

**First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Gaylord**

June 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 – June, 2023

“Following the Phenological Calendar”



I don't know about you, but the term “phenological” is new to me. I learned about it in Daniel Cooperrider's book *Speak With the Earth and It Will Teach You*. According to the book, the phenological calendar is “the calendar of when things happen on the landscape”. We are going to be using this book for several months as we consider our faith and the environment.

Cooperrider continues, “The church [is] not just a place to read and interpret the written scriptures of God, but a place to read and interpret the expressions of God that emanate constantly and from every corner of God's creation.

You know I love to hike, kayak and bike. Hiking is when I'm most aware of this calendar that Cooperrider refers to. I hike many of the same trails in all four seasons. Each time I'm amazed by what has changed from the last time I hiked there. This is what we're being asked to take note during this engagement with the environment. We see obvious change in the Spring and the

~Continued~

Fall, but I challenge you also to look for change in the environment this summer and again in the winter. Change is still happening, but it's less obvious.

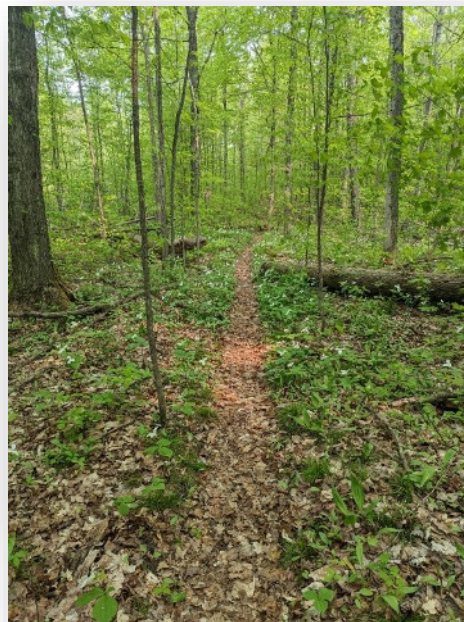
I invite you to engage with nature both here at church and in your own lives. Cooperrider tells us there are two kinds of books. He quotes an ancient theologian, Augustine of Hippo, to make his point:

Some people, in order to discover God, read books. But there is a great book: the very appearance of created things. Look above you! Look below you! Note it, Read it. God, whom you want to discover never wrote that book with ink. Instead, God set before your eyes the things that God had made. Can you ask for a louder voice than that? Why, heaven and earth shout to you: "God made me!"

Look around. See the signs. Indeed, you and all of creation are beautiful gifts from God.

Blessings,

Pastor Greg



June 2023

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
28 Worship, 10 AM	29	30	31	01 Bible Study, 11 AM Wms. Fellowship 12:15 PM Choir, 4 PM	02 Comm. Meal, 4 PM	03
04 Worship, 10 AM Council, 12 PM	05 Reaching In, 12 PM Compassionate Friends, 7 PM	06	07	08 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	09 Comm. Meal, 4 PM	10
PASTOR GREG IN WISCONSIN						
11 *OUTDOOR Worship, 10 AM PASTOR GREG IN WISCONSIN	12	13	14	15 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	16 Comm. Meal, 4 PM	17
18 Worship, 10 AM	19 Reaching Out, 7 PM	20	21 Trustees (tent.), 7 PM	22 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	23 Comm. Meal, 4 PM	24
PASTOR GREG IN ITALY, 6/21 –7/2						
25 Worship, 10 AM	26	27 Salad Luncheon, 11:30 AM	28 Church Book Club, 1 PM	29 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	30 Comm. Meal, 4 PM	01 JULY
PASTOR GREG IN ITALY, 6/21 –7/2 . PLS. CONTACT MAGGIE WALLIN IN CASE OF EMERGENCY (517-410-8311)						

*If possible, please bring a lawn chair to outdoor services. If you're unable to do so, we'll provide one!

Outdoor Worship Schedule:

June 11, 2023

July 9, 2023

August 13, 2023

September 10, 2023

Things to keep in mind:

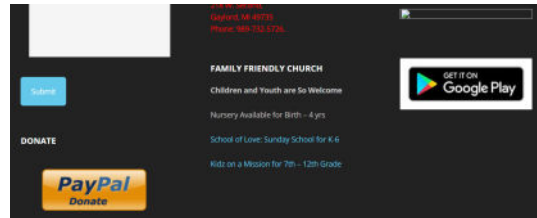
- All outdoor services are tentative and dependent on the weather.
- You should bring lawn chairs, but if you are unable, we will get a chair from Fellowship Hall for you.
- If you are able to help with set-up (speakers, mics, etc.), we would be very appreciative. Just let someone in the office know you would be willing to help.



PayPal Instructions

We have been getting some questions about using PayPal for sending your offering. Included here are instructions.

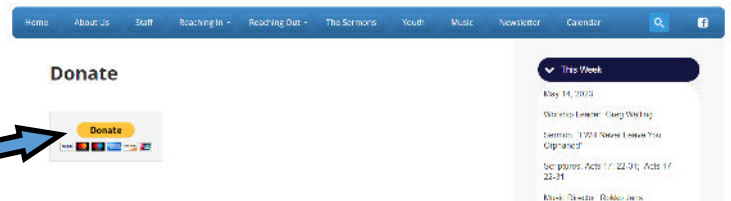
1. Go to [PayPal.com](https://www.paypal.com) and create an account, if you don't already have one.
2. Go to our [website](#) and scroll to the very bottom of the page and click the PayPal button.



3. Next, you'll see this:



Gaylord First Congregational United Church of Christ



4. Click the "[donate](#)" button.

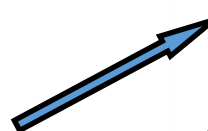


4. Here, you'll see several options.

- A. Choose a specific amount or choose "other" and enter your own amount.

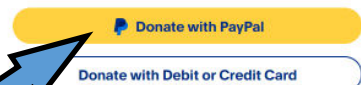
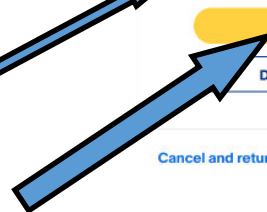


- B. If you want an automatic, recurring payment, click the box to select that option.



☐ Make this a monthly donation

- C. Click the yellow "Donate with PayPal" button and follow the instructions.



[Cancel and return to First Congregational Church UCC Gaylord](#)

If this isn't working for you, email or call the office. We can arrange a time for me to help you.

~Stephanie

From May's Conference Newsletter

RIP Medical Debt

Medical debt is the number one reason for 66.5% of Bankruptcies. At the start of 2022, approximately 1.3 million adults in Michigan had medical debt in collections. The impact of this financial burden on so many individuals is the reason Bethel UCC in Waterford, MI chose to partner with the Prophetic Integrity Mission Area Team and RIP Medical Debt to raise \$40,000. Through [RIP Medical Debt](#), On average, \$1 is leveraged to abolish \$100 in medical debt. Every donation is spent directly on abolishing medical debt in Michigan. \$40,000 would eliminate \$4 million of the \$181 million of medical debt for Michiganders.

Bethel UCC pastor the Rev. Dr. Diane Baker says "I saw it as a way for our small church to have a big impact. I also wanted to create a link that would bring UCC churches together to work on a project. There's power in covenant and collaboration, I'm thankful for all those who have helped."

Volunteers from Bethel and PIMAT have worked together to reach out to every UCC church in Michigan asking them to join in raising donations. The campaign has raised over \$22,000. Combined efforts confirm once again that God does great things in small amounts. Looking through the lens of covenant and collaboration, we see the Body of Christ take shape.

- Medical debt causes serious financial and emotional harm for individuals and families. In addition to damaging credit scores, medical debt can make it difficult for people to afford basic necessities such as food and clothing. Individuals who have medical debt also have a greater likelihood of experiencing mental health problems such as anxiety or depression. While Michigan has a robust network of hospitals and healthcare coverage options, many Michiginians still struggle to access affordable healthcare -(source [RIP Medical Debt](#))

Thank you to all the churches who have contributed to the campaign. Your resources make a difference in many people's lives as their medical debt is eliminated. [Click HERE](#) if you would like to make a final contribution to "Michigan UCC - United in Love"



Bethel United Church of Christ Waterford, Michigan
Submitted by Rev. Dr. Diane Baker 05.2023 for May 2023 Newsletter

Karing Home Youth Project Update



We are thrilled to announce that we have been awarded a **Matching Grant Opportunity through Funds for the Community of The Otsego Community Foundation.**

Donations for the campaigns can be made here: thekaringhomeyouthproject.org/donate

Now through June 30th please help us reach our goal of raising \$10,000! Funds raised will specifically help us expand our capacity & complete a feasibility study as an organization that assists young people who experience adversity in the face of homelessness in Otsego County.

All donations made to KHYP's General Fund will be matched by funds at the Otsego Community Foundation up to \$10,000. If all \$10,000 is raised through the Karing Home Youth Project's campaign by June 30th this will be a total of a \$20,000 impact for vulnerable youth in our community.

Please read the full press release at the above link

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us
by emailing info@thekaringhomeyouthproject.org

Thank you for your continued support of vulnerable youth in Northern Michigan

DONATE NOW

Salad Luncheon Season!



Salad luncheons are back! Below are the dates and sponsorship for each. Watch for a sign-up list each month, if you would like to help!

MONTH	COMMITTEE	CHAIR
May 23, 2023	Women's Fellowship	Mona Viviano
June 27, 2023	Scholarship	Sallie Anderson Brenda Brummel
July 25, 2023	Council	Maggie Wallin
August 22, 2023	Reaching In	Sallie Anderson
September 26, 2023	Reaching Out	Louanne Spearman
October 24, 2023	Women's Fellowship	Mona Viviano



June Birthdays & Anniversaries

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

Anniversaries:

9 Pastor Greg Watling & Cindy Goller
10 Aaron & Laura Hotelling
14 Cathi and Judy Gatewood-Keim
21 Steve & Lori Ferguson
23 Terry & Diane House
30 George & Judy Dunn

~ In Our Prayers ~

**During the month of June, the UNA is holding the
Clare First Congregational UCC in prayer.**

Bill Dely and family – as he prepares to relocate and his younger sister has passed away.

Tony and Mike Dockery-Fobar – as Mike awaits testing and a possibly serious diagnosis.

Sallie Anderson and family —as they grieve the sudden passing of Rod.

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

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 Madison 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.

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

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Directory – The directory has been updated.

- At the time I make any update, I upload the newest version to the link you find in our weekly eblasts. I am keeping a few hard copies in the office, out of the reach of the public, for our participants who would prefer a hard copy. Stop in the office if you'd like a printed copy, or I could put a one in the mail to you.
- Also, please keep in mind that if you ever find an error or an update I lost track of, please let me know and I'll make corrections as needed.

Thank you! ~Stephanie

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>





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.*





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: \$216

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: \$220

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)

As of April, our donations to Blanket Sunday totaled \$294





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 sp

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>