



Friendship News

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

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

The Pastor is also available at other times by appointment.

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uccbrainerd.org

June 2015

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

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Rev. Deborah G. Celley Memorial Garden

I am so pleased to inform you that Richard Celley, Julia and Jennifer will be coming for the dedication of the plaque and benches in Rev. Deb Celley's honor on Sunday, June 21. We will have a simple dedication following our regular church service that day. Rev. Leslie has offered to help with the planning and I welcome input from everyone. Please be thinking about this so we can gather after church in early May to make plans. I'm hoping the rain gardens will be thriving by then as well as the lovely surrounding garden that Deb planted. Steve Crum, Jeff Behr and Gary Whiteman have offered to finish the pavers, mount the plaque and secure the benches. If anyone would like to help, please contact them.

Thanks to all,

Nancy

Thank You

Thanks to everyone for the cards and best wishes for my 90th birthday. I am blessed to belong to such a loving church.

Fondly,
Jean Widmark

God's Garden

God's Garden needs volunteers to start seeds, condition bales, plant, monitor for disease, harvest and deliver produce to the Food Shelf. If you want to help in any way or learn more about straw bale gardening, please contact Coleen Carder (651-216-9821) ASAP so a meeting can be scheduled. We want to get more people involved in this ministry to the community, if there is interest.

Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity

After 25 years as an affiliate and ninety-nine homes built, the hundredth house will be built in memory of Paul Mans this August. 19th Annual Dinner and Auction, June 11th at Breezy Point Resort. 6:00 Social and Silent Auction, 7:00 Dinner and Live Auction. Tickets \$60 per person with \$40 tax deductible. To reserve a table, call 218-828-8517.

Brainerd History Week

In the spirit of Brainerd History Week and also in conjunction with the goals of Crow Wing County's "Get Energized" program, the volunteer committee of History Week would like to invite all residents and visitors to participate in the architectural tours, north side church open houses and old fashioned pie social scheduled for Tuesday, June 16. There will be three walking tours (one with a motorized option) scheduled at 1:00 p.m., 4:00 p.m. and 7:00 p.m. of the homes. Learn about where the first Brainerd residents lived, who they were, where they gathered and how the city grew. The church open houses will be self-guided and from 1:00 – 3:00 p.m. Join us at St. Francis Church who will be hosting the pie social from 3:00 – 5:00 p.m. Eat pie, drink coffee, socialize – like in days of old. The north side of Brainerd welcomes all who want to step back into yesteryear. We look forward to this multi-generational experience.

Peace in the Park

4th Annual Central Minnesota Peace Fair
 Saturday, June 20th, 11am—5pm
 Ramada #2, Lum Park, Brainerd

Speakers:

Coleen Rawley, Peace Activist, 9-11 FBI Whistleblower
 Ken Pentel, Militarism and the Environment

Vigil, Food, Music & More!

Details at brainerdpeace.org. Brainerd Area Coalition for Peace

The Rainbow Coalition is also hosting their annual Pride Picnic from 2pm—5pm

New Address

Jim and Itty Newgord's new address is 4647 CR 121, Ft Ripley, MN 56449.

BAELN

Brainerd Area Environmental Learning Network

Faith Communities in Action through environmental stewardship

Thursday, June 18, 2015, from 3:00-4:30 p.m.

Sessions are free and all are invited.

SPEAKERS: Carolyn Blanck, Sarah Fogderud and Laura Raedeke from Nisswa Lutheran Church of the Cross; Reverend Roger Grussing from Crosslake Presbyterian Church; and Coleen Carder and Eleanor Burkett from the Brainerd First Congregational United Church of Christ

There are many ways to become a “greener” congregation. Representatives from three area faith communities will present their efforts of environmental stewardship. They'll share what they have done and what they've learned in becoming congregations that are more earth-friendly. Examples of their efforts include: geo-thermal heating; photovoltaic (PV) panels for electricity generation; community gardens; Sharing Market; solar garden; installing rain gardens to control parking lot water run-off; and the use of rain barrels to protect the church foundation as well as water the vegetable garden. Please join us at this last BAELN session of the season to celebrate these wonderful environmental efforts.

LOCATION: Land Services Building, 322 Laurel St., Brainerd, Lower Level, Meeting Room 2. Located behind the Historic Crow Wing County Courthouse. Free parking in the county lot on the corner of 4th and Laurel.

If you have questions concerning this presentation, please contact Denise Stromme at stromme@umn.edu or 218-828-2680.

BAELN offers environmental professionals and community members free professional development and timely information on environmental and sustainability issues. Events are held on the third Thursday of

the month from 3:00-4:30 p.m. They include a 30-40 minute presentation, followed by questions and discussion with time for networking and refreshments.

To receive BAELN notifications or for general information on BAELN, please contact Stephen Mikkelson at 218-316-3887, toll free at 1-800-657-3864 or stephen.mikkelson@state.mn.us.

The Brainerd Area Environmental Learning Network is a collaborative effort of: Central Lakes College, Central Regional Sustainable Development Partnership, Crow Wing Soil and Water Conservation District, Initiative Foundation, MN Department of Natural Resources, MN Department of Transportation, MN Pollution Control Agency, The Nature Conservancy, and University of Minnesota Extension.

PASTOR'S PEN

Rev. Leslie Moughty, Pastor

One year ago, the Pastor's Pen article for the June Newsletter was all about the new Pastoral Search Committee and the tasks that lay before them as they began to search for your next settled Pastor. The first task being the preparation of a Local Church Profile. One year ago in Bothell, Washington, I had just submitted my ordination paper and was working on my pastoral profile. As we journeyed down our unique paths - each of us preparing our profiles to be shared with the other, I never imagined that a year later I would be beginning my fifth month as the pastor of such a wonderful and amazing congregation.

Over the last several weeks I have had the honor of getting to know many of you a little better through a series of Getting Acquainted groups. So far, fifty-one people have participated in these groups! I have heard faith journeys and love stories, family histories and hopes for the future. If you haven't been part of a group yet, more will be scheduled in the near future and I encourage all of you to sign up!

This is my main task in our first year together - to get to know this family of faith. As the Getting Acquainted groups are wrapping up, I will begin a new task of interviewing church leadership. Starting with the members of the church council, we will meet individually and go deeper in discerning what ways God might be calling this community. This information gathering is a crucial part of my effectiveness as your Pastor.

It can be tempting for many of us to want to jump into making big changes as we begin our journey together. As one group participant asked me, "Do you have ideas for what you want to change around here?" As I answered then, I am trying to be very intentional about not coming up with ideas for change right away. Certainly some things have changed already, but it is important for me to understand this church and the wider community as deeply as possible before jumping into big, new ideas. We are in this together for the long haul and I am excited to see what our future together holds!

With Peace

Pastor Leslie

Moderator's Musings

Already, 2015 has been full of exciting developments and changes, not the least of which is the arrival of Pastor Leslie Moughty as our new pastor. I don't know about you, but from week to week, I find myself pondering last week's sermon, and anticipating what she is going to present us with next. I think we are blessed. Thank you Pastor Leslie for the wisdom, insight and courage you have already demonstrated from the pulpit. And that's just one aspect of her ministry amongst us!

At last Month's Annual Meeting, you were encouraged to hold the question, "What does this mean for me?" close to the fore of your awareness. Keep that question in the front of your mind as you worship, read, pray, fellowship, laugh, share, minister, help, volunteer, etc. At that meeting, you were also posed another question, again with the intention of keeping it close at hand; what does it mean to "do church?"

We will need to be about some formal exploration of each of these questions in regard to future direction, growth opportunities, etc. One of the changes you will see coming shortly is in regard to the schedule of committee meetings. Presently, each committee has carved out its own meeting date throughout a given month. During the course of any given week, there are multiple committees, groups and task forces meeting at church.

New to our congregation, Pastor Leslie attempts to attend as many of these as possible. An alternative to the status quo will be implemented in July. All committees will be meeting at the church on the same evening, allowing Pastor to float between the various groups as needed. As a result, valuable pastoral time will be freed up for other areas of ministry.

Is it new? Yes. Is it a change? You bet. Is it feasible and possible? Indeed. Might it pay dividends? Absolutely. How we do church will certainly change and, in the grand scheme of things, this is a relatively straightforward change. You will hear more about this at your individual committee meetings this month, as well as at announcement time during up-coming worship services.

The other thing noted at last month's annual meeting was how we really know how to do food! Well, it strikes me that a monthly gathering of committees sounds like a perfect opportunity to share a meal with one another, after which we can collectively roll our sleeves up to get busy with our individual committee meetings. Mmmmmm. My mouth is watering already!

Peace.

Phil

New Pathways

New Pathways: Sunday, May 31 – Sunday, June 7, 2015. Our church will once again be hosts to New Pathways guests and help is needed for those who wish to volunteer for set up and take down of beds, providing dinners, evening activities, staying overnight and transporting our guests with the new Pathways van. You can volunteer with a group of people or by yourself. If you are interested in helping in any of the above ways, you are welcome to contact the following people for more information: (Set Up/Take Down), Deb Griffith, 828-4841, (Dinners), Sharon Carlson, 828-1581, (Activities), Lance James, 330-6329, (Evening Host/Overnight), Sue Hadland, 829-2381 and (Transportation), Scott Gutierrez, 838-7066. Thank you always for your generous support of this important church project.

Christian Ministry Department

June 7

Hosts: Eileen Kurpiers & Jan Morton

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

Greeters: Jan Morton

Counters: Jeff Behr & Marcia Mans

June 14

Hosts: Mary Harder & Lois McBroom

Ushers/Greeters: Maria Bertram, Lance James, Itty Newgord & Preston Newgord

Counters: Deb Griffith & Marcia Mans

June 21

Hosts: Shirley Barten, Jim Flath, Deb Lundberg & Duane Shatava

Ushers: Austin & Preston Newgord

Greeters: Marcia Mans & Barb Stokke

Counters: Coleen Carder & Vi Heiser

June 28

Hosts: Sharon Carlson & Karen Ogdahl

Ushers/Greeters: Joey Halvorson, Ann Turnbull, Mike & Beth Schrader

Counters: Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

Improve Your Health – Join the Choir

Singing comes naturally to preschoolers, but by the time we reach adulthood most of us have stopped the habit. Perhaps you were tactfully asked by your music teacher to “pull the curtains” instead of singing in the school show, or it was suggested that you mouth the words during the choir performance. Sadly, many people have experiences like these, which stop them singing in later life. Susan West, an associate professor at the Australian National University, calls this disorder “selective mutism for singing”. As adults, many of us adjust the way we sing in particular circumstances to reduce or mask the impact – some refuse to sing in any circumstances. This behaviour is so commonplace that it’s become the default social position for many adults, even though secretly they may want to sing. It’s a pity, because increasingly, research is showing singing to be widely achievable, good for both your mood and your health. Sceptical? Read on.

1. Everyone can sing!

Even if you haven’t sung for years or you believe you can’t sing in tune, the chances are your singing is just fine. Studies in Canada, Australia and New Zealand have shown that most people who think they are ‘tone deaf’ really just lack confidence in singing – with support and practice, they can become self-assured singers. Remember, your vocal cords need exercise as well.

2. Singing is good for your health

There is a growing body of evidence that singing can bring physical, mental and emotional benefits. Singing offers benefits considered vital for wellbeing: a state of pleasure and a sense of meaningfulness or engagement in life. Researchers Stephen Cliff and Grenville Hancox surveyed more than 1000 people who sang in choirs in Australia, England and Germany, and found the majority of participants found singing was beneficial for their wellbeing. Women in particular reported improvements in their wellbeing. Evidence shows group singing releases endorphins and oxytocin (the stress-relieving hormone). There are benefits

to be had from any kind of singing, says Dunedin health psychologist Dr Nicola Swain. "Singing in private, such as in the car or shower, will improve your mood and have a positive impact on physical health." Most people who think they are 'tone deaf' really just lack confidence in singing - with support and practice, they can become self-assured singers.

3. Singing helps you feel connected

In evaluation of a community choir in Christchurch carried out by Community and Public Health found the choir was important because of the opportunities for social contact it gave members. Sharing experiences in the choir led to an increase in networks and friendships, and promoted coping and resilience in the aftermath of the earthquakes.

4. The more singing, the better

Singing regularly won't just improve your tone and voice. Regular singers, particularly group singers, were found to have lower levels of the stress hormone cortisol in a 2004 study, compared to those simply listening to choral music. The quality of the singing doesn't matter either. A US study in 2005 showed the beneficial effects of singing were the same, even if the sound wasn't quite note-perfect.

5. It's great exercise

According to charity Heart Research UK, singing is an aerobic activity that has the same physical benefits as other cardiovascular-rich exercises. "Singing increases oxygenation in the blood stream and exercises major muscle groups, even when sitting," says Professor Graham Welch, chair of music education at the University of London. A joint study by Harvard and Yale showed choral singing increased the life expectancy of the population of New Haven, Connecticut due to the positive effect it had on heart health and mental state. "It's a great way to keep in shape, because you are exercising your lungs and heart," says leading vocal coach and singer Helen Astrid. Great exercise, great for making friends, great for relieving stress – and you don't even have to be good at it. Why don't we all sing more often?

Food Shelf Offering – May 24

Each month we bring offerings of groceries, necessities and financial donations to help feed hungry neighbors in our community. The Salvation Army Food Shelf serves 400 families each month. On May 24, we received \$240. Our next offering will be Sunday, June 28.

The following commodities are always needed and appreciated: canned beans (kidney, pinto, garbanzo, baked); chili, canned pasta meals, stews, soups; tuna, canned chicken, peanut butter; ramen noodles, pastas, macaroni and cheese; paper towels, toilet paper, disposable diapers, soap and shampoo.

Again, *thank you* for helping to feed our hungry neighbors!

Lunch Bunch

Lunch Bunch will meet at noon on June 30th at Gregory Park. All are welcome—bring a favorite dish to share! If the weather does not cooperate, we will meet in Fellowship Hall.

Soup Kitchen – June 26

Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve an evening meal at the Soup Kitchen on June 26. Sharing food and fellowship is an important ministry to neighbors in our community. If you can help, please sign up on the red notebook placed in the church entry, or call the church office and we'll put your name on the list.

All in the Church Family



June Birthdays

6/2	Ken Nelson	6/20	Lowell Johnson
6/2	Cadence Hartwig	6/20	Kellie Hartwig
6/8	Shelly Trimble	6/22	Dawn Stattine
6/10	Barb Stokke	6/23	Pat Bertram
6/10	Becky Twamley	6/24	Anna Boman
6/11	Mona Gorham	6/25	Claire Steen
6/14	Ed Pishko	6/25	Steve Waller
6/15	Ashley Boman	6/27	Nancy Gould
6/16	Chuck Watson	6/29	Jocelyn Jones
6/17	Anna Clavin		

Church Council Minutes

May 20, 2015

Moderator – Phil Kuehn	Assistant Moderator – Dan Hegstad
Clerk – Karen Ogdahl	Treasurer – Lisa Wigand
Christian Ministry – Joey Halvorson	Trustees – Coleen Carder
Christian Education – Marina Grabowski	Stewardship – Marcia Mans
Council at Large – Ann Turnbull, Nicole Grabowski, Bonnie Crum	

Present: Karen Ogdahl, Ann Turnbull, Marina Grabowski, Marcia Mans, Nicole Grabowski, Bonnie Crum, Joey Halvorson, Phil Kuehn, Rev. Leslie Moughty, Dan Hegstad, Itty Newgord, Coleen Carder, Lisa Wigand

Incoming Moderator Phil Kuehn began the meeting with introductions and an inspirational reading from *All I Really Need to Know I Learned in Kindergarten*. Pastor Leslie Moughty led the group in prayer.

The April minutes were approved. Phil explained that committees should email their minutes to Karen (ogdahl@brainerd.net) prior to the next Council meeting.

CLERK'S REPORT –

Karen read a letter from the Crow Wing County Historical Society thanking the church for its membership in the society.

Death: Edmond Hopps on May 11, 2015.

Three transfer members: Laurel Baxter from New Brighton UCC and Rev. Leslie and Ken Moughty from North Shore UCC, Woodenville, WA.

TREASURER'S REPORT – See attached report.

Because there are several new Council members, Lisa explained the financial statement and answered questions. The church has been operating in the red, mainly because of one-time expenses such as moving expenses for the Crowes and the Moughty's and paying two office administrators during April. Members continue to give generously, and electronic giving provides more predictable income, but we still need to practice careful spending.

Council approved switching from a debit card to a credit card for security reasons. Lisa suggested making the church computer more secure by seeing that internet security is up to date and by not allowing anyone but authorized users access to the church computer.

Lisa also reminded church members who wish to be reimbursed for church purchases to bring their receipts to the church office and fill out reimbursement forms.

PASTOR'S REPORT

Leslie is attending get-acquainted groups to help her get to know the congregation. Two more are scheduled, and more may be added. She will be interviewing Council members and other people in leadership positions. She thanked those members who led the church service when she was ill.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT – No meeting

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Utility bills have been higher due to weather. Deb Griffith has been working on a church use policy for groups who use the church. Trustees are still researching fellowship hall remodeling which will involve acoustic improvements. The Columbarium Committee has met and is researching affordable columbaria for the small chapel. The chapel would also need renovation. The insurance agent has recommended background checks for those people who work with children. Spring clean up is May 21.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CE will be discussing ways to rethink Sunday School. Because of the number of children, the old model doesn't work well. One possibility might be intergenerational events combined with traditional lessons about the bible and our beliefs. CE hopes to send several young people to next year's national youth event, which will need fund-raising.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

CM has developed a calendar for the rest of 2015. The next event is Brainerd History Week June 14 – 21. Our church will again be part of an ecumenical service in Gregory Park and will host historical tours of the church.

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

New at-large members asked what their role should be. Their roles are to represent interests and concerns of the congregation and to be the nominating committee, which finds new committee members prior to the annual meeting.

OLD BUSINESS

A task force is working on updating the wedding and funeral policies.

NEW BUSINESS

There was a discussion of the best times to hold Council and committee meetings. It was suggested that all committees meet at the same time, perhaps with a potluck dinner prior to the meetings. Committees will try this beginning the second Thursday in July and will evaluate this schedule.

Honoring the Earth held a rally last year in the Brainerd area around the theme of opposition to the oil pipeline, and several church members participated. They are holding another rally this year about the issue of Columbus Day vs. Indigenous People's Day. Pat Scott made a request that the church be involved. The Council agreed that information on the event could be placed in the church newsletter.

Because of the lateness of the evening, Council decided to discuss other new business items at the June meeting.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 17 at 5:30.

Respectfully submitted,
Karen Ogdahl, Clerk of Council

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd Financial Results - General Fund As of April 30, 2015

	Annual Budget	Results Through April 30, 2015	% of Budget
Income:			
From Giving Units	\$ 143,220	\$ 56,634	39.54%
Other Giving	\$ 11,510	\$ 10,288	89.38%
Total Income	<u>\$ 154,730</u>	<u>\$ 66,922</u>	
Expenses:			
Council	\$ 103,318	\$ 40,712	39.40%
Christian Ministry	\$ 10,400	\$ 4,623	44.45%
Christian Education	\$ 1,450	\$ 163	11.24%
Stewardship	\$ 300	\$ 321	107.00%
Trustees	\$ 60,816	\$ 22,546	37.07%
Total Expenses	<u>\$ 176,284</u>	<u>\$ 68,365</u>	
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	<u>\$ (21,554)</u>	<u>\$ (1,443)</u>	

CHURCH CALENDAR — JUNE 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2	3 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	4 11:30 Clergy Cluster 5:30 Stewardship	5 10:30 Book Group 11:00 Christian Ministry	6
7 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	8	9	10 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 5:30 Trustees	11 Habitat Dinner honoring Paul Mans	12 10:30 Book Group	13
14 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	15	16 History Week Open House	17 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 5:30 Council	18 5:30 Christian Ed	19 10:30 Book Group 6:00 Process & Film	20
21 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship Deb Celley Memorial Garden Dedication 1:00 Community Worship Service	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 *Food Shelf Offering* 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship Newsletter Deadline	29	30 12:00 Lunch Bunch @ Gregory Park				

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