

# Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

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

Jonathan Riedel, Pastor

**“An Open and Affirming Church”**



*No matter who you are,  
no matter where you are on life's journey,  
you're welcome here!*



## The Churchmouse



May, 2023



*What's Included* “My Father's house has room to spare. If that weren't the case, would I have told that I'm going to prepare a place for you?”

John 14:2 CEB

I pulled into the parking lot adjacent to the blackened stone sanctuary. The area around the church was worn but reviving. Couples were walking their dogs in a public park nearby. I could hear children calling to each other from the swings. A trendy diner was raising umbrellas over the outdoor tables as they prepared for the lunch rush. At the church, a small queue was gathering at the door that led to a food pantry. After a short walk around to read the banners on the church lawn and a quick scan of what was on the church marquee, I located an open door and went in. This congregation had built this sanctuary in the glory days of the late nineteenth century. It was meant to serve the community around them. It was too big to do otherwise, deliberately so. The amphitheater style sanctuary, the long mahogany halls that lead to many large meeting rooms and libraries, and the industrial-style kitchen were designed for those outside of the church family to use. And so they were. Orchestras and lyceums rented the meeting rooms, daycares, nursery schools, and tutoring programs occupied the classrooms, and the women's fellowship served hundreds of wedding, anniversary, and funeral receptions as well as a few political and social reform rallies. Other congregations met in the sanctuary until they could build one of their own. Not only was the building paid for, the funds raised made possible all the outreach the people gathered here made to their neighborhood. During times of war and depression, disease and poverty, they remained committed. They worked on making a mixed race congregation in an era of redlining. They opened their door to gay and lesbian during the height of the AIDS epidemic. They hired the first female pastor to serve among their male-dominated fellow



congregations. Most of all, they stayed put when many other churches fled to the suburbs. The food pantry, the homeless shelter, the free clinic within were too important for them to abandon. When I stopped in to look around, I had a chance to have a long talk with their interim pastor. The church was indeed in a time of decision. The area around them was becoming more gentrified and younger. Some of the peoples they had worked so hard to include had moved away. Neighborhood priorities and dynamics had shifted. Their building was more and more demanding as it aged. Rooms were left empty. One thing remained constant, though. They still wanted to welcome people into the inclusiveness of God's love. They wanted people, no matter how badly the world around them had rejected them to find a home when they walked through these worn and well-loved doors. Being inclusive in your love is not a single decision, made once and then settled. It is a commitment made each day, challenging our prejudices and our blind spots. When I reflect on Jesus' suggestion that God's house has many rooms, I struggle with the tension held with some many of our Christian church. We try to draw a line around God's love to define who is included and who is not. If love is too inclusive, to our minds, it becomes flaccid and ambivalent. When it becomes too exclusive, it repels with its harshness. We have bickered for many generations over which behavior, which motivations, which beliefs, and which reactions to the people around us bring us into God's circle or cast us out among the darkness, never to be recovered. Perhaps I am wrong when I fall on the inclusive side. I am willing, however, to take that chance because I suspect that God have often taken that chance, particularly with me. I imagine God's house as something like that large church I toured, filled with long halls, large rooms, and dark wood. It was built to be filled and built to be used. The many rooms are not there for decoration, but for occupation. The doors are left open, perhaps painted red, as a way of welcome, a way of pulling people in. Maybe God does have concerns about acceptable behavior, but I wonder if God addresses these concerns more by getting people in first. Then time and companionship can do their creativity. I also imagine land enough out back to build additions, more rooms prepared for those who are yet to come.

I suspect that God's love is akin to the banquets and wedding festivals that Jesus knew so well and found himself often invited to. They were meant for the community, not for the selected few, and there was always room for one more even if we have to improvise with the refreshment

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



We will be remembering those who have died since last Memorial Day during the worship service on May 21st. If you have a loved one you will like lifted up at the time, please let Pastor know via phone, in person, or email by May 14th.



# Special Meeting of the Congregation

Following worship on Sunday May 21, 2023, there will be a short special meeting of the congregation to vote on two items. As noted in the March Churchmouse the intent of the meeting was to have the congregation vote on a request from the Christian Education Commission to the Board of Directors to set a matching amount of money from the Phillips Fund to support their Museba Congo School Project. At the April 20 Board Meeting, the Board and Christian Education Commission agreed to keep the project as an ongoing fundraiser and therefore not subsidize it with Phillips Fund money. The following two items will be voted on at the meeting:

**Item #1** The Board of Directors is proposing that \$15,000 be transferred from the Phillips Fund to the General Fund to solve a cash flow issue. This is not an issue of not having enough money coming in for the year, but an issue of not having the right amount at certain times of the year. This year there has been a rise in the Property Insurance, Health Insurance and Natural Gas rates. The month in which the Property Insurance of \$5,970 comes due, along with the regular monthly bills creates a cash flow deficit. The expenses for March were \$12,203.27. There is money in the bank account to cover these costs, but much of it is dedicated for specific restricted line items such as Memorial Fund, Building Fund etc., which means we are borrowing from these other line items. So, the fiscally responsible thing to do is to have money transferred to the unrestricted General Fund line item. The transferred money will be used as a cushion and keep the cash flow at an even level throughout the entire year. This was also done In February of 2014. This is not to be considered a loan from the fund and therefore will not be paid back. Shall this money be transferred from the Phillips Fund to the General Fund?

**Item #2** The Worship and Pastoral Care Commission has proposed, and the Board of Directors have approved, that since their board member Barb Getz is living in New York, it would be in the best interest of the church to replace her Board of Directors' position with Dorothy Bos. Barb will continue to be an active member of the Worship and Pastoral Care Commission.

Shall Barb's Board of Directors' position be replaced by Dorothy? Thank you for your prayerful consideration of these items.

NCUCC Board of Directors



## Treasurer's Report

March 16, 2023 to  
April 15, 2023

	Income	Total Exp.
March 19	\$ 625.00	
March 26	904.00	
April 3	1,864.00	
April 10	2,607.00	
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$6,000.00</b>	<b>\$6,236.19</b>

<b>Difference</b>	( 236.19)
<b>Phillips Fund</b>	<b>\$169,133.46</b>

<b>Family Fund</b>	<b>\$ 71,988.06</b>
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<b>Congo School</b>	<b>\$485.00</b>
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(in our treasury. The rest has been sent out already.)

Thank you for all your generosity and loving care.

Dawn Anderson Treasurer

## Deadline for the June Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the Junly-

**Churchmouse** to the office by

**Monday, May 29**

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



## Museba Project



The most exciting part of the school/church in the Democratic Republic of Congo last month was the addition of four flush toilets! Many there in the village of Museba have never experienced such nice bathrooms, At least four more are needed for the number of children attending school and the number of people attending church. Hopefully our contributions will help with projects like these.

When Christian Ed started this mission project in partnership with two pastors from Iowa - Methodist ministers Betty and Kiboko Kiboko, both of whom have visited Museba - we never thought we would be able to help so much through your generosity. To date, you have given \$2,350.00, most of which has been sent to the project.

Pastor Kiboko sent us this message via a Facebook post yesterday: *"Thank you for being the feet of Jesus Christ in the Democratic Republic of Congo. May God bless you all."*

## FELLOWSHIP MEAL



Our Fellowship Meal celebrated our Museba project on Sunday, April 16. About 30 of us enjoyed an indoor hotdog picnic with many yummy sides and Jayne's cookies and mini-cheese cakes. We were able to send a couple meals out to folks who couldn't attend but who are graciously supporting the project.

Sophia Wilder entertained us with her piccolo, and she was thrilled to sell all of her chocolate candy bars to help with her NHS band project.

Thank you to all who helped with food and clean up! We even had one of our little Sunday school girls show up to wash dishes - all grown up now - Lianna Tagle! Thank you everyone!

Our next meal will be served Sunday, May 7, after church. Mexican food - taco bar, enchiladas, beans and rice, and a special Mexican dessert from Jayne - Tres leches with mole sauce.



## 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](http://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.

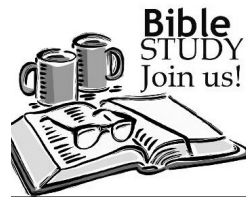
### Prayer Room/Chapel

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.

The room is open during the secretary's office hours and on Sunday morning.

## Smile Awhile. . .

A lady's funeral service is taking place in the church. But when the service ended, the pallbearers who were holding the casket mistakenly knocked into a wall, shaking the casket. Everyone heard a shaky moan. Curiously, they unlocked the casket and figured out that the lady was not dead. She stays alive for ten more years and then passes away. After that, a ceremony is again taking place at a similar church and when it ends, the pallbearers are once again holding the casket. As they were heading to the gate, the husband exclaimed "Look out for the left wall!"



## Tuesday Noon Forum Prayer Workshop

We will be continuing our Bible study of the General Letters of the Christian Scriptures. These books, not written by Paul, help us understand the challenges the early churches faced, how they coped with change, and what spiritual wisdom these churches can still offer us. We will meet in the Main SundaySchool room. Here is a schedule of our topics:

*May 02-1 Peter*  
*May 09-2 Peter*  
*May 16-1 John*  
*May 23-2 and 3 John*  
*May 30-Jude*

## Wednesday Night Prayer

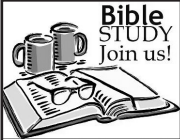
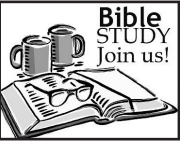


Wednesday Night Prayer Time 7 pm. Call 978-990-5000 then 283560#

### **PUZZLE 70** Sewing 101

R	N	E	E	D	L	E	K	J	O	D	W
E	I	N	S	E	A	M	A	X	V	T	R
H	B	A	N	D	A	L	V	W	L	G	J
T	B	N	U	F	C	M	W	O	Z	N	T
A	O	F	L	U	E	X	B	A	R	I	C
G	B	T	B	H	A	E	Z	E	C	D	J
N	O	Y	T	I	X	W	T	H	W	A	V
I	Z	O	Z	B	N	T	X	U	W	E	F
K	L	X	F	K	A	D	Q	M	Y	B	U
C	G	X	A	P	P	L	I	Q	U	E	O
A	S	T	I	T	C	H	I	N	G	Y	X
B	M	J	L	F	A	C	I	N	G	D	B

APPLIQUE	BOBBIN	HEM
BACKING	BOLT	INSEAM
BAND	CLOTH	NEEDLE
BEADING	FACING	PATTERN
BINDING	GATHER	STITCHING

# May, 2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 12 Noon Open & Affirming Commtee SS Room	4 6 pm Narcotics Anonymous Meal	5	6
7 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom  Fellowship Meal	8	9 <b>Noon Class</b>  NA Meal Served	10 7 pm Prayer	11	12	13
14 <b>Mother's Day</b> Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	15 10 am Worship & Pastoral Care in Pastor's Office & on the phone	16 <b>Noon Class</b> 	17 7:00 Prayer	18	19	20
21 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	22	23 <b>Noon Class</b> 	24 7:00 Prayer	25	26	27
28 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom  30	29 <b>Memorial Day Office Closed</b>	30 <b>Noon Class</b> 	31 7:00 Prayer			



# Get to Know Sophia Wilder



Who is that young lady who plays flute and piccolo at our Easter service and for our background music during our Fellowship Meals?

Sophia Wilder is the daughter of Jayne Rohn, who cleans our church and who provides yummy desserts for us to enjoy. Sophia is a sophomore at Newaygo High School and first chair flutist in the Newaygo High School band. She's in marching band, pep band, and symphonic band. Other instruments she plays: saxophone, marimba, keyboard, trumpet, bass guitar and piano.

Other extracurricular activities for Sophia have been Quiz Bowl, Robotics, and Drama Club. She recently played the Red Queen of Hearts in the school production of "Alice in Wonderland", thus that pretty red tint to her hair.

Since Sophia was young, she has always enjoyed attending camp in the summer from Frontier Camp with the horses at Camp Henry to Camp Rogers, along with Band Camp for the past three summers.

And this is from Sophia when asked about her summer and future plans:

## JOBS

- i. Continue Performing for Church whenever I am able
- ii. Apply at Johns Produce for 2023
- iii. Apply at Ice cream shop near Hardy Dam 2023
- iv. Apply to be camp wrangler at Camp Henry the summer after senior year

## EDUCATION:

- i. Attend MCC for associates degree in Behavioral Studies & Music Theory
- ii. Transfer MCC credits to Eastern Michigan University
  1. Double Major in Forensic Psychology and Music Theory
  2. Transfer on to receive a postgraduate degree

## LONG TERM CAREER GOALS:

- a. FBI Agent working in the Behavioral Analysis Unit as a profiler and criminologist tracking down and capturing criminals for prosecution.
- b. Play with a symphony orchestra

Sophia is quite a talented young woman, and we're so fortunate to get to know her and have her perform in our church! Thank you, Sophia!

## Thank You Ladies

Dear Deb and Judy,

*I hope this letter finds you well, I wanted to take a moment to express my gratitude for your generous contribution towards my Blue Lake Fine Arts Camp uniforms. Your kindness and support mean the world to me.*

*your selflessness and willingness to help others has touched my heart. Your support has enabled me to pursue my passion for music and participate in this amazing camp. Without your help I wouldn't have been able to afford the uniforms needed to participate in this program.*

*I am so grateful for your kindness and generosity. your gift has not only helped me achieve my dreams but also has given me the motivation to work harder and strive for success. I will always remember your kindness and will do my best to pay it forward.*

*Once again, thank you so much for your support and generosity. You have made a significant impact on my life, and I will always be grateful to you.*

With Thanks  
Sophia Wilder



# Working Together Towards Common Goals

Our church is fortunate to have good people with good ideas and good intentions. When someone sees something that needs to be done it gets done. Unfortunately these good ideas and intentions don't always end up with good results.

In order for things to operate smoothly, we have to have communication and cooperation amongst ourselves. We have by-laws, commissions and guidelines in place so that things operate as smoothly as possible. When people decide to go on their own and do things outside of the proper channels, things can go awry. You can end up with different people working on the same thing, coming from different directions, and heading on a collision course.

We are not trying to discourage people from working on projects within the church, community or beyond, but are asking that you go through the proper channels to prevent duplication of projects, unnecessary expenses and to avoid hurt feelings.

Ideas or concerns can be brought to Pastor Jon or any Administration Commission member (Ken, Deb, Dawn, Gloria and Tom) who will then relay the information to the proper commission as needed.

You can also go directly to a board member of the affected commission as follows:

*Buildings and Grounds:* Sherry

*Christian Education:* Jane

*Mission and Social Action:* Miriam

*Worship and Pastoral Care:* Dorothy

Thank you for your willingness to do what needs to be done and for doing so by communicating and cooperating with each other.

Board of Directors



- 3 - Charlie Johnson
- 15 - Stan Mercer
- 16 - Ken Bell
- 17 - Marcia Eager
- 21 - Allen Raterink
- 26 - Don Cornell
- 28 - Jessica Thompson
- 28 - Jullie Jenuwine Otto
- 30 - Clair Shively

## The Triumphal Entry

A very large crowd spread their cloaks on the road, while others cut branches from the trees and spread them on the road. Matthew 21:8 (NIV)

Based on Matthew 21:1-11



C L O A K S N J T E M K I N G  
 E E Y S Y E J E R U S A L E M  
 P X K H K N H B K D K F K D J  
 H D D O M P X L B I E F P Q L  
 M O P W O E L E S S P H J A Y  
 O S S R N I X S L C H X O R U  
 U C P A F N A S E I Y F N I U  
 N U O L N P E E E P A C H D F  
 T X U L J N Y D X L J P B I V  
 U F Y R I E A K B E K W M N C  
 F L E A K V R X R S C X V G O  
 A S O N G N E C L J E S U S L  
 U E O R M I A S G E N T L E T  
 Z D C Y D G V I L L A G E K P  
 E M D B R A N C H E S L U I U

RIDING	SPOKEN	JESUS	PROPHET	MOUNT
BRANCHES	BLESSED	JERUSALEM	HOSANNA	KING
CLOAKS	LORD	FULFILL	DONKEY	FOAL
VILLAGE	DISCIPLES	OLIVES	GENTLE	COLT

## May Worship Schedule on ZOOM

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

### May 7 Communion

John 14:1-14

*What Endures*

### May 14 Ask a Question Sunday

John 14:15-31

Must have questions written ahead of time

### May 21 Memorial Sunday

John 17:1-11

*What We Notice*

### May 28 Pentecost

Acts 2:1-21

*Birthday Party*

