

First Congregational United Church of Christ

218 W. Second Street, Gaylord, Michigan 49735

www.firstuccgaylord.org

(989) 732-5726

October 2026 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

“Where Your Heart Is...Part II: Time, Talent, or Treasure?”

Throughout my ministry, I have had many discussions of time, talent, and treasure. The church needs all three. If time isn't shared, a lot of things remain undone. When no talents are shared, the

richness of the church experience is lacking. And without shared treasure, we wouldn't have the financial resources to do what we need to do.

For many, time, talent, and treasure carry some guilt. I have had countless conversations with people when they cannot offer the same amount as they have in the past. People feel a duty and responsibility to the church--and ultimately to God--related to these issues. At the same time, if these things are done primarily out of duty, responsibility, or a sense of guilt, they won't be done well.

That doesn't mean that every day gifts are easy to give. Some days, it's just plain hard. Even so, I want to assure people that our gifts in any area should come from gratitude, fullness of heart, and joy. We give what we can out of gratefulness for what we've been given. We share time, talent, and treasure not only because the church needs them, but because we have something God has given us that makes the world is better off if we share it.

This month, some of our committees are looking for new participants. Someone may ask you to serve. Below is the list of the positions that are needed. If you aren't asked, don't assume no one wants your gifts. Please prayerfully consider your participation in our committees and speak with me, Pete Amar (Moderator), or a member of the committee on which you'd like to serve to learn more or to volunteer. Openings include:

1. Moderator
2. Reaching In (two openings)
3. Reaching Out
4. Trustees

Of course, we will also talk about financial giving this month. You will hear from me and the Trustees about our goals and needs for 2027. We recognize that the economy is difficult for some of you. Your life situations have changed. Some of you are doing better than you have, but others are struggling. As with our gifts of time, our gifts of treasure should not come from guilt or duty but rather from gratefulness...from the heart.

Please prayerfully consider all your gifts and how they might be shared through the life of this congregation of God's people who strive every day to be more faithful to the One who gathered us in the

first place. If you'd like to talk about your giving in any area, please feel free to reach out to me or to someone you trust in our congregation.

Blessings,

Pastor Greg

October Church Volunteers (as of 9/17/26)

Date	Liturgist	Greeter/ Usher	Coffee Hour	Digital Ministry	Mowing
4 th	D Storing	M Viviano	Trendas	P Amar	
11 th	S Fuelling	M Hellenberg	C Otto	L Hotelling	
18 th	M Fox	M Fox	T Lubs	P Amar	
25 rd	J Gatewood- Keim	G Lienert	Akans	M Fox	

Guest Preacher: October 18 – Helen Crandall

Guest Musician: October 11 – Sarah Peterson

Thank you!

Office Hours

- **Pastor Greg** will be out of the office October 18. Helen Crandall will preach.
- **Rokko Jans** is out-of-town October 9 – 12. Sarah Peterson will fill in for him on October 11.
- **Liz Larson** will be in Birmingham at Birmingham/Berkley First Rummage Sale October 5-7.

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



Your School Supply donations are helping local kids—thank you!



From GCS Director of Licensed Programs, Karla Hawkins:

"...Thank you so much for the very generous donation of school supplies towards our After School Child Care program...We have over 200 students at four different schools already signed up this school year, so they will be thrilled about having these art supplies..."

~In Our Prayers~

The UNA is praying for Ironton Congregational UCC in October.

Zephie Boughner Gentz had a baby boy, ***Scott***. He was premature and may need to transfer to the University of Michigan. Please pray for baby and family.

Chris Crubaugh.

The English Family –Please pray for ***Joe*** to heal and adjust and for ***the English family.***

Pastor Rosemary Gibson as she continues to recover from injuries sustained in a car accident. She is at McReynolds Hall rehabbing.

Prayers for the Michigan UCC Annual Conference and our church.

Prayers for those moving south for the winter.



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.



FOOD PANTRY DATES

Noon to 2P Otsego County
United Way

OCT 8 & 9, NOV 6 & 7, AND DEC 16
& 17

CONTACT MARGARET
HELLENBERG FOR MORE INFO

116 E. 5TH ST., GAYLORD
(989) 732-8929



Announcements

- We are looking for **virtual greeters** to interact with those participating via social media. Sign up in the Fellowship Hall or on Sign Up Genius.
- **Crop Walk** was on *September 27*. Thank you to those who donated or walked to raise funds to feed the hungry!
- **Meeting Dates for October: Women's Fellowship DNM, Reaching In October 5, Reaching Out October 19, Trustees October 21, Council October 15.**
- **The Michigan Conference UCC Annual Meeting is October 2-3** in Grand Blanc at First Congregational UCC.
- Gaylord's unit of AAUW holds their **annual book sale** at the Otsego United Way on *October 2* from 9 am – 6 pm and *October 3* from 9 am - noon. This fundraiser

helps support educational awards and programming for local girls and women.

- Join us for the **Annual Women's Fall Color Tour** of Pond Hill Farm on *October 7*. The group leaves church at 11 am. Sign up at the Fellowship Hall credenza by *October 4*. Contact Helen Crandall for more information.
- **Food Pantry** dates are *October 8 & 9*.
- Preparation to **make four dozen sandwiches for the Refuge Soup Kitchen Style Lunch** will take place at 10 am on *October 12* in Fellowship Hall.
- Do you know a mom who needs to get out and find others to learn and grow with? **Mama Mingle** is a monthly event at Peace Lutheran. It is *the second Monday of the month (October 12)* from 4:30 – 6. Trusted caregivers will watch your kids and dinner is included! Call Peace for more information.
- *October 13* is The Refuge's annual **Soup Kitchen Style Lunch** at 11:30 at the Pavilion. The meals are free or donation only.
- The **Lunch Group** will dine at noon on *October 20* at Big Buck. All are welcome!
- **November newsletter submissions** are due *October 22*.
- The final **Salad luncheon** of 2026 is at 11:30 am *October 27*.
- Join us for **Book Club** on *October 28* at 1.
- Looking ahead, **Hanging of the Greens and the church's Annual Meeting** are *November 22*. **Annual Reports for the various committees** are due *November 8*.

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



October Birthdays and Anniversaries

Birthdays:

7	Judy Gatewood-Keim
25	Sallie Anderson
	Marilyn Kaczanowski
	Lauren Rigney
	Mary Sanders
27	Jean Sasso
30	Sarah Watling

Anniversaries:

6	Tony & Mike Dockery- Fobar
8	Mischelle Stone & Jean Sasso

*Mark your calendars for November 8, when
Rokko Jans hosts the annual
June Jans Memorial Concert at 3 pm.
All proceeds will go to Meals on Wheels.*

Lynne Wikarski

Dogs and God

How many of you have a dog? When God created our planet earth, He filled it with humans and animals. Dogs are great pets, aren't they? Did you know that DOG, spelled backwards, spells GOD? Maybe God gave us dogs because he knew they could teach humans some special things:

1. Dogs give us love unconditionally. They love us no matter what. Doesn't God love us no matter what?
2. Dogs are quick to forgive. Isn't God quick to forgive us when we sin? We just need to ask.
3. Dogs need your kindness, love, and attention. Doesn't God depend on you to be kind, loving, and giving?
4. If you call a dog by name and give him praise, he will come to you. If you call God by name and praise Him, will He not come to you?
5. A dog will always protect you or try to save you if you fall. Doesn't God always protect and save you if you call on Him?
6. Your dog can learn many things from you, but he has to listen first. We can learn many things from Jesus, but don't we have to listen?

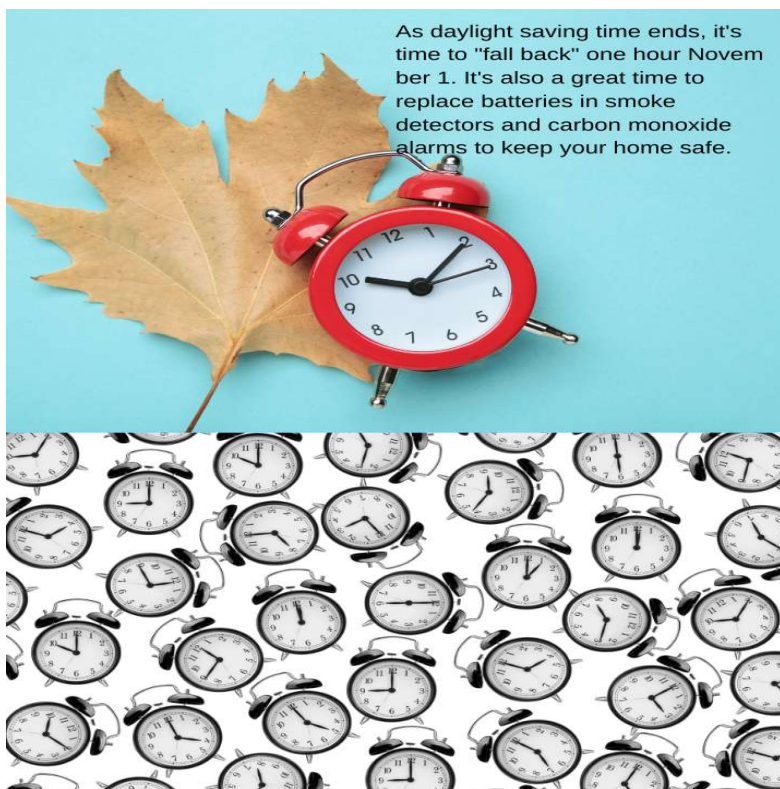
Love goes in a circle...it keeps going around and comes right back to us, doesn't it? What does a dog do? He runs in circles and comes back to us. Then he waits and listens for his next command. Isn't that what God wants us to do? Think about that.

The next time you pet your dog, remember that he was created by the same loving God that created each one of us. Don't you think God

put dogs here to show us, in a gentle way, what He expects of us? Like the dog is to us, God wants us to be His gentle servant.

Prayer: Heavenly Father, teach us to listen closer, so that we can be most loyal to you, our Master. Jesus, thank you for dogs. Amen? Amen.

Reminder that all Annual Meeting Reports are due November 8.





Therefore, be imitators of God, as beloved children, and walk in love, as Christ loved us.

Ephesians 5:1-2 (NRSVUE)

It can be hard to think about this. It's tough not to use the verse to scold: act this way/don't act this way, especially when there are lots of instructions in Ephesians that Christians haven't lived up to.

And yet, it can be inspiring to be like Christ. This transformation is at the heart of our faith. There is hope that what we were doesn't necessarily dictate who we will be.

This is why this passage is the theme for the UCC's Neighbors in Need offering this year. When we come together as a church to work for justice and advocacy, we are acting out of the hope that change in the world is possible.

For this offering, please consider that this offering transforms us as it calls us to collective justice—not simply isolated programs and pitches and that our gifts represent our faith in God's ability to multiply what we have. Jesus' ministry was full of abundance, but not because he started with great resources. Rather, what was offered in community became enough to meet the needs. When we walk, roll, and march in love together, justice will come.

When you give to NIN, you ensure the UCC continues to be a leader for justice. Two-thirds of the offering supports justice projects across the church. One-third supports the Council for American Indian Ministries. Thank you for your gifts!

Neighbors in Need (often abbreviated as NIN) is one of the five annual special offerings of the UCC that our church supports. We will receive this offering throughout the month of October.

www.ucc.org/nin

October



2026

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
UNA Prayers for Ironton Congregational UCC 10a Worship/ Communion **Last day to register for $\frac{2}{2}$ Fall Color Tour**	Flowers provided by Vickie Rigney 6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Reaching in 6p Compassionate Friends	Neighbors in Need Offering 6a Gaylord Gratitude 11a $\frac{2}{2}$ Fall Color Tour 5p Ukelele Group	Annual Reports due Nov 8 11a Bible Study 4p Choir 6p Stronger Together Zoom	1 Mid-Conf Annual Mtg 2 6a Gaylord Gratitude 9a AAUW Book Sale @ UWay	3 Mid-Conf Annual Mtg 3 9a AAUW Book Sale @ UWay	
4 10a Worship/ Communion **Last day to register for $\frac{2}{2}$ Fall Color Tour**	5 6a Gaylord Gratitude NOON Reaching in 6p Compassionate Friends	6 6a Gaylord Gratitude 11a $\frac{2}{2}$ Fall Color Tour 5p Ukelele Group	7 11a Bible Study 4p Choir	8 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal	9 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal	10 10a Nature Photography @ Pigeon River Discovery Ctr
11 10a Worship	CAN Thanksgiving Day 12 6a Gaylord Gratitude 10a Refugee Lunch Sandwich Making in Kitchen	13 11:30a Refugee Soup Kitchen Lunch @ Pavillion	14 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5p Ukelele Group 11a Bible Study 3p Church Council 4p Choir 6p Stronger Together Zoom	15 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal	16 10a Nature Photography @ Pigeon River Discovery Ctr	17
18 10a Worship—Helen Candall preaching	19 6a Gaylord Gratitude 7p Reaching Out	20 12p Lunch Group @ Big Buck	21 6a Gaylord Gratitude 5p Ukelele Group 7p Trustees	Newsletter Deadline 22 11a Bible Study 4p Choir	23 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal	24
25 10a Worship	26 6a Gaylord Gratitude	27 11:30 a Salad Luncheon	28 6a Gaylord Gratitude 1p Book Club	29 11a Bible Study 4p Choir	30 6a Gaylord Gratitude 4p Community Meal	1st Thanksgiving 31 Last Day of Standard Time—Fall Back at 2 am Sunday