

The Pastor's Post

NEW COVENANT
COMMUNITY CHURCH



Six Hats, Pt. 7

BLUE HAT

Well, we've made it: the New Year, and undoubtedly, we all have ideas of what we'd like to see accomplished this year, whether in our own lives, the life of the church, the lives of our friends and families, the life of our nation, or in our communities. However, not all ideas will have the same sources. Some of these ideas will be purely logical, others emotional, still others flooded with pessimism or optimism, and some will be just spit-balled ideas we haven't yet fleshed out. Put another way, these ideas will be from instances of our having worn the various hats we've been talking about so far. So, the question becomes: How do we sort through all of these ideas, organize them, and make sense of all of them? This is where the sixth and final hat comes in: the Blue Hat.

When you think of this hat, I want you to think of the sky, this all-encompassing bubble that seems to hold everything together. In any given discussion, the one wearing this hat is the one in charge of the discussion, not

unlike the ringleader in a circus or the conductor of an orchestra. Charged with, essentially, thinking about thinking, the Blue Hat holds everything together. From where they sit, they look at the big picture of what needs to be discussed, how the discussion is going, where the discussion might (need to) go from its present position, etc. If/when a discussion is at an end, they bring it all together by giving a summary of what problems have been addressed, what direction the discussion seems to be taking, and any conclusions that have been reached. Perhaps more importantly, though, during the discussions themselves, the Blue Hat ensures that all hats are being worn and expressed equally. For example, if someone is abusing the Black Hat and being overly pessimistic, the Blue Hat might ask them to put on either their Yellow Hat (therein looking at the positives) or the Green Hat (therein proposing new ideas of their own) for a few minutes.

(Hats continued on page 3)

The Messenger

January
2025

Governing Board

Monday
January 27
6:00 p.m.

F.I.T.

In March

Fellowship Committee

Thursday
January 2
10:30 a.m.

Finance Committee

Tuesday,
January 21
11:00 a.m.

Mission Committee

TBA

Worship Committee

January 6
4:30 p.m.

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From the President's Pen

LOOKING FORWARD TO 2025

Greetings, Everyone!

Where to begin? Uncertainty everywhere... boiler problems, having enough people to deliver Christmas baskets, natural disasters, and political unrest. We at New Covenant and everyone else face uncertainty as we begin 2025.

In the midst of everything, however, we, who claim to be Christians, are reminded that Jesus was born in and lived during a period of chaos. By the same token, because of Jesus, we need to remind ourselves that He brings us out of chaos into the path of love and peace in His victory over death.

So, too, our small congregation, with its kind-hearted and motivated individuals, is a beacon of hope as its members lead us in Mission activities such as book fairs, FIT programs in the Northwest Community area, and packing and delivering 30 Christmas baskets to the needy. We also collected a record amount of money for last year's Hunger Walk and supplied several walkers. We participated in the Harmony House Mitzvah Day project and gave 20% of our Pentecost offering to Harmony House. Our many social events have added joy to our lives, while a willingness to try a Blue Christmas service has caused us to pause and react on the comfort of God's love.

For sure, as our new Governing Board members begin their work, they realize the challenges that lie ahead. As a reminder, this period of chaos and discord might soften a bit as we realize that peace and love can help overcome the chaos that surrounds us.

A Happy New Year to All of Us!

Nancy W.

2025 GOVERNING BOARD	DIRECTORS	EX-OFFICIO OFFICERS
PRESIDENT Nancy Williams (2025)	Jenn Bryson (2026)	Rev. Brad Rito—Pastor
VICE PRESIDENT Ken Heischman (2025)	Joani Lannoch (2026)	Reesá Mathews— Secretary
	Tim Meyer (2027)	John Sezna—Treasurer
	Jaci Chetelat (2027)	

(Hats continued from page 1)

With that said, it's worth noting that Blue Hat thinking is not a "position" so much as it is just another thought process, something all of us are capable of doing, even in our own minds.

Just as all of us are capable of using any of the five other hats, so, too, are we all capable of tapping into Blue Hat thinking.

Additionally, while it sounds like the Blue Hat seems to be "large and in charge," this is not actually the case. The Blue Hat serves no purpose without the other hats to provide their input, meaning it actually is an equal to the other hats and not "over and above" the others. Think for a moment about the aspirations for the coming year I began by mentioning. I would wager that, around a month or so ago, as we saw the year wrapping up, we began spit-balling ideas about what we'd like to get done in the New Year (Green Hat). Since then, we've weighed the positives and negatives of those ideas (Yellow and Black Hats, respectively), we've surely had emotional reactions to some of those ideas (Red Hat), and maybe we've even done a little research into what the cost (s) (whether of time, energy, money, etc.) would be to bring any one of them to fruition (White Hat). So, with all these thoughts and bits of information swirling around our

minds, we need to ultimately make sense of it all, to come to some level of a conclusion, and that's where the Blue Hat comes in. By tapping into that thought process, we come to some kind of conclusion about what we will actually "resolve" to do for the New Year.

Tying this hat into our spiritual lives, then, there's argument to be made that this hat is a very spiritual (if not one of the most). As Christians, we have at our disposal a number of external Blue Hats, whether it's Scripture as a whole, Jesus' teachings and life specifically, God as a whole, the Holy Spirit more specifically, or other writings from past scholars. Those sources help to shape our personal beliefs and our faith (something of a Blue Hat in and of itself). Each one of these, then, not only guides our thought processes, but brings us to conclusions and decisions about how we will better live into our callings both in the year ahead and on a daily basis, even if the decision is "to think about this more" or "to do more research." In the end, the Blue Hat brings things full-circle, both wrapping up previous steps while also initiating those next steps in our faith journey. So, with that in mind, I ask: What has your Blue Hat led you to resolve to do in this new year?

Pastor Brad



SOUP LUNCH & TRANSITION TO NEW GOVERNING BOARD

Save the date of Sunday, January 19 after church for our popular soup lunch. This year, we will provide smaller containers so you can try a variety of soups and chilis. Check the sign-up sheet in the hallway for items needed.

Set up for the lunch will be on Friday, January 17 at 10:00 a.m.

AAIC MEETING

Tuesday, January 7
Noon
Mustard Seed
Highland Square



People will order their lunch first and proceed into the Portage Room. The meeting will begin at noon. This is an opportunity to meet the members and learn about planned events for 2025. Guests are welcome. Please let Nancy Williams know if you plan to attend.



Faith Innovation Team (FIT) 2025 Neighborhood Collaborations

Here is the FIT Event Calendar for 2025:

April 12 – Hop-A-Long the Bunny Trail Storybook Walk at NW Family Recreation Center. Volunteers are needed to serve refreshments, help with an egg hunt, staff the Storybook stations and more.

May—Race for Case Carnival - Volunteers are needed to oversee games, make snow cones, face painting, etc.

May—(7pm on last Friday in May) - Annual Dance Recital at Firestone High School Auditorium. Volunteers are needed to collect tickets and serve as ushers.

June 29 – T.P. Sunday collection for the Christ Woodland Food Pantry located at 444 N. Hawkins.

August 5 – Night Out Against Crime at NW Family Recreation Center. Volunteers are needed to serve beverages and distribute informational materials.

August 31 – Fifth Sunday Collection of cleaning products for the Christ Woodland Food Pantry.

October—Fall Fest at NW Family Recreation Center. Volunteers are needed to help with the trick or treat Storybook Walk, scavenger hunt, pumpkin decorating, games and serving refreshments. Volunteers are encouraged to come in costume!

Other – Volunteer for Anne T. Case CLC PTA – Volunteers are requested for various events. Volunteer opportunities will be reported in the *Messenger*.

Case CLC Collaborative of local churches – As emergencies arise for Case CLC families, requests for assistance will be presented to the NCCC congregation. This may be for gift cards, clothing donations or other items to support a family in need. Thank you in advance for your compassion and generosity.



Mission Committee 2025 Calendar of Mission Support and Opportunities

Projects Supported with Your Mission Dollars:

General Assembly, Synod and Presbytery
International Council of Community Churches
ICCC Ohio Fellowship
Solar Under the Sun
Central America Medical Outreach
Valor Home – aid to veterans
Grace House – end of life care
One Family Under Guard
South Street Ministries – support services to children and families.
Hunger Walk – Akron Regional Foodbank
Gennesaret –Feed My Sheep
Christ Woodland Food Pantry – serving Northwest Akron
Portage Path Book Fair
Case CLC Book Fair
Pastor’s Discretionary Fund
Other Mission Based Projects and Requests

Here is the 2025 Calendar of Scheduled Mission Opportunities:

February – Portage Path CLC Book Fair.

March – Case CLC Book Fair.

March 1 to April 13 – Lenten Super 6 to support the Akron Regional Foodbank.

April 13 – One Great Hour of Sharing Special Offering.

June 8 – Pentecost Special Offering supporting at-risk youth.

October 5 – World Communion Sunday/ Peace and Global Witness Offering.

November & December – Annual Christmas Basket Project.

December 31 – Christmas Joy Special Offering.