



June, 2024

*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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Church Service: Sunday, 10 am



Pastor's Column – June, 2024

"What About the Organ and Other Property Things"

We have a lot going on at church right now. It's exciting, but it also comes with some decisions that we need to make. Yes, the Council and the Trustees make many decisions on our behalf, but they always appreciate input from the Congregation. And just in case you hadn't heard, here are a couple things we're talking about. If you have opinions or ideas, please talk with a member of our Trustees or Council, or with me.

First, **the organ**. We have not used our organ in many years. There are a couple of people interested in the organ and would put it to good use. I think it is unlikely that we will find someone able to play the organ to it's fullest capacity. We likely will use the Clavinova (electric piano) we presently use. So, what do we do with it? All of the committees have talked about it and the consensus seems to be that we either sell or donate the organ to someone who could use it.

Second, **the green bushes near the entry to the sanctuary, on the Otsego Avenue side, and near the church office**. It has been talked about for a couple years now that we might remove some or all of these bushes. We haven't reached consensus about that, nor do we know what we might put in their

~Continued~

place. But they are overgrown somewhat and difficult to maintain. Maybe there's a better option?

Third, **tables**. We have purchased, with Memorial Funds, five tables that are the plastic, lighter tables like the ones in Fellowship Hall. All the tables match. This means that we have several of the heavier tables that are available for someone who would like them. We are asking for a donation, but ultimately we have too many tables. If someone could use them, please contact me or a member of Trustees.



I want to be sure that as many people as possible are aware of things when we make major changes. Yes, we could do everything by congregational meeting, but that would be cumbersome for all of us. My experience here is when we talk about things, we tend to reach consensus pretty well. No, not everyone will agree with whatever the leadership teams decide, but the best decisions will be made if we have a good deal of input. Please, share with me or with your committees, things you are interested in or ask when you have questions.

In all we do, I pray that we will do that which is most loving, inclusive, and best mirrors God's plan for each of us, and for this congregation. After all, this isn't "our" church, it is God's. May we faithfully manage all that God has entrusted to our care.

In Christ's Love,

Pastor Greg

June 2024

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
					6-7 AM Gratitude Group Community Meal 4 PM Talking Circle, 7-9 PM	1
2 Worship 10 AM	3 6-7 AM Gratitude Group Reaching In 12 PM	4	5 6-7 AM Gratitude Group	6 Bible Study 11 AM Wmn's Fellowship 12:15 PM Choir 4 PM Fellowship Hall In Use 2:30 - 4:30 PM	7 6-7 AM Gratitude Group Community Meal 4 PM Talking Circle, 7-9 PM	8
9 Worship 10 AM	10 6-7 AM Gratitude Group	11	12 6-7 AM Gratitude Group	13 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM	14  6-7 AM Gratitude Group Community Meal 4 PM Talking Circle, 7 PM	15
16 Worship 10 AM Yard Clean-Up 11:15 AM	17 6-7 AM Gratitude Group Reaching Out 7 PM	18 Lunch Group @ 12 PM	19 6-7 AM Gratitude Group Trustees 7 PM	20 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM	21 6-7 AM Gratitude Group NO Community Meal Talking Circle, 7 PM	22
23 Worship 10 AM	24 6-7 AM Gratitude Group	25 Salad Luncheon 11:00 AM	26 6-7 AM Gratitude Group 1 PM Church Book Club	27 Bible Study 11 AM Choir 4 PM	28 6-7 AM Gratitude Group Community Meal 4 PM Talking Circle, 7 PM	29
30 Worship 10 AM	July 1 6-7 AM Gratitude Group	2	3	4 		



This summer we will have outdoor worship on the second Sunday of June, July, and August. Next week, June 9, will be the first outside service for this season. Please bring a lawn chair, if you are able.

Tables!

The trustees approved the use of memorial funds to purchase some new tables for Fellowship Hall. Due to this recent purchase and the arrival of the new tables we have 6 older (heavier) tables available. If you are interested in the older tables, please see Pastor Greg.





God calls us into community. God desires for us a big, inclusive, expansive, welcoming community. One where "no matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you're welcome." Our General Minister & President Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson calls this a "big tent" community. God wants our congregations and our whole Christian movement to be a "big tent" where all can be genuinely welcomed.

The Strengthen the Church Offering supports congregations and initiatives that help us live into the United Church of Christ's "big tent" vision. Funds raised support leadership development, new churches, youth ministry, and renewal initiatives in existing congregations. Your conference and the national ministries work together to use these funds for projects that matter now and for the future of our movement.

Through this offering, we further our commitment to being a multi-racial/ multi-cultural church that is accessible to all.

June Birthdays & Anniversaries

Birthdays:

- 4 Jenna English
- 6 Jim Boughner
- 7 Vicky Rigney
- 9 Katie Amar-Fox
- 11 Kynzie House
- 14 Max English
- 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
- 24 Laura Bantens & Chris Crumbaugh
- 30 George & Judy Dunn

Celebrating Jenna!



Jenna

SHAE
ENGLISH



Gaylord
High School

CLASS of 2024



join us

Sunday, June 23rd
from 2-5 p.m.

The English Home

1554 McCoy rd

Gaylord

text RSVP to 989.370.5682



Attending
Grand Valley State



NEW SERMON SERIES TO CONTINUE. . .

For years, I have wanted to preach a series on "The Beatitudes". Years ago, someone mentioned in a book (I think it was Fr. Richard Rohr) that no one preaches on those, and the church spends little time discussing The Sermon on the Mount found in Matthew's Gospel. I'm still working on what this series will look like, but it will be based on Fr. Rohr's book *Jesus' Alternative Plan: The Sermon on the Mount*. My goal is that we will begin to memorize the Beatitudes the same way we memorize the Ten Commandments.

We will share the Beatitudes each week in worship, concentrating on one at a time (I think). To get us thinking, what is different between "Thou Shalt Not..." and "Blessed are you when..."?

Maybe Jesus is trying to say something important to people of faith? Let's learn together.

Pastor Greg

The Beatitudes

Blessed are the poor in spirit, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.



Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.



Blessed are the meek, for they shall inherit the earth.



Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they shall be filled.



Blessed are the merciful, for they shall obtain mercy.



Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.



Salad Luncheon Season!



Salad luncheons are back! Below are the dates and sponsorship for each. Watch for a sign-up list each

2024 Salad Luncheon Schedule

MONTH	COMMITTEE
May 28, 2024	Women's Fellowship
June 25, 2024	Scholarship
July 23, 2024	Council
August 27, 2024	Reaching In
September 24, 2024	Reaching Out
October 22, 2024	Women's Fellowship

~ In Our Prayers ~

During the month of June the UNA is holding the
Ironton First Congregational UCC in prayer.

Roger Brummel – as he is now home and recovering from pneumonia.

Brad Derenzy – as he has been discharged and is recovering at home.

Mona's niece Robin – as she has recently been hospitalized and is struggling with breast cancer. She is in need of our prayers.

Dear friends of Anna Kalember, Evan Debock and his fiancé Haley Robichaud – as, after many months of illness, Evan has been diagnosed with lung cancer and they're awaiting the next steps as medical bills are piling up and Evan is unable to work. They are in need of prayers.

Mona's niece Karen – as she has recently been hospitalized and is struggling with breast cancer. She is in need of our prayers.

Cathi Gatewood-Keim's cousin, Jacob – as he is suffering from stage 2 intestinal cancer, recovering from surgery, and awaiting further results for treatment options.

Sharon Bartone, sister of Paul Balliet and Aunt to Stephanie Kalember – as she continues to struggle with advanced Alzheimer's and has now been relocated to a memory care unit near her son.

Jim Boughner – as he is awaiting answers from testing regarding mobility issues.

Ariah House – (from Diane House) Ariah had her last in-hospital treatment in December 2023. She is doing great. I have to take her back to DeVos in March for the next step, providing she doesn't relapse. With this OMAS disease, there is a 50% - 75% chance of relapse. We are only going to focus on the wins. ☑ Keep the prayers coming. God Bless you all. We really miss our church families.

Stacy Wright, friend of Kathy Menkes – Stacy has been facing metastatic breast cancer. Meanwhile, Stacy's mother-in-law passed away recently.

Laura Bantens and family – For Laura's sister-in-law, Jasme, continued prayers as she has been enrolled in a MS drug study free of charge. The study will cover her for two years!

Gloria House's granddaughter, Alyssa Crawford, – Who has had her surgery, is recovering well, and will soon be returning to her preschool students.

Tom and Jenni Johnson – as Tom is now receiving chemo treatments for pancreatic cancer.

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.

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.



JOIN US!

C E L E B R A T I N G



21 JULY 2024

Please join us as we celebrate the
150th anniversary of the First
Congregational United Church of
Christ, Gaylord, Michigan.

Worship, 10:00 AM Service followed
by a luncheon in Fellowship Hall.

Please RSVP by July 7 to
office@firstuccgaylord.org
or sign up in the Fellowship Hall,
including names and the number of
people in your party.



JOIN US!

C E L E B R A T I N G



20 JULY 2024
7:00 PM

The annual June Jans memorial concert will be held in tandem with our sesquicentennial celebration.

Join Rokko and friends from Ned the evening of Saturday, July 20 in the sanctuary.

All 2024 concert donations will benefit Crossroads Industry.

Organ



The organ in the sanctuary has gone unused for many years. In the last couple of months there has been some interest in it.

Our question to the congregation is this: Are there any objections to our agreeing to a plan to relocate the organ from our church property? Please let Pastor Greg know either way. The area where the organ is being stored could be used to allow more room for the video production equipment.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Announcements

Calling all Creatives! There is a new section our website for displaying all things creative by the members of this congregation. This can include poetry, paintings, needlework, gardens, prose, and anything else that you would like to share. We already have some poetry there and will welcome any additions. Please submit your project to Brenda at brendabrummel@me.com or message to 810-623-1691. To view this new section, just go to the website and scroll down to the Special Events. The website is www.firstuccgaylord.org.

First Salad Luncheon – The first salad luncheon of the season is scheduled for this Tuesday, May 28th. It is sponsored by Women's Fellowship. Please watch Fellowship Hall for a sign-up sheet where you can sign up to help should you choose.

“Shoe Some Love” campaign – The United Way is running a fundraiser and they need us to donate new or gently used pairs of shoes we no longer need. To pitch in clean out your closet and leave them in the collection box in Fellowship Hall or take them or to the United Way building on Fifth St. The fundraiser runs through July.

Lawn Care – We are in need of volunteers to help with lawn care. Volunteers take on a week at a time. There is a sign-up sheet in fellowship hall. See Pastor Greg or Dave Shopp if you are interested in helping.

Join us for lunch! – a group of people from our church family meet for lunch on the third Tuesday of each month. Everyone is welcome! Please

join us. The next scheduled lunch is Tuesday, June 18, 2024. Please sign up in Fellowship Hall so we can make the restaurant aware of how many people to expect.

Prayer Cards: In the pews, you will find prayer concern cards. When possible, to ensure accuracy in the bulletin and newsletter, please use the new cards.

Directory – If at any time you have changes, please forward them. You can access the most up-to-date directory via our weekly eblast or stop in the office for a copy. I appreciate your continued input.

Food Pantry – needs a few more volunteers. Please contact Don Storing if interested.

Reaching Out meeting link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83640729481>





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: \$262 (2024)

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: \$495 (2024)

Strengthen the Church

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

Collected around Pentecost

Received to date: \$75 (2023)

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: \$256 (2023)

Christmas Fund

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

Collected in December

Received to date: \$694 (2023)





Current Meeting Times

All are welcome to “attend” these meetings except where noted otherwise.

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 Specific dates.:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85297662581>

Trustees will meet the third Wednesday of each month at 7:00 PM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83432888287>

Bible Study meets Thursdays at 11am

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