

Worship Helpers for February

USHERS:

4: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
 11: Dick & Gloria Winters
 18: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
 25:

SOUND SYSTEM



Ken Bell



FELLOWSHIP TIME:

4: Deb Burton & Judy Cook
 11: Jean Smith & Jim Sloan
 18: Bring a Snack Sunday
 25: Luke & Sherry



Choir will be starting up again with a rehearsal at 5:30 on Weds. February 7.



Birthdays in February

12 Jo North
 22 Ben Voshel

Thank You. . .

Bob would like to thank the church for your prayers and concern. He is doing remarkably well at this point, standing up from chairs on his own and getting stronger each day. His physical therapist is amazed and delighted with his progress. Thank you!

--Barb Getz

Deadline for the March Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the **March Churchmouse** to the office by **Monday, February 26.**

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

Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Jonathan Riedel, Pastor



The Churchmouse

February, 2018



Thawing

*"Then God issues his word and melts (snow) away!
 God makes his winds blow; the water flows again." Psalm 147: 18*



Most years, in the middle of February, winter breaks. The wind lessens and the snow dwindles. Lake Michigan's moderating effects prompt temperatures to rise so we begin to see grass beneath waning ice. It feels safe to walk among growing puddles of water again. I find myself, in those times, removing the hood from my head and unzipping my jacket. In the lingering of winter, I notice that it is not a singular season; something warmer, fresher, and more life-nurturing is coming. I simply have to learn how to wait for it, even when my kitchen thermometer bottoms out again and I watch drifts pummel the yellow siding of my porch.

Our psalmist is referring to a winter of his/her and his//her people's soul. Something-famine, an encroaching enemy, a decline of people even noticing that God is there-has brought the impact and the threat of calamity. Isolation, fear, despair, and a deep sense of loss are all that remain and our writer remains frozen in place, unable even to utter a mute cry for help. Yet, something within still stirs in this barren hinterland. God is still working and speaking. Winters may come, unwelcomed and unprepared for, but they will also pass. Something livelier always follows-a bloom, a new crop, a reaching out of song and trust to God. God warms God's people's spirits even as they experience the coldness of turning away from God. God speaks and ice drips into water. God shouts with joy and river gush down high mountains.

In that moment of mid-winter thaw, Lent often falls. Lent, from the Latin for the lengthening of days, is, at least in northern climes, made for the arrival of spring. This season of self-reflection, of turning away from harmful habits, of contemplated how often we pursue things far less worthy than God, is my faith's way of doing spring cleaning. It is the Christian manner of tossing what is no longer useful and healthy, of whisking and dusting away what is blocking us from seeing and experiencing the growing and healing glory of God. It is our way of turning away from the clutter of our lives so we can focus on what Jesus did for us: He lived out the life of God so fully that, though it led to his betrayal and death on a cruel cross, not even death and evil could keep him in the grave. Yet there is more here: if we can sweep away the noise and the blurriness in our lives, through the ever-blowing winds of God, nothing can separate us from God's love-not hate, not time, not age, not what we have done wrong, not what we have left undone, not pain, not sorrow, and not

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Worship Schedule



February 4

Communion
"Sources of Strength"
 Mark 1:29-39



February 11 -

Transfiguration Sunday
"Matisse's Chapel"
 Mark 9:2-9

February 14 - Ash Wednesday Svc. 7 pm

Joel 2:1-2, 12-17
Lenten Series - Questions about Jesus

February 18 - First Sunday of Lent

Psalms 25:1-10
Lenten Series - Questions about Jesus
"Why Not?"

February 25 - Second Sunday of Lent

Mark 8:31-36
Lenten Series - Questions about Jesus
"Who?"

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even death itself. If we allow Jesus' life to touch us in all our bareness and vulnerability, we have a new and permanent lease on life. Our hearts and minds will not remain frozen and lifeless, but we will meet and flow into God's vast river of life.

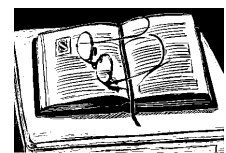
On the 14th of February, we will gather for Ash Wednesday, the official starting day of this thawing season. We will spread ashes on our foreheads to give us a tangible reminder that we are broken and temporary in this broken and temporary place. We will listen to stories of how we break and how we heal, how we search for and how we find God's peace and strength. We will gather around a table that Jesus laid out and share bread and wine, common items that he made even more meaningful. As we eat morsels of pita bread and drink small cups of grape juice somehow the story of his crucifixion and resurrection strikes us as more real than before because we have touched and tasted something that makes his love and his hope burst to life. If we are open to what God is up to, maybe we will be moved. Maybe we will hear a word from God. And maybe we will be thawed and broken as the snow is in the coming spring, free to flow to God's vast ocean of peace.

The Rev. Jonathan D. Riedel, Pastor
Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ



Pick a Topic Sermons

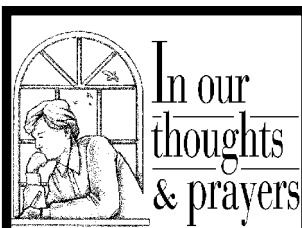
Pastor would like to hear from you about which topics you would like Pastor Jon to feature during his *Pick a Topic* sermons. If you have a suggestion, you can call Pastor at 652-6624, put a note in the offering plate, or email him at revjdriedel@gmail.com.



Sunday Morning Bible Study

9:00 am

We continue its walk through the prophesy of Isaiah. We meet at 9 a.m. Bring your questions. We'll supply the Bibles.



John, Melissa, Linda, Al, Genny, Eva, Vicki, Marguerite, Carolyn, Conrad Jr., Fred & Lucas.

Tuesday Adult Study Class- noon and repeating at 7 p.m.

What is the Pseudopigrapha? These were books of prophesy and praise written under other people's names that circulated among the people of Israel during Jesus' time. We will look at excerpts from four of these writings and see how they had an impact on the Bible we have today. We meet at noon and 7:00 pm. See Pastor jon for a packet of reading. Here is the schedule:

- 2/06 - The book of Enoch
- 2/13 - Testaments of the Twelve Patriachs
- 02/20 - Jubilees
- 02/27 - Prayers of Jacob



In case of severe winter weather which would make it necessary to cancel Sunday Church Services, please check your TV Channels 13 and 8 for closures.

Thank you
Pastor Jon

Smile Awhile. . .

One Easter Sunday morning as the pastor was preaching a children's sermon, he reached into his bag of props and pulled out an egg. He pointed at the egg and asked the children, "What's in here?"

"I know, I know!" a little boy exclaimed, "pantyhose!"

A new pastor was visiting in the homes of his parishioners. At one house it seemed obvious that someone was at home, but no answer came to his repeated knocks at the door.

Therefore, he took out a business card and wrote 'Revelation 3:20' on the back of it and stuck it in the door.

When the offering was processed the following Sunday, he found that his card had been returned. Added to it was this cryptic message, 'Genesis 3:10.'

Reaching for his Bible to check out the citation, he broke up in gales of laughter. Revelation 3:20 begins 'Behold, I stand at the door and knock.' Genesis 3:10 reads, 'I heard your voice in the garden and I was afraid for I was naked.'

Thank You

I want to say THANKS for all the ways this church family has been so supportive of my family and I during Rich's cancer journey. If you said a prayer, mailed a card, made a meal, or stopped to visit; you are a blessing to me. A special thanks to Pastor Jon for all his visits and guidance during that time. Ken Bell, I am grateful for your help with the picture tribute and the music for Rich's memorial service. For everyone who prepared food for Rich's memorial service, came by to offer their condolences and shared a memory, I appreciate you.

With Christ's love,
Denise VanGessel and family

Camp Henry Summer Camp



With the help of Camp Henry Newaygo County student scholarships, our church was able to send 10 children to camp last summer. They had a great time and were thankful for the opportunity.

Camp Henry again has scholarships set aside for Newaygo County children who qualify for camp for the summer of 2018. Our church will help pay part of the remainder of the registration fee.

During Kids Klub in February, parents will have an opportunity (and help) to fill out the provided forms for summer camp. No proof of income is needed, but parents will need to report household income on the form, as well as medical information. (All information will be confidential.)

Deadline for turning in the camp form to Gloria or Pastor will be March 1. By turning the forms in early, your child or children will have the best chance to attend camp at the time they choose.



Canned Goods for Food Pantry

We are continuing the collection of Canned Goods for the food pantry. There is a special need at this time of the year. There will be a box under the coat racks in which to put your donations.

Thank You

February 2018

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
28	29	30	31	1	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25
Bring a Snack Sunday	Presidents' Day	Adult Bible Study Noon & 7 pm	Choir Practice 5:30 pm Kids Klub 5:30-7	Circles Meal	8:00 am Men's Breakfast at Newaygo United Methodist		



Circles engages the entire community to come together to find solutions to poverty and reduce the poverty rate by at least 10% within ten years. Communities must be willing to support households to earn at least 200% of the Federal Poverty Guidelines. Circles is integrated with existing local employment, education, and human service programs in order to effectively address poverty.

March, 2018 thru February 28, 2019 Newaygo UCC will host the Circles Group. We will continue to provide and serve the meal on the 4th Thursday of each month.

We are always open for volunteers to help with preparing food - serving food and clean-up. Volunteers are also needed as greeters. On other Thursdays also.

Other churches have provided meals for this Circles program for other Thursdays and will continue to do so.

If you have questions about this program, you can see Pastor Jon or Gloria.

Thank You



Treasurer's Report Dec. 16, 2016 -- Jan. 15, 2017

	Income	Total Exp.
Dec. 17	\$1,020.00	
Dec. 24	1,239.00	
Dec. 31	257.00	
Jan. 7	1,401.00	
Jan. 14	3,142.00	
Total	\$7,059.00	\$5,165.21
Difference		\$1,893.79

Phillips Fund	\$174,583.97
Christmas Fund (Veterans of the Cross)	\$661.00

We have a wonderful start for another year where we work and give to God's Kingdom. Thank you all.

Dawn Anderson, Treasurer

You're Invited to attend an exciting journey

Kids' Klub Worship Thru Art



Join us for Kids' Klub at Newaygo United Church of Christ every **Wednesday in February 5:30-7:00 pm** through **Wednesday, February 28**. We will eat supper at church, then travel to Studio 37 downtown.

Stacy Kirk and Gabe Schillman, artists and owners, will work with the children to create Easter-themed art with various mediums.

Children respond to working with their hands and creating. They will have an opportunity to see art, work with professionals and their material. They will have an opportunity to create from their own faith and from the Easter Story.