First Congregational United Church of Christ

218 W. Second Street, Gaylord, Michigan 49735
www.firstuccgaylord.org
(989) 732-5726

November 2026 Newsletter



This Photo by Unknown Author is licensed under CC BY

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
"Lots Happening in November"

There is a lot to look forward to in November in the life of the church! We'll begin right away with a time change (okay, maybe you don't look forward to that!) and All Saints Sunday.

On November 1, we will dedicate our Estimate of Giving cards in worship. It is fine if you send them in earlier than that. These cards

are our best estimate of our gifts for 2027. We all know that life can change and with it, our gifts to church. At the same time, these Estimate cards help us plan for 2027. We also can celebrate the gifts that have been given and will be given in 2026. Our budget looks good! We have been aided, in part, by $5000 in grants from the Michigan Conference United Church of Christ. We are partners with the conference not only financially, but as participants in the leadership and ministry of the conference throughout the state. Our gifts to OCWM (Our Churches' Wider Mission) help fund the ministries of the conference. I hope you'll consider a gift in 2027 to the Conference.

November 8th, we will celebrate the Annual June Jans Memorial Concert in Fellowship Hall at 3pm. Many hands will help make this concert enjoyable! Invite your friends, perhaps make some treats for the reception, help with set-up, or whatever your schedule allows. The event is free, but donations received will be given to Meals-on-Wheels in Otsego County.

On the 22nd, we look forward to our Annual Meeting. As of this writing, we are still seeking a Moderator for 2027. If you have interest in this role, please speak with me or our present Moderator, Peter Amar. The role primarily is in leading Church Council meetings, and presiding over the Annual Meeting. This year's Annual Meeting will be held immediately after church in the Sanctuary. Often these meetings are short as we approve the budget for the year and elect our committee members and officers. Your annual report will arrive soon so that you will know the full agenda.

After that, all are invited to assist in the Hanging of the Greens. Working together, it doesn't take long to be ready for Christmas. Afterward, we are invited into Fellowship Hall for a special coffee hour to reward our efforts! If you have questions about Hanging of the Greens, speak to a member of the Reaching In team. Typically, the decorating takes less than a half hour.

I'm sure I have left something out as there is always more going on at First Congregational UCC! I so appreciate all your efforts, your teamwork, your love for one another, and your care for the community. Thank you for all you do and who you are!

In Christ,
Pastor Greg

November Church Volunteers (as of 10/26/26)

Date	Liturgist	Greeter/ Usher	Coffee Hour	Digital Ministry	Virtual Greeters
1st	K Menkes	C Gatewood-Keim	C Otto	J Gatewood-Keim	
8th	D Storing	C Gatewood-Keim	M Fox/ P Amar/ M Derenzy	J Gatewood-Keim	
15th	S Fuelling	Joe Wambold	Wades/ Wambolds	M Wallin	
22nd	M Derenzy		L Larson	M Fox	
29th	M Wallin	M Hellenberg	M Hellenberg	M Wallin	

Guest Preacher: *November 15 – Mary Fox*
Guest Musician: *None*
Thank you!

Office Hours

Pastor Greg *will be out of the office November 15.*



Link the September & October meeting minutes in the body of the email blast.



Announcements

- **Meeting Dates for November: Reaching In** *2nd (10 AM)*, **Trustees** 4th & *18th*, **Women's Fellowship** *5th*, **Reaching Out** *16th*, **Council** *19th*, **Annual Meeting** *22nd*.
- **Food Pantry** dates are *November 6 & 7*.
- **Annual Reports for the various committees are due** *November 8*.
- **Rokko Jans' annual June Jans Memorial Concert** in *November 8* at 3 in Fellowship Hall. Free will donations support Otsego County Meals on Wheels.
- A reminder that there is a **Pet Partner Evaluation** on *November 14*. Fellowship Hall will be unavailable all day as a result.

- **Greg will be off** on *November 15*. Mary Fox will be our guest preacher.
- **The Refuge Town Hall** is on *November 17 (11:45 AM)* at Otsego County Library. Lunch will be provided.
- The **Lunch Group** will dine at *noon* on *November 17* at Pine Squirrel. All are welcome!
- The church **Annual Meeting** will be in the Sanctuary following worship *November 22*. The meeting is typically short.
- **Hanging of the Greens** is *November 22* following the Annual Meeting for about 30 minutes. There will also be a special coffee hour with a soup lunch.
- **November newsletter submissions** are due *November 23*.
- Join us for **Book Club** on *November 25* at 1.
- The **church will be closed** on *November 26* for Thanksgiving.
- **Community Meal** is cancelled *November 27* due to Thanksgiving.
- *November 29* **choir sings in church** to celebrate the **first Sunday of Advent.**
- Looking ahead to December, **Christmas Eve Service** will be *Thursday, December 24* at 5 pm. **Community Meal** will be cancelled on *Christmas Day and New Year's Day*.

Please **update your meetings** with Liz for next month **by the Newsletter Deadline** so our church calendar is accurate.



November Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:		Anniversaries:	
10	Ariah House	10	Paul & Marilyn Kaczanowski
14	Maggie Wallin	28	Jeff & Stephanie Kalember
16	Maureen Derenzy		
18	Zephania Boughner Gentz		
	Andrew Kalember		
20	Keelin English		
30	Mona Viviano		

Reminder that all Annual Meeting Reports are due November 8.

~In Our Prayers~

The UNA is praying for Manistee First Congregational UCC in November.

Pete Amar, *as he has shoulder surgery.*

Prayers for ***Kathy Arnold and the friends and family of Joanna Morse****, following Joanna's death on October 22.*

Prayers of joy for the arrival of ***Helen Crandall's thirteenth great-grandchild! Eleanor Kathleen*** *Sheldon was born October 21 weighing 7 lbs, 10 oz and measuring 20". We hope as you read this that she is out of NICU, where she was being treated for jaundice. Proud parents are* ***Meadow & Greg Sheldon.***

Chris Crubaugh*.*

Cheryl Double *fell and broke her knee. She is recovering.*

Dyllan*, the grandson of Margaret Hafner and Dave Henson as he recovers.*

The ***English Family*** *–Please pray for healing.*

Pastor Rosemary Gibson *recently sustained injuries in a serious car accident. She is rehabbing at home.*

Liz Larson's *niece,* ***Emma*** *is at the Mayo Clinic in Phoenix undergoing treatment for cervical cancer.*

Jason Peterman *asks for prayers for his continuing health concerns.*

Jackie and Bruce Smith *request prayers for their daughter,* ***Sarah,*** *who is having a hard time recovering from outpatient surgery.*

Ken Wade*, who is recovering from knee surgery at home.*



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.

REFLECTIONS FROM MICHIGAN CONFERENCE ANNUAL MEETING

It is always a blessing to attend our Annual Meetings and to both spend time with "old" friends and to meet new, vital people within our church community.

We began our time in Grand Blanc at the Church Vitality Workshop, facilitated by our own Pastor Greg. Three presenters from Owosso, Jackson, and Kalamazoo gave widely different perspectives on what they were doing/offering in their churches/communities to "be the church," on so many levels. The ideas offered ranged from including young people in the worship service to aiding communities as they deal with hunger, homelessness, health issues, etc. It's always rewarding to hear so many creative ways to "do God's work."

Other workshops dealt with the usual budget and bylaws issues but also Strategic Planning within churches to meet the needs of so many in our communities and Justice issues including the vital Get Out to Vote issues prevalent now!

Helen addressed the keynoter, Rev. Michael Neuroth, Director, Office of Public Policy and Advocacy, UCC, Washington, D.C., as part of her October 18th sermon. Rev. Neuroth represents all of us as he "speaks up" in Washington, D.C. His office is directly across from the White House, and he is present at the Advocacy/Protest events that happen dealing with the Social Issues that are challenging and disturbing to many of us. It was great to see/hear him in person and to know that our OCWM dollars are helping support, educate, enlighten, encourage, and promote so many good works, as God would have us do!!

The UCC offers so much to so many: "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, YOU ARE WELCOME TO JOIN TOGETHER WITH US/ YOU ARE WELCOME HERE!" AMEN to that!!

Helen Crandall and Sallie Anderson/Lay Delegates



Michigan Conference: We Put Love into Action

Basic Support through donations to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) funds most of the budget of the Michigan Conference UCC. When you give to Basic Support, 90% stays in Michigan.

Members can provide offerings to OCWM through indications on their giving. Typically, gifts to OCWM are 3-5% of the annual giving to the local church.

As we create our yearly budget, the Conference invites you to commit a pledge of Basic Support for the mission and ministry of our Conference.

The Conference brings churches closer together and to God by:

- **Cultivating Leadership** through the pastoral search process, members-in-discernment, and leadership events.
- **Supporting Congregations** with advice, resources, and encouragement including more than $150,000 in grants to congregations and their leaders.
- **Seeking Justice** by helping congregations embody God's love and justice.
- **Building Relationships.** OCWM Basic Support allows staff to provide care and guidance to clergy, lay leaders, and congregations. It expands our capacity for innovative grant opportunities like the Mitten Project, a faith formation initiative for our congregations.

OCWM includes **Basic Support,** which funds the work of the Conference. This is the most important offering you can make to the work of the wider UCC. The rest is **"envelope offerings"** that fund the Christmas Fund, One Great Hour of Sharing, Strengthen the Church, and Neighbors in Need.

Your generosity makes the work we do possible. Thank you.





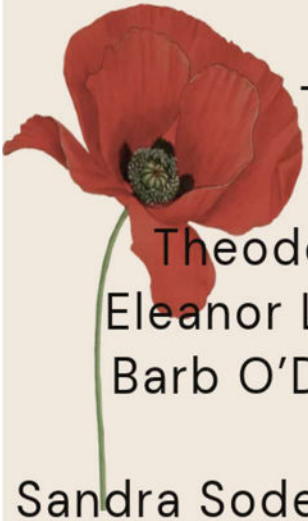
You are ALL pretty amazing…we raised $1,555 for the 2026 Annual CROP Walk. Thanks, as always, to Margaret Hellenberg, who once again was our major "collector!" The final count hasn't been tallied yet for the County, but as always, our local Otsego County Food Pantry will benefit from the proceeds. Thank you for your continued support to this worthy cause.

DAYLIGHT SAVINGS ENDS NOVEMBER 1.

NOVEMBER 1, 2026 ALL SAINTS' DAY

In Memory of those we have loved and lost this past year...

Bea Axford
Bob Clark
Linda Distel
David Evans
William Farmer
Robert Hale
Marshall Henderson
Maryetta House
Trish Jachym
Jay Jans
Theodore Barton Kjolhede
Eleanor Locke
J Morse
Barb O'Donnell
Lee Frank Olsen
Sandra Soderberg
Joel Quay



ETERNAL REST GRANT UNTO THEM, O LORD

November



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Daylight Savings Ends All Saints Day 1 10a Worship/ Communion/Dedication of Estimates of Giving	Diwali 2 6a Gaylord Gratitude 10a Reaching In 6p Compassionate Friends	Election Day 3	4 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5p Ukelele Group 7p Trustees	5 11a Bible Study NOON Food Pantry 12:15a ♀Fellowship 4p Choir 6p Stronger Together	6 6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Food Pantry 4p Community Meal 6p Talking Circle	7
Annual Rpts Due 8 10a Worship 3p June Jans Memorial Concert	9 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4:30 Mama Mingle @ Peace Lutheran	10	Veterans Day 11 6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Free Vet Lunch@ Eagles 5p Ukelele Group	12 11a Bible Study 4p Choir	13 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal 6p Talking Circle	14 8:30a Pet Partners Evaluation
15 10a Worship – Mary Fox preaching	16 6a Gaylord Gratitude 7p Reaching Out	17 11:15 The Refuge Town Hall @ Otsego County Library NOON Lunch Group @ Pine Squirrel	18 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5 p Ukelele Group 7p Trustees	19 11a Bible Study 3p Church Council 4p Choir 6p Stronger Together	20 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal 6p Talking Circle	21
Hanging of Greens/ Annual Meeting 22 10a Worship 11a Annual Meeting 11:30 Hanging of the Greens	Newsletter Deadline 23 6a Gaylord Gratitude	24	25 6a Gaylord Gratitude 1p Book Club 5p Ukelele Group	Thanksgiving Day 26 Bible Study & Choir--CANCELLED	27 6a Gaylord Gratitude Community Meal—CANCELLED 6p Talking Circle	28
Advent Begins 29 10a Worship	30 6a Gaylord Gratitude	UNA Prayers for Manistee First Congregational UCC	Flowers provided by Joann Schopp	Angel Tree items due November 22		