

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Gaylord

July 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
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Communications

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



Pastor's Column – July 2022

“Play Time!”

I know that for some of you, our sermon series based on the theme of “play” is a little uncomfortable. I appreciate your willingness to engage and allow yourself to be challenged as to why play, in the context of church, is uncomfortable. In fact, I encourage all of us to investigate those things that make us uncomfortable. Often it is in discomfort that we learn the most.

Having said that, I want to share with you a couple of stories from a book I’ve been reading. It is by Anne Hillman and it is called *Awakening the Energies of Love: Discovering Fire for the Second Time, Second Edition*. Hillman has a section on play near the middle of the book. They are cute stories, but have a powerful point to make. They are found in her chapter, *Interlude*, found on pages 188 and 189 of the book.

A week ago, we made a new swing and hung it from a high branch on a Monterey pine. I love to swing out over the field! The first time I sat on its maple seat and pushed off into the air, a movement near a split-rail fence to the north caught my eye. I had startled two young fawns grazing at the edge of the meadow, and they had scattered fast. But their curiosity got the better of them. They seemed enchanted by what they saw – a human being swinging in the air! They started to come closer, got partway, and stopped. Not quite daring to come further, they stood stock-still and watched.

The day before, one of the fawns had tried to get a jack-rabbit to play. She sneaked up on the baby rabbit as it nibbled the spring grass and jumped in place as if to scare it.

The rabbit turned and ran a little way and the fawn gave chase, then stopped and waited for the rabbit to return. Sure enough, the rabbit came back, sidled as close as it dared, and waited for the fawn to take up the pursuit again. They kept it up for several minutes until the doe got tired of the ruckus and chased her fawn into submission.

Another day, we watched a similar game between a puppy and a calf. When they encountered one another unexpectedly, they sniffed around a bit, tested each other with the same startle behavior, then pretended to menace one another, jostling and chasing for half an hour. It seemed strange to see the comparatively huge calf romping with a puppy, but they were allured to relationship.

We arise out of relationship.

*It is the ground of **who we are.***

It's all about relationship. And everyone needs them. Play is one way we get to know one another. In every one of these stories, the creatures were not the same, and in fact, we couldn't imagine them being together. And yet, through play, relationship was born between them – even if for a moment.

What could play do for us that would help us recognize differences, but find ways to be in relationship?

Blessings,

Pastor Greg

OUTDOOR WORSHIP JULY 10 at 10 AM!

Hopefully we'll have better weather than our June attempt. Dress comfortably, and consider bringing something you like to play with! Our theme that day is Play and Self Expression.



CHURCH PICNIC and SHARING CUPBOARD DEDICATION

Mark your calendars!

Sunday, August 14 following worship, we will have a church picnic and dedicate the sharing cupboard!

The picnic will be a potluck (sign up will be in fellowship hall soon) and will be held in the church yard, or in fellowship hall, depending on the weather. We'll gather for food, fellowship and fun. During the picnic, we'll also dedicate the Sharing Cupboard, which is in memory of Mardee Storing, and was built by Chuck Falk and Roger Brummel.

That Sunday is also outdoor worship, so let's hope for good weather!



Report from Trustees – July 2022 Newsletter

- For the month of May, our income was substantially more than budgeted, thanks to a generous memorial contribution recorded from Mardee Storing's estate. Because this contribution was made with express wishes that it be used for future facility needs, we will earmark the gift accordingly. Without this special one-time memorial contribution, our income was roughly on par with budget, and we appreciate the generosity of our church family.
- Trustees are attempting to address some technical infrastructure issues that are interfering with normal livestreaming of our church services. Interim solutions have been identified for the short term; longer term, we've identified a need to replace microphone audio cables that have failed after many years of service. A subgroup has been identified to work toward the longer term solution.
- A summary of May's Income and Expense report is included, below. Thank you for the many ways in which you contribute time, talent, and treasures for the continued well-being of our vibrant church community.

First Congregational UCC Gaylord
Actual Compared to Budgeted Financials
May 2022
May

	Budget Annual	Budget Monthly	Actual May
INCOME			
Operating Income	\$ 105,500	\$ 8,793	\$ 19,476
Ministries Income			\$ 3,750
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 105,500	\$ 8,793	\$ 23,226
EXPENSES			
Personnel	\$ 75,730	\$ 6,379	\$ 6,273
Facility	\$ 21,170	\$ 1,364	\$ 994
Administration	\$ 6,250	\$ 443	\$ 464
Ministries	\$ 2,350	\$ 197	\$ 745
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 105,500	\$ 8,383	\$ 8,476
NET INCOME	\$ -	\$ 410	\$ 14,750

Announcements

Outdoor Worship—July 10th

There will be no First Sunday with Brenda – in July.

Church Picnic and Sharing Cupboard Dedication – Sunday, August 14. Picnic will be potluck style, please be on the lookout for signup sheet soon.

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

Bible Study – please monitor your email for information from Rokko on how bible will meet. In the meantime, the Zoom link is provided: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84612895017>

July Upcoming Dates to Remember

July 10th Outdoor Worship

July 26th Salad Luncheon

July Mowing Schedule:

Week of 3rd: Don

Week of 10th: Pete

Week of 17th: George

Week of 24th: Rod

Looking Ahead:

Church Picnic and Cupboard Dedication:

Aug 14 (also outdoor worship)

Rummage Sale Dates:

Sept. 16 & 17, 2022





TOGETHER WE ARE STRONGER!

Through donations and help from the community, we made over 250 sandwiches and sack lunches to pass out to volunteers helping to clean up damage left by the tornado!





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

OCWM (Our Church's Wider Mission)

Basic support for the Michigan Conference and National Settings.

Collected on an ongoing basis

Received to date: \$62

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

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 (2021)

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 (2021)

Christmas Fund

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

Collected in December

Received to date: \$774 (2021)

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

2022 Tornado Relief - \$335

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>

Bible Study meets Thursdays at 11am

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

~ 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 July, the UNA is holding our church in prayer

The English Family – as they grieve the loss of Joe's mother and process Joe's recent diagnosis with progressive aphasia.

Laura Bantens and her partner, Chris— as Chris is experiencing health issues and they are both encountering major life changes.

Maxine Dely—as she deals with ongoing balance issues.

Sandra Soderberg – as she has broken a bone in her left shoulder.

John Hellenberg—who is now living in AspenRidge

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

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

July Birthdays

3 Joel Sietsema
4 Tony Fobar
4 Laura Hotelling
10 Bo Leser
16 Lori Ferguson
16 Harrison Kalember
18 Whitney Rigney
Mary Evans
21 Gloria House
23 Mardee Storing
26 Jackie Fry
31 Brianna Boughner

July Anniversaries

3 Roger and Brenda Brummel





July 2022

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

					1 Community Meal 4pm	2
3 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	4 Office Closed 	5 Office Hours 8am-12pm	6	7 Bible Study, 11am	8 Community Meal, 4pm	9
10 OUTDOOR Worship, 10am Coffee Hour Council, 12pm	11	12	13	14 Bible Study, 11am	15 Community Meal, 4pm	16
17 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	18 Reaching Out, 7pm	19	20 Trustees, 11am	21 Bible Study, 11am	22 Community Meal, 4pm	23
24 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	25 Reaching Out, 7pm	26 Salad Luncheon, 11:30am	27 Church Book Club, 1pm	28 Bible Study, 11am	29	30