

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Gaylord

September 2022

*Embracing people at every age and every stage of life, helping them
to become the most loving version of themselves possible.*

Pastor's Column – September 2022

"All About Belonging"

Starting September 11, we will begin a new worship series called "The Path of Belonging".

I think that to some degree we all know that belonging matters to us. We are social beings and we thrive best when we have a group to whom we belong as our full and total selves. A group where we don't have to act differently than we are, and we are accepted and loved. Every church thinks they are this kind of group, but not always.

Church folks often are great at first welcoming someone as a guest to their church. They show them around, make sure they know where the restrooms and the coffee are located. Church folks inquire about the person or the family who is first coming to the church. We find them bulletins and sometimes even find them a seat in the sanctuary. In our case, our Reaching Out team works hard to reach out to folks and invite them in. All of those are good things.

After a few years, if they're still around, they become a part of the congregation and receive deeper care, compassion, assistance where needed, maybe even friendship. In our case, our Reaching In team does a great job working to care for people when they have become part of the family.

Continued on next page...

First Congregational
United Church of Christ
218 W. Second Street
Gaylord, MI 49735
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www.firstuccgaylord.org

Pastor: Rev. Greg Watling
pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org

Moderator: Maggie Wallin
margaretwallin@msn.com

**Communications
Coordinator:**
Stephanie Kalember
office@firstuccgaylord.org

Church Service: Sunday, 10 am
In-person worship has resumed—



But there is a gap. It's quite unintentional, but almost every church (dare I say, every?) has a gap between someone being a guest and someone being part of the family. Sometimes guests drift away not because they are angry, but because they never felt quite included in the congregation.

We have no idea how many little secrets we have about how things are done. Recent examples include bringing your own place settings to a potluck picnic. No one had to say anything, we believe, because everyone knows. We've always done it that way. Surely people know. Completely unintentionally leaving out new people, or even considering that folks forget that's how we do things.

We need a team that helps us help guests become integrated and part of the family. This idea first came up in the Pastor Parish committee meeting in August. I have already approached Reaching Out about this idea, and Louanne Spearman and Kathy Menkes have volunteered to serve on the team. Hopefully a couple of Reaching In folks will volunteer at the September meeting, or maybe some volunteers will "bubble up" from the congregation. If you are interested, please shoot me an email and let me know (pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org).

This is great timing to go along with our Belonging theme in worship. Many theologians have followed Diana Butler Bass's lead when she says that belonging comes first in a new Christian's life. It comes before belief sometimes. It truly is meeting someone "no matter where they are on life's journey."

Peace,

Greg

OUTDOOR WORSHIP SEPTEMBER 11 at 10 AM!

Dress comfortably, and please bring your own chair, if you are able. We'll have extras for those who need them.

WELCOME TO OUR NEW COMMUNICATIONS COORDINATOR!

During the last week of August, two well-qualified people were interviewed for our open Communications Coordinator position.

Either would have been a good person for the position, but we chose our own Stephanie Kalember for the position!

Stephanie will officially begin Monday, August 29th.

For the time being, her office hours will be Monday 10-2 and Thursday 12-4. She will work additional hours at home.

Welcome, Stephanie, to our staff!

We are blessed to have you among us in this new way!

August 25, 2022

Tell our advertisers you saw their ad in the Weekly Choice • Page 3

LOCAL NEWS

New stories updated daily on-line at www.weeklychoice.com

First Congregational United Church of Christ of Gaylord Announces Their "Sharing Cupboard"

We invite the community to utilize our sharing cupboard, where every single item provided, is completely free to anyone in need. Please visit the cupboard on the north-east side of our building as you wish. Items provided are small baby items, small articles of clothing, socks, undergarments. During the winter months, we hope to provide hats, gloves, and more warm socks.

Many in our community remember Mardee Storing as Mrs. Roundy from her years at Gaylord Schools. We are grateful for Mardee's inspiration in creating this cabinet. She always noticed when children came to school without adequate winter clothing. This cabinet is designed to meet that need.

At this time, we are not able to accept donations.



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Johannesburg-Lewiston Area Schools

Report from Trustees – September 2022 Newsletter

For the month of July, our tithes and offerings of \$6,302 were less than our budget needs by \$1,615 or 20%. Overall for the first seven months of the year, our routine tithes and offerings total \$54,195, or \$1,224 below budget. We appreciate the ongoing generosity of our church family.

Efforts are underway to improve our church audio system. Installation of new cabling is underway and the organ has been repositioned to allow room to relocate the sound mixer once other components are in place. We hope to have the project complete later this fall.

Trustees reviewed an initial draft operating budget for 2023 which reflects a 3% increase in overall operating costs. Final discussion will occur at the September meeting, with a recommended budget to be presented in advance of the Annual Meeting.

Our annual Stewardship campaign will get underway in early fall. Dedication of stewardship pledges will take place on the Sunday following Thanksgiving.

Thank you for the many ways in which you contribute time, talent, and treasures for the continued well-being of our vibrant church community.

First Congregational UCC Gaylord Actual Compared to Budgeted Financials July 2022

	Budget Annual	Budget Monthly	Actual July
INCOME			
Operating Income	\$ 105,500	\$ 8,793	\$ 6,693
Ministries Income			\$ 409
TOTAL INCOME	\$ 105,500	\$ 8,793	\$ 7,102
EXPENSES			
Personnel	\$ 75,730	\$ 6,379	\$ 6,728
Facility	\$ 21,170	\$ 1,364	\$ 948
Administration	\$ 6,250	\$ 443	\$ 127
Ministries	\$ 2,350	\$ 197	\$ 1,936
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$ 105,500	\$ 8,383	\$ 9,739
NET INCOME	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 410

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Committee Annual Reports – must be submitted to office no later than Monday, October 31.

Reaching Out – will be collecting school supplies again during the months of August and September. Please see box in narthex or Louanne Spearman for additional info.

Rummage Sale - is next month! **Please see sign-up sheet on credenza in fellowship hall! We need volunteers to help work during the sale.** Now is the time to start looking around your homes and garages for items to donate! Drop-off dates are Sept. 12 & 13 ONLY, sale dates are Sept. 16 & 17. Please see Sallie Anderson or Helen Crandall for more info.

Food Pantry – is in need of a few more volunteers. Please contact Don Storing if interested.

Bible Study – please monitor your email for information from Rokko on how bible will meet. In the meantime, the Zoom link is provided: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84612895017>

Name Tags – if you are in need of a name tag, please let Jessi-office know.

September Upcoming Dates to Remember

Sept 11th Outdoor Worship

Sept 16 & 17 Rummage Sale

Sept 27 Salad Luncheon

Looking Ahead:

Daylight Saving Ends Nov. 6

Annual Meeting Nov. 13



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MICHIGAN CONFERENCE THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

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517 332-3511 • FAX 517 339-2621 • www.michucc.org

February 20, 2022

Dear Friends,

On behalf of the Michigan Conference of the United Church of Christ I am happy to send you this Courage Grant for \$2,000.00. In the book of Joshua it says that the People of God stood at the edge of the promised land and were terrified. God's response to them is what we hear from God over and over and we hear it today, "Have courage! I am with you!"

The Courage Grant funds were given to our Conference over previous decades by our foremothers and forefathers in the UCC tradition. They gave these gifts because they believed in our mission and our future. It is with great honor and thankfulness that we distribute these gifts to our churches as we stand at the edge of uncertain times. These gifts come with prayers and hope!

This grant is to be used in whatever way your local church determines would be helpful to your future ministry. We do ask that sometime this year, you briefly share how the grant was used. We will provide a link for that brief feedback. We want to share successes and challenges with one another across the Conference so that we might learn, inspire, and support one another. Thank you!

Friends let us hold one another in prayer as we move forward in ministry, and may grace, peace, and courage be yours today, tomorrow, and all the tomorrows to come.



Rev. R. Philip Hart
Transitional Conference Minister

Sharing Cupboard Dedication





School Supplies Needed

The Reaching Out Committee will be collecting school supplies once again from August—September.

There will be a box in the narthex of church where you can drop any items to be donated.

Items they are asking for:

crayons, markers, paints, paper, construction paper, colored pencils, and pens, coloring books, scissors, glue, etc.





Friday, September 16

9 am to 3 pm

***Saturday, September
17***

9 am to Noon

First Congregational Church

218 W. Second St

Gaylord, MI 49735

Drop-off is 12th and 13th in fellowship hall

(Monday and Tuesday)

ONLY

Saturday is Bag Day!



NO TV's, Electronics, or Large Furniture!

All items must be clean and in working order!



Parish and Pastor Relations

Our church's Pastoral Relations Committee (PRC) is a standing committee whose purpose is to support a healthy relationship between our pastor and church participants, thus enhancing the effectiveness of our church's ministry. Our team meets on a quarterly basis and is comprised of five members: Pastor Greg, Cathy Otto, Joe Wambold, Maggie Wallin and Mary Fox. *A Sure Foundation*, a resource publication of the UCC, describes the PRC as serving in two primary ways:

- 1) As an advisory group to the pastor: sharing ideas, dreams, expectations, and concerns of the congregation with the pastor; and
- 2) As a support group for the pastor's leadership: interpreting roles, functions, boundaries, opportunities, and needs of the pastor to our congregation.
- 3) The next quarterly meeting of our PRC will take place in mid-November. Church participants are always encouraged to speak to Pastor Greg directly regarding issues or concerns, and doing so is a key strength of our congregation. If, however, you would prefer to speak to a member of the Pastoral Relations Committee, we invite you to do so. It is the goal of our PRC to promote faithful and effective ministry shared between our pastor and our congregation.





2022 Flower Schedule

January: Margaret Hafner and Dave Henson

February: Margaret Hellenberg

March: Jeannine Wambold

April: Cathy Otto

May: Bill and Maxine Dely

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: \$329

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: \$935

Strengthen the Church

Supports church growth, pastoral and lay leadership development, young and young adult ministers within conferences.

Collected around Pentecost

Received to date: \$94 (2021)

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: \$149 (2021)

Christmas Fund

Provides direct financial assistance to retired UCC ministers and lay employees and spouses.

Collected in December

Received to date: \$774 (2021)

In Addition, we gave \$521 for Blanket Sunday this year!

2022 Tornado Relief - \$377 (as of August)





Current Meeting Times

All are welcome to “attend” these meetings

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/83220896539>

Council will meet the second Wednesday of each month at 7PM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85297662581>

Trustees will meet the third Wednesday of each month at 11:00 AM:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/85470391561>

Bible Study meets Thursdays at 11am

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84612895017>

~ In Our Prayers ~

As a reminder, in an effort to respect each individual's privacy and private wishes, prayer requests will only be printed once permission has been given.

During the month of September, the UNA is holding the Ironton church in prayer

Helen Crandall— as she addresses ongoing health concerns.

Brenda Brummel – as she undergoes tests and treatments.

The English Family – as they grieve the loss of Joe's mother and process Joe's recent diagnosis with progressive aphasia.

Laura Bantens and her partner, Chris— as Chris is experiencing health issues and they are both encountering major life changes.

Maxine Dely—as she deals with ongoing balance issues.

Sandra Soderberg – as she has broken a bone in her left shoulder.

John Hellenberg—who is now living in AspenRidge

Gloria House's granddaughter, Madison Crawford – as she suffers from cataplexy in narcolepsy along with other neurological struggles. She is now at home and adjusting to new medication which seems to be helping but is still in need of prayers.

Brad Derenzy—as he has continuing health struggles.

Ariah House – as she is finally home but still in need of prayers. She will be traveling to Grand Rapids for monthly infusions.

Mardee Storing's daughter, Lori Lane—as her cancer has returned.

All of those working on the frontline to fight COVID-19, those that are considered essential workers, those without jobs, those ill, and those affected by this pandemic in anyway.

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.

Birthdays and Anniversaries

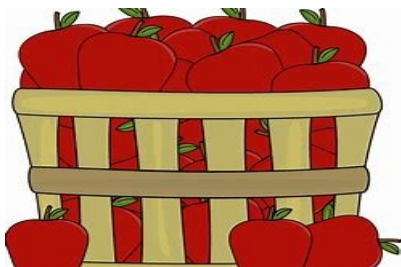
September Birthdays

- 2 Robbie Watling
- 3 Amallia Kassuba
- 7 Margaret Hafner
- 11 Louanne Spearman
- 13 Stephanie Kalember
- 14 Gage Boughner
- 17 Chuck Falk
- 18 Melissa Mannion
- 19 Carol Leser
- 19 Helen Mate
- 22 George Lienerth
- 25 Judy Dunn

September Anniversaries

- 15 Kay and Jim Boughner
- 20 Joe and Lani English





Sept 2022

Sun

Mon

Tue

Wed

Thu

Fri

Sat

				1 Bible Study, 11am Women's Fellowship, 1pm	2 Community Meal 4pm	3
4 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	5 Labor Day	6 Office Hours 8am-12pm	7	8 Bible Study, 11am	9 Community Meal, 4pm	10
11 OUTDOOR Worship, 10am Church Picnic	12 Rummage Sale Drop-off	13 Rummage Sale Drop-off	14 Council, 7pm	15 Bible Study, 11am	16 Rummage Sale 9am-3pm	17 Rummage Sale 9am-12pm
18 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	19	20	21 Trustees, 11am	22 Bible Study, 11am	23 Community Meal, 4pm	24
25 Worship, 10am Coffee Hour	26	27 Salad Luncheon, 11:30am	28 Church Book Club, 1pm	29 Bible Study, 11am	30 Community Meal, 4pm	

*To My Friends and Family at Gaylord
First Congregational United Church of Christ*

I cannot thank everyone enough for my beautiful sendoff last Sunday. To say I was touched is an understatement. Your letters and gifts, and sweet words warmed my heart. I feel incredibly loved and appreciated. Thank you doesn't seem like enough!

The past several weeks have been a rollercoaster of emotions. This church has been such a gift to me for the last five years. I have truly enjoyed every single day here—we have been through some struggles together—but it has been a pleasure all the same.

On my toughest days, I felt better knowing I could come to work, and center my focus on the needs of the church. I've learned so much from my job but most importantly, I'll treasure everything I've learned from all of you!

I'm struggling to find the exact words I want to say, so I'll leave with this:

You are so very special to me and I hope we all keep in touch. Thank you for everything! My gifts, your support, your kind words, your visits, your hugs...everything!

*Lots of Love,
Jessica*