

**A Brief History of
NORFIELD CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH
(established 1757)**

For more than 250 years, Norfield Church has been central to the life of Weston. Norfield, the *North Field* of the coastal town of Fairfield (est. 1639), represents the first attempts by settlers to develop the inlands. After years of struggling with the commute from country farms here to the church and government center at Green's Farms, the earliest Westonites, called *Outlivers*, petitioned to have their own Parish. The Church was chartered as an Ecclesiastical Society, holding both political and religious authority, by the Connecticut Colony in 1757. The first meeting was held on June 23 of that year.

After the founding of the United States, the church and the town separated. Nevertheless, the Norfield church building served for town meetings until 1883, when a town hall and fire house was built right behind the church. The town's one-room schoolhouse was also located here, and survives today as the Banks Room in the Parish Hall. Norfield still has a strong public profile, hosting the Weston Senior Lunch programs, Boy Scouts, Kiwanis, and political forums, along with Norfield's own fellowship programs, concerts, and meals. Rev. Robert W. Greene began his long tenure in 1955, leading the church until 1988, during a time of great growth and change for the town and the parish.

The present Norfield campus includes the Parsonage; the Memorial Garden; the Carriage Shed; the Parish Hall and Offices, incorporating the old schoolhouse (Banks Room) and the new Mike Tine Youth Room; the Christian Education Building and Memorial Chapel, and the Greene Room behind the chancel in the church building and a Casavant Frères pipe organ.

Since 2004, Rev. Dr. Bernard Wilson has provided inspiring preaching and strong leadership to take Norfield Church from its long history into its promising future.

Opportunities to Serve



Norfield Congregational Church
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Rev. Dr. Bernard R. Wilson
Senior Minister

Be doers of the word, and not hearers only...

—James 1:22

Members and friends of Norfield Congregational Church are busy in active Christian ministry. Opportunities to serve abound, here at Norfield, in the Weston community, and around the world. Please take a moment to read the brief descriptions in this booklet and prayerfully consider whether you might be called to serve in one or more ways.

Congregational churches are called *congregational* because the membership retains a great degree of authority and autonomy in many ways. This means lay involvement is a central and crucial part of the church. Ministry is done by *all* believers, not only ordained leaders. The church is led in ministry by the Senior Minister, Rev. Dr. Bernard R. Wilson; Transitional Associate Minister, Rev. Diane Stevenson; Director of Youth Ministries, Thomas C. Burke Jr.; Director of Music and Worship Arts, Dr. David Connell; the Moderator, Tracy Pennoyer; and Vice Moderator, Mary Crawford. The congregation's Council gathers under their leadership to coordinate and support the efforts of the various Boards and Committees detailed in this brochure.

If you are interested in joining us in Christian service in any way, please use the Staff and Leadership listing printed with each Sunday bulletin or monthly Steeple newsletter to find the name of the appropriate person(s) to contact. We look forward to working together with you!

I by my works will show you my faith

—James 2:18

TRUSTEES

Stewardship – Invites the congregation to pledge financial support to all of Norfield's programs, missions and property.

Budget – Prepares the annual budget for approval by the congregation at the Annual Meeting in February.

Children's Center – Acts as liaison to the Norfield Children's Center and applies income received to building improvement.

Legal – Provides legal counsel to Norfield Church as needed.

Property – Oversees maintenance and improvements to all church properties including the sanctuary, the Children's Center, the Parish Hall, the offices and both parsonages.

Insurance – Oversees insurance, both property and liability, for the church.

Investments – Makes investments of all funds, including endowments, memorials, and temporary accounts.

Memorial Garden – Supervises care of the garden and acts as liaison to families.

Memorial Fund – Honorary donations that are made to Norfield are acknowledged and recorded.

MUSIC

The Sanctuary Choir offers special musical selections in worship each Sunday morning in addition to seasonal concerts. The choir rehearses on Sundays from 8:45 to 9:45 a.m. and after church from 11:15 until noon.

The Memorial Handbell Choir rehearses on Thursdays at 6:15 p.m. and plays for church services once a month. The bell choir plays a set of 61 Malmark handbells and a six octaves of handchimes. We welcome new ringers! The ability to read music is helpful but not required.

Music Makers – Children from toddlers through sixth grade are invited to be part of our wonderful Wednesdays! Music Makers Ministry is an after-school program which includes activities, instruments, and singing as the children learn and grow together, getting ready to sing and play for worship, perform pageants and plays, and enjoy Christian fellowship. The whole family is invited to join together for our Wednesday dinners at 5:30 pm, and there is Youth Fellowship for children in grade 3 and up at 6:00 each Wednesday during the Weston school year.

Cherub Choir is open to all children pre-school age through all-day kindergarten. The cherubs join with our Music Makers program each Wednesday and sing on the first Sunday of the month in church!

Caroling – Each December we gather to sing Christmas joy for our Norfield seniors and friends. Sponsored by Music and Shepherds/Deacons.

Concerts are held various times during the year, usually on Sunday afternoons. The concerts often feature the Sanctuary Choir, as well as other Norfield Choirs, and guest musicians. This is a great way to spend a Sunday afternoon listening to great music right here in Weston.

DEACONS

Worship – Oversees all worship services held at Norfield Church, sacraments (baptism and communion), memorial services, scripture readings, and prayer during worship. Coordinates volunteer worship leadership (readers, greeters, ushers).

Altar – Prepares the sanctuary for worship on Sunday morning and any other special worship services. Places flower arrangements on the altar, and prepares the elements for communion.

Ushers – Supports a network of people who greet those arriving for church, pass out bulletins, help seat parishioners, and collect the offering during Sunday services.

Shepherd Ministry – About 25 members of the church serve as “Shepherds.” Each shepherd has 8-10 individuals or households for which the Shepherd is responsible. Shepherds make occasional phone contact, coordinate assistance in time of illness or crisis, and inform the ministers when there is a particular pastoral need.

Senior Shepherds – Individuals who provide contact, friendship, and care to Norfield’s senior members.

UCC & Interfaith Relations – Acts as liaison to the United Church of Christ, Fairfield West Association, and to the greater Weston/Westport Interfaith Community.

Prayer Chain – A group of Norfield members who pray for all those in need – members of the congregation, members of the community, and peoples of the world.

Prayer Shawl Ministry – Knitters work with yarn supplied through donations, making prayer shawls to a special pattern. The shawls are both practical and symbolic of the support that surrounds persons in need of prayer, as at births, deaths, transitions in life. Knitters are always needed!

OUTREACH

Mission Trips – Norfield has organized trips to Appalachia, Ecuador, Honduras and South Africa to assist in the building and repair of health clinics, homes and churches. The mission teams also collect food, supplies and toiletries for distribution to the people.

Gillespie Center – Volunteers provide food and serve dinner to residents and walk ins at the Soup Kitchen run through the Gillespie Center in Westport.

Day of Giving – Held each September, Norfield volunteers spend a day working on a number of projects and initiatives for those in need across the community at large.

Community Engagement Projects – Throughout the year, Outreach organizes different events to support those in need across the community. These may range from setting up homes for newly arrived refugees or collecting clothing articles for different groups. Typically done in partnership with area non-profit agencies.

Weston Senior Luncheon – Outreach oversees Norfield participation providing food and serving the lunch to the members of the Senior Center.

Auction Dinner – Outreach's primary fundraiser conducted annually to raise funds to support designated beneficiaries and Outreach activities.

Person-to-Person Christmas Gifts – Norfielders provide gifts to families in the local area in need of gifts for their children.

FELLOWSHIP

New Members – A group of Norfielders who welcome all visitors, arrange classes for people to learn more about Norfield and the United Church of Christ, and arrange for the Sunday service when new members join. New members attend a special welcome brunch and social gathering hosted by the committee.

Fellowship – Events for people to come together, meet new friends and enjoy one another. Volunteers help out with the preparation of these events. Annual events include: Homecoming, Ladies Ornament Exchange, Thanksgiving Potluck Dinner/Luncheon, Men's March Madness, Agape Dinner, Funky Junket, and much more

Fellowship Hour is offered each week following morning worship. Volunteers set up the coffee and snacks, and clean up after people have left.

Unstructured Groups – Identify, support, and create new unstructured groups that meet throughout the year for potluck dinners. Many of the ongoing groups are engaged in outreach projects.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Discovery Hour – Christian education for children through 8th Grade is offered each Sunday during the worship hour. Teaching is done by adult volunteers, usually working in teams.

Confirmation Class – 9th Graders explore their faith and the meaning of church membership as they work with the Senior and Associate Minister to prepare to join the congregation as adult members. Adult volunteers serve through the confirmation year and beyond in one-on-one support for each confirmand.

Adult Education – weekly Bible Studies, special guest lectures, and other offerings such as the Congregation and Community Conversation Series

Soul Food – This new offering is a mini-series offered from time to time: a Sunday morning breakfast fellowship for all ages, followed by exploration of a variety of topics with something for everyone.