



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.

Office phone 218-829-2528

E-mail firstcong@brainerd.net

Website uccbrainerd.org

uccbrainerd.org

May 2017

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

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Pastor's Pen

Every month, the Brainerd Ministerial Association (a group of Brainerd-area clergy) gather for breakfast and fellowship. This month we gathered at Saint Joseph's Hospital to meet the new Director of Mission Spirituality, Alex Chamtcheu. One of the topics of conversation was the relationship between the hospital and local churches, particularly the topic of alerting local pastors when a parishioner is in the hospital.

Did you know...

When you are admitted to the hospital, admission staff should ask you about your religious affiliation and if you belong to a local church. If you want the hospital to let me know that you are there, it is important that you tell them you attend First Congregational UCC and that you want them to contact your pastor. Due to data privacy laws, the hospital will not let me know that you are in the hospital without your permission. Please don't hesitate to ask them to contact me (or contact me directly yourself) if you find yourself in the hospital. I would love to visit you!

If the person in the hospital is a friend or loved one but you find yourself (or them) needing spiritual care, please also feel free to contact me or ask the hospital to do so on your behalf.

It goes without saying that you are not obligated to let me know that you are in the hospital. You are entitled to be in the hospital without your pastor knowing. But please do not hesitate, even for a second, to call me or to ask the hospital staff to call me if you would like a visit. You do not need to be in a dire situation or an emergency to warrant a visit; the only requirement is that you want me there. Carry my business card in your wallet and utilize my cell phone number: 218-656-0096.

On a related topic, you may have heard that a new ministry team is forming. We are working on a name for this team but their mission is to provide peer-to-peer listening and spiritual care. The members of this team will be making visits and/or phone calls to members in the congregation who would benefit from additional visits or contact by a fellow parishioner. This team is not meant to replace visits or contacts by the pastor, but instead to be an additional way of connecting to one another, providing community and support. The team members will be making contact with folks in the next few weeks. However, if you or someone you know would benefit from a program like this, don't hesitate to let me know.

One of the blessings of a church family is our ability to be there for each other in difficult times. Sometimes if we are the ones who have always cared for others, it can be difficult to ask for or receive care. Know that you deserve to be cared for! Also know that if your needs for spiritual care are not being met, please let me know. I am working on increasing pastoral visits and I realize there may be people who would like a visit from me but that I am unaware of it. As I embark upon my third year of ordained ministry, in a context that is different from where I was trained, I am continuing to learn how to best balance the priorities of being your pastor.

I feel so blessed to be serving as the pastor for this incredible congregation. May you each be blessed with the palpable presence of God's love and grace.

With Peace,
Pastor Leslie

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Pastor Leslie". The signature is written in black ink and is positioned below the typed name "Pastor Leslie".

Moderator's Notes

Dear Church Family,

We don't like to talk about money and donations, but we have to. We've got a situation, not a crisis, but we need to talk.

Let me take you back to last December when we passed our 2017 budget. It was a realistic list of what we want to, and need to spend this year. Our projected income fell short of our projected expenses by nearly \$20,000. But we made the decision. We decided that it was OK to pass the budget knowing that somehow we'd have to either cut expenses or find more money. We've approved deficit budgets for the past few years, but we've been lucky. Winters have been relatively mild, other expenses were a bit less than expected and members of our Church Family were generous toward the end of the year.

We made the decision to move forward in December but now it's May and there is that deficit that's dogging us as we traverse through the months of 2017. Rather than hope and pray, we'd like to address it.

At our Council meeting in April we decided to move on several ideas. I won't go into all here as some are just beginning to come into focus, but we've got ideas. To be clear, we have cut and cut back on a number of budget items. We will continue to do so, but we can only do so much.

My message in this month's (and my last) Moderator's column is to ask you to please consider a financial contribution to fill the gap.

Members of our Church Family are very generous. We raised about \$8,000 for new chairs in the fellowship hall in just a few weeks. The chairs are certainly needed and it's a clearly a need that people felt strongly about.

But now I'm asking you to be as passionate about making sure we have insurance and supporting the great cause of heating the building. That sounds silly, doesn't it? But that's what we truly need along with coffee, toilet paper and electricity. These are not visible needs or motivating, but they are very real.

We need to fill the gap.

If we look at the number of members, official and 'in spirit,' and divide the deficit by that number it comes to about \$200 per family. Of course, not every family can afford that, but it puts it in perspective.

This is the time of year when folks are getting tax refunds. You might consider all or part of your refund as a contribution. As for us, Marcia and I will be writing a check for \$200 specifically to fill the gap. Further, we will be increasing our monthly contribution by \$20 per month.

As I said this isn't a crisis, but it is important. Please do what you can.

Thank you!

Dan Hegstad
Council Moderator

Annual Meeting of the Congregation

After worship on May 21 we will be holding an annual meeting of the congregation. During the meeting, we will be electing new committee members and a new Moderator and Vice Moderator. Everyone is encouraged to attend!

Organist

Welcome to our new organist Barb Bendson! Barb will be starting on Sunday, April 30th.

May Birthdays

5/2	Joe Freeman	5/23	Max Ferrie
5/3	Ellen Pishko	5/24	Jean Widmark
5/5	Lance James	5/25	Carol Spear
5/9	Sue Hadland	5/25	Nancy Waller
5/14	Kai Lukanen	5/26	Preston Newgord
5/16	Laura Raedeke	5/29	Tony Newgord
5/22	Shon Boman	5/31	Grace Forbord

Get Ready for Camp!

Youth camp is open to all youth who will have completed sixth grade through seniors in high school.

Middle School CYE – May 12-14

Family Camp – July 16-21

Youth Camp Week 2 – July 23-28

If you are interested in serving as an adult leader (minimum age 23), please contact Pastor Leslie.

Additional youth and adult camps:

Taize Meditation Retreat: May 17-19

Deaf First Family Camp: June 18-23

Youth Mission Week: August 6-11.

Register on the Conference website <http://uccmn.org/pilgrimpoint>

HUGS

May 7

Hosts: Eileen Kurpiers & Jan Morton

Ushers/Greeters: Roger Best, Greg Johnson
Ken Nelson & Gary Whiteman

Counters: Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

May 14

Hosts: Jack & Kay Kraywinkle

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

Counters: Deb Griffith & Judy Whiteman

May 21

Hosts: Cheri Maxwell & Kathy Ogden

Ushers/Greeters: Shirley Barten, Marina Grabowski,
Deb Lundberg & Claire Steen

Counters: Coleen Carder & Tracy Lyons

May 28

Hosts: Sharon Carlson & Mike Schrader

Ushers/Greeters: Ellie Burkett, Tracy Lyons,
Karen Ogdahl & Ann Turnbull

Counters: Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

Food Shelf Offering – April

Each month we bring groceries, necessities and financial donations to help feed hungry neighbors in our community. The Salvation Army Food Shelf serves 400 families each month. In April we received \$10. Our next offering will be Sunday, May 28. **Thank you for helping to feed our hungry neighbors!**

April 19, 2017 Church Council Minutes

Moderator – Dan Hegstad	Assistant Moderator – Claire Steen
Clerk – Barb Stokke	Treasurer – Cheri Maxwell
Christian Ministry – Ann Turnbull	Trustees – Coleen Carder
Christian Education – Marina Grabowski	Stewardship – Judy Whiteman
Council at Large –Mike North and Bonnie Crum	

Present: Dan Hegstad, Claire Steen, Barb Stokke, Cheri Maxwell, Ann Turnbull, Coleen Carder, Marina Grabowski, Judy Whiteman, Mike North, Bonnie Crum, and Rev. Leslie Moughty

Dan Hegstad called the meeting to order. Cheri Maxwell shared Food for Thought. Bonnie Crum will provide May's Food for Thought.

CLERK'S REPORT – No report

TREASURER'S REPORT – See New Business

PASTOR'S REPORT – Highlights: Held 5 sessions of a mid-week Lenten gathering called Watch and Pray that explored different Spiritual Practices; held a Maundy Thursday service, a Good Friday in partnership with St. Paul's Episcopal Church, and the Easter Sunday Service; hired a new organist, Barb Bendson; met with the Congregational Care team; held funeral and interment services for Betty Hopps; worked with Preston on his April 30 sermon; worked with the Exec Committee on the Pastor Job Description; attended The Brainerd Area Ministerial meeting ; hosted and attended MN Conference Ministry Conversation; spoke at the Crow Wing County Board meeting and attended the Brainerd School District Board meeting; made twelve pastoral care contacts. Leslie reported that people enjoyed the Facebook Live taping of the Easter service, which had been viewed 380 times by 870 people.

STEWARDSHIP – The Volunteer Luncheon will take place Sunday, April 23. Carla Benjamin will supply all the chicken for the luncheon.

TRUSTEES' REPORT – The colors of the Fellowship Hall chairs have been decided, and half of the chairs will have arms. One dolly will be purchased for stacking the chairs. The chair fund has \$8,300. The first check for the dishwasher has been sent, and the remainder will be sent once the dishwasher arrives. Yde's will install it after the necessary electrical work is complete. Installing sheet rock in the Columbarium took a significant part of money allocated for repairs. Trustees will check with the Foundation for possible additional funds. The Fellowship Hall carpet has been cleaned and looks good.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Family Fun day is scheduled for April 30. Activities will take place at the church, not at the bowling alley. Youth in grades 7-12 will meet to discuss summer mission work with Minneapolis and New York Mills. The youth raised \$600 at the Camp Sunday brunch.

A request was received to help fund a camper's attendance at Clearwater Forest Camp since Pilgrim Point does not have a children's camp.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY – Sunday, May 7, Leslie and Rev. John Fiscus, of Peace UCC, St. Cloud, will swap pulpits. The date for New Member Sunday may be changed to accommodate new members' schedules.

AT-LARGE – No report

OLD BUSINESS – The Exec Committee and Leslie completed revisions to the Pastor Job Description. Bonnie Crum read a letter of recommendations made by the Conference concerning the allocation of a pastor's time. After conferring with the Conference and making final revisions, the job description will be presented to the Council during the May Council meeting. Council agreed that the job description should be

reviewed each year to keep it current. The Annual Meeting will take place Sunday, May 21, after the service. Committee reports are due May 1.

Council discussed committee and council openings for the next year. A few openings remain.

NEW BUSINESS – Computer software licensure is complete. Leslie reminded us to check the church's calendar, newsletter, and website while planning events to avoid conflicts. Council had a lengthy discussion about the budget deficit and agreed that a multi-prong approach was needed to balance the budget as soon as possible. Possible steps toward balancing the budget include making the congregation fully aware of the deficit, determining where spending cuts may be made, inviting more non-profit groups to use our facilities, holding fund raisers, and encouraging more contributions if possible.

If it is convenient for new Council members, the monthly Council meeting will start at 5:00 during June, July and August.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.

The next Council meeting will be Wednesday, May 17, at 5:00 p.m. (Note the time change)

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stokke, Clerk of Council

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd			
Financial Results - General Fund			
Year to Date Results as of 3/31/2017			
	2017 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 3/31/17	% of Budget
Income:			
From Giving Units	\$ 117,365	\$ 38,622	32.91%
Other Giving	\$ 32,146	\$ 4,913	15.28%
Total Income	\$ 149,511	\$ 43,535	29.12%
Expenses:			
Council	\$ 102,901	\$ 33,948	32.99%
Christian Ministry	\$ 3,120	\$ 1,018	32.63%
Music Committee	\$ 12,220	\$ 2,424	19.83%
Christian Education	\$ 650	\$ -	0.00%
Stewardship	\$ 600	\$ 147	24.50%
Trustees	\$ 55,110	\$ 14,867	26.98%
Total Expenses	\$ 174,601	\$ 52,403	30.01%
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (25,090)	\$ (8,869)	

Our Whole Lives Facilitator Trainings

Our Whole Lives Facilitator Trainings May 19-21, 2017 at Pilgrim Point



Our Whole Lives (OWL) is a sexual education program with resources written by professional sexuality educators that equips participants with accurate, age-appropriate information to help them make informed and responsible decisions about their sexual health and behavior. OWL provides not only facts about anatomy and human development, but helps participants clarify their values and understand the spiritual, emotional, and social aspects of sexuality.

The Minnesota Conference UCC has established the following OWL Facilitator Training Courses in 2017:

Elementary Curriculum (Grades K-1 & 4-6)

When: Friday, May 19 at 3:00PM until Sunday, May 21 at 2:00PM

Where: Pilgrim Point Camp, 2059 Pilgrim Point Rd NW, Alexandria, MN

Cost: \$150 (subsidized; includes room & board; curriculum not included)

Registration: At www.uccmn.org | Deadline to register: May 8, 2017

Middle School/High School Curriculum (Grades 7-9 & 10-12)

When: Friday, May 19 at 3:00PM until Sunday, May 21 at 2:00PM

Where: Pilgrim Point Camp, 2059 Pilgrim Point Rd NW, Alexandria, MN

Cost: \$150 (subsidized; includes room & board; curriculum not included)

Registration: At www.uccmn.org | Deadline to register: May 8, 2017

Questions about this training? Email PPC&R Registrar, Zac Norenberg, at zacn@uccmn.org or call 612-871-0359.

Church Calendar – May 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 4:00 Cooking Group	2	3 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 11:30 Clergy Cluster	4	5 10:30 Book Group	6
7 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Worship & Communion 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	8	9	10 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	11 5:30 Committee Meetings	12 10:30 Book Group	13
14 Mother's Day 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	15	16 4:00 Church Grounds Clean-up	17 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Council Meeting	18	19 10:30 Book Group	20
21 8:30 Choir Rehearsal 10:00 Worship 11:00 Annual Meeting	22	23	24 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	25 5:30 PPRC	26 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	27
28 10:00 Worship & Food Shelf Offering 11:00 Fellowship NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	29 Memorial Day	30 12:00 Lunch Bunch	31 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn			