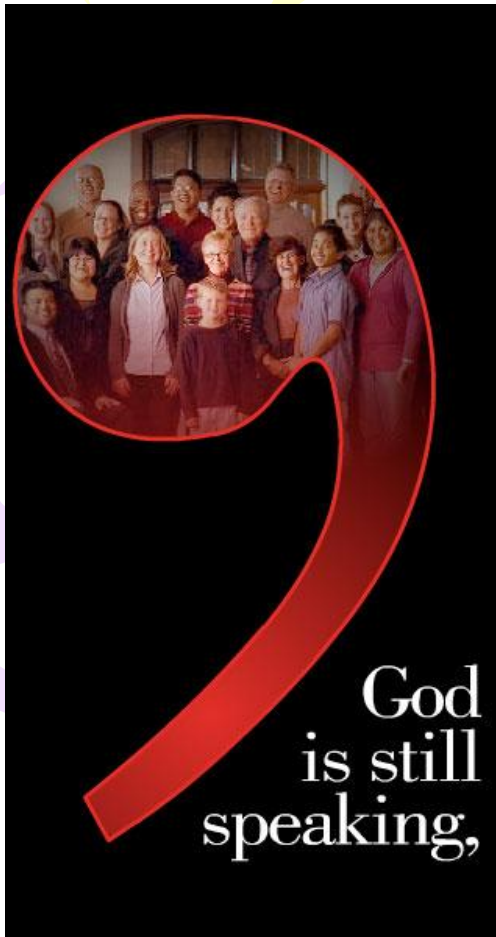


Gaylord United Church of Christ

***" through our Actions,
Prayers, and Words!"***

Congregational Meeting

November 18, 2012





Gaylord United Church of Christ

- “The mission of the Gaylord United Church of Christ is:
 - **To proclaim the love of God in Jesus Christ to this community and the world;**

AND

- **To live the Gospel of Jesus Christ through our words and deeds.”**



Mark

January 21, 2007 Meeting

"We are Gaylord's Melting Pot"

We believe that God is still speaking to us through everyday life by the opportunities in which we are give, and we are accepting of all faiths.

We are a comfortable, friendly, musical congregation of Christians who are award of and act on the needs of others.

We are a congregation of accepting, independent thinkers, welcoming to all to join us in sharing God's word and communion.

We are a family who welcomes all as we grow individually and together in the model of Christ's love.

We are a diverse group of people celebrating the differences in each other and accepting anyone wherever they are at and working together to grow in their faith.

Mark



Purpose of Meeting

- **Ask for Support**

- Become a “Permission-Giving Church”, where the Council and members have permission to DO things...differently!

- **Ask for Trust, Prayers, Forgiveness**

- We will make mistakes when we explore new ministries /community connections.

- **Ask for Help**

- We need Time, Talent, and Tithes

Hank

The Four Corners of Success



Hank

October 27 "Church-Craft" Workshop

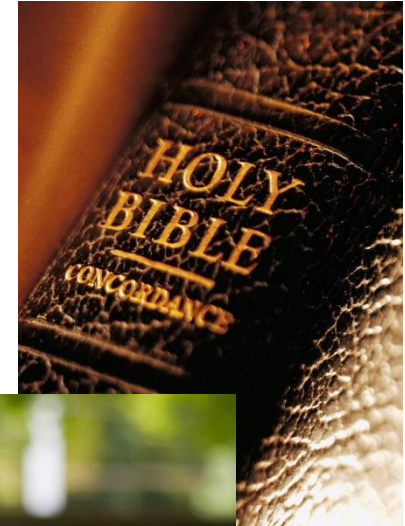
*Creating a Process for Getting People On-Board in Your Church
Led by Rev. Mike Piazza and David Plunkett*

- How to attract new people to your church using basic tools every church has (or should have)!!
- Best practices in basic hospitality when people visit for the first time.
- Shaping membership classes that inspire instead of bore people.
- Setting up small groups that shape disciples.

Phil

"Church-Craft" Insights

- What is the "Heartbeat" of our community?
- What is distinctive about our church?
- Worship services should meet the needs of first-time visitors.
 - Take off our bibs and put on our aprons.
 - Serve others, not serve me.
 - Producers, not consumers.
 - Host, not Guest. *"Champagne Evangelism"*
 - Interior/Exterior Signage
 - Multi-Media, Music, Photo, Video
 - Website, Email, Social Media...
 - Nametags, Attendance Pads
 - Weekly eNewsletter, Daily eDevotional
 - Much, much more....



Phil



What does God want us to do?

- **Energetic Worship Services**
 - Move and inspire people to laugh/cry
- **Small Group Meetings with Friends who Care About Each Other**
 - Limited Times, Specific Topics
- **Community Service Projects**
 - Do Something to Make a Difference

Phil



Energetic Worship Service

- Monthly music-oriented worship services
 - Gustavus, Sibley East, Dick Kimmel...
- Have members speak, read, or participate in the worship service
 - Poems, Prayers, Children's Sermons...
- Use multi-media and technology
 - Audio-Visual System...

Small Group Meetings with Friends Who Care About Each Other

- **Congregational Bible Study & Prayer**

- Daily “*StillSpeaking*” Devotional
 - <http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit/daily-devotional/>
- “*Weekly Seeds*” Bible Study
 - <http://www.ucc.org/feed-your-spirit/weekly-seeds/>

- **Community-Based Worship**

- Lenten Services at Oak Terrace??

- **Small Group Study (3x per Year)**

- Lenten Bible Study (6 weeks) [**Winter**]
- Summer “Beer and Bible” Study [**Summer**]
- “Affinity” Groups (Shared Interests) [**Fall**]

- ***Need Volunteers to Host***



Community Service Projects

- **DO something to make a difference**
 - Head Start Christmas program
 - February 2013 fundraiser for Food Shelf
 - After-school activity center for kids
 - Hispanic Outreach Ministry
 - *Sign-Up Sheets / Planning in Advance*



What are the Next Steps?

- **Become a “Permission-Giving” Church**
 - Finalize message(s) about our church.
 - Community Leaders...moving forward
 - Making mistakes, learning, experimenting
- **What do we offer...and to whom?**
 - Decide how we are going to communicate this information to Gaylord’s citizens.
 - Decide who will do it...moving outside our “Comfort Zone”
 - Decide how much we are willing to spend...and on what things.
- **“Prayer for Success” means we Trust**
 - Members give Time, Talent, & Treasure (Tithe)
- **Council is open to exploring all ideas!**

Mark



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Mark

Closing Prayer





Gaylord United Church of Christ

How are we unique?

**Input for our Faith Statement
Congregational Meeting
October 29, 2006**



Answering “The Question”

- If we contact people in the community...
 - From other churches...
 - Who are new to Gaylord...
 - Who do not have a church...
- How do we explain our uniqueness and why they will LOVE becoming part of our “mutual ministry”?
- What do we say to someone who asks...
“Why should I join the Gaylord UCC?”

The background features a stylized sun in the top left corner, composed of a large green circle with yellow triangular rays. To the left of the text, there are three balloons: a green one at the top, a light blue one in the middle, and a purple one at the bottom. All three balloons have yellow triangular rays emanating from them. The text is centered and has a slight drop shadow.

What did we learn? (Group 1)

We believe that God is still speaking to us through everyday life by the opportunities in which we are give, and we are accepting of all faiths.

We are a comfortable, friendly, musical congregation of Christians who are award of and act on the needs of others.



What did we learn? (Group 2)

We are a family who welcomes all as we grow individually and together in the model of Christ's love.



What did we learn? (Group 3)

We are a congregation of accepting, independent thinkers, welcoming to all to join us in sharing God's word and communion.



What did we learn? (Group 4)

We are a diverse group of people celebrating the differences in each other and accepting anyone wherever they are at and working together to grow in their faith.

Most Common Themes

Frequency	Themes	Unique to Us?
36	Caring, Giving, Helpful, Supportive	
34	Open, Diverse, Tolerant, Respectful	Yes
34	Friendly, Sociable	
29	All are welcome & can participate/vote	Yes
26	Faithful, Individual Faith (Covenantal)	Yes
25	Actively involved in the community	
22	Independent Thinking, Learning	Yes
17	Accepting, Inclusive (Ecumenical)	Yes
11	Music	



What do we have to offer?

Gaylord is made up of a diverse mix of people!

- Young Families...latchkey children
- Single, Divorced, Separated, Widowed
- Split Families...Traditional Families
- Elderly...Youth...Parents without kids
- Hispanic...Newcomers to Gaylord
- The “unchurched”...different faiths
- Liberals, conservatives
- People who want to be “friends”
- Different religions, gay/lesbian, race

**Do these people have different needs?
Do we need to say or do anything
differently for each group?**

How are we involved in the Gaylord community?

- Service Clubs
 - Rotary, Sertoma, Jaycees, Legion, etc.
- Youth
 - Volunteers at Sibley East, 4H, Scouting, Youth Group
- People in Need
 - Meals on Wheels, Bloodmobile, Food Shelf, Thanksgiving Dinner, Ambulance, Fire, Blue Christmas Service

What are the “firsts” that we have done in Gaylord?

- Hispanic
 - Founded the Alliance of Friendship
- Men’s Fellowship
 - Men’s Lenten Breakfasts
- Ecumenical Worship Services
 - Thanksgiving, Good Friday
- What Else?
 - _____



We are Gaylord's "melting pot"!

- Are you an independent thinker?
 - You're welcome here.
- Are you _____ (fill in the blanks)
 - We are a "melting pot" of people from different denominations, backgrounds, beliefs, and interests, etc.
- Thanks for listening to me. (We listen!)
 - You're welcome here.

Specific Examples of our "Uniqueness"

- We serve communion to anyone.
- We "marry and bury" anyone. (Example: John Werges funeral...Christian Scientist and Immanuel Lutheran Church).
- Non-members can go through confirmation.
- Mentoring program for confirmation.
- Our congregation leads the national synod...not vice versa. We have a covenantal relationship with the national synod and the Minnesota Conference.
- Everyone is able to have their own personal faith.
- Don't have to be baptized to become a member.
- Don't have to be a member to participate in the life of the church.
- We are not tied to a specific set of rules or traditions.
- Everybody is treated equally and with respect.
- We are the "church of the independent thinker".
- Women can vote.
- The best potlucks in Gaylord!
- No religions are "wrong".
- We do not judge people.
- Everybody does what they can do.
- We believe in what we do and we work together.



God is Still Speaking...

No Matter Who
No Matter Where
God is Still Speaking
You're welcome here.

Never place a period, where God has
placed a comma (Gracie Burns)



One Possible List of Unique things for the Gaylord UCC

Ecumenical church...open/welcome

Bringing people together...diversity

Building relationships...respect

Independent thinkers (I'm ok, You're ok)

Constructive conflict (ok to disagree)

Encourage differences of opinion

Actively involved in the community

Living our faith "in action" each day!

Are you...Welcome Here?

ARE YOU....

A Christian...a Hindu...a Muslim...A Jew...A Buddhist...A Christian Scientist...
A Widow or Widower...Single, Divorced, or Separated...Shut-in...
Married, with or without children...
Without a denomination or a tie to a particular church...
Discriminated against...
Not baptized...Not confirmed...
Feeling excluded by the church because of your beliefs...
Liberal...Conservative...Independent...Green Party...Democrat...Republican...Apolitical
A Person who has left the church because your needs were not met?

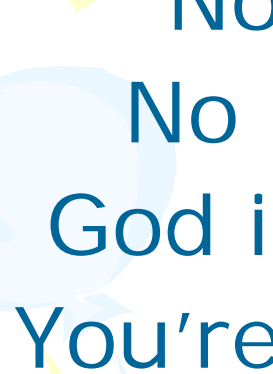
YOU CAN COME BACK HERE!!

YOU ARE WELCOME TO THE GAYLORD UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

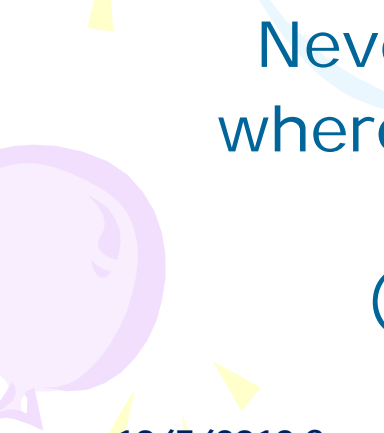
...As an equal partner with each of us...
...As a respected, and loved, Child of God...
...As a valued member of our church family...
...And with the opportunity to share your talents with us!!



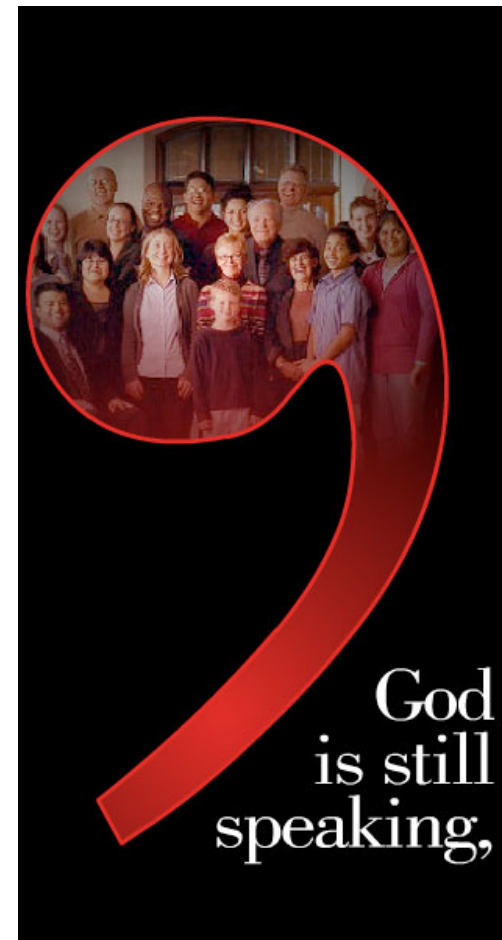
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Never place a period,
where God has placed...
a comma
(Gracie Burns)





Why do people decide to become involved with church?

- It's not because of the church's name. In this crowd, denominationalism doesn't cut it; the denomination often played no role at all in the person's decision to choose a particular church.
- **These new Christians want to know what a church believes in; they want it to stand for something clear. The way Rainer sees it, churches need to "be clear in conviction about biblical matters."**
- Many of those who joined a church had had some previous contact with organized religion; had, in the past, come to church now and then; and were not ignorant about religion.
- Source: *"Surprising Insights From the Unchurched and Proven Ways to Reach Them"* (Zondervan), by Thom Rainer, dean of the Billy Graham School of Missions, Evangelism and Church Growth at the seminary in Louisville

July 25, 2012 Conference Call with Rev. Elena Larssen





Small Churches Know Their Niche

- Cannot be all things to everyone
- Get past “attracting the youth”
- Rooted in history
- Focus on 1-3 key assets you currently have
 - Asset #1: _____
 - Asset #2: _____
 - Asset #3: _____



Small Churches Root Their Mission in Their Identity

- Celebrate your identity as a church
- Link mission to identity
 - Be rooted in the congregation's understanding of its identity
 - Be rooted in the congregation's understanding of the Gospel
- What does our church believe is the “good news” Jesus came to proclaim?
- How, when, and where are we called to share this good news in this present time?



Small Churches Know Extravagant Welcome

- Focus on relationships, not numbers
- Personal attention to “guests”
- Intergenerational friendships
- Beware of overwhelming guests with too much, too soon



Small Churches Know When to Let Go

- Offer a place for lamentation
- Don't lament the way things were
- Say....



THANK YOU



Farewell

Small Churches Have Fun Together

Choose FUN



Over Drudgery





Small Churches Make Stewardship Personal

- Why would people want to give to our church?
 - Belief in the mission
 - Regard for leadership (staff)
 - Fiscal responsibility of the organization
- Stewardship is based on personal relationships and telling the story



Small Churches “Right-Size” Their Governance

- In what ways do your governance structures...
 - Stifle your primary mission?
 - Enable your primary mission?
- Do we need to change so that the church can more readily focus its time, energy, and passions on its primary mission?

Small Churches Share What Works

- Collaboration, not competition!





Changing and Saving the World (Our Scorecard)

Summary

Our Scorecard

We Know Our Niche.

We Celebrate Our Unique Identity.

We Root Our Mission in Our Unique Identity.

We Know and Express Extravagant Welcome.

We Have Skills at “Letting Go”.

We Have FUN Together.

We Make Stewardship Really Personal.

We “Right-Size” Our Governance.

We Share What Works.

Closing Prayer

