

First Congregational  
United Church of Christ  
*Gaylord*

# DECEMBER 2021

*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](http://www.firstuccgaylord.org)

**Pastor:** Rev. Greg Watling  
[pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org](mailto:pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org)

**Moderator:** Mischelle Stone  
[mstone359@gmail.com](mailto:mstone359@gmail.com)

**Communications  
Coordinator:** Jessica Benoit  
[office@firstuccgaylord.org](mailto:office@firstuccgaylord.org)

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



## ***Pastor's Column –December 2021***

### ***"New Book and Clothing Cabinet Underway!"***

Several months ago, Mardee Storing asked me about the church having a cabinet outside so that people could receive free winter clothing for children. We talked about putting it in the gazebo, or along side Otsego Avenue side of fellowship hall. Both of those ideas wouldn't work so well, given the amount of snow we get in Gaylord. So, I took the idea to the Reaching Out team and to the Trustees. Yes, we wanted their support and approval, but even more so, we needed to refine the idea and find the best place to put it. Eventually, we knew we would need Council approval, but first things first.

Thanks to the Reaching Out team and Trustees we came up with a great location for the new box. It will be along the parking lot side of the fellowship hall. In the meantime, Roger Brummel suggested that maybe he and Chuck Falk could build it! The church was also approached about having a children's lending library on church grounds that would be maintained by the Guardian Gals. Roger and Chuck thought we could put both things in the same cabinet. They went to work on the design and have already started the work (see the picture! That is the base for the cabinet). Also, we want to thank those who donated the lumber to build the new cabinet.

Mardee gave me clothing to put in the new cabinet before she passed away. The idea is that we would have warm clothing (hats, gloves, socks, whatever could be donated) in the cabinet and people could come and take the items whenever they needed them. No signing in. No having to come when the church was open. Whenever you need something, if it's there, you can take it. Reaching Out team has accepted the responsibility for managing the clothing half of the cabinet.

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The lending library would be a take a book, leave a book center and Guardian Gals will make sure there are books there to be loaned out. They will completely manage their side of the cabinet.

We then took the idea to Council who supported the project unanimously.

The only concern we have now is that people may leave items that are not appropriate for either side of the cabinet, so we are saying “no donations” on the cabinet itself. Church members are invited to donate items to the clothing side of the cabinet through the church office or a member of Reaching Out. We just don’t have a lot of storage room and want to make sure the items donated are usable and fit the mission of the cabinet.

Soon, we will dedicate the completed cabinet in memory of Mardee Storing. She was very thankful when she heard that this was going to happen. Amid her other life struggles at the time, it was a joy to see the smile on her face that we could make this happen to serve the Gaylord community.

There are conversations about how we might use the cabinet to help people in the summertime. If you have thoughts or suggestions of what we might do with the cabinet in the summer, please see a member of the Reaching Out team, or me.

What a great way for us to serve people in need in our community! Thank you to everyone who made this happen!

*Blessings,*

*Pastor Greg*

*P.S. If you do plan to donate warm items to the closet, we are asking for new or VERY gently used winter items.*

#### **LIVESTREAM VOLUNTEERS NEEDED**

As you know, we have begun livestreaming our worship services. Each week, we gain more confidence in the system, and we’re very able to train others to use the system. What we need is a couple more people to help us run the system. Even if you take the training, you can back out if it’s more than you bargained for.

Livestream is an important connection with our out-of-town participants and friends, and it also is a wonderful way to share our church with the community. Many people check out a church online before they ever come in person. Please help if you are able.

Contact Pastor Greg or Jessica if you will help.

#### **PASTOR OUT OF THE OFFICE DECEMBER 13**

I will be taking Cindy back to Wisconsin for her post-operative check-up (she is having bunion surgery November 29). I will be available by phone but will not be in the office. Should you need to reach me, please call or text 920-472-9172.

#### **INSTALLATION SERVICE**

A special service of worship was held during the worship time on Sunday, November 7 to install Pastor Greg, followed by an “enhanced” coffee hour. It was a wonderful service and a great day. Thank you to all who were involved.





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***Stay tuned for more information  
on Advent...***



## ***Did You Know . . .***

That there is a committee known as the Pastoral Relations Committee, whose purpose is to support and enhance the ministry of this church by paying attention to the relationship between pastor and participants? The committee encourages anyone with an issue with the pastor to first address it with him, personally. However, should there be a need beyond that direct communication, anyone may address an idea or concern to one of the members of the committee. The committee currently includes 4 people: Cathy Otto, Maggie Wallin, Mary Fox, and Joe Wambold. Working together, we hope for a continuing healthy church/pastoral relationship.



## ***Congratulations on our new committee officers!***

***Moderator: Maggie Wallin***

***Council: Helen Mate, Laura Hotelling, Cathy Otto, Doreen Dobosy***

***Reaching Out: Louanne Spearman, Cindy Goller, Cathy Otto, Mona Viviano***

***Reaching In: Brenda Brummel, Helen Crandall, Helen Mate, Bill Dely, Rokko Jans,  
Sallie Anderson***

***Trustees: Mary Fox, Doreen Dobosy, Jean Sasso, Rod Anderson, George Lienerth,  
Don Storing, Vicky Rigney, David Schoop***

## ***Salad Luncheon Report***

***July Total: \$255***

Women's Fellowship: \$100

Church Mowing/Snow Removal: \$50

Church Cleaning: \$50

Remaining \$55 to Afghanistan  
Resettlement

***August Total: \$290***

Entire amount to Scholarship Fund

***September Total: \$260***

Entire amount to Afghanistan  
Resettlement

***One Great Hour of Sharing Total:***  
**\$605**





## Holiday Traditions



*We gather with extended family (cousins and their families) on the afternoon or evening of Christmas Eve for a potluck and games. Each year we identify a theme for a simple gift exchange and everyone brings an item of that nature. One year we exchanged calendars, another time kitchen towels, and this year we'll exchange jigsaw puzzles. - **Mary Fox***

*The holiday tradition in the Evans family was to shout Christmas Gift before any of the other family members. Often when you're busy in the kitchen and family would arrive for dinner before you realized they were coming through the door shouting it was too late to get the jump on them. It always resulted in laughs and jokes.*

*When I googled the phrase it turns out it originates in Virginia dating back to Thomas Jefferson in 1809, where my paternal grandfather was born. I can clearly hear (and see) my Aunt Geneva, who was the most colorful of my dad's 6 siblings, coming through the door at my folk's house crying 'Christmas Gift'! Now since everyone wants to be the first the tradition now begins at Thanksgiving time. - **Cathy Otto***



*A huge thank you for all who donated pies and put in time cooking, dishing meals and cleaning up the*

*Thanksgiving dinner for the Community Meal on Nov 19th.*

*They served 95 meals to-go in a record breaking time of 20 minutes!*

*Thank You to everyone!*



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## Report from Your Trustees – December 2021 Newsletter

- We are grateful for your continued contributions to the work of our church. For those attending Sunday worship in person, collection plates are always available in the Narthex, or you can mail your gifts to the church office (218 W. Second St.). PayPal contributions are also welcome by using the donate button on our website at [www.firstuccgaylord.org](http://www.firstuccgaylord.org).
- Current year offerings through October, 2021 totaled \$77,143 compared to a budgeted amount of \$76,900 for the same period. Rest assured that gifts of any amount truly make a difference. Thank you for your ongoing generosity.
- Dedication of 2022 Stewardship pledges took place during our worship of November 7<sup>th</sup>. Thus far we have received 32 pledges for a total of \$67,460, reflecting 71% of the amount budgeted for 2022. If you have not yet turned in your pledge for the coming year, we encourage you to do so. Pledges are a reflection of intended giving, allowing Trustees to plan responsibly; however, we fully understand if life circumstances result in the need for change at a later date.
- Trustees continue to meet monthly on the third Wednesday at 11 am (via Zoom). If you have questions or wish to attend, you are welcome to join us anytime.

| <b>First Congregational UCC Gaylord</b>       |                          |                           |                           |
|---|--------------------------|---------------------------|---------------------------|
| <b>Actual Compared to Budgeted Financials</b> |                          |                           |                           |
| <b>Month of October, 2021</b>                 |                          |                           |                           |
|   | <b>Budget<br/>Annual</b> | <b>Budget<br/>Monthly</b> | <b>Actual<br/>October</b> |
| <b>INCOME</b>                                 |                          |                           |                           |
| Operating Income                              | \$ 102,780               | \$ 8,565                  | \$ 8,776                  |
| Ministries Income                             |                          |                           | \$ 873                    |
| <b>TOTAL INCOME</b>                           | <b>\$ 102,780</b>        | <b>\$ 8,565</b>           | <b>\$ 9,649</b>           |
| <b>EXPENSES</b>                               |                          |                           |                           |
| Personnel                                     | \$ 71,230                | \$ 5,936                  | \$ 5,895                  |
| Facility                                      | \$ 20,730                | \$ 1,728                  | \$ 1,638                  |
| Administration                                | \$ 8,185                 | \$ 682                    | \$ 362                    |
| Ministries                                    | \$ 2,400                 | \$ 200                    | \$ 355                    |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b>                         | <b>\$ 102,545</b>        | <b>\$ 8,545</b>           | <b>\$ 8,250</b>           |
| <b>NET INCOME</b>                             |                          |                           |                           |
|   | <b>\$ 235</b>            | <b>\$ 20</b>              | <b>\$ 1,399</b>           |



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## ***Announcements***

**Advent Candle Lighters** – there is a signup sheet in fellowship hall for anyone interested in lighting the candles.

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

**Pledge Box** – is now on credenza. You may submit your pledge there or in narthex of church.

**First Sundays** - On the first Sunday of each month (11/07), 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.)

**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>

**NEXT McLaren Book – Dec. 2<sup>nd</sup> with Ch. 14. *NEW LINK:***

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82057784784?pwd=eWdVbDlzZkRndEFaUFF5bHUvNU5MUT09>  
Meeting ID: 820 5778 4784 Passcode: 173265

**Flower Schedule:**

**June:** Jeannine Wambold

**July:** Joanie Sietsema

**Aug.:** Evelyn Pratt

**Sept.:** Sallie Anderson

**Oct.:** Vicky Rigney

**Nov.:** Louanne Spearman

**Dec.:** Christian Ed.



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# **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: \$286**

### **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*

### **Christmas Fund**

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

*Collected in December*

***In Addition, we gave \$587 for Blanket Sunday***

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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/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>

McLaren *Evening* Book Study meets Thursdays at 7pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82057784784>

Meeting ID: 820 5778 4784

Passcode: 173265

Bible Study meets Thursdays at 11am

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

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## ~ 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 December, the UNA is holding the New Waves TC  
church in prayer.***

***Anna Kalember*** – as she was recently hospitalized with three blood clots, and a partial collapse of one lung because of a pulmonary embolism. She is recovering at home after a short hospital stay.

***Don Storing and Family*** – as Mardee's recent passing.

***The Crandall Family*** – as they grieve Don's recent passing.

***Rokko Jans*** – as his friend Elliot recently passed away.

***Samantha Fray & The Dunn Family*** – as Marcus recently passed away.

***The Perdue Family*** – on the sudden death of Mike and for Laney who suffered multiple injuries when their plane made a crash landing.

***Marilyn Kaczanowski*** – as she is recovering from foot surgery to remove a nerve – recovery time is quite lengthy.

***Jim Boughner's brother, Charles Bernard*** – as he has been diagnosed with brain cancer and is having a very difficult time.

***John Hellenberg*** – as he will undergo a vein clearing procedure on each leg.

***The Family and Friends of Bob and Charlene Clark*** – as they grieve the recent loss of their son, Jeffrey Potter.

***Gloria House's granddaughter, Madison Crawford*** – as she suffers from cataplexy in narcolepsy along with other neurological struggles. She is currently at U of M receiving treatment and therapy.

***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*** – as she is doing better, but still in need of prayers.

***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.***





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# *Birthdays and Anniversaries*

## *December Birthdays*

- 1 Ryan Watling
- 3 Terry House
- 4 Travis House
- 5 Cindy Goller
- 5 Sandra Soderberg
- 14 Mike Dockery
- 16 Ian Hotelling
- 19 Paul Kaczanowski
- 25 Ilah Weaver



## *December Anniversaries*

- 21 Joel & Joanie Sietsema
- 22 George & Carol Lienerth



# December 2021

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

|                            |   |           |                                    |   |  |               |
|----------------------------|---|-----------|------------------------------------|---|--|---------------|
|                            | <div> Mardee Storing<br/> Memorial<br/> 12/02/2021<br/> 11am </div> |           | <b>1</b>                           | <b>2</b><br>Virtual Bible Study, 11am<br>Women's Fellowship, 11am<br>Book Study 7pm | <b>3</b><br>Community Meal 4pm         | <b>4</b>      |
| <b>5</b><br>Worship, 10am  | <b>6</b><br>Reaching In, 12pm                                       | <b>7</b>  | <b>8</b><br>Virtual Council 7pm    | <b>9</b><br>Virtual Bible Study, 11am<br>Book Study 7pm                             | <b>10</b><br>Community Meal 4pm        | <b>11</b>     |
| <b>12</b><br>Worship, 10am | <b>13</b><br>Reaching Out, 7pm<br><div>GREG GONE</div>              | <b>14</b> | <b>15</b><br>Trustees, 11am        | <b>16</b><br>Virtual Bible Study, 11am<br>Book Study, 7pm                           | <b>17</b><br>Community Meal, 4pm       | <b>18</b>     |
| <b>19</b><br>Worship, 10am | <b>20</b>   | <b>21</b> | <b>22</b><br>Church Book Club, 1pm | <b>23</b>   | <b>24</b><br>Christmas Eve Service 5pm | <b>25</b><br> |
| <b>26</b><br>Worship, 10am | <b>27</b>   | <b>28</b> | <b>29</b>                          | <b>30</b>   | <b>31</b><br>New Year's Eve            |               |