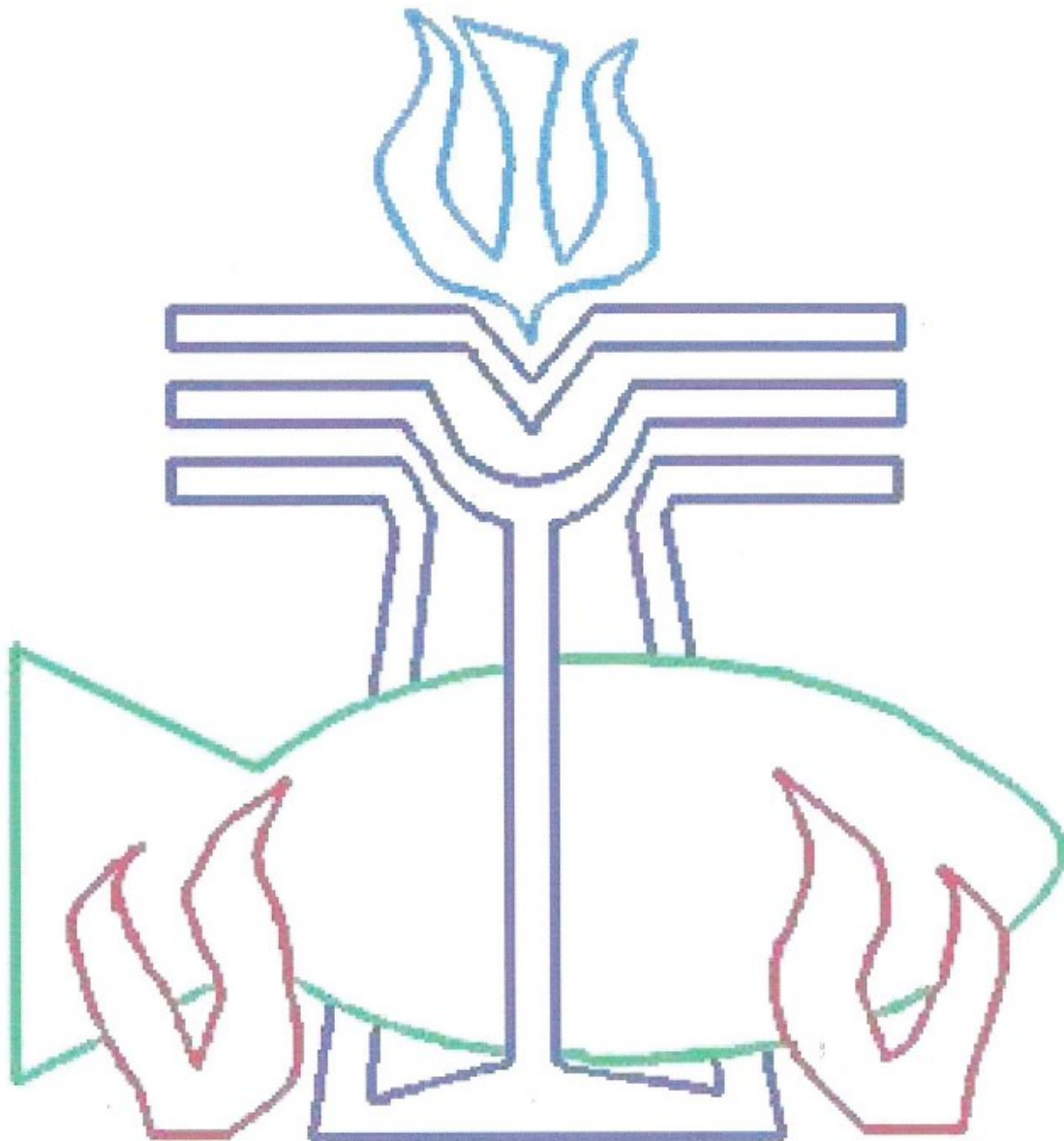


January 2020

NEW COVENANT

COMMUNITY CHURCH

THE MESSENGER



“The world is waiting for new saints, ecstatic men and women who are so deeply rooted in the love of God that they are free to imagine a new arrangement.”

– Henri Nouwen, *Lifesigns*, (New York: Doubleday, 1989), page 114.



From the Pastor's Pen

Pastor Tom Ulrich

When they saw that the star had stopped, the magi were overwhelmed with joy. On entering the house, they saw the child with Mary his mother; and they knelt down and paid him homage. Then, opening their treasure chests, they offered him gifts of gold, frankincense, and myrrh. And having been warned in a dream not to return to Herod, they left for their own country by another road.— Matthew 2:10-12

It's lamentably ironic that, even though we have celebrated the birth of the Prince of Peace a couple of weeks ago, several nations across the globe continue to rattle their sabers with threats of warfare and violence. The peace that the Child in the manger sought to bring to all people and places seems to be ignored and neglected, and the angelic message to the shepherds of "Don't be afraid!" that even inspires us to "go and tell it on the mountain" has been strangled by a rhetoric of fear which causes us to forget the One we claim to worship.

However, we can still embrace hope, because as we examine the text for Epiphany (January 6), the day traditionally associated with the coming of magi to bring gifts to the Christ Child, we learn that once we have encountered the Christ, God points us in a new direction, if we only have courage to pursue it. For the magi, their encounter with Christ had changed them, and because they had learned of Herod's wicked intentions, they returned to their country by another way.

Symbolically speaking, as we begin a new year, that new course should also apply to us . . . For once we have encountered Christ, we are never the same again. We too are transformed . . . we too are changed . . . we too not only look at the world differently, but we also act differently, and we pursue new visions and new opportunities.

Following a new path is usually difficult because it takes courage to trust God to lead us to places where we have never traveled before. But the world is waiting for new saints, ecstatic men and women who are so deeply rooted in the love of God, that they are not only willing to venture toward the horizons to which God calls us, but they are also free to imagine and work for a new international order where life and liberation are constantly promoted. Accordingly, Epiphany clearly captures our attention as people of faith, for we are now sent, not down the same old paths which prohibit creative ideas and lead us back to the same old places, but to embark on a new journey which leads us to pinnacles of proclamation where we can preach to the nations and share what we know — Jesus Christ, "light and life to all He brings."

That is our calling, and the world is waiting for our Christian voices to be heard.

Blessings,

Governing Board

Meet the new Governing Board for 2020

January 19

After Morning Worship

We'll have a brief discussion on the following questions:

What do you want to know about the Governing Board?

What should the Governing Board be doing?

How can you assist the Board?

Be sure to sign up on the sheet located on the hall table, so we'll have the right amount of food,

Please sign up by January 12.



See how the pieces all come together

Wednesday, Jan. 15, 6:30 pm, Annual Governing Board dinner at Papa Joe's honoring outgoing & incoming board members.

Next Governing Board Meeting,

Monday, Jan. 27,

4 pm,

Fellowship Hall

During this meeting the board members will wrap up some outstanding 2019 items, introduce a new committee structure, and handle regular and new business.

Facilities Committee Update

Last year many older books were removed from the church library and the remaining books were organized. We will do a second thinning this year. A new book area was created and will be expanded this year. A few featured books will be displayed under the bulletin board. Please look at the new and old books and give me your comments.

We will also be looking to replace the large cabinet near the children's area with a more attractive cabinet with doors. Let me know if you have a good source for such a cabinet .

We also need a better door mat outside the parking lot door.

Ken Williams



NEW INITIATIVES GROUP



Did you know you are a member of the New Initiatives uncommittee?

Yes, everyone is a member because all of us have thoughts and ideas for projects or experiences that will help keep Christ alive among us. Whether your ideas are just blossoming or in full bloom, Nancy Clem, Cathy King, Ken and Nancy Williams, and Reverend Tom Ulrich are people you can contact to help explore and facilitate your ideas. This is an opportunity for anyone to be involved in something they care about, not a committee. So, let the brainstorming begin! !

December 2019

Some moments to remember



NCCC Christmas
Bingo Party planned
by the Fellowship
Com-



Dec. 13—Christmas Party for Immigrant children and their families— New Initiatives Committee supplied 100 cookies and brought many scarves, gloves, hats, and hoodies



Dec. 21, NCCC packs and delivers
32 Christmas baskets to needy
families, organized by the
Missions Committee.





COMMUNITY CORNER

What an exciting, stimulating AAIC meeting on Jan. 7! The off months are really committee meetings; however, because of the location at Citizens Church at the Well (former home to First Presbyterian Church) on E. Market St., we were treated to a discussion led by Pastor James Talbert and Elder Curtis Mintor on the beginnings of Citizens Church, now about three years old.

To sum up briefly, the church is truly a neighborhood, multi-ethnic congregation for the citizens who both live and will soon live in the Middlebury neighborhood. Members are young, enthusiastic, and eager to spruce up the area in the name of doing Jesus' work. People are grouped into villages that focus on activity and mission. Church services are Sundays at 10:30 except on the first Sunday of the month when members are at a particular village doing work. Members also act as tutors at two local elementary schools—Mason and Helen Arnold.

Other items on the AAIC agenda in the next months include the date of Sunday, March 29 where the documentary HESBURGH will be shown, sponsored by both AAIC and the Akron-Summit Co. Public Library downtown. Details later. On the radar is a program on Religion and the Nones, something the group has been trying to do for several years. Josh Gippin, PR person and local film maker is interested in filming this event. Mitzvah Day, sponsored by Temple Israel and other local congregations will be recruiting people to participate in various service projects both on that Saturday and Sunday. Several of our NCCC members participated in a discussion that Sunday and stayed for the supper following.

Once again, the Akron Area Interfaith Council is effectively making a difference in the Akron area. Come, see what we're about. Next general meeting is Feb. 4, 10:30-12, at South Street Ministries, Front Porch Cafe on Grant St.

Nancy Williams