

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Gaylord

June 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

Pastor: Rev. Greg Watling
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Moderator: Mischelle Stone
mstone359@gmail.com

**Communications
Coordinator:** Jessica Benoit
office@firstuccgaylord.org

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

In this issue:

Pastor's Column.....	1
Council.....	5
Reaching In.....	7
Reaching Out.....	8
Trustees.....	9
Announcements.....	10
Prayer Requests.....	13
Birthdays & Anniversaries.....	14
Calendar.....	15

Pastor's Column – June 2021

Slowly, but surely, things are getting back to “normal” in our state and in our church. The church Council has faithfully deliberated and discerned what seems to be the safest way for us to reopen. The word I would use is gradual. While much of the state and the nation opened at the flip of a switch, we want to take our time a little bit and be sure that a good number of people are vaccinated, and we don't have a surge of new cases and hospitalizations. Originally, we were going to wait until 70% vaccination rate in our county. Right now, we're in the 50s, and that leads us to be cautious.

Included in this newsletter are the latest restrictions through the end of May. We would ask that you continue to mask while in worship. We also will have self-contained, self-serve communion June 6. However, you are welcome to sing along with the hymns, the Gloria Patri, and the Doxology. Soon, we believe, we will have more of our music live. Meanwhile, for those not quite ready to be in person, or who would just rather be at home for worship, livestreaming will continue. And we will continue to post worship to our church website later in the day on Sundays.

I anticipate that we will have a great June! On June 6 we will have in-person communion. June 13 will be graduation Sunday, featuring our seniors and other youth sharing their musical talents. After worship that day, we hope to have a cake reception for our seniors in the church yard. If it rains, we likely will have cake to go! On June 20, we hope to have an outdoor worship service. Plans are in the works, and of course, this is weather dependent! Pay attention to your emails for updates! Finally, on June 27, you'll get treated to a worship service led by our own Maggie Wallin. There is a reason to be here in person or virtually every Sunday in June!

Continued on next page ...

More and more things are happening, and it feels good to get things going again after a very long time of quarantine. However, I would still ask for your patience as the Council does it's best to reopen carefully, keeping in mind that the safety of our participants and anyone who would visit us is paramount. If you have questions, please don't hesitate to contact me.

VISITS

I would love to visit with you and get to know you better as your time and interest allow. I received my first COVID vaccine on March 18 and the second on April 9. If you would like to visit with me, I would like nothing more. It doesn't matter your age, family make up, location...no matter who you are, I would love nothing more than getting to know you. I completely understand that several of you will want to wait until the pandemic lessens or ends, but when you're ready, I can't wait to meet you!

If you would be willing to meet with me, please contact the church office, or email me at: pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org.

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 will continue even when we are back in person for worship. This is an important connection with our out-of-town participants and friends, and it also is a great 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 Mary Fox, Pastor Greg, or Jessica if you will help.

OFFICE HOURS CHANGE

Pastor Greg will not be in the office on Thursday, June 24 as he will be making his way to Minnesota for an annual Men's retreat with Minnesota Illumin. Given that it is a ten-hour trip, Monday, June 28 may have altered office hours as well. We will issue an email blast when final travel plans are in place.

*Please also note that Jessica will be having wisdom tooth surgery the same day, so she will be in office Wednesday, June 23rd instead of Thursday.

STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH

This congregation participates in five special offerings of the United Church of Christ. Our on-going offering (year-round) is Our Churches' Wider Mission. This offering supports the work of the Michigan Conference which in turn encourages, trains, and supports local churches and their pastors in a variety of ways that enhance local church mission.

Continued on next page ...

This time of year, we are asked to participate in the Strengthen the Church offering. As the names suggests, this offering is to strengthen our existing churches through revitalization projects, and to support new church starts. Traditionally, 25% of the offering stays in the Michigan Conference to support our local churches and our new church starts, including in Traverse City and Mount Pleasant (among others). The other 75% goes the National United Church of Christ to support larger projects regionally or throughout the country to help strengthen our churches, both new and existing. We will receive this offering from May 23 through June 13. Please give as you are able.

SPECIAL OFFERINGS REPORT

Through May 16, 2021, the following special offerings have been received. Please note that the number for community meal only reflects money given by our congregation. As you'll see from the Trustee's report, they have received additional grant money. In addition to that, community meal receives donations each week. If you'd like more detail on the numbers from Community Meal, please contact the church office.

OCWM: \$170

Food Pantry: \$80

Community Meal: \$85

One Great Hour of Sharing: \$344

Christmas Fund: \$25 (note, most \$ was collected and already paid prior to Jan)

Scholarship: \$1,290

Kidz on a Mission: \$25

Blanket Sunday: \$537

Total Special Offerings: \$1241

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR MANY FINANCIAL GIFTS NOT ONLY TO THESE SPECIAL OFFERINGS,
BUT TO THE GENERAL FUND OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UCC.**



Please carefully read the following
updated guidelines:

- Open for worship only
- Live stream will continue for those who wish to watch at home
- Masks are required through May 30. Please monitor email for June updates.
- Only certain pews will be used to maximize social distancing
- No fellowship hall use or coffee hour during worship
- Offering can be placed in the offering plates near the guestbook in the entryway
- In-person communion will be June 6 with self-contained elements
- Congregational singing is now allowed
- Paper bulletins will not be used – please follow along on screens
- Coffee hour will continue via Zoom for the time being at 11:30am
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83811276546>
- Please bring your own bible as there will be no bibles or hymnals provided

**IN THEIR HEARTS HUMANS PLAN THEIR COURSE, BUT THE LORD ESTABLISHES THEIR STEPS.
PROVERBS 16:9**

Updated May 2021

April 14, 2021 Council Minutes (meeting via Zoom)

Present: Mischelle Stone, Helen Mate, Laura Hotelling, Greg Watling, Maggie Wallin, Doreen Dobosy

1. We started the meeting with a COVID/check-in to see how everyone is doing.
2. The March minutes were unanimously approved.
3. Carillon Update
 - A. Mischelle sent out the quotes she's received from Master Chimes. The options range from \$6,800-\$17,000, and we can check them out on their website.
 - B. We would be able to do installation locally.
 - C. We're waiting on a quote from Verdon Bells.
 - D. Doreen suggested that we would need to narrow down our choice and then have a church discussion.
 - E. Maggie asked if there would be upkeep we would need to do, and the answer was no and that any breakage would be covered by the warranty.
4. Streaming Update
 - A. Laura suggested that we need more people trained. Greg is trying to get more people willing to take the training.
 - B. Doreen wondered if we've figured out how to do the streaming with an outdoor service, and Greg answered not yet. We might need to have someone stream an outdoor service on a phone.
 - C. Greg also added that we're introducing new components little by little and learning as we go.
 - D. Mischelle suggested the potential for an outdoor coffee hour sometime.
5. Review of In-Person Service
 - A. There were about twenty people there.
 - B. Everyone had masks and sat where requested.
 - C. Greg doesn't recommend changing any of the policies that were established.
 - D. Mischelle noted that we need to remind people that even with most people vaccinated, there are still some people who are medically compromised.
 - E. Greg added that Mona was great about sanitizing people's hands, and he suggested that she would be great to be the person giving a gentle reminder about masks and spacing.
 - F. Some people are wondering when we'll be able to have people in fellowship hall, but we're not yet sure.

-
6. Greg wondered about the use of fellowship hall for a vaccine clinic during community meal. This was a discussion at Reaching Out.
- A. Mischelle said that Jean doesn't think the health department would want to do a small venue since the aim is to reach large groups of people.
 - B. There's concern that people wouldn't be able to distance after getting the shot.
 - C. Helen noted that there's a need to check group homes. Many might have already given the shot to their residents.
 - D. Doreen noted that we could have a flyer with vaccination sites in the community meal bag.
 - E. Greg will share all of these ideas with Vicky.
7. Maggie closed the meeting with a prayer.



**REACHING IN
MAY 3, 2021**

In Attendance: Rokko, Pastor Greg, Sallie, Helen M, Helen C, Bill D, Brenda B,

Rokko opened the meeting with prayer

VIRTUAL WORSHIP DISCUSSION

- Each week gets better
- Some glitches are still being identified
- Need to work on “sound quality” and “synchronization” of pictures and words and congregations’ participation
- There is still a need for volunteers to run the computer during the Sunday Worship

COFFEE HOUR

- Virtual Coffee Hour will be delayed/changed to 11:30 AM – 12 PM
- More are attending church so not so many are attending the virtual social time

EMAIL LIST

- Discussion pertaining to some not receiving church email “blasts”
- Greg and Jessica will follow up with email list and make sure that all are receiving pertinent information

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

- Sallie Anderson, Brenda Brummel, and Pastor Greg will be meeting this week to review possible programming for “after the pandemic” CE programs
- Many churches are seeing a decline in attendance of young people
- One possibility is collaboration with other churches to do some shared mission projects; service activities; music programming
- Rokko and Brenda continue to work on “music programming” with community teens; Council will need to offer recommendations pertaining to wearing of masks when teens meet within the church properties

COMMUNICATION

- Council has created a post card notifying the congregation of the re-opening of the church
- COVID restrictions are listed on the card as well as all “virtual information” for contacting the church and following the virtual programming
- The limiting factor for people returning is how many people can safely sit in the church

PASTORAL CONCERNS

- The committee shared information about people on the church phone tree

NEXT MEETING: June 7, 2021; 12:00 PM

Helen S Crandall, Recorder

REACHING OUT APRIL 19, 2021

Meeting started at 7PM via zoom.

Present: Mona, Louanne, Greg (Pastor), Vicky (note taker)

Louanne opened us with a prayer

We are in need of a new chairperson. Louanne has agreed to lead us. She was nominated and voted on with a unanimous vote.

Women's outerwear that was gathered this winter will be taken by Stephanie for storage.

Question was asked about how much was gathered for high school senior's scholarship. Later found out it is \$1,090.

May 16th Reaching Out is asking congregation members to help. We have scheduled this day (Sunday May 16th) to take cookies and cards to The Brook here in Gaylord. We are asking for donations of cookies. Louanne is getting the cards for us.

Blanket Sunday will be on Sunday May 9th. Information will be in the newsletter and the bulletin. This is also Mothers day (**public service announcement**)

Short discussion on Salad luncheon.

Pentecost is May 23rd

Strength the church offering will be mid May to Mid June

Next month we will discuss the Teddy Bear project. Our church has been doing this for over 15 years.

Report from Your Trustees – June 2021 Newsletter


- We are grateful for your ongoing contributions to the work of our church. For those attending Sunday worship in person, collection plates are available in the Narthex to allow for touchless donation. Alternatively, you can mail your gifts to the church office (218 W. Second St.) or utilize the PayPal button on our website at www.firstuccgaylord.org .
- Offerings for April totaled \$8,013, compared to a budgeted amount \$7,690. A gift of any amount truly makes a difference, and we appreciate your ongoing support.
- Through the first four months of this year, church participants have donated a total of \$1,875 to a number of church ministries such as One Great Hour of Sharing, Our Church’s Wider Ministry, student scholarships and more, while also creating the capacity for the Community Meal to receive over \$4.2K in contributions, including a generous grant through the Otsego Community Foundation.
- Beginning June 1 (and on an annual basis thereafter), we will be assigning a new door code for entrance to the Fellowship Hall. If you have a legitimate reason to access the Fellowship Hall when the building is not staffed, please contact Jessica to be added to the list and receive the new code. Please do not share the code with others; instead, ask them to contact Jessica so that they can be added to the list of authorized users. It’s the only way we can know who’s using our facility, and we appreciate your understanding.
- Trustees continue to meet on the third Wednesday of each month at noon via Zoom. If you have question or wish to attend, please contact Jessica at office@firstuccgaylord.org.

**First Congregational UCC Gaylord
Actual Compared to Budgeted Financials
Month of April 2021**

	Budget Annual	Budget Monthly	Actual April
INCOME			
Operating Income	\$ 102,780	\$ 8,565	\$ 8,054
Ministries Income		\$ -	\$ 3,530
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 102,780	\$ 8,565	\$ 11,583
EXPENSES			
Personnel	\$ 71,230	\$ 5,936	\$ 6,273
Facility	\$ 20,730	\$ 1,728	\$ 1,193
Administration	\$ 8,185	\$ 682	\$ 447
Ministries	\$ 2,400	\$ 200	\$ 388
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 102,545	\$ 8,545	\$ 8,300
NET INCOME	\$ 235	\$ 20	\$ 3,283

Announcements

JUNE Greeters & Liturgists – please contact the office if you are able to help with greeting on Sundays and/or readings.

 **Waste Disposal**—Our new pick-up time is Monday morning 5am. Please note, there is no yard waste accepted. Thank you, Mischelle for helping with this!!!

Lawn Mowing – It is that time again! Please contact Don Storing if you are willing to help mow the lawn this season.

AV Operators – the church needs volunteers to operate livestreaming (cameras and slides) on Sunday mornings. If you are interested in training, please contact Mary Fox. This is a pick and choose commitment; you decide when it works for you!

Bible Study – 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/83040403820> Dial by your location: +1 929 205 6099; Meeting ID: 830 4040 3820

McLaren Book Study— <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83040403820> Dial by your location: +1 929 205 6099; Meeting ID: 830 4040 3820

Virtual Coffee Hour TIME CHANGE - click the following link to join our virtual coffee hour this Sunday at 11:30am; <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83811276546> call or text Rokko (773) 398-6767 or Brenda (810) 623-1691 if you have any difficulties connecting. Dial in phone number is: (929) 205 6099

Mary Fox – would like to thank everyone who supported her through prayer as she is successfully recovering from hip replacement surgery.



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: \$166

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: \$314

Strengthen the Church

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

Collected around Pentecost

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

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/86109266574>

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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7913585725>


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

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81455642087>

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

[https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86536935740?
pwd=aXN0enQ5ODZvWDRNoeXlUZEVFdE1OQT09](https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86536935740?pwd=aXN0enQ5ODZvWDRNoeXlUZEVFdE1OQT09)

This meeting requires passcode 452218



***Please note,**
Reaching Out & Trustees
will NOT meet
during the month of June.

~ *In Our Prayers* ~

During the month of June, the UNA is holding the Manistee church in prayer.

Cindy Goller's mother, Betty Bartlett – as she prepares to have knee surgery.

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.

Mary Fox's friend Ursula – who suffered a stroke while vacationing in Florida with family and is now back in Michigan continuing rehabilitation.

Brad Derenzy—as he awaits having to reschedule a needed surgery.

Bo & Carol Leser—as Bo is struggling with health issues.

The Crandall Family – as Don continues under the care of hospice.

The Family of Ginny Titus – as they grieve her recent passing.

The English Family – as they battle cases of COVID-19 within the family.

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.



Prayer Requests

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES

June Birthdays

- 4 Jenna English
- 6 Jim Boughner
- 7 Vicky Rigney
- 9 Katie Amar-Fox
- 11 Kynzie House
- 17 Erin Rigney
- 21 Meredith Anderson
- 21 Gavin Ball
- 23 Mary Fox



June Anniversaries

- 3 Rod & Sallie Anderson
- 9 Don & Helen Crandall
- Pastor Greg Watling & Cindy Goller
- 10 Aaron & Laura Hotelling
- 21 Steve & Lori Ferguson
- 23 Terry & Diane House
- 30 George & Judy Dunn

June 2021

Sun Mon Tue Wed Thu Fri Sat

		1	2	3 Virtual Bible Study, 11am Women's fellowship, 12:15pm Book Study, 7pm	4 Community Meal 4pm	5
6 In Person Worship, 10am Virtual Coffee Hour	7 Reaching In, Noon	8	9 Virtual Council 7pm	10 Virtual Bible Study, 11am Book Study 7pm	11 Community Meal 4pm	12
13 In Person Worship, 10am Virtual Coffee Hour Graduation Sunday	14 Flag Day	15	16	17 Virtual Bible Study, 11am Book Study, 7pm	18 Community Meal, 4pm	19
20 In Person Worship, 10am Virtual Coffee Hour Father's Day!	21	22	23 Church Book Club, 1pm *Jessica will be in office instead of Thursday	24 Virtual Bible Study, 11am *Greg gone, no book study	25 Community Meal, 4pm	26
27 In Person Worship, 10am Virtual Coffee Hour	28	29	30			