NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH

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Spring Music Fundraiser with Silent Auction

The Music Committee will be producing our third annual fundraising show on Friday, May 9 to benefit the NCC Music fund. The Music fund is used for special musical presentations throughout the year such as the brass ensemble which plays for the Easter service.



This will be the second "Dinner and a Show" featuring The Chancel Choir and its members. They will be performing the music and lyrics of Stephen Sondheim which will include selections from *West Side Story, Gypsy, A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum, Follies, Company* and *Sweeney Todd.*

The dinner will again feature a silent auction, which was a huge success. Items to be auctioned off can include many different things: merchandise, tickets to sporting events, sports or pop culture memorabilia, services such as the preparation of a dinner for six or a few hours of handyman services. If you have something you'd like to donate or connections which we might use to solicit a donation, please contact **Danny Hawkins**.



From the Minister...



It has seemed that this winter will never end! The grey days, the snow and ice have distracted me from the reality that the days are getting longer, the sun's rays are getting warmer, and no matter how remote it seems, Spring will come. This is the truth of our faith as well: in the midst of darkness and despair, resurrection bursts upon us. At no time is this more apparent than in the season of Lent, beginning March 5th, when we reflect on Jesus' life, teachings, and death, culminating in Easter (April 20), when we celebrate Christ's Resurrection and all of the resurrections that God is working in our world and in our lives.

This year, our Lenten study will stretch across weekdays and Sundays, in a series I'm calling "Red Letter Jesus." We will look in the Gospel of Matthew at Jesus' own words, the ones often printed in red in copies of the Bible, and consider what he had to say about how to live and how to love. Weekday sessions, open to everyone, will offer the same lesson on Tuesday mornings at 10 and Wednesday evenings at 7:15 (a supper is available on Wednesdays at 6:30 p.m.). Sunday's worship services will feature additional passages. They are listed in the Lenten brochure in this newsletter. I hope you'll find yourself able to attend both times each week, to gain the greatest benefit from studying scripture this Lent! I always look forward to hearing the thoughts and ideas that emerge from discussions about the Bible, and as people who are committed to being "followers of Jesus," our discipleship will be opened up to new possibilities as we spend time thinking about the things that Jesus has taught us.

Looking forward to seeing many of you on Ash Wednesday, as we receive ashes and begin our Lenten journey,

Rev. Mary E. Biedron

Notes from the Moderator:

Is it still winter? This has been an exciting one. But even with canceled meetings/rehearsals, extra snowplows, and burst pipes, the work of our church has continued.



What's Been Happening at North Church this Winter?

- Worship Services were held on very snowy Sundays
- Annual Business Meeting we received a financial update and approved the 2014 budget
- Missions church members served at Crossroads and/or donated cookies, hygiene items, and warm clothing
- Confirmation Class a new class started their journey
- BelleMusik and Chancel Bells rehearsals resumed (welcome back, Kim!)
- Outreach CHAOS and PF members hosted a Valentine's party at Halsted Place
- Lenten Studies and Suppers scriptures were selected and dates were scheduled
- More Missions church members traveled to New Orleans to continue the work of the St. Bernard Project
- Chancel Choir started rehearsing music for the May 9 fundraiser
- Communications a Welcome Brochure introducing North Church was mailed to new residents
- Lots of meetings/activities including Boards, Committees, Bible Study Groups, Tuesday Lunch Circle, Men's Breakfast, Flick Chicks, Book Group, Mascot³s

Even during the cold winter days, we've continued to enjoy the warmth of fellowship and of God's love.

Nancy Scott

Ash Wednesday



On **Wednesday, March 5th,** we will gather for <u>supper in</u> <u>Fellowship Hall at 6:30 p.m.</u> (prepared and served by the Ushers) followed by <u>Worship at 7:15 p.m.</u>, in the Sanctuary.

This year's Lenten study, **RED LETTER JESUS**, will stretch across weekday sessions and Sunday sermons. We'll be looking at the words of Jesus, the ones often printed in red in the Bibles we give our Sunday School students, to see what he said about living the Jesus life. Of course, there are far too many red letter words to pack into one Lenten season! This year, we'll focus on selections from the gospel of Matthew. The topics and Bible readings are outlined in the Lent and Easter Brochure.

Reservations are needed for the meal to insure we have enough for everyone. Please sign up outside Fellowship Hall, call the church office, or fill out the reservation slip included in an upcoming Sunday bulletin. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3.50 for children 10 and under. If you prefer, you're welcome to bring your own meal. We'll have plenty of seating available.

> Our menu ~ Beef Stroganoff, Mashed Potatoes and Gravy, Mixed Green Salad with Tomatoes, Choice of Dressings, Rolls/Butter and Carrot Cake

en by Boards and Committees

Each Wednesday in Lent, a different church group is responsible for setting up, preparing the food, and cleaning up the **6:30 p.m. Lenten Suppers**. The menus are preplanned, using prepared food which only requires reheating or minimal preparation.

All of the meal items, as well as paper plates and cups and utensils, etc., will be in the church kitchen by Wednesday morning. An instruction sheet and time line is available for each week, so that the serving group can determine jobs and schedules.

We realize that some groups are smaller than others, and that some of you are on multiple committees. **Please call the church if you would like additional help** with setting or clearing up, or if you have any questions.

Reservations are needed to insure we have enough for everyone. The cost is \$5 for adults and \$3.50 for children 10 and under. If you would prefer to bring your own dinner, please feel free to do so. Extra seating will be available in Fellowship Hall.

March 12 - Music Committee; March 19 - Stewardship Committee March 26 - Diaconate; April 2 - Mascot³s April 9 - Women's Association, TLC, CHAOS

Easter Flowers



On Easter Sunday, April 20, our Sanctuary will be filled with beautiful flowering spring plants. Order forms will be available soon. Look to your Sunday bulletins in March, and the April newsletter for further information regarding prices and selection.

Opportunities to participate in North Church

During the next two months, the Nominating Committee will be looking for people who want to help shape North Church's future goals and activities. We have many areas where we can use your help! Let us know if you would like to be considered or if you have someone to recommend.

We are seeking nominations for the following areas of church life:

Trustees Diaconate Ushers Board of Religious Education Music Committee Stewardship Library Committee Delegates/Representatives to Mich



Delegates/Representatives to Michigan and National Conferences

More information about these positions is outlined in the Nominating Committee handbook which may be found on the table outside Fellowship Hall. Detailed descriptions of these committees, boards, and positions are also found in the church bylaws, which are printed in the back of the church directory. You are encouraged to talk to current members of the boards and committees that interest you. A list of the current members serving in these positions is printed in the front of the church directory.

Let us know about your interest or recommendations by talking to a member of the Nominating Committee, which includes **Sara Lange**, **Pete Shand**, **Carrie Cooper**, **Donna Nordman**, **Dottie Kendall**, **Sherel Shand and Susie Hawkins.** You can also call (248/848-1750) or e-mail the church office at ncc.churchoffice@gmail.com. We'll take it from there.



NOLA Mission Trip 2014

As you are reading this newsletter, 21 volunteers from SE MI Congregational churches will be returning from our 7th annual mission trip to New Orleans. Our group was made up of 13 men and 8 women. Five of our volunteers this year were new to the group. North Church members who went this year are: **Mark** and **Liane Jensen, Mark Payne** (along with brother-inlaw **Terry**), **Bob Plummer, Mona Utterback** and **Lys Kennedy**. This was Bob's first trip and he'll let you know if he survived "Freshman Week"!

We worked for 5 days for St. Bernard Project which is an organization that was founded in New Orleans but now has affiliates in Joplin, MO and also in the NY and NJ area for Hurricane Sandy relief. At night we played games, tried new restaurants and probably even took in some Mardi Gras Parades. Look in next month's newsletter for an update on our work week.

Some of us will be returning Sunday, March 2, others extending by a few days and returning Tuesday, March 4. We'll report back upon our return in March after hopefully a warm and sunny, fun but fulfilling week of work in New Orleans. Thanks for your interest and support!



March Activities...

Flick Chicks

Our Movie Night is Thursday, March 6th, at the UA Theater on 14 Mile Road in Novi, followed by dinner at Applebee's. Join **Barbara Yuhas** on Sunday, March 2nd during Coffee Hour to help decide both the movie and time. All chicks interested in flicks are encouraged to join us!

Tuesday Lunch Circle

Join us each Tuesday for lunch at 11:30 a.m. Reservations are needed, all women of the church are welcome!

March 4 - Olive Garden March 11 - Big Tommy's Parthenon March 18 - Red Lobster March 25 - Breakfast Club



Paylight Saving Time begins...

on **Sunday, March 9th.** Please remember to set your clocks <u>ahead one hour</u> before retiring Saturday night.

CHAOS ... Caring Hearts and Other Services



After a successful Valentine Party at Halsted Place, where we were joined by members of the PF youth group, the ladies of CHAOS are now looking toward the Lenten season. Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday, March 12th** at the Lenten Dinner. We will be discussing ways we can assist with the Women's Association Dinner on April 9th and the Rummage Sale in April. Many of us will also be helping with the Diaconate Lenten Dinner on March 26th. CHAOS is open to all ladies of the church. Please join us and see what we are all about!

Men's Breakfast Group

A group of North Congregational Church men meet for breakfast at Moe's on Ten every other Tuesday morning at 9:00 o'clock. If you eat and are interested in a little lively conversation, you are welcome to join them on **March 4th** and **18th**. If you contact **Steve Lange** he will add you to their e-mail list so you can get updates on their schedule.

Book Group

On Wednesday.



March 10th at 1 p.m., the North Church Book Discussion Group will meet in the church library to discuss Flight Behavior by Barbara Kingsolver. This novel is set in present day Appalachia and explores how the complexities we inevitably encounter in life lead us to believe in our particular chosen truths. At the center of the story is a young wife and mother on a failing farm in rural Tennessee who experiences something she cannot explain. What follows shows how her discovery energizes various competing factions-religious leaders, climate scientists, environmentalists, politicians—trapping her in the center of a conflict about meaning, and ultimately opening up her world.

There should be plenty to talk about in this book! All are welcome; this book is available in libraries, book stores, and in ereader format.

Charity Sewing Pay March 15, 2014

at North Congregational Church, 36520 W. Twelve Mile, Farmington Hills

Join us for a Charity Sewing Day, **Saturday, March 15th, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m.**



March 15th, 9 a.m. - 4 p.m. We will sew quilt tops for Safe House, a battered women's shelter in Ann Arbor, or for the Piquette Square Center for Homeless Veterans, Detroit. Beginners and ironers are welcome! Come for the whole day or a few hours. If you have a portable sewing machine to share, please bring it.

We will finish assembling a quilt top donated by a North Church member and begin sewing quilt blocks for two other quilts. Please bring your own charity sewing project for the day and enjoy the company of quilt enthusiasts. Some participants may also sew pillow case dresses for a Haiti mission trip.

If you have any questions, contact **Lori Rhode** at **248-553-0462**. Pack a lunch and/or bring some munchies to share.

Pilgrim Fellowship

Upcoming activities for High School and Middle School students.

March 2nd – 4:00-5:30 p.m. "RED LETTER JESUS"

The all-church "Red Letter Jesus" program will also be offered to our teenagers. **Rev. Mim**i will walk the PF'ers through the whole concept, and we'll plan together for ways to read/ respond/reflect. In addition, we'll consider how this Bible reading project works together with the missions we're choosing to support with our service. (spoiler: it does! Come find out how!)

March 7th - 9th Michigan PF Retreat

North Congregational is hosting the Michigan PF spring retreat for Middle and High School students. Plan to join us and PF'ers from across the state for fun, Christian fellowship, learning and worship.

March 23rd - 4:00 - 5:30 p.m. PF Meeting

Further discussion and planning of upcoming service projects and events.



High School News...

No class on Sunday, March 2nd - we'll attend worship.

We are hosting the MI PF Retreat the 7 - 9th, so there will be no class that Sunday. Don't forget to get your registration forms in!

We'll resume classes on Sunday, the 16th.

Confirmation Class

We're re-

organizing the way confirmands meet and learn together, to be more interactive and coordinate with Sunday School class. Any parents of students in grades 7 and up who have not already signed up, and are interested in having their student take part, please speak with **Rev. Mimi Biedron.**

MASCOT₃S



March 7th, 6:00 p.m., S.O.U.L. Bowl

Bowling fundraiser for Source of Universal Love, a Farmington human services agency that helps people with almost any issue: depression, divorce, alcohol and drug addiction, grief, pregnancy, relationships, motivation, health, children, verbal abuse, emotional abuse, physical abuse, or isolation. Much of their care counselor's job is just listening with compassion.

March 15th, 7:00 p.m., Bingo, Five15 in Royal Oak

This unique Bingo is an audience-participation comedy show, with an entertainer calling numbers and zingers and insulting everyone and everything. Nothing is sacred and no one is safe, but it's all in good fun.

April 5th, 5:00 p.m., Game Night

Emily and Butch Dye host a lively evening of fun and games.

May 10th 7:00 p.m., **Cinco de Mayo**

Celebrate the unlikely Mexican defeat of the French expeditionary force at the Battle of Puebla in 1862 (the last European invasion of the Americas). The Hawkinses will be serving Mexican food and beverages at their home.

June (date TBD), **Detroit Princess Dinner Cruise** – A three hour riverboat dinner cruise on the Detroit river featuring Motown music.

Please sign up on the sheet outside Fellowship Hall. Contact **Danny Hawkins**, <u>ncc.businessmanager@gmail.com</u>, with any questions.

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ALL CHURCH ANNUAL RUMMAGE SALE

Friday, April 11 and Saturday, April 12



This is an all-church, family activity – honest! First of all, everyone in your family can go through his or her closets and donate those items that are no longer used (or that they've outgrown). Then, everyone can help with sorting, set-up and selling. Our PF'ers are helping move the items into Fellowship Hall on Sunday, April 6. Volunteers of all ages (and gender) will be needed the week of the sale to price items and display them, and volunteers will be needed the days of the sale to assist buyers. *There's a job for you.*

You are welcome to bring your rummage items in and put them behind the curtain backstage **beginning March 16th.** Please DO NOT bring computers, car seats and cribs for babies, or encyclopedia sets. Please call and inquire as to whether we are accepting large pieces of furniture. *All clothing and shoes should go in the Coat Room*, which is located in the northeast vestibule/link.



Dinner for Eight

Dinner for eight, an opportunity to share several meals with a small group of North Church people, will begin a new session in <u>April</u>. The timing and style of the meals can be tailored to suit the needs and desires of each group (you may choose afternoons or evenings, pot lucks hosted by members of the group, or meet at local restaurants). Sign up to join us for food, fun, and a chance to learn more about your fellow parishioners.



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Women's Association News

Mark your calendar for **Tuesday**, **April 15**. We will meet at noon to have a "Brown Bag Lunch" in the Bradford Room, and following lunch we will have our business meeting.

The meeting will include: Nominating Committee Report Election of Officers Installation of Officers By-Law Change

Please bring your own brown bag and beverage for lunch. Dessert will be served.

The By-Law change consists of one item under the responsibilities of the President. It is simply a change in the wording.

Future date to put on your calendar:

Saturday, May 17 - Spring Fling, 2 p.m.

Musical entertainment and wonderful desserts in Fellowship Hall! There is no charge for the Spring Fling. Watch our bulletin board (across from the Library) for information about our activities.



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Sunday, May 4, 2014 1:00 – 4:00

(Check in at 1:00) at First United Methodist Church of Farmington, Grand River East of Farmington Road

Every year, North Church joins with other faith communities and organizations to participate in the Farmington/Farmington Hills/ West Bloomfield CROP Hunger Walk. Each year, our community Walk brings in over \$35,000; of that, 25% is returned directly to hunger relief projects in our own community. The remainder of the money goes around the U.S., and around the world, to provide emergency food, to improve the ability of people to produce their own food, and to make clean, safe water available for people, farm animals, and crops.

YOU CAN HELP! We need walkers, to get pledges and donations for walking the 10K or 2 mile routes; we need volunteers on Walk Day, May 4th, in the afternoon, and we need lots of people to help get ready for the Walk. Information and pledge forms will go out in Coffee Hour in late March. If you would like to volunteer to staff the information table, or to make phone calls and help distribute materials to walkers, please speak with **Rev. Mimi Biedron** who has chaired the community walk for the past 14 years.

More information about the CROP Hunger Walk and its parent organization, Church World Service, as well as access to our church's Walk team page, can be found at <u>crophungerwalk.org</u>.



Crossroads

On **Sunday, February 9th**, we served 522 people at Crossroads. The snow was tricky to get through, but the effort was much appreciated by all!! We served bologna and salami

sandwiches, bananas, turkey barely soup and the clients really loved the homemade cookies. The people who served were:

Pete, Sherel and Matt Shand, Carrie Cooper and Lynn Earle, Tom Modick, Danny, Dan and Alex Beardslee, Mark Jensen, Miranda, Meghan and Brandon Webster, Jennifer and Patrick Murray, Lys Kennedy, Dottie Kendall, Pat Butler and Steve and Sara Lange.

Meghan came to Crossroads on her 16th birthday, and brought some of her girlfriends to help her celebrate the day! Miranda brought a birthday cake for the workers, and some was left over and actually shared with the clients!)

Thanks to everyone who donated and who served on Sunday!

Stewardship

Thank you to all of our Members and Friends who completed an Estimate of Giving card for 2014. As of February 19th we have received 106 Estimates totaling **\$215,641**, a 1.56% increase over last year's final numbers of 108 Estimates totaling \$212,337. You may always modify your estimate at any time during the year by contacting **Danny Hawkins** at ncc.businessmanager@gmail.com.

THANK YOU, NCC Stewardship Committee

Diaconate Benevolences...

for the month of March



Llewelyn House, Salvation Army, Starr Commonwealth, SE Michigan Association of CCC, St. Alexander's Food Cupboard, Michigan Roundtable for Diversity and Inclusion

March 2 - Brian Ekizian March 9 - Lys Kennedy

LAY READERS

March 16 - Steve Lange March 23 - Susie Hawkins March 30 - Nancy Scott

COFFEE HOUR HOSTS

March 2 Lisa and Steve Ficker March 9 Pete and Sherel Shand March 16 Melissa and Gary Boothroyd March 23 Dave and Rebecca Pniewski March 30 Wendy Powell, Lee

GREETERS

Would you like to be a North Church greeter on Sunday morning for the worship service? If so, please call Audrey Poese at 248/960-4881.

March 2 Wendy Powell, Susan Lemon March 9 Tom Modick March 16 Dottie Kendall, Dave Emery March 23 Bob and Karen Moore March 30 Jack and Marilyn Pomeroy

ACOLYTES

March 2- Julianne Nove March 16 - Roland Hill March 9 - Brandon Webster March 23 - Abby Turner March 30 - Matthew Shand

Our Sympathy to ...

Peter Lichtenberg and family on the death of wife, Susan Lichtenberg, on Sunday, February 9, 2014. A Memorial Service was held at North Church on Saturday, February 22, 2014, with Rev. Mary E. Biedron officiating.

Jeremy and Kim Ruckhaber and family, on the death of his father, Charles Ruckhaber on February 11, 2014. A Service was held on Friday, February 14, 2014 at Salem United Church of Christ in Farmington, MI.

March Calendar

(Current version of our calendar can be found on our web site: *northcongregationalchurch.org*)

March 2, 2014 - Sunday

9:15 a.m. BelleMusik Rehearsal Worship, Children's Message, Sunday School, NO High School Class 10:30 a.m. Lay Reader: Brian Ekizian; Acolyte: Julianne Nove 4:00 p.m. Pilgrim Fellowship Meeting

March 4, 2014 - Tuesday

Men's Breakfast Club - Moe's on Ten 9:00 a.m. Women's Bible Study 10:00 a.m. Tuesday Lunch Circle - Lunch at Olive Garden 11:30 a.m. 6:30 p.m. Chancel Bell Rehearsal Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:30 p.m.

March 5, 2014 - Ash Wednesday

6:30 p.m. Ash Wednesday Dinner by Ushers Ash Wednesday Service - Sanctuary 7:15 p.m.

March 6, 2014 - Thursday

Flick Chicks - Movie at UA Theatre, Dinner at Applebee's

March 7, 2014 - Friday

S.O.U.L. Bowl at Drakeshire Lanes: Pizza at 6 p.m. 6:00 p.m. Bowling begins at 6:30 p.m.

March 7-9, 2014 - Friday, Saturday, Sunday

MI Conference of CCC Jr. and Sr. High Retreat at North Congregational Church - Pilgrim Hall

March 8, 2014 - Saturday

Please remember to set your clocks ahead one hour before retiring





March 9, 2014 - First Sunday in Lent

Daylight Saving Time Begins Chancel Bell Rehearsal 9:15 a.m.

Worship, Sunday School, NO High School Class 10:30 a.m. Lay Reader: Lys Kennedy; Acolyte: Brandon Webster

March 11, 2014 - Tuesday

10:00 a.m.	Lenten Study - Bradford Room
11:30 a.m.	Tuesday Lunch Circle - Lunch at Big Tommy's Parthenon
6:30 p.m.	Chancel Bell Rehearsal
7:30 p.m.	Chancel Choir Rehearsal

March 12, 2014 - Wednesday

- CHAOS attends Lenten Supper 6:30 p.m.
- Lenten Supper by Music Committee 6:30 p.m.
- Lenten Study Bradford Room 7:15 p.m.
- Diaconate Meeting Plymouth Room 8:15 p.m.
- Trustee Meeting Middle School Room 8:15 p.m.

March 15, 2014 - Saturday

- Charity Sewing Day Middle School Room 9:00 a.m.
- MASCOT³S Bingo at Five15 in Royal Oak 7:00 p.m.

March 16, 2014 - Second Sunday in Lent

Worship, Children's Message, Sunday School, High School Class 10:30 a.m. Lay Reader: Steve Lange; Acolyte: Roland Hill

11:30 a.m. **BelleMusik Rehearsal** Rummage items may be brought in beginning today

March 18, 2014 - Tuesday

- Men's Breakfast CLUB Moe's on Ten 9:00 a.m.
- 10:00 a.m. Lenten Study - Bradford Room
- Tuesday Lunch Circle Lunch at Red Lobster 11:15 a.m.
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Bell Rehearsal
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:30 p.m.

Works

March 19, 2014 - Wednesday

Book Group - Library 1:00 p.m. 6:30 p.m. Lenten Supper by Stewardship Committee Lenten Study - Bradford Room 7:15 p.m.

March 21, 2014 - Friday

Consent Agenda minutes/reports for Council are due today

March 23, 2014 - Third Sunday in Lent

10:30 a.m.	Worship, Sunday School, High School Class
	Lay Reader: Susie Hawkins; Acolyte: Abby Turner
11:30 a.m.	BelleMusik Rehearsal
4:00 p.m.	Pilgrim Fellowship Meeting

March 25, 2014 - Tuesday

- 10:00 a.m. Lenten Study - Bradford Room
- 11:30 a.m. Tuesday Lunch Circle - Lunch at Breakfast Club
- 6:30 p.m. Chancel Bell Rehearsal
- Chancel Choir Rehearsal 7:30 p.m.

March 26, 2014 - Wednesday

- Lenten Supper by Diaconate 6:30 p.m.
- 7:15 p.m. Lenten Study - Bradford Room
- **Executive Council Meeting** 8:15 p.m.

March 30, 2014 - Fourth Sunday in Lent

- Worship, Sunday School, High School Class 10:30 a.m. Lay Reader: Nancy Scott; Acolyte: Matthew Shand BelleMusik Rehearsal 11:30 a.m.

Neusletter deadline...



Newsletter articles are needed by the 10th of each month. Please e-mail Debbie at ncc.churchoffice@gmail.com. Thanks!



