

First Congregational United Church of Christ

218 W. Second Street, Gaylord, Michigan 49735

www.firstuccgaylord.org

(989) 732-5726

May 2026 Newsletter



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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

“Too Distracted?”

I have been reading *Who Do We Choose to Be? Facing Reality, Claiming Leadership, Restoring Sanity* by Margaret Wheatley. You may remember the book was introduced to us in Cameron Trimble's first Convergence presentation. The book asks a lot of good questions and makes the reader think about how to lead in such times as ours. It is not just the church that is in crisis, but many parts of our society. To wade through all of that, she suggests some antidotes, or better said, ways to provide “islands of sanity” in our crazy world.

In the chapter, Information Facing Reality, Wheatley challenges children and adolescent use of social media and “lost-in-the-matrix” video games. She quotes Dr. Nicholas Kardaras:

From his experience, Dr. Kardaras notes, “I have found it easier to treat heroin and crystal meth addicts than lost-in-the-matrix video gamers or Facebook-dependent social media addicts.”

Both authors suggest we “pry ourselves away from screens” and re-establish our relationship with the real world.” Could that apply to adults as well as to kids? Are we so distracted by our devices that we are losing our sanity? Though that may be true, it is not my question for this column.

My question is about the church. Are we distracted by so many things that we miss the main thing? As we work through our Convergence process will we be so distracted by all the things we want to do that we miss what is most important for *us* to do?

I hope you will engage with a Town Hall (forum?) after church on **June 7**, led by the Convergence team from our church. Our task now will be to determine what we do at this point in history. We all will want to do everything, but we know that we cannot be everything. How do we choose? What distracts us from being the fullest expression of the church in Gaylord?

The bottom line is this: sane behavior requires that we reconnect with life, that we willingly seek out information, not more distractions. We have much information at our fingertips—both from our process and from the rest of our lives—now, we need to sort it out and set a course. I invite you to participate as you are able.

See you in church!

Pastor Greg

Office Hours

- **PASTOR GREG** will be out of the office from May 13-17. Brenda Brummel will preach on the 17th.
- **LIZ** is out of the office from the afternoon of May 28-June 2 *and* day.

May Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

6 Joe Wambold
8 Brenda Brummel
10 George Dunn
12 Emma Wambold
15 Norm Dressel
16 Don Storing
17 Lani English
18 Jason Peterman
22 Pat Dressel
24 Julia Chwatun
25 Mackenzie Fobar
31 Alaina Anderson

Anniversaries:

16 Mary & Jason Peterman
20 Rollie & Louanne
Spearman
25 Pete Amar & Mary Fox

BLANKET SUNDAY IS MOTHER'S DAY, MAY 10!



Blanket the world with love

CWS Blanket Sunday | *"They are also filled with abundant joy, which has overflowed in rich generosity." - 2 Corinthians 8:2*



Mysteries, Yes by Mary Oliver

Truly, we live with mysteries too marvelous to be understood.

*How grass can be nourishing in the
mouths of lambs.*

*How rivers and stones are forever
in allegiance with gravity
while we ourselves dream of rising.*

*How two hands touch and the bonds will
never be broken.*

*How people come, from delight or the
scars of damage,
to the comfort of a poem.*

*Let me keep my distance, always, from those
who think they have the answers.*

*Let me keep company always with those who say
"Look!" and laugh in astonishment,
and bow their heads.*





FOOD PANTRY DATES

Noon to 2P Th & Fr

APR 30, MAY 1, 21, 22, JUN 11, AND 12
CONTACT DON STORING FOR
MORE INFO

Otsego County
United Way

116 E. 5TH ST., GAYLORD
[\(989\)732-8929](tel:(989)732-8929)

Announcements

- ***We will celebrate our confirmands in a confirmation service on May 31.*** Stay tuned for more details!
- **Food Pantry** dates through the end of June are April 30, May 1, 21, and 22, and June 11 and 12.
- Little Traverse Choral Society celebrates **250 Years of American Voices** May 2 at 7:30 at Emmanuel Episcopal Church in Petoskey and on May 3 at First Presbyterian Church in Harbor Springs at 3.
- **Blanket Sunday** will be on Mother's Day, May 10.

- 'Tis the season for mowing—**we need mowers** to claim weeks starting in mid-May. Thank you in advance!
- In May, our **lay preacher** is Brenda Brummel, who will preach May 17.
- The **Lunch Group** will dine at noon on May 19 at Pine Squirrel. All are welcome!
- May 19 from 5-7 pm, Otsego Community Foundation will sponsor **100+ Women Who Care** at North Life Church. This event costs \$100 and attendees will vote on which local nonprofit will receive the total giving for the evening. Register with Otsego Community Foundation.
- Salad luncheons will begin again May 26.
- Please **update your meetings** with Liz for next month **by the Newsletter Deadline (Monday after the Council Meeting)** so our church calendar is accurate.

CONFIRMATION SUNDAY

Confirm, not Conform



Celebrating our Confirmands
Brianna Boughner and Nola-Jean Brown

Sunday, May 31

Pentecost

Pentecost marks the beginning of the Christian Church and the fulfillment of Jesus' promise to send the Holy Spirit. It means 50 days and signifies the 50th day after Easter. At that time Jesus descended in wind and fire as the Holy Spirit on the disciples to empower them to preach the Gospel globally, transitioning them from fear to bold action. Pentecost is often referred to as the "birthday of the church".

Converts were baptized and communities of believers were formed. Followers spoke many languages, thanks to the Holy Spirit through "tongues" of fire, which allowed The Word to spread and Christianity to grow. This is seen as the fulfillment of the prophesy of Joel 2: 28-29 and a change from Jesus' physical ministry to the ministry through the church, led by the Spirit.

Red is the liturgical color of Pentecost. Pentecost hymns may include lyrics referring to wind and fire. To read more about Pentecost and the birth of the church, you can find the story in the second chapter of Acts. Pentecost Sunday is May 24.

Upcoming Church Volunteers (as of 4/23/26)

Date	Liturgist	Greeter/ Usher	Coffee Hour	Digital Ministry	Mowing
3 rd	M Fox	C Lesser	C Otto/ G House	P Amar	
10 th Mother's Day	S Anderson	Jennifer Akans	Wade/ Wambold/ Allen	M Wallin	
17 th	D Storing	C Lesser	M Hellenberg	M Fox	
24 th	H Mate	M Hellenberg			
31 st Confirmation Sunday			H Mate (Confirmation Celebration)	L Hotelling	

Guest Preacher: Brenda Brummel, May 17.

Thank you!



THE SHARING CUPBOARD
NEEDS DONATIONS OF

BABY & CHILDREN'S

Clothes, Socks, & Underwear



DONATION BOX IN
FELLOWSHIP HALL

QUESTIONS? CONTACT MONA VIVIANO



~In Our Prayers~

In May, the UNA is praying for Benzonina First Congregational UCC.

Laura Bantens, who requests prayers for employment and finding where she belongs. Her mother, **Connie**, needs prayers for the same. Connie's house is on the market—prayers for a quick sale at a great price.

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

Chris Crubaugh – who has medical issues. Continued prayers for Chris and Laura Bantens as they adapt.

Ann Eicher's son-in-law, Mark Zelmer, has recently been diagnosed with a rapidly growing brain tumor. He and Ann's daughter/his wife, **Carrie**,

are waiting to learn next steps.

The English Family –Joe is now back at home. Please pray for Joe to healing and adjustment and for the English family. Prayers also for Callie as she graduates!

Mary Sue Evans requests prayers for her husband as he goes through health issues.

Anna Kalember's fiancé's dad has been diagnosed with prostate cancer. He asks for prayers of comfort and healing for himself, his wife, **Theresa, Brendan, Anna's fiancé, and the rest of their family.** He will be undergoing treatment toward the end of May and into June.

Nathan Palmer, husband of Carol Leser's grandson Duncan, is headed for the Middle East. Please pray for him.

Maggie Shanahan Menkes (Kathy's daughter-in-law) has had good news that her treatment seems to be working. Please keep her in your thoughts and prayers for strength.

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



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.

Check out our meeting minutes, linked to the MailChimp mailing. Contact Liz for hard copies at 989-732-5726 or office@firstuccgaylord.org.



UCC WOMEN OF MICHIGAN

**Registration OPEN NOW
For Spring Gathering 2026
"Early Bird" discount due by March 25th!**

JUNE 5-7, 2026
Friday evening thru Sunday morning

THEME: "Fortified in Faith, Clothed in Strength!"
Scriptures: Proverbs 31; Acts 16: 14-16

*She is clothed
IN STRENGTH
AND DIGNITY,
and she laughs
WITHOUT FEAR
OF THE FUTURE.
When she speaks,
HER WORDS
ARE WISE,
and she gives
INSTRUCTIONS
WITH KINDNESS.*

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ABOUT OUR KEYNOTE SPEAKER & PREACHER

The Rev. Dr. Lillian Daniel

The Michigan Conference Minister is responsible for the spiritual care of our clergy and 140 congregations. Since starting July 1, 2022, the Rev. Dr. Daniel has focused on encouraging, equipping and connecting our Michigan churches in Christ's love and justice. Lillian is based in Grand Rapids and travels most weekends to worship with folks in the Michigan Conference.

**We are excited to announce the 2026 Gathering
event at The Lake Huron Retreat Center
Located at 8794 Lakeshore Rd, Burtchville Twp, MI**

JOIN US FOR OUR CONTINUING ADVENTURE!

**REGISTRATION BROCHURE AVAILABLE NOW!
Watch for it in your email, ON THE UCC WOMEN OF MI FACEBOOK
PAGE, or the MI Conference UCC e-newsletter & website.**

Co-Chairs: Penny Lowes	248-762-5551	revpen73@gmail.com
April Reh	586-291-8827	a_rehofcolor@gmail.com
Kristen Rieder	231-818-3831	k3teacher@hotmail.com
Registrar: Shari Hoppe	614-403-2364	sfhoppe@gmail.com



Gaylord Golf Opens!

Did you know that Michigan has more public golf courses than any other state? Golf provides \$6.1 billion in economic impact and 61,000 jobs in Michigan, despite being a seasonal activity. Here are a few courses within 10 miles of Gaylord:

- Black Bear Golf Course
- Gaylord Golf Club
- Lakes of the North Golf Course–
- Loon Golf Resort (3 courses)
- Michaywe Pines Golf Course
- Treetops Golf Club (5 courses)

May



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<p>UNA Prayers for Benzonla First Congregational UCC</p>	<p>Flowers provided by Mary Evans</p>				<p>6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Food Pantry 4p Community Meal</p>	<p>1 8:30a Pet Partners Team Training 7:30p 250 Yrs of American Voices @ Emmanuel Episcopal</p>
<p>10a Worship/Communion 3p 250 Yrs of American Voices @ 1st Presby Hsgs</p>	<p>3 6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Reaching In 6p Compassionate Friends</p>	<p>4 Cinco de Mayo</p>	<p>5 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5p Ukelele Group</p>	<p>6 11a Bible Study 12:15p ♀ Fellowship 4p Choir</p>	<p>7 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal</p>	<p>8 Pastor Greg in TN</p>
<p>10a Worship</p>	<p>11 6a Gaylord Gratitude</p>	<p>12 Pastor Greg in TN</p>	<p>13 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5p Ukelele Group</p>	<p>14 11a Bible Study 4p Choir</p>	<p>15 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal</p>	<p>9 Pastor Greg in TN</p>
<p>Pastor Greg in TN 10a Worship – Brenda Brunnel preaching 11:30a Church Yard Clean Up</p>	<p>17 6a Gaylord Gratitude 7p Reaching Out</p>	<p>18 NOON Lunch Group @ Pine Squirrel</p>	<p>19 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5p Ukelele Group 7p Trustees</p>	<p>20 11a Bible Study NOON Food Pantry 4p Choir 5p Church Council</p>	<p>21 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal Newletter Deadline</p>	<p>22 6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Food Pantry 4p Community Meal - CANCELLED</p>
<p>10a Worship 12:30p Korff Wedding Shower</p>	<p>24 6a Gaylord Gratitude</p>	<p>25 Memorial Day 11:30 Salad Luncheon</p>	<p>26 6a Gaylord Gratitude 1p Church Book Club 5p Ukelele Group</p>	<p>27 11a Bible Study 4p Choir</p>	<p>28 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal</p>	<p>29 Liz in SLC</p>
<p>Liz in SLC 10a Worship/ Confirmation Sunday 11:15 Confirmation Coffee Hour</p>	<p>31 Liz in SLC</p>					<p>30 Liz in SLC</p>