

# First Congregational United Church of Christ

218 W. Second Street, Gaylord, Michigan 49735

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

(989) 732-5726

## July 2025 Newsletter



*Our mission is to embrace people of every age and stage of life and help them become the most loving version of themselves possible.*

### **Pastor's Column "Moving Forward with a Plan"**

By now, you all have heard of the survey we are conducting as part of our strategic planning process in partnership with Convergence. As of this writing, twenty-four have completed the survey, and I hope that by the time you receive this, that number will be higher. It is step one in a process that I hope will give us a "true north" or a direction to follow over the next several years.

In addition to our work with Convergence, I have gotten back to reading books on church growth,

development, planning and other such matters. The latest one was recommended to me by a participant here, and one of the authors was president of the seminary I attended in Kansas City. The book is *Sustaining While Disrupting: The Challenge of Congregational Innovation* (F. Douglas Powe, Jr and Lovett H. Weems, Jr authors).

The book had many useful tools, but the one I found most helpful was the “so that” formula. The authors write, “These two simple words can transform well-intentioned hard work into actual results that advance the mission. Here is how to use the phrase:

*We will do X **so that** Y occurs.*

I invite you to try it for yourself related to ministries, programs and even worship in our church. It is harder than you think. Try these: We have a choir so that...; We have a greeter so that... Why do we do what we do? What is the outcome we expect? Then we can ask ourselves if the ministry is accomplishing the goal we hope it will. If not, we either discontinue, or we change it *so that* it does.

The only reason to do this is so that our energies are used toward a shared goal. The authors remind us, “We can easily become preoccupied with *what* we are doing that we lose sight of *why* we are doing it.”

This is not an evaluation of whether a program is good or bad, but whether it is the best use of our energy and resources.

I wonder what impact one phrase would have on what we do and why we do it?

In Christ,

Pastor Greg

HAPPIEST INDEPENDENCE DAY!



...WITH LIBERTY AND JUSTICE FOR ALL!

"MAY WE THINK OF FREEDOM, NOT AS THE RIGHT TO DO AS WE PLEASE, BUT AS THE OPPORTUNITY TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT." — PETER MARSHALL



KEEP AMERICA IN OUR PRAYERS

## July Birthdays and Anniversaries

### Birthdays:

|    |                    |
|----|--------------------|
| 4  | Tony Fobar-Dockery |
| 4  | Laura Hotelling    |
| 8  | Jennifer Akans     |
| 16 | Lori Ferguson      |
| 16 | Harrison Kalembur  |
| 18 | Whitney Rigney     |
| 18 | Mary Evans         |
| 21 | Gloria House       |
| 23 | Nola Brown         |
| 31 | Brianna Boughner   |

### Anniversaries:

|   |                        |
|---|------------------------|
| 3 | Roger & Brenda Brummel |
| 4 | Jim & Jennifer Akans   |



## **Announcements**

- Food Pantry Volunteers are needed – call Don Storing
- For prayer concerns, joys, announcements, or news to share, contact Liz at [office@firstuccgaylord.org](mailto:office@firstuccgaylord.org) or Pastor Greg at [pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org](mailto:pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org)
- Check Fellowship Hall to sign up for mowing, lunch group, or to serve on Sunday.
- Directory updates are in the works.
- Community Meal is CANCELLED July 4 and 11
- Pastor Greg will be away July 18-20

## *~ In Our Prayers ~*

*During July, the UNA is holding Clare Congregational UCC Church in prayer.*

***Jason Peterman** – who is dealing with a variety of health issues.*

***Madison Crawford** – as she suffers from neurological and vision issues.*

***Chris Crubaugh** – continued prayers Chris and Laura Bantens as they adapt to Chris' medical issues.*

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

***Kathy Arnold's daughter and son-in-law**—as his mother suddenly passed away June 15.*

***Mary Evans' brother, Andy** –is recovering at home after emergency surgery.*

***Jay Jans, Rokko Jans' brother**—Jay has entered hospice in Illinois.*

***Stephanie Kalember** – who faces hip surgery in Traverse City.*

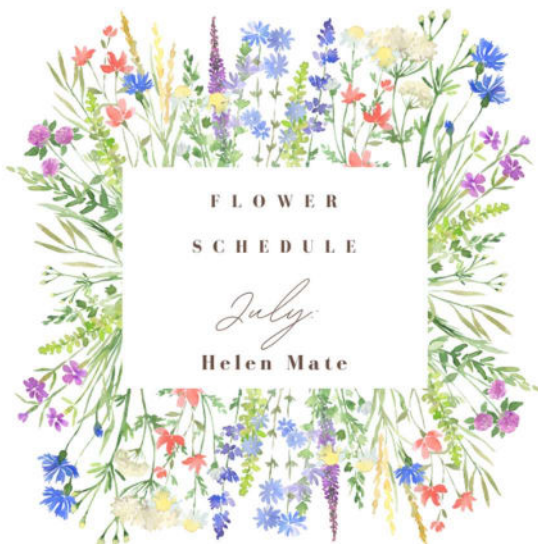
***Donna Kotler** – who has returned home.*

***Kathy Menkes' daughter-in-law, Maggie** – Maggie's mother is suffering with health issues, and she lost her brother to suicide on May 29, but she is also celebrating the birth of her son June 11.*



*Prayer Requests*

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.



## **HELP IS NEEDED AFTER THE ALPENFEST PARADE!**

In the parking lot adjacent to the church along Second Street, the Petoskey Steel Drum group will perform following the Alpenfest Parade. The City of Gaylord will leave chairs in the parking lot that need to be set up. Likely, we can set those up that morning, or during the parade itself, whichever is more convenient. At the end of the concert, we will need to re-stack the chairs. The date is July 12.

Alpenfest has also issued an invitation for us to sell concessions during the concert. That is being worked on, but help may be needed there as well. Please contact Pastor Greg with questions.



Minutes are Available and Attached

## Cancer & Friends Support Group

Meeting Schedule 3:30-5 p  
Otsego County Commission on  
Aging Upper Level - Board Rm  
1165 Elkview Ave, Gaylord



June 24 - Physical Activity & Exercise  
Tailored for Cancer Patients  
July 29 - Journaling for Emotional Well-Being  
August 26 - Palliative Care & Pain  
Management  
September 30 - The Importance of Laughter!

Contact Elaine Raschke (989) 350-4391 or [elaineraschke@gmail.com](mailto:elaineraschke@gmail.com)

## TIME AWAY FROM THE OFFICE

LIZ WILL WORK JULY 2 INSTEAD OF HER USUAL JUNE 30 TO WORK AROUND THE HOLIDAYS.

PASTOR GREG WILL BE AWAY JULY 18-20.

## *Mission Trip 2025*



## **Hot Dog Sale**

**July 12 - Alpenfest Parade**

**Come support the mission trip and  
the best hot dog deal in town  
in the parking lot of our church!**





Share Certificate  
for  
Mission Trip to



Re-Member

Trip to take place  
September, 2025



AWARDED BY TEAM MEMBER

In September, Bri Boughner and Brenda Brummel will join the Re-Member at Pine Ridge Reservation South Dakota. They will need your financial help with the cost of the trip and donation materials, estimated at \$2,000. To date, they have raised \$550.

For \$25.00, you can buy a share in the trip. You may buy more than one certificate. Fundraising will continue during July and August. If you have any questions, please contact Brenda.

## Did you know?

In June, our Facebook feed had at least 288 sets of eyes on each of our worship broadcasts! Thanks to the volunteers making sure we are streaming the worship hour and posting the results to social media!

**BAY VIEW  
ASSOCIATION  
PREACHERS OF THE  
WEEK**

JUNE 15-19

BISHOP DAVID  
BARD

JUNE 22-26

BRIAN MCLAREN

JUNE 29-JULY  
3

MARY LUTI

JULY 6

TRYGVE JOHNSON

JULY 13-17

MARILYN  
MCENTYRE

JULY 20

GRACE IMATHIU

JULY 27-31

WILL WILLIMON

AUGUST 3-4

ANN VOSKAMP

AUGUST 7

ROBIN WALL  
KIMMERER

AUGUST 10

LUKE POWERY

AUGUST 17

AARON TREDWAY

AUGUST 24

JULIE  
GREYERBIEHL

**SUNDAY SERVICE @ 10:45 AM IN JOHN M HALL  
AUDITORIUM. LECTURES M-TH AT 10 AM IN  
VOORHIES HALL.**

## Join us for a Taste of

# HONDURAS



**When:** Saturday, July 26th 1-3 p.m.

**Where:** Peace Lutheran Church  
Gaylord

- Enjoy a traditional Honduran lunch
- Take a virtual mission trip to the Lutheran Church in Honduras (ICLH)
- Win a door prize
- Try your hand at a piñata.

This event is free, but donations are welcome and will support the *Health for Life* program which focuses on providing training and resources for basic medical care, good dental practices, and nutritional food preparations to ICLH volunteers.

Donations up to \$3,000 will be matched  
dollar-for-dollar by a generous supporter.

If you plan to participate in this event, please RSVP by June 15 at

[Taste of Honduras RSVP Form](#)

A Taste of Honduras will also be at Peace in Gaylord on July 26.



**RSVP for the Honduras meal by JULY 15 by calling Peace Lutheran at (989) 732-1991.**



2025

| Sunday   | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday   | Thursday  | Friday   | Saturday   |
|--|--|--|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Kitchen Closed:</b><br><b>Only open to The Refuge</b><br><b>General Synod</b> | <b>Pastor Greg is away</b><br><b>Newsletter Deadline</b><br><b>Alperfest</b> | 11:30a Convergence   | 6a Gaylord Gratitude                              | 11a Bible Study<br>12:30 Women's Fellowship<br>4p Choir | <b>Independence Day/4</b><br>6a Gaylord Gratitude<br><b>Community Meal</b><br><b>CANCELLED</b> | 5  |
| 6  | 7  | <b>Kitchen Closed</b> 8<br><b>Alperfest</b>                | <b>Kitchen Closed</b> 9<br><b>Alperfest</b>       | <b>Kitchen Closed</b> 10<br><b>Alperfest</b>            | <b>Kitchen Closed</b> 11<br><b>Alperfest</b><br><b>General Synod</b>                           | <b>Kitchen Closed</b> 12<br><b>Alperfest</b><br><b>General Synod</b>         |
| 10a Worship  | 6a Gaylord Gratitude<br>12p Reaching In<br>6p Compassionate Friends          |  | 6a Gaylord Gratitude                              | 11a Bible Study<br>4p Choir                             | 6a Gaylord Gratitude<br><b>Community Meal</b><br><b>CANCELLED</b>                              | Chair set up/take down<br>3p AA  |
| <b>General Synod</b> 13<br>10a Worship   | <b>General Synod</b> 14<br>6a Gaylord Gratitude                              | <b>General Synod</b> 15<br>11p Lunch Group @ Pine Squirrel | 16<br>6a Gaylord Gratitude<br>7p Trustees         | 17<br>11a Bible Study<br>4p Choir                       | <b>Rev Greg is Away</b> 18<br>6a Gaylord Gratitude<br>4p Community Meal                        | <b>Rev Greg is Away</b> 19<br>8:30a Handlers' Workshop                       |
| <b>Rev Greg is Away</b> 20<br>10a Worship  | <b>Newsletter Deadline</b> 21<br>6a Gaylord Gratitude<br>7p Reaching Out     | 22<br>11:30a Salad Luncheon                                | 23<br>6a Gaylord Gratitude<br>1p Church Book Club | 24<br>11a Bible Study<br>4p Choir                       | 25<br>6a Gaylord Gratitude<br>4p Community Meal  | 26   |
| 27   | 28   | 29   | 30  | 31  | <b>Kitchen Closed:</b><br><b>Only open to The Refuge</b><br><b>General Synod</b>               | <b>Pastor Greg is away</b><br><b>Newsletter Deadline</b><br><b>Alperfest</b> |
| 10a Worship Outdoors   | 6a Gaylord Gratitude   |  | 6a Gaylord Gratitude                              | 11a Bible Study<br>4p Choir                             |  |  |