

Worship Helpers for July

USHERS:
1: George & Ann Passage
8: George & Ann Passage
15: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
22: Dick & Gloria Winters
29:



SOUND SYSTEM

Ken Bell

FELLOWSHIP TIME:

1:
8: Luke, Jane & Nancy Hauser
15: Bring a Snack Sunday
22: TBD
29: 5th Sunday Potluck



Birthdays in July



3 Sheila Raterink
4 Marilyn Spaulding
8 Jane Porter
10 Maxine Parminter
15 Holly Matthews
19 Ann Passage
20 Eli Papes
21 Paul Eno
22 Carolyn LaPreze
23 Linnea Godfrey
28 Fred Veenstra
29 Miriam Strohpaul

Anniversaries in July

2 Stan & Ella Mae Mercer
13 Bill & Jeanne Leaver
19 George & Ann Passage

July Worship Schedule

The Bible in 13 Chapters

July 01
CORONATION
I Samuel 8:10-22
Communion

July 08 -
CORRECTION
Micah 6:6-8
Mission of the Month

July 15 -
CELEBRATION
Psalm 146
Hymn Sing

July 22 -
COLLISION
Ecclesiastes 11:12
Hymn Sing

July 29 -
CONFESSION
Ezra 3:1-7
Hymn Sing

Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Jonathan Riedel, Pastor



The Churchmouse



July, 2018



Independence Day

“My plans aren’t your plans, nor are your ways my ways.
Just as the heavens are higher than the earth,
so are my ways higher than your ways and my plans than your plans.
Isaiah 55:8-9 CEB

As far as church controversies go, it wasn’t much of one. Sometime during the tenure of my predecessor, the American and the Christian flag had been pushed off to the side of the church’s chancel. This offended some of the veterans that gathered each Sunday and they asked for these flags to be restored to what was perceived to their rightful positions-to the right and the left of the pulpit. A discussion ensued and, as the case of many congregational decisions, a compromise was enacted. The flags were left standing to the stage right –the Christian flag nearest to the pulpit while the American flag hung closer to the pews.

Even a relatively innocent story such as this comes with storied baggage. For denominations such as the Anabaptists and the Jehovah’s Witnesses, you will never find a flag of any country in their meeting spaces nor will you find provisions in their codes of conducts allowing their constituents to say the Pledge or swear allegiance to any part of the political realms. Quakers are loyal patriots on every issue except for military enlistment; their belief in Jesus’ call to non-violence urges than to serve government in any way other than to bear arms. Many Catholic and ethnic Orthodox parishes not only have American flags flying, but also contain flags from Mexico, Guatemala, Serbia, and Greece-ancestral homes of many who sit in the pews. Historically-minded Christians of many stripes recall Lutheran and German Reformed churches draped in Nazi paraphernalia and debate how closely affiliated church and state should ever be. Other equally-committed followers of Christ push aside such concerns as unnecessarily alarmist and invoke, instead, God’s special call to the United States as a place of unique freedom, opportunity, and commitment to moral integrity-all signs of divine blessing. As one trained in history and theology, I can see the merits of all of these positions because I understand their sincerity because the book they all hold dear-the Bible-provides enough evidence for each to champion their point of view.

Much of the confusions and the possibilities of American history happened because of frictions between all of these positions. Would the emancipation of the slaves and the championing of women’s right have prevailed without the religious intensity of their advocates, often minor voices

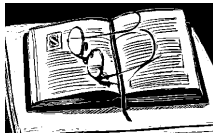
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compared with the voices of those who used Scriptures to keep slaves and women in their subservient places? The controversies between those celebrating God’s call to war and those urging God’s call to love their enemies has inspired armies and Martin Luther King’s and Caesar Chavez’s nonviolent approach to removing injustice. And, how much of our vital melting pot of our current culture would have remained if churches and religious societies had not preserved the unique voice of each of our immigrants grouping, allowing them to celebrate both their pasts and to offer each group’s special ingredients to this mighty stew we call “America.”

As Independence Day, I do not spend my time mulling over the presence of flags in our sanctuaries or over whether or not we should sing patriotic hymns in church. Instead, I reflect over Isaiah’s warning from God about how God’s ways are not always our ways, nor is God’s plans for us the same of what we would plan for ourselves. Isaiah spoke these words in a time of national distress for the people Israel. Babylon had sacked their land, removed the best and the brightest into exile, and destroyed both their palace and their temple. Instead of knowing itself as a player among the great nations, Israel was now a weak vassal, humiliated and broken. In the eyes of many of the exiles and of those left behind, God had washed God’s hands of Israel. They no longer had any role to play among the countries, no purpose in the eyes of God. Yet Isaiah and some of the later prophets saw God calling them to something different-a land of moral integrity, inclusion of the outcast, care for the poor and the abandoned, and commitment to following God despite the folly and the power of nations might cause them to change more lives and alter more nations than any sword or army would. When Israel rose to this call from God, this small, obscure nation has inspired the great modern ideas of equity, justice, and compassion that have lasted far longer than the towers of Babylon and the long roads of Rome. When Israel dared to walk in God’s ways, instead of the tempting ways of nations, they became the mighty people they so often dreamed of being. When they ran after kings and political alliances, the ways of the nations they so desired to become, they tumbled. I wonder sometimes if the prophet’s words might be spoken to us as well.

So this Independence Day, I will celebrate this country. It is the land of my birth, the land of my dearest memories. I treasure its commitment to its Bill of Rights, its democratic system, and its relative openness to sojourners and strangers, some of whom were my ancestors who fled economic and political hardship in Europe. I believe that this is a place where my faith has been allowed to flourish and live free of most persecution. God has indeed worked through these circumstances and for them I am most grateful. However, as is the case of even the best of homelands, I am challenged by a higher voice to call out wrong-doing, political and economic injustice, and my own failure to seek justice, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with my God, whose ways of mercy and compassion are not always going to let me to live as though I am the only important and valuable person in this universe. To ignore this higher voice on my own may not bring down a country, but it may just bring down my life. And if we as a country ignore God’s call to loving-kindnesses, we may lose whatever opportunity to improve our world and to do what guarantees a better future for those who are to come. If I take my gift of freedom seriously, I must love the author of that freedom more than anything else. So if the call is torn between God and country, it is God who I must follow. And I must follow no matter what the consequences must be. Most of all, I must use my freedom to love my country enough to challenge and call it to better ways because to do otherwise will show only the depth of my contempt and indifference for all I share this land with. A daunting love to express and to follow indeed, but one that makes all other love, all other freedom, all other possibility a reality, so it is that love, God’s love, that I celebrate most each Fourth of July.

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



Sunday Morning Bible Study

9:00 am

Each Sunday we meet at 9:00 a.m. to study the Bible slowly in the Prayer Room.

We are still sorting through the prophesy of Isaiah.

Bibles provided.

Summer Film Series

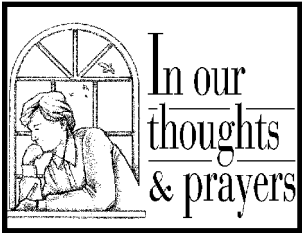
Noon

We are watching and discussing JESUS of Nazareth, Franco Zefferelli’s ministeries on the love and words of Jesus.

Come and join our discussion each Tuesday.

Women’s Bible Study

Women’s Bible Study meets on Tuesdays at 10 a.m. in the front room.



Al, Carolyn, Conrad Jr.,
Fred & Lucas, Maxine, Carolyn S. and
Marcia S.

“Following God’s Path” as we Scoot SK8



on Sunday mornings .

On Sundays at 10 o’clock, we have been meeting with children for breakfast in the fellowship hall. We then have a short Bible lesson. So far we have talked about David and Goliath -praying to help us meet our goals; and Ten Lepers - remembering to have gratitude and say thank you.

After our lesson and cleaning up, we head to the skate park to enjoy some summer fun. We will continue the schedule all summer.


Thank You

We want to thank all of our church friends for the spiritual and physical support you have given to us. We feel truly blessed!

Marcia & David Eager



July

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Scoot/SK8 Sunday School 10-11 am	2	3 Women's Bible Study 10 am Adult Bible Study 12 Noon	4  Independence Day Office Closed	5 Circles not here	6	7
8 Circles Mtg. Scoot/SK8 Sunday School 10-11 am	9	10 Women's Bible Study 10 am Adult Bible Study 12 Noon	11 Worship & Pastoral Care 9 am Admin. Commission 10 am	12 Circles	13	14
15 Scoot/SK8 Sunday School 10-11 am Bring a Snack Sunday	16	17 Women's Bible Study 10 am Sewing - 10-4 Adult Bible Study 12 Noon	18	19 NCUCC serves Circles Meal	20	21
22 Scoot/SK8 Sunday School 10-11 am	23 Churchmouse Deadline	24 Women's Bible Study 10 am Adult Bible Study 12 Noon	25 Council 7 pm	26 Circles	27	28 Men's Breakfast at NUMC at 8 am
29 Scoot/SK8 Sunday School 10-11 am 5th Sunday Potluck	30	31 Women's Bible Study 10 am Adult Bible Study 12 Noon	1	2 Circles	3	4

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.



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 August Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the **August Churchmouse** to the office by **Monday, July 30**. You may e-mail information to: churchmouse@newaygoucc.org or leave a hard copy in the office.



Treasurer's Report

May 15 to June 15, 2018

	Income	Total Exp.
May 21	\$830.00	
May 28	1,221.00	
June 3	3,292.00	
June 10	3,605.00	
Total	\$8,948.00	\$12,508.23

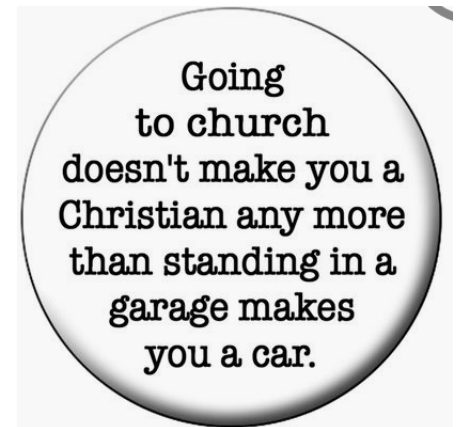
Difference (\$3,450.23)

Phillips Fund \$!169,010.87

Blanket Sunday \$243.00

Thank you to everyone for their generous giving/sharing for God's work.

Dawn Anderson, Treasurer



Mission and Social Action News

School Supplies



Summer time again and soon stores will have “Back to School” sales. Some families in our county are not financially able to buy the supplies their children need. Lucky for them, our members and friends have always been willing to help out.

Please bring your purchases to church and put them in the “School Box”. We will collect supplies through the middle of August.

Items Needed

- Yellow Pencils
- Block Erasers
- Glue Sticks
- Crayola Crayons
- Markers - washable
- Pointed Fiskar scissors
- Plastic Pencil Box
- Wide Ruled Spiral Notebooks
- Colored Pencils
- Spill-proof water bottles

Please DO NOT Bring:

- Trapper Keepers
- Permanent Markers
- Mechanical Pencils

Thank you for your help

Mission & Social Action Commission

Blanket Sunday

Thank you for your generous support of Blanket Sunday, held on June 3.

Your gifts of \$243.00 will help those in need in our county and throughout the world.

Church Humor

- Thursday night – potluck supper. Prayer and medication to follow.
- For those of you who have children and don't know it, we have a nursery downstairs.
- The rosebud on the altar this morning is to announce the birth of David Alan Belzer, the sin of Rev. and Mrs. Julius Belzer.
- This afternoon there will be a meeting in the south and north ends of the church. Children will be baptized at both ends.
- Tuesday at 4:00 p.m. there will be an ice cream social. All ladies giving milk will please come early.
- Wednesday, the Ladies Liturgy Society will meet. Mrs. Jones will sing "Put Me In My Little Bed" accompanied by the pastor.
- Thursday at 5:00 p.m. there will be a meeting of the Little Mothers Club. All wishing to become little mothers, please see the minister in his study.
- The ladies of the church have cast off clothing of every kind and they may be seen in the church basement Friday.
- A bean supper will be held on Tuesday evening in the church hall. Music will follow.
- At the evening service tonight, the sermon topic will be "What Is Hell?" – come early and listen to our choir practice.
- The church will host an evening of fine dining, superb entertainment, and gracious hostility.
- The outreach committee has enlisted 25 visitors to make calls on people who are not afflicted with any church.

APPEARING IN CONCERT



www.4onequartet.com

DATE: **Monday, August 13th, 2018**

TIME: **7 P. M.**

LOCATION: **Newaygo Congregational U.C.C.-432 Quarterline**



For more information: 231.357.1181 or 231.250.0134

FREE WILL OFFERING