

# Agape

Greek for “Love without Limits”

North Olmsted United Methodist Church

Vol. 54 Issue 10

November 2020

## Charge Conference 2020 Lay Leader Report

Pastor Hoyte Wilhelm has worked very hard to lead our congregation in this very diverse and difficult year. He has continued to help organize our committees and activities to run more efficiently consistent with *Our Faithful Journey*. Pastor Hoyte has been compassionate and empathetic to the needs of the congregation while keeping safety uppermost in mind during the pandemic. He has met with individuals and small groups outside to address concerns along with taking advantage of Zoom meetings to meet with groups of all sizes. He has started sending inspirational messages once a week.

The North Olmsted United Methodist Church continues to work on our long-range strategic plan for continued future growth. After approval of our Administrative Board, the reorganization is now open to discussion by the congregation.

Sunday attendance was averaging 84 before the Covid-19 closure. YouTube views have averaged 45 households since 3/8/2020. Our music program was strong with an adult choir and a bell choir. The organist, choir director, and talented members of the congregation have been sharing their musical talents for our streaming worship services. Three children’s Sunday school classes and an adult Sunday school class were meeting each Sunday morning. At this time the adult Sunday school is meeting via Zoom. Our Sunday school director is making video lessons with accompanying activities available for the children and young adult classes.

Our church congregation is extremely generous with both their time and money. Several of our former missions have been put on hold during the pandemic. We continue to pick up food from one restaurant and deliver it to a food pantry. Our once-a-month community meal has become a “grab-and-go” meal. The Adult Council and other groups meet via Zoom or outside for activities following safety guidelines. Several new groups have been meeting. One group is reading about and discussing racism, and another group is discussing the difficulties of life during the pandemic. Our members have been creative in finding ways to gather and stay in contact with one another.

Financially we are good stewards. We are able to pay our district apportionments in full while supporting, making, and serving a free community meal (7 times a year) along with paying the salaries and expenses of an active church. Our building repairs this past year include a new air conditioner, refurbishing three areas of the church, and installing new wireless capabilities. A fundraising campaign raised the money to improve the technology for streaming worship services along with in-church services when we safely can again offer in-person worship services. A Technology Team was created to plan and execute this project, and they have worked very hard to meet this goal.

Even during this difficult year North Olmsted United Methodist Church provides many opportunities to serve the Lord. Our goal continues to be to serve the community—feeding body and soul.

Jean Scothon, Lay Leader

## Our Guiding Principles

- We appreciate and invest in our youth.
- We actively serve our neighbors in the North Olmsted community and the wider world.
- We provide varied opportunities for people to grow in their faith.
- We welcome and nurture a diverse congregation who become extended family.
- We foster lasting personal relationships, which are especially important in a digital world.

*Our Faithful  
Journey*



## COVID-19 Reminders

### Worship with Us Online!

*Live-stream worship on Sundays at 10:30 am*

Join us online as we live-stream worship on Sundays at 10:30 am! Visit our [YouTube channel](#) to worship with us. The videos will also be available to view later. For more information and assistance, visit [www.noumc.org](http://www.noumc.org) or our [Facebook page](#).

Visit <http://www.noumc.org/worship-remote-worship-resources/> for bulletins and weekly announcements.

#### Office Hours

To protect the health and well-being of you and the staff, we will be working from home whenever possible. Please conduct business with the staff by phone or email, when possible. If you leave a voicemail at the church or send an email, a member of the staff will respond. If you need to conduct business in person, please call ahead to be sure someone is in the office to assist you, or contact a staff member and leave a voicemail to make an appointment.

#### Pastoral Care

Please reach out to Pastor Hoyte by using his cell phone or email address (330-428-1545 or [hoytewilhelm@gmail.com](mailto:hoytewilhelm@gmail.com)) if you have any questions or want to schedule an individual time to talk as he will be working remotely much of the time from the church office consistent with the rest of our support staff.

Pastor Hoyte continues to keep you in his thoughts and prayers. God *IS* with us!

### Stay Connected—We Are Not Alone

If you would like to subscribe to receive weekly e-newsletters, up-to-date email announcements from Pastor Hoyte, and prayer concerns from the congregation, email [office@noumc.org](mailto:office@noumc.org).

### Financial Contributions to North Olmsted United Methodist Church

Please continue to be faithful with your financial gifts by sending your stewardship contributions to the church office to the attention of the Financial Secretary, Ed Brewster.

### December Agape Deadline

*November 15*

Email articles and dates for the calendar to [office@noumc.org](mailto:office@noumc.org) or mail them to the church, attention Megan Howe by November 15.

**Church Staff:** 440-779-6634

**Pastor:** Hoyte Wilhelm  
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**Christian Ed.:** Wendy Cooper  
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**Organist:** Marlene Dirksen  
[marlened959@gmail.com](mailto:marlened959@gmail.com)

**Admin. Assistant:** Megan Howe  
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**Music Director:** Gabriela Martinez  
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**Social Media:** Hanna Moore  
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# A Statement by United Methodist Bishops in the United States

## Crisis of Faith and Democracy

The right of every citizen to vote in the United States is under attack, and with it, the foundation of American democracy and the sacred worth of all persons. We call United Methodists to vote and to protect free and fair elections and peaceful transfer of power.

A faithful retelling of the story of Methodism in America and the history of The United States must consider the influence of each on the other. They came into being alongside one another, and similarities in development of the two are undeniable. The narrative includes noble ideals and shameful actions, astonishing opportunity and disturbing discrimination, ethical vision and moral failure.

Our church and our nation are both democratic institutions. Through a system of conferences, from the local church to a global assembly, Methodists discuss, debate, and vote in order to discern the will of God. The Social Principles of The United Methodist Church affirm that we “hold governments responsible for the protection of the rights of the people to free and fair elections.” (BOOK OF DISCIPLINE, ¶164).

As Bishops of The United Methodist Church who reside in The United States, we affirm our democratic institutions. However, we believe that the democratic processes of our country are under great threat. This is particularly evident in the reality of widespread initiatives to obstruct voter registration and to suppress voters from casting their ballots with confidence they will be accurately counted.

The right to vote is rooted in a commitment to the value of all persons, created in the image of God as individuals of sacred worth. This belief in the sacredness of humanity is a foundational principle of many religious traditions present in the American body politic.

The legacy of injustice told in civil rights museums across our country is one of suppression of the vote. And the legacy of white supremacy and privilege continues. At times this suppression has been overt, as when one was required to own property or be a white male to vote. At other times it is more nuanced, as in moving or eliminating polling places, or in sowing confusion over early voting or voting by mail. Such actions undermine the people’s confidence that voting matters. And in some instances, where the people have affirmed the right to vote for convicted felons who have served their sentences, state legislatures and governor’s offices have sought to overturn the will of the people in order to suppress the vote.

Efforts by our government or elected officials to suppress the freedom to cast ballots violate the high principles upon which our nation was founded. By contrast, these high principles are affirmed and realized when elected officials and government entities promote, defend, and guarantee the unfettered right of all citizens to choose our leaders in free and fair elections.

The greatest hallmark of a democratic institution is the peaceful transfer of power once the will of the people has been established. This model of democracy has existed within our country for over 220 years. It is incumbent upon those who participate in democratic processes not only to ensure each citizen’s right to cast their ballot, but to respect the result of those ballots once counted. When we resist this aspect of our democratic franchise, we undermine the whole and corrupt the foundation of our republic.

We are in a moment of national crisis as we navigate two viruses, COVID and Racism, and suffer the economic consequences of both. In these crises we are reminded that our religious faith and our nation’s principles support elections that faithfully reflect the will of the American people. Our faith in God who created all people in the divine image, and our hope that our nation can live into the aspirations of our founding ideals, lead us to pledge ourselves to the fullest expansion of this right to vote.

To that end we call upon the people of The United Methodist Church to use their influence in their states, legislative districts, and local precincts to enable voter registration and to encourage elected officials to provide the resources necessary to support the fullest possible participation in November’s elections. This would include the provision of an adequate number of accessible polling sites and the support of an efficient process of counting mail-in ballots. Our identity as a democracy requires no less.

\*UM News Weekly Digest, Oct 16, 2020

## Charge Conference 2020 Pastor Report

Pastor Hoyte Wilhelm

### North Olmsted UMC Remains Steadfast in Faithful Ministries

Jesus taught his disciples and continues to teach: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age” (Matthew 28:19-20).

North Olmsted UMC remains steadfast in living the words from the Gospel of Matthew consistent with the mission of The UMC to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world, and to do so with open hearts, open minds, and open doors. The church has been faithful in its ministries by providing opportunities for people to grow in faith, invest in youth, serve neighbors, celebrate diversity, and foster personal relationships that embody “Our Guiding Principles” with the church’s strategic plan of “Our Faithful Journey.”

The church is alive and well even though the physical doors of the church have been closed since mid-March for most ministries and activities due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The church has persevered with an active spirit of love and grace reflecting the goodness and strength of God and Jesus Christ. The church has sustained and advanced the following:

**Governance Structure**—with the work of leaders in the life of the church to plan, organize, refine, present, and gain approval from the congregation for a new governance structure which will enhance the effectiveness of the church in offering its ministries;

**Livestream and Recorded Worship Services**—with the teaming efforts of the pastor, support staff, technically and artistically gifted laity, organist, choir director, liturgists, and musicians;

**Technology**—with the work of a Technology Team and through generous financial contributions from church members to update the audio, video, wireless, and livestreaming capabilities in the sanctuary;

**Zoom Connections**—with administrative meetings, fellowship gatherings, informal support groups, Adult Sunday School, and one-to-one support and care;

**Small Group Class**—with focus on readings and discussions in becoming more educated, informed, and active in advocating for anti-racism and social justice in church and society;

**Stephen Ministry and Caring Outreach**—with complementary work of the pastor and laity to offer phone calls, personal greeting cards, and email messages to people in need of a listening ear, prayer, and care beyond what can be offered safely with a physical presence;

**Electronic Communications**—with ongoing development of the Website, Facebook page, weekly e-newsletter, monthly newsletter, and newly offered piece called, “Staying Connected,” featuring updates about people’s lives in the absence of in-person sharing at the church;

**Midweek Messages**—with recorded audio-video devotions led by the pastor and posted on the church’s website focusing on a different scripture passage each week and a brief reflection of encouragement, hope, and assurance;

**Monthly Meals**—with a volunteer team that continues to offer free monthly meals to the community through pre-packaged hot meals, and a pickup process in the parking lot entailing safe distancing practices and the wearing of masks;

**Building Care**—with teaming work of the Trustees and other laity in reorganizing and refurbishing the nursery, “Conversation Café,” and prayer room, repairing outdoor siding, replacing an air conditioner, refining maintenance of the thermostats, updating the fire alarms and sprinkler systems, upgrading electrical wiring and outlets, and implementing a new key system for entering and exiting the building and interior rooms;

**Financial Stewardship**—with faithful ongoing contributions from members to support the operating and mission ministries of the church locally, regionally, and abroad.

I am grateful to serve as Pastor with the church family of NOUMC as we continue to make disciples of Jesus Christ and remain steadfast in our faith knowing that God is always with us!

In Christ, Pastor Hoyte

## Christian Education

### Sunday School Mission Project: Africa University

*Some significant dates in the history of Africa University*

In 1984 two African bishops challenged their colleagues at the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry to support the establishment of a university in Africa. A plan for the United Methodist-related university was presented to the General Board of Higher Education and Ministry in October 1987. At the 1988 General Conference, United Methodists overwhelmingly accepted the proposal to begin the university. On April 6, 1991, thousands of people throughout Zimbabwe watched as the groundbreaking ceremony took place and one acacia tree was planted at the Old Mutare Mission site of Africa University. In January 1992, President Robert Mugabe granted Africa University's Charter by official proclamation. African Methodists serving with United Methodists from all over the world worked to develop an institution for all of Africa!



***This year, we hope you will support the Sunday School Mission Project by helping us raise money to build a new dorm for female students of Africa University! A new dorm will enable women from all over Africa to be housed in a safe place while completing their education.***

### Online Sunday School Is in Session!

Elementary and Middle Sunday School students, please join us each week on our [Friends of NOUMC Facebook page](#) as we continue to study God's Word! Each week, a video Bible lesson will be posted on the Facebook page, and links to activity sheets will be posted in the comments. High School and Young Adults are welcome to click on a weekly devotion with thoughts and questions to ponder. Video lessons and devotions will be posted by Saturday evening each week.

Sunday School Teachers will be needed once we return to in-person classes; contact Wendy Cooper at [sundayschool@noumc.org](mailto:sundayschool@noumc.org) if you are interested.

## United Methodist Women

### Give-Away Meeting

*Wednesday, December 2, 10 am*

Considering we only had two money-raising activities this year, we are happy to say we met our budget for the year and have a little left over. We certainly couldn't have done it without your help. We are planning to meet on December 2 to give money to some of our favorite charities. We probably will give most of our money to local charities such as the Oxcart Pantry, the Free Community Meal ministry, and Laura's Home, branching out only if we have more money.

That's where we'd like to ask for your help. *If you would like to donate to one of these charities, you can send a check made payable to NOUMW and mark your favorite charity in the memo. **Send checks to the church office, attention: Darlene Owings.*** Please get the checks to us by November 25. We know there has been talk in the past that some of you would prefer to make a donation instead of working at the rummage sale, so here's your chance.

We are looking forward to our next FUNDrive in the spring, and we are grateful to you for holding on to your donations until then. Meanwhile, keep following all the rules and enjoy a quiet but happy Thanksgiving and Christmas holiday. We can't wait until we can see you all in person once again.

## Financial Report

Mike Moore, Treasurer

### September 2020 Financial Update

During the first nine months of this year, we received \$160,250 in offerings. We also received \$1,343 in rent, proceeds from the Dover Players, and Amazon Smile rebates, for a total of \$163,593. Thank you all for your support, especially those members of the congregation who have paid ahead or paid all of their 2020 pledge. The church's expenses for the first nine months totaled \$194,211, which results in a shortfall of \$32,618. We have been able to pay all of our bills, our apportionments and our payroll on time.

Here is the breakdown of our expenses for the first nine months of 2020:

Ministerial Expenditures	70,775	36.44%
Other Staff Payroll	53,578	27.59%
Trustee / Building Expenses	26,431	13.61%
Apportionments	25,495	13.13%
Utilities	7,818	4.02%
Insurance	3,750	1.93%
Office Expenses	3,711	1.91%
Christian Education / Youth Ministry	1,415	0.73%
Other Expenses	1,238	0.64%
Total Expenditures	194,211	100.00%



Thanks again for your financial support of the church and supporting all the good work that we do!

## Opportunities to Give

### Adopt-A-Family this Christmas

Oxcart Pantry is still planning to collect donations this year for families in need, but the format is going to look a lot different. The details are still being decided, but Oxcart is forming a plan to make an online gift registry for each group of donators. Georgia from Oxcart Pantry thinks the registry might be on Amazon, but that is still being decided. She also thinks that even though the registry will be with a particular company, you could choose an item and maybe find a better deal on a similar item at a local store and then let the registry know you had picked up that item to keep from duplicating. Georgia gave as an example: someone might want a size 8 black winter coat, and instead of buying the \$50 coat that the Pantry asks for, you could buy a similar one for \$40. Since the clients only give the color and size and don't usually specify a brand, they won't know that there was a different suggestion from the Pantry.

For those of you who don't have access to the internet, you can let the Outreach Committee make purchases for you. *Make checks payable to NOUMC and write Adopt-A-Family in the memo. Send checks to the church office, attention Ed Brewster.*



The November Penny Sunday Offering will also go to benefit the Adopt-A-Family program.

Once we have more details from the City and Oxcart Pantry, we will communicate those to you. You have always been great at making Christmas better for so many families, and it's obvious that the needs will be greater this year. Thank you!

## United Methodist Student Day

*Sunday, November 29*



One of six special offering Sundays in the life of The United Methodist Church, United Methodist Student Day calls the church to support students as they prepare for life in uniting faith with knowledge. The special offering provides scholarships for qualified United Methodist applicants. When you give generously on United Methodist Student Day, you support students as they prepare for life in uniting faith with knowledge.

*Make checks payable to NOUMC and write UM Student Day in the memo. Send checks to the church office, attention Ed Brewster, Financial Secretary.*

## A Message from the Stephen Ministries Team

A fellow was stuck on his rooftop in a flood. He was praying to God for help.

Soon a man in a rowboat came by and the fellow shouted to the man on the roof, "Jump in, I can save you." The stranded fellow shouted back, "No, it's OK, I'm praying to God and he is going to save me." So, the rowboat went on. Then a motorboat came by. "The fellow in the motorboat shouted, "Jump in, I can save you." To this the stranded man said, "No thanks, I'm praying to God and he is going to save me. I have faith." So, the motorboat went on.

Then a helicopter came by and the pilot shouted down, "Grab this rope and I will lift you to safety."

To this the stranded man again replied, "No thanks, I'm praying to God and he is going to save me. I have faith." So, the helicopter reluctantly flew away.

Soon the water rose above the rooftop and the man drowned. He went to Heaven. He finally got his chance to discuss this whole situation with God, at which point he exclaimed, "I had faith in you, but you didn't save me, you let me drown. I don't understand why!"

To this God replied, "I sent you a rowboat and a motorboat and a helicopter, what more did you expect?"

Psalm 40:1-2: I wait patiently for the Lord to help me, and He turned to me and heard my cry. He lifted me out of the pit of despair, out of the mud and the mire. He set my feet on solid ground and steadied me as I walked along.

Many of you may have heard the joke about the man stranded on the roof and yet how does that relate to the Psalm? I have struggled with daily living, death, illness, disease, loneliness, relationships that falter and pray for God to help me. And He does help me by sending good people. We need to open our hearts and see God in others, unlike the stranded man who did not. When I cry out, my friends will listen, they may not be able to give me any advice, but they are there and will listen because they have known the same struggles.

Yet, one may feel the need to have a listener whom you know will keep all confidential. Stephen Ministers are assigned to care receivers based on how well they match up with the care receiver. There are situations such as a loss of a spouse which I might not be able to relate to and this person may be assigned to a Stephen Minister whom has gone through the same painful experience. And also, there is a need to train Stephen Ministers from all walks of life; please think about joining when the next training session becomes available.

Remember, when the pain is great and you cry out, a Stephen Minister can walk by your side.

Sue Shellhouse

## Church Family News

# NOVEMBER

## Birthdays & Anniversaries

8	Andy W.
14	Andy M.
15	Greg L.
18	Michelle W.
20	Andrew H.
24	Ron W.
29	Ray B.
29	Madison S.

18	Claudia & Paul T.
25	Judie & Mike F.
28	Carol & John W.
29	Sandi & Frank O.
29	Chris & Mike B.

### Small Group Gathering Procedures from the Reopening Team

*Planning a small group gathering? Please contact the church office and follow all of the procedures developed by the Reopening Team. They can be found online at [www.noumc.org](http://www.noumc.org) or in the [September Agape Newsletter](#).*

**You are encouraged to continue Zoom meetings and outdoor meetings at the church or at public parks as a good and safer option than meeting indoors. For outdoor meetings, masks and social distancing continue to be required.**



## Prayer Concerns

First Responders  
Victims of natural disasters  
Those suffering from mental illness  
Those affected by gun violence  
Those who are homeless  
Stephen Ministers  
Care Receivers  
Our condolences to Rita R. following the passing of Carl M. Tak and Mely S. following the passing of Mely's father  
Jeff, Judy K.'s friend  
Kifah, David L.'s friend  
Jean S.  
Jeff and Sharon, lifted by Janis J.  
Bob, Carole B.'s son  
David, brother-in-law of Susan S.  
Josh O.  
Donald R.  
Sheryl, lifted by Sally S.  
Danielle, lifted by Alice W.  
Scott, brother-in-law of Barb L.  
Frank M.  
Keith A.  
Danielle, lifted by Gwen H.  
Gwen H.  
Mary Lou L.  
Barbara B.  
Sterling B.  
Bev, lifted by Josh O.  
Viola C.  
Darlene, friend of Barb A.  
Susan W.  
Donna, sister of Carol N.  
Adrienne, lifted by Tom M.

Bill and Vince, brothers of Reba Y.  
Russ, friend of David L.  
Andy, Faye W.'s son  
Dusty, nephew of Reba Y.  
Israel, Sarah's student  
Dawn, friend of Susan W.  
De Niro and family  
Connie C.  
Jim, friend of Bill and Marilyn R.  
Donna friend of Judy K.  
Kevin, friend of Barb and Ron C.  
Zack, son of Jennifer G.  
Brian R.  
Steve, son of Mary Ellen M.  
Carol, lifted by Jane and Ray B.  
Selene, lifted by Carole A.  
Christopher Y., USAF  
Matthew F., USAF  
Lt. Col. Bill G., USMC  
Cpl. Trevor C., USMC

## November 2020

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> All Saints Sunday 10:30 am Worship (livestreamed)	<b>2</b>  8:30 pm AA (FH)	<b>3</b> 7 pm Facing Covid Together (Zoom)	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 10:30 am Worship (livestreamed)	<b>9</b>  8:30 pm AA (FH)	<b>10</b> 10:30 am Anti-Racism Group (choir room)  7 pm Charge Conference (Zoom)	<b>11</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>15</b> <i>Laity Sunday</i> <i>Penny Sunday</i>  <i>December Agape</i> <i>Deadline</i>  10:30 am Worship (livestreamed)	<b>16</b>  8:30 pm AA (FH)	<b>17</b> 10:30 am Anti-Racism Group (choir room)  6:30 pm Stephen Ministries (Zoom)	<b>18</b>	<b>19</b> 11:30 am Lunch with Friends (at home)	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10:30 am Worship (livestreamed)	<b>23</b>  8:30 pm AA (FH)	<b>24</b> 10:30 am Anti-Racism Group (choir room)	<b>25</b>	<b>26</b>  <i>Thanksgiving</i> <i>Day/Office Closed</i>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> <i>UM Student Day</i> 10:30 am Worship (livestreamed)	<b>30</b>  8:30 pm AA (FH)					

Please contact the church office to add your meeting or gathering, virtual or in-person, to the church calendar.

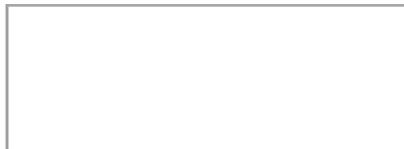
**North Olmsted United Methodist Church**

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North Olmsted United Methodist Church  
4600 Dover Center Road  
North Olmsted, Ohio 44070

Agape Newsletter



## Holiday Free Community Meal Carry-Out Only



*Thursday, December 3*

*4:30 pm - 6 pm*

Carry-Out Menu:

roasted pork, mashed potatoes & gravy,  
green beans, fruit, and dessert

***(Please note: there isn't a meal in November)***

The Free Community Meal is a mission of North Olmsted United Methodist Church with assistance from our friends at St. Richard and St. Clarence Catholic Churches and others in the community. All meals are funded by donations, and the dinners are prepared and served by volunteers. Menus may change because of donated food or food pricing. Additional volunteers are always welcome! If you would like more information, please contact us at 440-779-6634. *We are an accessible facility.*