
Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

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Rev. Jonathan Riedel, Pastor

“THE CHURCHMOUSE”

September 2021

Yom Kippur

“Note that on the tenth day of the seventh month is the Day of Reconciliation. It will be a holy occasion for you. You must deny yourselves and offer a food gift to the Lord. You must not do any work on that day because it is a Day of Reconciliation to make reconciliation for you before the Lord your God.” Leviticus 23: 26-7

Sometimes we all need a yom kippur.

A day of pulling out old drawers and emptying out their contents on a bed so we can sort through the detritus and the past and present worries of our lives, discerning what need to concern ourselves with and what we can dispose of. A day of soaking in a tub so the stress and dirt of our world washes away along with our worn skin and our tired muscles. A day of healing where we lose the cast, get the stitches cut, and are released from our doctor's care. A day of reconciliation-of renewing broken promises, of mending broken relationships, of reaching across the racial, cultural, and gender that our societies impose, and of asking forgiveness for words and deeds that have both knowingly and unknowingly hurt other people, other creatures, and the world that God created. All of which falls into the hours that make up the Jewish holiday of Yom Kippur, one of the most sacred of their holy days.

This day is a way to start a new year in the right way and in the right frame of mind. Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year celebration, falls about two weeks before just as the northern world prepares to reap the harvest and make stores for the winter ahead. A new year should be a fresh start so it is wise to clear out the leftovers from the year before. So Yom Kippur is the disposing of those leftover-those harsh words, those unkept promises, those broken dreams, those times when we have deliberately distanced ourselves from God and our neighbors. It is a time of confession-of saying aloud all of those blunders and poor choices, all of those malicious and destructive acts so we can admit them, ask for help in avoiding the temptation to try them again, and plot out alternative ways of livings, free of recrimination and guilt. In some respect, God calls us into a therapeutic relationship so we can change and heal.

All of this is hard work so God asks us to take the day off. To focus a sunset to sunset on our most essential relationships: with our God, with our families, with our neighbors, and with ourselves. We are asked not to distract ourselves with busywork. We are given no excuses to avoid hard conversations. We are asked to think about and to keep the promises we make. The actual Scripture reading is harsher than that. We are not asked politely to focus on that difficult work of reconciliation; we are commanded to do so. Those who refuse to do so are to be banished from the community, cut off until they decided to perform the challenging tasks of the day.

Why? Because people who cannot face their mistakes and foolishness cannot change and societies that refused to admit their shortcomings and sin cannot grow. They remain stuck in an endless cycle of repeating themselves. They are caught in a pattern of self-delusion that never admits we could be traveling the wrong paths, loving the wrong things, and seeking after the wrong goals. Enough of that. God gives us the day to sit and to think. God gives us the time to be honest, no matter how painful that process might be. God gives us the time to sort out and to prioritize so we may finally get our priorities right at least long enough to last the coming year.

In our all divisions, in all of our lies, in all of our delusions of grandeur and persecution, in all our prejudices, and in all our wretchedness towards each other, we certainly need to a day of reconciliation. So why don't we take one? The invitation stands open, free of charge.

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

Worship

Since returning to in person worship, some parts of the worship service have remained the same and some things have changed. Now that we are using new technology to reach all who wish to worship with us, hopefully the changes have made worship services better. Whether you worship with us in person or on ZOOM (either phone in or by internet) we hope your worship experiences are good ones. If anyone has any ideas that you think might improve worship services, please let Pastor Jon or Ken know. We are open to your ideas and will look into them.

Ask A Question Sunday

Sunday, September 12 is "Ask A Question Sunday." If you have a question you would like Pastor Jon to answer during his sermon, you may call or email him ahead of time or write it down and give it to him on Sunday.

Pastor Jon on Vacation

Pastor Jon will be on vacation from September 17 thru October 8. If anyone has a pastoral care concern during this time, please contact either Dorothy or Ken.

What's Happening at NCUCC September 2021

Events, Anniversaries and Birthdays

Worship is in person and on ZOOM at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84864699096>
or phone 1-312-626-6799 ID: 848 6469 9096

Pastor Jon's Tuesday noon class is in person. Will also be on ZOOM by request
or due to bad weather. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84229731057>
or phone 1-312-626-6799 ID: 842 2973 1057

Wednesday Night Prayer Time 7 pm. Call 978-990-5000 then 283560#

We. 1: Prayer Time 7 pm (phone-in)

Th. 2: Admin. 10 am in person

No Circles

Brecken M. b'day

Fr. 3:

Sa. 4: Trisha W-T. b'day

Su. 5: Worship 10 am w/Communion

"Be Opened"

Mark 7: 24-37

Mo. 6: Office closed for Labor Day

Tu. 7: Noon class - The Vanished Village/

Remembering Christianity

Tom and Gretchen M. anniv.

We. 8: Prayer Time 7 pm (phone-in)

Th. 9: Worship & Pastoral Care 1 pm. (phone

Circles 6-8 pm

Gloria W. b'day

Fr. 10:

Sa. 11:

Su. 12: Worship 10 am

"Ask A Question Sunday"

Mark 8: 27-38

Mo. 13: Paul H. b'day

Norma Jean P. b'day

Tu. 14: Noon class - The New Village Church/
Finding Home

Ed and Dorothy R. anniv.

We. 15: Prayer Time 7 pm (phone-in)

Th. 16: Council 10 am in person & Zoom

Circles 6-8 pm

Fr. 17:

Sa. 18: Barb G. b'day

Su. 19: Guest Pastor

The Rev. Rebekah Rathman- Wingrove

Mo. 20:

Tu. 21: No noon class

We. 22: No Prayer Time

Th. 23: Circles 6-8 pm

Andrew T. b'day

Fr. 24:

Sa. 25: Wayne P. b'day

Su. 26: Guest Pastor

The Rev. Rebekah Rathman- Wingrove

Mo. 27:

Tu. 28: No noon class

Greg M. b'day

We. 29: No Prayer Time

Jim C. b'day

Th. 30: Circles 6-8 pm

Elliana T. b'day

Members and friends in need of Prayers: Bill B., Gloria W.

Deadline for information to be printed in the October newsletter is Thursday, September 23.

Evening Prayer

On Wednesdays at 7 p.m.-we will join over the phone for a time of meditation and prayers for ourselves and others. To join us, dial 978-990-5000 then 283560#.

Tuesday Noon Class

Christianity For The Rest of Us"

The church has been changing more and more rapidly in the past decades. Truths that used to seem so solid have shifted and many no longer trust what the church truly stands for. Change is inevitable but the Gospel remains. What does that look like? How can we be the church today? Join us for a discussion of historian Diana Butler-Bass' book CHRISTIANITY FOR THE REST OF US, an examination of the qualities of our faith that allow churches to prosper despite all the transitions of the modern era. We meet on Tuesday at noon in the church narthex. Here is a schedule of topics for the month.

September 07-The Vanished Village/Remembering Christianity

September 14-The New Village Church/Finding Home

September 21-No class

September 28-No class

School Supplies

Due to a surplus of supplies caused by most of last year's classes being online, we will not be collecting backpacks and school supplies for kids this year. After talking to educators we found there is a greater need for clothing items. The clothes will be kept at the school for emergency use. The following is a list of needed items:

Both girls and boys sweat pants and underwear sizes 5-6, 7-8 & 10-12

(Also some 14-16 sweat pants occasionally needed)

Socks (youth large white to be gender neutral)

Crocs (no name brand in neutral colors)

There is a box in the hall near the mailboxes where you can put the items you have purchased.

You may also make a monetary donation and the items will be purchased for you. Please note "school clothes" on your check or envelope so the money goes to the right place.

Thank you for your support of this project.

Mission and Social Action

Yoga Class

Are you looking to age well? YOGA may be the answer for you! Yoga is so good at helping with our flexibility, strength, balance and overall good mental health. I have lead Yoga practice for the past 18 months with seniors in my Florida neighborhood via ZOOM. Some of these yoga students have said they quit going to their chiropractor after months of yoga class dedication. I can't guarantee that, but I am sure you will be pleasantly surprised with just how much you can do. You'll need a yoga mat, a towel to protect your knees, water and a hand towel for some of the movements.

Afraid of ZOOM? I can get you started and help you join us. Call Joyce Mead at 616-403-7550 if you are interested. Yoga sessions will be an hour twice a week. Remember they are geared toward senior participants. And with ZOOM you can turn off the video feature and practice privately. So call me soon and I'll answer any questions you may have. Thanks!

Children In Worship

The Christian Education teachers are looking for children ages 3-10 to participate in their Sunday morning Children In Worship Sunday School program. The program is from 10-11 am each Sunday and will consist of the following format: Sing to prepare for story of God.

Hear and watch the story.

Read story from children's Bible

Respond to story with art.

Have a simple feast.

Prayer time.

If you know anyone with children in this age group, please invite them to be a part of this program.



Our Sunday School class was blessed this summer by Christopher, Natalie, and Kaylee. We studied Daniel, Moses, Ruth, Esther, Creation, and the Ten Commandments. We painted, made posters, and did sidewalk chalk drawings. Check out the bulletin boards.

We'll miss them as they return home to Mexico City, but we look forward to seeing them next summer!

On Sunday, August 15, we celebrated the children by presenting them with age appropriate daily devotionals. In turn, they made tissue paper bouquets for their teachers. Cake and ice cream was served in the Fellowship Hall.

Safe travels!

Treasurer's Report Jul 16 – Aug 15, 2021

Income:

July 19 \$ 709.00

July 26 \$ 979.00

Aug 9 \$3,894.00

Aug, 15 \$3,848.00

Total \$9,430.00

Expenses : \$ 7,130.86

Difference: \$2,300.14

Phillips Fund: \$188,477.48

Family Fund: \$82,239.87

Thanks to everyone for supporting our church programs and our missions.

Dawn Anderson Treasurer