

Friendship News

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Brainerd
An Open and Affirming Church



The church office hours are 8am-12pm, Tuesday – Friday.

Our Pastor, Leslie Moughty's drop-in hours are Wednesday's 2-4pm and Thursday's 10am-12:00pm. Other times available by appointment.

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uccbrainerd.org

January 2019

**No matter who you are,
or where you are on life's journey,
you are welcome here.**

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**The December Council minutes and Special Offerings will be included in the February newsletter

Pastor's Pen

"Now after that, an angel of the Lord appeared to Joseph in a dream and said, "Get up, take the child and his mother, and flee to Egypt..." Matthew 2:13


The Christmas story in our scripture does not linger for long on the song of angels, the awe of shepherds, or the gifts of the magi. In Matthew's gospel, we quickly learn that with the visit of the magi, alerts King Herod to the birth of a baby whom they believed was the Messiah. The story tells us of Herod's brutality and violence as he allows a perceived threat to his authority to drive him to order the massacre of all children under the age of two in and around Bethlehem.

The Revised Common Lectionary schedules this scripture to be read on the Sunday after Christmas every three years. I would bet that many, if not most churches choose to focus on a different scripture that week. It's a difficult text full of sorrow and evil – not exactly the themes we want to be thinking about during the Christmas season. At Christmas we celebrate the incarnation: God made flesh, God with us, Emmanuel. It is important that we not only pay attention to the sweet baby, and the cute animals in the manger, and the glorious song of angels, and the awe of the shepherds. It is important that we remember that in Jesus, God comes into the world the same way each of us did - as a vulnerable baby. In Jesus, God becomes fully human and reminds us that our humanity matters.

The Holy family was warned by an angel of the violence Herod was planning. They were able to seek asylum in Egypt and find safety there until Herod died. Jesus and his family escaped. But most did not. This story is the Christmas story for too many people around the world - children and babies being carried by their parents as they flee violence in their homelands. Children who will spend the Christmas holiday and the days and maybe weeks to follow in a detention center away from their families. We mourn the death of 7 year-old Jakelin Caal Maquin from Guatemala whose death was likely a combination of the result of the arduous journey as well as a delay in receiving medical attention.

God is each of these children, running from violence, inhaling tear gas, sleeping on the ground or in a detention center not knowing if they will ever see their parents again. Fellow children of God, in this Christmas season, let us remember that it matters that God took on our humanity, our vulnerability, and came to live as one of us. Let us live as though the incarnation really matters to us, right now, as 2018 turns to 2019. Let us put ourselves into the story, let God-with-us know that we are also with God, wherever God is made flesh in this world.

With Peace,



For information about how you can help people at our southern border, visit <https://tinyurl.com/borderhelp>

Pastor Leslie will be out of the office from December 31 – January 13 attending the January Core Class for the Next Generation Leadership Initiative and a week of vacation. The following pastors will be on call for pastoral care emergencies:

12/31 – 1/6: Rev. Mark Ford - 218-232-8131

1/7 – 1/13: Rev. John Stiles – 612-418-1406

January Birthdays

1/1	Lilja Behr	1/8	Deb Lundberg	1/22	Pam Patrick
1/5	Linda Downs	1/13	Marcia Ferris	1/26	David Schaeffer
1/7	Macyn Harder McBroom	1/16	Betty Alderman	1/31	Nick Kalinoski

HUGS

January 6

Hosts: Shon Boman & Jan Morton

Ushers/Greeters: Reed Campbell, Greg Johnson,
Austin Newgord & Gary Whiteman

Counters: Jeff Behr & Gale Landem

January 13

Hosts: Maria Bertram & Marina Grabowski

Ushers/Greeters: Jack & Kay Kraywinkle,
Austin & Itty Newgord

Counters: Deb Griffith & Georgia Harris

January 20

Hosts: Brian & Becky Twamley

Ushers: Austin & Itty Newgord

Greeters: Charlotte Goedsche & Cynthia Janes

Counters: Tracy Lyons & Mabel Schultz

January 27

Hosts: TBD

Ushers/Greeters: TBD

Counter: Nancy Gould & Judy Whiteman

News from New Pathways

The New Pathway staff has let us know that currently that there are only 2 families needing services; 6 guests in all, for the week of Dec. 30th - Jan 6, 2019. There is always the possibility of more people entering the program before December 30th, but the number will not exceed 18. Thank you to all who have signed up to volunteer during that week and every week that our church houses the families. You are truly a blessing!

Also, the executive director indicated that NP's has an agreement with the new owners of the Presbyterian Church, (Halverson/Johnson Funeral Home) that they will not have to move their program day center to another location. This is indeed great news for New Pathways and for our homeless family population.

Adult Forum

January 20, 2019 – The Green New Deal, Expanded, Improved Medicare for All, and Changing the Criminal Injustice System: Great News from the 2018 Sanders Institute Gathering. By Trish Miller (Pine River MN)

January 27, 2019 – Teri Gerhardt, LICSW, will be presenting to us on the Mobile Crisis Organization.

News from the Trustees

The trustees have begun to make changes to the fellowship hall men's restroom so that it will become a handicapped accessible area for both male & female use. One partition by the commode has been removed for easier accessibility with a wheelchair or walker and a deadbolt lock has been installed on the entry door. The inside of the door has a turn handle to lock for privacy which can be easily opened. In the event someone is locked in the restroom, a key is located in the fellowship kitchen on the side of the refrigerator marked handicapped bathroom. Further changes will be made as funding is available.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year from your Trustees Committee, Sharon Carlson, Tracy Lyons, Cynthia Janes, Jeff Behr, Nancy Gould and Deb Griffith.

Brain Buster Trivia Challenge

The Brainerd, MN branch of the American Association of University Women presents the 12th annual

BRAIN BUSTER TRIVIA CHALLENGE

Saturday, January 19, 2019

First Lutheran Church, 424 S 8th St. Brainerd
Check In 1:00 to 1:45 pm - Play begins at 2:00 pm
\$90 per team - up to 6 players per team



Fundraiser for Central Lakes College Scholarships

Prize for Best Team Costume!
Free Coffee and Treats! Fun Prizes!
Register online and pay at the event

**The winning team gets bragging
rights and a cheap trophy they
have to give back!**

brainbustertrivia.org

High School Trip to Chicago and Milwaukee – Register Now!

Registration is open for the 2019 High School Trip to Chicago and Milwaukee! Please fill out the form at <https://tinyurl.com/hsucc> no later than **December 28**. We will be fundraising to offset the cost of the trip. In the meantime, a deposit of \$100 is due with the registration to secure a spot. Please give payment to the church office (make checks payable to First Congregational UCC). Financial assistance is available, and payments can be made over time. The most important piece is completing the form. Please let Pastor Leslie know if you need assistance or if you have any questions.

Real Talk: Sexuality and Our Faith for 9-12 grades

In partnership with our sister congregations in New York Mills and Wadena, we will be offering a series of workshops on Sundays after church called “Real Talk: Sexuality and Faith”. Starting on January 27, we will meet at the UCC church in Staples once a month from 12:30 pm – 3:30 pm for lunch and a workshop on the topic of sexuality and faith. These workshops will be using the Our Whole Lives (OWL) curriculum as its basis. I (Pastor Leslie) will be attending and helping to lead these sessions, so I will be able to provide transportation for up to 4 participants.

Lori Alford, who will be leading the series, will be hosting an **information session** for parents and youth on **January 13** after worship. If you are a youth or a guardian who is at all interested in possibly attending one or all of the workshops, please come to the information session. I can't praise this curriculum enough. It is the sexuality education you wish you had as a young person. Participants do not have to belong to the church so encourage the parents of your teen's friends to come as well.

Women's March in Washington

Do you remember the Women's March in Washington in 2017? Do you wish you had been there? Well, a second Women's March is coming to Washington on January 19th. The North family plans to be there along with some friends from Up North, and we want to gauge the interest in others attending. If you have an interest in attending, please talk to Sue North about possible logistics.

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd				
Financial Results - General Fund				
Year to Date Results as of 11/30/2018				
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 11/30/18	% of Budget	Actuals Through 11/30/17
Income:				
Giving Units	\$ 129,892	\$ 163,436	125.82%	\$ 136,887
Loose Offering (10% to OCWM)	\$ 3,278	\$ 3,022	92.19%	\$ 3,004
Other Giving	\$ 4,938	\$ 7,680	155.54%	\$ 6,160
Revolving Income	\$ 3,933	\$ 15,645		\$ 19,593
Total Income	\$ 142,041	\$ 189,783	133.61%	\$ 165,644
Expenses:				
Council	\$ 101,821	\$ 88,273	96.37%	\$ 92,990
Christian Education	\$ 2,300	\$ 722	44.25%	\$ 289
Christian Ministry	\$ 1,900	\$ 2,110	121.73%	\$ 3,610
Music	\$ 8,990	\$ 7,674	93.53%	\$ 7,058
Stewardship	\$ 695	\$ 571	92.40%	\$ 638
Trustees	\$ 56,810	\$ 82,362	153.14%	\$ 45,632
Revolving Expense	\$ 3,724	\$ 13,739		\$ 14,696
Total Expenses	\$ 176,241	\$ 195,450	119.86%	\$ 164,914
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (34,200)	\$ (5,667)		\$ 730

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - Revolving Accounts		
Year to Date Results as of 11/30/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 11/30/18
Income:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -
Flower Income	\$ -	\$ 365
OCWM Income	\$ 8,398	\$ 8,115
Other Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 3,247
Special Offering Income	\$ -	\$ 134
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 1,349
UCC Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 2,435
Total Income	\$ 8,898	\$ 15,645
Expenses:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ 237
Flowers	\$ -	\$ 719
OCWM Payments	\$ 8,398	\$ 6,818
Other Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 2,614
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 771
UCC Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 2,580
Total Expenses	\$ 9,123	\$ 13,739
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (225)	\$ 1,906

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - Designated Funds		
Year to Date Results as of 11/30/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 11/30/18
Income:		
Building Fund		\$ 23,760
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 2,190
Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ 1,214
Total Income	\$ -	\$ 27,164
Expenses:		
Building Fund		\$ 44,981
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 8,400
Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ 878
Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ 54,259
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ (27,095)

Church Calendar – January 2019

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 New Year's Day Office Closed New Pathways	2 9:30 Prayer Circle 12:00 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn New Pathways	3 New Pathways	4 10:30 Book Group New Pathways	5 New Pathways
6 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 7:00 12 th Night Concert	7	8	9 9:30 Prayer Circle 12:00 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	10 5:30 Committee Meetings	11 10:30 Book Group 11:30 Clergy Cluster	12
13 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School	14	15	16 9:30 Prayer Circle 12:00 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Council Meeting	17 6:00 Taize Service	18 10:30 Book Group	19
20 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	21	22	23 9:30 Prayer Circle 12:00 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	24	25 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	26
27 10:00 Worship & Special Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum 5:00 Newsletter Deadline	28	29	30 9:30 Prayer Circle 12:00 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	31		