

Advent and Christmas Holiday Newsletter



North Congregational Church
36520 W. Twelve Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48331

northcongregationalchurch.org
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NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

“The Greatest of These is Love”

- 1 Corinthians 13:13

ADVENT / CHRISTMAS EDITION

From the Minister...

Welcome to the Holiday Edition of our North Church Newsletter!

On Sunday, November 20th (the Sunday before Thanksgiving) we will be celebrating our **Congregational Heritage** as we remember the Pilgrims who founded the Congregational tradition in Plymouth, Massachusetts.

Starting November 27 and continuing through December 18, the **four Sundays of Advent** are a way of marking time as we move towards Christmas, helping us to remember God's prophetic Word and God's Incarnation not as a mighty king or conqueror, but as a tiny baby, laid in a manger. Each Sunday, we'll light a candle on the Sanctuary Advent Wreath; our Traveling Advent wreath lighting will be featured on Wednesdays on our Facebook page. On **Christmas Eve**, we'll share the light of the world in person and virtually, as we welcome Jesus into our hearts and world once again.

So much is happening over the time from Heritage Sunday to New Year's Day that we thought it would be helpful to have it all in one place. Our regular December Newsletter will come out on December 1.

Looking forward to celebrating the coming of Christ, the Incarnation, together.

Faithfully,

Rev. Mary E. Biedron



NORTH CHURCH ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP

Attention Knitters, Crocheters, Sew-ers and Shoppers!



The Women's Fellowship and Missions Board are once again happy to sponsor the **Knitting Tree** and the **Christmas Stocking**. So, get your needles, crochet hooks, and dollars ready to support this good cause.

The **Christmas Stocking** will be hanging on the banister in the Narthex starting the **First Sunday of Advent, November 27th**. Your donation of new packaged socks for infants through adults can be placed in the large stocking. The winter outerwear and socks will be distributed to a charity in January. In years past we have delivered to Lighthouse, Farmington Public Schools, and Crossroads.

The **Knitting Tree** will be set up in the usual place in the entrance, next to the information table. You can bring in your homemade or store-bought hats, gloves, mittens, and scarves and hang them on the tree, and watch it fill up with ornaments of clothing each Sunday from **November 27th through December 24th**.



Thank you for your support!

ADOPT - A - FAMILY

Sponsored by the Women's Fellowship

We are celebrating our gratitude for our many blessings by adopting two Farmington area families for the holidays. Watch for a bulletin board beginning Sunday, November 13 with the items on the families' wish lists. The bulletin board will be available through Sunday, November 27 or until all the gifts are selected.

If you would like to participate, please choose a gift from any of the suggested lists. Write your name on the line next to the gift. Take the corresponding gift tag as your reminder. When you purchase the gift, please ask for a "gift receipt."

Bring your gift to church on or before Sunday, December 11. Please include the gift receipt and lightly tape the gift tag from the bulletin board to the outside of the package. Do not wrap your gift. Women's Fellowship will wrap and deliver the gifts to Neighborhood House.

If you misplace your tag, please write the recipient's name and the gift on a slip of paper and attach it to present.

If you would like to donate money, please use the envelopes provided on the Adopt-a-Family bulletin board. Checks should be made payable to North Congregational Church.

We would like to provide a joyous Christmas for these families and hope you will join in this project with us.



WORSHIP MINISTRY BOARD



COMMUNION

We will celebrate Communion on **Sunday, December 4th**.

RECEPTION OF NEW MEMBERS

New members will be received on **Sunday, December 4th** during the worship service. If you would like to join, or would like further information, please speak with **Rev. Mimi**.

TRAVELING ADVENT WREATH

One of our new traditions has become the Traveling Advent Wreath, which features our shut ins and others recorded while lighting advent candles. These will be shown during the Wednesday Inspirations.

ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS

First Sunday of Advent - November 27: Michelle Sibley and Judy Campbell

Second Sunday of Advent - December 4: Byron, Tracey, Abigail and Paisley Turner

Third Sunday of Advent - December 11: Mimi Biedron and Laurie Meeker

Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 18: Pete, Sherel, and Matthew Shand

Christ Candle, Christmas Eve: Brandy, Ted and Theodore Adams

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS AND WREATHS

Fragrant wreaths and beautiful poinsettias decorate our church each year during the holidays. This year, you may donate a poinsettia or wreath as a memorial, a tribute, or a celebration of the spirit of Christmas. The cost of a poinsettia is **\$11.00**; the cost of a wreath is **\$50.00**.



Order forms may be found on the table in the Narthex, attached to the Church Planner, and included in this newsletter. **All orders are needed by Monday, December 5th.**

BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE — SUNDAY, DECEMBER 18 at 1:00 P.M.,
in the Sanctuary (and live streamed as well)

Christmas is a time of celebration, but it can also be a time when we feel grief, loneliness, and the absence of loved ones recently or long deceased. This disconnect can be difficult. The “Blue Christmas” service offers a time to share these feelings, to receive comfort from the community of faith, and to re-discover the message of love and hope at the center of the Christmas story.

Join us, and please feel free to bring a friend, neighbor or a relative...all are welcome!

MISSIONS MINISTRY BOARD

REVERSE ADVENT CALENDAR

One of the traditions many families observe during the holiday season is a countdown to December 25 via an Advent calendar. There are many variations on this tradition, from a daily chocolate treat to the daily reveal of puzzle pieces to construct a holiday scene. In all cases it is a small ritual leading to the celebration of Christmas.



Since this is the season of giving, a new reverse method of counting down the days until the 25th, a “reverse” calendar is an alternative way to celebrate the blessings of the season. It is another option for sharing the bounties we enjoy with people whose basic needs are not being met.

If you would like to do a “reverse” Advent calendar, print the calendar attached to the church bulletin, celebrate the days of December by purchasing the items during Advent. The items can be delivered to **church Sunday, January 1st, at Door 2, and placed on a cart or bin in the Narthex.** The Missions Board will deliver them to a community pantry.

DIACONATE MINISTRY BOARD

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS

The First Sunday of Advent is November 27. The devotional booklets have been sent to our shut-ins. There will be a limited number of Advent Devotional booklets available on the tables in the Narthex and the Link. Feel free to take one for yourself or give one to someone who might appreciate having it for the season.

CHRISTMAS CARDS

The Christmas holidays are quickly approaching, and the Diaconate needs your help! Once again, we are planning to send Christmas cards to every household listed in our directory. On **December 11**, there will be packets available at church. We need people/families to address and mail the cards. Feel free to join the festivities in Fellowship Hall and address a packet of cards while enjoying some treats and chatting with friends—or take a packet home to complete later.



The packet includes 10 cards with stamped envelopes, addresses and a Christmas letter along with instructions. If you would like to help but are unable to pick up a packet on the 11th, please call or email Debbie at ncc.churchoffice@gmail.com and arrange to pick one up. Thank you for your help!

CARE NOTES

CareNotes are written for people dealing with intensely emotional situations who are looking for concise, easy-to-read guidance and support. You will find a collection of these Notes, dealing with a variety of subjects, on the table in the Link. Please feel free to take one or more CareNotes home with you.

ASSETS & RESOURCES MINISTRY BOARD

STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN FOR 2023

“The Greatest of These is Love” 1 Corinthians 13:13

As we approach Thanksgiving, the Stewardship Team would like to offer:

Thanks to our Stewardship speakers **Lori Rhode, Abbey Turner, Bob Plummer, and Laurie Meeker** for sharing what supporting North Church and its ministries means to them, and to **Kevin Gromley** for representing the Stewardship Team on Commitment Sunday.

Thanks to the North Church members and friends who have already returned Estimates of Giving for 2023; these pledges are an important to the life of the Church as we plan next year’s budget.

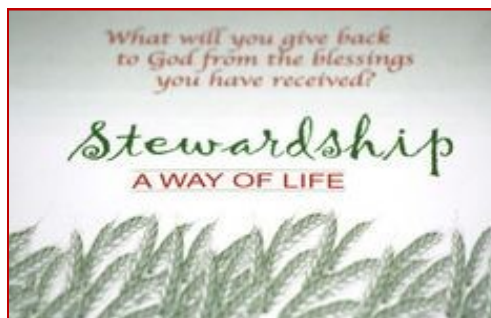
Thanks to everyone who faithfully supports North Church and its programs with time, talent, and prayers.

If you have not yet submitted a confidential Estimate of Giving for 2023 but intend to do so, you may use one of the following methods.

- Complete an Estimate of Giving card and
 - ◊ mail it back to the Church office or
 - ◊ bring it to Sunday worship and place it in the Offering Stand in the Narthex.
- Complete the short form linked from the Church’s website.
- Contact the church Treasurer, **Danny Hawkins** at ncc.churchtreasurer@gmail.com or via the Church office

North Congregational Church Stewardship Team:

Mary E. Biedron (Senior Minister), Danny Hawkins (Treasurer), Steve Plummer, Kevin Gromley



FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY BOARD

HERITAGE SUNDAY – NCC Chili Cookoff



Please join us for a lunch of Chili, Soup, Corn Bread and Dessert on **Heritage Sunday, November 20th**, in Fellowship Hall, following the service. Each chef is willing to pit their favorite recipes against the best your fellow parishioners have to offer, and all of you will choose your favorites. Fabulous trophies will then be awarded to the favorite chili (the Golden Pepper), soup (the Palladium Ladle) and dessert (Silver Server). Everyone is invited to attend; there is no cost for the meal.

We will also have a collection for UNICEF during the Chili Cookoff event on November 20th. Please bring your loose change to support our donation efforts. Thanks!

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 **November 29th, December 13th and 27th**. If you would like to join them, please contact **Tom Modick** at moto126@aol.com.



MASCOTT's White Elephant gift exchange - Saturday, December 3rd

Come and enjoy Christmas games and Holiday cheer on **December 3rd**, at **7:00 p.m.** at the Sirovy's home. Please bring a dish to share. Don't forget a White Elephant gift! 1 gift per person. Please RSVP to Karensirovy@gmail.com by December 1st or sign up on the Information/Sign up table in the Link.

CHRISTMAS CRAFT WORKSHOP - Sunday, December 11th

Join us in celebrating the joy of the season at the Christmas Craft Workshop. A light lunch will be served in Pilgrim Fellowship Hall following the church service. After lunch enjoy creating Christmas Crafts with your friends and family. There will be a variety of crafts for kids and adults. Plus a photo opportunity with the Jolly Old Elf himself!

Watch for more details about the great ornaments, decorations, and treats that the Fellowship Board is planning for this fun afternoon!

CHRISTMAS EVE COOKIES

The Fellowship Board is looking for cookie bakers to share their cookies with the congregation on Christmas Eve. Please bring 3 dozen cookies to church by **Wednesday, December 21st**.



Our Christmas Eve activity will look a little different this year. We are celebrating the season and hoping to stay safe by handing out individual bags of cookies to the congregation following church service. Your cookie donations will be included in treat bags to spread joy to you and our North Church families and friends. If you would like to bring cookies, please sign up on the Information Table.

**BOOK GROUP — Wednesday, December 21 at 1 p.m.
in the Plymouth /Bradford Room**

Cookbooks! Last year we did the ones that inspired us; this year, bring one of your most recent acquisitions or interests! We'll have holiday refreshments and a fun time talking about cooking and our memories connected with cooks and the things they made.



Invite someone to join us! Do you have a friend—one at church or one from elsewhere who'd be interested in joining the discussion? Invite them!!

CONCERTS AT THE HAWK

Join some NCC members at a series of concerts held at **The Hawk** - Farmington Hills' community center located at the former Harrison High School. Please let **Tim Sirovy** know if you would like to join the dinner crowd. Tickets are available from The Hawk. The link to purchase any of the concert series tickets at The Hawk is bit.ly/hawktickets. Tickets to the concerts range from \$15-\$25.

The following concerts are part of the Cultural Arts Concert Series and we would like to make these a fun Fellowship group outing for whoever can attend.

The Fellowship Board is looking forward to seeing some familiar NCC faces at these events. We are looking forward to supporting these community events and enjoying some great musical talents.



January 7th - Flick & Warren - acoustic artist playing violin, cello, guitar, banjo and nyckelharpa. Folk, bluegrass and jazz are all part of their repertoire.



March 11th - Steve Taylor - singer-songwriter is a local favorite with acoustic originals and familiar covers. Come sing along.



May 18th - Eat It Up Trio - "Possibly the most pleasurable music three humans can safely perform". Versatile repertoire spanning traditional jazz to modern R&B, classic rock to bebop, and everything in between.



Reverse Advent Calendar

North Congregational Church

Purchase the following items and place them in a basket or box each day during advent to celebrate the season by sharing our blessings. On the last day, or a date thereafter, these may be dropped off at church and they will be delivered to a community food bank the beginning of January.

- 1) Can of tuna or salmon
- 2) Can of chicken or ham
- 3) Canned soup: chicken noodle, tomato, mushroom, bean, split pea
- 4) Canned vegetables: green beans, tomatoes, corn, peas, carrots, beans
- 5) Canned fruit: pineapple, mandarin oranges, pear, peach, pie fillings
- 6) Canned meal items: beef stew, spaghetti sauce, ravioli
- 7) Boxed cereal, or oatmeal
- 8) Dried beans: navy, black, lentils, or chick peas
- 9) Bag of Rice
- 10) Box of Pasta, 1 lb.
- 11) Jar of Peanut butter, plastic bottles please
- 12) Powdered or Condensed Milk
- 13) Ground coffee or box of tea bags
- 14) Paper towels
- 15) Toilet paper or box of facial tissues
- 16) Laundry detergent
- 17) Shampoo, Suave, VO5
- 18) Bar soap
- 19) Can Opener
- 20) Toothbrush or Tooth paste
- 21) Baby Diapers size 5-6
- 22) Household cleaner or Disinfectant
- 23) Adult Incontinence products all sizes
- 24) Feminine hygiene product



CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS & WREATHS

Fragrant wreaths and beautiful poinsettias decorate our church each year during the holidays. This year, you may donate a poinsettia or a wreath as a memorial, a tribute, or a celebration of the spirit of Christmas.

Wreaths will be on display **November 27th – December 24th**. Poinsettias will be present from **December 11th – December 24th**; they may be designated to be given to a shut-in or taken home following the Christmas Eve worship service.

The cost of a poinsettia is \$11.00; a wreath is \$50.00. Please make your check payable to **North Congregational Church**. **The deadline for orders is Monday, December 5th**. Please fill out the form and return it to the church office, or mail it to:

North Congregational Church
36520 W. Twelve Mile Road, Farmington Hills, MI 48331

I wish to place _____ poinsettia(s) _____ wreath for Christmas.

_____ I will take my plant on Christmas Eve _____ Please deliver to a shut in.

The message should read:

A gift from _____



a. *Given in memory, in honor, or in celebration of:*

b. *Or, write your own message:* _____

Signature _____

Phone _____