

# Advent and Christmas Holiday Newsletter



North Congregational Church  
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## NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

“God Is With You Wherever You Go”

- Joshua 1:9

### ADVENT / CHRISTMAS at NORTH CHURCH

Worship and special events to mark this holy season!

**Sunday, Dec. 3** – 10:30 AM – **FIRST SUNDAY IN ADVENT** - Worship in person and online; communion, open to all.

**Sunday, Dec. 3** – 2:00 PM - Online only on the North Congregational Church Facebook page. **BLUE CHRISTMAS** – “The Weary World Rejoices” As Christmas approaches and the strains of “Joy to the World” are everywhere, many of us are weary and sad in so many ways: from the loss of loved ones, to the state of the world, from personal tragedies to global catastrophe. This time of prayer, reflection, and music will create space to acknowledge those feelings and find comfort in God’s love.

**Friday, Dec. 8** – 7:00 PM - **CHRISTMAS CONFECTIONS** - **The Women’s Fellowship** is pleased to announce the return of this popular event featuring the musical stylings of **Laurie Meeker and Jim Wilking** accompanied by **David Bauer** on the piano. After the entertainment in the Sanctuary, dessert will be served in Fellowship Hall. Mark your calendars for Friday, December 8, at 7:00pm. Everyone is invited and there is no charge, but we suggest that each guest bring a pair or package of socks for school aged children (K-12). All donations will go to Crossroads Soup Kitchen in Detroit.

A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex to help us with our planning. You can also contact the church office (248-848-1750) to RSVP. Take several of the flyers and invite your family, friends, and neighbors. Don’t wait! The deadline for signing up is Sunday, December 3.

**Sunday, Dec. 10** – 10:30 AM – **SECOND SUNDAY IN ADVENT**, worship in person and online. During the service, we’ll offer the “DIY CHRISTMAS PAGEANT,” a special do it yourself event put on by attendees of all ages to recall and re-envision the Christmas story! Pick up a costume and a role (no speaking parts) in the Link and join in the fun!

**Sunday, Dec. 10** - 11:30 AM – **CHRISTMAS CRAFT WORKSHOP** — Join us in celebrating the joy of the season at the Christmas Craft Workshop. A Light lunch will be served in 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!

If you would like to bring an appetizer or dessert to compliment the lunch, please drop them off in Fellowship Hall on December 10. Don’t forget to sign up in the Narthex!

**Wednesday, Dec. 13** – 1 PM - **BOOK GROUP** – We’ll talk about “Christmas Cozy Mysteries” with emphasis on “Rest You Merry” by Charlotte MacLeod (available on Kindle) and enjoy some refreshments. Location - Rev. Biedron’s house.

**Sunday, Dec. 17 – 10:30 AM – **THIRD SUNDAY OF ADVENT****, worship in person and online; featuring a service of Lessons and Carols from the Chancel Choir. A beautiful trip through the Christmas story in scripture readings, carols, anthems and songs.

**Sunday, Dec. 17 – 11:30 AM - **RETIREMENT PARTY****– we will celebrate **Mimi Biedron** (and her family) on her retirement after 25 years as our Senior and Associate Minister at North Church. We will have a delicious luncheon immediately following worship service that day, served at a cost of \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 4-12 and children 3 and under eat free. A reflective program of memories, music, and gifts along with laughter and perhaps a few tears will round out the festivities. Don't forget to mail or drop off your RSVP so that we know you're coming.

**Sunday, December 24 – 10:30 AM - **FOURTH SUNDAY OF ADVENT****, with Christmas worship in person and online.

**7:00 PM – **CHRISTMAS EVE CANDLELIGHT SERVICE****, with carols, scripture, and candle lighting in a beautiful joint evening service with North Church and Pine Hill Congregational Church. In person at North Church, live streamed on the North Congregational Church Facebook page.

## ***MIMI'S RETIREMENT PARTY***

**Sunday, December 17<sup>th</sup>** we will celebrate **Mimi Biedron** (and her family) on her retirement after 25 years as our Senior and Associate Minister at North Church. We will have a delicious luncheon immediately following worship service that day, served at a cost of \$10 for adults, \$5 for children 4-12 and children 3 and under eat free. A reflective program of memories, music, and gifts along with laughter and perhaps a few tears will round out the festivities.

Invitations have been sent out. Please be sure to return your Retirement Celebration RSVP directly to the church. Do not return it in the envelope that was included in the Stewardship campaign mailing. We will also have a table set up after church in Fellowship Hall to RSVP and pay for your meal on 3 upcoming Sundays -- November 19th, December 3rd & December 10th.

The Retirement Planning Committee members are **Karen & Tim Sirovy, Susie & Danny Hawkins, Margaret & Bob Plummer, Jennifer Murray, and Sara Lange**. You can contact any of the members with questions, comments or suggestions.

We are looking forward to this special occasion and would like to see as many of you as possible to celebrate Mimi.

## ***NORTH CHURCH ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES***

### ***WORSHIP MINISTRY BOARD***

### **COMMUNION**

We will celebrate Communion on **Sunday, December 3rd**.

## TRAVELING ADVENT WREATH

The Traveling Advent Wreath has become one of our newer traditions, featuring North Church members and groups recorded while lighting advent candles. These will be shown during the Wednesday Inspirations.



## CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS



Beautiful poinsettias decorate our church each year during the holidays. This year, you may donate a poinsettia as a memorial, a tribute, or a celebration of the spirit of Christmas. The cost of a poinsettia is \$11.00. All poinsettias should be taken home after the Christmas Eve service. Order forms may be found on the table in the Narthex, attached to the Church Planner, and included in the Advent/Christmas newsletter. **All orders are needed by Monday, December 4<sup>th</sup>.**

## ADVENT CANDLE LIGHTERS

First Sunday of Advent - December 3: Jim and Nancy Wilking  
Second Sunday of Advent - December 10: Karen Cowen  
Third Sunday of Advent - December 17: Veronica Noye and Tom Modick  
Fourth Sunday of Advent - December 24, a.m.: Carol Turner and Jan Henzie  
Christmas Eve Candlelight Service: Steve Fecht

## BLUE CHRISTMAS SERVICE – December 3, 2:00 P.M.

“The Weary World Rejoices.” As Christmas approaches and the strains of “Joy to the World” are everywhere, many of us are weary and sad in so many ways: from the loss of loved ones, to the state of the world, from personal tragedies to global catastrophe. This time of prayer, reflection, and music will create space to acknowledge those feelings and find comfort in God’s love. Online on the North Congregational Church Facebook page.

## *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 “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 included in this newsletter, and celebrate the days of December by purchasing the items during Advent. The items can be brought in **the beginning of January**, and the boxes/bags will be delivered to CARES.

## **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

### **ADOPT - A - FAMILY**

We will be obtaining the names of two families this Christmas from Neighborhood House. The Women's Fellowship Committee will be making a rolling bulletin board display containing tags and sign-up sheets noting each recipient. The display board will be in the link **November 19th**, and if needed, on **November 26th**. Your job is to do the Christmas shopping by signing up to purchase a gift, and taking the corresponding tag.



Don't forget to ask for a gift receipt for each gift you purchase and put it inside the package.

The unwrapped gift should be returned to church with its tag attached, on **Sunday, November 26, December 3rd or 10th.**

### **KNITTING TREE AND CHRISTMAS SOCK**



Women's Fellowship is sponsoring the **Knitting Tree** and the **Sock Project** this Advent season. Beginning **Sunday, December 3rd**, the Knitting Tree will be in the Link area ready to receive hats, gloves, mittens and scarves.

The large Sock will be displayed on the railing leading up to the Balcony. The Sock will welcome your gift of socks for school age children. (K through 12th grade)

The tree and the sock will be available throughout the Advent Season. All gifts will be delivered to Crossroads in January. Thank you for your generous donations! The children also say "Thank you".

### **CHRISTMAS CONFECTIONS IS BACK!**

The **Women's Fellowship** is pleased to announce the return of this popular event featuring the musical stylings of **Laurie Meeker** and **Jim Wilking** accompanied by **David Bauer** on the piano. After the entertainment in the Sanctuary, dessert will be served in Fellowship Hall. Mark your calendars!

**Friday, December 8, 2023**  
**7:00pm**  
**North Congregational Church**



Everyone is invited and there is no charge, but we suggest that each guest bring a pair or package of socks for school aged children (K-12). All donations will go to Crossroads Soup Kitchen in Detroit.

A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex to help us with our planning. You can also contact the church office (248-848-1750) to RSVP. Take several of the flyers and invite your family, friends, and neighbors. Don't wait! **The deadline for signing up is Sunday, December 3.**

## ***ASSETS & RESOURCES MINISTRY BOARD***

### ***STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN FOR 2024***

*“God Is With You Wherever You Go”  
Joshua 1:9*

We feel the presence of God at our worship services and at our church meetings and fellowship activities, and we want to carry that presence with us out into the world.

We invite you to reflect on the Stewardship messages from worship and your own connection to the North Congregational community when planning your estimate of giving for the coming year. Pledges play an important role in the preparation of the church budget by providing a clear sense of our resources.

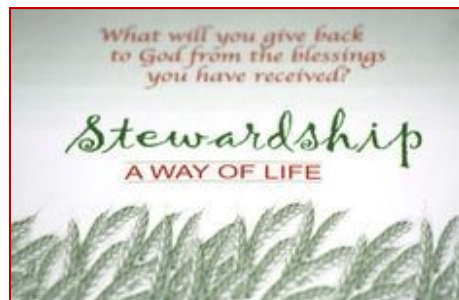
2024 Estimate of Giving Cards were mailed October 26<sup>th</sup>. They can also be found in the Link and in the pews at church. You may mail or deliver your pledge card to church, submit a pledge through the church website, or email the Treasurer at [NCC.ChurchTreasurer@gmail.com](mailto:NCC.ChurchTreasurer@gmail.com). All giving estimates and actual contributions from our members and friends are kept confidential.

As we think about what North Congregational means to us and to the world, consider our mission and vision statements. “We are gathered for the worship of God and Service to Humanity. We are a Christian community growing in faith and spirit, welcoming and serving our neighbors with joy and love, worshiping together with mutual respect, and making a difference in our lives and our world.”

Faithfully,

The Stewardship Team

***Rev. Dr. Mary E. Biedron, Senior Minister  
Dan Beardslee, Danny Hawkins, Mark Payne, Bob Plummer, Nancy Scott***



## ***DIACONATE MINISTRY BOARD***

### **ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS**

The **First Sunday of Advent is December 3**. The devotional booklets have been sent to our shut-ins. There will be a limited number of Advent Devotional booklets available on the table in the Link and Narthex. Feel free to take one for yourself or give one to someone who might appreciate having it for the season.

### **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.

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

We are in need of assistance from approximately 6 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 table in the Narthex, The Diaconate will let you know the dates and details of your delivery.

## ***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 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 included in this newsletter, and celebrate the days of December by purchasing the items during Advent. The items can be delivered to the **the first week of January, and will be taken to CARES.**

### **MISSION BENEVOLENCES... for the month of December**

Adopt a Family, Salvation Army, Camp Restore—Detroit,  
Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion,  
Mission Contingency (relief efforts and one-time need), Mission Disaster Relief Fund

## **FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**



### **CHILI COOK OFF - HERITAGE SUNDAY – November 19**

Join us in Fellowship Hall after the worship service to celebrate our Congregational heritage and the history of North Church, and have a wonderful lunch of chili, soup and dessert. You are also needed to help to choose the best chili, soup and dessert! The Golden Chili and the Palladian Ladle are waiting for the new winners to claim them! Bring your appetites and join us for this fun event.

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

A group of North Church Men meet every other **Tuesday** at **9 a.m.** for breakfast at Moe's on Ten. They will meet next on **November 28** and **December 12** and **26**. If you would like to join them, please contact **Tom Modick** at [moto126@aol.com](mailto:moto126@aol.com).



### **MASCOTT's White Elephant gift exchange - Saturday, December 2nd**

Come and enjoy Christmas games and Holiday cheer on **December 3<sup>rd</sup>**, 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 sign up on the sheet in the Narthex.

### **CHRISTMAS CRAFT WORKSHOP - Sunday, December 10th**

Join us in celebrating the joy of the season at the Christmas Craft Workshop. A light lunch will be served in 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! If you would like to bring an appetizer or dessert to complement the lunch, please drop them off in Fellowship Hall on December 10th

### **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 20th.

On Christmas Eve we will once again be 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 13, at 1 PM**

We'll talk about "Christmas Cozy Mysteries" with emphasis on "Rest You Merry" by Charlotte MacLeod (available on Kindle) and enjoy some refreshments. Location — Rev. Biedron's house.





## 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 CARES 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

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

Poinsettias will be present from **December 10th – December 24th**; they may be taken home following the Christmas Eve worship service.

The cost of a poinsettia is \$11.00. Please make your check payable to **North Congregational Church. The deadline for orders is Monday, December 4th.** 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) for Christmas.**

**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 \_\_\_\_\_

