



Six Hats,
Pt. 6

GREEN HAT

So far in this series, a running theme has been evaluating ideas already on the table. The White Hat states facts and figures pertaining to the idea while the Red Hat talks about what emotions said idea(s) bring up. Then, of course, there are the Black and Yellow Hats, which balance each other out in bringing forth both the positives and negatives of any given idea. However, much of what these hats do is dependent upon there first being an idea to evaluate. This is where the Green Hat comes into play.

When you think of this hat, I would invite you to think about a field, each blade of grass an idea called forth to solve a particular problem. This is a thought process characterized by its creative thinking and one we see displayed in the story of Creation. Before all of Creation existed, God had an idea of what They wanted the Universe to look like, how They wanted it to operate, etc. So, to solve the problems posed with having a living, breathing universe, God very much put on a metaphorical

Green Hat in calling forth the Sun and Moon, the plants, the waters, the animals, and all intangible things. However, this isn't to say that Green Hat thinking is only useful at the start of a project. In fact, Green Hats are pertinent throughout the conversations, and a great example of what I mean comes from my sophomore year of high school (or at least, how I recall the order of events taking place).

At my home church, the high school students go on a mission trip each summer on a particular rotation: local trips every other year, alternating between national and international in the off years (i.e. the average student would do two local, one national, and one international mission trip in their high school career). The summer after my freshman year (2005), we did a national trip to Mt. Vernon, KY to help Christ Outreach for the Blind (a summer camp for blind children) get up and running. Later that summer, Hurricanes Katrina and Rita

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Governing Board

Monday
November 18
6:00 p.m.

F.I.T.

Thursday
November 7
1:30 p.m.

**Fellowship
Committee**

Monday
November 4
10:30 a.m.
109 S. Hametown Rd.
(Nancy W.'s)

**Finance
Committee**

Tuesday,
November 12
11:00 a.m.

**Mission
Committee**

Tuesday
November 19
1:30 p.m.

**Worship
Committee**

Monday
November 4
4:30 p.m.
Via Zoom



From the President's Pen

GIVE THANKS

From the President;

To close out 2024, let's reflect on some of our activities during the year. These photos, by no means, represent all that we have accomplished over the year. That would fill an entire newsletter!

Enjoy the pictures; smile as you reflect on what our small congregation has participated in during 2025.

For certain, challenges lie ahead, but on behalf of this year's Governing Board and the many people in charge of seeing that these events occurred, along with Pastor Brad and Reesa, I wish you a wonderful Christmas and a Blessed 2025.

May Christmas Joy be in your hearts.

Nancy

A blessed Thanksgiving to all.

Nancy W.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

After Sunday
Service

On November 4, we will meet after service for the Nominating Committee to recommend the following:

**Governing Board
Nominees**

- Tim Meyer and
- Jaci Chetalet.

**Nominating Committee
Nominees**

- Cathy King and
- Ken Williams.

Prayer At the Time of an Election

Under your law we live, great God, and by your will we govern ourselves. Help us as good citizens to respect neighbors whose views differ from ours, so that without partisan anger, we may work out issues that divide us, and elect candidates to serve the common welfare; through Jesus Christ the Lord. Amen.

-Book of Common
Worship, 817-

(Hats continued from page 1)

devastated the gulf coast, particularly New Orleans. As high school students, we didn't know how bad it was, but we knew it was bad, and we wanted to do something about it. So, we proposed that we do another national trip to aid in Katrina/Rita Relief efforts for the summer of 2006. The initial proposal was a prime example of our wearing our Green Hats as a group.

When the idea came before the church's Youth Nurture Commission (the committee that would then bring it forward to the Session for a vote), there was understandable pushback. Those wearing White Hats stated that the funds weren't there after having just done a national trip. Those wearing Red Hats recognized that not all youth participate in the fundraising for mission trips and expressed their uneasiness giving "free rides" for a trip of this magnitude to those who don't "earn their way." As for the Black Hats, they stated that much of what we would be doing would be gutting houses that are potentially unsound structurally after such storms and the clear danger that posed to youth and chaperones alike. So, we, the youth group, put our Green Hats back on, and we modified our idea to accommodate those concerns raised. To make up for the lack of funds, we proposed doubling up our fundraising opportunities and researching the most cost-effective way to travel. To ensure we had no "free rides" and all youth justly earned their way, we proposed having a sign-in sheet for all fundraising events and setting a pre-designated number of fundraising events each participating youth had to attend to go. As for the safety issue, we stated that we would have to do research on what groups are running overnight efforts like what we were looking at doing and that "age appropriate work" would be a question we would be intentional about asking. Suffice it to say, these modifications eased most of the apprehensions they may have had, they took

it to the church's Session, and the next summer, we drove down to New Orleans with five full-size SUVs packed with kids and at least three trailers, all to aid in hurricane relief efforts.

In short, perhaps it is best to think of the Green Hat as one of adaptability. When faced with a particular problem, the Green Hat comes up with possible solutions to that problem. When one or more of those solutions need modification, the Green Hat is the one to come up with those modifications or to come up with new ideas to propose as alternatives to the initial idea. The Green Hat is very much so about "rolling with the punches" and "taking things as they come," a mindset we as the Church need to keep in mind going forward. There's no denying that the Church is presently facing a variety of issues, just as it has throughout the centuries and just as God's People as a whole (whether Christian, Jewish, or Muslim) have faced a plethora of issues (sometimes leading to conflicts with one another). With each new challenge comes an opportunity to create new solutions and/or to modify old solutions, all in the hopes of adapting to the ever-changing landscape. While attendance of worship services is statistically down, community service and "mission work" is very much alive and well. So, we as the Church have an opportunity then to consider how we can/should be less Sunday-centric and more focused on the good we can be doing everyday. Regardless, as beings made in the image of a Creator God, so, too, have we been endowed with creativity to face and adapt to challenges of varying degrees and types. So, I would invite you to wonder: How is God stimulating your creativity with the challenges in your life?

Pastor Brad

"Tis the Season... For Chili

Several people asked John Sezna for his chili recipe after a recent event. So, he sent it to the office in case anyone else was interested in having it.

John Sezna Slow Cook Chili

Ingredients:

- 2 lbs. Bob Evans Ground Pork Sausage (Green Tube)
- 1 Diced Onion
- [3-4 Celery Strips, Chopped](#)
- 3-4 Carrot Strips, Chopped
- 1 tsp Minced Garlic
- 3 strips of Bacon
- 12 oz Tomato Paste
- 2-14.5 oz Cans Kidney Beans (Hanover Organic), Rinsed.
- 1-14.5 oz Can Black Beans, (Hanover Organic), Rinsed.
- 2-14.5 oz Cans Diced Tomatoes, Fire Roasted (Hunts or Del monte)
- 3 cups Beef Broth
- 1 Bay Leaf
- Spice Mix:
 - 2 tsp Garlic Powder
 - 4 tsp Chili Powder
 - 3 tsp Cumin
 - 1 Tbsp Brown Sugar
 - 1 tsp Oregano
 - 1tsp Paprika
 - ½ tsp Black Pepper
 - ½ tsp salt
 - ¼ tsp Cinnamon
 - ¼ tsp Basil
 - ¼ tsp Dried Mustard
- 1 Tbsp Worcestershire Sauce
- 2 Tbsp Butter
- 8 oz Shredded Monterey Jack Cheese
- 3 Tbs Sour Cream

Steps:

- Cook Bacon, Place on Paper Towel, Drain Fat, Crumble.
- Dice Onion, cut Celery, Carrots into bite sized chunks.
- Heat at Medium a large drizzle of oil in large skillet.
- Add Onion, Minced Garlic, Celery, Carrots, Bacon.
- Cook, stirring until Onion is softened: 8-10 minutes.
- Add Pork and Spice Mix. Cook, breaking up meat into pieces until browned: 10-15 minutes.
(May be refrigerated until ready for next step.)
- Place Contents of skillet in Crock Pot, set on Low.
- Stir Tomato Paste into Crock Pot with Pork Mixture. Stir until combined: 1-2 minutes.
- Add Diced Tomatoes, Beef Broth. Rinsed Beans and Bay Leaf..
- Cook covered on Low for 6 hours.
- Season with Worcestershire Sauce, Butter, salt and pepper to taste.
- Serve [with toppings of Monterey Jack Cheese, Sour Cream, as desired](#).

FALL FEST FUN

F.I.T.'s last activity of the year allowed us to help children and adults have fun at the Northwest Family Recreation Center. Eleven NCCC volunteers helped with games, concessions, crafts, and distributing "trick-or-treat" candy at Fall Fest. Our congregation donated 32 pounds of candy so that we could sponsor a "trick-or-treat" stand. The Northwest Family Recreation Center needs and appreciates our help.

When FIT started in the summer of 2022, with guidance from the Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, we didn't know where it would take us. Thanks to our generous congregation and willing volunteers, we are helping community groups serve families and children in our neighborhood. During 2024, our congregation donated:

- ♦ Toilet paper and cleaning supplies for the Christ Woodland Food Pantry
- ♦ Easter candy for the NWFRC's Hop Along The Bunny Trail in April
- ♦ Halloween candy during Fall Fest in October
- ♦ We are currently collecting gift cards for a Case CLC family in need.

Our volunteers worked the:

- ♦ Race for Case CLC Carnival,
- ♦ NWFRC's Hop Along the Bunny Trail,
- ♦ NWFRC's Dance Recital at Firestone CLC,
- ♦ Night Out Against Crime and
- ♦ NWFRC's Fall Fest.

Many thanks to all who donated to the projects and to our faithful volunteers:



**THANK YOU FOR
SUPPORTING FIT**

- ♥ Bev Cinovec
- ♥ Jaci Chetelat
- ♥ Nancy Clem
- ♥ Betsy Davis
- ♥ Ken and Heidi Heischman
- ♥ Tom and Shelley Koutnik
- ♥ Joan Lannoch
- ♥ John and Betty Miller
- ♥ Pastor Brad and Katie Rito
- ♥ Susie Stevenor
- ♥ Jim Strandberg
- ♥ Ken and Nancy Williams.



MISSION SPOTLIGHT
NOVEMBER 2024
CHRISTMAS BASKETS

Only 52 Shopping Days
Until Christmas!

ONLY 43 Days Until the Annual
NCCC Christmas Basket Project

The Community Room at Acme Fresh Market in Montrose is already reserved for Saturday, December 14. We will begin packing the baskets at 9:00 a.m. and loading the delivery cars at the dock at 9:45 a.m. The grocery list consists of an 8 lb. spiral sliced ham, canned fruits and vegetables, potatoes, milk, eggs, and bread. Please plan to help pack, deliver, or both! A sign-up sheet will be available in mid-November.

But First, we need to raise \$1,500 to purchase the groceries for the baskets. Every year, the congregation of NCCC has generously donated the funds to prepare 30 Christmas food baskets valued at \$50 each. Please consider donating to fund one or two baskets. Of course donations of any amount are appreciated. Please mark your checks "Christmas Baskets" on the memo line and give it to John Sezna or place it into the collection plate.

Thank you to all who have helped with this worthy mission project in the past and to all who will help again this year!

*Thank You for your
support!
The Mission Committee*

FELLOWSHIP EVENTS

COMMITTEE MEETING

MONDAY

NOVEMBER 4

10:30 A.M.

109 S. HAMETOWN RD.

UPCOMING EVENTS

The Fellowship Committee will work on plans for the **Men's Brunch**. That event is set for November 10th, following Sunday Service. Volunteers will set up for that event on Friday, November 8. At that time the election equipment should be out of the way. Ken Williams will contact those involved. Those who are contributing food, please be at church with your item by 10:00 a.m.

The committee will also work on plans for the **Christmas party**, which will be Thursday, December 5, and the **Soup Lunch**, which will include the Governing Board yearly transition.

Set up for the first Sunday of Advent and partial set up for the Christmas Party will occur on Monday, November 25 at 10:00 a.m. Worship Committee sets up in Sanctuary, and those facility members contacted by Ken Williams will set up the other Christmas decorations.



PLEA FOR PEACE LETTER

It has now been a year since the events of October 7, 2023, when Hamas launched a major attack on Israel, killing 1,195 and taking 251 hostage, escalating the long-standing conflict between Palestinians and Israelis. As of October 2024, around 97 hostages from that attack are still believed to be held in Gaza, including both civilians and military personnel. Tragically, the Israeli government has confirmed that 33 of these individuals are presumed dead. Meanwhile, upwards of 40,000 Palestinians have lost their lives in Gaza. In the West Bank, more than 680 Palestinians have also been killed, including a significant number of women and children. Now, the dying has begun in Lebanon.

The impact of this conflict is not confined to distant lands. Here at home, in Akron, we feel its ripple effects, as it fractures the fabric of our own community. Anti-Semitism and anti-Muslim hate have surged, seeping into national politics and even into the local gatherings that once brought our Jewish and Muslim neighbors together. Relationships that were once built on trust and dialogue are strained, and the divisions between us feel deeper than ever.

But we cannot lose hope. We must stand firm in our commitment to end this cycle of violence, retaliation, and hatred. Rather than placing more conditions or demands before sitting at the negotiating table, we must seek peace that goes beyond temporary ceasefires. Both sides must release the burdens of past disappointments and take a genuine step toward lasting peace. This peace is not just for today, but for the children and grandchildren of all communities. The divine figures we pray to—whether in mosques, synagogues,

churches, or temples—are not gods of vengeance, but of compassion and hope. Our shared humanity calls us to build a future where love and reconciliation prevail, so that future generations may live free from fear and division.

This journey toward peace begins with dialogue. In the Middle East, there are leaders who are ready to step forward and put an end to the violence. They must be supported, and we must remember that for centuries, Jews and Muslims lived side by side in the Holy Land. This shared history proves that coexistence is not only possible but has been the foundation of these lands before. Now, we need leaders and communities to reclaim that spirit of unity, to rebuild the bridges of trust, and to lead us toward a future where peace is not merely hoped for but realized.

Here in Akron, we must take up the mantle and lead by example. We need to revive the evenings of interfaith dialogue that once served as the cornerstone of relationships built over the years. Our Jewish and Muslim communities have shared love, understanding, and respect in the past. If we cannot find peace here in our own neighborhoods, how can we expect those abroad to do the same? The member communities of the Akron Area Interfaith Council have the power to heal these divides and show the world what love, forgiveness, and reconciliation look like. Before we call for peace in the Middle East, we must first put our own house in order. The time is now. Let us come together once more, as friends and neighbors, take up our dialogue and shared events again, and walk the path of love that leads us all toward peace.

- Rev. Dr. Thomas J. Bodie
Akron Area Interfaith Council