

Happy Valentine's
Day



FEBRUARY 2026 CTC

Countryside Trinity Church

FROM THE PASTOR ---- REV. NATHANIEL ASPERGER

Greetings to you all in the name of our Lord and Savior, Jesus the Christ!

Matthew 25 is an important scripture to many ministries, churches, pastors, and faithful Christians around creation. It has been the base for much good done in the world. The whole of the chapter has important things to share, specifically, verses 31-48 are instructions and warnings. Verses 41-48 ring harshly against the ways of this world.

⁴¹ "Then he will say to those on his left, 'Depart from me, you cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels. ⁴² For I was hungry and you gave me no food, I was thirsty and you gave me no drink, ⁴³ I was a stranger and you did not welcome me, naked and you did not clothe me, sick and in prison and you did not visit me.' ⁴⁴ Then they also will answer, saying, 'Lord, when did we see you hungry or thirsty or a stranger or naked or sick or in prison, and did not minister to you?' ⁴⁵ Then he will answer them, saying, 'Truly, I say to you, as you did not do it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to me.' ⁴⁶ And these will go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

Life is a difficult reality. Often, we can sell ourselves the lie that we've done our time and now we're good. We have done enough service projects, we have given enough tithe, we have done enough good, and we can relax now. That is not what the gospel says; that is not the example of any of the apostles or disciples. We are to love our Neighbor, that is Old Testament (Lev 19:18 & Zech 7:9-10) it is New Testament (Matt 22:37-40) it is an ethic of God's people. If we are faithful. We are to care for the stranger; we are to care for our fellow humans. That is again, Old Testament (Lev 19:33-34) that is New Testament (Matt 25:35-40) it is an ethic of God's faithful people.

We live in a time where all the little conflicts and disagreements are becoming volatile in the world stage. Our country is dangerous to be in, as citizens are murdered and the government justifies it. Citizens of this country are arguing laws vs. morals. As God's people, we often claim morality. We have the moral majority that rose and claimed that Christian's had the answer to society's problems 60 years ago. They moved into politics claiming this was the case, while they blended worldly views with Christian ethics.

We have mandates from God, and if we are faithful, we have a code of ethics that should leave no doubt. Do not murder, do not lie, care for the stranger, the neighbor, the widow, the orphan, those in prison, and the list goes on. We are meant to be in the world, standing for what the scriptures impart to us is the standard of faith and life. We are meant to be in the world, living a moral example, caring for the people that the world and its government reject.

Every conflict across the world has had Christians standing in the chaos, caring, loving, and doing good. Not arguing about if life matters for that person, or if someone was legally justified to use the rights of their citizenship. The primary folks who hid Anne Frank were of a Christian background. Many of the folks who stood with Martin Luther King Jr. and the civil rights movement were Christians. Pick a conflict, and you will find faithful Christians standing for heavenly morality, not human legality.

In this time, as a community of faith, it is important that we stand for what is morally upright. By the scriptures and the Spirit's conviction, I ask that you consider what you can do for our fellow humans. Everyone can do something. Whether it is calling your representatives. Whether it is donating to those caring for others. Whether

that is finding a mutual aid program and supporting it. There are lots of ways to stand for what our scriptures tell us, and what the Triune God expects from us.

If you are finding things overwhelming in this time of chaos, please remember you have a pastor who loves you. I am available to talk or to meet and share in fellowship.

May the Lord bless you and keep you, until we meet again.

-Pastor Nathaniel Asperger

UPCOMING LECTIONARY READINGS FOR DECEMBER

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>February 1, 2026 Micah 6:1-8 Psalm 15 1 Corinthians 1:18-31 Matthew 5:1-12</p> | <p>What does the Lord require? Justice, kindness, and humility. Those who do what is right live in the presence of God. The foolishness of the cross shames the wisdom of the world. Jesus begins his Sermon on the Mount with the Beatitudes.</p> |
| <p>February 8, 2026 Isaiah 58:1-9a (9b-12) Psalm 112:1-9 (10) 1 Corinthians 2:1-12 (13-16) Matthew 5:13-20</p> | <p>The fast God chooses; do justice, release captives, help the poor. Those who do God's will and seek what is right will be happy. Paul preaches Christ, crucified; the Spirit reveals God's wisdom. Jesus says: You are salt and light; I have come to fulfill the law.</p> |
| <p>February 15, 2026 Transfiguration of the Lord Exodus 24:12-18 Psalm 2 Or Psalm 99 2 Peter 1:16-21 Matthew 17:1-9</p> | <p>The glory of God settles on Sinai, where Moses spends forty days. God says: You are my son; the nations will serve the Lord. The Lord reigns; worship God on the holy mountain. The apostle recounts Jesus' transfiguration, fulfilling prophecy. On a high mountain with Moses and Elijah, Jesus is transfigured.</p> |
| <p>February 18, 2026 Ash Wednesday Joel 2:1-2, 12-17 Or Isaiah 58:1-12 Psalm 51:1-17 2 Corinthians 5:20b-6:10 Matthew 6:1-6, 16-21</p> | <p>The day of the Lord is coming; return to God with all your heart. The fast God chooses; do justice, release captives, help the poor. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and put a new spirit within me. Be reconciled to God in Christ; now is the day of salvation! Don't flaunt your fasting and prayer; store up treasure in heaven.</p> |
| <p>February 22, 2026 First Sunday in Lent Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-7 Psalm 32 Romans 5:12-19 Matthew 4:1-11</p> | <p>The man and woman disobey God, eating forbidden fruit. My sin tormented me; but when I confessed, God forgave me. Sin and death came from Adam; grace and life come from Christ. Jesus spends forty days in the wilderness and is tested by the devil.</p> |

IMPORTANT

It has come to our attention that occasionally the doors have been left unlocked at the Church. Sometimes, they just aren't shut tightly, and the lock did not catch. **PLEASE BE SURE** if you are the last one to leave the building that the doors are **ALL** checked to be sure they are locked. When you get outside, give them a tug to be sure the lock has caught and nobody can get back in without a key. **THANKS!**

PER CAPITA DONATIONS

As church members we are reminded annually that we must pay a per capita tax to our denomination. This money usually goes toward paying expenses at the higher level than our own immediate church. Since we are a two-denomination church (Presbyterian and United Church of Christ), we receive two bills for per capita. The denominations base the total per capita on the number of members that the church reports. Also, please bear in mind that since we are two denominations, all of our membership statistics that are submitted to the two denominations annually are divided in half. For instance, if we have 100 members, the report to each denomination will be 50 members. The Presbytery bill for us covers 50 members, so it is actually to our benefit. We also receive a bill for a lesser amount from UCC based on 50 members.



With this in mind, the Session has approved a request to be made to the members to pay \$30.00 per capita for 2025. Just a gentle reminder that the per capita is per member, not per household. So, if you have four people in your household that are members of Countryside Church, you are asked to pay for all four people a total of \$120.00. In order to defray the expense of the per capita, the Session is asking that members assist the church by paying their own per capita of \$30.00/member for 2025. We do not want to put a hardship on anyone, but these bills must be paid whether our treasury gets help from the members or not. There will be an envelope marked "per capita" in your box of contribution envelopes that you will be receiving in the next few weeks that you can use.

The Session appreciates your help in this matter.

PERSONAL NEEDS CABINET

Our Personal Needs Cabinet is outside to the right side of the West End Door. If you wish to contribute, here is a list of items needed:

- Tooth Paste/Tooth Brush
- Mouth Wash
- Hair Comb &/or Brush
- Paper Tissues
- Wet Wipes
- Bandages/First Aid Kit
- Rain Poncho
- Chapstick
- Cotton Swabs
- Ziploc Bags
- Feminine Products
- Shampoo/ Conditioner
- Bath Soap Hand Sanitizer

GET INVOLVED!



Express yourself and your faith by joining the worship, music, or usher team today.

There are so many meaningful and fun ways to get involved, and there is something for everyone to do and **YOU** are needed for CTC to continue to grow and move forward. If you are interested in becoming a worship helper, singing in the choir or have any questions about how you can help, please speak with Darren Woodke or Dan Groom. If you can occasionally usher, talk with Pat Denno or Ron Platt.

CTC CHOIR

TALK WITH DAN GROOM IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN JOINING. WE'D LOVE TO HEAR YOUR VOICE.

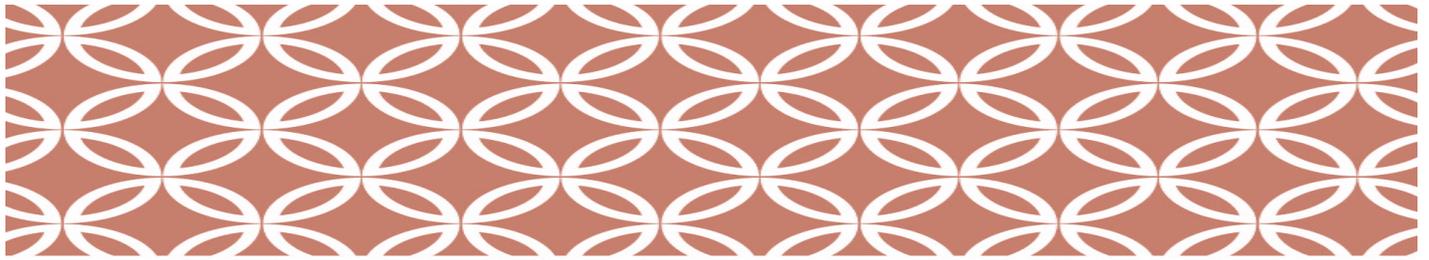


SAGINAW COUNTY COMMISSION ON AGING

SENIOR CENTER ACTIVITIES:
THERE ARE MANY CENTERS IN THE SAGINAW AREA OFFERING CONTINUING WEEKLY ACTIVITIES FROM DANCING AND EXERCISE TO CARDS. I HAVE PLACED THE DECEMBER NEWSLETTER FOR THE COMMISSION ON AGING ON THE TABLE IN FELLOWSHIP HALL. YOU CAN ALSO GO ONLINE TO VIEW A LIST OF EACH MONTH'S ACTIVITIES.

GO TO WWW.SAGINAWCOUNTY.COM AND HOVER ON THE TAB "COMMUNITY RESOURCES" AND THEN CLICK ON THE DROP-DOWN ITEM "COMMISSION ON AGING". LOOK FOR UPCOMING EVENTS AND THERE WILL BE A LINK FOR SENIOR CENTER EVENTS & ACTIVITIES. CHECK IT OUT - THERE ARE SOME FUN ACTIVITIES THAT CONTINUE THROUGHOUT THE YEAR.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC



MISSIONS SUPPORTED BY COUNTRYSIDE TRINITY CHURCH

HOW DO I CHOOSE?

At CTC we support many different Missions through "Special Offerings" including **One Great Hour of Sharing, Pentecost/Strengthening the Church, Peace & Global Witness/Neighbors in Need** and **Christmas Joy/Fund** as well as our "Missions of the Month" throughout the year. It is not necessary to contribute to each of the Mission's CTC supports. If you are able and wish to do so, we invite you to select those missions you are most passionate about and donate to them. Any contributions you make are greatly appreciated. **THANK YOU.**

CHRISTIAN OUTREACH: In January we celebrated "**Sock-it-to-me Sunday**" and welcomed Chaplain Andy Cox from the Saginaw County Jail to tell us about "*All About the Cross*" which is the organization he runs at the jail. We sent him back with lots of white socks for the inmates and will be sending a check soon for the cash donations made by our members and friends.

On February 1st we will be joined by our Boy Scouts who will assist in the Worship Service. On February 8th, we will celebrate Souper Bowl Sunday and will have the pleasure of Major Chords for Minors who will join us for the worship service.

IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT

Session has decided that for all Worship Services the doors will be locked fifteen minutes after the start time of the service and will remain locked throughout the service. If you know you are going to be late getting to the church, please call (989) 793-0125 and let us know so we can watch for you. **SO, FOR SUNDAY WORSHIP DOORS WILL BE LOCKED AT 10:45 A.M.** These items may change as needed and as weather indicates. Thank you for your help.

SERVICES BEGINNING AT 4:30 P.M., DOORS WILL BE LOCKED AT 4:45 P.M.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC



THE NEXT CTC WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION MEETING

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 14TH
BEGINNING @
11:30 A.M

WE HOPE YOU CAN
ATTEND!



DIAL 2-1-1 FOR HELP!

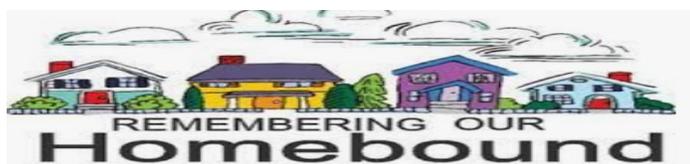
2-1-1 is a Health and Human Services Hotline for Northeast Michigan. "Non-Emergency" assistance is available by calling 2-1-1. To talk to a trained professional about hundreds of health and human services available, call 2-1-1. Staff are trained to assist those in need with referral for food, housing, utilities, childcare, emergency shelter, clothing, legal aid, literacy, transportation, substance abuse, senior issues, disability, health care, and much more.



We at CTC are keeping the doctors and hospitals in business lately. *Get well wishes* to Dallas Williams who had a total knee replacement in January. And to Kitty Blehm who will have hip replacement surgery on January 28th. Also, Kathy Loviska is having surgery on Friday, January 30th and Pastor Nathaniel will be having hip replacement surgery on Monday, February 16th. **PHEW!**

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

| SESSION COUNCIL | DEACONS |
|--|---|
| Class of 2026 Roger Scovill Kathy Loviska Chuck Davis | Class of 2026 Dan Groom Paige Pequignot Lori Halase |
| Class of 2027 Sidney Diggs Debbie Davis Sandy Redfield | Class of 2027 Lynne Groom Jackie Williams Ron Platt |
| Class of 2028 Carol VanArsdale Becky Pequignot Bethany Scovill | Class of 2028 Pat Denno Ronda Otway Duncan Redfield |



| | | |
|---|---|---|
| John & Leore Bethune Traditions of Saginaw, West, Formerly New Hope Valley | Dawn Curtis @ Home | Lois Krzak @ Home |
| Avis Leach Roosevelt House/Hemlock | Tom Kennedy Adira Nursing & Rehab | Marilyn Leffler Traditions of Saginaw, West Formerly New Hope Valley |
| Marie Lemmer Wellspring Assisted Living | Fern Evon Little Swan Haven Manor | Elaine O'Keefe Great Lakes Rehab |

Our Homebound members and friends would all love to hear from you. Please drop them a card or give them a call. Their contact information is in the Church Directory.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

Our Boy Scouts have had a very busy few months. Here are a few photos of their recent activities.





HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC

ANNUAL MEETING



Our Annual Meeting was held on Sunday, January 18th and we had a wonderful meal following. Thank you to everyone for getting their reports in ahead of time and for their food donations.



IN CASE OF INCLEMENT WEATHER



BEFORE HEADING OUT THE DOOR, CHECK WJRT EITHER ON YOUR COMPUTER, PHONE OR TELEVISION AND CHECK THEIR SCHOOL CLOSING LINK. WE WILL REPORT ANY CLOSINGS TO THEM AS SOON AS WE MAKE THE DECISION TO CLOSE.

Pack your lunch each Wednesday and join Pastor Nathaniel for fellowship and Bible Study. Come each Wednesday, or the Wednesdays you can. Together we can grow in understanding. NOTE: Pastor Nathaniel is having total hip replacement surgery on Monday, February 16th – so the Wednesday Lunch will be postponed starting on February 18th until further notice.



CTC Directory: It's that time of year again, please give Kathy any changes or additions for the 2026 Directory. If you didn't get your picture taken last year and want to have one taken for the 2026 directory, let Kathy know. We will schedule a day or two for pictures. A form to update your information is on the table in Fellowship Hall. Thank you.

HERE'S WHAT'S HAPPENING AT CTC



We recently learned of the passing of Rev. John E. Jeffrey, our former pastor. Here are his funeral arrangements.

Reverend John Edson Jeffrey, age 88, passed away peacefully on Tuesday morning, January 20, 2026, in Clarkston, Michigan.

John was born on May 29, 1937, in Akron, Michigan, to Arthur and Martha (Ruby) Jeffrey. He graduated from Akron High School in 1955 and went on to attend Westminster College in Pennsylvania, graduating in 1961. Answering a lifelong call to ministry, he pursued Theological education at the University of Dubuque Seminary in Iowa, where he earned his Master's degree in 1964.

Reverend Jeffrey devoted his life to serving God and others through pastoral ministry and community service. Over the years, he faithfully served congregations across Michigan, including the Unadilla Presbyterian Church as the pastor; First Presbyterian Church of Saginaw as assistant pastor; First Presbyterian Church of Lansing as associate pastor; Saint Mark's Presbyterian Church in Dearborn Heights as the pastor; and Countryside Presbyterian Church in Saginaw as the pastor. In later years, he continued his ministry as an interim pastor for Caro Presbyterian Church, Lapeer Presbyterian Church, Novi Community Presbyterian Church, and Brighton First Presbyterian Church. His leadership, compassion, and steady presence left a lasting impact on each congregation he served.

John's commitment to service extended far beyond the pulpit. In 1972, he founded John's Cupboard, the original food pantry of the First Presbyterian Church of Lansing, to provide food assistance to members of the local community in need. Following his retirement, he volunteered extensively with the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan and helped establish Crossover Outreach, a nonprofit shelter in Flint dedicated to serving individuals and families in need. He also devoted countless hours to building wheelchair ramps and using his handyman skills to assist others. John had a deep love for people and a quiet humility that guided his life of service. His generosity and care for others will be remembered through the many lives he touched.

Outside of his ministry, John enjoyed spending time with family, farming, camping, fishing, making maple syrup, traveling, volunteering, and sports. He was a gifted athlete in high school, playing football, basketball, baseball, and even advanced through several rounds of tryouts for the Detroit Tigers.

John is survived by his children, Brad (Gayle) Jeffrey and Scott (Carol) Jeffrey; his grandchildren, Lauryn (Aaron), Faith (Josh), Nicholaus "Nick" (Miranda), Samantha "Sam" (Patrick), Kathleen, and Jacob; his sister, Noreen (Duane) Robinson; and many nieces and nephews.

He was preceded in death by his beloved wife, Sandra Jeffrey, sister, Doris (Leo C. "Pete") Marker, and his brother, Jerald "Jerry" Jeffrey.

In lieu of flowers, the family requests donations be made to the Food Bank of Eastern Michigan, 2300 Lapeer Road, Flint, MI 48503, or Crossover Outreach, 414 West Court Street, Flint, MI 48503.

Visitation will be held from 11:00 a.m. to noon on Saturday, January 31, 2026, followed by the funeral service at noon and a luncheon afterward. Visitation, service, and luncheon will all take place at First Presbyterian Church, 746 S. Saginaw Street, Flint, Michigan. The service will be officiated by Rev. Dr. Paul Ytterock. Interment will take place at Watertown Township Cemetery at a later date.

A livestream of the service will be available through the church website at fpcf.org or on their YouTube channel at [YouTube.com/@FPCFLive](https://www.youtube.com/@FPCFLive).

Arrangements are by Brown Funeral Home, 1480 E. Hill Road, Grand Blanc, Michigan 48439.

Location:

First Presbyterian Church, 746 S. Saginaw Street, Flint, Michigan.

Schedule:

10:30AM – 11:00AM Family Viewing

11:00AM – 12:00PM Family and Friends Viewing

12:00PM – 1:00PM Funeral Service

1:00PM – 4:00PM Hors D'oeuvres and Luncheon

Donation Links:

Food Bank of Eastern Michigan

Click Here to Donate <https://www.fbem.org/donate/> - Food Bank

Crossover Outreach Shelter

Click Here to

Donate https://www.paypal.com/donate/?hosted_button_id=WEEGVEH4YGR7L- Crossover Outreach



BIRTHDAY & ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATIONS

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 13 Sarah Gonzales
- 13 Kevin Diggs
- 17 Madisen J. Groom
- 24 Chelsea Parker
- 28 Irene Ohmer
- 28 Tammy Charkowski
- 30 John Bethune

FEBRUARY BIRTHDAYS

- 3 Roger Scovill
- 5 Pastor Jane Young
- 6 Angie Mitchell (Organist)
- 8 Mark VanArsdale
- 9 Matthew Davis
- 9 Aaron Plater II
- 10 Victoria Parker
- 11 John VanArsdale
- 12 Jackie Williams
- 13 MariAnne Vega
- 22 Michelle Martinez
- 26 Leore Bethune

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

- 1 Ron Platt
- 2 Elaine Miner
- 3 Carol VanArsdale
- 9 Sandy Redfield
- 22 Chong Ladner

APRIL BIRTHDAYS

- 2 Lysithea Evans M=Alexa Mahan
- 4 Jeanne Krugielki
- 5 Nancy Erndt
- 5 Evon Little
- 12 Kathy Loviska
- 12 Matthew VanArsdale
- 13 Dallas Williams
- 17 Andrea Asperger
- 19 Debra Davis

JANUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Pervez & Ezra Yusaf
- 7 Ron & Brenda Platt
- 11 Robert & Jean Bortner
- 28 Michael & Amanda Groom

FEBRUARY ANNIVERSARIES

- 11 John & Leore Bethune
- 12 John & Carol VanArsdale
- 25 Sarah & Tony Gonzales

MARCH ANNIVERSARIES

- 6 Chad & Karla Parker
- 21 Vincent & Michelle Martinez

ANNIVERSARIES APRIL

None Known

Countryside Trinity Church

4690 Weiss Street

Saginaw, Michigan 48603

(989) 793-0125



**WILL YOU BE
MY VALENTINE?**