

# NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH MAY 2023 NEWSLETTER

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



## *From the Minister...*

Despite the temperatures, Spring is here, and we are getting ready for many of our Spring things! Some are traditional, some are new.

**ANNUAL PROGRAM MEETING, May 21, 11:30 AM** – we’ll be gathering in the Sanctuary after a brief coffee hour to elect officers, board & and committee members, and representatives to our regional, state, and national bodies. There will be a zoom option, but if you’re here in person you’ll get a yummy lunch afterwards, as well as the fellowship of the gathered congregation!

MAY also brings the **CROP WALK – May 7**, stepping out from First UMC in Farmington at 1:30 pm. See the CROP HUNGER WALK article to contribute to this hunger relief effort – internationally, nationally, and locally – and consider walking, or sharing the info on our Facebook page and website with family and friends to ask for online contributions!

I’m also starting a new regular **TUESDAYS WITH THE BIBLE** weekly program, going up on the North Congregational Church Facebook page at 1 PM on the first and third Tuesdays of each month, to highlight texts we’re hearing about on Sundays, share fun facts, and encourage everyone to spend a little time looking at the Bible! They’ll be about 15 minutes, so consider these as “snacks” to help you understand some of the interesting and challenging things about scripture!

Wednesday Inspirations will continue on Facebook Live at 3 PM each Wednesday, a mini-worship experience about 20 minutes long.

There’s much more in store, as we continue to resume and initiate ministries at North Church!

Faithfully,

*Rev. Mary E. Biedron*

## *Moderator's Notes...*



May has arrived, although winter seems to be reluctant to relax her grip. Nonetheless the signs of spring surround us. North Church celebrated Holy Week with a return of our special in-person services (with some new twists) – communion on Maundy Thursday, virtual Good Friday evening service, special music and coffee hour on Easter Sunday. It was wonderful.

Nancy and I just returned from a trip to Chattanooga. It was my first time visiting that city and I thoroughly enjoyed it. The area abounds with Civil War history (site of three major battles, national cemetery established there in 1863). Reminders of a time when Americans fought and slaughtered each other wholesale – something to recall in our divided, violent present.

On Sunday afternoon, April 23, North Church hosted the Southeastern Michigan Association of Congregational Churches. The event went very well. Thanks to all North Church volunteers who assisted with the event and the meal afterward.

The **Search Committee** survey is concluded, the Committee will summarize and share the results. Thanks to everyone who completed the survey. The Committee's next steps will be to complete the NACCC church information form and post our impending opening on the NACCC website.

The **Nominating Committee** has concluded its work (thanks to the members for their contributions). Our nominating process concludes this month at our annual program meeting. At this gathering the members will vote on accepting the nominees for the various positions. We will also hear reports from our various Boards, and consider any other business that requires member approval. This meeting will be **May 21** following worship. It will be a hybrid meeting so you may join via Zoom (although we encourage in person attendance for this meeting). We need a quorum, so mark your calendars and please plan on joining us.

You will see one change at the annual meeting. We did not have volunteers for the empty positions on the Education Board. Consequently, Executive Council has approved the combination of the Worship and Education Boards. We will try this on a temporary basis for the coming year, five Ministry Boards: Assets & Resources, Diaconate, Fellowship, Missions, and Worship & Education.

At our **May 21** annual meeting we will elect a new moderator. It has been an honor to serve you and North Church in that capacity these last four years.

### **Executive Council Notes**

Executive Council met on April 24 and considered the following:

- **Assets & Resources and Treasurer:** The Church received a significant bequest gift and so is ahead of budget on revenues. Through end March pledge income is ahead of last year by 12%, expenses are about 7% lower (although our expense for natural gas heating were up

substantially). The Assets Board has been working with **Janice Thornton** on various building maintenance issues. The City will be doing work in our front parking lot, some excavation to repair an underground drainage pipe.



- **Diaconate:** Diaconate was busy with preparations for Holy Week and Easter -- Easter cards, mailed to our members and friends, Easter flower delivery to shut-ins. The Diaconate continues visitations of shut-ins and 'Pilgrim Pal' notes.
- **Fellowship:** This Board arranged the special coffee hour following Easter Sunday worship. The Board is also planning to invite all those interested to attend a concert at the Hawk on Twelve Mile on May 18. There will be lunch served after our **May 21** annual meeting.
- **Missions:** **Sara Lange** has been busy helping with Crossroads in Detroit. The Missions Board plans volunteer events at Crossroads for North Church on June 22 and July 23. We will coordinate with the Muslim Community Mosque to join us.
- **Worship:** The Worship Board was busy working with **Rev. Biedron** to plan Holy Week worship services. The lay reader schedule is set through July.

#### *Other Business*

- **Personnel:** The Personnel Committee presented a recommendation and proposed edits to the Church's vacation and sick leave policies to make them clearer. Council suggested a few edits and will take up the revised version later in an e vote.
- **Staffing:** Council approved adding a part time marketing and social media coordinator to our Church staff. We do not have anyone dedicated to this function at the moment. In addition to increasing the Church's presence on social media, this person can assist with the transition to a new minister next year.
- **Board Structure:** Council approved the trial combination of the Worship and Education Ministry Boards.

*Beloved, I pray that all may go well with you and that you may be in good health, just as it is well with your soul. (3 John 1:2)*

*Kevin Gromley*

### **MAY MEETINGS**

Diaconate Ministry Board – Tuesday, May 9, at 7 p.m. (Zoom)

Asset & Resources Ministry Board – Monday, May 15, at 7 p.m. or May 22, at 6 p.m.

Fellowship Ministry Board – Monday, May 15, at 7 p.m.

Worship Ministry Board – Wednesday, May 17, at 6 p.m. (Zoom )

Missions Ministry Board – Wednesday, May 17, 7 p.m.

## **NORTH CHURCH ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES**

### ***CALL TO THE ANNUAL PROGRAM MEETING***



The Annual Program Meeting of North Congregational Church will be held at **11:30 a.m.**, following the conclusion of worship, on **Sunday, May 21, 2023**, as ordered by the Executive Council. The meeting will be conducted in person in the Sanctuary and by video teleconference via “Zoom” (connection information to follow).

The meeting agenda will include reports from boards and committees, adoption of prior minutes and ratification of Executive Council actions for the past year, election of officers, board members and delegates and other business as may be submitted.

As a Congregational church, it is the right of the membership to fully participate in the leadership and development of the church. It is the member’s responsibility and opportunity to be actively involved in the process. We hope that you will plan to attend OUR Annual Program Meeting. Your vote is important. Lunch, coffee and conversation will follow.

As always, we will need a quorum of members, so please plan to attend.

*Judy Campbell*, Clerk

### **WORSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**

#### **TUESDAYS WITH THE BIBLE!**

On the first and third Tuesday of May, **Rev. Biedron** will have a short (about 15 minutes) reflection on the Book of Acts, including background for our Sunday services, questions, and fun facts! After the good response to the Lenten Lectures, we’re continuing these pre-recorded segments which will post at **1 PM on May 2 and May 16** and then be available for viewing at your convenience. Rev. Biedron will be following the comments, so please feel free to add your questions, insights, or thoughts as we practice looking at scripture for what it has to show us!

### **DIACONATE MINISTRY BOARD**

#### **PILGRIM POSTAL PALS**

The Diaconate’s May recipients are **Dick and Sue Weinert**. Cards will be available on May 14 and 21 (if there are any left). They 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. We know the Weinerts will appreciate knowing we are thinking about them!

## FOX RUN DRIVERS – PLEASE HELP!

On April 2nd we began providing rides to our Fox Run members. We generally provide rides until the end of October. The more volunteers we have the less often you will be scheduled. You will need a vehicle that has room for two walkers and the ability to assist passengers and maneuver walkers in and out of your vehicle. There is a sign-up sheet on the Circle of Care table. Your help would be greatly appreciated, even if you can only do it occasionally. If you have any questions, contact **Sandy Greer**.



## MISSIONS MINISTRY BOARD

### **CROP HUNGER WALK**

**Sunday, May 7, 1-3 PM**

at Oakland Community College  
(Farmington Road entrance)

The Farmington/Farmington Hills/West  
Bloomfield CROP Hunger Walk is coming!



We'll be fundraising online starting in March, and walking through downtown Farmington starting at 1:30 pm at First United Methodist Church on May 7th! We walk in solidarity with all people who suffer from hunger and food insecurity. All are welcome!

Funds raised support the International and national work of Church World Service – as well as our five local hunger-relief partner agencies which share 25% of the total raised: **CARES of Farmington Hills, Neighborhood House, Salvation Army Farmington, Yad Ezra Kosher Food Pantry, and Zaman International.**

To learn more about our walk, to start or join a team, or to donate, see [crophungerwalk.org/farmingtonmi](http://crophungerwalk.org/farmingtonmi) or contact **Rev. Mary Biedron, Walk Coordinator** at 248-910-6755.

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

Haven, St. Bernard Project

### **MOTHER'S DAY CARDS FOR CROSSROADS**

Color a stamped Mother's Day card during social time after church on May 7. The cards will be distributed along with a flower seed packet as a gift for moms at Crossroads May 14<sup>th</sup>.

### **HERITAGE PARK CLEAN UP DAY**

Volunteers can serve our community **May 20th, 9 am-12 pm** in a Rouge River watershed clean-up day at Heritage Park, 24915 Farmington Rd., Farmington Hills. Meet at the park's Nature Center to pick up gardening gloves and tools for use during the event. Park rangers suggest bringing a water bottle or your own gloves if you prefer. Trail clean-up and clearing out invasive species are planned.

Several other Rouge Rescue events are being held on **May 20th** by the Friends of the Rouge which promotes the restoration and stewardship of the Rouge River ecosystem.



### **JUNE CROSSROADS CHILDREN'S LUNCH**

Our Mission's Ministry Board will serve a hot dog lunch and a suncatcher craft with as many as 75 children at Crossroads on **Thursday, June 22, 10am-2pm**. If you are interested in helping at this event, contact **Lori Rhode** or **Sara Lange**. We need about 8 people to prepare and serve lunch and supervise the craft project.

### **NACCC ANNUAL MEETING – June 24-27, 2023**

The 69th Annual Meeting & Conference (AMC) will be held **June 24-27, 2023, virtually and at the Sheraton Milwaukee Brookfield Hotel in Milwaukee, Wisconsin**. Come join your fellow Congregationalists from across the country for The Daring Endeavor of Being Church. Mark your calendars for *a great meeting on a great lake!* Prepare for great food, fellowship, and fun. The member churches of the [Wisconsin Congregational Association](http://www.wisconsincongregational.org) will be your hosts for the meeting and are excited to welcome you and show off our beautiful city on the shores of Lake Michigan!

Registration form, speakers, events, reports, lunches, and more, may be found on the meeting website, <https://www.naccc.org/events/2023-annual-meeting-conference/>  
**Registration is needed by May 20<sup>th</sup>.**



### **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 this month on **Tuesday, May 2, 16 and 30**. If you would like to join them, please contact **Tom Modick** at [moto126@aol.com](mailto:moto126@aol.com).

## BOOK GROUP

**Wednesday, May 17<sup>th</sup>** at **1 PM**, the North Church Book Group will gather in person and on zoom to discuss The Mystery of Mrs. Christie by Marie Benedict. This historical fiction novel is based on the real-life disappearance of famed mystery writer Agatha Christie for eleven days in December of 1926, an event that was never explained after she reappeared. We've enjoyed other works of history-based fiction by Marie Benedict, this should be a fun conversation!



Our **June 21<sup>st</sup>** book will be The Sentence by Louise Erdrich; we will skip July, and on **August 16<sup>th</sup>** we'll gather to talk about Demon Copperhead by Barbara Kingsolver, a long but worthy novel about an intrepid young man navigating the many hardships of life.

## CONCERT AT THE HAWK

Join some fellow NCC members attending the **May 18<sup>th</sup>** concert at The Hawk - Farmington Hills Community Center. We will be enjoying the music of the **Eat It Up Trio** described as "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. Let **Tim** or **Karen Sirovy** know if you will be attending. They will be having a taco bar dinner at their house prior to the performance if you are interested.

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 are \$20 - but use the promo code hawk20 for a 20% discount!

## ICE CREAM SOCIAL – Save the Date!

The NCC Ice Cream Social will be **Sunday, June 5<sup>th</sup>** following worship. Individual ice cream treats will be available. Looking forward to seeing you then! Thanks!