## First Congregational United Church of Christ

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

#### October 2025 Newsletter



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: All Flourishing is Mutual

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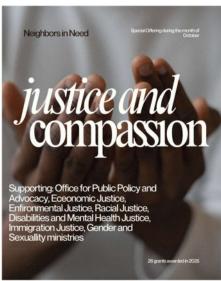
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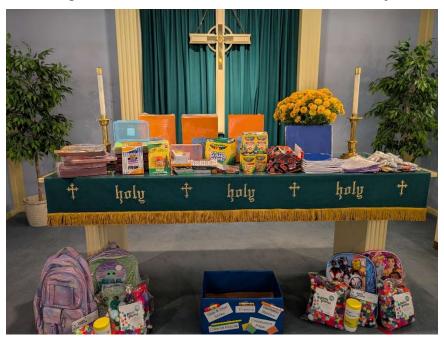
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	Lauren Rigney	Sasso
	Mary Sanders	
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#### Slow Cooker Cider Pulled Pork by Summer Miller

Prep: 30 mins Cook: 25 mins Slow Cooker: 8 hrs Refrigerate: Overnight or 8 hours Serves 10-12

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For the rub:	12-oz hard apple cider
2 1/2 T brown sugar, packed	2 c apple cider
2 1/2 T kosher salt 1 1/2 t pumpkin pie spice (or 1 t cinnamon, 1/4 t ground ginger, 1/4 t ground cloves, and a dash of nutmeg) 1 1/2 t chili powder 1 1/2 t ground black pepper 1 t ground dry mustard 1/4 t cayenne pepper	For the sauce: 2 T tomato paste 3 cloves garlic 3/4 c ketchup 1/2 c brown mustard 1/3 c brown sugar 1/4 c apple cider vinegar 1/4 c Worcestershire sauce 2 t liquid smoke
For the pork:	3/4 t kosher salt
6 lb boneless pork shoulder or	2 c pork stock leftover from
butt, trimmed of excess fat	braising

- 1. In a small bowl, combine the rub ingredients. Trim excess fat from the pork. Massage the rub into the meat.
- 2. Place the pork in a 6-qt slow cooker. Add both ciders. The liquid should cover 3/4 of the meat. Replace the lid and set to low heat

- for 8 or high heat for 4 hours.
- Completely cool the pork and cooking liquid in the slow cooker crock on the counter. Pour the liquid off into a separate storage container. Keep the pork in the slow cooker crock and cover. Refrigerate both the pork and the liquid overnight for up to three days. (Refrigerate the pork whole to keep it from drying out.)
- 4. To serve, remove the pork and the liquid containers from the refrigerator. Remove the solidified fat from the pork and the surface of the cooking liquid. Using your mixer or two forks, shred the pork. Discard large pieces of fat.
- 5. Warm the shredded pork in the slow cooker on the low setting or warm the pork covered with foil on a sheet pan in a low oven while you prepare the sauce. If the pork seems dry, stir in a few tablespoons of the leftover cooking liquid.
- 6. Reserve 2 c of the remaining cooking liquid. The rest can be strained and frozen for up to three months. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, add the tomato paste and garlic. Whisk together and cook for about 1 minute until fragrant. Add in the remaining ingredients, finishing with the reserved 2 c of liquid. Increase heat to medium high and bring to a gentle boil. Reduce the sauce, whisking occasionally until the consistency is of a thick tomato soup, about 15 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning if needed.
- 7. Reserve 1/2 cup of sauce to serve in a small bowl alongside the pork. Pour the rest of the sauce over the pork, toss to combine, and serve. Place a pile of pork on top of buttered, toasted buns, top with pickles, pickled onions, or extra sauce, and dig in.

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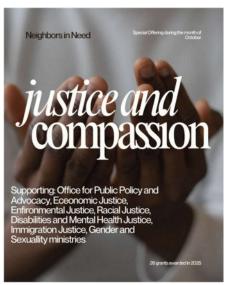
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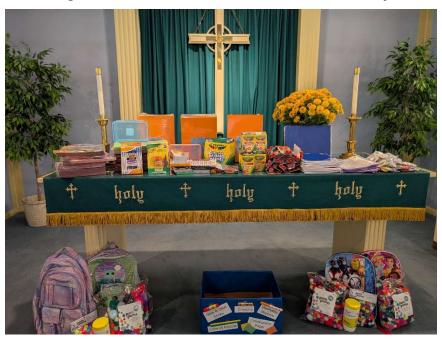
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Our mission is to embrace people of every age and stage of life and help them become the most loving version of themselves possible.

#### Pastor's Column: All Flourishing is Mutual

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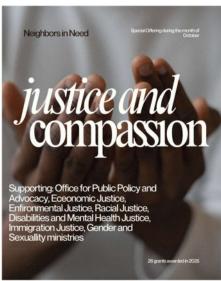
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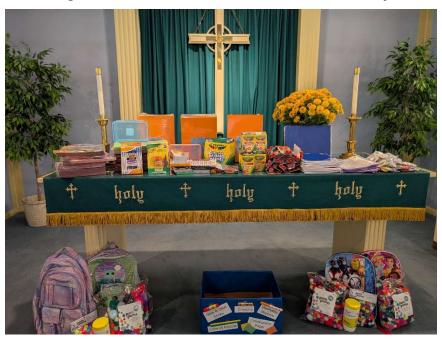
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Prep: 30 mins Cook: 25 mins Slow Cooker: 8 hrs Refrigerate: Overnight or 8 hours Serves 10-12

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For the rub:	12-oz hard apple cider
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- 1. In a small bowl, combine the rub ingredients. Trim excess fat from the pork. Massage the rub into the meat.
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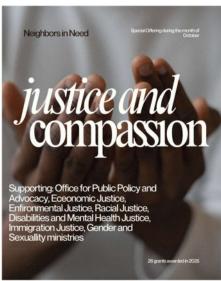
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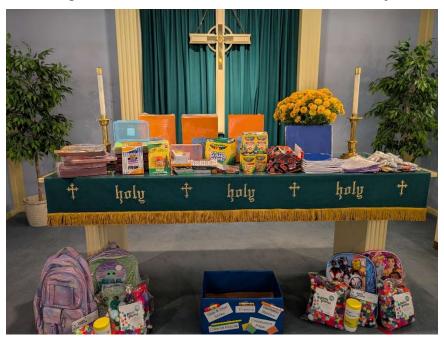
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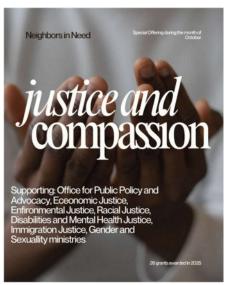
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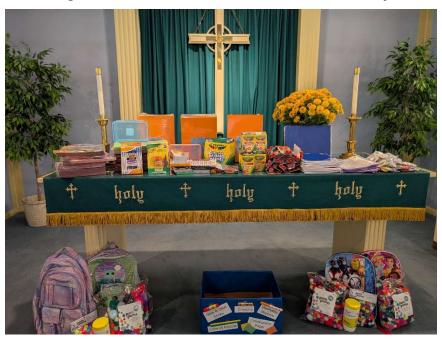
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	Lauren Rigney	Sasso
	Mary Sanders	
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30	Sarah Watling	
30	Staci Brown	

### Slow Cooker Cider Pulled Pork by Summer Miller

Prep: 30 mins Cook: 25 mins Slow Cooker: 8 hrs Refrigerate: Overnight or 8 hours Serves 10-12

For the rub: 12-oz hard apple cider 2 1/2 T brown sugar, packed 2 c apple cider 2 1/2 T kosher salt For the sauce: 1 1/2 t pumpkin pie spice (or 1 2 T tomato paste t cinnamon, 1/4 t ground ginger, 3 cloves garlic 1/4 t ground cloves, and a dash 3/4 c ketchup of nutmeg) 1/2 c brown mustard 1 1/2 t chili powder 1/3 c brown sugar 1 1/2 t ground black pepper 1/4 c apple cider vinegar 1 t ground dry mustard 1/4 c Worcestershire sauce 1/4 t cayenne pepper 2 t liquid smoke 3/4 t kosher salt For the pork: 2 c pork stock leftover from 6 lb boneless pork shoulder or braising butt, trimmed of excess fat

- In a small bowl, combine the rub ingredients. Trim excess fat from the pork. Massage the rub into the meat.
- 2. Place the pork in a 6-qt slow cooker. Add both ciders. The liquid should cover 3/4 of the meat. Replace the lid and set to low heat

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- Completely cool the pork and cooking liquid in the slow cooker crock on the counter. Pour the liquid off into a separate storage container. Keep the pork in the slow cooker crock and cover. Refrigerate both the pork and the liquid overnight for up to three days. (Refrigerate the pork whole to keep it from drying out.)
- 4. To serve, remove the pork and the liquid containers from the refrigerator. Remove the solidified fat from the pork and the surface of the cooking liquid. Using your mixer or two forks, shred the pork. Discard large pieces of fat.
- 5. Warm the shredded pork in the slow cooker on the low setting or warm the pork covered with foil on a sheet pan in a low oven while you prepare the sauce. If the pork seems dry, stir in a few tablespoons of the leftover cooking liquid.
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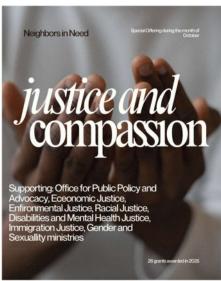
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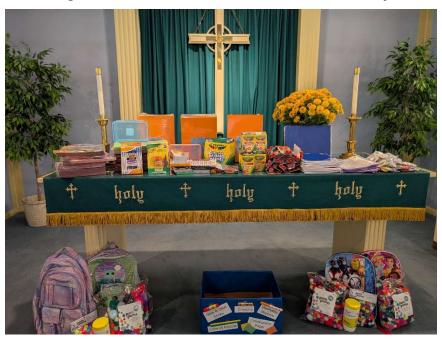
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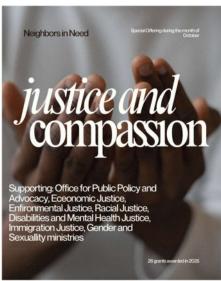
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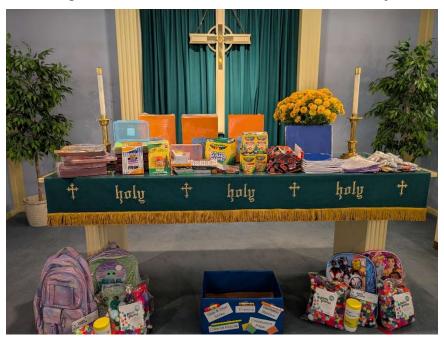
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Prep: 30 mins Cook: 25 mins Slow Cooker: 8 hrs Refrigerate: Overnight or 8 hours Serves 10-12

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For the rub:	12-oz hard apple cider
2 1/2 T brown sugar, packed	2 c apple cider
2 1/2 T kosher salt 1 1/2 t pumpkin pie spice (or 1 t cinnamon, 1/4 t ground ginger, 1/4 t ground cloves, and a dash of nutmeg) 1 1/2 t chili powder 1 1/2 t ground black pepper 1 t ground dry mustard 1/4 t cayenne pepper	For the sauce: 2 T tomato paste 3 cloves garlic 3/4 c ketchup 1/2 c brown mustard 1/3 c brown sugar 1/4 c apple cider vinegar 1/4 c Worcestershire sauce 2 t liquid smoke
For the pork:	3/4 t kosher salt
6 lb boneless pork shoulder or	2 c pork stock leftover from
butt, trimmed of excess fat	braising

- 1. In a small bowl, combine the rub ingredients. Trim excess fat from the pork. Massage the rub into the meat.
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26 10 a Worship 12 p Confirmation @ Peace Lutheran 12 p Council	27 6 a Gaylord Gratitude	28 11:30 a Salad Luncheon	29 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 5 p Ukelele Group	30 11 a Bible Study 4 p Choir	Halloween 31 6 a Gaylord Gratitude 4 p Community Meal Reformation/ Reconciliation Day	

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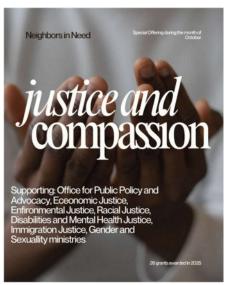
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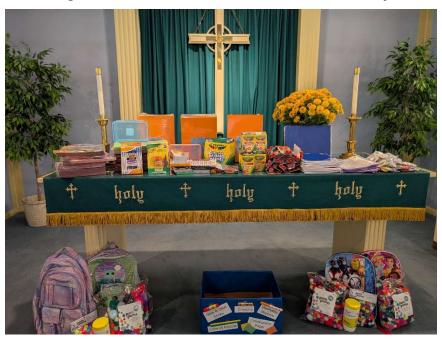
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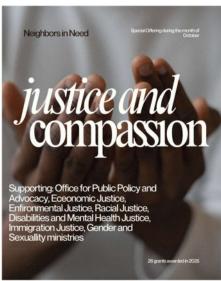
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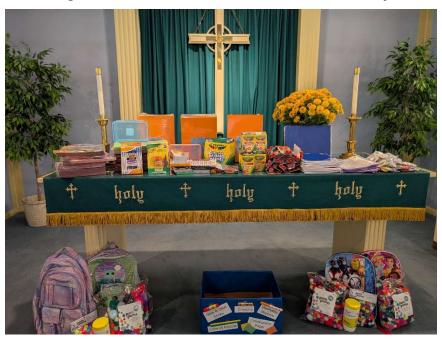
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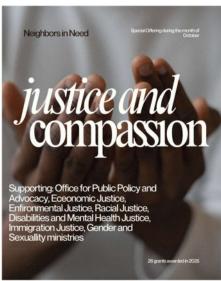
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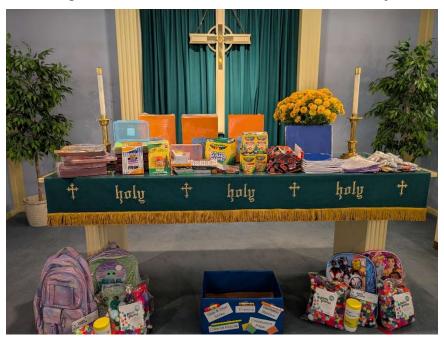
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# October



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## First Congregational United Church of Christ

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

#### October 2025 Newsletter



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: All Flourishing is Mutual

By now, you will have heard at least two sermons from me based on the book The Serviceberry: Abundance and Reciprocity in the Natural World by Robin Wall Kimmerer. It is the backdrop for our Stewardship Campaign this year. Yes, it's that time of year again!

Not everyone likes Stewardship, because it is the time of year that the church asks us to make an estimate of our giving for the coming year. There are so many unknowns for 2026. In fact, we can't even begin to think yet about what will happen then as so much is happening in 2025! And yet, these estimates of giving by our participants help the Trustees to plan for how to utilize the resources entrusted to the

church. This year, we are asking everyone to consider at least a 2.7% increase in giving. Of course, if you can do more, that would be appreciated! If you are unable, that's okay, too. Whatever your monetary gift, they are gratefully received and managed faithfully.

However, the Serviceberry goes beyond money and speaks of the gift economy. In most economic models, the primary belief is that resources are scarce. In a gift economy, which Wall Kimmerer believes is the way nature works, the primary belief is that there is abundance and if all shared, then all would have more than enough. We cannot change the whole world and its economic models, but what if our church began to live as if we had abundance?

Some might think that would mean that we would squander resources, thinking that they are infinite. Quite the opposite is true. When you come from a place of abundance, we only use what we need, and we do our best to ensure that there is plenty left over to meet the needs of others. This is hard for us to get our minds around, and I have no reason to believe that this can take hold overnight.

What would change in how we live individually and as a church if we spent our time wondering about how people and communities can flourish? That's way better than just getting by. In fact, Jesus offers to us much the same message when he addresses our anxiety: Consider the lilies of the field, how they grow: they neither toil nor spin; and yet I say to you that even Solomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these (Matthew 6: 28-33).

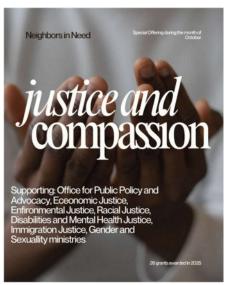
Wouldn't it be great to be less anxious? Especially here. In this place. May we all flourish the rest of this year and into 2026. Check your mail for your stewardship materials. Faithfully consider your support of our faith community.

In Christian love,

Greg

Minutes are Available and Attached

#### **Neighbors in Need**



Neighbors in Need (NIN) is one of 5 special mission offerings that our church supports throughout the year. We will be collecting this special offering throughout the month of October. It is a special mission offering of the United Church of Christ that supports ministries of justice and compassion in the United States.

Your gifts directly fund both direct service and advocacy projects.

You can note Neighbors in Need or NIN on your check or envelope — or contributions to the Neighbors in Need can be made online, as well, by going to the church's website firstuccgaylord.org and clicking the Donate Now button at the very bottom of the home page.

#### Mission Trip Dinner 2025

**Mission Trip** – Stockholders are reminded that Wednesday, October 1 is the special dinner included with their stock purchase where Bri Boughner and Brenda Brummel will share their experiences at Re-Member. Join us at Fellowship Hall to learn more about this important trip!

#### 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 together we are stronger.

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.

#### **Office Hours**

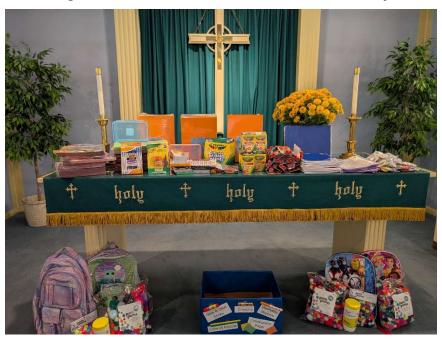
- Pastor Greg will off October 8-13. He will be here for Confirmation on that the 12<sup>th</sup> only. Judy Gatewood-Keim is preaching October 12. He will also be away from October 30 November 3.
- Liz Larson will be working on Wednesday, October 1 instead of Thursday, October 2 and returns to work in office on Friday, October 10.

#### **Announcements**

- Food Pantry Volunteers are needed call Don Storing
- For prayer concerns, joys, announcements, or news to share, contact Liz at <u>office@firstuccgaylord.org</u> or Pastor Greg at <u>pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org</u>
- Check Fellowship Hall to sign up for mowing, snow removal, lunch group, or to serve on Sunday

Thank you for your generous support of the school supply fundraiser for Gaylord's after school program.

Together, we make a difference in our community.



## News from The Refuge Shelter Season Final Service Report Season 12: Oct 28 – Jun 1

- For the third time in five years, The Refuge (TR) simultaneously provided emergency shelter for the unhoused *and* shelter due to a natural disaster.
- TR sheltered 28 ice storm households with 46 adults and 13 children for 160 nights.
- Despite opening 28 days later in Season 12, TR exceeded prior year households/individuals served housing 137 households (128 in 2024), 253 people, and 1200+ nights. When you include the disaster housing, the numbers are 165, 312, and 1375+, respectively.
- 50%, down from the previous year's 66%, were placed in permanent housing due to the lack of affordable housing.
- Need is rising. Factors include high prices for necessities, low payed jobs without benefits, and little available low income housing.
- Households need to fundamentally change in order to end homelessness. TR is partnering with other county agencies as START Navigator to more effectively deliver and coordinate human services for more impactful long-term results and to bridge the gap between enforcement and services.
- During 2024, TR raised \$122,000 and spent \$107,000. TR continues to try to diversify and grow funding sources.
- There is a staff of one--the Shelter Coordinator--who worked 20 hours/week during the seven month season. The season reopens October 1, 2025 for eight months with the same staffing.
- Non-cash donations include coats, gloves, hats, paper/daily living supplies for use in hotels, transportation, and business services, as well as reasonable hotel rates.
- TR has a 9-member volunteer board who develop policy, oversee operations, and fundraise. TR reimburses Otsego County United Way for utilities and shared costs, and supports the Community Meal program four times a year.

 The books are audited independently every 2-3 years and the Audit Report is available by request to the Board.

The Refuge started as a temporary response to homelesness in our community when The Friendship Shelter closed in 2013. It is now the primary source of help for those in need of shelter in Otsego County.

Note: On September 8, the church received word from The Karing Home Youth Project (KYHP), an organization working with homeless young people in Otsego County, that they dissolved as a nonprofit. KYHP ended operations due to worries about financial sustainability and the divisive community climate. It is unknown how and if this will impact TR in the 2025-2026 season.



#### ~ In Our Prayers ~

#### During October, the UNA is holding Ironton Congregational UCC Church in prayer.

The Confirmation Class of 2026 - as they begin their journey of faith.

Don Storing and Janice Wright — who will begin married life on October 18 here at Fellowship Hall.

Mike and Rosemary Gibson and family - in the past year,

they have lost Mike's brother and his brother's son-inlaw and Joey—their nephew and the son of Mike's deceased brother—is under hospice care. Joey has two young sons. Pat Dressel - Pat has been dealing with skin cancer. Louanne Spearman - is recovering from back surgery in a

rehab facility in Metro Detroit.

Maggie Shanahan Menkes (Kathy's daughter-in-law) - Maggie has been diagnosed with inflammatory breast cancer. Maggie gave birth to a healthy boy on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Prayers are also needed for Maggie's mother, Joan, who is recuperating from bladder/colon surgery, so she can be with her daughter and hold her month-old grandson, Quinn Michael.

Jay Jans, Rokko Jans' brother - Jay has entered hospice in Illinois.

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

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 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.



#### October Birthdays and Anniversaries

Bir	thdays:	Anniversaries:
7	Judy Gatewood-Keim	6 Tony & Mike
25	Sallie Anderson	Dockery-Fobar
	Marilyn Kaczanowski	8 Mischelle Stone & Jean
	Lauren Rigney	Sasso
	Mary Sanders	
27	Jean Sasso	
30	Sarah Watling	
30	Staci Brown	

#### Slow Cooker Cider Pulled Pork by Summer Miller

Prep: 30 mins Cook: 25 mins Slow Cooker: 8 hrs Refrigerate: Overnight or 8 hours Serves 10-12

For the rub: 12-oz hard apple cider 2 1/2 T brown sugar, packed 2 c apple cider 2 1/2 T kosher salt For the sauce: 1 1/2 t pumpkin pie spice (or 1 2 T tomato paste t cinnamon, 1/4 t ground ginger, 3 cloves garlic 1/4 t ground cloves, and a dash 3/4 c ketchup of nutmeg) 1/2 c brown mustard 1 1/2 t chili powder 1/3 c brown sugar 1 1/2 t ground black pepper 1/4 c apple cider vinegar 1 t ground dry mustard 1/4 c Worcestershire sauce 1/4 t cayenne pepper 2 t liquid smoke 3/4 t kosher salt For the pork: 2 c pork stock leftover from 6 lb boneless pork shoulder or braising butt, trimmed of excess fat

- In a small bowl, combine the rub ingredients. Trim excess fat from the pork. Massage the rub into the meat.
- 2. Place the pork in a 6-qt slow cooker. Add both ciders. The liquid should cover 3/4 of the meat. Replace the lid and set to low heat

- for 8 or high heat for 4 hours.
- Completely cool the pork and cooking liquid in the slow cooker crock on the counter. Pour the liquid off into a separate storage container. Keep the pork in the slow cooker crock and cover. Refrigerate both the pork and the liquid overnight for up to three days. (Refrigerate the pork whole to keep it from drying out.)
- 4. To serve, remove the pork and the liquid containers from the refrigerator. Remove the solidified fat from the pork and the surface of the cooking liquid. Using your mixer or two forks, shred the pork. Discard large pieces of fat.
- 5. Warm the shredded pork in the slow cooker on the low setting or warm the pork covered with foil on a sheet pan in a low oven while you prepare the sauce. If the pork seems dry, stir in a few tablespoons of the leftover cooking liquid.
- 6. Reserve 2 c of the remaining cooking liquid. The rest can be strained and frozen for up to three months. In a medium saucepan over medium heat, add the tomato paste and garlic. Whisk together and cook for about 1 minute until fragrant. Add in the remaining ingredients, finishing with the reserved 2 c of liquid. Increase heat to medium high and bring to a gentle boil. Reduce the sauce, whisking occasionally until the consistency is of a thick tomato soup, about 15 minutes. Taste and adjust the seasoning if needed.
- 7. Reserve 1/2 cup of sauce to serve in a small bowl alongside the pork. Pour the rest of the sauce over the pork, toss to combine, and serve. Place a pile of pork on top of buttered, toasted buns, top with pickles, pickled onions, or extra sauce, and dig in.

St. Andrew Episcopal Church hosts:

Saturday | October 18, 2025 | 10 AM - 2 PM
St. Andrew Episcopal Church
To Register: 989-732-4163

# THE GOOD FUNERAL GUIDE

with Jennifer Duitsman Coy, Esq. Rachel Smith, Funeral Director Hospice of Michigan

Understand options for end-of-life planning Lunch is provided

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