

## Worship Helpers for November

### USHERS:

5: Dick & Gloria Winters  
 12: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters  
 19:  
 26:



### SOUND SYSTEM

Ken Bell

### FELLOWSHIP TIME:

5: Jane & Newt Porter  
 12: Joyce T. & Debi W.  
 19: Bring a Snack Sunday  
 26: TBD



## Birthdays in November

3 Ken North  
 6 Nancy Myers  
 12 Nathan Voshel  
 13 Donald Hills  
 14 Marcia Peterson  
 17 Aidan Petz

## Anniversaries in November

7 Richard & Denise VanGessel  
 12 Jose & Nancy Hauser



## Trunk or Treat a Huge Success



Our 3rd Annual Trunk or Treat was a great success. We had 350 kids of all ages in a variety of costumes. Bunches of candy treats were given out by a great group of church family ladies. Thank you to all those who passed out candy and to all our candy donators.

Looking forward to all the fun again next year.



## Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Jonathan Riedel, Pastor



## The Churchmouse



November, 2017



## Stewardship is a way to say 'Thank You'

*"Whoever is faithful with little is also faithful with much, and the one who is dishonest with little is also dishonest with much. If you haven't been faithful with worldly wealth, who will trust you with true riches?" Luke 16:10-11 CEB*

Some stories that Jesus told are easy to preach about. The Good Samaritan. The Prodigal Son - both of these lend themselves to sometimes hard but easy to understand lessons. The lines I quoted above come from one of Jesus' most challenging parables-the story commonly called the parable of the Unjust Steward. A man fires one of his money managers because he really isn't doing his job. The soon-to-be-unemployed realizes his essential laziness and unfitness for physical labor and so devises a clever way to win influence and friends. He manages to half all of the debts that others owe his former boss thus saving them considerable cash and winning their gratitude (and perhaps a place to stay when his money runs out.) His former boss commends him for his devious cleverness-the surest letter of reference in those times for another position. Jesus also admires the crook and his smarts and urges his followers to be as clever with the gifts from God he is giving them. He goes on further to suggest that the world of wealth is an often corrupt one and one has to wickedly wise to survive; if you cannot succeed in the ways the world around you demands, even if it means getting your hands dirty, how are you going to be successful in the far more demanding world of God's gifts and riches? This invitation, which seems to encourage tricking your neighbors, embezzlement, and sheer criminal craftiness, is hardly the ideal Sunday School lesson we, let alone our children, need to learn.

But if we get stuck on those details, we miss Jesus' point entirely. The unjust steward is commended not because he is crooked but because he is clever. He is using the talents he has been given. He has clear insight into his shortcoming and deep understanding of the people around him. He knows he cannot survive on his own and he suspects that neither can anyone else. So he uses money and his business savvy to create a network of support strong enough to carry him through the hard times ahead. In the end, he has used his God-given smarts in a way that benefits both him and the people around him, although his intentions were a bit more self-serving. Strangely, he has looked out for his neighbors much the way he looked after himself. It would be asking much to consider this a kind of love, a kind of compassion, but it is honoring God's commandment for mutual care and commitment to your fellow human beings. Somehow he has managed to use his talents crookedly but well-at least it might look that way in the eyes of God. I think even Jesus had to smile when he was adding his take on this not so conventional way of going about pleasing God.

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So what pleases God? During this month, my denomination, the United Church of Christ, recognizes Stewardship Sunday as a day to recognize what we have been given and how we are supposed to give back with what we have been given. I do not find it coincidental that we also celebrate Thanksgiving during the same month. Being good stewards, good caretakers and good choosers of what we have is a way of saying 'thank you'. It is recognizing the privilege of the time, the talent, and the resources that we have been given and then, as a way of being grateful, using them well. Using them well means benefiting not just ourselves, but also the world around us and our fellow creatures as well. Even the most elaborate cathedral or the most well-paid minister or the most celebrated charity is no substitute for acts of kindness and compassion that help feed, shelter, heal, and give hope to this world and to our fellow inhabitants when they are the most in need.

Doing that pleases God, even if our motives are not completely devoid of self-service (how are we really going to be completely selfless?) and even if we make a mess of what we are trying to do (and how do we not do just that?). Maybe as we reflect on how to be users of the gifts we have been given and as we reflect on how we can be thankful for what we have, we should take a clue from the unjust steward. Use your gifts to make friends and better the world. Be clever in your compassion and your care-you can take care of yourself but don't forget that your well-being depends on everyone else's. Show your gratitude by doing something creative, constructive, and life-giving with what you have.

I think, perhaps, that might be the best way to be thankful, the best way to earn the wry smile of Jesus.

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



## Two More of our Camp Henry Campers



*Ethaniel*

*Andrew*

Two more of our ten campers at Camp Henry are Ethan and Andrew Thompson. Ethan is nine years old and in 3rd grade; Andrew is 13 and in 7th grade.

Ethan said he enjoyed being pulled on the Donut and the Banana Boat on the lake. The driver would do "rotten eggs", driving in circles to create waves, which would often flip the kids into the water.

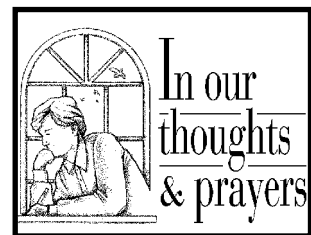
Andrew enjoyed his outdoor cooking, martial arts, and boating. One of his outdoor recipes had to do with cooking a banana loaded with peanut butter, and chocolate chips. Ethan's activities were games, boating and archery. Other group activities were four-square, gaga ball, Capture the Flag and trivia.

The campers participated in chapel, singing songs and hearing stories about God. Although they worked after breakfast to clean up their cabins, they never won the ice cream prize.

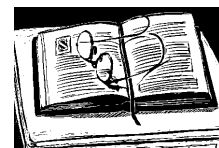
Camp food was "the best food I ever tasted, and we could eat until we were full". After meals, they would always bus and clean up their own tables.

Both boys rode horses. Ethan had an outdoor meal cooked over the fire - beans, beef stew, with marshmallows for dessert. They also played flashlight tag.

Their mother Jessica said that her children came back different after camp -- more responsible for themselves.



Al, Genny, Carolyn, Conrad Jr.,  
Fred & Lucas.



Sunday Morning Bible  
Study

9:00 am

We meet at 9 a.m. each Sunday to get our Scriptural juices flowing as we prepare for morning worship. This month we continue our study of Esther.

### 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

### Deadline for the December Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the **December Churchmouse** to the office by **Monday, November 27**.

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

# November

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29	30	31 Women's Bible Study 10 am Adult Bible Study Noon & 7 pm	1 Admin Meeting 10:00 am	2	3	4
5 Fall Mtg. of Grand West Assoc. 2:30 pm at Shelby UCC	6	7 Women's Bible Study 10 am Adult Bible Study Noon & 7 pm	8 Worship & Pastoral Care 9:00 am Choir Practice 5:30	9	10	11
12	13	14 Women's Bible Study 10 am	15 Choir Practice 5:30 Council Mtg. 7:00 pm	16	17	18
19	20	21 Women's Bible Study 10 am Thanksgiving Eve Svc - 7 pm	22 Choir Practice 5:30	23 Thanksgiving Office Closed	24	25
26	27 Churchmouse Deadline	28 Women's Bible Study 10 am	29 Choir Practice 5:30	30	1	2

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

Did you ever wonder what the blues have to do with the gospel? Join us as we listen to the Guitar Evangelists, African-American men and women who traveled the church and juke joint circuit during the 1920's and 1930's and, in the process, inspired Modern Gospel music, rhythm and blues, and rock. Here is the schedule:

Nov.7 - Male Guitar Evangelists  
Nov. 28 - Female Guitar Evangelists



## 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](mailto:revjdriedel@gmail.com).



## Bring a Snack Sundays

The 3rd Sunday of each month will be designated as *Bring a Snack Sunday*. If you wish to participate, bring a snack of your choice to share at Fellowship Time.



## Treasurer's Report

October 1 2017 -  
October 14, 2017

	Income	Total Exp.
Sept. 17	\$ 459.00	
Sept. 25	891.00	
Oct. 1	3,738.55	
Oct. 8	2,234.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$7,322.55</b>	<b>\$6,114.12</b>

**Difference** **\$1,308.43**

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Phillips Fund \$164,958.06

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Thank you to everyone for your consistent, generous donations of time, talent and money. The budget is in good shape and holding steady as we go. Hooray!

Dawn Anderson, Treasurer

## Thanksgiving Service

On Tuesday, November 21 at 7:00 pm, we will be hosting our annual Thanksgiving Service. We will be sharing what we are most thankful for, singing some grand songs a cappella, and listening to what God has to say about the attitude of gratitude.

Come and join us.



# Love and Go On

by Denise Van Gessel  
in memory of Linda Carlson

*You can shed tears that she's gone,  
or you can smile because she lived.*

*You can close your eyes and pray she'll come back  
or you can open your eyes and see all that she left.*

*Your heart can be empty because you can't see her anymore  
or you can be filled with the love you shared.*

*You can turn your back on tomorrow and live for yesterday  
or you can be happy for tomorrow because of yesterday.*

*You can remember her and only that she is gone  
or you can cherish her memory and let it live on.*

*You can cry and close your mind, be empty and turn your back on life  
or you can do what she'd want. . .*

*SMILE, open your eyes, LOVE and go on.  
You can carry on her legacy to love and cherish all things in your life.*

## Circles Poverty Program

If you would like to help with our Community Outreach Program with money, donations of food, or help prepare food or serve, please sign the sheet in the Fellowship Hall.

We are also in need of empty containers, such as cottage cheese, margarine, Cool Whip, peanut butter jars, mayo jars, yogurt containers, or whatever you may have. We use these to put our leftover Circles Meals in for those who wish to take them home. Please bring your clean containers and put them in the box in the Fellowship Hall marked *Containers for Circles*.



Thank You  
Gloria



Morph

## Kids Klub Hayride



Lily Whitehead



Lily Whitehead



Purcell Barn



Waiting to see Lily

The Kids Klub ended the month of October with a hayride on the Purcell Farm. We were, for the first time, able to catch Lily Whitehead, the Stumpy Field Witch, on camera with her Morph friend. The kids and some adults went up to her shack and were able to see her.

Exciting for all. Thanks to Jane and Bill for pulling our wagons. A great time was had by all who were there. We ended our great evening with bags of apples and some great treats.

Thanks to all who made this fun and memorable time happen for all the Kids, both young and old.