

# NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NOVEMBER, 2021 NEWSLETTER

**“GO AND PROCLAIM THE GOOD NEWS”**

**- Mark 16:15**



## *From the Minister...*

The other day I sat down and charted out our celebration season from Halloween's Trunk or Treat last Sunday through Thanksgiving and Christmas. It will be a busy and exciting time when we will have the opportunity to come together in person AND online! Our ministry boards are developing important ways for us to worship and have fellowship while continuing to stay safe; a mid-November special holiday edition of the newsletter will detail many of those plans. I hope you'll plan to come in person when you can, and to tune in to our streamed services when you cannot.

What we need in these times is YOU – participating, supporting our church's ministries with your time, your financial and prayer resources, and most of all, with your commitment to being part of a community that's weathering challenging times with innovative ideas and renewed commitment. Consider inviting a friend to attend a service, in person or online, to see and hear what we are doing, and do plan to join in our holiday season activities including CONFIRMATION, DECORATING THE SANCTUARY, the CHILDREN'S PAGEANT, the ADVENT WREATH LIGHTING (both the Sanctuary and traveling wreaths will be featured this year!) and special MUSIC from our talented singers and instrumentalists!

On November 7<sup>th</sup> we will be celebrating **Dedication Sunday**, when we present and bless our pledges of support for the coming year. While it's never fun to talk about fundraising, your estimates of giving are critical to the success of ALL the ministries of North Church, allowing us to know our resources as we plan and undertake works of worship and service. If you are able to come in person, wear a mask and be prepared to hand in your pledge card; if you cannot, you may return it by mail or by using the treasurer's link: <https://njscott.weebly.com/>

We'll post a thermometer tracking our progress to our pledge goal; please know that we will NOT publish or share any specifics about your pledge, which are kept in complete confidence by our treasurer, Nancy Scott.

In all of these times, events, and celebrations, I wish you God's blessings!

Faithfully,

*Rev. Mary E. Biedron*

## *Moderator's Notes...*



It is Election Day, happy voting.

My note is a bit late this month. Autumn is well and truly upon us. I spent last week hiking in the Smoky Mountains, enjoying the colors and the crisp fall air.

Last Sunday we observed Halloween at North Church with ‘trunk or treat’ after worship. The weather cooperated with a sunny day. It was great to see the costumed kids and to socialize with our friends. Thanks to everyone on our Ministry Boards who helped organize the event, and to everyone who brought candy and a ‘trunk or treat’ automobile.

We wrapped up Missions Month a few weeks ago. Several inspiring speakers joined our Sunday worship to tell us about their organizations. The stories reinforced to me how much need there is in the world and in our own neighborhood – but also how much generosity and good will there is. Thanks to our Missions Ministry Board for organizing this.

We are in the midst of our stewardship drive, this coming weekend will be Commitment Sunday. This is an important event in the life of the Church – your pledges and donations help us plan our budgets and pay for North Church’s operation. I hope you will fill out your pledge card and bring it with you Sunday (or drop it off at the Church office). We have had wonderful speakers during our stewardship drive, thanks to our Assets and Resources Ministry Board for their hard work on this.

Looking ahead, **Heritage Sunday will be November 21**. Aside from our normal activities celebrating our heritage, we will have three new confirmands joining our Church membership. Mark your calendars and join us!

### **Executive Council Notes**

Executive Council met on November 1 and considered the following:

- **Assets & Resources and Treasurer:** Our overall financial performance is better than last year, helped by the forgiveness of our second PPP loan. Year to date through end September revenues are up \$13,000 over last year (though down from 2019), expenses down. The A & R Board approved several building expenses, including repairs related to a roof leak and new air handlers. All of the Boards have developed draft budgets for next year. The A & R Board will compile these and review with Executive Council at the Nov. 22 Council meeting.
- **Diaconate:** The “Pilgrim Postal Pals” program is going well. It is a way to reach out to members / friends who we have not seen in a while, or who may need a friendly word. To participate, pick up one of the addressed envelopes in the narthex after worship, sign the enclosed card (with a note if you wish), and drop it in the mail. Diaconate also continues to keep in touch with our shut-ins and to arrange rides for our Fox Run members and friends (if you would like to **volunteer** for Fox Run Sunday driving, please contact **Sandy Greer**). The

Diaconate will be purchasing Advent devotional booklets from the NACCC and distribute to our shut-ins.



- **Education:** Education is planning an adult education Bible study series in conjunction with our Senior Minister. Sunday School is continuing virtually, via Zoom, with Sunday in-person school and events roughly monthly (like last Sunday's 'trunk or treat'). The Board is looking for a **volunteer** to help with the Sunday Zoom sessions, see the sign-up sheets in the narthex or contact **Michelle Sibley**.
- **Fellowship:** Fellowship is planning a 'fowling' social event at the Hawk (you'll need to look it up) and a euchre evening in November, see the Church calendar and contact the Office or **Tim Sirovy** for details. The Fellowship Board is also looking ahead to Advent, making plans for Christmas crafts.
- **Missions:** Our Missions Board arranged a joint workday at Camp Restore Detroit, teaming with Meadowbrook Congregational Church, on October 2. The team worked outside, on building siding and landscaping. This Board is also looking ahead to the Advent season, making arrangements with Adopt-a-Family to provide the opportunity to assist one or more needy local households at Christmas.
- **Worship:** The Worship Board is also planning for Thanksgiving and Advent. They are coordinating with **Laurie Meeker** on music for our holiday worship. Christmas Eve will be a hybrid worship session (in person and live streamed), with the option of lighting candles at home. The Board is making arrangements for Advent candles and for Christmas poinsettias.
- **New and Other Business:**
  - We are waiting for the final equipment to arrive for our new A/V system in the sanctuary (to improve our on-line capabilities). **Rev. Biedron** has interviewed a very promising candidate to work as a contractor on Sundays to run the system during worship.
  - We have hired a contractor to help maintain the Church's website. (If you have suggestions for the website, please contact Rev. Biedron or me).
  - We are also awaiting equipment for our new, electronic sign on Twelve Mile Road (a replacement for our somewhat decrepit wooden sign).
  - Our building is going to need a new roof soon (we are seeing more leaks and roof-related problems). Council discussed a potential capital campaign for this expenditure.
  - Council continues to monitor the state of the pandemic in Michigan. Numbers are still high, though thankfully seem to have stopped increasing. Council meetings will continue via Zoom for the time being.

The pandemic continues to test our patience and resolve; may we continue to live and endure with faith and hope.



*“Some give freely, yet grow all the richer; others withhold what is due, and only suffer want. A generous person will be enriched, and one who gives water will get water. (Proverbs 11:24-25)*

*Kevin Gromley*

## **STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN FOR 2022**

*“Go and Proclaim the Good News”- Mark 16:15*

On **Commitment Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>**, we will all be given the opportunity to pledge our faith during our annual stewardship campaign. Once again, each of us will make our personal commitment as we “Go and Proclaim the Good News”.

While making your Commitment for 2022, it is important to remember our programs and our ministries are funded through the grace of our giving. Our pledge goal for 2022 is \$182,000.

Estimate of Giving cards can be submitted in person on Commitment Sunday or mailed to North Church. Alternatively, online attendees will also be able to participate as well. You may also submit a confidential pledge through the church website or by emailing the **Treasurer, Nancy Scott**, at [ncc.churchtreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:ncc.churchtreasurer@gmail.com). Giving estimates and actual contributions are only known by the Treasurer.

In closing, we would like to leave you with this verse from Acts 20:35

“In all things I have shown you that by so toiling one must help the weak, remembering the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, “It is more blessed to give than to receive”.

Please plan to join us in person or online!

*North Congregational Church Stewardship Team*



**North Congregational Church**  
**Year-to-Date Financial Summary as of**  
**September 30, 2021**

	<b>Year-to-Date</b>	Year-to-Date	Percent	Annual
	<b><u>Total</u></b>	<u>Budget</u>	<u>Difference</u>	<u>Budget</u>
			<u>vs. Budget</u>	
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Pledges	138,025	126,785	8.9%	186,050
Other Income	17,891	20,460	-12.6%	40,400
<b>Operating Income</b>	<b>155,916</b>	<b>147,245</b>	<b>5.9%</b>	<b>226,450</b>
<b><u>Expenses</u></b>				
Payroll & Benefits (1)	87,678	185,868	-52.8%	247,861
Assets & Resources Ministry Board				
Utilities and Insurance	32,071	34,172	-6.1%	43,000
Building Maintenance	36,995	37,850	-2.3%	69,174
Grounds Maintenance	20,026	15,583	28.5%	20,800
Office Expenses	5,703	7,041	-19.0%	9,400
Professional Services (2)	13,675	6,600	107.2%	5,000
Other	352	2,808	-87.5%	5,290
Diaconate Ministry Board	112	325	-65.6%	500
Education Ministry Board (3)	2,644	5,645	-53.2%	7,730
Fellowship Ministry Board	351	2,195	-84.0%	2,600
Missions Ministry Board (3)	28,427	30,428	-6.6%	36,000
Worship Ministry Board				
Music (3)	17,978	18,966	-5.2%	27,484
Other	275	410	-33.0%	500
<b>Operating Expenses</b>	<b>246,286</b>	<b>347,891</b>	<b>-29.2%</b>	<b>475,339</b>

**Notes**

- (1) Payroll Expenses were offset by forgiveness of Paycheck Protection Program (PPP) loans received in 2020 (\$43,700) and 2021 (\$45,000). Both loans were forgiven in 2021.
- (2) Includes Audit, Payroll Processing, and Bookkeeping Services.
- (3) Net of Restricted funds usage.



## ***NOVEMBER MEETINGS***

Education Ministry Board - Monday, November 8, at 7 p.m.

Diaconate Ministry Board – Tuesday, November 9, at 7:30 p.m.

Assets & Resources Ministry Board - Wednesday, November 10, at 7 p.m.

Missions Ministry Board – Wednesday, November 10, at 7 p.m.

Fellowship Ministry Board – Tuesday, November 16, at 7 p.m.

Worship Ministry Board - Sunday, November 21, at 11:30 (in person with a Zoom option.)

Executive Council – Monday, November 22, at 7 p.m.

## **NORTH CHURCH ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES**

***DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME***...begins **Sunday, November 7<sup>th</sup>**. Please remember to move your clocks back one hour before retiring Saturday night

## **DIACONATE MINISTRY BOARD**

### **PILGRIM POSTAL PALS**

Each month the Diaconate will be spotlighting one of our members or friends that may be celebrating an occasion or may need a little boost. There will be 20 stamped and addressed cards available on the Circle of Care table for two weeks. Take a card, add a note and your name, and drop it in the mail within a few days of selecting a card. Watch the weekly Planner for details.

### **CONFIRMATION CLASSES**

Classes will be held at First Congregational Church in Royal Oak on **Sunday, October 17, and November 7, 14**. We will leave after church and drive together.

### **CONFIRMATION SUNDAY – November 21**

On Sunday, November 21 – our traditional Heritage Sunday – we will be welcoming three teenagers into full membership in the covenant of North Congregational Church. **Alycia Fernandes, Jack Fernandes, and Lauren Jensen** have been learning about our faith and our tradition in a combined class with confirmands from First Congregational Church of Royal Oak.

Following the service, there will be a (socially distanced) reception in Fellowship Hall to welcome these young people; we hope you'll be able to come in person on this date and take part in this big day!

## **EDUCATION MINISTRY BOARD**



### **BIBLE STUDY /ADULT EDUCATION**

Our Education Ministry Board is considering ways to add some zoom classes for adults! After the first of the year, Rev. Biedron will be developing an Epiphany study to run for several weeks; we are also looking at other education and growth experiences.

We need YOU—to let us know what kinds of things you'd like to study in short term (2-4 weeks) courses, as well as topics that could be engaged in a single session Q and A with the minister or more in-depth.

As we seek to share the Good News with our world, an important step is to know what the story is, and how to talk about theological questions.

Send your comments, thoughts, or interests in studies to **Rev. Biedron** at [ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com](mailto:ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com).

## **WORSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**

### **ADVENT & CHRISTMAS!**

Advent, a season of preparation for the coming of Christ, begins four weeks before Christmas, on Sunday, Nov. 28. This year's observance includes both North Church traditions and some new elements that have been developed during these times of social distancing. In mid-November, we'll be sending a special Advent/Christmas edition of the Newsletter with our events, our missions activities, instructions on how to order poinsettias in memory or honor of loved ones, and much more.

### **LAY READERS**

Lay readers are needed, and we'd love to have **you!** The lay reader's responsibilities include speaking from the pulpit (and being recorded/viewed during the live streaming and Facebook recording) twice in the service: during the Invocation, and Lord's Prayer (leading the congregation, unison reading) and that day's scripture reading. Materials are sent to you a few days prior for your review and printed for you on the day of service.

If you are willing to be a lay reader, choose a date that works for you on the sheet located in the Narthex, or you can sign up online via the SignUp Genius link. Please contact the church office if you have questions. .

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/60b0a4eaead2dabfd0-layreaders>



## **MISSIONS MINISTRY BOARD**

### **MISSION BENEVOLENCES *for the month of November***

Adopt-a-Family, Capuchin Community Center, Focus: Hope, Source of Universal Love (SOUL), One Great Hour of Sharing

## **FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**

### **MEN'S BREAKFAST CLUB**

A group of North Church Men meet every other Tuesday for breakfast at Moe's on Ten, at 9:00 a.m. They will be meeting on **Tuesday, November 16 and 30**. If you would like to join them, please contact **Steve Lange** at [stephenlange@me.com](mailto:stephenlange@me.com).

### **FRIDAY NIGHT FOWLING – Please note change of date.**

Attention *All Adventurous Friends over 21 who like to have fun.*

**Fowling has been moved to Friday, November 12th.** *You* are invited to join us at the Hawk (the old Harrison High School), from **8 – 10 p.m.** Pre-Game (dinner) at Craft Brew City at 6:00 p.m. This will give everyone more time to sign up! The signup sheet may be found on the table in the Narthex. The cost is \$5.00 per person.

### **BOOK GROUP - Hybrid (in person and zoom) meeting Wednesday, November 17, at 1:00 PM**

Our Book Discussion Group meets monthly in a hybrid (in-person and zoom) format to talk about the month's selection, with an eye toward what popular fiction and non-fiction discloses about grace.

The November book is [Healing Wounds: A Vietnam War Combat Nurse's 10-Year Fight to Win Women a Place of Honor in Washington, D.C.](#) by Diane Carlson Evans.

The author took on three heroic tasks in her life: serving as a combat nurse in Vietnam; despite ferocious opposition, leading the battle for a monument on the Mall to women who served in Vietnam; and telling her story in this book of the emotional price paid when she was shamefully rejected and reviled by fellow Americans. Diane recovered from the war and its aftermath by acting, doing, and salvaging the memories of the women who served.

Join the conversation in person or on zoom! To receive the zoom code, email **Rev. Biedron** at [ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com](mailto:ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com)



**MASCOT<sup>3</sup>S – Friday, November 19 at 6 p.m.**  
Friendly Euchre game at the Hawkins' house



This low-key, friendly euchre tournament will be held at the Hawkins' house, and includes a refresher/teaching session at 6:00 p.m. with play beginning at 6:30 p.m. Bring a dish to share, \$5.00 per person for a prize pool and quarters for the Euchre pot, should you and your partner fall short of your three tricks.

Please see the signup sheet in the Narthex for additional information, or contact **Danny Hawkins** at [gdanielhawkins@gmail.com](mailto:gdanielhawkins@gmail.com) with any questions.

### **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

**ADOPT - A – FAMILY** - Looking ahead, we will once again be using Signup Genius to support our Adopt-A-Family at Christmas. The Mission Ministry Board helps to fund this project. Keep a lookout in your email for more information concerning this worthy project.

**THANKS** to the generosity of the members and friends of North Church, Women's Fellowship was able to deliver 338 non-perishable food items to Lighthouse. They were very grateful. We could not have accomplished this project without your donations. Thank you!