
Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ



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“An Open and Affirming Church”

“THE CHURCHMOUSE”

November 2022

Giving Tuesday

“In everything I have shown you that, by working hard, we must help the weak. In this way we remember the Lord Jesus’ words, ‘It is more blessed to give them to receive.’” Acts 20:35 CEB

While I was reflecting over this passage, I checked the Gospels to discover the origin of Paul’s quote. None of the Gospels we have list it. It is likely that he was quoting from oral tradition passed down disciple to disciple in those early days of the Church. It is, however, a sentiment that Jesus would have readily agreed with. Jesus was about the business of building a more caring and just society and that work would require the willingness to share and to put each others’ needs before our own. Paul carried on that work, working as a tent maker so that the congregations he founded did not have to support him with a salary. Instead they could put that money to work taking care of the elderly, the infirm, and the destitute that had found a home in their gatherings. Paul saw this clearly as walking down the path that Jesus had called him to go, a path he saw as a necessity for anyone who claimed to be a follower of Jesus.

This is the season of thanksgiving and what better way to show our thanks than by showing generosity? In America, though, our annual day of thanks is followed by one of the busiest shopping days of the year: Black Friday. Touched by riots and by other outward expressions of rampant greed, Black Friday has a checkered history indeed. The name itself marks a Stock Market disaster. On September 24, 1869, two investors drove up the price of gold, the standard the United States currency depended upon, so high that it caused the market to collapse, setting off an economic recession. Its association with shopping began in Philadelphia in the 1950’s as a police nickname for the crowds that descended upon downtown shops after Thanksgiving, increasing their workload. By the 1960’s, the nickname became so commonplace that it was regularly featured in advertising fliers. Though I have talked to many who have enjoyed quality family time shopping and dining out with the relatives on the day after Thanksgiving, the day should give every follower of Jesus some pause. The day does focus on acquisition, not on giving-although to be fair, many are buying presents for friends and loved ones. Could we who follow Jesus find another way, perhaps a way that allows us to spread our blessings further and wider by sharing them with others?

Unsurprisingly, someone came up with such a way. The 92nd Street Y and the United Nations Foundations surmised that people might be inclined to be generous as the holidays approached and after they had saved so much money on presents shopping on Black Friday. The organizations proposed calling the Tuesday following that Friday 'Giving Tuesday' and launched a fundraiser supporting their respective organizations in 2012. It was a resounding success and sparked many other non-profits to follow suit. According to a 2020 report on Giving Tuesday, 16 million people worldwide donated \$503 million online that year, a five percent increase over 2019. Giving Tuesday turned out to be a fine suggestion to help people be generous in an organized and focused manner.

As I consider this, I wonder what would happen if we treated Giving Tuesday with the enthusiasm and forethought as many of us, with our camping equipment and our willingness to wait in staggering lines, approach the early sales on Black Friday? What would happen if we all mailed a check or clicked on PayPal to donate to organizations working for societal improvement? One year let us take on drug addiction treatment. Another year-homelessness. Another-cancer treatment and prevention. Still another-the prevention of hate crimes. The problems and the non-profits dedicated to solving them are numerous. We could go through many Giving Tuesday before we exhausted the causes. Surely each cause, each organization would benefit from a surge of interest and attention. Who knows what progress we might make, what solutions we might provide?

I know Jesus and Paul had no way of imagining Giving Tuesday, but I suspect that they would rally around its spirit. They might even suggest that we carry over the generosity to the rest of the days of the week. And what miracles would we provoke if we did that! But all movements start small so let us start with just a day. So let us take one Tuesday, look up a charity we unabashedly support, and give the amount that we might have spent on a present for someone who no longer has room for all the things they already have. You can send them a note that you made a donation in honor of him or her. We might discover that our spreading around our generosity around might make a difference in a life, in a movement, and in our society as a whole. Indeed, maybe in our giving we may discover, for all the good it might do, it is better to be giving than it is to receive.

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

Noon Forum - Sabbatical Learnings

We will spend the rest of our season of ordinary time mulling over what Pastor Jon gleaned from his sabbatical journeys through many churches in Michigan, Ohio, and Indiana. To prepare for our conversations, please look at the last 11 entries in Pastor Jon's travelogue. We meet on Tuesdays at noon in the entry area of the church. The topics we will discuss are meant to stand alone so you do not have to attend each session to benefit from what we will study together. Here is a schedule of what we will discuss:

November 01-Kin-Dom

November 08-Joy

November 15-Self-Examination

November 22-Mission

November 29-Focus

What's Happening at NCUCC November 2022

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 7:00 pm. Call 978-990-5000 then 283560#

Tu. 1: Noon Forum - Sabbatical Learnings

Mission and Social Action 4 pm

We. 2: Prayer Time 7:00 pm (phone-in)

Th. 3: Administration 10 a.m.

True North Meeting 6-8 pm

Ken N. b'day

Fr. 4:

Sa. 5: Time Change "Fall Back"

Su. 6: Worship w/Communion 10 am

"Hold Onto Faith"

2 Thessalonians 2: 1-5, 13-17

Nancy M. b'day

Mo. 7:

Tu. 8: Noon Forum - Sabbatical Learnings

Election Day

We. 9: Prayer Time 7:00 pm (phone-in)

Th. 10: True North Meeting 6-8 pm

Fr. 11:

Sa. 12: Jose & Nancy H. anniv.

Nathan V. b'day

Su. 13: Worship 10 am

Stewardship Sunday

Ask A Question Sunday

Isaiah 65: 17-25

Don H. b'day

Lydia R. b'day

Mo. 14: W&PC (in pastor's office) 10 am

Marcia P. b'day

Tu. 15: Noon Forum - Sabbatical Learnings

We. 16: Prayer Time 7:00 pm (phone-in)

Th. 17: Council 10 am

True North Meeting 6-8 pm

Aidan P. b'day

Fr. 18:

Sa. 19: Jim S. b'day

Su. 20: Worship 10am

Reign of Christ Sunday

"Together In Christ"

Colossians 1: 11-20

Mo. 21:

Tu. 22: Noon Forum - Sabbatical Learnings

Service of Thanksgiving 7 pm

We. 23: Prayer Time 7:00 pm (phone-in)

Th. 24: Thanksgiving

December NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Fr. 25:

Sa. 26:

Su. 27: Worship 10 am

First Sunday in Advent

Candle-lighting

Songs for the Season

Matthew 24: 36-44

Mo. 28:

Tu. 29: Noon Forum - Sabbatical Learnings

We. 30: Prayer Time 7:00 pm (phone-in)

Members and friends in need of Prayers: Cynthia J., Katy L., Allen R., Marilyn S., Marcia S., Carolyn S., Fred V., Karen V., Gloria W., Donna, Nikki

Newsletter Deadline

The deadline for articles to be put in the December issue is Thursday, November 24.
Email articles to: newaygoucc@gmail.com.

Evening Prayer

On Wednesdays at 7:00 pm Pastor Jon hosts, on a conference call, a time of meditation and prayers for ourselves and others. To join us, dial 1- 978-990-5000 then 283560#.

Service of Thanksgiving

At 7 p.m. on November 22, we will gather for a service of song, Bible readings and prayers of thanksgiving in the church sanctuary. Here is the Zoom link if you wish to attend from home:

Zoom Link : <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89005730704>

Zoom Phone-in: 1-312-626-6799 ID: 890 0573 0704

Prayer Room/Chapel

Anyone who wishes to have a small quiet place to pray or meditate is welcome to use the room across from the nursery to do so.

Ways to Worship with Us

Here is a reminder of the different ways that our worship services are available to you.

- Everyone is welcome to attend our services in-person every Sunday at 10 am.
- You can also access a live audio/visual broadcast using ZOOM on your computer or smart phone by using the following link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84864699096>
Those without internet access can call the following phone number and Meeting ID:
1-312-626-6799 Meeting ID: 848 6469 9096.
- If you would like to access the services on your own schedule, they are added to our website www.newaygoucc.org and Facebook page following each service.
- Links to Ash Wednesday, Maundy Thursday, Good Friday, Thanksgiving and Christmas Eve services are provided as needed.

Treasurer's Report Sept 16 – Oct 15, 2022

Income: Sept 18 \$415.00
Sept 25 \$1,031.00
Oct 2 \$3,180.00
Oct 10 \$966.00
Total: \$5,607.00

Expenses: \$7,225.46

Difference (\$1,618.26)

Phillips Fund \$147,726.17 Family Fund \$63,500.94

Shed goodness, light, caring and love to all we meet as we serve God ! Dawn Anderson, Treasurer