

Worship Helpers for June

USHERS:

3: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
10: Dorothy Bos & Gloria Winters
17: TBD
24: TBD



SOUND SYSTEM

Ken Bell

FELLOWSHIP TIME:

3: Jim Sloan & Jean Smith
10: Luke Sanderson &
Dewey Purcell
17: Bring a Snack Sunday
24: TBD



June Worship Schedule

The Bible in 13 Chapters

June 03 - Communion

Genesis 1-2
"Creation"

June 10 - Mission of the Month

Genesis 11:1-9
"Confusion"

June 17 - Hymn Sing

Deuteronomy 30:15-20
Covenant

June 24 - Hymn Sing

Joshua 20
Community



Birthdays in June

3 Jim Cook
5 Deb Burton
12 Carolyn Siders
16 Donna Edighoffer
16 Deb Fraley
20 Betty Bell
21 Sandy Purcell

Anniversaries in June

3 Dick & Gloria Winters
10 Don & Miriam Strohpaal
12 Barb & Bob Getz
17 Bill & Shirley Barends
25 Klaus & Debi Walter



Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

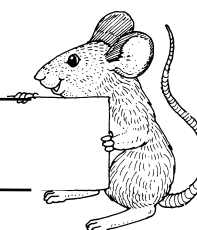
432 Quarterline • Newaygo, MI 49337 • (231) 652-6624



Jonathan Riedel, Pastor

The Churchmouse

June, 2018



Open and Affirming Day

*"There is neither Jew nor Greek; there is neither slave nor free;
nor is there male or female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus."
Galatians 3:28 CEB*

There are many days that I am proud of being both a pastor of and a member of the United Church of Christ and Open and Affirming Day (celebrated June 24th) is one of those days. This day, celebrated in my most liberal of denominations and as one of the first to ordain openly gay clergy, is one that recognize the gifts and the opportunities offered by the GLBTQ community in our midst and in the world at large.

Now, I do understand why this day might not exact much joy out of some of my fellow Christians. The place and the moral integrity of those in the Gay/Lesbian/Bisexual/Transgender/Questioning in many communities of Christ-followers is a matter of some controversy. I am not trying to minimize the difficulties surrounding these issues but I do often wonder how we got so much mileage out of seven bible verses, most of which are dealing with lack of hospitality, idolatry, pedophilia, and co-mingling with the angels, when we disregard much more numerous and more stringent prohibitions against exploitation of the poor and divorce and, for the most part, have never used the inability or unwillingness to follow such regulations as a condition for exclusion from our sacred communities and their work. LGBTQ people are as prone to sin and destructive behavior as any other people are, but not because they are LGBTQ but because they are human and therefore suffer from brokenness in their relationships with God and with other people. Yes, their sexual relationships can be broken as well but at no greater a rate than any heterosexual's; after all, history is littered by the remains of infidelities, broken marriages, and abandoned children of clearly straight people. I make this point not so much as a quid pro quo, but more as a suggestion no one has a monopoly on damaged and damaging sexuality.

I believe that is the nature of Christ to reach over the barriers and the divides that have marred humanity and to pull them into the grasp of God's loving and healing arms so that they may become all of who God called them to be. So that they may become whole and complete as God created them to be. I would take this to mean that a gay person is called to be gay with all the loving capacity that God has placed within him or her; God calls him or her to be gay, not as a masquerading straight. Just a woman is called to be all the all the women she can, not as a denatured male. Just a black or an Asian is called to be the color that they are, not as a fake white.

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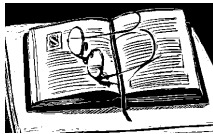
The norm of the God’s universe is therefore not be male, straight, and white, but to be who God has made you to be, to be as colorful and as varied as the very diversity of the universe around us.

And we can be that diverse because our straightness, our maleness, or our whiteness is not what should unite us as humankind, but rather it is the power of God’s love that holds us as one family, as one blood, and as one divine spark of life. Despite our differences and, more importantly, despite our tendency to demonize other people’s differences from us, God’s love still holds each and every one of us. That is what lies at the heart of the quotation from Galatians I mentioned above. Paul knew that his fellow followers of Christ lived, as he did, in a stratified, hierarchical universe. Each person had a place and it was usually above or below someone one else. Empires such a Rome thrive in such order and find much power in this unequal distribution of power. Despite all appearances, the Jews believes that God had chosen them above the Romans and was using them as an example of how to be a true leader in God’s eye, yet, for God’s strange reasons, he had left the Romans in charge of the political realm. The Jews must have proven themselves, Jewish thinkers reflected, to be in such a subordinate position. Men, of course, were superior to women and should be always. Women were seen as prone to vulnerability and needed to be protected by stronger men. Slaves were inferior to the free because their losses in war and economics were clearly of their own doing and therefore of their own fault. Diversity exists only to provide a pecking order, a safety valve of power-sharing (or hoarding if you will) to prevent further damage and destruction to an already deranged and damaged human civilization.

But what would happen if something tipped this order over and left it in pieces? What difference would it make if this division of power is seen as deranged and damaged as the sin it struggles to prevent? What would transpire if we saw humankind as united by something unmoved by and accepting of the minute difference between us to the point that those happenstances of genetics, gender, ethnicity, and sexuality are seen merely as mundane rather than as sources of power, prestige, or notoriety? Or, better yet, seen as the multi-colored and beautiful reflected light of that love that made all of its multiplexity possible? Paul has found the heart of that love; it showers forth in the birth, life, death and resurrection of Jesus the Christ, where we see clearly how close God is always is always with us and how tightly God holds all of us both singularly and all of us as one of the creation’s species.

So what does this all mean in the here and now? Perhaps it means that if we allow God’s love to pull out of our power plays and our acts of oneupmanship we may discover an essential unity of love and hope that gives every one of us, regardless of how different we all are, a place to grow and thrive united by the plentitude of God’s love. We will be better able to discover and share the diversity of our worlds because we will no longer be afraid that God’s love is as rare and as apt to judgment as so much of human love is. Emboldened by this deep and wondrous love, we may then be free to be straight or gay or somewhere in between, we may free to see the burdens and the benefits of skin color and ethnicity, we may free to realize the both male and female have equal and important gifts to offer human history, and we may be free to recognize the importance and the necessity of every human story, not just those who come in the most appealing cloak and are presented with the most demanding insistence. Maybe then we can see what an opportunity an Open and Affirming Day is because it is a day to be open with all of who God made us to be and to celebrate all of that richness with abandon and joy, certain that God’s creativity and hope will emerge from even our most frail and creaking act of love.

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



Sunday Morning Bible Study

9:00 am

The Sunday Morning Bible Study meets at 9 a.m.

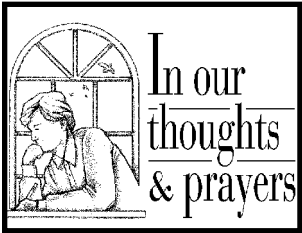
We are still exploring the prophesy of Isaiah.

Bring your questions; we’ll supply the Bibles.

Summer Film Series

Noon

We will be viewing and discussing Franco Zefferelli’s intriguing and challenging *Jesus of Nazareth*. Each Tuesday at noon we will view a segment and discover what questions it asks of us. Join us for what is likely to be a lively conversation.



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

Smile Awhile. . .

The secret of a good sermon is to have a good beginning and a good ending; and to have the two as close together as possible.

-- George Burns

At Sunday School they were learning how God created everything, including human beings. Johnny was especially intent when the teacher told him how Eve was created out of one of Adam's ribs.

Later in the week his mother noticed him lying down as though he were ill, and said, "Johnny, what is the matter?"

Johnny responded, "I have pain in my side. I think I'm going to have a wife."

An engineer dies and reports to the Pearly Gates. Saint Peter checks his dossier and not seeing his name there, accidentally sends him to Hell. It doesn't take long before the engineer becomes rather dissatisfied with the level of comfort in Hell.

He soon begins to design and build improvements. Shortly thereafter, Hell has air conditioning, flush toilets and escalators. Needless to say, the engineer is a pretty popular guy.

One day, God calls Satan and says: "So, how are things in Hell?"

Satan replies: "Hey, things are going great. We've got air conditioning, flush toilets, and escalators. And there's no telling what this engineer is going to come up with next."


"What!" God exclaims: "You've got an engineer? That's a mistake - he should never have been sent to Hell. Send him to me."

"Not a chance," Satan replies: "I like having an engineer on the staff, and I'm keeping him!"

God insists: "Send him back or I'll sue."

Satan laughs uproariously and answers: "Yeah, right. And where are you going to get a lawyer?"

June


Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11	12 Mission & Social Action 5:30 pm	13 Worship & Pastoral Care 9:00 am	14	15	12
17 Annual Meeting after church	18	19	20	21	22	23 Men's Breakfast at NUMC at 8 am
24	25 Churchmouse Deadline	26	27	28	29	30
1	2	3	4 Independence Day 	5	6	7

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 June Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the **July Churchmouse** to the office by **Monday, June 25**.

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



Treasurer's Report

April 16 to May 15, 2018

	Income	Total Exp.
Apr. 22	\$1,932.00	
Apr. 29	1,702.00	
May 6	3,070.00	
May 13	1,595.00	

Total	\$8,299.00	\$9,198.42
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Difference	(\$899.02)
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Phillips Fund	\$167,629.79
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One Great Hour of Sharing	\$379.00
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Thank you to everyone for their generous giving/sharing for God's work.

Dawn Anderson, Treasurer

Going to church doesn't make you a Christian any more than standing in a garage makes you a car.

God's Voice Mail

We have all learned to live with "voice mail" as a necessary part of modern life. But have you wondered, "What if God decided to install voice mail?"

Imagine praying and hearing this:

Thank you for calling My Father's House.

Please selectk on of the following options:

Press 1 for Requests

Press 2 for Thanksgiving

Press 3 for Complaints

Press 4 for all other inquiries.

I'm sorry, all of our angels are busy helping other sinners right now. However, your prayer is important to us and will be answered in the order it was received, so please stay on the line.

If you would like to speak to:

God, Press 1

Jesus, Press 2

For the Holy Spirit, Press 3

If you would like to hear King David sing a Psalm while you are holding, please press 4.

To find out if a loved one has been assigned to Heaven, Press 5, enter his/her Social Security number, the press the pound key.

If you get a negative response, try area code 666.

For reservations at "My Father's House" please enter J-O-H-N followed by 3-1-6.

For answers to nagging questions about dinosaurs, the age of the earth and where Noah's Ark is, please wait until you arrive there.

Our computers show that you have already prayed once today. Please hang up and try again tomorrow.

This office is closed for the weekend to observe a religious holiday. Please pray again Monday after 9:30 am. If you need emergency assistance when this office is closed contact your local pastor.

NCUCC Scholarship Award Winner Austyn Page



All my life, I have wanted to be independent and I have been working hard to achieve this dream by taking classes and working at businesses and locations that will help me with my future interests. I am currently taking classes at a tech center with the intention of taking accounting classes when I go to Norhern Michigan University. I am also achieving certifications in many programs that will put me ahead of the game when I eventually get to the classes that directly pertain to accounting. Through my tech center, I also get training in customer service skills, telephone etiquette, cash register usage, professional letter and e-mail writing and many more skills that will eventually help me get a job in the field of accounting. Also, through the tech center, I work for our school store as the website manager and maintainer. I have to keep the online inventory up to date and make sure that online transactions between our store and customers goes smoothly.



50th
Wedding Anniversary
PARTY



celebrating the love of
DAVID & LYNNE ROBINSON
**SATURDAY, JUNE 16TH FROM 1:00 PM
UNTIL 5:00 PM**
10837 GORDON AVE., GRANT, MI 49327



RSVP BY JUNE 1ST
TEXT OR LEAVE A MESSAGE
(231) 652-0407
OR
SARAHB0715@GMAIL.COM

CWS Church World Service **Blanket Sunday**

*They are also filled with abundant joy,
which has overflowed in rich generosity.*
2 Corinthians 8:2

On Sunday, June 3, NCUCC is holding a Church World Service Blankets Offering. For a gift of \$10, you are able, with the help of CWS, to give a blanket to a person in need.

During 2017 there have been many natural disasters throughout the world and here in the United States.

Because of your generosity, CWS responded quickly in the aftermath of Hurricane Harvey. You helped to provide CWS Blankets and emergency supplies to Texas and other areas that were hit especially hard.

Because of your generosity, CWS provided Blankets and other needed materials to agencies and churches in Florida responding to Hurricane Imma..

Because of your generosity, CWS provided Blankets to Neighbors to Neighbors in Berrien Springs, Michigan. CWS also provides homeless shelters and street programs around the country with blankets to distribute to people in need before winter arrives.

As you can see, your gifts last year have been hard at work. Please prayerfully consider your gift on **June 3** to provide blankets for those in need throughout the world.

Linnea Godfrey
Mission Commission

OGHS

Thank you to all who gave so generously to our One Great Hour of Sharing offering. A total of \$379.00 was given! Thank you so much for your generous mission giving.

