

First Congregational United Church of Christ

218 W. Second Street, Gaylord, Michigan 49735

www.firstuccgaylord.org

(989) 732-5726

November Newsletter and Annual Reports



Our mission is to embrace people of every age and stage of life and help them become the most loving version of themselves possible.

The Pastor's Column: Annual Report

"Is It Worth It?"

At about the same time last year, I drafted my annual report. I'm sure that is no surprise. I talked about the need for deep roots to weather the storms that inevitably will come. Little did I know at that time that we would experience an Ice Storm of epic proportions! At the end of March, everything came to a halt and over the course of several months, our communities came together to support one another, restore one another, love one another, and care for one another. It was a tremendous outpouring of support and encouragement. I met a lot of people during that time and never realized how important they would be to my future and to the future of our church. Often, it is the worst of times that bring out the best in people.

In that report, I outlined two goals for 2025. The first was to do my best to help everyone in the church grow spiritually. That is hard to evaluate, but rest assured that many things took place over the course of 2025 to help us all grow spiritually. We celebrated many themes this year, and we completed projects together, especially in Lent and Advent. We held a book study or two and broadened who came to those studies. I cannot evaluate whether your faith grew this year, but I hope it did. I encourage you to speak with me if you have further ideas how to help one another grow in this way.

We sent a mission trip to South Dakota. And this fall, for the first time in a long time, we started a Confirmation program for two of our youth in partnership with Peace Lutheran Church. These are designed to help our youth grow in their faith.

Our adults served at the food pantry, in numerous community groups, ice storm recovery, music, art and drama, our community closet, Community Meal, and a host of other activities that do more than just do good things. They, too, are designed to grow our faith.

Our second goal was to begin to chart a course for our future. Earlier this year, the church Council contracted with Convergence, a group of professionals that help churches like ours “become the best versions of themselves possible” and to chart a short-term course for the future. First, we completed a survey of the congregation. The results were staggering, as we had far greater participation than expected. We shared those results with one another, and I think all of us were pleased to see how strong we are, how united we are, and how healthy we are.

In the next phase is our team, made up of Helen Crandall, Laura Hotelling, Ken Wade, Pete Amar, and Vicky Rigney, began to do community interviews. We had hoped to be ready for a congregational forum by the November 9, 2025, Annual Meeting. That deadline won't be met. Again, we are finding not only a positive view of our congregation (from those who know us!), but also beginning to see some community needs that we might choose to address, likely in partnership with other community groups and agencies. More to come on that as we gather more data.

We'll continue to work with Convergence through much of 2026. Yes, it cost us \$9,800, less grants from the Michigan Conference (over 2 years) of \$5,000. Our total cost then is \$4,800. We chose to invest in

our future, and we hope that you will be pleased with the results of this investment. My thanks to the committee who have really taken this role seriously and faithfully. Please ask any of us if you have questions.

What, then, will we do in 2026? My goals include completing the Convergence process and coming out with a doable, down-to-earth, realistic plan that we all get excited about. My other major goal is to nurture and grow relationships with leaders of all kinds in our community. It is so much easier to do the work we wish to do if we do it in partnership with others. I also want to it – quite frankly—because it’s my way of resisting a culture that increasingly hateful, spiteful, divisive, and downright mean. We have become so individualistic that we have gotten to the point of dehumanizing others. To some degree, we are all guilty of it, although we could argue some are more guilty than others.

Standing firmly behind Jesus and his mission, we are called to the margins of society. We are called to be agents of change “on the edge of the inside” (Richard Rohr), which means that we participate in our community, but are on the edge always challenging the community to be more than it was before. This is true of Otsego County (and surrounding areas) and it’s true of our own church.

I look forward to an exciting 2026. I’m blessed and honored to serve among you and am always thankful for the many ways we partner to love and to change the world.

Blessings on all of you,

Pastor Greg

Office Hours

- **Pastor Greg** will be traveling in Mexico from October 30-November 3. **Maggie Wallin** is preaching November 2. He is available by cell phone in an emergency.

ANNUAL MEETING AND FORUM



SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 9 | 11:30 AM

FELLOWSHIP HALL
COME AND JOIN US!

November Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

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

Anniversaries:

- 10 Paul & Marilyn
Kaczanowski
- 28 Jeff & Stephanie Kalember

First Congregational United Church of Christ Gaylord, MI

Annual Meeting Agenda Sunday, November 9, 2025

- I Call to Order Sallie Anderson, Moderator
- II Opening Prayer Pastor Greg Watling
- III Establishment of Quorum
- IV Approval of 2024 Annual Meeting Minutes (pp 6 & 7)
- V Acceptance of Reports
 - A Pastor Greg (pp 1-3)
 - B Council (pp 8 & 9)
 - C Reaching In (pp 9 & 10)
 - D Reaching Out (pp 10 & 11)
 - E Women's Fellowship (pg. 11)
- V Election and Installation of Officers (pp 12 & 13)
- VI Budget Report and Adoption (pp 14-16)
- VII Other Business
- VIII Adjournment and Closing Prayer

First Congregational Church of Gaylord United Church of Christ

2024 Annual Meeting Minutes November 3, 2024

1. Call to Order – Maggie Wallin, moderator
2. prayer – Greg Watling
3. Quorum Established
 - a. Approval of 2023 Annual Meeting Minutes Don Storing moved.
 - b. Vicky Rigney seconded.
 - c. unanimously approved.
5. Acceptance of Reports – had been emailed out.
 - a. Mary Fox moved.
 - a. Helen Mate seconded.
 - b. unanimously approved
6. Election of Officers – had been emailed out
 - a. Council
 - i. Sallie Anderson – moderator
 - ii. Pete Amar – assistant moderator
 - iii. Maggie Wallin
 - iv. Margaret Hellenberg
 - v. David Schopp
 - vi. Laura Hotelling
 - vii. Jeanine Wambold
 - viii. Helen Mate
 - ix. Judy Gatewood-Keim
 - b. Trustees
 - i. David Schopp – chair
 - ii. Mary Fox – treasurer
 - iii. Margaret Hafner – financial secretary
 - iv. Cathy Otto
 - v. Paul Balliet
 - vi. Ken Wade

- vii. Becky Trenda
- c. Reaching Out
 - i. Kathy Menkes – chair
 - ii. Cindy Goller
 - iii. Margaret Hellenberg
 - iv. Stephanie Kalember
 - v. Louanne Spearman
- d. Reaching In
 - i. Maggie Wallin – chair
 - ii. Rokko Jans
 - iii. Helen Mate
 - iv. Mona Viviano
 - v. Sharon Wade
- e. Pastor Parish
 - i. Cathy Otto
 - ii. Joe Wambold
 - iii. Maggie Wallin
 - iv. Mary Fox
- f. Rokko Jans moved to accept officers.
- g. Cindy Goller seconded.
- h. unanimously approved

7. Budget Approval – had been mailed out.

- a. Roger Brummel expressed a desire to have a larger raise for Greg than other employees get. Mary Fox explained that there was a 2% increase across the board and that the music director ends up being a little more than the 2% but that's comparable when looked at in dollars.
- b. Roger moved to have the pastor's salary increase by 4% rather than 2%. Mary explained how the increase is determined, including housing and salary.
- c. Cathy Otto seconded the motion.
 - i. Discussion Sallie Anderson noted that she's sure the trustees took time to discuss the budget and that they analyzed all expenses.
 - ii. Mary brought up that when you increase the budget for one year, it begins to set a tradition and precedent for future years that might not be plausible in the future.

iii. David Klein added that if we were to move forward with this, we would need to increase our funding to support it in the future.

iv. Jean Sasso expressed that as a former trustee, she knows that trustees go through the budget line item by line item. Agreement was noted by Vicky.

v. Maggie Wallin added that the budget is based on projections of what we expect based on pledges.

vi. Maureen Derenzy asked if adjustments can be made midyear and if raises can happen, and Mary answered that yes, this is possible.

vii. Laura Bantens asked how this would be done, and Mary answered that trustees would call a special meeting to look at the current budget and money coming in to see how the budget could be modified.

viii. Vicky added that the budget does get discussed every month.

ix. Call to Vote on the Motion

+ 11 yes

+ 21 no

+ Motion fails

d. Pete Amar moved to adopt the budget as emailed .

i. Mischelle Stone seconded.

ii. The motion passed unanimously.

8. Prayer and adjournment – Maggie Wallin

ANNUAL REPORT OF COUNCIL 2025

Church Council acts as a liaison between committees and as the body that is empowered to act for the congregation on matters requiring its approval or action. Council meets monthly.

Council allows committees and individuals to share what they are doing and to report on any long-term projects. This year, one proposed project was the purchase of an electronic sign which the trustees are studying. Several members have expressed a willingness to help finance this project.

The Convergence Project was started this year with much of the cost being supported by the Michigan Conference. This project will provide a congregational vitality plan for our church and will help with long range planning. A committee has been selected to oversee this project. The Congregational Survey and Community Interviews have been completed. Convergence will remain as a standing agenda item to keep the Council updated.

The Council strives to keep the congregation informed and welcomes input from individual members.

Respectfully submitted,

Sallie Anderson, Moderator

REACHING IN ANNUAL REPORT 2025

This year has seen some remarkable creative activity from the Reaching In Committee. In addition to continuing our normal functions of paying attention to regular worship items, involving ourselves in pastoral care, praying for the church and its members, and ensuring that worship and normal congregational events continue in orderly fashion, the committee has had the fortunate participation of some folks with unique ideas on how to change up some of those regular functions to be freshened.

To that end, the committee is indebted to members who have brought forward these ideas. Among those contributors, has been contributions from Sharon Wade, our resident artist, who has brought to the committee ideas that were wholeheartedly adopted and implemented by the entire committee, and then brought about with the participation of many committee and congregation members.

Two highlights from the year that came to the congregation in this fashion were the miniature paintings in two shades of blue and gold to represent key words--done over Advent and Christmas in 2024. The paintings done by the participants then formed a lovely river over the cloth that was adorning the Table. An additional innovative program of a church season happened with the Passover Seder last Spring. Both programs were well received by the congregation, with many members participating in them.

Kudos are to be extended not only to Sharon (whose creativity and organizational efforts made these events possible), but to our pastor who has been not only accepting, but very encouraging in bringing new activities and innovative approaches to the liturgical seasons. In addition, I give great credit to the other committee members who have worked to take care of the details surrounding these unique events, while also continuing cherished annual events like the annual church picnic.

Additionally, this year Reaching In approved and supported efforts to implement a confirmation class for our youth. We are using a program entitled "Confirm Not Conform". It is only in its very beginnings, with a decision later next year for the participants as to whether they wish to commit to membership.

"Thank you" hardly begins to express the depth of my appreciation, especially since for much of the year, I was encumbered with health issues that prevented me from participating as I would have liked. The committee stepped up and took care of business. What a joy it has been to be a part of this great group!

Respectfully submitted by Maggie Wallin, Chair

REACHING OUT ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Reaching Out committee exists to promote and support the mission activity within our church and our community, and to also support the United Church of Christ by promoting the 5 for 5 Special Mission Offerings (One Great Hour of Sharing, The Christmas Fund, Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and Our Church's Wider Mission). Other mission-related activities in which the committee took part include Blanket Sunday, advocating for the Otsego County Food Pantry, setting up chairs for the Petoskey Drum Band during Alpenfest, and advocating for the Otsego County Food Pantry.

The committee meets via ZOOM on the third (3rd) Monday of the month. Members are Judy Gatewood-Keim, Cindy Goller, Margaret Hellenberg, Stephanie Kalember, Kathy Menkes, Cathy Otto, and Pastor Greg.

Mona Viviano continues to work with the Reaching Out committee to keep the Sharing Cupboard supplied with seasonal clothing items and books. Louanne Spearman and Margaret Hellenberg continue to promote, collect, and deliver school supplies.

From Reaching Out's salad luncheon proceeds, we bought sandwich items to support the Refuge's soup and sandwich fundraiser/dinner at the Downtown Pavilion, and the custom-made placemats that we purchased last year are still serving our church well.

Reaching Out came up with several new ways to 'reach out' to our community and explore new ways to promote new growth this year. One way was to encourage people to be more interactive on the church's Facebook page to strengthen community in that arena. Other ways of 'reaching out' and promoting new growth were to change the Video Production Team's name to Digital Ministries and then we welcomed Judy Gatewood-Keim to the committee as a representative from Digital Ministries.

Sincerely,
Cindy Goller

WOMEN'S FELLOWSHIP ANNUAL REPORT 2025

Women's Fellowship has been busy this year as usual taking care of monthly projects but only meeting twice this year. Things happened and our meetings were canceled, but we did what we had to do.

We adopted a new budget and in May salad luncheons started with Fellowship in charge of the first one. Even though we do not run the next four, we are there each month to help; we oversee the last one in October. The women provided pies for Father's Day, helped with the Hot Dog sale, and assisted Brenda and Bri with donations and projects for their mission trip to South Dakota, as well as donating \$500 dollars to the California wildfire disaster.

The Fellowship keeps busy doing God's work daily, monthly, and yearly.

Submitted by Mona Viviano

2026 Committee Rosters – Pg 1 of 2

Position	Name	Term	Year
Moderator	Pete Amar	1	1
Asst. Moderator		1	1
Financial Secretary	Margaret Hafner	2	1
Treasurer	Mary Fox	2	1
Council (Must have 5 members, but may have up to 3 additional)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
Reaching in Rep.	Maggie Wallin	1	2
Reaching Out Rep.	Margaret Hellenberg	2	1
Trustees Rep.	David Schopp	2	2
At large			
At large	Jeanine Wambold	2	1
At large			
At large	Judy Gatewood-Keim	1	2
Pastor Parish			
Position	Name	Term	Year
	Cathy Otto		
	Joe Wambold		
	Maggie Wallin		
	Mary Fox		
Reaching In (3-5 members)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
Chair	Maggie Wallin	1	2
	Rokko Jans	3	2
	Helen Mate	1	2
	Mona Viviano	2	1
	Sharon Wade	1	2

2026 Committee Rosters – Pg 2 of 2

Trustees (must have 3-5 members, in addition to Treasurer & Financial Secretary)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
Chair			
Liaison to community Meal and Women's Fellowship	Cathy Otto	1	2
Financial Secretary	Margaret Hafner	3	1
Treasurer	Mary Fox	2	1
Assistant Financial Secretary			
At large	David Schopp	3	1
At large	Maureen Derenzy	1	2
At large	Ken Wade	2	1
At large	Becky Trenda	2	1
Reaching Out (3-5 members)			
Position	Name	Term	Year
Chair	Kathy Menkes	3	1
Digital Ministry Rep	Judy Gatewood-Keim	1	1
	Cindy Goller	3	1
	Margaret Hellenberg	2	1
	Stephanie Kalember	2	1
	Louanne Spearman	1	1

First Congregational UCC Gaylord

2026 Proposed Budget – Pg 1 of 3

	2025 Annual Budget	2025 Annual Projection	2026 Proposed Budget
INCOME			
Tithes/Offerings	\$109,591	\$108,363	\$112,879
Interest Income	\$0	\$0	
Rental	0	\$730	\$750
Otsego Community Foundation Spendable	\$2,060	\$2,060	\$2,060
Transfer from Savings (investment income)	\$5,150	\$5,150	\$5,150
TOTAL INCOME	\$116,801	\$116,303	\$120,839
EXPENSES			
Facility			
Kitchen Supplies	\$100	\$100	\$100
Cleaning Services	\$4,200	\$4,200	\$4,200
Maintenance	\$2,400	\$700	\$2,400
Building & Liability Insurance	\$7,000	\$8,503	\$8,500
Licenses/Permits	\$620	\$620	\$620
Phone/Internet	\$1,800	\$1,703	\$1,800
Electric	\$2,900	\$2,898	\$3,000
Gas	\$4,300	\$4,241	\$4,400
Water/Sewer	\$1,200	\$1,347	\$1,400
Lawn / Snow Care	\$750	\$0	\$0
Garbage	\$420	\$342	\$350
Total Facility	\$25,270	\$24,897	\$26,770

First Congregational UCC Gaylord

2026 Proposed Budget – Pg 2 of 3

	2025 Annual Budget	2025 Annual Projection	2026 Proposed Budget
Administration			
Copier	\$1,800	\$1,993	\$1,800
Office Supplies	\$300	\$77	\$250
Postage	\$350	\$329	\$350
Dues & Subscriptions	\$1,100	\$386	\$400
Marketing	\$100	\$33	\$100
Website	\$380	\$710	\$700
Licenses for Livestream	\$300	\$300	\$300
Computer	\$200	\$2,514	\$220
Accounting / CPA	\$400	\$120	\$120
UNA Per Capita Fee	\$500	\$405	\$500
Total Administration	\$5,430	\$6,867	\$4,740
Ministry			
Reaching In	\$600	\$581	\$600
Reaching Out	\$200	\$10	\$100
Christian Ed	\$200	\$0	\$0
Youth/Kidz on Mission	\$200	\$0	\$100
Church Education / Transformation	\$300	\$7,400	\$2,400
Total Ministry	\$1,500	\$7,991	\$3,200

First Congregational UCC Gaylord

2026 Proposed Budget – Pg 3 of 3

	2025 Annual Budget	2025 Annual Projection	2026 Proposed Budget
Personnel			
Pastor			
Salary	\$21,749	\$21,749	\$22,336
Housing	\$21,749	\$21,749	\$22,336
Health Insurance Reimbursement	\$4,459	\$4,459	\$4,210
Pension Expense	\$6,091	\$6,454	\$6,254
Life / Disability	\$654	\$408	\$670
Soc Sec Offset	\$3,324	\$3,324	\$3,417
Mileage	\$250	\$250	\$250
Pastor Continuing Ed	\$750	\$750	\$750
Pastor Compensation	\$59,026	\$59,143	\$60,223
Finance Coordinator	\$840	\$840	\$863
Communications Coord.	\$11,700	\$11,700	\$12,016
Music Director	\$4,000	\$4,000	\$4,108
Accompanist	\$5,200	\$5,200	\$5,200
Work Comp Insurance	\$907	\$907	\$1,000
Direct Deposit/Bank Fee	\$50	\$201	\$200
Payroll Taxes	\$1,000	\$1,000	\$1,000
Total Personnel	\$82,723	\$82,949	\$84,610
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$115,343	\$120,461	\$119,320
NET INCOME	\$1,458	(\$4,158)	\$1,519

IN THE COMPANY OF SAINTS, WE FIND STRENGTH AND INSPIRATION.
REMEMBERING OUR FAMILY MEMBERS AND FRIENDS LOST IN THE PAST
YEAR.

All
saints
day

Please submit your pictures for the All Saints
Day video to Brenda Brummel by October 28.
Her email is brendabrummel@me.com or call
810-623-1691.

Announcements

- Food Pantry Volunteers are needed – call Don Storing
- For prayer concerns, joys, announcements, or news to share, contact Liz at office@firstuccgaylord.org or Pastor Greg at pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org
- Check Fellowship Hall to sign up for snow removal, lunch group, or to serve on Sunday
- Check Fellowship Hall for opportunities to serve over the holidays
- For inclusion on Sunday, November 2 on the All Saints Day Remembrance video, please have your pictures to Brenda Brummel **by October 28.**

Minutes are Available and Attached

Otsego County Angel Tree

Each year, our congregation supports the efforts of Angel Tree to provide clothing as gifts for children in need in Otsego County. Angel Tree partners with Toys for Tots and the Salvation Army so that other needs are met as well.

This year, our Reaching Out team accepted 25 Angel Tree children for us to provide new clothing. The ornaments showing the child's gender, size, and items needed are placed on a small tree in Fellowship Hall. You are invited to take an ornament (or more than one You don't have to get everything on the list. Bring the gifts back unwrapped, in a bag with the ornament attached. Gifts may be left by the small tree.

Please have all gifts to the church no later than November 16.

In 2023, Angel Tree clothed 1,425 children in our county. In 2024, that number was 1,595. Your participation makes a difference in a child's life in Otsego County.

Any questions may be directed to Margaret Hellenberg of the Reaching Out team, or Pastor Greg.



Special Offerings Update



ONE GREATER HOUR OF SHARING	\$455
STRENGTHEN THE CHURCH	\$150
OCWM (MICHIGAN CONFERENCE)	\$536
NEIGHBORS IN NEED	NOT FINISHED
CHRISTMAS FUND	NOT STARTED





BLANKET SUNDAY	\$722
FOOD PANTRY	\$502



Congratulations!

Rosemary Gibson for being approved for ordination on October 25 pending a call.

The Advent Tapestry Project

What do you fear? Insisting on Hope this Advent Season.

Can we name our fears honestly and still trust that God is near? Hope and fear are interwoven in our lives. This Advent Season, we are working on a tapestry together that will help us acknowledge fear while representing the hope that can come with it. A huge reason we have hope is our community. How can we, like Jesus and Isaiah, point to the places where God is at work in our world? We are given moments every day to practice small, quiet acts of courage in our solidarity with others which makes us stronger. Our communal flourishing depends on each person stepping into their calling despite their fear. In a world where the algorithm decides what takes up space in our lives, let's be disruptive with our joy. Let's run through the streets like the shepherds shouting the good news! And let's quietly document our blessings, our victories, our tragedies mixed with hope. To symbolize walking through our fears, let's be a community and remember how strong we are together.

To create this piece, collect strings, ribbon, strips of cloth, old jewelry, pieces of leather, even a vine from outside--anything that you can weave through the loom. These things can represent family, prayers, times when friends were near, people of hope, things made right. It could signify something you feared that you made it through because of others. It can even be a color that brings you joy. Maybe you could weave long grasses from a remembered journey with a friend or a piece of clothing from someone you lost where your community helped you through. You can even hang things from it like keys or buttons or jewelry, tokens, or ornaments. Anything that helps you hope and remember God's grace can be woven into this piece to remind us that we are an interwoven community. We are stronger together.

This frame will be up in Fellowship Hall all through Advent—November 23 to December 21. And then it will be hung in church during the Christmas Holidays.

Happy Thanksgiving!

~ In Our Prayers ~

During November, the UNA is holding Manistee First Congregational UCC in prayer.

Kay Boughner had surgery on her leg. She is recovering at home.

Roger and Brenda Brummel. They recently lost their daughter *Phylis Moll*, who had lived in Florida.

Mike and Rosemary Gibson and family.

Maggie Shanahan Menkes (Kathy's daughter-in-law) –for her healing and for increased energy. Pray for the entire family to restore their spirits and energy levels so they can do all that needs to be done each day.

Louanne Spearman as she continues to heal at home.

Laura Bantens, who asks for prayers for employment and finding where she belongs. Her mother, ***Connie***, needs prayers for the same.

Jay Jans, Rokko Jans' brother—Jay under hospice care in Illinois.

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

Jason Peterman's mother – who faces surgery in November.

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

Chris Crubaugh – who is dealing with medical issues. Continued prayers Chris and Laura Bantens as they adapt.

Madison Crawford – as she suffers from neurological and vision 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.



Remembering Others: A Thanksgiving Prayer

O God, when I have food,
help me to remember the hungry;
When I have work,
help me to remember the jobless;
When I have a home,
help me to remember those who have no home at all;
When I am without pain,
help me to remember those who suffer,
And remembering,
help me to destroy my complacency;
bestir my compassion,
and be concerned enough to help;
By word and deed,
those who cry out for what we take for granted.
- Samuel F. Pugh

Bored With Your Thanksgiving Leftovers? Try these ideas:

Stunning Savory Waffles

- Leftover stuffing
- Nonstick cooking spray
- 1 recipe best turkey gravy
- Maple syrup, for serving

Directions

1. Preheat a Belgian waffle iron according to manufacturer's instructions and prepare with nonstick cooking spray. Spread 1/5 of stuffing mixture across the surface of the waffle iron. Cook until crisp on both sides, about 10 minutes total.
2. Transfer to a serving platter and serve with hot gravy and maple syrup, or keep hot in a 200°F (90°C) oven while you cook the remaining batches of stuffing mixture.

Turkey Reuben

For the Russian Dressing:

- 1/3 c mayonnaise
- 2 T ketchup
- 2 T turkey gravy
- 2 T chopped dill pickles or dill pickle relish
- 2 T prepared horseradish
- 1 T fresh lemon juice (from 1 lemon)
- Kosher salt and freshly ground black pepper

For the Sandwiches:

- 1 lb leftover roast turkey, pulled or sliced into 1/4-inch-thick pieces
- 2 T turkey or chicken stock
- 1 1/2 c sauerkraut
- 1/4 c cranberry sauce
- 5 T unsalted butter, softened
- 8 slices rye bread
- 8 slices (8 ounces) Swiss cheese

Directions

1. For the Russian Dressing: In a small bowl, stir together mayo, ketchup, gravy, pickles, horseradish, and lemon juice. Season to taste and set aside.
2. For the Sandwiches: Preheat oven to 350°F. Lay a sheet of aluminum foil on a rimmed baking sheet and place turkey in the center. Bring foil edges up to form walls, then add stock to the turkey. Bring edges of foil together, crimping to seal the foil packet. Transfer to oven to heat turkey through, about 10 minutes.
3. Meanwhile, in a small saucepan, combine sauerkraut and cranberry sauce over medium heat, stirring occasionally, until warmed, about 5 minutes; cover and keep warm.
4. Spread butter on one side of each slice of bread. Heat a large cast iron skillet or griddle over medium heat. Working in batches, toast bread, butter-side down, until crisp and golden brown, 3 to 4 minutes. Transfer toasted bread slices to a rimmed baking sheet, toasted side up; allow to cool slightly.
5. Flip bread, so untoasted sides are up. Spread each untoasted side with Russian dressing. To cook on a griddle or in a skillet, layer one slice of cheese on each slice of bread. To cook in the oven, layer one slice of cheese on only four slices of bread. Divide turkey

evenly over four bread slices (for oven sandwiches, use the four slices without cheese), letting any excess stock drip off before arranging on bread. Divide cranberry-sauerkraut mixture evenly over turkey. Layer remaining cheese over cranberry-sauerkraut.

6. Transfer baking sheet to the oven and bake until cheese is fully melted--about 3 minutes. Close sandwiches. To cook on a griddle, close sandwiches and cook over medium heat, pressing down on sandwiches with a weight or spatula, until cheese is fully melted, about 2 minutes a side. Serve at once.

Cheese-Free Sweet Potato "Quesadillas"

- 1 large sweet potato (about 12 ounces)
- Small handful minced fresh cilantro leaves (see notes)
- 3 T minced pickled jalapeños (see notes)
- 3 scallions, thinly sliced (see notes)
- Kosher salt
- 4 to 6 (8-inch) flour tortillas
- Vegetable oil, as needed

Directions

1. Preheat oven to 425°F. Place sweet potato in an oven-safe vessel and roast until a knife inserted into its center meets no resistance, about 40 minutes. Remove from oven and cool.
2. Peel and discard the skin and mash flesh in a medium bowl. Add cilantro, pickled jalapeños, and scallions (see notes). Stir and fold to combine. Salt to taste.
3. Spread 1/2 c of the mixture evenly over half of a tortilla, leaving a 1/2-inch border. Fold tortilla over and seal edges by pressing down. Repeat with remaining filling.
4. Heat 2 T oil in a large skillet or griddle over medium heat until shimmering. Add 2 folded tortillas and cook, moving tortillas around, until golden brown and, about 2 minutes. Flip quesadillas and continue cooking until golden brown and puffy on second side.
5. Transfer quesadillas to a paper towel to drain and cook remaining quesadillas. Serve immediately.

Notes

Replace the cilantro, jalapeño, and scallions with any of your favorite quesadilla fillings.

November



2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
ALL SAINTS DAY 1						
DAUGHTER SAVINGS ENDS PLEDGE CARD DEADLINE 10 a Worship/Communion – Maggie Wallin preaching	3 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	ELECTION DAY 4 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 5 p Ukelele Group	5 11 a Bible Study 4 p Choir	6 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 4 p Community Meal	7 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	8 6 a Gaylord Gratitude
9 10 a a Annual Meeting PM GHS @ FH	10 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	VETERANS DAY 11 Noon Free Veterans Lunch @ VFW	12 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 5 p Ukelele Group	13 11 a Bible Study 4 p Choir	14 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 4 p Community Meal	15 8 a Pet Partners
ANGEL TREE GIFTS DUE 16 10 a a Worship 11:30 a Confirmation	NEWSLETTER DEADLINE 17 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 7 p Reaching Out	18 Noon Lunch Group @ Pine Squirrel	19 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 5 p Ukelele Group 7 p Trustees	20 11 a Bible Study 4 p Choir	21 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 4 p Community Meal	22 6 a Gaylord Gratitude
THANKSGIVING SUNDAY 23 10 a a Worship 11:30 a Hanging of the Greens 1ST SUNDAY OF ADVENT 30 10 a a Worship	24 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	25 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 5 p Ukelele Group 1 p Church Book Club	26 THANKSGIVING DAY 27 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	28 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	29 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	30 6 a Gaylord Gratitude