

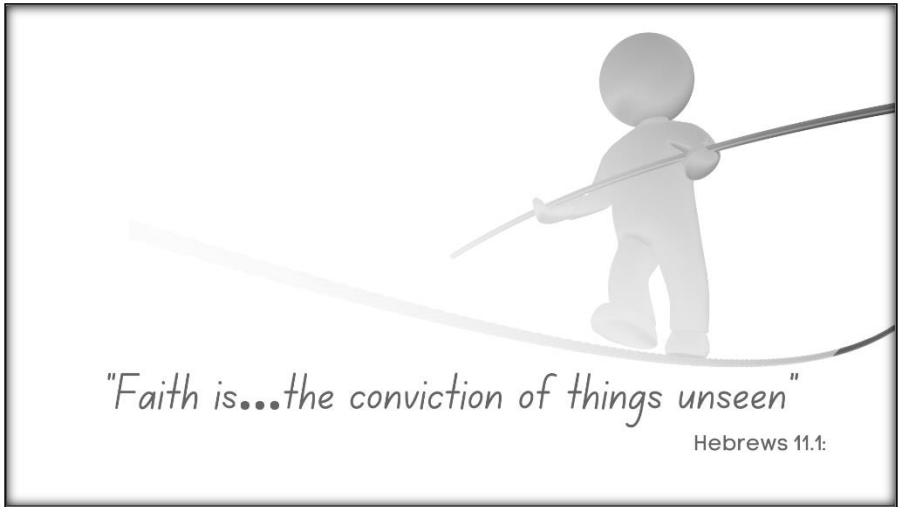
First Congregational United Church of Christ

218 W. Second Street, Gaylord, Michigan 49735

www.firstuccgaylord.org

April 2, 2023

Welcome to the First Congregational United Church of Christ. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here!



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

Words of Welcome

(Adapted from "The Church's One Foundation", Samuel J. Stone, 1866)

Welcome to the First Congregational United Church of Christ. No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcome here.

Congregational Response: You are welcome to journey together with us!

Processional

"Palm Branches"

By, Faure

Performed by the choir.

****Call to Worship***

(The Liturgy for Today's service is from Open the Gates: Service Prayers for Palm/Passion Sunday was written by the Rev. Dr. Chad Abbott, the Conference Minister for the Indiana Kentucky Conference of the United Church of Christ who resides in Indianapolis, Indiana. Worship Ways: United Church of Christ. Used by Permission)

Right Side: **Open the gates, for on this side of Jerusalem, a grand parade of Rome brings the pomp and circumstance of power and prestige to the streets for the Passover Feast.**

Left Side: Open the gates, for on the other side of Jerusalem, a humble procession enters the city among the lives of the Jewish poor and marginalized.

Right Side: **(Facing left and stomping together) Entering through the gates, we ride in on horses with the powerful armor of Rome, bind the festal procession with power. Let the feast begin!**

Left Side: (Facing right and waving palms) Entering through the gates, Jesus comes riding on a donkey and the crowd binds the festal procession by laying down palm branches and shouting, "Hosanna!"

ALL: **(WAVING BRANCHES) OPEN TO US THE GATES OF GOD AND TOGETHER WE WILL PROCLAIM, "BLESSED IS THE ONE WHO COMES IN THE NAME OF THE LORD. HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!"**

****Hymn***

B.213, "Hosanna, Loud Hosanna"

Invocation

One: God of humble entries, we lay down our branches on the path ahead and give thanks for this day you have created. For this is the day you have made, and we rejoice in it together. As we walk with Jesus and his followers into Jerusalem today, open the gates of our hearts that we might enter hearts that we might enter.

First Scripture Lesson

Psalm 118: 1-2, 19-29

****Gloria Patri***

Glory to the Creator, the Christ, the Holy Spirit:
three in one!

As it was in the beginning, is now and ever shall be
world without end. Amen. Amen.

Prayer Of Confession

One: O God, we know that our lives have missed the mark and fallen short of your call to love you and neighbor with our whole lives. At times we can enter into the circumstances of our lives with power over others, arrogance, or a lack of awareness of the needs of our neighbor. Forgive us for being more interested in our own achievements or our obsession with seeking the approval of others. Come and save us now. Transform us into a people of humility and righteousness, we pray. Amen.

Assurance Of God's Love

One: The good news of God this day is this: This is the day that God has made, let us rejoice and be glad in it. For on this day, God has entered into our lives with love and compassion for all who surrender and lay down their lives in Christ. Friends, you are loved. You are embraced. You are forgiven. Amen.

ALL: We give thanks to the Lord, for God is good, and God's love endures forever. Amen and Amen!

Invitation to Generosity

One: O God of Welcome and Waving Palms, as the crowd offered to you their praise and the palms on the road, so we share these gifts out of the abundance you have provided. May they be for the healing salvation and work of justice you are bringing about in the world through your unending love. Amen and Amen.

***Doxology**

Praise God from whom all blessings flow
Praise God all creatures here below
Praise God for all that love has done
Creator, Christ, and Spirit, One!
Amen.

Prayer of Dedication and Thanksgiving

One: O God of Welcome and Waving Palms, as the crowd offered to you their praise and the palms on the road, so we share these gifts out of the abundance you have provided. May they be for the healing salvation and work of justice you are bringing about in the world through your unending love. Amen and Amen.

Sharing of Prayer Concerns/Pastoral Prayer/Lord's Prayer

Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed be thy name.
Thy Kingdom come, thy will be done, on earth as it is in heaven
Give us this day our daily bread.
And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors.
And lead us not into temptation but deliver us from evil.
For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.
Amen.

Second Scripture

Matthew: 21: 1-11

***Hymn**

B.216 All Glory, Laud, And Honor

Message

“Riding On A Donkey”
Rev. Greg Watling

Celebration Of The Sacrament Of Holy Communion

(Bread of Life: An All Ages Communion for Lent. By Nancy Cocks. From Wild Goose
Book of Liturgies: Iona Community. Altered)

Communion Drama

Invitation to Communion

Sharing the Bread and Cup

Prayer of Thanksgiving

All: Loving God, your love is as close to us as our own hands and feet. People who need your love are as close to us as the people beside us and in front of us. Send us now into your world to love each other, sure that you love us. Show us where we are needed and how we can make a difference so that the world will be a good place for all your people. We know this is what Jesus wanted. Help us live for Jesus wherever we go. Amen.

Special Music

“One Friend”

By, Keb’ Mo’

Blessing

Right Side: Turning from the front to the back) Having entered through the gates in power and prestige, this Jesus has called us to go out in love, compassion, and humility.

Left Side: (Turning from the front to the back) Having entered through the gates on donkeys and waving palms, this Jesus has come to save and now calls us to go out in hope, justice, and love.

ALL: TOGETHER, WE ARE EMBRACED BY AN
ENDURING AND BOUNDLESS LOVE THAT
FORGES US TOGETHER IN SHOUTS OF
“HOSANNA! HOSANNA IN THE HIGHEST!”

Pastor: Friends, Go forth humbly to serve the God whose love endures forever. Go forth in the name of the Christ who entered Jerusalem on a lowly donkey. Go forth in the strength of the Holy Spirit, that calls us to rejoice in this very day God has made. God’s love endures forever.

ALL: GOD’S LOVE ENDURES FOREVER. AMEN!

Note that we have two hymnals, one is red (R), the other is black (B).

*You are invited to stand if you feel comfortable doing so.

~ In Our Prayers ~

**During the month of April the UNA is holding the
Charlevoix First Congregational UCC in prayer.**

Jeannine Wambold and family – as they grieve Jeannine’s mother’s recent passing.

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

Janet Holmes, cousin of Kay Boughner, as Janet has been released from the hospital and continues her recovery.

Andrew Short, Helen Crandall's grandson, who was seriously injured in a motorcycle crash.

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

Brad Derenzy—as he has been blessed with a bit of a reprieve from his illness.

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

Jen Crandall Finnegan - as she was recently hospitalized with migraine headaches.

Helen Crandall's family – as a cousin's son passed away unexpectedly last week.



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.

SUNDAY PARTICIPANTS:

Worship Leader: Rev. Greg Watling

Liturgist: Louanne Spearman

Greeter: Mona Viviano

Flowers: Jeannine Wambold

Music Director: Rokko Jans

Altar & Banner Design: Helen Mate

Graphic Arts: Brenda Brummel

Production: Pete Amar

Coffee Hour:

Pastor

Rev. Greg Watling

989-732-5726

920-472-9172

Monday: 8:00am – 12:00pm

Thursday: 12:00pm – 4:00pm

Or by appointment

Email: pastorg@firstuccgaylord.org

Communications Coordinator

Stephanie Kalember

989-732-5726

Monday: 10:00am – 2:00pm

Thursday: 12:00 pm – 4:00pm

E-mail: office@firstuccgaylord.org

Moderator

Margaret Wallin

margaretwallin@msn.com

Finance

Jessica Benoit

finance@firstuccgaylord.org

- ANNOUNCEMENTS -

Food Pantry – needs a few more volunteers. Please contact Don Storing if interested.

Bible Study – 11 AM on Thursdays, but please keep an eye on your email for communication from Rokko. The Zoom link is provided:

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

PLEASE NOTE: we will be using a new zoom link for reaching out meetings from now on.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83640729481>

Meeting ID: 836 4072 9481

March 16 – April 2 -- Stephanie working remotely – I will be in Florida, but I *will* be working and checking email daily!

Birthdays:

1 Anna Kalember
2 Avery Ball
3 Doreen Dobosy
3 Kathy Arnold
4 Duncan Palmer
7 Jenna Andrews
8 Paige Kassuba
9 Anna Fry
14 Ben Fry
14 Scott Fry
16 Cathy Otto
19 Aaron Hotelling
19 Caroline Compton

Anniversaries:

20 Alan and Becky Trendera
25 Bill & Maxine Dely

Happenings at Church for the week of April 2, 2023

Sunday: Worship, 10 AM

Monday: Reaching In, 12 PM

Thursday: Bible Study 11 AM

Women's Fellowship 1 PM

Choir 4 PM

Maundy Thursday Service 6:30 PM

Friday: Good Friday Service, 12 PM

Service of Tenebrae, 7 PM @ Peace Lutheran

NO Community Meal

*Our meetings are open to all, except where noted. If you have input for any our teams and cannot make the meeting time, please email us your ideas at office@firstuccgaylord.org. Thanks!