

**FROM THE PASTOR'S PEN****Notes from the Annual Conference of the ICCC**

The International Council of Community Churches returned to Dublin, Ohio, for its Annual Conference after having gathered there in 2015. The conference commenced with opening worship which was led by Rev. Michael Droege from Watchung, New Jersey. His message was based on Acts 2:1-21, in which he stated that, for the disciples, Pentecost may have felt like a pandemic lockdown since Jesus had told them to wait until the appointed time. Then, when the Spirit came upon them, they were sent into the world to speak God's word into culture and society. With relevant boldness in language that the people understood, the disciples went with gifts that they learned and received during their lockdown. Rev. Droege continued by saying that for too many congregations, we fail to learn new things that God's Spirit is trying to teach us, and we hold on to a notion that church growth equals people affirming our way of worship. He concluded his message by challenging those in attendance, saying that the world is seeking love, forgiveness, hope ... but they don't think that the church has it. So, we are called to speak a new language.

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Rev. John Sugden led a workshop on providing care for people, and he emphasized that our task is to be present with people, and to listen and understand rather than judge. Regardless of what has happened, presence reveals care, and if we are too judgmental, it conveys that we have distanced ourselves too far away from another person to be compassionate.

Rev. Michael Droege also led a workshop on the "Church in a Pandemic World." He encouraged the attendees to avoid becoming too Sunday-centric and instead to reflect how the church can be the church in all its depth and breadth. Again, he issued a challenge, stating, "Are you meeting the people's needs? ... or are you meeting your own?"

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Dr. William Payne of Ashland Theological Seminary led the Bible Study, and his theme focused on mission, and he highlighted that God calls Israel, Moses, the disciples, the church, and us, not because we're superior but because God can work through us and with us. Accordingly we are called to participate with God to do mission.

During the business sessions of the conference, the following items were addressed:

- ◆ The ICCC sought to raise \$13,000 for COVID relief in India, and we celebrated the fact that more than \$21,000 was collected.
- ◆ The budget of \$201,604 for 2022 was presented and adopted.
- ◆ The officers for the Class of 2024 are:  
Abraham Wright - President  
Bruce Merton - Secretary  
and Nicholas Brame - Treasurer
- ◆ As part of the emphasis on ecumenism and interfaith efforts, the National Council of Churches developed Christian/Hindu dialogue, Christian/Buddhist dialogue, and Christian/Sikh dialogue.
- ◆ In addition, the ICCC updated a resolution about racial justice.



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Next year, from July 18-22, the Annual Conference will again be in Dublin, so perhaps we can get a delegation to attend a few of the events.



## GETTING READY

Thursday (7/29), Thomarios began work on the steeple, with a good washing. Hopefully, the weather will cooperate, and schedules will come together, so that the job will be complete before Sunday (8/1).



## AAIC UPDATE

AAIC's next meeting is set for Tuesday, August 3, on Zoom, at noon. [Click here](#) to join, call 253.215.8782. and enter: Meeting ID— 868.1171.2021 Passcode: 8434406552 .

## Town Hall Meeting

Ohio House Minority Leader, Emilia Strong Sykes, is hosting several town hall meetings in her district, to update voters on the state budget, redistricting and other district priorities. State agencies will also have resource tables at the event. The events are free. Click on [RSVP](#) for dates, locations and times and a chance to register for Leader Sykes' next meeting which will be August 23, 6:30PM, at Maple Valley Library. Other town halls are also at this link [RSVP](#).



# MINUTE FOR MISSION

This month we have several things to report.

### BASEBALL OUTING

In late July, the Akron Interfaith Council (through the Akron Interfaith Immigration Advocates, AIIA) hosted 145 children from North Hill at a Rubber Duck's baseball game and provided food! This worthy endeavor was made possible with the monetary assistance from the Missions Committee and NCCC member contributions,

### GARDEN GRUB

Our Mission Garden is doing well and growing, but with so much rain this summer, it is a little slow producing as of yet. Betsy Davis reports that we have had a lot of Collard greens, though. Anyone wishing to help with the garden can talk to Betsy or Bev.



## HELP NEEDED

**Here's your chance to make a big impact.**

Gennesaret needs volunteers. If you're available to make to-go orders, please see Betsy **IMMEDIATELY**. Your help is **URGENTLY** needed.

### LOOKING AHEAD

On Sunday, September 26, help us welcome Kathy Tschiegg, founder of CAMO (Central American Medical Outreach). I hope many can come to hear her interesting stories!



### BOOK FAIR

We are also hoping to have another book fair sometime this fall with Portage Path Community Learning Center. More information on these events will follow.

-Margie Frlich

## Fellowship Committee

### Fellowship Meeting—Thursday, Aug. 26, 10:30 am , Fellowship Hall

This meeting is for all who agreed to be part of the Fellowship Committee for the rest of the year and for anyone else who would like to assist in the planning. Items to be discussed are:

some type of FALL OUTING

another LADIES' LUNCH

TRUNK OR TREAT (working with New Initiatives)

A CHRISTMAS PARTY and

whether we will have some type of COFFEE HOUR before church service

Any ideas are welcome. Please call, text, or email Susie Stevenor or Nancy Williams

## New Initiatives

Our planning group will be meeting to mull over possible ideas that we can be involved in to benefit the community. This group will take the lead in TRUNK OR TREAT, and we will be participating in MITZVAH DAY, now scheduled for **October 2 & 3** (if there still is one because of COVID). One thing we will be doing is working with AIIA in collecting clothing and gift cards and participating in a Christmas party for North Hill immigrants.

Once again, all church members are part of this group. Bring your ideas to the next meeting. Watch the announcements for when that will be .The steering group includes Cathy King, Nancy Clem, Nancy Williams, and Ken Williams.

—Nancy Williams

## JOINT WORSHIP SERVICE AT THE TADMOR SHRINE

Sunday, September 12<sup>th</sup>, we are scheduled to participate in a joint worship service with Allenside Presbyterian Church, Firestone Park Presbyterian Church, and North Springfield Presbyterian Church at the Tadmor Shrine (3000 Krebs Drive, Akron). Prior to COVID, we have shared in this worship experience a couple of times (one was relocated due to rain). While this is more than a month away, and while CDC recommendations seem to change daily, it would be good to put this onto your calendar.



## ELECTION DAY PREP

Crews dropped off election equipment Thursday, in preparation of Tuesday's primary. The office will be closed during the election.