

Worship Helpers for August

USHERS:

7:
14 :
21:
28:

GREETERS:

7: Katrina
14:
21:
28:



SOUND SYSTEM



Ken Bell
Austyn Page

FELLOWSHIP TIME:

7: Don & Holly
14: Sue & Linnea
21: Dorothy Bos &
George & Ann Passage
28: Ella Mae Mercer & Gretchen Mee



Birthdays in August

2 Sherry Tagle
4 Dawn Anderson
9 Sue Johnson
9 Ben Riedel
10 Theresa Voshel
11 Denise VanGessel
13 Max Purcell
16 Paul Papes
16 Karen Veenstra
18 Kimberly Thomas
29 Doris Purcell



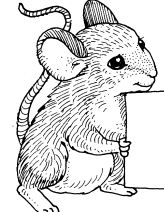

Anniversaries in August

6 Greg & Nancy Myers
8 Nathan & Theresa Voshel
15 Paul & Audrey Eno
20 Paul & Anna Papes
27 Allen & Sheila Raterink

Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Jonathan Riedel, Pastor

The Churchmouse

August, 2016

To Tell the Truth



*“God’s Spirit blows wherever it wishes.
You hear its sound but you don’t know where
it comes from or where it is going.
It’s the same with everything who is born of the Spirit.”*

John 3 &CEB

It is the heart of my work to tell the truth or at least to make an honest attempt to do so. The truth in question is what really lies at the heart of life, what it is that gives all we are meaning. I suspect that is what Nicodemus was trying to do when he approached Jesus for a midnight conversation. He did so because his desire to know what Jesus was up to was stronger than his fear of his highers up in Jewish leadership would do to him once they found who he was talking to. Nicodemus had noted Jesus’ healing, the directness and passion of his words, and the hope he raised with their own people, people so overcome by divisions and by hopelessness. He had to find out the truth about Jesus, the secret behind what he was doing. Was he some kind of evil spirit? Did he come from God? So he came to Jesus in a mixture of curiosity and terror, to seek the truth.

It was not as clear-cut a journey as Nicodemus was hoping for. Searching for the truth seldom is. We as human beings have an inerrant tendency to nail life down into tight boxes. We want to know what is right and what is wrong. Most of all, we want to be certain that our views and our convictions are the correct ones. I wonder, sometimes, if a good portion of our wars, our mistreatment of other people, and our destruction of the world around us has more to do with the ‘rightness’ of our philosophies than it does with the narrowness of our hearts.

Therefore I don’t think it is far-fetched to suspect that Nicodemus went to Jesus not so much to be challenged as to be reinforced in what he already knew to be true about God and God’s ways in our lives. He just wanted to learn how to be live by those preconceived notions better-to pray better, to offer worthier sacrifices, to be more obedient to the Law. Maybe then he would be able to have all the talents that Jesus seemed to be showing. I suppose he didn’t mind a little challenge to clear up the dustier corners of his spirit. What he was not expecting was to be thoroughly confounded by what Jesus had to say to him.

What Jesus shared with him was series of riddles, akin to Zen koans, designed to get Nicodemus to stop thinking and to start listening with his ears truly open. He offered images of being reborn long after you have emerged from your mother’s womb. He conjured pictures of people living darkness more than they loved light even in a land where darkness hid thieves and

continued on page 2



Worship Schedule

August 7 -
Luke 22:7-34
God Calls: Resist
Communion



August 14 - Romans 8:18-39
Forgiveness and Courage
Hymn Sing

August 21 - John 15
Presence and Life
Hymn Sing

August 28- - Psalm 24
Everything is God’s
Bring a canned good to share with our
greater community

(continued from page 1)

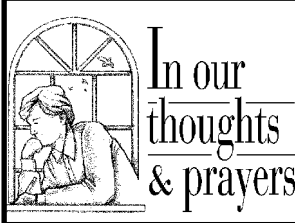
dangerous terrain. Then he offered a lingering insight: God's spirit is just like the wind. You don't know where it starts and where it will end. And that will also be true about anyone who works with God's spirit. There will no place and no place that God's spirit cannot touch or affect. You will notice God by the sound of God's work in action, but there is no way you can contain it or control it. Those prerogatives belong to God. Your call in all of this is to pay attention and to come along, if you choose to.

What Nicodemus discovered is that the deepest meaning of everything, the heart of the truth, is not something you can place in your wallet or in your purse and walk around with it as though it was rabbit's foot. It is not a diploma we can display to show how proper and right we are. Most of all, it is not a weapon we can use to bludgeon offenders out of our way. If anything, it is more like a surf board for riding the waves of God's spirit, a compass to show us through the woods in our lives when we have no particular direction to go, or the opening note of a musical piece strong and clear enough to invite to join in. This truth invites us to join in an adventure of discovery, of possibility, of hope, and of openness. It lifts the clouds from the sky. It is not there to funnel us into a safe and narrow cave.

Pontius Pilate, during his inquisition of Jesus, asked him what truth is really about. Jesus knew the narrowness constraints of Pilate's mind couldn't handle what he had to say so he kept silent. But Jesus no longer keeps silence; his words float through history, tipping over all our prejudices and presumptions. They invite us to follow to the wide horizon, to turn away from the traps of our fenced-in yards and enclaves. They urge us to come to the Truth, as expansive and as freeing as the wind itself. Will we follow or will we not? That is the only words of truth we can say.

Peace,

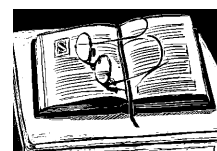
Pastor Jon



In our thoughts & prayers

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

Sunday Morning Bible Study



9 am every Sunday. A Slow Journey through the Acts of the Apostles.


All are Welcome Come Join Us • Bibles Provided

Women's Bible Study

Women's Bible Study will be meeting on Tuesdays at 10:00 am. We will be following the lectionary texts for the summer. All are welcome!

Deadline for the September Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the **September Churchmouse** to the office by **Sunday, August 28**. You may e-mail information to: churchmouse@newaygoucc.org or leave a hard copy in the office.



Adult Study Classes

Noon and 7 p.m.-each Tuesday


Movie Series: *Two Days, One Night*
Directed by the belgian Dardenne brothers

Explores what happens when a woman has to beg her fellow workers to vote for the retention of her job. The ethics revealed in this film will provide a lively discussion.

We will also start the *Cotton Patch Gospel*, a musical that sets the life of Jesus in the rural American South.

Join us as we watch this carefully.

Friday & Saturday, September 9 & 10




9 am to 3 pm at NCUCC

You can bring your items to the church during Gloria's office hours. We have a place to store them here. NO CLOTHING, PLEASE!

Thank You for supporting Women's Fellowship.

--Deb Walters, Nancy Myers, Gloria Winters



Debi Walter would like to send a huge THANK YOU for all the prayers, food and visits to her during her recent surgery.

Address Change

Carolyn LaPreze's new address is:
Christian Care Nursing Center
Room F#17
2053 Sheridan Dr.
Muskegon, MI 49442
Carolyn would appreciate receiving mail from you.



Treasurer's Report

June 16 - July 15
2016

	Income	Total Exp.
June 20	2,492.65	\$5,602.20
June 27	1,230.00	
July 3	2,652.80	
July 10	2,382.32	
Total	\$8,757.77	
Difference		\$3,155.57
Phillips Fund		\$144,733.30

Thank you fr being to faithful with your summer giving.

Dawn Anderson
Treasurer

Items Needed to Fill Backpacks



- Yellow Pencils
- Block Erasers
(not pencil caps)
- Pointed Fiskar Scissors
- Glue Sticks
- Crayola Crayons
- Markers
- Colored Pencils



- Plastic Pencil Box
- Spill-proof Water Bottle

Please DO NOT Bring:

- Trapper Keepers or 3 Ring Binders
- Permanent Markers
- Mechanical Pencils
- Backpacks with wheels

Mission & Social Action is collecting the supplies for the backpacks.

Women's Fellowship will purchase the backpacks.

Compassion Home to offer care and comfort for terminally ill

A group mostly comprised of nurses and other health professionals has been working for more than three years in an effort to create a home where people in the final stages of their lives can have care and comfort around the clock.

"We believe it is best for people to die in the comfort of their own homes," said Ann LaPres Hindes, "but for many reasons, some people cannot. For individuals in these situations, family-like care will be provided in our home, The Newaygo County Compassion Home for the Terminally ill."

A core group has been working quietly, obtaining nonprofit tax status, creating bylaws and completing other legal challenges. The group's mission of providing compassionate loving support to the terminally ill in a peaceful, comfortable home setting while caring for the physical, spiritual and emotional needs of guests and their families.

It was noted that, in a hospital setting, nurses do not have the luxury of time to spend long moments with one patient when they have several others needing care.

All guests of the Compassion Home will be a patient of a hospice organization. The Compassion Home staff and volunteers will provide direct patient care and will assist with all activities of daily living, companionship, social support and listening.

The group's biggest challenge so far is finding a suitable home that could be donated to the organization. Ideally, a ranch-style home with three or more bedrooms would be great.

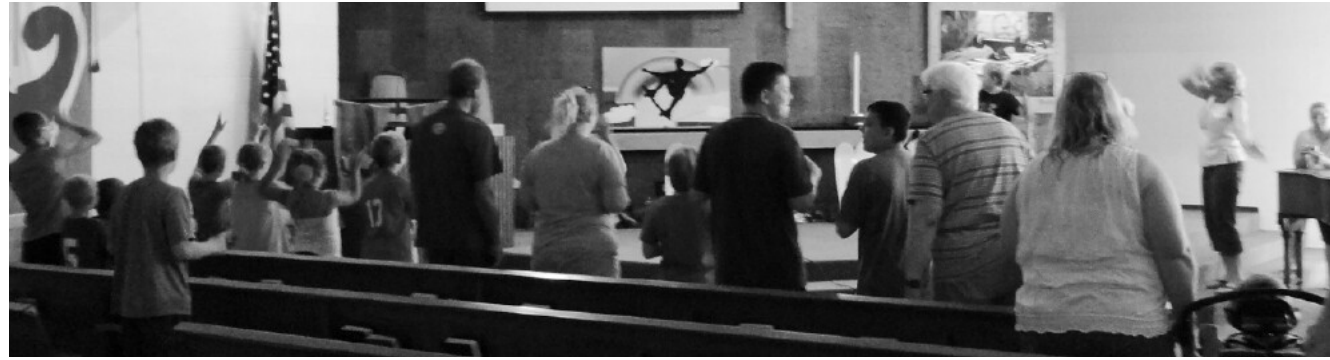
For more information, e-mail nc.compassionhome@gmail.com. Information is also available online on Facebook.

Financial contributions can be made via e-mail or through <https://www.gofundme.com/Compassion-Home>.

August, 2016

	Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
31	1	8	15	22	29	6	13
7	14	21	28	4	11	18	25
				10	17	24	31
			2	9	16	23	30
			10 am Women's Bible Study Adult Bible Study 12 pm & 7 pm	10 am Women's Bible Study Adult Bible Study 12 pm & 7 pm	10 am Women's Bible Study Adult Bible Study 12 pm & 7 pm	10 am Women's Bible Study Adult Bible Study 12 pm & 7 pm	10 am Women's Bible Study Adult Bible Study 12 pm & 7 pm
			3	10	17	24	31
			4	11	18	25	31
			5	12	19	26	31
				13	20	27	31
				20	27	Men's Breakfast @NUMC 8:00 am	3

Skateboard VBS 2016 a huge success!



This July 12-14, we had something very beautiful which happened in our church. Skateboard Vacation Bible School. Some of what happened bordered on miracle.

We had 36 kids, ages 2 to 14, who came every night. We had nearly the same number of adults who helped or were parents and grandparents. That entire group of people enjoyed a wonderful meal every night. The fruits and vegetables were really popular along with everything else. With no high fructose corn syrup!

When a young man named Jeremy, with a beard and tattoos, came in carrying his skateboard and a camouflage cover on his Bible - when he read from his Bible and shared his faith, the children listened.

All of us sang and signed "My God is Powerful". (Check it out on YouTube - Everest, plus the song title. A chilly scene on the screen for such hot evenings!)

We talked about prayer the first night – how you can pray out loud, or quietly in your mind, with your hands folded or your hands in the air. You can pray when you're getting ready to do something like skateboard.

The second night we talked about the 10 Commandments and how there are rules for doing things in life, like keeping your skateboard dry. We had some improvisation, acting out the 10 Commandments, including Jane trying to steal Jeremy from his wife. He almost went but didn't in the end.

The third night Sherry played hangman with the children. The answer was The Golden Rule. Generally, the kids and adults abided by that rule each night.

In three evenings, the kids designed and painted the bare wood on their own skateboards. Littler kids heard more Bible stories, played outside and decorated their scooters. On the third night we had five or six men who worked diligently with each child to assemble his/her own skateboard with truck and wheels and grip tape.

Children who finished their skateboards were so ready to go to the skate park that they were skateboarding in the hallways!. We thought they might storm the doors! Fortunately we had a skateboarding family who showed up to help, and they walked the first wave of new skateboarders down to the skate park to practice.

The skate park time was not even organized chaos. It was chaos! . We had scooters, skateboarders, rip stickers, other contraptions, and people just running up and down the structure. We even had Lucas in his special wheelchair flying around pushed by his brother. If there is such a thing as guardian angels, they got a work out and were hovering big-time over that skate park those three nights.

There was no significant blood loss! We would call the children back from the skate park to the side-lines three times. Once for snacks and water; once to watch Jeremy or other older skateboarders, and once for a closing prayer.

The Newaygo police showed up to give out tickets. Yikes! They were free ice cream tickets for anyone wearing a helmet. Whew. The policeman even prayed with us and took a 360 picture to post on the Newaygo Police Website. (A little blessed part of the world, we pray to extend to all - kids of all ages, abilities, our police protecting and encouraging...)

Mostly parents did remember to pick up their kids, although a few stayed later into the evening to play. We made friends with boarders who were at the park before us, giving them water and treats and apologizing for our invasion. They were gracious.

To thank everyone who helped would be impossible, because everyone here who contributed to the strawberry social or the meal or who brought in a pop can or who helps make this building exist helped. Everyone had a job or practiced generosity. Like Pastor said - moved with the Holy Spirit. Everyone listened and said yes, and everyone did their job very very well. We are sure we planted some seeds in the good soil.

On behalf of the children – thank you.

Your Christian Education Commission

