

REACHING OUT COMMITTEE

MEETING MINUTES

April 21, 2025

Attending via Zoom were: Cindy Goller, Margaret Hellenberg, Stephanie Kalember, Kathy Menkes, Pastor Greg Watling and Louanne Spearman.

OPENING PRAYER: led by Cindy.

MINISTER'S UPDATE

Convergence will be leading our church through a strategic planning process. The total cost for our church will be \$9,800, which has been approved by Trustees. The Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ has approved our church for \$1,000, which is the first of several grants for which we have applied.

The Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ offered to help in some way with disaster recovery after the ice storm.

- Greg suggested that the Michigan Conference help the Otsego County Food Pantry, as the need for their services in our community remains high. He also suggested Emergency Services at United Way.
- The Food Pantry will be having a fundraiser and food drive on Thursday evening, April 24th from 4:30 - 7:00 PM at the Gaylord Eagles Hall, with all proceeds benefiting the Otsego County Food Pantry.

DISCUSSION

1. Blood Drive

- Church people have approached Greg about doing a blood drive.
- The blood drive people contacted Greg about having a blood drive on site, as well.
- Another way to help with a blood drive is that our church could "get credit" for sending people to the Gaylord Blood Center, too.
- Greg asked the group to consider if/how we want to proceed; will need a decision by May, 2025.
- Stephanie will look into the options about how to proceed and will share her learnings with the group via email.

2. Blanket Sunday - Margaret H. is ready to go. The Blanket is up, paper hearts are ready and she will publicize this Special Offering.

3. Strengthen the Church

- Strengthen the Church is a Special Offering that we will promote on June 8, 2025.
- Funds raised support local churches, like the grant we received.
- Louanne and Stephanie will work together on this Special Offering.

4. Mission Trip Bri and Brenda - no update. Trip is planned for September, 2025. Stephanie will reach out to Brenda for an update and share what she learned for the May, 2025 Reaching Out meeting.

5. Website

- Live Streaming is back and it went well!
- Liz contacted Brenda to request training.
- There is a need for someone to monitor the Live Stream to watch the comments and make sure Greg is aware of anything that may require follow up. Please contact Pastor Greg if this is something you would be willing to do.

6. New sign - David Schopp from Trustees is working on this.

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7. Community Needs

- The Food Pantry really needs our help, as the need for their services in our community remains high, especially after the ice storm.
 - The Reaching Out Committee wants to do more to support the Food Pantry.
 - Cindy will obtain a box in which to put items.
 - Greg will help Cindy create a list of needed items.
 - Cindy will publicize this opportunity as soon as she can get the pieces in place.
- RSVP funding loss. The committee discussed the potential impact of funding cuts at both the state and federal level, particularly on the RSVP program. The committee agreed to wait and continue to observe the situation before deciding to take action.

8. Helping Community (besides money)

- Help the Food Pantry however you can.
- Be more interactive on the church's Facebook page.
- People are encouraged to volunteer with the Downtown Summer Concert series, which will take place each Friday night from May 16, 2025 through August 15, 2025 (except July 11th, 2025). Concerts will be held in Claude Shannon Park, 126 W Main Street, Gaylord, MI. There are several easy volunteer roles to fill. Please contact Pastor Greg for details about how exactly you can help.

OTHER BUSINESS: none.

CLOSING PRAYER: led by Greg.

Next Meeting: May 19, 2025

<http://us02web.zoom.us/j/86904855449>

Respectfully submitted, Cindy Goller