

**First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
Gaylord**

# April 2023

*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**  
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## Pastor's Column – April 2023

### "What's Next?"

I intended to write a creative article about Holy Week, but I think it more important to share information about upcoming events and activities in April at First Congregational.

First is Holy Week:

Sunday, April 2 – Palm Sunday with Communion (including a dramatic reading!)

Thursday, April 6 – 6:30 pm interactive Maundy Thursday service in the Fellowship Hall with communion.

Friday, April 7 – 12 noon, Community Good Friday service at First United Methodist Church

7 pm, Community Tenebrae Service at Peace Lutheran Church

Sunday, April 9 – Easter Service

The Thursday service will include some interactive, creative approaches to Holy Week, as well as your chance to participate in our collective art project with Sharon Wade (see later in the newsletter for more information about this project).

The Friday services will be held in cooperation with our church, St. Andrew Episcopal, Peace Lutheran, First Presbyterian, and First United Methodist. You are welcome to come to either or both as they will be very different services. Tenebrae is a dramatic service, which involves readings, extinguishing candles, and really brings the message of Good Friday to the heart as well as the mind.

*Continued...*

Second, I will be out of town more than usual in April:

April 14 – 19 I will be traveling by car to Boston to watch my daughter, Sarah, run in the Boston Marathon. We will leave early that Friday morning and return the following Thursday. I can always be reached in case of emergency at 920-472-9172. On this trip, I will also be checking my church email.

April 26 – 30 I will be traveling to Houghton to watch my son, Robbie, graduate with his Masters Degree from Michigan Tech. I'll leave late in the day on the 26<sup>th</sup> and should be back in the office Monday morning, May 1. Again, I'll be available most of the time by cell phone (limited service in the UP). I don't expect that I'll be checking church email during this trip.

**ALSO in April:** I hope that we can begin to complete the second part of our project that began with the renovated bathrooms. Step two is to organize and straighten up the front of the sanctuary on both sides. I could use help with this project, especially if you have things in the sanctuary that belong to you that you would like to take home. Those things that are left there will simply be organized in the next month or so. I would also like help from a few willing souls to organize up front.

A busy month ahead! I hope you'll participate as your time and interest allow.

Peace,

Pastor Greg

# APRIL 2023

"Let everything you do be done in love."

1 CORINTHIANS 16: 14

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						1
2 Worship 10 AM  PALM SUNDAY	3	4	5	6 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM Maundy Thursday Service 6:30	7 Good Friday Service 12 PM @ FUMC Service of Tenebrae @ Peace Lutheran NO Community Meal	8
9 Worship 10 AM  EASTER SUNDAY	10 Reaching In 12 PM	11	12	13 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM	14 Community Meal 4 PM Pastor Greg out-of-town	15
16 Worship 10 AM	17 Reaching Out 7 pm	18	19 Trustees 11 AM	20 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM	21 Community Meal 4 PM	22
Pastor Greg out-of-town						
23 Worship 10 AM Council 11 AM	24	25 Salad Luncheon 11:30 AM	26 Church Book Club 1 PM	27 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM	28 Community Meal 4 PM	29
Pastor Greg out-of-town						
30 Worship 10 AM  Pastor Greg out-of-town						



- ◇ **Pastor Greg has accepted an on-call position with Gaylord Community Funeral Home. It will typically be on Fridays, with some night call on Monday and Thursday nights. The schedule will work around his duties here at First Congregational, so it will not likely impact office hours. *This new endeavor is in no way any sort of indication that Pastor Greg is considering a different career path*; it will be supplemental income and another way for him to share his expertise with the community. If you have questions, please be in contact him.**
  
- ◇ **We are finding donations in Fellowship Hall and that is a wonderful thing, but recently they are coming in so often that we're having a bit of a problem—what a glorious problem to have! To help manage this influx of gifts, please refrain from leaving donations for Community Meal or the Caring Closet without emailing Stephanie or Pastor Greg. You could also put a note on the office door or slip it under the door (a notepad, pen, and tape will be on the credenza for this purpose). This protocol will help us to better manage, monitor, and disperse the donations we receive. Thank you!**

# From the desk of our Conference Minister

MICHIGAN CONFERENCE



## Nostalgia is an Unreliable Narrator

by Michigan Conference Minister Lillian Daniel

“Before the pandemic, we had thirteen people in the choir,” the pastor tells me, while the moderator explains that it was a three octave bell choir made up of both adults, who all saw eye to eye, and youth, who never missed a rehearsal. But that’s nothing compared to the same choir as described by the church historian who adds that there was also a vocal choir whose large tenor section all had masters degrees in musical performance, perfect pitch and halos, because it wasn’t actually a human choir but an elite ensemble of harp playing angels.

Nostalgia is an unreliable narrator. The more time that passes between now and the glory days, the better that old church choir sounds. Same goes for the couples clubs who met for monthly dinners, the booming youth group, or the last live worship service before the shut down in 2020, that seemed so ordinary and lightly attended at the time but now gets bigger and better in the rear view mirror.

Over the last nine months, I’ve worshiped and preached at 45 church services in the Michigan Conference and in a spirit of humility, I do have a few observations. I recognize that year three of whatever we are going through feels harder than year one or two. For this reason, I am leading a clergy retreat with serious scholarships (use code MI 1/2) and we are holding a workshop on trauma for our leaders. Early in the pandemic, we were all in scramble mode, doing whatever we needed to in a time of crisis, including watching (and even leading) worship from our couches, wearing suit jackets and pajama bottoms. But now in 2023, we are experiencing the weird unexpected grief that church life has not returned to normal, whatever we remember normal to be. And therein lies the problem. The



further we get from normal, the more diverse our memories of normal become, which creates conflict in churches where we all unfairly compare our present moment to competing and divergent views of a mythical past.

How about we all just stop doing that? How about we work on living in the present moment? After all, we follow Jesus, whose entire ministry spanned three very hard years, but ended in a death that turned out to be a resurrection. Nostalgia is an unreliable narrator.

So this Lent, I am giving up nostalgia. Will you join me?



## **The Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, Michigan Conference Minister**

### **2023 Preaching Schedule & Worship Visits**

Contact [Lisa@michucc.org](mailto:Lisa@michucc.org) for full schedule or to plan a visit

#### March

19th: Preach - St. John UCC, Wyandotte, MI

26th: OFF

#### April

2nd: Preach - East Church, Grand Rapids, MI

16th: Preach - First Congregational Church, Kalamazoo, MI

23rd: Preach - First Congregational Church, Chelsea, MI

30th: Preach - Hudsonville Congregational UCC, Hudsonville, MI

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# MICHIGAN CONFERENCE



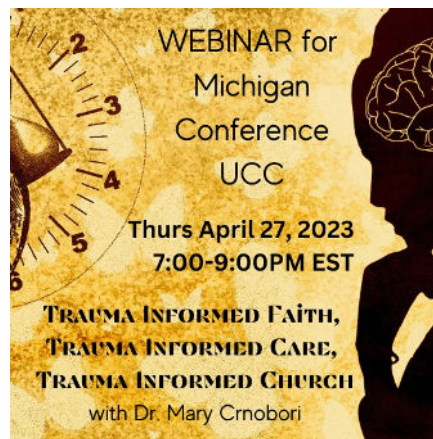
## **Trauma Informed Faith, Care, and Church**

**Thursday April 27 7-9 PM**

**A Webinar for the Michigan Conference U.C.C.**

**Featuring Dr. Mary Crnabori,**

**Coordinator for Trauma Informed Schools, Metro Nashville**



**In the face of a global pandemic, racial and social justice movements, acts of mass violence, political upheaval, and weather-related disasters, our communities need connection and hope more than ever before. Stress and trauma are pervasive in our high-paced, high-pressure modern society and, in the absence of essential protective factors, this can take a costly toll on our health and well-being. The impact on spiritual faith and faith communities cannot be underestimated either. Understanding and responding faithfully to the impact of this chronic trauma on us all is an essential element of ministry and a necessary component for the health of congregations and their settings.**

**In the first hour a comprehensive overview of trauma's impact including its effect on brain functioning and social emotional health will be presented.**

**In the second hour we will discuss practical strategies and offer models for church communities in trauma ministries.**

**CLICK [HERE](#) FOR THE ONLINE REGISTRATION.**

# Painting for Easter

Click [here](#) to learn about how you can participate in Sharon Wade's beautiful Painting for Easter project!







### **Birthdays:**

- 1 Anna Kalember
- 2 Avery Ball
- 3 Doreen Dobosy
- 3 Kathi Arnold
- 4 Duncan Palmer
- 7 Jenna Andrews
- 8 Paige Kassuba
- 9 Anna Fry
- 14 Ben Fry
- 14 Scott Fry
- 16 Cathy Otto
- 19 Aaron Hotelling

### **Anniversaries:**

- 20 Alan and Becky Trendera
- 25 Bill & Maxine Dely

~ In Our Prayers ~

**During the month of April the UNA is holding the  
*Charlevoix First Congregational UCC* in prayer.**

**The Anderson family** —as they grieve the sudden passing of Rod.

**Jeannine Wambold and family** – as they grieve Jeannine’s mother’s recent passing.

**The English Family** – as they manage medical and family challenges.

**Janet Holmes, cousin of Kay Boughner**, as Janet has been released from the hospital and continues her recovery.

**Bill Dely**—as he grieves the passing of his dog Max.

**Andrew Short, Helen Crandall’s grandson**, who was seriously injured in a motorcycle crash.

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

**Brad Derenzy**—as he has been blessed with a bit of a reprieve from his illness.

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

**Jen Crandall Finnegan** - as she was recently hospitalized with migraine headaches.

**Helen Crandall’s family** – as a cousin’s son passed away unexpectedly last week.

*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.*



*Prayer Requests*



***Kamp for a Kause's*** mission is to stand in solidarity with homeless youth by Kamping Out overnight on the Gaylord Community Field on Saturday, April 29th starting at 8 pm, concluding Sunday, April 30th at 8 am with a morning reflection and community partner breakfast to follow. Individuals, businesses, students, and families will have the opportunity to rally to raise funds through their very own peer-to-peer fundraising campaign by either forming an individual or team page. Businesses can also elect to simply sponsor the event through one of our annual partnership opportunities.

The event will be centered around experiencing and learning more about what it is like to either face homelessness or experience homelessness as a young person in Northern Lower Michigan. During the event, Kampers will hear from keynote speakers on an array of topics that youth face in regard to homelessness, young people who have overcome adversity through the help of KHYP and be able to stand in solidarity with those who have lost their lives to homelessness or who are currently homeless.

This event will benefit the next chapter of finding a physical home for The Karing Home Youth Project (KHYP) in Gaylord. This will allow KHYP to grow and evolve its mission of holistically walking alongside young people who are working to overcome adversity in the face of homelessness in Otsego County, MI.

Please learn more about the event in the attached press release. If your business or organization would like to get involved in Kamp for a Kause(K4AK), please see the K4AK Partnership Guide to learn more ways to make an impact for young people who face homelessness in Otsego County this spring with us!

This event is produced & managed by [Wohlfeil Events](#) and [989 Creative Group](#) on behalf of The Karing Home Youth Project.

**Please direct any and all questions, comments, or suggestions to me either via email at [cameron@thekaringhomeyouthproject.org](mailto:cameron@thekaringhomeyouthproject.org) or call/text KHYP at (989) 448-6654.**

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# ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

**Food Pantry** – needs a few more volunteers. Please contact Don Storing if interested.

**Bible Study** – 11 AM on Thursdays, but please keep an eye on your email for communication from Rokko. The Zoom link is provided: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84612895017>

## ***Upcoming Dates to Remember***

- ◇ April 2, 2023: Palm Sunday
- ◇ April 9, 2023: Easter Sunday

## ***Looking Ahead:***

- ◇ May 21<sup>st</sup>, Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel, Michigan Conference minister, visits.







## 2023 Flower Schedule

January: *Margaret Hafner and Dave Henson*

February: *Margaret Hellenberg*

March: *Jeannine Wambold*

April: *Cathy Otto*

May: *Mary Evans*

June: *Joanie Sietsema*

July: *Helen Mate*

August: *Evelyn Pratt*


September: *Sallie Anderson*

October: *Vicky Rigney*

November: *Louanne Spearman*

December: *Christian Ed.*





**All Gaylord Area Churches:**

Please join **United Women in Faith**  
for their annual

# **WHITE BREAKFAST**

On Maundy Thursday  
April 6th, 2023 at 9:30 a.m.

**FIRST UNITED METHODIST  
CHURCH**

Fellowship Hall

**Speaker: Rev. John E. Naile**

**First United Methodist Church**

**Music: Sue Fuelling**

*accompanied by Michele Gianino*

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



# 5 for 5

from your Reaching Out Team

## **OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission)**

Basic support for the Michigan Conference and National Settings.

*Collected on an ongoing basis*

**Received to date: \$420**

## **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 March*

**Received to date: \$935 (2022)**

## **Strengthen the Church**

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

*Collected around Pentecost*

**Received to date: \$84 (2022)**

## **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: \$255 (2022)**

## **Christmas Fund**

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

*Collected in December*

**Received to date: \$565 (2022)**

***In Addition, we gave \$521 for Blanket Sunday this year!***



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## 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/83640729481>

**Council** will meet the after worship. Check monthly calendar for specific dates.:

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

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83432888287>

**Bible Study** meets Thursdays at 11am

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