

A close-up, slightly angled view of the American flag, showing the blue field with white stars and the red and white stripes. The flag is draped and appears to be part of a larger display or backdrop.

November 2020

THE MESSENGER

**EVERY
VOTE
COUNTS**

ELECTION

2020

NEW COVENANT

COMMUNITY CHURCH

1587 W. EXCHANGE ST.

AKRON, OH 44313

COVENANTAKRON.ORG

“If Christian theology is to be more than just an intellectual game, if it is to deal with you personally, it has to bring the word about God to bear, not just on your church life, but on your life in the world.” – Shirley Guthrie, *Christian Doctrine*, (Louisville: Westminster John Knox Press, 1994), page 4.

One of my former theology professors was a man named Shirley Guthrie, and during the time that I was at in his classes, Dr. Guthrie emphasized that theology embraces every facet of life and affects every decision we make. For Shirley Guthrie, a Christianity that declines to engage political and economic questions or refuses to question the generally accepted practices in the world is harmless and ineffective. Christianity is not satisfied with retreating into a purely private spirituality or pious pretentiousness, but instead Christianity must faithfully address the realities that we encounter in our lives– the issue of family responsibilities, the use of force, and how we utilize financial and environmental resources. He stressed that the Christian faith enables believers, not to escape from the world but to live in it in order that the world can begin to be made new. Therefore Christians are recognized, not by how much they pray, but by how much they pray for the world. They are recognized, not just for how much they read the Bible, but by how the Bible influences their business practices, political commitments, and social relationships. Christian theology is immersed in the world, for it is in the world that we meet the Spirit of the living God who is at work to bless us with the gift of abundant life.

From the Pastor's Pen

Pastor Tom Ulrich

In just a few days, we Christians will have numerous opportunities to live out our theology in the world. As we vote in the presidential election on November 3, we can employ our theological understandings in deciding how to cast our ballot. Even though God is neither a Republican nor a Democrat, most issues in the political arena can also be seen as theological issues, and believers of all persuasions can cast their votes for different candidates for reasons deeply rooted in their faith. However, as people of faith, our theology summons us to examine the candidates by measuring whether they enhance human life, human dignity, and human rights; whether they strengthen family life and protect children; whether they promote reconciliation and equality; whether they serve peace and social justice; and whether they advance the common good rather than only individual, national, and special interests.

In addition, because this election has the possibility of becoming somewhat contentious, I have been invited to serve as a peacekeeper at the polls on Election Day. After all, if Christian theology is to be more than just an intellectual game, it has to bring the word about God to bear, not just on our church life, but on our life in the world.

Blessings,

tom

As the brilliant colors of fall slowly fade into grayer shades of an approaching winter, let us be reminded that November means

Governing Board

Thanksgiving, a joyful time when we think about family and friends near and far.

While we may not be able to experience Thanksgiving in the traditional manner this year, we do have an opportunity to remember our church family living nearby, a family that collectively has contributed in so many ways these past eight months under less than ideal circumstances.

To name a few contributions, the parking lot was completely renovated along with the beautifying of the surrounding grounds, and the mission garden provided an abundance of vegetables that were given every week to Gennesaret. The Mission Committee's plans for the Portage Path Book Fair (cancelled in the spring) are now occurring. Books have been purchased and will be given to the school to be distributed by the teachers. The traditional Christmas Basket collection and delivery will include a different method this one year. (See Mission article.)

Members who pledged for 2020 have been keeping up with pledges, and we are on target to have a surplus the end of the year, a portion of which will be used to pay down our mortgage. Since late March, our tech group, each Saturday, has skillfully worked on streaming the Sunday service. The Nominating Committee has selected two excellent choices for Governing Board for a three-year term—Nancy Clem and Susie Stevenor—and two members of the Nominating Committee for a two-year term—Jackie Horton and Cathy King.

Zoom has been a godsend for getting caught up in informal chats, meetings, and Bible Study as well as the enjoyment of a combined service in September with Francie Fischer's two churches. On November 10 at 6:00 p.m. we will have the unique opportunity to reconnect with Assistant Pastor Mark Greer and members from One Family Under Guard and discover a possible mission project we can work on next year. Eula is still the preacher, but is experiencing health issues. She has always referred to our church as their "sister" church.

Yes, we are thankful this November for our church family and other opportunities that have presented themselves to connect and reconnect with our "family." November is also a time to remember those in our family who have passed on. We are thankful for their many contributions to our congregation over the years.

Turning to the monetary side of keeping our church running in the year 2021, you are encouraged to turn in your pledge cards as promptly as possible. They need to be returned by November 29. You will note from the pledge letter, that the finance people are asking for a 5-10% increase to make up for the pledges of members who have died this past year as well as the additional expenses connected with in-person worship once we are safe to do this.

Continued on page 4

Continued from page 3

Governing Board

The pledge card with the letter and a Nominating Committee ballot will be inside the letter you will receive in the mail. In addition, you will have the opportunity to once again donate items as well as gift cards to the Akron Interfaith Immigrant Advocates annual Christmas party. Although the party itself will not occur, donations are still needed. (See AAIC article for detailed information on page 5)

Let us thank God for the many blessings He has bestowed on our church families. The graying days of winter will certainly be brighter because of you NCCC members.

A blessed month to all,

Nancy Williams, Governing Board President

The Election and NCCC

Thanks to the volunteers who agreed to open and close the building. There will be no bake sale this year because of COVID.

Volunteers are as follows:

Monday, Nov. 2—2:00 p.m.—Stephen from Summit Co. Board of Elections at church to set up. *Nancy Williams & John Miller* there.

Monday, Nov. 2—6:30-8:30 p.m.—Poll workers meeting at church.
John Miller & Ken Williams

Tuesday, Nov. 3—5:15 a.m.—Open church for workers and voting
John Miller, Hal Horton, Ken Williams

Tuesday, Nov. 3—9:00 p.m.—Shut down the church
Tim Meyer & Jim Strandberg

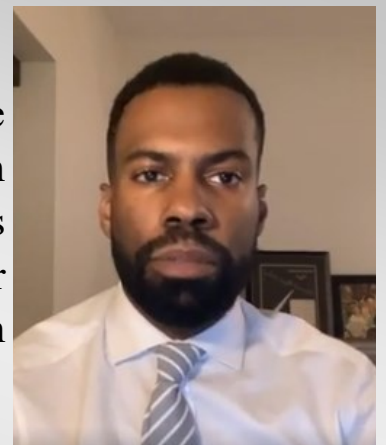
Later in the week BOE officials will come by and get voting items.



Mark Your Calendar



On November 10 at 6:00 p.m. we will have the unique opportunity to reconnect with Assistant Pastor Mark Greer and members from One Family Under Guard and discover a possible mission project we can work on next year.



AKRON AREA INTERFAITH COUNCIL UPDATE



The Nov. 3 meeting of Akron Area Interfaith Council has been cancelled because of Election Day. AAIC organizers have also cancelled the November 8th showing of HESBURGH: A DOCUMENTARY, due to the rising number of COVID cases in Summit County. It is unclear at this time whether the showing will be rescheduled.

AAIC is moving forward with collecting items for the Akron Interfaith Immigration Advocates. While there will be no Christmas party this December, the organization is collecting: hats, gloves, mittens, socks, scarves and hoodies for boys and girls of all ages—for 50 families. And, new this year, people can also provide gift cards to Burlington Coat Factory, Dollar Tree, and Target in any amount.

To drop off donations here at NCCC, please put all clothing items/gift cards, into the donation box, which will be in Fellowship Hall. The door will be open between 11:00 a.m. —1:00 p.m., on the highlighted days. Items will be picked up after December 3 by the individual in charge of this event.

<i>November 2020</i>						
Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
1	2	<i>Election Day</i>	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	<i>Thanksgiving</i>	27	28
29	30	1	2	3		

—Nancy Williams

Don't forget to drop off or mail in your receipts, they really add up. Drop them into the white drop box near the door.



**COMMUNITY
CASH BACK**

Minute for Mission



The Mission Committee has several items to report for November. First, our Online Book Fair at Portage Path CLC is ongoing. The books have been ordered for 244 children and the school counselor reports that the children were excited to be able to do this and they are all very grateful! We're now waiting to hear from Barnes & Noble.

Second, we have been given an opportunity to interact with Case CLC as well, in that our church will be "adopting" a family from the school for Christmas. We will purchase gifts for the children and drop them off at the school. We are waiting for information, such as ages of children, clothing sizes, etc. Speak with Lev Anderson for more information.

Lastly, we are definitely going to continue our tradition of the Christmas baskets in December, but the committee has been debating about how we can best accomplish this, whether gift cards or in-person delivery. We are leaning towards in-person delivery if it can be done in a no-contact matter. If we do this, it will be on Saturday, December 19th. Regardless, we will be accepting donations from the congregation as the baskets will remain at \$45 a piece, with approximately 30 baskets being given. Thank you so much to all who will prayerfully donate!!!!

We will let the congregation know when the books are in for the students at Portage Path Elementary.

Blessings to all,
Margie Frlich