

Worship Helpers for December

USHERS:

4: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
11: George & Ann Passage
18: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
24: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
25:

GREETERS:

4: George & Ann Passage
11: Dorothy Bos
18:
24: Gloria Winters & Dorothy Bos
25:



SOUND SYSTEM



Ken Bell
Austyn Page

FELLOWSHIP TIME:

4: Aicha
11: Holly & Bud Spaulding
18: Nancy Carlson
25: Debs & Judy



Birthdays in December

2 Joyce Twining
3 Vicki Pantoja
4 Mark Fellows
4 Ella Mae Mercer
4 Lianna Tagle
12 Dylan Cook
19 Aaron Papes
20 Dorothy Bos
20 Genny Cooper
24 Donnielle Cook
25 Marilyn Melvin
26 Bill Leaver
30 Blake Cook
30 Jeanne Leaver



Anniversaries in December

21 Wayne & Jane Porter
28 Ken & Jo North

No Men's Breakfast
in December

Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

432 Quarterline • Newaygo, MI 49337 • (231) 652-6624

Jonathan Riedel, Pastor

The Churchmouse

December, 2016



Inches

"This is a sign for you; you will find a newborn baby wrapped snugly and lying in a manger."

Luke 2:12 CEB



Every Advent my sister and I had calendars to mark down the days to Christmas. Sometimes they were a strip of red cloth with a bell on its bottom. We had to untie a peppermint candy each day, inch by inch, stooping lower and lower, until on Christmas we could ring the little bell.

Other years we had bits of chocolate hidden behind pictures of angels, shepherds, and wise men. Inch by inch, we lifted flaps and left empty spaces until the nativity scene covering the treats was a mess of holes and smeared faces. It was a good habit to get into-this waiting for Jesus to come. It was good to look forward to something, to some birth, to something new, to a fresh, fragrant moment in the dull grass, and the bare trees of a Michigan winter.

The people in the years before Jesus' birth were used to waiting for God, for a time when swords would be beaten into plow blades and nations had long forgotten about war, for something worth hoping for, worth believing in and for a sign of how great God's love was for each and every one of us.

Some shepherds came, some astrologers from the Eastern lands arrived and what they saw satisfied some mystery in their hearts, took the chill of a dark and deep night and gave them a touch of God's loving hand that they could not help but thank God for as they scattered back into the lands they came from, even though it was only a birth, only a baby. Inch by inch, this child would grow into something far grander.

As we wait for Christmas once again, inch by inch, day by day, we look for something, some hope, some promise, some reassurance, some flash of God's sweet grace, more delicious than any candy we can find, more healing than any bandage, and more shivery with excitement than any bell that could ever ring

May it be so for you and for all in some small, every-growing way during this Advent Season.

The Rev. Jonathan D. Riedel-Pastor, Newaygo Congregational UCC

Worship Schedule



December 04

Second Sunday in Advent
Lighting of the Candles
Isaiah 11:1-10
Gifts to Bring Peace

December 11

Third Sunday in Advent
Carol Hymn Sing from the red hymnal
Lighting of the Candles
Isaiah 35:1-10
Gifts to Bring Justice



December 18

Fourth Sunday in Advent
Sunday School Pageant
Isaiah 7:10-16

December 25

Christmas Day
Hymn Sing and their Stories
- A Celebration
Luke 2:1-20



Treasurer's Report
October 16 - November 15, 2016

Expenses **\$5,767.51**

Difference \$3,638.49
 Phillips Fund \$146,078.55
 Neighbors in Need \$201.00

We have SO much to be thankful for. Let's think of some of the infinite possibilities available to us.

Dawn Anderson
 Treasurer

Income

October 17 \$2,578.00
 October 23 798.00
 October 30 901.00
 November 6 1,482.00
 November 13 3,648.00
 Total \$9,407.00

SK8 Club



Dear NCUCC SK8 Club Member 2016,

Hope you enjoyed SK8 Club this year. We thought you would enjoy seeing a picture of the hayride and the group. We had a great time of having supper together, learning some Bible verses, learning a song, and heading to the skate park when it wasn't raining!

We're looking at having another Wednesday night group possibly in February with Jeremy. We will keep you posted about that.

If you would like to come to the church to sing the SK8 Club song that we learned, "The Peace of God", please come to the church at 9:30 a.m. on Sunday, December 18th, for practice. We will practice the song, dress as wisemen, shepherds, or other parts of the Christmas story, and then sing the song for the church congregation during the church service at 10 a.m. Everyone is welcome.

Hope to see you soon,
 NCUCC SK8 Club Teachers



December 7 NCUCC and
 St. Mark's @ NCUCC

December 14 at Family of
 God

Sunday Morning Bible Study

9:00 am

A Look at what the Bible Says
 About Christmas

Dec. 4 -- Matthew 1-2
 Dec. 11 -- Luke 1-2
 Dec. 18 -- John 1

Join us with your questions. We will provide the Bibles.

Pastor Jon will be taking December 26th through December 31st off. Contact Nancy Carlson if you have any pastoral care needs.

**Christmas Eve
 Service of Stories and
 Songs**

7:00 pm

Featuring the Chancel Choir and the Bell Choir. The lighting of the Christmas Candle, and a Special Time and Treat for the Children.

**Deadline for the January
 Churchmouse**

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the **January Churchmouse** to the office by **Friday, December 30th.**

You may e-mail information to:
 churchmouse@newaygoucc.org
 or leave a hard copy in the office.



There is a copy of your directory listing in the notebook on the table in the fellowship hall. Please check your listing for accuracy and initial if OK or make necessary changes on the page. We want to have an up-to-date directory. Thank you for your help.



**Christmas
 Caroling**

NCUCC will be Christmas Caroling on Sunday, December 11, at The Brook at 2:00 pm and at Woodview Apartments at 3:00 pm.

We can meet at the Church by 1:45 pm to carpool.

--Thanks,
 Barb Getz



Rich, Linda, Al,
 Genny, Carolyn L.,
 Conrad Jr., Fred,
 Lucas, John, Hope,
 Maxine and Carolyn S.

My Name is Debra Walter and this is My Story



My sister, two brothers and I are the children of Carolyn and Harry LaPreze. I have always lived in the Newaygo area and went to school here.

In school my favorite subject was math. I also played volleyball and was a pom-pom girl. I liked school but could not understand their thinking when it came to art. I was artsy. My last year in school I painted a rock (granted it was not in a classroom, or even on school property -- it was on city property on Barton St. Someone had the gall to call the city police and they and the school tracked to me and my good friend. My painting skills were not approved by them, my career as a painter was shattered.

I was a girl scout, and earned lots of badges (but not one in painting), and when I went to scout camp I learned how to skinny dip (no badge for that either). But in high school I was on the National Honor Society.

I met this really cool guy one night while with my good friend, Tammy, and we ended up dating and I married him after I graduated. We have been married 41 years, and good years they have been. We have two daughters and now we have to great grandsons.

Klaus and I are avid Hockey fans and our oldest grandson, age 7, is a really good hockey player.

I work with four year olds in the Great Start program.

My friends from high school and I have "girls weekend" four times a year. What happens at girls weekend stays at girls

weekend. Another thing Klaus and I do with our couple friends is have a Skimmer T & Planner Party. We play cabin fever games, such as -- pool, pass the pickle, darts, euchre, cribbage. There are 10-12 of us and we have a great time.

My lifes happiest moments have been when I married Klaus and when our girls were born, and when our two wonderful grandsons were born.

I never had great expectations for my life and I would not change it. Klaus is a wonderful husband and treats me great. Maybe my life would have been different if my artistic life had not been ruined in high school. I know that one day I would have been able to say, "Move over Grandma Moses, Grandma Debbie is here to stay.

Note from Nancy:
I knew about Debi from Kindergarten. Her mom called me several times to complain about my dimpled darling son Fritz pulling the belts off of her dresses while chasing her on the playground. Well Fritz claims he remembers her saying, "pull on my belt Fritz, it drives my mom crazy" Deb and I have been friends for several years and I really enjoy her humor and wit. I also remember when she was painting rocks, she was the talk of the town and I saw her art work. Don't ask me about it.




December 2016

| | Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|---|--------|---------|-------------------------------------|--|--------|---|
| | 27 Bible Study 9:00 am Bell Practice 11:30-12:00 | 28 | 29 | 30 | 1 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | 4 Bible Study 9:00 am Bell Practice 11:30-12:00 | 5 | 6 | 7 Soup's On at NCUCC | 8 Worship & Pastoral Care 9:00 am | 9 | 10 |
| | 11 Bible Study 9:00 am | 12 | 13 | 14 Soup's On at Family of God | 15 | 16 | 17 |
| | 18 Bible Study 9:00 am Children's Christmas Program | 19 | 20 | 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 Christmas Eve Service 7:00 pm |
| | 25 Christmas Day | 26 | 27 | 28 Pastor Jon on Vacation | 29 | 30 | 31 |

Mission & Social Action News

Christmas Families



For many years our church has helped make Christmas brighter for families in need. You will have the opportunity to buy toys or clothing for children, as well as gifts for adults. If shopping is difficult for you, please consider a gift of money and a Mission member will do the shopping.

During Fellowship Time, Sue or Ann will help you select a name or two, give you the shopping tags and gift tags to put on your gift. Please wrap or bag your gift and place under the tree in the narthex by December 18. Our offerings of love will be given to the families on December 20. Thank you for doing God's work in our world!

Christmas Greetings

Once again, our "Shoobox Post Office" will be set up in the narthex. You are invited to bring cards to each other and place in the boxes. Remember to check your own box to see if you have mail.

Neighbors in Need

On November 13, the Neighbors in Need offering was received. Our national UCC uses this money to support ministries of justice and compassion in our country. One third of the money supports our Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). This year our offering was \$201.00.

Christmas Fund

For 115 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a tangible expression of God's love. One of the four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ, the Christmas Fund provides UCC congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in loving compassion, providing assistance to those who have so faithfully served our Church and who now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs.

In 2015, UCC congregations and members generously contributed \$1,528,481 to the Offering. This enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole Church, Pension Supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to individuals and families in need.

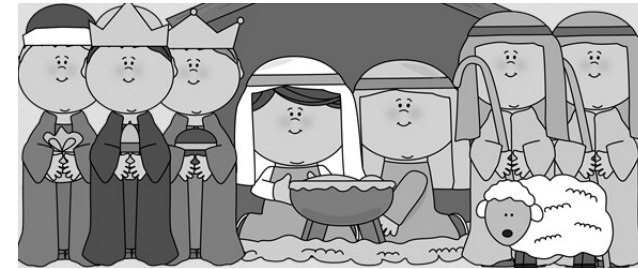
The theme of the 2016 Christmas Fund Offering is God's Love Colors Everything, and our goal is to raise \$1.7 million to help support these ministries of love and care. In the spirit of love, we invite and encourage you to prayerfully consider and support this year's appeal, and to spread the word so that others will also join in this vital ministry.

On behalf of the hundreds of clergy and lay employees and their families whose lives were touched by your support of last year's Christmas Fund Offering, we offer our sincere thanks to you for your generosity and for the love that colors everything in God's name! Please visit www.christmasfund.org for more information.

Once again, this offering will be received during our Christmas Eve Service, December 24.



Children's Christmas Program December 18



The Children's Christmas Pageant will take place during the service on Sunday, December 18. Sherry Tagle will read the Christmas story from the Bible, while the children, dressed in pageant clothes, take their places. After the story, the children will sing a song they learned at SK8 Club. They have been practicing the song in Sunday School.

Practice for the pageant will be during Sunday School on Sunday, December 11. Any child who comes to church at 9:30 am on December 18th may participate in the pageant.



My Name is Klaus Walter

and this is My Story

My family lived in Germany until I was about a year old. My parents decided to bring our family to America. There were three of us kids, two boys and a girl. My brother has passed away.

We moved to Detroit and I lived there until I was eight, then we moved to West Bloomfield and stayed there until I was fifteen. We then moved to White Cloud.

I graduated from White Cloud and went to college at Ferris and majored in a drafting and design program.

One night a bunch of us were hanging out and a couple of girls came riding up on a motorcycle. They were a couple of cuties! It

started raining. One of the girls jumped in my car and the other girl jumped in my buddies car. Well, I dated the girl that jumped in my car. The girl was nice but it didn't work out. I checked out the other cutie and we started dating. Her name was Debra LaPreze. Well, she ended up being my wife.

Deb has been one of the most important people in my life and has brought much happiness to me, beside giving me two lovely daughters.

I have no regrets in my life, and like it just as it is and would not change a thing.

Note from Nancy: Klaus has built a beautiful home for his family, and he is a heck of a hockey fan. If you want to talk hockey, just bring up the subject to him and you will be entertained. He is also a wicked Shanghi card player. I really enjoy Klaus, he puts up with me and has been known to laugh at some of my antics.