



Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ

432 Quarterline, Newaygo, MI 49337 * 231-652-6624

Jonathan Reidel, 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 2024 -



This Pentecost

"From one person God created every human nation to live on the whole earth, having determined their appointed times and the boundaries of their lands." Acts 17L:26 CEB

I have spent the last several years trying to figure out what is truly means to be white in America. I say this not because I want to be drawn into the often bifurcated conversation that surrounds the topic of This is way so much of our national conversation about race happens: Black, Asian, Native American, Hispanic-Good. White-Bad. Or vice versa. The situation is, of course, more complicated than that On one hand, I see skin color as an accidental quality, a quirk of genetics and passion and not of destiny. I did not choose to be white, but neither did any other other person chose to be black, Asian, Native American, or Semitic. On the other hand, I understand how people have used skin color as a weapon to further exclusive and damaging agendas, how arbitrary privilege, not hard work or compassion, has affected our educational, vocational, economic, and cultural institutions. Because of this, I am aware that I have benefited from many opportunities and favors that, as a person dealing with disabilities, that I would not have received if I had not been light-skinned. I did not create this situation, but I am responsible for the choices I can make or not make that could either improve the situations and make it even worse. And as a person trying to see God working through this, I feel this is also my responsibility to care for all of God's creation as it would like to be treated. But this often takes painful honesty. One of my Oregon colleagues, a conservative to the core gentleman, began his first day serving his church with a rather declarative statement. He was immediately and angrily drawn to an old photo hanging in the church's narthex. It was a gathering of church members, dressed in full Klan regalia, on the church steps. He pulled the picture off of the wall and handed it to the head deacon, suggesting strongly that it had no place hanging in a place that claimed to follow Jesus. He did receive some flak from this move, but the picture never reappeared and he is still



...serving that church. I understand that challenge. I once made a report on hate groups rising in Pennsylvania to a church gathering. I was told not to mention such difficult fringe movements. They were a thing of the past, best forgotten. Perhaps they are, yet I have offered anti-racism and challenging history of American religion over the years and I have always received blow-back from those classes, mostly from people who did not bother to attend the classes (all elective, by the way). Racism is not a real problem, so I am told. You are making uncomfortable, I am reminded. I must admit that these stories make me uncomfortable too, but that might be the reason why they must be told. Our comfort comes at the price of others' discomfort and pain. It would be lovely to tell the story of White America's repentance as a straight line-slavery-abolition-Reconstruction-Jim Crow-Freedom Riders-End of Racism- with the South as the main villain. The true history, however, is more of a boomerang and it involves all of us-North and South, rich and poor, educated and struggling. It is a tug-of-war of redlining, gaslighting, putting people in their place economically and socially. It is a game where poorer whites and blacks are pitted against one another without any real benefit for either party. It is also a story of opportunity, of rising above the odds, of overcoming prejudices learned from our forebears, and the triumphs of collaboration. It is also narrative of sharing privilege and possibility with all so that all can be all that God created them to be. But that can be only be done if we explore truly what it means be to white in American. It can only happen if we see being white not as a default of being a human being, but as a unique story with its limitations and its challenges. As one important piece of the story, but not the whole story itself. This month we celebrate the birth of the Christian church-a holiday many call 'Pentecost'. The first outpouring of the God's spirit was truly an international affair. The ancestors of white people were there, but so were the ancestors of Asians and Africans. A quick glance at the localities listed in Acts 2 will confirm Members of the known world then were standing in Jerusalem's main square where listening to these Galileans-the white trash or the sharecroppers of their day-far from the Roman ideal

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



Memorial Day

We will be remembering through friends and family members who have passed away since the last Memorial Day during our May 26th worship service. If you have a loved one whose name you would like to be included, please let Pastor Jon or the church office know by May 19th.



Noon Forum on Tuesdays

The Politics of Jesus

We meet in the prayer room at noon each Tuesday to discuss issues and topics that help us learn more about how to live out our walk with God. This month we will continue our close look at how Jesus understood and dealt with the complicated world of political decision-making. Join us as we discuss the following subjects:

May 07-Don't Just Explain The Alternative, Show It.

May 14-The implications of Jubilee

May 21-God Will Fight for Us

May 28 - Christ and Power

Wednesday Night Prayer

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

Deadline for the June Churchmouse

Please send any information or articles you would like included in the June **Churchmouse** to the office by

Tuesday, May 28

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

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.

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/184864699096>

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.

Thank You. . .

There is no way we can thank you enough for love, calls, cards hugs, and caring you showed me and our family during this difficult time. Don was a treasure to us and so many more.

Thank you so very much.

Miriam and family



Pastoral Relations Support Committee

This past March 20th the newly formed Pastoral Relations Support Committee (PRSC) had our first meeting. We were lucky to have with us the area conference minister Cheryl Burke to offer support, guidance, direction, and to answer questions. The committee will be meeting at least quarterly to address any concerns that have been brought forward by the congregation and to allow Pastor Jon an opportunity to discuss his concerns or needs and check in on his well being. These meetings will all be confidential.

We are all aware that conflict is inevitable. We invite any concerns to be brought forward but there are guidelines that must be followed. If there is a concern with Pastor Jon we ask that

you speak with him directly. Please note that a member of the PRSC will be present when you speak with him. If the concern is of another nature please put your concern in writing with the date and sign your name. This can be given then to any member of the PRSC committee and he or she will bring the concern to our next meeting. Please note that you will likely not know any action taken. We also ask that if you have a concern or see an opportunity for a certain other church committee to talk with that committee chairperson directly.

The PRSC committee members are Holly Spaulding-chair, George Passage, Jean Smith, Don Hills, Dave Twining, and Salle Havenkamp.

Thank You!

Dear Church Family, we have been through a very hard and sad time the last few weeks. We have lost some very dear Church family and friends.

Don Strohpaal was a super guy, we all loved him and his great smile, jokes and stories. He left his mark on each one of us.

Norma Jean was a matriarch in our church family. We all looked forward to seeing her every Sunday. She loved her church and singing in the choir. Coffee hour was her social life and she looked forward to that and socializing with everyone and loved it especially when we have something with chocolate to serve that Sunday, she will forever be missed.

Dawn Anderson's passing was a shock to us all. Dawn touched our hearts also. She had been Church Treasurer for many, many years. She was our friend and we all loved her. She had such a great smile and a giving heart, always willing to help so many, no matter what they needed.

We now see their empty pews and each Sunday. As we see their empty pews we are sad and hurting all over again.

God has these wonderful and loving Church Family angels with him now.

We together and leaning on one another will heal our broken hearts. All these wonderful people may be gone, BUT NEVER FORGOTTEN!





Thank you all for your help in getting all things ready for their services. Together we accomplished much even when we think we can't do it WE CAN, TOGETHER.

This is why we are a loving, caring and compassionate Church Family.

Blessings and HUGS. —Gloria



May, 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 7:00 Prayer	2	3	4
5 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom O & A Meeting after Service	6	7 Noon Class 	8 7 pm Prayer	9 NA Meal 6:30 pm in the Fellowship Hall	10	11
12 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	13 10 am Worship & Pastoral Care in office & on phone	14 Noon Class 	15 7:00 Prayer	16	17	18
19 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	20	21 Noon Class 	22 7:00 Prayer	23	24	25
26 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	27 Office Closed for Memorial Holiday	28 Noon Class  Churchmouse Deadline	29 7:00 Prayer	30	31	





3 - Charlie Johnson
 15 - Stan Mercer
 16 - Ken Bell
 17 - Marcia Eager

21 - Allen Raterink
 26 - Don Cornell
 28 - Julie Jenuwine Otto

The Parable of the Talents

But the man who had received the one talent went off, dug a hole in the ground and hid his master's money. Matthew 25:18

Based on Matthew 25:14-30 (NIV)



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

Journey
 Servant
 Ability
 Gained
 Worthless
 Property
 Wicked
 Happiness
 Talent
 Share
 Faithful
 Lazy
 Master
 Money
 Weeping
 Entrusted

April Worship Schedule on ZOOM

Worship is in person and on ZOOM at <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/184864699096> or phone 1-312-626-6799 ID: 848 6469 9096

May 5 - Communion
 John 15:9-17
Friends Together

May 19 - Pentecost
 Acts 2:1-21
Invitations

May 12 - Ask A Question Sunday
 John 17:6-19

May 26 - Trinity/Memorial Sunday
Remembering Those Who Have Died in the Past Year
 John 3:1-17
Football Slogans

