

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 2026



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From the Pastor's Desk

The Book of Ecclesiastes is such an interesting book, unique in many ways. For one, there is such an urgency for being aware of time. In one way, and probably its most famous verse is 3:1, where it says "*There is an occasion for everything, and a time for every activity under heaven,*" where it famously goes on to say all the different things that there is time for. And it lists a lot, but there is also within its verses a sense of how short a time we have and being aware of that too. In verse 1:4 it says, "*A generation goes and a generation comes, but the earth remains forever*." It reminds us that we are as quick as a wisp of wind, when it comes to other parts of God's creation.

Never is there more an Ecclesiastical season as Fall is. Even in 3:2 it speaks of the Fall season as one of those times when it says, "*a time to plant and a time to uproot*." I know that is what I am doing with my little garden of tomatoes, peppers and spices. I don't know about you but Fall to me, is a perfect time to review my successes and failures of the previous 6 or 7 months when it comes to plants. I did something right with those plants and somethings I could have done better. And like most people, I start my plans for next year even while this season of growing is coming to a close.

In church we do something… similar, not quite, but close, because Fall and Advent have similar elements to them. Especially on All Saints Sunday, we remember those who have passed away in the last 12 months. It is very much a time of reflection on those whom we have lost, and maybe the ways we were good to them, and maybe the ways we could have been better. I will call them Blessings and Regrets, because we often go in one direction or the other. Even the notion of I wish I knew that person better is a regret, as a pastor I know I often feel that way about those who died in the church.

But we have attached to the tail end of the fall season. The notion of being Thankful and even the notion of looking forward as Advent follows right after Thanksgiving. I'm not sure if there is any intentionality to this annual string of events, or it is just luck that put them together that way, but I like that progression because if we allow ourselves to go with the flow of things, it becomes a means of helping us not to get 'stuck' in just the memories. Being Thankful and then becoming aware of the coming of Jesus are great ways of allowing us to move on in ways that does not seem disrespectful to those that have gone on to greater things.

Even in the ideas of Autumn where things are changing, leaves colors, moving from one season to another, is a way to remind us to move on. But I think that part of the purpose of Ecclesiastes and its attempts of making us aware of time and its passing or moving on, the book is trying to tell us to not get stuck, no matter what it is. There is the subtlest undertone of beauty in this bleak book with all that it says. When you match the beginning of the poem in 3:1 to more towards the end in 3:11, where it says, "*He has made everything beautiful in its time.*"

This becomes a reminder of looking for the best of things in whatever season we are in regardless of the season, we just need to look. Change our thoughts if we have to but look none the less.

It even tells us to party today, because tomorrow may not have time to do so. Ecclesiastes 9:7 says, "*Go, eat your food with gladness, and drink your wine with a joyful heart, for God has already approved what you do*." The book gives us permission to move on, to become unstuck, and to even look at this moment with a sense of hope and wonder. As we transition from Fall to Advent, I hope you give yourself this permission to do the same.

It also, tells us to "*Fear God and keep His commandments, for this is the whole duty of man*." From Ecclesiastes 12:13. Because, as I have said on many Sunday mornings that we need to be about God's purposes. Even in that, we can find cause to move on from whatever we are 'stuck' in. Life is messy but we don't have to get caught.

"As the leaves fall, we are called to let go and open our hearts to God's harvest, trusting that His seasons bring both His provision and His purpose."

Pastor Duane

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

For anyone without health insurance
2nd Saturdays, Nov 13, Dec 11 & Jan 8
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.

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Evy's Closet

Evy's Closet is open for shopping hours from 4 to 6 p.m. on every 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.

Evy's Closet is in need of the following items: Small Deodorant, Small Bottles of Shampoo, Conditioner, Body Wash, Mouth Wash, Lotion, and hand sanitizer, chap stick, Small Kleenex, Small Bars of Soap, and Underwear.

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 to put up in various places.

I need volunteers, they don't have to do anything but sit there. I cannot open Evy's Closet without volunteers so please sign up if you can and let me know when you can help! Please call Syliva Smith at 269-357-9809.



We will celebrate All Saints' Day on Sunday, November 1st 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 ASAP in order to have the name put on the list before this Sunday November 1st.

Richard Bookwalter, Don Boose, Marion Eldred, Dick McCreedy, Carol Noid, Jack Scott, Darcy Steinman, Claire Ann Wiggins, & Mary Ellen Wood

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

Special Sundays

Nov 1	Communion/All Saints Sunday
Nov 8	Twenty-Fourth Sunday after Pentecost Organ and Tissue Donor Sunday
Nov 15	Twenty-Fifth Sunday after Pentecost
Nov 22	Thanks Giving Sunday/Christ the King/Reign of Christ Sunday
Nov 29	First Sunday of Advent – "Sending a Righteous Branch"

Dec 6	Communion - Second Sunday of Advent – "Here is Your God"
Dec 13	Third Sunday of Advent – "Rejoice in Renewal"
Dec 20	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 27	First Sunday after Christmas Day

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Mark Your Calendar

» UPCOMING EVENTS

The Worship Committee is asking people if they can stop in and help with the hanging of the greens on Saturday, November 28th 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 **time to be determined**. 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? We are using a new florist this year, Crystal Springs Florist our of Benton Harbor, MI. There are 3 choices this time around. A 4 1/2 -inch for $6.40, a 6 1/4-inch for $113.20, and a 12-14-inch 3 Bloom for $21.20. The flower color choices are: red, white, pink, ice punch, and cinnamon. The foil colors are: red, sage, green. Silver, & gold. They Orders are due in the church office by Wednesday, December 2nd at noon, as orders are due to Martin's by Friday, December 4th. 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: 4 1/2-inch _____ **6 1/2-inch** _____ **12-14-inch 3 Bloom** _____

Amount Enclosed_____

In Memory of: _____

In Honor of: _____

Committee Reports

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

November – Immigration Law - (CCMM#3013)

There will be a Worship Committee Meeting on November 11, 2026 and a Mission Committee Meeting on November 18, 2026.

This year, Immigration Law & Justice Michigan (ILJ-MI), formerly Justice for Our Neighbors Michigan, celebrates 20 years of service to the state's immigrant community. Today, there are four offices, with Kalamazoo, Dearborn (Metro Detroit), and Traverse City joining Grand Rapids. Each of the offices finds its home at a United Methodist church. Refugee ministry has been a core tenet of UMCOR's Mission since it was founded in 1940 "to begin relief operations for the many refugees and internally displaced populations made destitute by World War II."

6.9% (687,700 people) of Michigan's population are immigrants. 7% of all Michigan residents have a parent who is an immigrant, so nearly 14% of the state's population have a recent immigration story.
More immigrants come to Michigan from India than all others.
Immigrants in Michigan pay $8.1 billion in taxes and have $23.1 billion in spending power. That's a huge economic impact!

December – Wounded Warrior

Your generous, tax-deductible donation to Wounded Warrior Project® (WWP) will change the lives of over 1 million injured warriors, caregivers, and family members. You will help bring independence back to our nation's most severely wounded veterans. The WWP mission is to honor and empower Wounded Warriors who incurred a physical or mental injury, illnesses, or wound, co-incident to your military service on or after September 11, 2001.

++++++++++++++++HOSPITALITY++++++++++++++

Thanksgiving Potluck – New Journey UMC is having a Thanksgiving Potluck open to the community on November 8, 2026 after church at 12:30 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The church will provide the turkey, potatoes, and gravy. This is a time of fellowship and being thankful for all who want to attend.

++++++++++++++++FINANCE++++++++++++++

We are seeing a savings since the Pastor has gone to 3/4th time. And with Cassopolis UMC helping with the Pastor's expenses.

As of September 30, 2026
General Endowment is $478,633.05
Smith Endowment is $344,245.18
CDs $110,923.96
Checking Account Balance $46,301.74
Designated Fund Balance $5,564.28
Trustee Working Fund Balance $3,285.66
Helpful Hundred Balance (at Pastor's discretion) $340.00

We will begin to work on the 2027 budget sometime in November. New Giving Envelopes for 2027 are in the process of being made

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. **We are in need of St. Patrick's Day Cards and Father's Day Cards**. 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!!

United Women in Faith

UWF Corner

United Women in Faith meet on Wednesday September 2nd at 1:00 pm. The speaker from the Berrien County Emergency Preparedness office. He did an excellent job informing us about how emergencies are handled in Berrien County. It is a very complex network and very well coordinated to ensure our safety. He also walked us through the process to sign up for notifications on our phones from the system. The public had been invited but there was still a small turnout.

The Thank Offering program was held on Wednesday, October 7th at 1:00. Nancy Calay presented the information. It was a very small turnout.

Wednesday November 4, 2026 at 1:00 pm a regular meeting will be held in the Fellowship Hall. Sharon will present devotions. The meeting was originally planned as a potluck but was changed to a regular meeting due the Thanksgiving Potluck that will be held on the 1st of November.

Our Annual Christmas Luncheon will be held on Wednesday December 2, 2026. The luncheon will be held at Brentwood to allow Nancy Boose to attend. We will be voting on whether to continue to hold meetings. The group has become very small and health is a concern for many.

Prayers for our Church Family

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

Cancer Patients

Jennifer Bobelenyi's sister
Owen Bradbury *(Kathy Scott's friend's grandchild)*
Beth *(Sue Phillips's friend)*
Earl Corak *(Judy Corak's husband)*
Leona Dixon *(Vickie Earl's friend)*
Annette (*Kathy Scott's friend)*
Chris Hay *(Niece to Jane Heflin)*
Tom Hall *(Norma Hall's Son)*
Sharon Dircks
Patti Kern *(Starla Miller's friend)*
Luke Fannon *(Brenda, John & Ron's nephew-in-law)*
Janice Bolton *(John, Brenda & Ron's sister-in-law)*
Richard *(Rev. Jane Logston Brother-in-law)*
Jim Dwight & wife Pam Weinstein *(friends of Dick & Pat Ham)*
Lee *(Pastor Duane's Uncle)*
Katlyn *(friend of Sandy Hodgman's granddaughter)*
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 brother-in-law)*
Becky *(Kathy Scott's friend)*
Katie *(Daughter of Pastor Duane's cousin)*
Vicki Earl
Pat Chomyn *(friend of the Engels)*

Health Concerns

Jane Heflin
Howard Engel
Bonnie & Don Nie
Woody Quick
Joan Benjamin
Wayne Stiles
Nancy & Jennifer Watts
Nancy Comfort
Taylor Jennings and Nadina
Anslie Rink-Scott *(Ernst's granddaughter)*
Wendi *(Sharon's niece)*
Dee Rough
Sean Rice *(Starla Miller's nephew)*
Ashley *(Judy's Granddaughter)*
Ron Hartline
Nancy Boose
Kimberly *(Faith Ernst's daughter)*
Mindy Corak
Starla Miller
Harry Rough
Louise Bookwalter
Bonnie Garwood *(Faith Ernst's daughter)*
Charles Ham *(Dick Ham's Brother)*

Prayers for Our Shut-ins: Dennis Comfort, Jane Heflin, Jeannine Severeid, & Woody Quick.

Happy Birthday

Happy Birthday to the following who celebrate NOVEMBER and DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

Randy Mace	November 3
Bethie Ruedinger	November 4
Marilyn White	November 6
Dennis Comfort	November 14
Nancy Comfort	November 18
Melissa Rough	November 21
Rick Dirks	November 27
Jerry French	December 2
Nellie Gentry	December 4
Dee Rough	December 4
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
Jeff Matejovsky	December 26
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

11:00 AM

Office Hours
Monday – Thursday
9:00 AM – 1:00 PM

Phone: 269-683-7250
Pastor Duane Lindsey: paduallli@yahoo.com (810)730-6861
Carla Valeris, Secretary/Treasurer: newjourneyumc2561@gmail.com
Marge Berkheiser, Finance Secretary: financesecretarynjumc@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.