

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

April 2018

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

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April Birthdays

4/1 Izzy Armstrong
4/4 Krystal Graf
4/7 David Crust
4/13 Hans Stadem
4/14 Bonnie Crum

4/14 Dan Hegstad
4/15 Joey Halvorson
4/23 Emma Ferrie
4/24 JoAnne Nelson
4/24 Coleen Carder

4/24 Austin Newgord
4/26 Mitch Crum
4/27 Lori Howe
4/30 Millie Gjertson

Pastor's Pen

"He is risen!" "He is risen indeed!" These words ring out in many churches around the world on Easter Sunday, rejoicing in the resurrection of Jesus. The concept of the resurrection can be a difficult one to get our heads around. Dead people coming back to life after two days (rising on the third day) is not something any of us have witnessed or heard of in modern times. It defies our post-enlightenment logic. I think I say this every Easter: "I wasn't there, I don't know if it happened or not, but I know that it's true," meaning, if the disciples had access to video cameras, I don't know if the resurrection is something they could have captured on video, but I know that the message of the resurrection is true. It's the message what we perceive to be dead may yet being new life, that the story isn't always over when we think it is, that sometimes, God inspires and creates things that we couldn't have imagined before it happened.

I have been feeling this way a lot lately as I think about the recent "March for our Lives" movement. I remember watching the news of the shooting at Columbine High School in disbelief. Certainly this incident was a one time tragedy that could never happen again. But then more school shootings happened, more people were killed in a movie theater, even more were gunned down in fast food restaurants and churches. And when a gunman took the lives of 20 children and 6 adults, I thought, "this is going to change things." But nothing changed. It seemed like the potential to reform our laws around guns was dead. For five years it seemed dead.

I have said before that I don't believe God causes suffering, but I do believe God can help us use suffering to bring about something good. This is the definition of resurrection. The horrific suffering of the victims at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School and their friends and families, has turned from a story of death to a story of resurrection. Resurrection often happens in mysterious ways. Sometimes resurrection comes when a man spends 15 years in prison and then starts a successful bakery that employs other ex-cons. Sometimes it is a person struggling with addiction who finds new life in a 12-step program. And sometimes resurrection is born from the grief and anger of high school students who inspire a nation to change something that seemed unchangeable.

This Easter season, I invite you to look around for resurrection stories. Maybe you have one of your own. May we have the faith and the courage to imagine the seemingly impossible with God's help.

With Peace,

Pastor Jessie

Moderator's Notes

This past month I have been touched by the number of messages and affirmations that I have received regarding my March Moderator's Notes writing. Several of you were surprised that I did not have guns present in my childhood. Many of you agreed with my message. It is my "wish" that we can have different perspectives on the gun control issue yet still respect each other's opinion. However, it is also my concern that people will quickly forget the recent Florida mass shooting until another one occurs. It is vital that our children are protected and that we begin to take serious measures in our country that will keep them safe. If you are concerned about enhancing our school safety locally, please consider voting on the school referendum by April 10th. A majority of Part 1 is devoted to improving school security.

Soon our UCC congregation will be forming new committees and electing new officers. This year our annual meeting is on Sunday, May 20. I encourage you to identify your own personal gifts and talents and consider how you can best share them with First Congregational. For example, if you enjoy preparing for

special worship services, Christian Ministry may be your calling. On the other hand, if you have an interest in maintenance and improving the church property, the Trustees Committee would be your "suit". If working with the youth is your favorite, please consider signing up for Christian Ministry. The Stewardship Committee conducts educational programs that help members understand the concept of Christian stewardship in giving of their talents, time, and financial resources. Another vital committee is the Pastor/Parish Relations Committee. Their primary responsibility is to promote a healthy relationship between the pastor and congregation.

During this year as moderator, I have been impressed by the contribution that so many members in our congregation give to our wonderful church. Some of you spend countless hours toiling away on building projects and others help people out whenever needed. When everyone gives of their time or talents, the results are amazing! As volunteers, together we can make a difference. So this is my "call to action". Whether you want to give a couple hours a month or work on a special project, you are vital and appreciated. Thank you for your consideration.

Cooking with Confidence Spring Luncheon



SAVE THE DATE – SATURDAY, APRIL 21, 2018

**Cooking for Everyone is hosting a spring luncheon
"COOKING WITH CONFIDENCE"**

Each table will have a different theme with tableware to reflect their theme. Guest speaker is Eunice Wiebolt and all the recipes we use will come from her two "Cooking with Confidence" cookbooks.

The luncheon is open to both men and women and we will have 1 table for children 12 and under with a special menu.

There will be a free will offering with any proceeds going to the church General Fund.

Sign up soon as we have a limited number of seats.

Any questions? Talk to Sharon Carlson or Jan Morton.

****It's Spring Cleaning time!!!** As you "sift" through your cookbooks and CD'S, bring those you can part with to the church nursery. We will sell them at our Spring Luncheon with the profits going towards our church budget needs. Those not sold will be donated to the Brainerd Library Book Sale.

Special Offerings – March

In March we donated 40 lbs of food and \$440 to the **Food Shelf!** Our next offering will be Sunday, April 22.

Thank you to the congregation for contributing to the **One Great Hour of Sharing** special mission offering. This is one of four occasions to contribute to the wider UCC projects. This time our church has given \$812. This will be used to support partners in countries with ministries for relief.

We also received \$75 for **Minnesota FoodShare**. Thank you for your support.

Stewardship

Mark April 8 on your calendar! The Stewardship Committee will honor those that have volunteered to make our Church and community a better place. You are invited to come to the luncheon following the service and celebrate the gifts that you have given.

Confirmation Schedule – April

All classes will meet on Wednesday's from 6:00 – 7:30.

April 1 – Easter Sunday, Attendance Encouraged

April 4 – Session 5: Scripture

April 11 – Session 6: *Teach Us to Pray, The Lord's Prayer*

April 18 – No Class, Council Meeting

April 25 – Session 7: Tradition, Creeds

Lenten Adult Forum Series

Preparing For the End of Life: The Lenten Adult Forum series allowed us to open up and talk about death. This isn't a topic that many of us bring up for fun and it often feels like a taboo subject. But death is a fact of life and how we approach it can make a big difference in the way we experience our own death and the death of loved ones. A few resources were offered during this series including information on Advanced Care Directives, Legacy Giving, a Funeral Planning Worksheet as well as the story "Is There Life After Birth" (if you would like a copy of the story, you can pick one up outside the church office).

Here are a few links to some of that information:

Information on Advanced Health Care Directives:

<http://www.mnaging.net/en/Advisor/HealthCareDirective.aspx>

Advanced Directive Form:

http://www.honoringchoices.org/images/Directives/HCD_Long_Form_Fillable_2014.pdf

Funeral Planning:

<https://tinyurl.com/fccfuneral>

If you would like printed copies of this information, or if you would like to discuss your plans with Pastor Leslie, or if you have any questions, please contact Pastor Leslie either by phone or email.

HUGS

April 1

Hosts: Mark & Becky Stadem

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

Counters: Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

April 8

Hosts: Jack & Kay Kraywinkle,

Ushers/Greeters: Maria Bertram, Mary Harder,
Austin & Itty Newgord

Counters: Deb Griffith & Judy Whiteman

April 15

Hosts: Shirley Barten & Deb Lundberg

Ushers: Brian & Becky Twamley

Greeters: Austin & Itty Newgord

Counters: Tracy Lyons & Mabel Schultz

April 22

Hosts: Ellie Burkett & Sharon Carlson

Ushers/ Greeters: Jean Gustafson,
Tracy Lyons & Ann Turnbull

Counters: Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

April 29

Hosts: Sue Hadland & Lisa Wigand

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

Counters: Sharon Carlson & Judy Whiteman

Heartland Symphony Orchestra – The Essence of Spring

April 6 – 7:30 pm @ Crosslake Lutheran Church

April 7 – 7:30 pm @ Charles D. Martin Auditorium, Little Falls Community High School

April 8 – 2:30 pm @ Tornstrom Auditorium, Brainerd

Tickets: Adult \$12, Senior \$10, Youth K-12 Free

Tickets may be purchased at the door or by calling 800-826-1997. www.HeartlandSymphony.com.

Bridges of Hope – Afternoon Tea for Hoped

Saturday, April 7th at 2:00 pm – Madden's on Gull Lake, Townhall Conference Center. Enjoy Sips, Sisterhood and Savories. Benefiting our Side by Side Mentoring Program.

\$40 per person or table of 8 for \$280. Visit bridgesofhopemn.org for tickets.

ACEs 101

What we experience as children can have a ripple effect on us for the rest of our lives. The hardships, and struggles we face growing up impact who we are, our behavior, our physical health, our mental health and even how long we live!

Join Tony Oltmann, BA, MDiv, for a look at the ACEs study, how it impacts our lives, the lives of those around us, and how we can prevent ACEs from being passed to future generations.

Monday, April 9, 2-4:00 pm @ Essentia Health Medical Center, 523 N 3rd St, Brainerd, Thabes 1 & 2.

Confidence Learning Center Volunteer Opportunities

Please reserve your volunteer dates with Mary Harder: Main: 218-828-2344, Direct: 218-828-5069, mary@camponconfidence.com. **Please pay attention to Diamond in the Rough dates and group categories.

Projects are pre-assigned on specific days for age, skills, independence level, and progression.

Diamond in the Rough – 9am-3pm:

April 18-21, 25-27 – School Groups, Scout Troops, Church Groups, Corporate, Banks

April 27-28 – Minnesota State Jaycee Chapters Volunteer Project Weekend AND Adult groups

MAY 2-5 – Schools, Scout Troops, Church, Service Clubs Corporate, Business's, Banks

Soup Kitchen – Security Awareness Needed

We have lost some rather costly supplies of late. Lots of Coffee has been removed from the storage area along with an entire case of coffee filters. Have you seen anyone suspicious hanging around back there or noticed anything that might be helpful? [Contact us here](#). If this issue persists we may have to consider a locked door policy for the food supplies. Check out our new website. [Here is the link](#).

Church Council Minutes – March 21, 2018

Moderator – Claire Steen

Assistant Moderator – Mike North

Clerk – Barb Stokke

Treasurer – Deb Lundberg

Christian Ministry – Karen Ford

Trustees – Deb Griffith

Christian Education – Barb McColgan

Stewardship – Judy Whiteman

Council at Large – Bonnie Crum, Gary Whiteman, Bob Jones

Present: Mike North, Barb Stokke, Karen Ford, Deb Griffith, Judy Whiteman, Bonnie Crum, Gary

Whiteman, and Pastor Leslie Moughty.

The meeting was called to order by Asst. Moderator Mike North. Karen Ford provided "Food for Thought. Bob Jones will provide April's.

Clerk's Report: Mark Utzinger and Miho Isobe were married at First Congregational March 5, 2018, with Pastor Leslie Moughty officiating. Mark Utzinger is the son of member Shirley Utzman and a friend of First Congregational.

Pastor's Report: Pastor Leslie extended an invitation to attend the UCC MN Conference Annual Meeting June 8-10 at St. Benedict's in St. Joseph, Minnesota. Business meetings take place on Friday. Saturday's events include workshops, worship, and key-note speaker Rev. Dr. J. Bennett Guess. The conference is open to everyone. The cost is \$50 per day. For more information go to <http://uccmn.org/events/am>

Treasurer's Report: No report

Trustees' Report: Repairs to one of the larger stain glass windows will begin in April. Trustees will let us know of precautions the congregation will need to follow while the repairs take place.

Stewardship's Report: Stewardship will host a volunteer appreciation luncheon after church on April 8.

Christian Ministry's Report: The Taizé service continues with 15 to 20 people attending each month. The service, held the third Thursday of the month, will continue thru June and then pick up again in the fall. Services may also continue in July and August.

Christian Education's Report: Eleven adults and thirteen youth had a great time tubing at Camp Confidence Sunday, March 11. To ensure the safety of our youth during activities when a parent is not present, CE has begun to collect emergency contact information and other pertinent information, such as allergies, medications, and food restrictions.

Members-at-Large: Bonnie Crum, Gary Whiteman, and Bob Jones, the Members-at-Large committee, are determining the up-coming Council and committee vacancies. Council asked that the committees report the number of nominations needed. Members interested in supporting the activities of our church by serving on a committee, please speak to Bonnie, Gary or Bob.

Old Business

Pastor Evaluation: Mike North reviewed the results of the yearly evaluation. Again it was noted that the pastor's greater strengths were in areas considered to be most important by the evaluators.

Church Directory: Council learned the new directory has been compiled and will be available as a printed directory or as a directory that the church will email to you to save on your computer. After services in the next weeks, Bonnie Crum will have a sign-up sheet for people to indicate the type of directory they want. Gary Whiteman made a motion to send out the emailed directory now [to those who want it online]. Bonnie Crum seconded the motion, and the motion was approved. Quotes will be sought for printed directory.

Donations for Specific Projects: Tabled until next month.

Safe Church Policy: The church's insurance company may have examples of safe policy statements the church could adopt. Deb Griffith will check with the insurance company and report her findings to the Council next month.

Nursery Staffing: Council discussed the pros and cons of types of employment the church could use to staff the nursery. It was suggested that we contact the Conference for their recommendations. Research will continue.

New Business

Updating Committee Descriptions - Bylaws: Council discussed possible recommendations for committee revisions.

Church Council Goals: Council and committees were asked to bring to the next Council meeting goals and advice for the new Council and committees.

Council Meeting: April 24, 2018 (date was changed to allow members to attend the Women Making Waves celebration honoring Joey Halvorson.)

Committee Meetings: April 12, 2018

Committee Host: Christian Ministry

Respectfully submitted,

Barb Stokke, Council Clerk

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd				
Financial Results - General Fund				
Year to Date Results as of 2/28/2018				
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 2/28/18	% of Budget	Actuals Through 2/28/17
Income:				
Giving Units	\$ 129,892	\$ 55,099	42.42%	\$ 23,860
Loose Offering (10% to OCWM)	\$ 3,278	\$ 422	12.86%	\$ 435
Other Giving	\$ 4,938	\$ 1,605	32.50%	\$ 1,321
Total Income	\$ 138,108	\$ 57,125	41.36%	\$ 25,615
Expenses:				
Council	\$ 101,821	\$ 22,035	30.10%	\$ 21,916
Christian Education	\$ 2,300	\$ -	9.09%	\$ -
Christian Ministry	\$ 1,900	\$ 312	25.23%	\$ 718
Music	\$ 8,990	\$ 1,849	28.49%	\$ 1,324
Stewardship	\$ 695	\$ 97	22.44%	\$ 98
Trustees	\$ 56,810	\$ 45,856	82.99%	\$ 10,015
Total Expenses	\$ 172,516	\$ 70,149	47.07%	\$ 34,072
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (34,408)	\$ (13,024)		\$ (8,457)

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - Revolving Accounts		
Year to Date Results as of 2/28/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 2/28/18
Income:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -
Flower Income	\$ -	\$ -
OCWM Income	\$ 8,398	\$ 1,397
Other Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 405
Special Offering Income	\$ -	\$ -
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 285
UCC Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 135
Total Income	\$ 8,898	\$ 2,222
Expenses:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -
Flowers	\$ -	\$ 367
OCWM Payments	\$ 8,398	\$ -
Other Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ -
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 124
UCC Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ 9,123	\$ 491
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (225)	\$ 1,731

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - Designated Funds		
Year to Date Results as of 2/28/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 2/28/18
Income:		
Building Fund		\$ 23,740
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 150
Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ -
Total Income	\$ -	\$ 23,890
Expenses:		
Building Fund		\$ -
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ -
Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ -
Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ -
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ -	\$ 23,890

Church Calendar – April 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Easter Worship & Communion 11:00 Fellowship	2	3	4 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 6:00 Confirmation Class	5	6 10:30 Book Group	7
8 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Holy Humor Worship 11:00 Fellowship & Volunteer Luncheon 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	9	10	11 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 6:00 Confirmation Class	12 5:30 Committee Meetings	13 10:30 Book Group 11:30 Clergy Cluster	14
15 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	16	17	18 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	19 6:00 Taize Service	20 10:30 Book Group	21 11:00 Cooking Group Spring Luncheon
22 10:00 Worship & Food Shelf Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	23	24 7:00 Council Meeting	25 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 6:00 Confirmation Class	26 5:30 PPRC	27 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	28
29 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	30					