

THE MESSENGER

OCTOBER 2021



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NEW COVENANT
COMMUNITY CHURCH

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*I thank my God every time I remember you,
constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you,
because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.*

Philippians 1:3-5

Throughout Scripture, we read about churches – the church at Philippi, the church at Corinth, the church at Thessalonica, and several others. We *read* about these churches, but we don't really *know* them. And even though we may study the epistles of Paul to learn about those churches, most of us form our opinions about the church from our personal encounters, because the only church we ever really know is the one we experience for ourselves. And, of course, the church that we experience is not centered in a building; the real church is alive whenever, wherever, and however God's people come together for worship, study, and service.

Indeed, being the church emphasizes that we can't say that we *believe in Christ* without also *following Christ*. Christians who belong to the church are the people who have come forth to be disciples, to have their lives influenced by the One who is Lord of all, to serve in the pattern of Jesus Christ who came to serve all humanity. The church is the wonderful, inspiring, miraculous gathering of people who demonstrate to the world that life can be lived more gracefully, more peacefully, more faithfully, more humanely, more compassionately. It is, as theologian Langdon Gilkey highlights, the "locus of the sacred... an embodiment of human relationships... a place where God's grace acts and God is present."

And as we open our eyes to the things God is doing among us, we can see the church come alive in worship, study, and service. In the name of Jesus Christ, you have lived as disciples of the Lord, not only reaching out to share God's love with the victims of earthquakes and hurricanes, but also seeking to serve the people by participating in Mitzpah Day, by collecting items for the Battered Women's Shelter, and by preparing for the book drive. You are certainly a wonderful, inspiring, and miraculous assembly of saints from whom we continue to learn how to live more gracefully, more peacefully, more faithfully, more humanely, and more compassionately. You are the people who shine God's light in the world, who proclaim God's word with your lives, who utilize your time and effort so that the kingdom of God may become a vibrant reality upon the earth.

Clearly your prayers and your contribution to our mission efforts continually strengthen our church and our community, and as a result I not only thank God every time I remember you, but I also remain eternally grateful that I can join you in sharing in the ministry of the gospel that you have revealed from the first day until now.

May God abundantly bless all of you.

Yours in Christ,
tom



FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK

“Dear members and friends of New Covenant Community Church,

As I look ahead into October, there are many things to plan for, but it is a good moment to look back and reflect on where we have been over the summer and the start of fall, and give some shouts out to some of the people who keep our church functioning. The Mission Garden is winding down and yielding its last produce for the season, and thanks is due to the garden team, including Bev Cinovec, Marty Pastor, Nancy Clem, Betsy Davis and Ken Williams, who have contributed their labor to send fresh produce to Gennesaret's food ministry for people in need in our community. We have a dedicated media team of Joan Lannoch, Susie Stevenor, Cathy King and Hal Horton keeping our worship services running smoothly in person and online. John Sezna tends to the financial books, and keeps the money flowing and our ministries operating, spending money given by many faithful members, who also deserve our thanks and commendation. In the office, Reesá Mathews keeps all sorts of processes going: assembling announcements and newsletters, and even attending to facilities issues like flushing the pipes from time to time to keep our water supply fresh and sanitary while the building is lightly used, and opening windows on cool mornings to help keep our un-air-conditioned sanctuary more comfortable through the summer heat. And I am certainly grateful for Tom Ulrich's steady-handed pastoral leadership.

Last week's announcements included a picture of me working in the ladies' restroom. It turns out that one of the stall doors was not anchored into anything solid inside the wall. It was just screwed into the drywall. First off, it's amazing that it held up as long as it did. (Miraculous, even?) The most obvious point is how much better it is to do things right the first time. Instead of having used a few dollars' worth of materials (or even just scraps from the rest of the construction work) and twenty or thirty minute's time to install blocking in the walls where the stall doors were planned to go. We now have to cut the wall open, nail the wood blocking into place, re-insulate the wall, patch the drywall, finish the drywall (three coats of joint compound, each one left to set up and dry before being sanded smooth), prime paint, and finish paint (two coats), all while keeping the room swept up and usable, before we can even get to re-installing the door. So, do things right the first time.



But, some other thoughts have come to me while doing all that. It's easier to keep on doing the things we know how to do. I know how to toe-nail (**President continued on page 5**)



MISSION GARDEN

Isaiah 9:3a says, “You have enlarged the nation and increased their joy; they rejoice before you as people rejoice at the harvest.” It doesn’t say how big the harvest is, but it does say that it is a time to rejoice. Each week, the Mission Garden Committee gives us a reason to rejoice, because they remind us that we serve Jehovah Jireh.

I have recently been reminded of how well God has provided for me. Because of the detour on I-77, I drive pass Gennesaret each morning. This morning, I saw the line of people outside waiting for the doors to open, waiting for the harvest. Isn’t it wonderful to know that the MGC gave them a reason to rejoice.

Rejoice in the Lord always; and again I say, Rejoice. -Philippians 4:4





(President continued from page 3)

2 x 6 blocking. I know how to patch and mud drywall, and how to paint it. I know how to plant flowers and weed the flower beds. So, yes, I can keep doing the things I know how to do. But sometimes, we need to do the harder work of learning new things, or even inventing new things.

I think all of us would like this community of faith that we have blessed with our time, attention, work, money, and love to continue after us as a meaningful presence of Christ in the world. So how do we make it meaningful and valuable to a new generation of members and leaders? What new things can we do, should we do, must we do for the long-term future of New Covenant? Or will faithful ministry through New Covenant mean bringing things to a graceful conclusion? I have a lot to learn here, and I hope you will join me in learning these new things, taking chances, enduring mistakes, and remaining centered on our Lord Jesus Christ.

In His service,

Tim Meyer,

President, NCCC Governing Board

FELLOWSHIP NEWS

Master grillers Ken Williams and Jim Strandberg threw on gloves and jackets, and braved the first cold, rainy day in September to cook hotdogs outdoors for 17 hearty souls. Attendees provided the sides and plenty of desserts. We asked for cookies and brownies, but no one objected to the cupcakes and pie. Our little picnic gave us a chance to laugh, smile

and ... well... fellowship.
(Fellowship continued on page 6)





(Fellowship continued on page 6)

A successful ladies' luncheon occurred September 14 at Beau's in Fairlawn. The women seem to prefer Tuesdays for future lunches. Suggestions for future places welcome.

The Fellowship Committee will be assembling in October to plan future events including a possible Christmas party. Ideas?

New Initiatives will meet **Tuesday, October 5, 10:00 a.m.**, at the church to plan Trunk-or-Treat, which will be held in our church parking lot, Saturday, October 30, 5:00-6:00 p.m. (for us), 5:00-7:00 p.m. (are the hours for Akron). Look for more details in future announcements. Remember, you are all members of this group. Your input is always welcome. Even if you can't attend the meetings, feel free to email suggestions to Nancy Williams.

At the upcoming meeting, we will also be discussing a possible partnership with OFUG in a food ministry. Keep an eye out for more information on that.

Mitzvah Day Akron Update—Several congregants have now signed up to volunteer with various projects, on October 2 & 3. Cathy King is heading up Project Linus, Jackie Chetelat and Susie Stevenor are participating. Ken Williams will be working on the Tikkun Village trail and grounds behind the Shaw Jewish Community Center. Nancy Williams is working on the Potluck Dinner on Sunday afternoon, outside at Temple Israel. (The dinner will be served at 5:00 p.m., to Mitzvah Day participants.) In addition, we decided to gather items for the Battered Women's Shelter. You can still bring items to church Sunday and place them into the box in Fellowship Hall.

In addition to all of this, you can attend a program on "Mental Health and the Marginalized Communities" at Temple Israel or by Zoom, Sunday afternoon. Sign up at mitzvahdayakron.com.

Mitzvah Day is a great opportunity to see other congregations at work.

The next AAIC meeting is October 5 at noon. It will be held at an outside location and on Zoom. Call the office if you need more information.



Items for Battered Women's Shelter

Comb or brush Body soap
Deodorant Wash cloth Towel
Razor Lotion Toilet paper
Toothpaste & toothbrush
Coloring books and small toys
(for the children)

Please put items in the box in Fellowship Hall



Friends,

New Covenant Community Church is a treasure to all of us. I remember when we had the 25-year celebration a few years ago at Hal's and what fun it was to remember those early days. We as a congregation have thrived, endured and changed. We are a different assemblage of people now, a little older, not quite as limber, and fewer of us. But, we remain resolute in our belief in the teaching of Jesus as to the power of love for all people. We want to make the world a better place for everyone. We do that with our book fairs for two Akron elementary schools, our weekly vegetable donations to Gennesaret dinners, and our astoundingly varied and generous mission programs. I think our devotion to doing God's work has not changed from when we were a larger congregation; we simply are a smaller group of people who can only do so much.

One solid way to amplify our determination to have an impact is to partner with like-minded religious and spiritual groups that advocate a better quality of life for all people. I am thinking of the scarves and mittens we distributed at an Akron Area Interfaith Council dinner and later big-hearted gift cards when we could not gather; the back-to-school supplies distributed at the Buchtel cluster gathering; the Hunger Walk every May; and the charming outdoor worship service last Sunday with four other Presbyterian churches where the animals were blessed. (I took my dog, Codi, to be blessed and if you see her, I'm sure she would love to show you her new St. Francis of Assisi medallion.)

We only multiply our impact when we are part of a larger group and let our hands and resources magnify a larger effort. The New Initiatives Committee seeks to find these connections and always wants your input on other ways we can be of service.

Nancy Clem

THE MESSENGER

OCTOBER 2021

MONTH OF SEPTEMBER DEDICATED TO:

Salsa Sizzle

ONLINE



Bringing Hope
to the forgotten

We are ALL grateful for your
years of support!

Online bidding will start at 8AM EST
Monday September 27, 2021 and end
on Thursday, September 30 at 8PM

VIRTUAL AUCTION, REAL IMPACT

You have until Thursday, September 30, to help CAMO raise money during this year's Salsa Sizzle. (Lots begin closing at 8:00 p.m.) In this year's virtual auction you can bid on luxurious vacations, sumptuous dinners, amazing gift baskets, and other surprises! (And, even if you don't win, you'll still help CAMO raise more money by making the winner pay more.)

You can also donate at camo.org/salsa-sizzle-2021/ to support the Salsa Sizzle. All donations over \$50 will be entered into a raffle for free airfare for 2 people to fly anywhere in the continental USA in 2022, or a \$100 gift certificate to Montavino in Wooster. (One entry per person.) Every dollar raised will greatly impact the people that CAMO serves.



Here is a partial list of
the auction items:

- #1 A week in Infinity Bay Spa & Beach Resort (Value \$1,750)
- #2 Hot Air Balloon Ride (Value \$500)
- #3 RCI Vacation (Value \$1,750)
- #5 Rocky Mountain Getaway (Value \$2,500)
- #7 Grilled Tomahawk Steaks Dinner (Value \$450)
- #8 Indian Dinner with Mary & Madhavi Vaidya (Value \$400)
- #9 Large Kamado grill and stand (Value \$1,200)
- #14 Necklace and Earring Set (Value \$100)
- #15 Essential Oils Basket (Value \$80)
- #16 Crystal Tray & Rock Glasses (Value \$175)
- #17 Locally-Produced Wine Basket (Value \$100)
- #20 New Spencer Electric Guitar and Amplifier (Value \$650)
- #23 Pamper Yourself or a Dear one! (Value \$450)
- #24 Wooster Country Club Golf Package (Value \$350)

[Click here](#) for the
auction catalog.



Church World Service is hosting a Zoom gathering, Monday, October 4, 12:00 p.m. that will focus on how faith communities can help welcome Afghan refugees. Learn how to support Afghan evacuees, and hear from former Afghan Special Immigrant Visa holders, who will share reflections on how communities can welcome arriving Afghans with respect to dignity and culture.

[Click here to register.](#)



HAITI AND AFGHANISTAN PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS UPDATE

In Haiti, Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (PDA) is providing emergency relief and short-term recovery through our established local partners and in collaboration with ACT Alliance, a worldwide network of Protestant and Orthodox churches. The PC (USA), through PDA, will remain active throughout the entire recovery process, accompanying our partners in the area as they determine long-term program needs and providing financial support for rebuilding and resilience.

Regarding assistance for our Afghan refugee siblings, PDA is working alongside U.S. resettlement networks and congregations as they welcome the large number of refugees and work to accompany them with both financial and emotional support for a sustainable new beginning. For Afghans who flee to neighboring countries, PDA is working with partners in the ACT Alliance alongside local and regional authorities to respond to the growing needs in host countries like Pakistan and Turkey. PDA is providing financial support for these ecumenical and interfaith efforts.

Where there is no justice, there is no peace. This year, we invite you to share God's peace with our Afghan and Haitian neighbors in particular through the Peace & Global Witness Offering.

Our gifts to the Peace & Global Witness Offering enable us to work together to build God's Household of Peace where everyone is welcome; where all can find compassion, peace, and justice.



PEACE & GLOBAL WITNESS

SPECIAL OFFERINGS

PEACEMAKING AND RECONCILIATION

SEPTEMBER 5-OCTOBER 3, 2021