

# NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH NOVEMBER, 2022 NEWSLETTER

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



## *From the Minister...*

I'm writing this at the end of October, the confluence of planning and undertaking Halloween/All Saints remembrances, Stewardship (your pledge card is coming soon! Please consider prayerfully how you can support the ministries of North Church!), Congregational Heritage/Thanksgiving, Advent, and Christmas. Sometimes, all the details leave me feeling stalled, unable to move forward. I think many of us feel that way in our lives right now: what is new? What is normal? What can we revision? What can we recover? While this is an enormous opportunity to envision new and adapted ways that we can share the Good News of God's love with our world, I want to acknowledge that in these times there are so many unknowns. How do we handle this as people of faith? The same way that people of faith have always been encouraged to act: by relying on God's steadfast, unchanging, grace-filled love for us. A love that sees us through crisis, that encourages us to learn from our difficulties, and holds us close when we are afraid, so that we can go forward knowing that we are loved and celebrate that eternal truth in our lives and our world.

Our proclamation of God's love will take many forms in the months to come: recollection of those who've died in the last year and beyond; pledging our support for the work of the Body of Christ that is the church, celebration of our Pilgrim Heritage (even as we wrestle with what that means for us), and preparation for the miracle of the Incarnation at Christmas. We'll be sending a special "extra" newsletter with the Advent/Christmas schedule of worship, activities, and events on November 17; sign-up sheets will soon blossom for many of those activities and events, and opportunities to collect food, donate Adopt a Family gifts and socks, mittens, hats, and gloves, take part in a "Blue Christmas" service, and more, will be helping us keep the focus of Christmas on Christ. I hope you'll plan to join in the in-person opportunities as you are able and watch the online activities both on Sunday and during the week on the church Facebook page (you do not need to be on Facebook to see these, follow the link on our website, [northcongregationalchurch.org](http://northcongregationalchurch.org)).

In the meantime, as you dig deep to find the gifts of faith, and hope, and love, remember that the very greatest of these is God's love for us!

Faithfully,

*Rev. Mary E. Biedron*

## *Moderator's Notes...*



We have been enjoying some fabulous fall days. Nancy and I took advantage of them, driving north and spending a few days on Mackinac Island. And last week I flew to Utah and did some hiking in Arches and Canyonlands National Parks. Our world has so much beauty to offer.

We are headed into a busy holiday season for the Church, a time for fellowship and for reflection.

Our stewardship campaign is under way. For three Sundays we will hear from our Ministry Boards, what they have been doing and what your gifts of time and money mean to them. Our campaign will culminate on **Dedication Sunday, November 6**, when attendees at worship will have the opportunity to submit their estimates of giving for 2023. This is an important event in the life of the Church, it allows us to prepare Ministry Board and operations budgets for next year. If you cannot attend on the 6<sup>th</sup>, you will have an opportunity to submit your estimate later online or via mail – but we are going to have some special treats during coffee hour that Sunday, so I hope you can attend.

Our Fellowship Ministry Board is busy planning upcoming events. On October 30 we will have ‘trunk or treat’ in the Church parking lot after worship, accompanied by a strolling taco lunch. If you have not signed up to bring treats and decorate your car you can do so with the office or **Tim Sirovy. November 20 is Heritage Sunday.** In addition to celebrating our Congregational heritage and the history of North Church we will have our chili cook-off (so get those crock pots ready!).

I noted in my last note that Executive Council is looking at ways to attract more families to our Church. A task team and the Education Board have worked on ideas. These include suggestions for a number of adult and family-oriented educational programs. I will be sending out a survey to all of you to ascertain your interest. We hope to attract some new people, of course, but obviously wish to give priority to programs that will also be attended by Church members and friends.

On **Sunday October 16** a stranger entered the Church during worship and inquired about ‘an election’ with one of our ushers. It was a worrisome encounter. In an abundance of caution we will be locking all of the doors except number 2 (the link) on Sundays. We’ve notified the Farmington Hills Police Department; they have plans for security on Election Day and are advising us on other precautions.

Looking farther ahead, we plan to have our **annual Business Meeting on January 22, 2023**. At this meeting we will review the proposed budget with the Congregation and ask members to vote on it. This will be a hybrid meeting, so those who cannot attend in person can join us via Zoom. We require a quorum, so mark your calendars!

I wish you all a safe, happy, joyous fall as we look forward to Thanksgiving and the Advent season.

## Executive Council Notes

Executive Council met on October 24 and considered the following:

- **Assets & Resources and Treasurer:** Revenues are slightly above budget, expenses 6% below budget. Our endowment has been affected by the market declines, down 18% through end September. The Assets & Resources Board continues to look at other options for internet and phone service – we have had reliability issues with Spectrum, our current provider. All Ministry Boards are now working on their budgets for 2023.
- **Diaconate:** The Diaconate Board has been busy visiting shut-ins and ‘Pilgrim Postal Pals’. The Board is planning a repeat of our Christmas card mailing to all of our households. The Diaconate is looking for volunteers to help with this and with visiting shut-ins.
- **Fellowship:** In addition to the November events noted above, the Fellowship Board is planning to have our Christmas Craft Workshop on December 11. We plan to promote this and invite our area neighbors to join us.
- **Missions:** The Missions Board organized volunteers who worked at Crossroads on October 8, serving meals. In addition, on October 23 volunteers from the Church went to Crossroads and passed out two car loads worth of warm clothing (thanks to everyone who donated). Looking ahead, Missions is planning for a repeat of our Reverse Advent calendar, with opportunities to help those in need.
- **Worship:** The Board has discussed returning to our traditional method of serving communion (versus bread in baggies), although we will refrain from the common loaf for the time being.
- **General:** We will publish Church office hours as 10 to 4, Monday through Friday. We may reach out for volunteers for specific times when the office staff need help, e.g., busy weeks before a memorial service.

*“Like good stewards of the manifold grace of God, serve one another with whatever gift each of you has received.” (1 Peter 4:10)*

*Kevin Gromley*



## ***NOVEMBER MEETINGS***

Diaconate Ministry Board – Tuesday, November 8, at 7 p.m.  
Women’s Fellowship - Wednesday, November 9, at 12:30 p.m. – Plymouth Room  
Education Ministry Board – Monday, November 14, at 7 p.m.  
Fellowship Ministry Board – Tuesday, November 15, at 7 p.m.  
Missions Ministry Board – Wednesday, November 16, at 7 p.m.  
Assets & Resources Ministry Board - Monday, November 21, at 7 p.m.  
Worship Ministry Board - Tuesday, November 22, at 7:00 p.m. (Zoom only)  
Executive Council – Monday, November 28, at 7 p.m.

## **NORTH CHURCH ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES**

***DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME***...begins **Sunday, November 6th**. Please remember to move your clocks back one hour before retiring Saturday night.

## **WORSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**

### **NEW MEMBERS CLASS**

**Rev. Biedron** is putting together a New Members’ class in preparation for reception into the covenant of North Church in the worship service on Sunday, December 4<sup>th</sup>. If you are interested in joining the church, or want to know more about membership, please contact Rev. Biedron at the church, 248-848-1750 or by email to [ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com](mailto:ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com).

### **CELEBRATION OF LIFE SERVICE...**

**Laurie and Lani Meeker** have scheduled a Celebration of Life Service for their parents, **Alan and June Meeker**, on **Saturday, November 12 at 11:00 a.m.** The service will be held at Grace Lutheran Church, 25630 Grand River Ave., Redford Charter Twp, MI. Lunch will be served following the service. All are invited.

### **GUEST SPEAKER NOVEMBER 13**

While Rev. Biedron is away, we will welcome the **Rev. Carrie Orlando** to share the Sunday message. Recently retired from FCC Royal Oak, Rev. Orlando has been working on activities with the NACC including a clergy silent retreat. We welcome her with joy to our pulpit!

## **DIACONATE MINISTRY BOARD**



### **WE NEED YOUR HELP!**

The Diaconate is planning on sending Christmas cards to all North Church households again this year. If you have any leftover Christmas cards, we can use them. Please drop them in the basket on the Circle of Care table any Sunday during November.

### **PILGRIM POSTAL PALS**

Our November recipient is **Barbara Yuhas**. Cards will be available on November 6 and 13. There are 20 cards that are addressed and stamped and all you need to do is pick up a card, add a personal note and drop it in the mail. I know Barbara will appreciate knowing we are thinking about her!

### **ADVENT BOOKLETS**

The **First Sunday of Advent is November 27**. The booklets will be mailed to our shut ins in time for the beginning of Advent. There will be a limited number of Advent Devotional Booklets available on the table outside the Sanctuary. Please feel free to take one.

### **POINSETTIA AND GIFT BAG DELIVERY**

We are in need of assistance from approximately 11 people to **deliver poinsettias** and a small gift to our shut-ins. This is a wonderful opportunity to do something special as a family during the holidays. Watch for a sign-up sheet on the Information/Circle of Care table or call the office to volunteer. The Diaconate will let you know the dates and details of your delivery.

## **MISSIONS MINISTRY BOARD**

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

Adopt-a-Family, Capuchin Community Center, Focus: Hope

### **CROSSROADS**

On behalf of the Missions Committee, many thanks to those of you who brought warm clothing items to the church for distribution at Crossroads on Sunday October 23rd. **Tom Modick** and **Kemi Bello** went with me to the soup kitchen and distributed your donations to a very grateful group of clients. Check out our NCC website to get a glimpse of the 2 carloads of goods we took down, plus a look at our setup in the Crossroads parking lot.

On a personal note, I had some mixed emotions about going to Crossroads, as I was taking many of Steve's warm clothes to be given away. I must tell you though, that those sad



feelings were replaced by hope and gratefulness when I saw a client I've seen many times at Crossroads, wearing one of Steve's sweaters a little later in the afternoon. This is a client that I know lives on the margins of society. It truly touched my soul to know that we were able to make his day a little better with such a simple act of kindness. I know Steve would be glad too.

There were a lot of requests for shoes, jeans and belts. The holidays are coming up, and I know many of us will be receiving new clothes for Christmas. If you find that you have some warm, gently used clothes, shoes, belts and coats this upcoming season, put them aside. I know we can do this again at Crossroads this season.

The Missions Committee is working on another "all church" project that we hope you'll be interested to participate in. If you have any ideas or suggestions for other mission activities for North Church, please feel free to contact any members on the Mission Committee.

Thank you, Sara Lange

## **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 **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 - December 24th**.

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. 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.

## **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 1, 15 and 29**. If you would like to join them, please contact **Tom Modick** at [moto126@aol.com](mailto:moto126@aol.com).

### **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. At this time we have 8 people signed up for the first concert on Nov 3rd. It is a jazz concert featuring Sheila Landis, a seven-time "Outstanding Jazz Vocalist" winner. If you are planning to go, we will be meeting for dinner before the shows. Please let **Tim Siroy** 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](http://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.

- **November 3rd** - Sheila Landis - Jazz singer who's not afraid to scat-sing and bend a blue note in the style of Ella Fitzgerald.
- **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.



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.

## **HERITAGE SUNDAY – November 20**

The **NCC Chili Cookoff** is returning. We will be hosting the cookoff on Heritage Sunday this year, November 20th - the Sunday before Thanksgiving. Get out your old family recipes to participate with a Chili, a Soup or a Dessert. Trophies will be awarded for each category. A sign up sheet will be available.

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

## **BOOK GROUP - Wednesday, November 16<sup>th</sup>, 1:00 PM**

Our November discussion will focus on the novel, The Book Woman's Daughter by Kim Michele Richardson. This stand-alone sequel to The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek follows the next generation of the Kentucky "blue people" and explores the ways that racism, isolation, and neglect can be challenged by brave souls.

We will meet both in-person at the church library, and on zoom. If you aren't on the book group email list and would like to join in, come to the in-person meeting or contact **Rev. Biedron** at [ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com](mailto:ncc.seniorminister@gmail.com) for the zoom code.