

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Gaylord

APRIL 2022

*Embracing people at every age and every stage of life, helping them
to become the most loving version of themselves possible.*

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
218 W. Second Street
Gaylord, MI 49735
989-732-5726
www.firstuccgaylord.org

Pastor: Rev. Greg Watling
pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org

Moderator: Maggie Wallin
margaretwallin@msn.com

Communications

Coordinator: Jessica Benoit
office@firstuccgaylord.org

Church Service: Sunday, 10 am
*In-person worship has resumed—
please see inside for details.*



Pastor's Column—April 2022

"Overwhelmed"

The good news is that Otsego County is now in the low category (as defined by the CDC) for Covid infection rate! Our hospitals are not nearly so full, and routine doctor and hospital visits are now more likely to occur. The downside is that this is another change. Whether you liked masks or not, they began to be more comfortable for many people. We got used to them – at least to some degree. People couldn't see our expressions the same way (probably a good thing in some settings!). Our face may have been warmer in cold winds. At the very least, we knew what to expect in public and when wearing a mask. Change, even returning to a more "normal" state, can be a bit overwhelming, odd, or strange. So, even though the mask mandate has been lifted by the Church Council, understand that for some, this is a change that is harder than it looks. If that means you want to or need to wear a mask – for any reason – feel free to do so.

Meanwhile, events in Ukraine have gotten worse and now they top the newscast every day. It's almost unbearable to watch the devastation and destruction, especially when it involves hospitals, schools, places of worship, and other such images. Violence is hard to watch, even while being thankful that we are not in the midst of all the fighting. Then there is the worry that somehow, in some way, a much more widespread war is on the horizon whether by design or by accident. Whether we know it or not, this weighs on us.

More on next page...

Then we go to the grocery store, the gas station, or most anywhere, and we see the effects of inflation. People are irritable about the prices, and for some of us, making ends meet becomes tougher. Even those relatively well-off are feeling the pinch. Inflation and the continuing broken nature of our politics weighs on us as well.

So much change... So much out of our control... So much that has us on edge...

To deal with all of this, we need to take a break from it. If you have the news on all day, or several times a day, regardless of where you get your news, it isn't helping. Sure, you want to keep up to date with what is happening in the world, but to spend all day on all the things that overwhelm us only makes things worse. We also need to feel the warmer sun, listen to the sound of the singing birds, listen to the gurgle of fast-moving streams...other things that remind us that the world is okay even when parts of it are a mess.

We also need to put things in perspective. What can we do and where? Can we give of our time and/or money to help those who are in need, here or around the world? May we send a card to a hurting friend? Might we find some solace in the reading of scripture, or participating in a group? Part of what makes things so overwhelming is that many of us are still very isolated. Isolation is not good for us over the long run. We all need time away and to ourselves, but total isolation can be and often is harmful to us.

Being overwhelmed in a world such as ours is, sadly, normal. But there are concrete ways to address our feelings. I've offered some ideas, and I know there are many places to search out more. I hope that you will find a friend, your pastor, a family member, or co-worker to talk to if things get to be too much. You are beloved and precious and not designed to go through life all by yourself. There are many people who care.

Happy Spring!

Pastor Greg

HOLY WEEK SERVICES

Maundy Thursday (April 14) will be a time of worship and enjoying the art projects people have created over the weeks leading up to Easter. We will begin at 6:30 with music and a tour of the "gallery" in the sanctuary. We will end with communion.

Good Friday (April 15) will be held at 12:00 Noon at the United Methodist Church. Our congregation, St. Andrew Episcopal, Peace Lutheran Church and First Presbyterian will all be participating.

Easter Sunday (April 17) join us for a celebration of the resurrection in person and livestreamed at 10 AM. Our art work will also be displayed in the Parish Hall.

Report from Trustees – April 2022 Newsletter

Through 3/6/22, ten weeks into the current giving year, our income from tithes and offerings of \$17,844 is slightly less than our budget of \$18,269. This deficit of \$425 represents 2.3% of tithes and offerings budgeted for this period. We appreciate the generosity of our gifts from our church family.

While challenges related to QuickBooks reporting have now been resolved, reports arrived too late to publish in this month's newsletter. We continue to monitor information to assure the integrity and well-being of church finances, and will share a summary of year-to-date financials in the next newsletter.

Trustees are aware of occasional concerns related to snow removal and are working to resolve these issues.

Thank you for the many ways in which you contribute time, talent, and treasures for the continued well-being of our vibrant church community.

Communication Corner

Jessica Office Hours

Mondays 8am-12pm

Thursdays 10:30am-2pm

Greg Office Hours

Mondays 8am-12pm

Thursdays 12pm-4pm

****Any changes or additions to bulletin must be made by 12pm on Thursday.*

The only email Jessica uses is office@firstuccgaylord.org

If there is a pressing matter, please contact Jessica by phone during office hours or her cell phone outside of office hours.





February 25, 2022

First Congregational Church
218 W. Second St.
Gaylord, MI 49735-1338

Dear Friends at First Congregational Church,

Thank you for donating to the United Church of Christ. Your gift of \$315.00 designated for resettlement of Afghan refugees was received on 1/21/2022. Your donation is especially appreciated as communities and individuals worldwide face greater need during these uncertain times.

We at the United Church of Christ are reflecting on all the ways we pass the peace. Whether gathered physically in one place or held together in our hearts in virtual settings, our Christian movement unites people in Christ as we work for a more just world. We are learning that there are so many ways to pass the peace.

For example, we offer weekly webinars on spirituality and care of people. Our pastors and lay leaders are experimenting with new ways to be the church. We provided grants to congregations as they adapted to the challenges caused by the Covid pandemic. In an anxious time, we supported the resilience and creativity of our local congregations.

And we didn't lose sight of the bigger picture. Systemic issues prevent real peace in our communities. That's why we remain focused on dismantling white supremacy and addressing creation care, voting rights, and immigrant justice. When we advocate for justice, we are passing peace in all our communities.

Thank you for adding your part in the passing of peace. Your gift makes love tangible. If you have questions regarding your donation, please feel free to contact us at giving@ucc.org or 800-848-8822.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "John C. Dorhauer".

Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer
General Minister and President

*No goods or services were provided in return for this donation.
Please keep a copy of this letter as a receipt for your taxes.*

Officers of the Church

Rev. John C. Dorhauer
General Minister and President

Rev. Traci D. Blackmon
Associate General Minister
Justice and Local Church Ministries

Rev. Karen Georgia A. Thompson
Associate General Minister
Wider Church Ministries and Operations



***Come to the Table. An Easter Reflection by
the Visual Arts.***

Music has long been recognized as a way to connect deeper in the worship of our Lord but the visual arts not so much in modern history. For Maundy Thursday and Easter Sunday, we want to incorporate art into our worship with visual displays celebrating the theme, "Come to the Table". Each participating artist will be given a passage of scripture to meditate on and create from. On the week of Easter, the creations will be set up in the sanctuary, each piece accompanied by the scripture that inspired it and the artist's statement of how the artist conceived of the piece. Think out of the box for this one! We are all creatives.

If you are a gardener, your piece could be a small table with plants, seeds, nuts, tools.

If you are a painter, paint a picture.

If you are a poet, write out your thoughts.

If you are a textile artist, create a piece to hang or display.

If you make maple syrup, create an installation with candles and jars of syrup.

If you are a carpenter, create a piece out of wood.

Etc. Etc!!

*We would love to have you join us. Contact Sharon Wade for information
and to receive your scripture passages. 989-619-6029.*

Breathing Under Water
By Richard Rohr
Book Study Schedule/Topics

Zoom Link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89372092567>

Book Study Dates:

March 3 Chapters 2 and 3

March 17 Chapters 4 and 5

March 31 Chapters 6 and 7

~We will not meet in April ~

May 5 Chapters 8 and 9

May 26 Chapters 10 and 11

June 2 Chapter 12 and Postscript

Announcements

Jessica's Email—recently, I've had several emails go to my "junk" folder from many of you! If you don't hear back from within 24-48 hours, please try reaching out by phone. I am not sure what is going on with Outlook and why suddenly this is happening.

Easter and Art – please be on the lookout for information on "Come to the Table" an opportunity to meditate and create from scripture.

NEW BOOK STUDY – "Breathing Under Water" by Richard Rohr. Meeting via Zoom every other week. Please contact office if you would like a copy, books are \$15 each. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89372092567>

First Sundays –On the first Sunday of each month, all students from K-12 will be meeting together for a special project. This may involve a field trip on a related subject. A permission slip will be required for the field trips. ***The class will meet at 9:30*** and end at 11:00 unless otherwise notified. Students are encouraged to bring friends. If you have any questions, please contact Brenda Brummel (brendabrummel@me.com) or 810-623-1691 (call or text.)

Coffee Hour News –Coffee Hour News – in addition to normal in-person coffee hour, we will have a virtual option, which will take place on the LAST SUNDAY of each month ONLY. <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81182790126>


Name Tags – if you are in need of a name tag, please let Jessica in office know.

Bible Study NEW LINK– every Thursday at 11:00am! All are invited. Please join us virtually by using either the following link or phone number: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84612895017>

Dates to Remember

***Palm Sunday is April 10th
Easter Sunday is April 17th***





All Gaylord Area Churches:

Please join us for the annual

WHITE BREAKFAST

On Maundy Thursday

April 14, 2022 at 9:30 a.m.

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH**

Fellowship Hall

**Speaker: Pastor Paul Gruenberg
First United Methodist Church**

Music: Jordan Kettlewell

Free hot cross buns, juice and coffee or
tea will be provided.



2022 Flower Schedule

January: Margaret Hafner and Dave Henson

February: Margaret Hellenberg

March: Jeannine Wambold

April: Cathy Otto

May: Bill and Maxine Dely

June: Joanie Sietsema

July: Helen Mate

August: Evelyn Pratt

September: Sallie Anderson

October: Vicky Rigney

November: Louanne Spearman

December: Christian Ed.





5 for 5

from your Reaching Out Team

Final 2021 Numbers:

OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission)

Basic support for the Michigan Conference and National Settings.

Collected on an ongoing basis

Received to date: \$473

One Great Hour of Sharing

Supports partners in countries with ministries that fund health, education and agricultural development, emergency relief, refugee ministries and both international and domestic response.

Collected in April

Received to date: \$344

Strengthen the Church

Supports church growth, pastoral and lay leadership development, young and young adult ministers within conferences.

Collected around Pentecost

Received to date: \$94

Neighbors in Need

One third supports Council for American Indian Ministry and two-thirds is administered to Justice and Witness Ministers to support a variety projects. Due to Covid-19 the elected UCC officers have deemed this to be a priority.

Collected in October

Received to date: \$149

Christmas Fund

Provides direct financial assistance to retired UCC ministers and lay employees and spouses.

Collected in December

Received to date: \$774

Current Meeting Times

All are welcome to “attend” these meetings

Reaching In will meet the first Monday of each month at noon:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84945686588>

Reaching Out will meet the third Monday of each month at 7 PM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83220896539>

Council will meet the second Wednesday of each month at 7PM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85297662581>

Trustees will meet the third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 AM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85470391561>

Richard Rohr Book Study meets Thursdays at 7pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89372092567>

Bible Study meets Thursdays at 11am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84612895017>

Virtual Coffee Hour Link (in addition to in-person)

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81182790126>

Last one for the season is March 27th

~ In Our Prayers ~

As a reminder, in an effort to respect each individual's privacy and private wishes, prayer requests will only be printed once permission has been given.

During the month of April, the UNA is holding the Charlevoix First Congregational Church in prayer

The Roundy Family—as they grieve Larry's recent passing.

Roy Wolf and Family— as they grieve Cleveann's passing

Maxine Dely—as she deals with ongoing balance issues.

Sandra Soderberg – as she is experiencing trauma with one eye.

The Boughner Family – on the recent passing of Jim's brother, Bernie.

Don Storing and Family – on Mardee's recent passing.

John Hellenberg

Gloria House's granddaughter, Madison Crawford – as she suffers from cataplexy in narcolepsy along with other neurological struggles. She is now at home and adjusting to new medication which seems to be helping but is still in need of prayers.

Brad Derenzy—as he has continuing health struggles.

Ariah House – as she is finally home but still in need of prayers. She will be traveling to Grand Rapids for monthly infusions.

Mardee Storing's daughter, Lori Lane

All of those working on the frontline to fight COVID-19, those that are considered essential workers, those without jobs, those ill, and those affected by this pandemic in anyway.

Prayer requests are received by the church office. Names will appear on the list for two months; please let the office know if this time needs to be extended, or if it is time to remove a name.



Birthdays and Anniversaries

April Birthdays

3 Doreen Dobosy

4 Duncan Palmer

4 Anna Kalember

7 Jenna Andrews

8 Paige Kassuba

9 Anna Fry

14 Ben Fry

14 Scott Fry

16 Cathy Otto

19 Aaron Hotelling

19 Caroline Compton

26 Mike Andrews

April Anniversaries

4 John & Margaret Hellenberg

25 Bill and Maxine Dely





April 2022

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 Community Meal 4pm	2
3 Worship, 10am	4 Reaching In, 12pm	5	6	7 Virtual Bible Study, 11am Women's Fellowship, 12:15pm	8 Community Meal, 4pm	9
10 Worship, 10am Palm Sunday	11	12	13 Council 7pm	14 Virtual Bible Study, 11am Book Study, 7pm	15 Community Meal, 4pm	16
17 Easter Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	18 Reaching Out, 7pm	19	20 Trustees, 11am	21 Virtual Bible Study, 11am	22 Community Meal, 4pm	23
24 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	25	26	27 Church Book Club, 1pm	28 Virtual Bible Study, 11am Book Study, 7pm	29 Community Meal, 4pm	30