

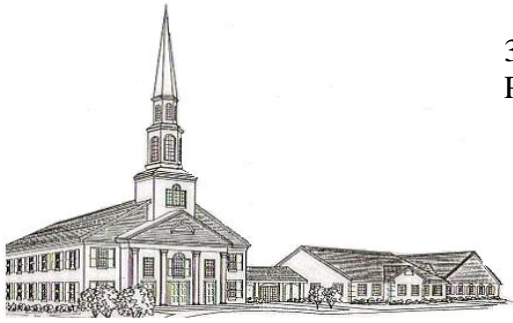
# **NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH**

## **FEBRUARY NEWSLETTER 2023**

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



# *NORTH CONGEGATIONAL CHURCH*



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Rev. Dr. Mary E. Biedron  
Senior Minister

January 24, 2023

To: Executive Council  
Fr: Rev. Mary E. Biedron

Dear North Church friends,

I first came to North Church on June 1, 1998, newly ordained, called to be the Associate Minister. In 2011, I was called to become the Senior Minister. It has been a wonderful experience, better than I could have imagined as a later-in-life seminarian.

When I met with the Search Committee for the Senior Minister role, I was (and have continued to be) clear that I did not plan to work past the age of 70. While it once seemed so far in the future, I will be turning 70 on November 19, 2023. Not wanting to leave the church in the midst of Stewardship and all that comes with Christmas, my plan is to retire at the end of calendar 2023, with Sunday, December 31st as my last day.

I am announcing this now to give the church time to prepare by creating a plan for clergy transition. A Search Committee will need to be appointed, as the church did in 2010 when Mark Jensen announced his retirement. An important starting place for the committee and the congregation will be examining what changes are needed to the church staffing structure at this change point, followed by creation of a job description for Senior Minister based on some of those decisions. The National Association of Congregational Christian Churches has tools and can advise in this process. As I continue my Senior minister role over the coming year, I will work with the Executive Council and the Search Committee to help prepare a smooth transition to my successor.

I am beyond grateful for the blessings of this pastorate and this congregation. It has been an honor to work with you, and having weathered past transitions and the pandemic, to name just a few things we have gone through together, I know that North Church is a healthy and resilient congregation with many ministries of worship and service yet to be imagined.

With love and gratitude,

Rev. Dr. Mary E. Biedron

## *Moderator's Notes...*



I hope you are all enjoying a (so far) fairly mild winter. It looks, however, as if we will be having some real snow very soon.

Executive Council met yesterday. At that meeting our dear **Senior Minister, Rev. Biedron**, announced that she will be retiring at the end of this calendar year. We thank her for her years of extraordinary service to North Congregational Church.

As her note to the Congregation indicated, we are forming a Search Committee to find Mimi's successor. I've asked the current Executive Council members to serve on the Committee. I would also like to add three or so additional members. This Committee will consider the Church's needs and future direction, update the position description for senior minister, launch a search (utilizing NACCC resources), review and interview candidates, and make a recommendation to Council and the Congregation. If you would be interested in serving on this Committee, please let me know.

Last Sunday we held our annual business meeting. The members approved the operating budget for 2023 – thank you. We also approved changes to the flower fund (from permanently to temporarily restricted) and to our bylaws (provision for North Church attendees at the NACCC annual meeting to represent the Church in the event that the elected delegates are not available). Again, thanks to everyone who attended and voted, and to everyone who helped plan and execute the gathering. This was once again a hybrid meeting, in person and on Zoom. If you have suggestions to improve the meeting, please let me know.

Executive Council also discussed our Nominating Committee.

Our program year ends April 30. In May we will have our annual program meeting. At that meeting the Nominating Committee will present candidates for open Board and officer positions and the members will vote on these candidates, plus any others who may be nominated from the floor during the meeting. The Nominating Committee will be working to find candidates for the open positions.

For our Ministry Boards, the open slots will be:

- Assets & Resources 1
- Diaconate 2
- Education 3
- Fellowship 2
- Missions 2
- Worship 2

These Boards are central to the life of the Church, directing and conducting Church activities in each of their respective areas. Membership on a Board provides direct input and influence on what our Church does and is. The time commitment is ten meetings per year (which may be via Zoom), it is important to have active members and a quorum at each of these meetings.

The Nominating Committee will have their first meeting and start work in the next few weeks. Meanwhile, if you are interested in serving on any of these Boards, please let me know.



## Executive Council Notes

Executive Council met on January 23 and considered the following:

- Assets & Resources and Treasurer: The budget for 2023 was approved at our annual business meeting. **Danny Hawkins** will be sending the full year financial statements and Treasurer's report to the Congregation when he returns from Mexico (the data for December were not available from our accounting firm in time for the business meeting).
- Diaconate: The Diaconate Board has been busy with visitations and card mailings to shut-ins. Lenten devotional books have been ordered and will be available in the link. The Diaconate is preparing to serve communion on February 5.
- Education: There will be a meeting with the Sunday School teachers later this week to discuss curriculum for next year and substitute teachers. The Board has launched a survey of adult education options (please respond to the email, the survey takes about 2 minutes).
- Fellowship: The Christmas Craft Workshop was a big success. The Board is looking at organizing an event to attend a concert at the 'Hawk' on March 11.
- Missions: Reverse Advent offerings were delivered to the Redford Food Bank, much appreciated. The Board donated \$1000 to the NACCC 'One Great Hour of Sharing' for disaster relief in California. The next North Church Crossroads mission will be in the spring.
- Worship: Christmas Eve was well-attended, we had 143 in-person attendees. We will have an Ash Wednesday service on February 22. Easter is April 9, we will also have a Maundy Thursday service.

*Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.* (Philippians 4:6-7)

*Kevin Gromley*

## **FEBRUARY MEETINGS**

Women's Fellowship - Wednesday, February 8, at 7 p.m.

Education Ministry Board – Sunday, February 12, at 11:30 a.m.

Diaconate Ministry Board – Tuesday, February 14, at 7 p.m. – Zoom only

Missions Ministry Board – Wednesday, February 15, at 7 p.m.  
Worship Ministry Board – Sunday, February 19, at 11:30 a.m. - Hybrid  
Asset & Resources Ministry Board – Monday, February 20, at 7 p.m.  
Fellowship Ministry Board – Tuesday, February 21, at 7 p.m.  
Executive Council – Monday, February 27, at 7 p.m.



## **NORTH CHURCH ARTICLES AND ACTIVITIES**

### **WORSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**

#### **COMMUNION**

We will celebrate communion on **Sunday, February 5, 2023** during worship.

#### **LENT 2023!**

**ASH WEDNESDAY, February 22, is the beginning of the church season of LENT.**

We'll be sending out a Lenten Calendar in mid-February with details about worship on Ash Wednesday (7:00 pm live in person and online), a recorded Lenten Lecture series of talks from Rev. Biedron about the Gospel of Matthew on Tuesdays online, and a preview of the Sunday passages and titles of a series on the Parables of Jesus in Matthew's gospel. Our Holy Week Schedule will also be included – and our great celebration at EASTER on April 9<sup>th</sup>.

### **DIACONATE MINISTRY BOARD**

**Barbara York**, long-time member of North Congregational Church, died Saturday, October 22, 2022 at the age of 95. Her daughter, Pamela, was at home with her when she died. There will be a small memorial service at Beverly Park in the Spring.

In February, we have two recipients for Pilgrim Postal Pals: **Marilyn Smith** and **Elizabeth Robinson**. Marilyn's cards are Valentines and Elizabeth's will be for her birthday. Cards will be available on **February 5** and **12**. There will be 10 cards for each lady that are addressed and stamped and all you need to do is pick out a card, add a personal note and drop it in the mail. Feel free to take one for each lady. We know Marilyn and Elizabeth will appreciate knowing we are thinking about them!

**Lent begins on Wednesday, February 22.** There will be a limited number of Lenten Devotional Booklets available on the table outside the Sanctuary. Feel free to take one. Reading the devotion each day as a family is an opportunity to remember the importance of Lent in the life of the church and prepare ourselves for Easter.

## **MISSIONS MINISTRY BOARD**



### **BLANKET SUNDAY - "Blanket the World with Love," Sunday, February 12**

When disaster strikes Church World Services responds quickly by providing critical supplies to organizations on the ground. These items include blankets, CWS hygiene kits, and emergency clean up buckets. Tens of thousands of these supplies are shipped each year reaching people who need them.

Your donation of \$10 supplies one blanket, \$50, enough blankets for a family.

Here at North Church, Blanket Sunday is a long-standing event which we have supported. Thank you! Under circumstances where someone has no home to go to the donation you make now truly brings comfort in a crisis.

You can make a donation by writing a check and using a Blanket Sunday envelope, or you can make a direct donation on-line at <https://cwsblankets.org/virtual/north-congregational/>. Thank you for your generosity!

## **FELLOWSHIP MINISTRY BOARD**

### **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 be meeting on **Tuesday, February 7 and 21**. If you would like to join them, please contact **Tom Modick** at [moto126@aol.com](mailto:moto126@aol.com).

### **BOOK GROUP – Wednesday, February 15 at 1 p.m. – In person and on Zoom**

The North Church Book group will be meeting on Wednesday, February 15th, at 1 pm both in person here at the church building and also on zoom. Our book will be The Light We Carry by Michelle Obama, and we'll be thinking about her use of the image of light and ours, as people of faith.

Our March book will be The Thursday Murder Club by Richard Osman; we are building our "to be read" list for the rest of the year, so bring your suggestions for books of any genre, that would be good food for discussion!

### **WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP**

Women's Fellowship sponsored The Knitting Tree and the Sock Project during the Advent Season. We received 114 pairs of socks. From the Knitting Tree we received 36 items. Hats, gloves and scarves were donated. The donated items will be given to children through the Farmington School District, Homeless Department.

We also sponsored the Adopt-A-Family Program. We appreciate your generosity in purchasing gifts for the families and a thank you to those who made a financial contribution to assist with this project. Thank you to everyone for making this past Advent Season so special for so many people.