



# November, 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

218 W. Second Street  
Gaylord, MI 49735  
989-732-5726

[www.firstuccgaylord.org](http://www.firstuccgaylord.org)

**Pastor:** Rev. Greg Watling  
[pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org](mailto:pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org)

**Moderator:** Maggie Wallin  
[margaretwallin@msn.com](mailto:margaretwallin@msn.com)

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Coordinator:**  
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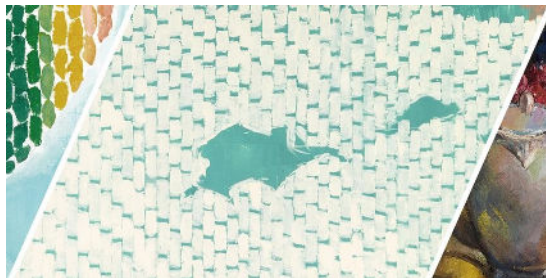
**Church Service: Sunday, 10 am**



## Pastor's Submission – November, 2023

### Richard Rohr's Daily Meditation

From the Center for Action and Contemplation



### Faith Mends the Breach

*Father Richard has long wrestled with what it means to be a person of faith: I am wondering if I have ever understood faith—or if I want it now that I am getting the point.*

Now I know that faith is *not* believing-certain-ideas-all-evidence-to-the-contrary. It is not dogged loyalty to childhood conditioning or pledges of allegiance to sacred formulas and official explanations. It is surely not the addictive repetition of rituals or practices that keep God under control. These approaches give the ego comfort, but they give little comfort to truth, and even less to the scary and wonderful coming of the Reign of God.

~Continued~

People of real faith seem able to hold increasing amounts of chaos in one tranquil and ordered life. Faith seems to make people spacious, non-controlling, and waiting in awareness. The faith Jesus praises as salvation (and sufficient in lepers, Samaritans, and those outside the temple system) is something very different than religion as such. It is a capacity within people to contain and receive all things, to hold onto nothing, with almost no need to fear or judge rashly. Faith-filled people find it unnecessary to secure themselves because they are secure at a deeper level; there is room for Another in that spacious place.

Because people of faith are comfortable with the totality, they're able to hold disparate parts together, make the peace, or "mend the breach." The recurring temptation is to separate, analyze, and judge the parts, which gives us a sense of control and "understanding." Faith, driven by love, enables us to give up our need to understand, allows us to let go, and for Someone else to hold us together. It's not a giving up as much as it is an opening up and refusing to close back down for the sake of self-sufficiency and mastery. If this is indeed the character of faith for postmodern people, or any people, then I finally know why faith is so rare and why Jesus himself wondered if he would find very much on this earth (Luke 18:8).

Today, there seems to be a breach in almost every wall. The "cosmic egg" that seemed to hold us together for a long time is now broken. We now find ourselves engaged in culture wars on almost every personal and social issue. Most of us are beyond being shocked by anything. We are often sad, discouraged, even alienated from the only world we live in. We yearn for breach-menders who can restore our ruined houses, (see Isaiah 58:12). We long for great-souled people who can hold the chaos together within themselves—and give us the courage to do the same. I pray all of us know such people in our lives and that we be granted such people on the world stage. I am confident such people have gone before and paved the way for us—the mystics and saints of all genders, cultures, and faith traditions, those both known and unknown. [2]

[1] Adapted from Richard Rohr, "Mending the Breach," *Tikkun* 22, no. 3 (May/June 2007): 28–29. Earlier version in *Radical Grace* 5, no. 6 (Dec. 1992/Jan. 1993): 1–2.

[2] Richard Rohr, "[What the Mystics Know](#)," *Daily Meditations*, October 23, 2020.

**Image credit:** A path from one week to the next—Alma Thomas, *Snoopy—Early Sun Display on Earth* (detail), 1970, acrylic on canvas, [Smithsonian](#). Alma Thomas, *Snow Reflection on Pond* (detail), 1973, acrylic on canvas, [Smithsonian](#). Lois Mailou Jones, *Jeune Fille Française* (detail), 1951, oil on canvas, [Smithsonian](#). [Click here to enlarge image.](#)



# November

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

			1	2 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	3 Community Meal, 4 PM	4 Fall Back 
5 Worship 10 AM	6 Reaching In, 12 PM 2:30 - 4:30 Fellowship Hall in use Jesus & John Wayne book discussion, 7-8 PM Compassionate Friends, 7-9 PM	7 VOTE 	8	9 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	10 Community Meal, 4 PM	11 
12 Worship 10 AM Kristin Kobes Du Mez Lecture, 1 PM in East Lansing	13 2:30 - 4:30 Fellowship Hall in use	14	15 Trustees, 7 PM	16 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM Fellowship Hall reserved for a meeting, 2 pm	17 Community Meal, 4 PM	18
19 Worship 10 AM Council 11 AM	20 Reaching Out, 7 PM	21	22 Church Book Club, 1 PM	23 	24 No community meal	25
26 Worship 10 AM	27	28	29	30 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	Dec. 1 Community Meal, 4 PM	2 
3 Worship 10 AM Advent	4	5	6	7 Bible Study, 11 AM Choir, 4 PM	8 Community Meal, 4 PM	9

# **First Congregation Church of Gaylord**

## **2023 Annual Meeting Minutes**

1. **Call to order** – Maggie Wallin

2. **Prayer** – Greg Watling

3. **Quorum Established**

4. **Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes**

- a. Mary moved.
- b. Rokko Jans seconded.
- c. unanimously approved

5. **Acceptance of Reports** – had been emailed out

- a. Cindy Goller moved.
- b. Carol Lesser seconded.
- c. unanimously approved

6. **Acceptance of Officers**

- a. Council
  - i. Maggie Wallin – moderator
  - ii. Cathy Otto
  - iii. David Schopp
  - iv. Laura Hotelling
  - v. Margaret Hellenberg
  - vi. Jeanine Wambold
  - vii. Helen Mate
- b. Trustees
  - i. David Schopp – chair
  - ii. Vicky Rigney
  - iii. Margaret Hafner
  - iv. Mary Fox
  - v. Paul Balliet
  - vi. Ken Wade
  - vii. Becky Tenda
- c. Reaching Out
  - i. Kathy Menkes – chair
  - ii. Cindy Goller
  - iii. Stephanie Kalember
  - iv. Cathy Otto
- d. Reaching In
  - i. Sallie Anderson – chair
  - ii. Rokko Jans
  - iii. Maggie Wallin
  - iv. Mona Viviano
- e. Pastor Parish
  - i. Cathy Otto
  - ii. Joe Wambold
  - iii. Maggie Wallin
  - iv. Mary Fox
- f. Joe Wambold moved to accept officers.
- g. Helen Mate seconded.
- h. unanimously approved.

## **7. Budget – Mary Fox**

- a. In the last three months, our gifts have met our needs.
- b. In we can increase our giving by 3%, we'll meet our needs in the coming year.
- c. Maureen Derenzy asked if the plan is to pull from savings if we have a deficit.  
Yes, that's the plan.
- d. Maureen Derenzy moved to accept.
- e. Louanne Spearman seconded.
- f. unanimously approved.

## **8. Other Business**

- a. Greg asked that people stand if they're involved in a variety of areas toward helping the church. Examples included choir, lawn care, windows, fellowship after church, salad luncheon, annual meeting planning and/or attendance, on a board or committee, church giving, Sunday school, computer/tech work for services, moving of equipment at any point, greeters, money counting, stuffing and mailing letters.
- b. The point is that every single person in this church contributes to and helps run the church. We don't just arrive on Sunday and then go about our way throughout the week with the church in our rearview mirror.

## **9. Adjournment & Prayer – Maggie Wallin**



# Committee Rosters, 2024

Position	Name	Term	Year
<b>Moderator</b>	Maggie Wallin	2	1
<b>Asst. Moderator</b>			
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Margaret Hafner	2	1
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mary Fox		
<b>Council</b> (must have 5 members, but may have up to 3 add'l)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
<b>Moderator</b>	Maggie Wallin	2	1
<b>Reaching in Rep.</b>			
<b>Reaching Out Rep.</b>	Cathy Otto	2	1
<b>Trustees Rep.</b>	David Schopp	2	1
<b>At large</b>	Laura Hotelling	3	1
<b>At large</b>	Margaret Hellenberg	1	2
<b>At large</b>	Jeanine Wambold	1	2
<b>At large</b>	Helen Mate	3	1
<b>Trustees</b> (must have 3-5 members, in addition to Treasurer and Financial Secretary)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
<b>Chair</b>	Dave Schopp	2	1
<b>Liaison to community Meal and Women's Fellowship</b>	Vicky Rigney	3	1
<b>Trustee Representative</b>	Dave Schopp	2	1
<b>Financial Secretary</b>	Margaret Hafner	2	1
<b>Treasurer</b>	Mary Fox	3	2
<b>Assistant Financial Secretary</b>		1	1
<b>At large</b>	Paul Balliet	1	1
<b>At large</b>	Ken Wade	1	1
<b>At large</b>	Becky Tenda		
<b>Reaching Out</b> (3-5 members)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
<b>Chair</b>	Kathy Menkes	2	1
	Stephanie Kalember	1	1
	Cathy Otto	2	1
	Cindy Goller	2	1
<b>Reaching In</b> (3-5 members)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
<b>Chair</b>	Sallie Anderson	2	2
	Rokko Jans	2	2
	Maggie Wallin	2	2
	Mona Viviano	1	1
<b>Pastor Parish</b>			
Position	Name	Term	Year
	Cathy Otto		
	Joe Wambold		
	Maggie Wallin		
	Mary Fox		



# Looking ahead

**11/4: Daylight Savings**

**11/12: Kristin Kobes Du Mez  
Lecture**

**11/23: Thanksgiving**

**11/24: No Comm. Meal**

**12/3: 1st Sunday of Advent**





*Angel Tree – The giving tree is up in fellowship hall. Please check out the ornaments, purchase what you are able, and return to church. Pickup for donations is November 13, so please have them back to church by November 12. The gifts should come back unwrapped with the angel tag attached.*



THE PEOPLES CHURCH ANNUAL  
HENRY & ANNABEL LARZELERE MEMORIAL LECTURE

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Featuring:

KRISTIN KOBES DU MEZ

AUTHOR OF 'JESUS AND JOHN WAYNE:  
HOW WHITE EVANGELICALS  
CORRUPTED A FAITH AND FRACTURED A NATION'

Kristin Kobes Du Mez is a professor of history and gender studies at Calvin University, and New York Times best-selling author. Her lecture is titled...



'Jesus & John Wayne,  
and the  
Evangelical Reckoning'

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FREE EVENT

SUNDAY, NOV. 12, 2023 | 1 P.M.  
200 W. GRAND RIVER AVE. EAST LANSING, MI

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Dr. Du Mez will also give a brief presentation during  
The Peoples Church 10:30 a.m. service. A luncheon will follow the service.

[thepeopleschurch.com](http://thepeopleschurch.com) | (517) 332-5073

## PROGRAM SCHEDULE

- 10:30 A.M.—** The Peoples Church sanctuary service. Dr. Du Mez will give a brief presentation.
- 12 P.M.—** Following the sanctuary service, there will be a luncheon with Dr. Du Mez in Snider Social Hall.
- 1 P.M.—** Dr. Du Mez will give her full lecture, 'Jesus & John Wayne and the Evangelical Reckoning.'



200 W. Grand River Ave.  
East Lansing, MI 48823

517.332.5073  
ThePeoplesChurch.com

## THE HENRY & ANNABEL LARZELERE MEMORIAL LECTURE SERIES

The Henry and Annabel Larzelere Memorial Lecture Series was established in 2017 to honor Henry and Annabel Larzelere's interest in continuing education on topics of international interest and theological thought.

Henry and Annabel moved to East Lansing in 1938 where Henry was a new faculty member in the College of Agriculture at Michigan State University. They promptly joined The Peoples Church and became involved in the church community as well as in greater Lansing where they were active in a variety of civic activities. Henry and Annabel were world travelers who were always building bridges of hope and understanding. Our desire is that these lectures will inspire and strengthen us to serve with compassionate love as we strive to build a more just and peaceful world.



# War Hurts The Poor



War always hurts the poor. War is not the great democratizer. It is the great demolisher.

The Bible records and describes it all. There is no great violence in which economic forces do not wield their generational power to fortify their own palaces first.

Yes, there are countries that claim that all their people share and experience the same war-carrying burden. But in the USA, our wise elders remember that long ago, in the Vietnam War, our draft was dodge-able, by Republicans and Democrats alike. Who told me that? It was my father, Leon Daniel, who was a journalist, an international war correspondent, and a marine who received a Purple Heart.



Who else told me that war hurts the poor? I heard it from Israelis and Palestinians in 2017 when last I visited that land, to study and to learn. Today I hear it from faithful UCC veterans in the Midwest, who want a better and more imaginative scholarship program for their own grandchildren - one that will not leave the deep scars that their middle-aged elders carry on their heavy war-torn shoulders and psyches.

Individuals hurt and cry out in pain. Crowds hurt and cry out in pain. Some voices are heard louder than others. From Biblical times to now, the powerful party-planners use shinier wrapping paper, and better technology. Yet somehow, the subversive words of Jesus slipped through the centuries, from the agony of the cross to the mystery of a heavenly banquet where friends and enemies will have an equal seat at the table.

War always hurts the people who have the least to lose, but who among us has anything we can afford to lose when it comes to human life?

So, consider this: War always hurts someone else more than it hurts you.

If you are still alive, you know this to be true.

Lord, make me an instrument of Thy Peace.





# *Birthdays & Anniversaries*

## **Birthdays:**

10 Arian House  
14 Maggie Wallin  
16 Maureen Derenzy  
18 Zephania Boughner  
18 Andrew Kalember  
20 Keelin English  
30 Mona Viviano

## **Anniversaries:**

10 Paul & Marilyn Kaczanowski  
28 Jeff and Stephanie Kalember  
29 Maureen and Brad Derenzy



# *November*



## **~ In Our Prayers ~**

During the month of November, the UNA is holding the  
*Benzonia First Congregational UCC* in prayer.

**Lynn, a friend of Jason and Mary Peterman** – as she has been falling frequently.

**The Grayling Hospital and its employees.**

**English Family** – as Jordan & Jeffrey's dad, Michael, is in stage 5 kidney failure and has now started outpatient dialysis 3 times a week. Prayers for the boys and Natassja as they navigate this difficult time, as this may be final stages for

however long it lasts. Prayers for the entire family as they struggle to regain custody of Max.

**Jenna English** - prayers of joy for Jenna's nomination award from Mario Capecchi, PhD for Congress of Future Medical Leaders Award of Excellence.

**Leona, Jason Peterman's stepmom** – as she is nearing the end of her life.

**Alyce, Cathi and Judy Gatewood-Keim's friend in Pennsylvania** – as she is dealing with severe depressive disorder.

**Sarah Brummel** – as she awaits further tests and a possible pacemaker.

**Kristine Achney, relative of the Boughner family** – was seen in the emergency room and diagnosed with 2 brain aneurysms. She was admitted to the local hospital and has since been transferred to a hospital downstate.

**Janet Holmes** – as she needs continued prayers.

**Brad Derenzy**—as he is now at home recovering from a recent infection.

**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.

**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*

# Native/Indigenous American and Alaska Native Heritage Month Resources for 2023



Building Faith has compiled a list of resources to support churches as they uplift Indigenous American and Alaska Native histories in November.

Please utilize the **books, podcasts, videos, articles, spiritual practices, and church resources** to support the continued learning of your congregation to amplify these voices from historically silenced communities.

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# ***ANNOUNCEMENTS***

**Angel Tree** - The giving tree is up in fellowship hall. Please check out the ornaments, purchase what you are able, and return to church. Pickup for donations is November 13, so please have them back to church by November 12. The gifts should come back unwrapped with the angel tag attached.

**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

**Book Discussion** – Our last book study (Jesus and John Wayne) date is tomorrow Monday, November 6<sup>th</sup>. The Zoom meeting link will be in

your weekly eblast, or you can copy it from here: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87358095041>

**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.

**Trustees** –will now meet on the third Wednesday at 7 pm (same day as previously, but a change in time).



## Annual Conference Meeting October 28, 2023 Plymouth United Church of Christ, Grand Rapids, MI

151 registered participants, plus children, youth, and volunteers were present at the in-person Annual Meeting of the Michigan Conference UCC.

Fun and fellowship took place on Friday Night 10/27 at the Drury Inn & Suites where the agenda was simply to BE with one another.

Saturday morning, all were welcomed by Pastor Jo Bahr and the day began with inspiring worship led by Conference Minister Lillian Daniel. Music included a pick-up choir and a special Celtic instrument ensemble. Associate Conference Minister Cheryl Burke led those gathered in Prayer, and newly hired Associate Conference Minister Lawrence Richardson shared the scripture reading.

Business was conducted under the leadership of Conference Moderator Diane Baker, and the Prophetic Integrity Mission Area Team recommended passage of a Resolution of Witness In Support of **Second Look Sentencing Legislation**. The gathered body voted in support of the resolution and accepted a 2024 Budget presented by Board Vice President and President-Elect Rev. Liz Larrivee. Current Board President Judith Booker was thanked for her service under three Conference Ministers and offered blessings for her new place of ministry on the Board of Directors at the National Setting.

Lunch was catered by **40 Acres Soul Kitchen** and the afternoon was filled with conversation. Vitality and church growth Keynote Rev. Claire Bamberg inspired much discussion while youth served together to support **Hand2Hand**.

**Mark your calendars for the 2024 destination Annual Meeting at Crystal Mountain Resort, Thompsonville, MI with special guest and Keynote UCC General Minister and President Karen Georgia Thompson, Nov 1-2, 2024.**

Recordings of the in-person 2023 gathering can be watched on **Facebook**, **Vimeo**, and **YouTube**.





## **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: \$482**

## **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: \$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: \$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 \$509***





## 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>