



NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2025



From the Pastor's Desk

It is getting to that time of year again. October is passed, and the Fall bounty is coming in. I know my tomatoes are slowing down. Still have 9 on the vine as of this writing. So, the plants are finishing strong even though we had an odd growing season. Our thoughts turn to reflection on the year with Thanksgiving on our door step. It is my hope for you all that you see the year of 2025 as a year with many things to be thankful for. That said I would like to put down a two-level challenge for you. I plan on doing this as well.

I would like us all to try to come up with something unique to be thankful for that we did not use in a prior day in November. So, starting November 1st, and every day till November 30th, find a different thing to be thankful for. Now I said there is two levels to this and you can choose at any time to start in on the 2nd level (you don't have to start on the 1st of November!). The 2nd level is to find an additional thing that you are thankful and still not repeat any one thing. And you can even try a 3rd tier to this if you are brave and thoughtful enough, because I think that the more, we find things to be thankful for the more we realize we have many more things to be thankful for. In other words, our thankfulness should multiply as we go through the month.

The best thing to do here if you do not blog or journal is to get a sheet of paper and put it on your refrigerator and everyday record the 'unique' thing you are thankful for, so you can keep track. I will do you one better and provide a half a page in this newsletter to do this. See on next page...

Why do this? It is more than exercise of frustration; it is my hope to bring us closer to the heart of God. In 1st Thess 5 as a part of 'final instructions' to the church of Thessalonica, Paul wrote this as encouragement.

"And we urge you, brothers and sisters, warn those who are idle and disruptive, encourage the disheartened, help the weak, be patient with everyone. Make sure that nobody pays back wrong for wrong, but always strive to do what is good for each other and for everyone else. Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus. Do not quench the Spirit. Do not treat prophecies with contempt but test them all; hold on to what is good, reject every kind of evil. May God himself, the God of peace, sanctify you through and through. May your whole spirit, soul and body be kept blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. The one who calls you is faithful, and he will do it."

I love all the 'instruction' in this. But being Thankful always is smack dab in this middle of this list of advice for the church. The words Thanks or Thankfulness or the phrase "give thanks" is listed over 220 times in the Bible it is an important theme run throughout the various books. There is never much instruction on how to be thankful, but it seems that it is telling us that it is a mindset that we need to have. And it also tells us of our position with God. That is one of Thankfulness, for all the good that we get and have gotten. Over and over in the Psalms it says to be Thankful to God for many things. Philippians tells to include an attitude of Thankfulness in our prayers. Thessalonians though imparts on us the need to just be Thankful.

Thankfulness is a powerful and can bring many benefits to our lives daily. It is linked to increased happiness, improved physical and mental health, greater self-esteem, and life satisfaction. Regular practice of thankfulness can lead to long-term positive changes in the brain, supporting mental health and resilience. Simple exercises like keeping a gratitude journal can improve mood, increase empathy, and strengthen social bonds. This is why I think that we should practice this November the art of "Giving Thanks Always."

Blessings to you all this Thanksgiving and Advent season, and for some, see you in 2026!

Pastor Duane

NOVEMBER THANKFUL PRAYER LIST

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H.E.R.B.I.E Clinic

For anyone without health insurance

2nd Saturdays, Nov 8, Dec 14 & Jan 10

8:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. More dates will be published in subsequent newsletters.

Dental care, eye examinations and physical therapy are available

Volunteers are always needed.

Please call Dr. Sherry O'Donnell's office at (269) 408-1777.

Cookie Walk

November is the month for baking cookies for the Cookie Walk. The baking days are:

Mondays, November 3, 10, 17, and 24

from 9:30 am - ??? pm

Tuesday, November 4, 11, 18, and 25

from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Wednesdays, November 5, 12, and 19

from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

from 1:30pm - ??? pm

Thursday, November 6, 13, and 20

from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm

Fridays, November 7, 14, and 28

from 9:30 am - ??? pm

As always, come when you can leave when you want to, the time of fellowship is always fun.

If you can help on any of these days it would be appreciated. There are many different jobs available, some do not require standing. It is also possible to bake at home. You will be able to choose a recipe and the ingredients will be supplied for the one you select.

The "Cookie Walk" is on Friday, December 5th from 9:00 am - 2:00 pm. If you are not able to pick them up on Friday, they will be available at church on Sunday, December 7 before and after the morning worship service

Cindy Jackson
Cookie Walk chairperson

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Evy's Closet

Evy's Closet is open for shopping hours from 4 to 6 p.m. on every 2nd and 4th Thursday. The amount of donations we have received has been phenomenal. So phenomenal that at this time we are unable to accept any more Fall and Winter clothing until further notice. So please spread the word if you know of women who are in need of Fall and Winter clothing, please direct them our way.

We know there are women in need out there but we are not getting the numbers that we use to at Evy's Closet. We are working on ways to get the information out there about Evy's Closet, but we need your help also in spreading the word. We are trying to help as many women in need as we can with this great cause. When you come in to visit. Please take a flyer and to put up in various places.

Thanks to all of the volunteers this fall! If you would like to volunteer call Nancy McCreedy at 269-684-6171.



MUSICAL NOTES

November/December (Choir and Special Music)

The Advent Season is quickly approaching! If you are interested in Christmas Caroling, please reach out ASAP. A date will be set based on who is available.

Dear New Journey Family,

I will be stepping down from my position as Choir Director after Christmas.

Thank you for all your support over the last few years. I am so grateful for the time that I got to spend learning and growing with you all. I want to give a special thank you to all the choir members, whether they joined for a day, a season or since I was hired in 2022. You gave me an irreplaceable opportunity leading you.

Choir Members - Past and Current

Sharon Stephayn	Randy Mace	Nancy Boose
Linda McLane	Ken Smith	Don Boose
Bethany	Ron Hartline	Gina Topping
Deb Litchfield	Steve Morrison	Sally
Sandy Hodgeman	Brenda Engel	Dick McCreedy
Sylvia Smith	John Engel	Nancy Nimtz
Amy Wade	Marion Eldred	Pastor Duane Lindsey

I am thankful for your support and prayers. I pray that God continues to bless this church.

Soli Deo Gloria,
Emma Connors



We will celebrate All Saints' Day on Sunday, November 2nd during worship service and remember those who have passed away since last year's All Saints' Day Sunday by lighting a candle for each person during the service.

Here is the list of people we are aware of who have passed away. If your loved one is not on this list, please contact the church office.

Eleanor Dean Fisher, Janyce Eileen Gano, Sandra Kay Halbritter-Bartley, Michael Lee Kohler, Elton "Big Al" Orpurt, Imogene Orpurt, and Rev. Scott B. Smith

God be with the loved ones of those who have passed.



Bible Study News

Creed: What Christians Believe and Why - Exploring the Apostles' Creed by Adam Hamilton bible study for women led by Sandy Hodgeman will begin meeting on Wednesday October 15th and will last until February from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. Please call Sandy at 269-684-0914 for more information.

Special Sundays

Nov 2 Communion/All Saints Sunday
Twenty-first Sunday after Pentecost

Nov 9 Twenty-second Sunday after Pentecost
Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday

Nov 16 Twenty-third Sunday after Pentecost

Nov 23 Thanks Giving Sunday/Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday

Nov 30 First Sunday of Advent – “Sending a Righteous Branch”

Dec 7 Communion - Second Sunday of Advent – “Here is Your God”

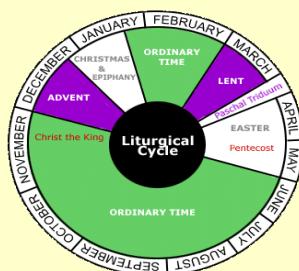
Dec 14 Third Sunday of Advent – “Rejoice in Renewal”

Dec 21 Fourth Sunday of Advent – “Blessed are They Who Believe”

Dec 24 Christmas Eve Service at New Journey 7:30 p.m.
– “Light in the Land of Darkness: Proclaim”

Dec 28 First Sunday after Christmas Day

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LITURGISTS:

Nov 2 Sue Phillips (Communion)
 Nov 9 Sandy Hodgman
 Nov 16 Steve Morrison
 Nov 23 Dee Rough – Thanksgiving Sunday
 Nov 30 Dave Hodgman
 Dec 7 Sue Phillips (Communion) – First Sunday of Advent
 Dec 8 Gina Topping – Second Sunday of Advent
 Dec 14 Dee Rough – Third Sunday of Advent
 Dec 21 Sandy Hodgman – Fourth Sunday of Advent and Christmas Eve Service
 Dec 24 Marge Berkheiser – Christmas Eve
 Dec 29 Dave Hodgman

ATTENTION SINGLE LADIES OF ALL AGES AND CIRCUMSTANCES:

VEP's is an interdenominational fellowship group for single women of any age, circumstance or church in our community. Since none of us are the original members we think the initials stand for **Very Exceptional People**. We meet for lunch one Sunday a month, March to November, at an area restaurant. (Whoever is the hostess picks the restaurant). *November 9th is our last gathering until March 8, 2025.* If you are interested in joining us, please call Pam Montgomery at 683-2192.



Decorating the church for Advent and Christmas will be a little different this year. The Worship Committee is asking people if they can stop in and help with the hanging of the greens on Saturday, November 29th and a project will be assigned to you. Please stay tuned for the exact time or you can Contact Donna Medlin at 574-532-4369 for more information. Please email the church at newjourneyumc2561@gmail.com if you are available to help. With many hands, the decorating will not take long!



Christmas Eve service times: New Journey UMC will have a Candlelight Service on Christmas Eve, December 24th at 7:30 p.m. Pastor Duane will be performing the service.



Christmas Poinsettias!

Would you like to help us decorate our sanctuary this year with poinsettias for the Christmas season? A 6-inch red poinsettia with white bow is \$TBD or an 8-inch red poinsettia with white bow is \$TBD. Orders are due in the church office by Wednesday, December 3rd at noon, as orders are due to Martin's by Friday, December 5th. We will place the poinsettia flowers in the sanctuary for the Christmas Eve morning and evening services. Please contact the church office of prices within the next couple of weeks since Martain's doesn't have a price list as of yet.

PLEASE NOTE: Following the Sunday evening, Christmas Eve Service, please take your poinsettia(s) with you.

Name _____

Quantity by Size: 6-inch _____ 8-inch _____

Amount Enclosed _____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Committee Reports

+++++MISSIONS OPPORTUNITIES FOR NOVEMBER AND DECEMBER+++++

NOVEMBER: Mobility Worldwide (982665)

Mobility Worldwide, formerly known as the PET Project, provides mobility for leg-handicapped persons in developing countries. These mobility carts are designed for rugged rural terrain. The Mobility Cart can also prevent other health problems. There are three Mobility Worldwide affiliate in Michigan. They are MI – East Michigan (Goodrich), Michigan - Saline and MI – West (Holland). The West Michigan affiliate builds carts specially designed for use by children. Contributions may be made to the parent organization using #982665 or to an affiliate at <https://mobilityworldwide.org/donate/>

DECEMBER: Spero House - Niles is an amazing city!

Just like all great cities there are challenges. One of the challenges is that of individuals struggling to beat addictions, single parent homes, and poverty. We believe that there is hope for everyone (Spero is Greek for the word hope) and it starts with kindness and ends with direction & wholeness. Spero House seeks to labor at this very thing, through charitable offerings, such as helping individuals through hunger, encouragement and life direction in the greater Niles area.

+++++TRUSTEES+++++

Greg and Larry have been working with a local area company to update the phone system. Also, a new computer was purchased and updated for the sound system. And the computer for running Zoom has been updated to Windows 11.
~Greg Rough, Trustees Chair

+++++HOSPITALITY+++++

Thank you to all who assisted me with the funeral dinners for Elanor & Mike. I very much appreciated all the effort that was out into purchasing, cooking & cleaning. God bless all of you ~ Amy Wade, Hospitality

+++++FINANCE+++++

The two endowments are doing well. We are using the funds that are available for needs, seminars, new books, and for buying and updating the church's building's needs. New phone lines, new handicapped door, new carpeting and flooring, new freezer, computers, etc.

As of September 30,

General Endowment is \$462,695.04

Smith Endowment is \$344,801.39

Without the use of these endowments, we would not be able to do much more than the budgeted expenses.

The two CDs are doing ok. They are both for 6 months. We use the interest generated to purchase higher CDs. One cd is \$53,000 at 4.1% interest. Matures on 10/30/25. The second cd is \$55,000 at 4.3% interest matures on 2/4/26. There has been a \$8,000 gain since purchasing both.

We will begin to work on the 2026 budget within the next two months. New Giving Envelopes for 2026 will be here within the next month or so.

As of October 1, 2025:

Checking Account Balance \$64,701.97

Designated Fund Balance \$9,028.09

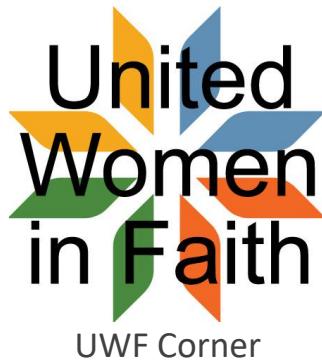
Trustee Working Fund Balance \$8,299.13

Helpful Hundred Balance (at Pastor's discretion) \$560.00

We do our banking with United Federal Credit Union. Any questions or concerns about finances please contact Chairman of Finance, Bill Carter (269-240-3637)

+++++CONGREGATIONAL CARE+++++

Thanks to our committee who have been sending cards and making calls to our church family members. If you would like to be contacted, please contact Carla or Pastor Duane 269-683-7250. Please remember our church family in your prayers and with acts of kindness. The holidays are coming, too! How fun to surprise someone in our church family with a call or card!!



Our September meeting was held at 1:00pm on Wednesday September 3, 2025 in the fellowship hall. A business meeting was held with light refreshments. Pam Montgomery has agreed to be Circle Leader but the president position remains open. Plans were finalized for the United Women of Faith Sunday. Due to the small number of active members, it was decided to include the entire Church Family in the service.

The Church Family Sunday was held on Sunday September 28, 2025. Pastor Duane secured a speaker from the state level of UWF. Her sermon was about the history of the women's group and the many ways we have supported programs in the community. She also spoke about the many ways we can continue to serve in our changing world. Randy Mace was honored with the Special Mission Recognition. A bakeless bake sale was held to raise money to help support our giving to local charities.

The World Thank Offering was the topic of our October 1st meeting, held in the Fellowship Hall. This is a Worldwide program of the group. Each year we receive little cardboard banks for the project. Whenever we are thankful for those special gifts from God we are to drop a coin in the little boxes to show our gratitude throughout the year. Nancy Calay presented the program which is held each October.

Linda McLane and her dog Olaf will present the program at our meeting November 5, 2025. There will be a potluck for Members at noon. Linda will be speaking around 12:45 and all are invited to the presentation. Please remember that when Olaf is in harness, he is working and he is not to be petted or talked to.

The Christmas Luncheon will be held at Brentwood this year on Wednesday December 3 at 12:00. The cost will be \$10 person to be paid in advance. Please let Pam know ASAP whether you will be going. We will carpool from the church at 11:30am. (Sometimes parking can be a problem).

Whatever the location we are looking forward to sharing Joys and concerns and a few laughs.

Prayers for our Church Family

Please review the Prayer List, and let us know of any changes!

Cancer Patients

David (*Cindy Jackson's Brother*)
 Owen Bradbury (*Kathy Scott's friend's grandchild's granddaughter*)
 Beth (*Sue Phillips's friend*)
 Earl Corak (*Judy Corak's husband*)
 Leona Dixon (*Vickie Earl's friend*)
 Annette (*Kathy Scott's friend*)
 Jeff (*Starla's friend*)
 Tom Hall (*Norma Hall's Son*)
 Sharon Dircks
 Lee (*Pastor Duane's Uncle*)
 Mike Frucci (*Ham's friend*)
 Vicki Earl
 Katie (*Daughter of Pastor Duane's cousin*)
 Claire Wiggins (*Richard Ham's sister*)
 Luke Fannon (*Brenda, John & Ron's nephew-in-law*)
 Janice Bolton (*John, Brenda & Ron's sister-in-law*)
 Jim Dwight & wife Pam Weinstein (*friends of Dick & Pat Ham*)

Jennifer Bobelenyi's sister
 Katlyn (*friend of Sandy Hodgman's*)
 David (*Deb Litchfield's father*)
 Dale (*Norma Hall's cousin*)
 Susan Engle (*Sue Phillips' friend*)
 Alex Nicholson (*friend of Susan Severeid*)
 Jeff Steinman (*Starla Miller's cousin*)
 David Litchfield
 Ray Boon (*Carol Wilfert's b-i-l*)
 Chris Hay (*Niece to Jane Heflin*)
 Nancy Comfort
 Becky (*Kathy Scott's friend*)
 Kevin Brown (*Judy's friend*)
 Jack Scott
 Pat Chomyn (*friend of the Engels*)
 Marion Eldred
 Claire Ann Wiggins (*Dick Ham's sister*)

Health Concerns

Jane Heflin
 Sean Rice (*Starla Miller's nephew*)
 Jeannine Severeid
 Bonnie & Don Nie
 Woody Quick
 Joan Benjamin
 Brenda Engel
 Nancy & Jennifer Watts
 Nancy Comfort
 Taylor Jennings and Nadina
 Carol Noid
 Anslie Rink-Scott (*Ernst's granddaughter*)
 Christine (*Emma's stepmother*)

Chuck Hayden (*Nancy Comfort's brother*)
 Ashley (*Judy's Granddaughter*)
 Ashley (*Judy's Granddaughter*)
 Faith Ernst
 Don & Nancy Boose
 Sylvia Smith
 Kimberly (*Faith Ernst's daughter*)
 Mindy Corak
 Doug Nie
 Starla Miller
 Harry Rough
 Howard Engel
 Wendi (*Sharon's niece*)

Prayers for Our Shut-ins: Marion Eldred, Dennis Comfort, Jane Heflin, Woody Quick

Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday to the
following who celebrate
NOVEMBER and DECEMBER
BIRTHDAYS

Randy Mace	November 3
Mary Varner	November 4
Marge Berkheiser	November 6
Marilyn White	November 6
Dennis Comfort	November 14
Nancy Comfort	November 18
Melissa Rough	November 21
Jerry French	December 2
Dee Rough	December 4
Richard Bookwalter	December 6
Pastor Rob Snodgrass	December 9
Joan Benjamin	December 10
Nancy Calay	December 14
Megan Vite	December 14
Nancy Boose	December 17
Yvonne Roebeck	December 21
Sue Phillips	December 26
Kelsey Medlin	December 28
Chuck Hart	December 29
Faith Ernst	December 30
Louise Bookwalter	December 31

If your special day is not listed or the date is wrong,
please call the church office and let us know.

New Journey United Methodist Church
302 Cedar Street
Niles, Michigan 49120

SUNDAY WORSHIP

10:30 AM

Office Hours

Monday – Thursday
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Phone: 269-683-7250

Pastor Duane Lindsey: [\(810\)730-6861](mailto:padualli@yahoo.com)

Carla Valeris, Secretary: newjourneyumc2561@gmail.com

Nancy Comfort, Finance Secretary: financesecretarynjumc@gmail.com

Brenda Engel, Treasurer: bbengel1@gmail.com

New Journey UMC is a downtown church with a Vision to Breathe In & Breathe Out:

Breathe In – To nurture the spiritual development of persons of all ages through worship, education, and fellowship; and to live the Core Values of Prayer, Faith, Love and Compassion.

Breathe Out – To be in ministry for all persons in our community.