strategies do we have to meet the challenges we see in our context?
- 3) *Conduct* - What actions and changes in behavior need to take place to meet the challenges and positively impact our context (not just our congregation but our community as well)?

Our evaluation of the context of our ministry, the content of our ministry and the conduct of our ministry will enable our Planning Team to develop SMART goals (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-framed).

What does a SMART goal look like? Let's say that we want to add a new worship service that is more spiritual and experiential in nature to attract younger worshippers in search of a more contemplative, reflective worship experience. The goal could be phrased as follows: "Develop a new contemplative, experiential worship service by September 2012 that attracts younger worshippers in search of a deep worship experience so that we encourage the development of member spirituality and increase worship attendance by 12-15 members by September 2014." The goal is specific (new contemplative, experiential worship service), it's measurable (develop member spirituality and increase worship attendance by 12-15 persons), it's attainable in that it does not place an unreasonable expectation on the church, it's relevant (speaking to a younger population in ways that are relevant to their context), and it's time-framed (the service will be developed by September 2012 and the attendance will have increased by 12-15 congregants two years later).

Our church has a very relevant message to deliver to our community and the world. The problem is that we have not always engaged the community and the world in a meaningful way. Jesus did not just teach in the synagogue. He met *with* the people where they were—in their houses and on the hillsides—ministering not just *to* the people but *with* them. Let's engage our community as Jesus has taught us.

Rev. Paul A. Fleck, Pastor

Church News

Youth Group

TUMYF kicked off the new year on Jan. 8, discussing youth group activities for the coming year. We went bowling on Jan. 15, and had a Superbowl Party at the Delmastro's. The youth group had a blast. Thank you, Mr. & Mrs. Delmastro for inviting us over and providing us with great food!



On Jan. 22 and 29, we met for our regularly scheduled youth group meetings. We have started to do a mini bible study in addition to a small opening worship/devotional. To make the meeting more lively than listening to a 15-minute long sermon, I set up the reflections on the bible verses as a time for all of us to talk together about the meaning behind the scripture, and how it applies to us in our everyday life. Through the meetings, we not only were able to be enriched by the Word, but also were able to play games together and plan future youth group activities together.

One of these events is a fundraiser coffeehouse at New Milford UMC on Friday, April 27. The students were excited to start planning for this great event to invite the local students into our church to have good food, good company, and good music for a good cause. Please spread the word, as we are hoping to get pledges from local businesses to bolster us in our fundraiser for our annual summer missions. Also, please come out to the regular youth group meetings, which will be crucial for planning and coordinating the coffeehouse. We need your input to make this coffeehouse happen! We will meet for a regular youth meeting at NMUMC on Feb. 19. The following week, we'll also meet for a regular youth meeting at Gaylordsville UMC. Please sign up for Hosanna 2012, an exciting youth rally held by the NJ Youth Pastors Network at Felician College on March 2! Lastly, we are planning to have a joint summer retreat with other youth groups in our CT district, along with several Korean-American churches in NJ. Stay tuned for updates, but most likely the event will be held in August. For more information on UMYF, contact Gilim Jung at (973) 902-9719 or via email at gilimjung@yale.edu.



Newsletter deadline and production dates

The next newsletter deadline will be **Friday, March 2 at noon** and we will be preparing it for mailing on Thursday, March 8.



To receive the
newsletter
via email, in full color,
please contact the
Church office at
Office@NewMilfordUMC.org

the Education Center

What an odd Winter season we have had so far... the weather has been great for outdoor play! We are all anxious to know if we really will have a "Winter Season"! Despite the lack of snow and bitter cold we are still going to continue with our Winter themed curriculum. The children have enjoyed learning about Penguins and exploring Winter through pictures, songs, books, and projects. For the month of February we will be focusing on Ice and Hibernation. The children will explore what hibernation is, which animals hibernate, where they live, and what they eat. It would be wonderful if you child could bring in a book or two they may have at home involving some of these animals as they are discussed in class. There will also be a focus on ice and it's properties. We will have the children try to answer all of the following questions through exploration, experimentation, art projects and more. What is ice? Where does it come from? How does it feel? What do we use it for? What

does it taste like? The idea is to spark an interest in the topic and let the children make the discoveries. This is the joy of learning and one of the best ways to increase a child's interest in learning...Exposure with Answer...also known as Hands on learning.

On February 21st we will have a Mardi Gras celebration. The children will be taste testing a variety of foods, creating festive art projects, and learning about the "carnival" season of New Orleans. If you have anything that would help us to celebrate on that day then let your child's teacher know! We love new ideas

We are now on Facebook under the name "The Education Center" and we have a new new web site at www.nmeducationcenter.org. Check it out and let us know what you think!

Warm regards,
Jennifer Pennucci

United Methodist Men News

First, we would like to thank everyone who helped with the sale of Christmas trees in 2011. Our major fund raising effort for the 49th year in a row was selling the Christmas trees that came from the Crystal Spring Tree Farm in Lehighon, PA. Early on the Saturday morning after Thanksgiving a truckload of 600 fresh cut trees was waiting to be unloaded. More than thirty-five folks from the church family helped unload the 600 trees, stacked them neatly in piles and placed them on the racks - all in less than 40 minutes. During the next 21 days many of you helped us sell the trees to friends and neighbors in the community and/or bought trees once again. We thank you for your generous support. 2011 was our most successful year and the profits will be used for scholarships, aid to the local community and the ministry and mission of the church.

Second, the United Methodist Men[UMMen] will be changing the days for their monthly dinner. Beginning in March 2012, our monthly meeting will now take place on the second Monday of each month. On March 12 all men of the church are invited to come and share a meal and fellowship at 6:30pm in Fellowship Hall. If you have any questions, please call Dave Kullgren at (860) 354-1102.

Attendance & Offerings		
Jan. 1	46	\$4,908
Jan. 8	109	\$4,518
Jan. 15	103	\$2,195
Jan. 22	94	\$2,702
Jan. 29	113	\$2,404
Monthly total		\$16,726

Congregational Care Committee

A Congregational Care Visiting committee has been formed. The purpose of the committee is visitation to church people who are in the hospital, nursing homes or shut ins, and for sending get well cards, serving communion or wherever help may be needed. We are asking the church congregation to please inform the church office if they know of anyone who could use a visit from this committee. This cannot work unless we are kept informed of who is in the hospital, nursing home and etc. Please contact the church office at (860) 354-4596 and they will transfer the information on to the committee.

Joys & Concerns

Our prayers are with...

Thelma Neufeld who has been diagnosed with Parkinson's Disease.

Joe Hudak is who recovering from recent surgery.

Lillie Allen who has moved into an assisted living facility, The Village, in Brookfield.

Alma Hough who is recovering from an infection following hip surgery, at Village Crest.

Emily Nixon who is home recovering from surgery.

Kathleen Whitfield who has health concerns. She is Sue Whitfield's mother and lives in Scotland

Walter Tripp who is having medical issues, he is Larry Tripp's brother.

Bill O'Rourke who is recovering from hip replacement surgery.

Bill Babbino who was hospitalized with heart problems.

Tracie Nixon who is home recovering from surgery.

Rose Ann Hastings, who will be donating a kidney. This will move her husband Ed up the list for a kidney transplant and they are looking for a kidney that would be suitable for Ed.

June Hudak who is undergoing her 4th round of chemotherapy treatment for cancer and was recently hospitalized.

Elaine Bock who is having health issues, she is a friend of Teddy Oxton.

Leslie Anderson who is facing health challenges, she is a friend of Teddy Oxton.

Kim Birsan who is having health issues
George Perry who has moved into the Masonic Homes.

Rev. Ken Kieffer who is recovering from cancer treatments..

Those affected by Hurricane/Tropical Storm Irene.

Winnie Farrell who is at home with her husband and daughter in Sherman, but is still having medical issues with Alzheimer's and Parkinson's Disease.

Dee Yukon, the wife of Rev. Matt Yukon of the Northville Baptists church, who was diagnosed with breast cancer.

Tom Gaynor, Sr., who is having health issues.

Ed Hastings who is undergoing dialysis.

Jack Orr who is recovering from Myelodysplastic syndrome. He is a friend of Joe & Nora Tigner.

Laurie Gaudette who is having health issues.

The leaders in our church.

Financial health of our church.

Our Bishop, Jeremiah Park, our District Superintendent, Ken Kieffer and all the churches in our Methodist Connection in the New York Annual Conference and beyond.

Church News

The Needle Nuts!

Needle Nuts is a new group that meets to work on your projects. We exchange ideas, patterns and help each other out. Beginners' knitting is taught anytime and there are some advanced knitters who can help out as you progress. Crocheters are welcome too! Needle Nuts meets on Wednesday nights from 6:30 to 8:30 in the Conference Room. It DOES NOT meet on the 3rd Wednesday of each month (and will not meet on Ash Wednesday, the Feb. 22.) Needle Nuts will next meet on Feb. 29, hope to see you there! For further information, contact Bonnie Weed at (860) 355-1264.

Gift Cards & Scholarship Program

Gift cards can be purchased at face value (and redeemed at face value) and the scholarship fund receives a percentage of the sale. Use these gift cards for hundreds of retailers for your everyday shopping needs while helping the scholarship fund. Please contact Heather Morin at (860) 354-8406 or hmorin218@yahoo.com. Orders with payment can be placed in the Scholarship mailbox.

Childcare Needed for Sunday morning services

Unfortunately, I am no longer available to do the childcare on Sunday mornings due to a job change. I will truly miss all the fun I had with the babies, the toddlers, preschoolers and beyond. It's been such a joy watching the children grow each week for the past, I believe, six years. It's great to walk in the church and all these little people run over to me like I'm so special or wave from their seats and give me a big smile. I was never so popular! My hope is that we can get a few volunteers to take turns or someone to cover the first service and another to cover open door. Please think about volunteering one hour per week or month during one of the church services. The experience is definitely rewarding. Please call me or email me if you have any questions or concerns. Sincerely, Lori Dolce (aka: Miss Lori) (860) 350-8890 or lrdolce@yahoo.com. *To volunteer: Please call the church office at (860) 354-4596 or email PastorPaul@NewMilfordUMC.org.*

UMARMY 2012

UM ARMY Camp this summer is from July 8 - 14 in Massachusetts. We are now accepting registrations for BOTH adults and youth. Youth need to have completed 7th - 12th grade and all adults are welcome to join us. If you are a college student aged youth or an adult leader, please contact the church office to sign-up for the college-age camp being held June 10 - 16 in Springfield, Massachusetts. Work Team adults are very important to the camp and you do not need to have your own "youth" to go with you. Registration forms are in the church office or can be emailed to you and must be returned to the church office by Sunday, April 1 along with a check for \$150 for a deposit fee. Please make the check out to NMUMC. The total cost for each person is \$325, but we hope to cover the balance between fundraising and camp scholarships given by the United Methodist Men. If you have any questions, please contact me at the church office or speak to one of our members who has gone before. This is the 7th year that our church will send a group to this mission. For more information contact Tracie Nixon at tracienix@gmail.com or (203) 994-7763.

WANTED!

Wanted: Ten brave Christians who for one month will:

- meet once a week to pray together;
- give two hours time each week to God; Give God one tenth of their earnings;
- spend from 5:30 to 6 a.m. each morning in prayer and meditation; and
- witness for God their experience to others.

Please contact Pastor Paul or the church office if you would like to be involved in this life-changing study.

Naked Spirituality — A Lenten Book Study

Lent is a time to reflect on the incorporation of spiritual practices into our everyday lives. In *Naked Spirituality*, emerging church prophet Brian McLaren confronts how a lack of simple, doable, durable spirituality undermines the transformation God is calling us to undergo. McLaren unfolds spiritual practices rooted in simple words: here, thanks, O, sorry, help, please, when, no, why, behold, yes, and silence. The book offers accessible, practical wisdom for living a truly spiritual life and sustaining a meaningful relationship with God, staying true to Jesus' core message while engaging faithfully with our postmodern world. Book study groups will meet on Tuesdays at noon during Lent starting February 28 and on Thursdays during Lent at 7 p.m. starting on March 1. The cost of the books is \$17. For more information, contact Pastor Paul Fleck or the church office.

the Don Cairns Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper

6 p.m., February 21

The annual Don Cairns Shrove Tuesday Pancake Supper is Feb. 21 and we are very excited with the program coming up. There will be six kinds of pancakes to choose from, along with sausage, bacon and special toppings for enhancement. The food will be prepared by our own top-of-the-line chefs. The United Methodist Men will be cooking and serving dinner beginning promptly at 6 p.m. Please give us a call if you would like to help or have a griddle we can borrow to cook the pancakes - we will need 7.

Shrove Tuesday is the Tuesday before Ash Wednesday which is the first day of Lent. It's a day of penitence, to clean the soul, and a day of celebration as the last chance to feast before Lent begins. Lent is a

time of giving things up, so Shrove Tuesday is the last chance to indulge yourself. In the old days there were many foods that observant Christians would not eat during Lent: such as meat and fish, fats, eggs, and milky foods. The need to eat up the fats gave rise to the French name Mardi Gras; meaning Fat Tuesday. Pancakes became associated with Shrove Tuesday as they were a dish that could use up all the eggs, fats and milk in the house with just the addition of flour.

For more information or to volunteer, contact Tom Nixon at 203-994-3155 or Dave Kullgren at 860-354-1102. All profits from the pancake supper will go to the Don Cairns Memorial Fund.

ADDRESS SERVICE REQUESTED

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