



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

- SEPTEMBER 2024 -



Native American Sunday

*"The Earth is the LORD'S and everything in it,
the world and its inhabitants too."*

Psalm 24: 1

The people who lived here saw trees, underbrush, and perhaps fruit-bearing bushes run the slopes down to what we, the later settlers, call the Muskegon, an Anglicization of a Native American word. I do not need to go far to find more remnants of their presence: Newaygo, Ottawa, Manistee, even Michigan itself. We often live so much in the present that we are not of the habit of realizing whose land we now occupy. They brought lives here, they told their stories here, they struggled with natural and human-made difficulties here, and they raised families here. We are not the first people here nor will we be the last, though our tendency to focus on ourselves might lead us to believe such fictions.. The lands we live on have their own stories, apart from us. Those stories, much as ripples cross water, connect us with others. We carry the benefits and the consequences of those stories as surely as we occupy the land that gave them a context. Many in my denomination will open their meetings and their worship services with some recognition of those original settlers. My fellow pastors will name the people, what they themselves might have called their home, and how long they lived here. This is often followed by an expression of gratitude for their care for the earth. Some may go as far as to recognize that our place in this land may be the result of treaties kept and not kept, of bonds forged and broken, of shared communities and the expulsion of whole tribes. Some may go further still and express sorrow for what role our ancestors might have played in the injury and the death of so many of our fellow human beings. I must admit that I have not been brave enough to broach this topic, but those who have prompted me to wonder what unintentional benefits and advantages have I received from those Native Americans who were here and what suffering did they endure so that I could be so "blessed". On the last Sunday of September, my denomination celebrates Native American Sunday. Some churches choose to honor this occasion by collecting money for



reservation food banks, vocational training programs, and small church revitalization. My church, at one point in time, went on a mission trip to a Lakota reservation in South Dakota to build bunk beds and spend time learning about Lakota culture. My own personal experiences have been more limited as they are the remnants of classes taken, museums toured, and books read. Because of what little I know, I know that my thoughts about Native Americans are awash with stereotypes, a few conversations taken out of context, and an overwhelming sense of pity generated by what I have heard about lost cultures, tales of addictions, and the difficulties of reservation life. Perhaps the closest parallel for me would be to assume I know anything about the varieties of Anglo culture by reading the history of Nazi Germany, mangling the pronunciation of a few place names in Ireland, and believing every cliché I have ever heard about people at the welfare office could summarize everything I need to know. Sadly, I suspect that is what I have likely done when it comes to the people who once cared for the land I live on now and whose descendants are very much lively and creatively diverse people. So how should I spend this Native American Sunday and the days beyond? This list came to mind, although it is far from complete.

1. Engage in conversation with people of Native American heritage. See them less as history lessons and more as people who are living their lives.
2. Read Native American fiction and non-fiction that is written by actual Native Americans. The time is long past for all of us to rely on outside experts. We need to let people speak for themselves, even if we might disagree with what we read.
3. Watch movies and TV created and acted by Native Americans. So many of our misconceptions about these cultures come from our steady diet of old and new Westerns. Check who is directing, acting in, and writing the movie.
4. Try Native American cuisine. Food always has a story behind it. Let those who prepare your meal share their stories.
5. Remember to question your preconceptions. If, after careful consideration, they seem too sweeping, one-sided, or too eager to place blame, you are probably at least partially wrong and you need to learn more.
6. More importantly, every human being is a child of God. No exceptions. No matter what culture they come from, which skin color they possess, what their gender or orientation might be, or what poor choices or confusions they might have. If you are willing to see them as evil or completely misguided, remind yourself that you are a child of God, not God Godself. You are not the final decision-maker about the value of your fellow human beings. God is. And God has already chosen to love them.
7. Finally, your job is to listen to stories, to learn, and to keep the stories going. That is a worthy enough task for you.

So I live and worship on land that once belonged to the Odawa people. I do not know as much as I could about their stories. I do not know their descendants. I do not know their stories. But I can take the time to find out. I can care for the land that they cared for. I can work to make this world more livable and caring for all of those who wander here. That is enough to do.

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

CHURCH VISIONING SUNDAY

THE RESCHEDULED VERSION

During our worship service, we will have a special conversation with the Rev. Lawrence Richardson, the Michigan Conference's Associate Conference Minister for Church Vitality and Transitions. After a time of prayer and song, he will be guiding through a time of consideration about the possibilities in our church's future and of sharing ideas of what we can offer to the community around us. We welcome all ideas from members and friends at this gathering so your presence is most appreciated. Rev. Richardson will also join us for Fellowship Time so everyone will have an opportunity to talk to him. This event will take place on September 22nd at 10 a.m.



Volunteer Opportunities in Newaygo County

I have had people ask me how they can serve the community around them better and how they can make a difference in people's lives. During the month of July, I visited most of the helping organizations in the county and asked about what they needed. Below is a list of volunteer opportunities. If any of these spark your interest, please make contact with the organization and see what orientation process is required. We will also look into if we can organize a group of church volunteers to volunteer together. Let me know what you are interested in.

1. Food Truck attendants at True North
2. Food Packers at Groceries to Go
3. Soup Prep People at the Red Door Kitchen
4. True Mentors for True North
5. Food Pantry Workers at Love Inc.
6. Gift Store Workers for Gerber Memorial Hospital
7. Food Pantry Packers at True North
8. Adopt a Classroom for Newaygo Public Schools
9. CASA Workers for PCA of Newaygo County
10. Thrift Shop Workers at Love Inc.
11. Patient Comforters in the Cancer Treatment Center and the Emergency Department - Gerber Memorial Hospital
12. Meals on Wheels Drivers for Commission on Aging

Come Join us Friday September 6 from 4-8 for a Picnic at the Lake



Say Good Bye to Summer and Hello to Fall!
4050 South Sherman Ave., Fremont

We live off of Baldwin Road on the west side of Long /Ryerson Lake between 48th and 40th streets.

We will provide Brats and Burgers, Boat rides, swimming, Kayaks, Etc, and a camp fire. Bring a dish to pass and a folding chair if you have one. (If not, don't worry, we will find one for you.) Questions? Ask Gloria or Call 231-924-9871

Sign up on the sign up sheet in Fellowship Hall. We hope to see you there!

Anne and Bob VandeKieft
Cell: 231-250-3620
Email: avdkieft@gmail.com

September 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

September 1 - Communion

James 1:17-27
"Be Love"

September 8 -

Mark 7:24-37
"Open"

September 15 -

Mark 8:27-38
"Who are You?"

September 22 -

Church Visioning Sunday
Guest Leader: The Rev. Lawrence Richardson

September 29

Mark 9:38-50
"Courageous Community"



NOON FORUM--THE FLOWERS OF ST. FRANCIS

We will meet in the main Sunday School room to watch the third film of our trilogy on the life and teachings of the People's Saint, St. Francis. Roberto Rossellini's THE FLOWERS OF ST. FRANCIS, uses non-professional actors and photography and set designs inspired by medieval art work to portray Francis' life simply and with deep attention to why Francis appeals to people so fervently. We will also view a making of this film documentary that will help us understand Francis' importance to Christian history. Join us for our lively conversation.

Trunk or Treat

Our Annual Trunk or Treat is fast approaching and we could use your help. We could use your candy donations so we will be ready for all the Ghosts & Goblins who will visit us to get their candy treats.

You can drop your donations off at the office.
Thank you for your generous candy donations.
Open & Affirming Committee

Wednesday Night Prayer

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

Anniversaries in September

6 - Tom and Gretchen Mee



4 - Trisha Winters Trzeciak
9 - Gloria Winters
18 - Barb Getz
25 - Wayne Porter
28 - Greg Myer

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.

5th Sunday Potluck

It is back by popular demand. 5th Sunday Potluck on Sunday, September 29th after worship.

Bring a dish to pass. Table service is provided.

Deadline for the October-Churchmouse

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

Churchmouse to the office by
Thursday, September 26

You may e-mail information to:

newaygoucc@gmail.com

or leave a hard copy in the office.





End of Summer Ice Cream Social – Sunday, Sept. 15 @ 11:30

After worship. All invited to attend. Bring your friends and come and enjoy some ice cream and good fellowship with us.

Newaygo Congregational United Church of Christ
432 Quarterline, Newaygo, MI



September, 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Communion Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	2 Labor Day Office Closed	3 Gloria in Office 10-12 am	4 Gloria in Office 10-12 am 7 pm Prayer	5	6 Gloria in Office 10-12 am Picnic 4-8 pm Anne & Bob VandeKieft	7
8 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom	9 10 am Worship & Pastoral Care in office & on phone	10 Gloria in Office Noon Class 	11 Gloria in Office 7 pm Prayer	12 Gloria in Office	13	14
15 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom Ice Cream Social 11:30	16	17 Noon Class 	18 7 pm Prayer	19	20	21
22 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom Rev. Lawrence Richardson's visioning Sun.	23	24 Noon Class 	25 7 pm Prayer	26 Churchmouse Deadline	27	28
29 Worship Svc. 10 am In person, phone & Zoom 5th Sunday Potluck	30	27 Noon Class 	28 7 pm Prayer	29	30	

