

# 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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May 2018

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

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## May Birthdays

5/2	Joe Freeman	5/16	Laura Raedeke	5/23	Max Ferrie
5/5	Lance James	5/16	Morgan Twamley	5/24	Jean Widmark
5/9	Sue Hadland	5/17	Carla Benjamin	5/26	Preston Newgord
5/10	Emily Jones	5/22	Jan Morton	5/29	Tony Newgord
5/14	Kai Lukanen	5/22	Shon Boman	5/31	Grace Forbord

## Pastor's Pen

Have you ever heard the saying "It takes a village to raise a child"? It is the idea that children thrive when they interact with and learn from a wide variety of people within a community. The church is one of the few remaining places where children and youth have an opportunity to be connected to supportive and loving adults outside of their immediate family. Our church in particular is a place where I have witnessed kids and adults sharing meaningful experiences together, from sharing stories over snacks during fellowship to tubing at Camp Confidence. I truly believe that this church is a place and a faith family that truly desires to support our kids and teens, both in the formation of their faith as well as in other pursuits like school, sports, music, theater, and more.

Because I clearly see this passion and excitement for our kids, I am a bit puzzled as to why it seems so difficult to find people who want to be part of our Christian Education committee. This committee is at the heart of organizing and implementing meaningful activities for our children and youth, as well as supporting our Sunday School and other faith formation efforts. I wonder if there are some folks reading this who firmly believe that thoughtful programming for kids is important, but maybe don't think they are "good with kids" or don't have any teaching experience, or don't want to commit to chaperoning lock-ins and mission trips. This is the great news! What the Christian Education Committee needs is organizers – people who can take some great ideas, give them some structure and direction, and recruit volunteers. Being on the committee does not require that you teach Sunday school or chaperon a trip. You don't need to have any experience with kids or even a desire to be with kids. That's where the village comes in! We all have different gifts to give and we all need one another if our church is going to be the vibrant and life-giving church we all want it to be.

I invite you to prayerfully consider the different ways you might be able to give some of your time and talent to this incredible community of faith. If you are not sure where your talents might fit, talk to one of our members at large (Bonnie Crum, Bob Jones, or Gary Whiteman) or talk to me!

Now, if chaperoning youth events is something you would like to do, I definitely want to talk to you. I will be taking our youth to the Regional Youth Event in Grinnell, Iowa from June 19-22 and to Youth Camp at Pilgrim Point from July 29 – August 3 and would love another adult to come along. These are wonderful events and you will get so much out of going. Let me know if you would like more information.

With Peace,

*Pastor Jessie*

## Moderator's Notes

This past month, Greg and I "took to the road" for three weeks to Florida with stops in Knoxville, Charleston and Savannah. This was our first road trip in forty-five years of marriage. We spent three nights in Charleston and, with uncanny luck, stayed in a hotel on Meeting Street a couple blocks from the Circular Congregational Church. This church is one of the oldest continuously worshipping congregations in the South, having been co-founded with Charles Towne around 1681 by the English Congregationalists, Scots Presbyterians, and French Huguenots of the original settlement. These "dissenters" erected a Meeting House on the exact site of the present sanctuary. The burial grounds date from 1691 and are the oldest in the city. Circular Church joined the United Church of Christ in 1954, and the Congregation is known throughout Charleston for its inclusiveness, openness, and community outreach.

One evening we attended "The Sound of Charleston" at the Circular Congregational Church which was a lovely concert combining gospel spirituals, jazz, Civil War, George Gershwin and light classics. John Newton chose the Circular Congregational Church in the spring of 1749 to worship in before returning to

England and later writing “Amazing Grace”. We sang this favorite hymn as a closing to the lovely and moving concert. I left feeling proud and honored to be a member of the United Church of Christ. The next day we went to Boone Hall Plantation and attended a presentation by an older descendant of a slave family who sang “Amazing Grace”. Once again, what a treat!

Having the role as a moderator this year has been a valuable learning experience for me. As a former educator, I cannot believe the lessons that I have been taught. First of all, I had no idea of all the work that is done behind the scenes. This includes the cleaning of bathrooms, the shoveling of snow, the beautiful flowers, and the maintenance of the building and parsonage. Everyone “pitches in” in small and large ways which helps to create a congregation second to none. The amount of non-paid labor contributed greatly benefits our church and is amazing. Above all, I continue to be impressed with the relentless dedication of our parishioners to each other and to the community to welcome all. On Sunday mornings, when I hear “No matter who you are or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here”, I feel at home.

Last June at the Annual Minnesota Conference Meeting, we were told that eight in ten congregations worship with less than one hundred people. There are gifts that small churches have to offer. They can be creative and experiment. Small churches can have a great sense of connection and offer a sense of community. They can specialize. What is the special gift that our church can offer? I like to think that we can be a leader in the “moral voice” in our Brainerd Lakes area. Remember that we need to focus on our mission, not necessarily growth in numbers.

In closing, I would like to thank Pastor Leslie and you, the congregation. Pastor Leslie added some life lessons to my “book of life. Perhaps we both taught each other. I am impressed with Pastor Leslie’s sermons. Every Sunday when I come to church, my “spiritual jug” overflows. In addition, I am pleased that Pastor Leslie has emerged as a leader in our community when issues and justice need to be addressed. I believe our congregation dares to dream the impossible dream. We are willing to imagine all possibilities. In our emerging world, it is a time of change and opportunity. I believe that First Congregational is willing to look at the capacity for our church to address its’ present and future needs. Together we are in this place of transformation and hope. Because of each and every one of you, I am confident that it will be an enjoyable ride. God bless.

Thank you.  
Claire Steen

## Special Offering – April

In April we donated \$200 to the **Food Shelf!** Our next offering will be Sunday, May 27.

## Confirmation Schedule – May

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

May 2 – Session 9: *Faith in Action, Pain to Power*

May 9 – Session 10: *Faith in Action, How We Can Help*

May 16 – No Class, Council Meeting

May 23 – Session 11: *Faith in Action, The Issue of Power*

May 30 – Session 12: *Scripture, The Bible by Heart*

## HUGS

### May 6

**Hosts:** Eileen Kurpiers

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

**Counters:** Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

### May 13

**Hosts:** Mary Harder & Lois McBroom,

**Ushers/Greeters:** Maria Bertram, Itty Newgord, Jack & Kay Kraywinkle

**Counters:** Deb Griffith & Judy Whiteman

### May 20

**Hosts:** Claire Steen & Barb Stokke

**Ushers:** Shirley Barten & Deb Lundberg

**Greeters:** Brian & Becky Twamley

**Counters:** Tracy Lyons & Mabel Schultz

### May 27

**Hosts:** Mike Schrader & Ann Turnbull

**Ushers/Greeters:** Ellie Burkett, Erik, Kai & Kyd Lukanen

**Counters:** Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

## Men's Group

### MEN'S GROUP TRIAL RUN – Book Reading

Beginning Wednesday, May 2, the Men's Group will add one half hour to our meeting time, 11:30-1:00 (our past schedule has been 11:30-12:30). We will begin with "eat and chat time," then shift to a book study. This will be an experiment for about 4 weeks. The book will be Marcus Borg's *Meeting Jesus Again for The First Time*. We will read and discuss at each session. Please join us! Questions: David Crum 330-3168.

## Regional Youth Event

If your youth (exiting 6<sup>th</sup> grade and older) would like to go to the Regional Youth Event in Grinnell, Iowa this June, a **deposit of \$75 is due by Friday, April 27**. If you need an extension, please let Pastor Leslie know. What is the Regional Youth Event? Also known as RYE, the 3 night, 4 day event will include dynamic worship, hands on service experience, small group faith exploration, inspirational music by the Convergence Music Project, and an opportunity to explore how to put our faith into action. For more information, go to [www.rye2018.org](http://www.rye2018.org).

## Come to Camp!

No matter who you are, there is a camp or retreat at Pilgrim Point for you! For more information about the following events, go to <http://uccmn.org/calendar/category/camps/> or call Curtis Giesel in the UCC Minnesota Conference Office at 612-871-0359.

Sowing Stillness: Contemplative Spirituality Retreat

Our Whole Lives Facilitator Training

Sowing Justice Retreat

Deaf Family and Friends Camp

Sexuality Education for Middle Schoolers & Parents

Tues, May 15 - Thurs, May 17

May 18 @ 3:00 pm - May 20 @ 3:00 pm

Tues, May 22 - Thurs, May 24

Sunday, June 17 - Friday, June 22

Thurs, June 28 - Sun, July 1

## New Members

The first session of the new members class was held on Sunday April 22. The final session will be held on April 29 at 11:30 and the new members will be received in worship on Sunday May 13. If you are interested in becoming a member but missed the first class or have questions, please contact Pastor Leslie. Another opportunity to join will take place in the fall.

## May 20 – Pentecost and the Annual Congregational Meeting

Wear red on May 20 to celebrate the Christian holiday of Pentecost. 50 days after Easter, Pentecost commemorates the day that the disciples were inspired by the Holy the Spirit to leave the safety and comfort of the locked room, and burst out into the streets proclaiming the teachings of Jesus Christ for all to hear. This day is often celebrated as the beginning of the Christian Church. In the tradition of the church, Red is the color of celebration and the color of the Holy Spirit, so join us in celebration by wearing red.

May 20 is also our Annual Congregational Meeting. The primary task of this meeting is to elect new committee members and to report on the activities and business of the church for the last year. All voting members are encouraged to attend and anyone is welcome to attend.

## The Lakes Area Music Festival

The Lakes Area Music Festival returns with a concert on Sunday, May 6 at 2pm featuring LAMF musicians from the Minnesota Orchestra, artistic director Scott Lykins, Franz Schubert and Soprano Bergen Baker. The concert will take place at Trinity Lutheran Church, 1420 S 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Brainerd. This concert is free of charge and open to the public. For more, visit [lakesareamusic.org/winter/schubert](http://lakesareamusic.org/winter/schubert)

## Confidence Learning Center Volunteer Opportunities

Please reserve your volunteer dates with Mary Harder: Main: 218-828-2344, Direct: 218-828-5069, [mary@campconfidence.com](mailto:mary@campconfidence.com).

**May** – Monday-Friday - 9am-2pm: Program Assistants - Many Brainerd Lakes Area schools bring their K-3rd graders to Camp Confidence to enjoy a year-end field trip with an outdoor education twist.

## Church Council Minutes – April 24, 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: Claire Steen, Mike North, Barb Stokke, Karen Ford, Deb Griffith, Judy Whiteman, and Rev. Leslie Moughty.

Claire Steen called the meeting to order. Karen Ford shared April's *Food for Thought*. Bob Jones will provide May's.

CLERK'S REPORT – Council approved the March Council minutes and reviewed the minutes of the two 2017 Annual Meetings.

PASTOR'S REPORT – **Highlights** include Holy week services and Easter Sunday service, attending UCC Clergy Cluster, leading Lenten Adult forum Planning Your Funeral, leading two confirmation classes, and working with the Bylaws committee to update the Bylaws. **Community engagements** include attending the March for Our Lives on March 24, the Out Front's LGBTQ Lobby Day in St. Paul April 19, the "Women Making Waves" event honoring Joey Halvorson, and the Cooking Group Salad Luncheon, and writing the Brainerd Dispatch's Clergy View article published April 20. **Pastoral Care Contacts** include one hospital visit, three home visits, two calls and a voicemail, five office visits, and planning and conducting a funeral. **On the Calendar:** New Members Sunday May 13 and UCC MN Conference Annual Meeting June 8-10.

TREASURER'S REPORT – No report

**TRUSTEES' REPORT** – Deb Griffith reported on the continuing search for safe-church policy templates. Deb has searched the Church Mutual Insurance web site and will be checking with a rep from Church Mutual. She will also check with other churches in the area. Council also discussed staffing positions in the church that are within the purview of the safe-church policies and require background checks.

**STEWARDSHIP** – On Sunday, April 8, Stewardship recognized volunteers for their work and hosted a luncheon in their honor. About 65 people attended.

**CHRISTIAN EDUCATION** – CE is looking for people to fill the vacancies of members who will complete their 3-year terms this May.

**CHRISTIAN MINISTRY** – CM raised two concerns about hosting fellowship time after the Sunday services – having enough treats and covering the cost for them. CM suggests serving two items and recommending that people take just one or two, assuring there will be enough for all.

**MEMBERS AT LARGE** – At Large members were not present due to conflicts created by a schedule change.

#### OLD BUSINESS

1. **Safe Church Policy:** See Trustees' Report
2. **Member Directory:** The Member Directory is complete and ready to distribute. A donation of \$3 to \$5 to cover costs is suggested.
3. **Hospitality Hour:** Contributions to cover the cost of coffee, lemonade and other items used during fellowship may be put in the Contribution jar or basket. Sunday hosts will be given directions for handling those contributions.
4. **By-Laws:** Pastor Leslie reported that progress continues in updating the bylaws. At this time the focus is on membership.

#### NEW BUSINESS

1. **Acknowledgement of Donors:** Council decided donors of generous one-time gifts are to be acknowledged during a church service and in the newsletter.
2. **Nominations for Committee Members and Officers:** No report at this time
3. **Church Council Goals:** No action taken
4. **Second Thursday Committee Meetings:** Council discussed the format of the monthly committee meetings and reached two conclusions: the communal meal was a hassle, but meeting at the same place and time was beneficial. Council passed a motion to eliminate the communal committee meal starting May 10. Council also decided that meetings could start anytime between 4:30 and 6:00, allowing each committee determine the best option for them.
5. **Fourth Sunday Special Offering:** Council passed a motion to increase the number of groups receiving the Fourth Sunday Special offering and to devise a rotating quarterly schedule of recipients. Different ways to collect the offerings were also discussed.

The meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully submitted,  
Barbara Stokke, Clerk of Council

**Tues, May 8 – Exec Committee – 4:00 PM**

**Thurs, May 10 – Committee Meetings – No meal will be served.**

**Wed, May 16 – Church Council Meeting – 7:00 PM**

**Sunday, May 20 – Annual Election Meeting – 11:00 AM**

## Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd				
Financial Results - <b>General Fund</b>				
Year to Date Results as of 3/31/2018				
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 3/31/18	% of Budget	Actuals Through 3/31/17
<b>Income:</b>				
Giving Units	\$ 129,892	\$ 65,508	50.43%	\$ 34,974
Loose Offering (10% to OCWM)	\$ 3,278	\$ 778	23.73%	\$ 761
Other Giving	\$ 4,938	\$ 2,242	45.40%	\$ 1,470
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 138,108</b>	<b>\$ 68,528</b>	<b>49.62%</b>	<b>\$ 37,205</b>
<b>Expenses:</b>				
Council	\$ 101,821	\$ 27,942	35.91%	\$ 28,128
Christian Education	\$ 2,300	\$ 119	14.26%	\$ -
Christian Ministry	\$ 1,900	\$ 312	25.22%	\$ 913
Music	\$ 8,990	\$ 3,199	43.50%	\$ 2,424
Stewardship	\$ 695	\$ 146	29.46%	\$ 147
Trustees	\$ 56,810	\$ 57,847	104.10%	\$ 14,851
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 172,516</b>	<b>\$ 89,565</b>	<b>58.33%</b>	<b>\$ 46,463</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:</b>	<b>\$ (34,408)</b>	<b>\$ (21,037)</b>		<b>\$ (9,259)</b>

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd			First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - <b>Revolving Accounts</b>			Financial Results - <b>Designated Funds</b>		
Year to Date Results as of 3/31/2018			Year to Date Results as of 3/31/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 3/31/18		2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 3/31/18
<b>Income:</b>			<b>Income:</b>		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -	Building Fund		\$ 23,740
Flower Income	\$ -	\$ 365	Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 151
OCWM Income	\$ 8,398	\$ 2,103	Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ -
Other Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 920	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 23,892</b>
Special Offering Income	\$ -	\$ 40	<b>Expenses:</b>		
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 330	Building Fund		\$ 1,181
UCC Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 837	Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 54
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 8,898</b>	<b>\$ 4,595</b>	Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ -
<b>Expenses:</b>			<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 1,235</b>
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -	<b>Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:</b>	<b>\$ -</b>	<b>\$ 22,657</b>
Flowers	\$ -	\$ 367			
OCWM Payments	\$ 8,398	\$ 2,103			
Other Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 920			
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 371			
UCC Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 877			
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 9,123</b>	<b>\$ 4,638</b>			
<b>Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:</b>	<b>\$ (225)</b>	<b>\$ (43)</b>			

## Church Calendar – May 2018

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