

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

July 2018

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

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Pastor's Pen

A colleague of mine recently posted in a Facebook clergy group "I hope the start of summer is giving you opportunity to have some down time." I read this while on the bus heading home after 4 days at the Regional Youth Event at Grinnell College in Iowa. A few weeks ago I was at the UCC Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting in Saint Joseph. I love these events, but they are certainly not downtime. I couldn't help but chuckle. I have so much to share with you about both of these events, AND no amount of sharing will truly communicate the depth of those experiences.

First, at UCCMN Annual Meeting, our theme was "In This Moment...Acting in Faith." The story of Esther was our scripture guide for our time together. If you aren't familiar with Esther's story, I recommend you take out your bible and read it. It's a relatively short book and it speaks to the courage of a young Jewish woman who became a queen and used her power and privilege to save the Israelites from being slaughtered. Now, Esther's approach was to kill the people who threatened them, so the lesson isn't a perfect one and I am not advocating violence to prevent violence. But our attention was called to the times we have, as a church community, acted in faith. When did we take a chance, risk something, for the sake of the kin-dom of God? And maybe more importantly, how are we being called to act in faith in this moment, and how will we respond?

You might have noticed the piece of artwork that has been on the chancel for the last two weeks. The painting was created by Kim Jore, an artist, art teacher, and member of First Congregational UCC in Moorhead, MN. She created the painting during our first plenary session. On Sunday morning, the conference held a drawing for a church to take the painting home. One of our delegates, Alvin Velsvaag, entered our church, and we won! The painting will be on display in the sanctuary and then somewhere prominent in the building as a reminder of our call to act in faith.

This theme of acting in faith carried over to the West Central Regional Youth Event with the theme "Faith Equals Action." Keynote speakers for the event included the founder of Simply Smiles, a not-for-profit organization that provides bright futures for impoverished children, their families, and their communities. We also heard from Rev. Brittany Conley, aka Rev. Smash, about her efforts to organize a faith-centered protest and witness to the white nationalist rally (and resulting violence) in Charlottesville, North Carolina last August. In our final morning plenary, we heard powerful and moving sermon on the story of... you guessed it, Esther! I have posted quite a few photos and videos of these two events on my professional Facebook page: www.facebook.com/revleslieucc which is visible even if you don't have a Facebook account.

It seems that every morning, there is something new going on that is challenging our sense of human decency. The continuing inhumane treatment of migrants seeking asylum in this country is still heavy in my heart. But I have been going back to these experiences of the last few weeks, praying for God to help me discern how my faith is calling me to act in this moment and how our church can best act in faith in this moment. I invite you to join me in calling your law makers and putting pressure on them to treat immigrants and asylum seekers in the way the bible describes over and over again: "When the alien resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the alien. The alien who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the alien as yourself, for you were aliens in the land of Egypt: I am the Lord your God." Leviticus 19:33-34 and 24:22. "You shall not deprive a resident alien...of justice." Deuteronomy 24:17-18. "Do no wrong or violence to the alien." Jeremiah 22:3-5. "The aliens shall be to you as citizens" Ezekiel 47:21-22. "...I was a stranger and you welcomed me." Matthew 25:31-46.

May we continue to discern our call in the world as a community of Jesus-followers and let us and in faith in this moment.

With many blessings,

Pastor Leslie

Pastor Leslie's upcoming out of office dates:

July 29 (after church) – August 3: Youth Camp at Pilgrim Point. (Rev. Joyce Rush on call for pastoral care at 218-838-8287.

August 6 – August 20: Vacation. Rev. Mark Ford on call from 8/6-8/15 at 218-232-8131. Rev. John Stiles on call 8/16 – 8/21 at 612-418-1406.

Thank You

Thank you for giving me the opportunity to represent you at the Minnesota conference annual meeting. Spending three days in a public setting was a stretch for a person with agoraphobia and I am so grateful I was able to attend.

Two resolutions were voted on, one having to do with gun violence, which passed unanimously and we got to see a video and hear a report from some of the Minnesota UCC youth that attended the March for Our Lives in Washington D.C.

The second, encourages our legislators to enact Minnesota renewable energy standards of 50% by 2030 and 100% by 2050, it passed with about 90% of the vote. I attended the hearing on renewable energy and even though no one expressed an opinion against the resolution, I suspect some people objected to the use of 100%, 99% may have worked better for them.

The two workshops I attended were about reflective listening and "The Life Saving Church." The first was an exercise where we practiced listening for facts, feeling and values, then repeated them back to the speaker.

The second talked about suicide prevention in the church and about the W.I.S.E. effort in the UCC that hopes to "widen the welcome" to include people with mental health challenges. A W.I.S.E. congregation is one that has made a conscious choice to become Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive and Engaged on mental health.

Please feel free to discuss any of these issues with me and again, thank you.

Alvin Velsvaag

Special Offering – June

In June we donated \$753.34 to the Camp Scholarship Fund! Our next offering will be on Sunday, July 22.

July Birthdays

7/4	Gary Whiteman	7/23	Vi Heiser
7/9	Miyah Ellis	7/23	Carol Crust
7/10	Bobbie Borg	7/26	Steve Crum
7/18	Jeff Behr	7/29	Samantha Bertram
7/19	David Crum	7/30	Roger Grussing

HUGS

July 1

Hosts: Marcia Ferris & Dan Hegstad
Ushers/Greeters: Reed Campbell, Greg Johnson, Austin Newgord & Gary Whiteman
Counters: Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

July 8

Hosts: Karen Ford & Tom Nelson
Ushers/Greeters: Jack & Kay Kraywinkle & Austin & Itty Newgord
Counters: Deb Griffith & Judy Whiteman

July 15

Hosts: Brian & Becky Twamley
Ushers: Austin & Itty Newgord
Greeters: Deb Griffith & Claire Steen
Counters: Tracy Lyons & Mabel Schultz

July 22

Hosts: Jolene Hojem & Mike Schrader
Ushers/Greeters: Eric, Kai & Kyd Lukanen & Tracy Lyons
Counters: Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

July 29

Hosts: Sue Hadland & Lisa Wigand
Ushers/Greeters: Reed Campbell, Greg Johnson, Austin Newgord & Gary Whiteman
Counters: Sharon Carlson & Judy Whiteman

New Pathways

Coming to First Congregational Sunday, July 15 – July 22 2018

Consider volunteering for dinner, overnights, set up, tear down or transportation Please contact:

Staying overnight: Sue Hadland – 829-2381 – dghrose@charter.net
 Kathi Hefti – 839-1578 – hefti2@gmail.com

Dinners: Sharon Carlson – 828-1581 – sharoncarlson62@charter.net

Set up and take down (2 Sundays) Deb Griffith – 828-4841 – debrange@brainerd.net

Transportation: Scott Gutierrez – 838-066 – sljtgutierrez@gmail.com

Activities: Lance James – 821-6667 – lancejames32@gmail.com

Basic food buying, (other than dinners) Jan Morton – 829-5092 – jan56401@gmail.com

The white board used for signing up, is in the church sanctuary lobby each Sunday starting June 3rd. Once you sign up, please go online by clicking on [Sign up Here](#), and pick your dates for any of the above five activity opportunities.

THANK YOU from The New Pathways Team!!!
 THE REWARDS ARE MANY, AS A VOLUNTEER, AND AS OUR GUEST

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 Griesel in the UCC Minnesota Conference Office at 612-871-0359.

July Family Camp	July 15 – July 20
Youth Mission Week (Grades 6-12)	July 22 – July 27
Retreat for Families with Trans and Gender Nonconforming Children	July 27 – July 29
Youth Camp (Grades 6-12)	July 29 – August 3
Young Adult Retreat	August 3 – August 5
August Family Camp (hosted by St. Anthony Park UCC)	August 5 – August 10
Retreat for Trans and Gender Nonconforming Adults	August 24 – August 26
Women's Retreat	September 1 – September 23
Men's Retreat	September 28 – September 30
Marriage Retreat	October 5 – October 7

Church Council Minutes – June 20, 2018

Moderator – Mike North	Assistant Moderator – Vacant
Clerk – Barb Stokke	Treasurer – Deb Lundberg
Christian Ministry – TBD	Trustees – Deb Griffith
Christian Education – TBD	Stewardship – Judy Whiteman
Council at Large – Gary Whiteman, Bob Jones, Claire Steen	

Present: Mike North, Barb Stokke, Deb Lundberg, Deb Griffith, Judy Whiteman, Gary Whiteman, and Sue Hadland (representing CM).

Mike North called the meeting to order. Barb Stokke shared June's *Food for Thought*. Mike North will provide July's.

CLERK'S REPORT—May and June: 2 baptisms, 9 new members, 2 transfers, and a funeral.

PASTOR'S REPORT—Highlights: attended UCC MN Conference June 7–10, and Brainerd Lakes Ministerium Breakfast; led 2 Confirmation classes (classes will resume in September); blessed bikes, motorcycles and skateboards after worship June 3; and baptized Aria and Emmalyn Moser. Community engagement: Pastoral Care Contacts: 2 office visits, a home visit, an extended hospital visit, the funeral service for Barb Watson, and multiple phone calls. Concerns: Filling the Assistant Moderator position and the 2 vacancies on the Education committee. Upcoming events: Regional Youth Event in Grinnell, Iowa, June 19–22; June 24 Camp Sunday with children and youth leading parts of the service; July 1 the Jazz Worship Service; August 5 Worship Service with Pastor Leslie and guest preacher Rev. Sonny Graves. Out-of-the-office dates: June 19–22 (Regional Youth Event) and after church July 29–August 3 (Youth Camp at Pilgrim Point).

TREASURER'S REPORT—Deb Lundberg distributed individual financial reports to each committee. A detailed, six-month budget report will be emailed to Council members for their perusal before the July's Council meeting.

TRUSTEES' REPORT—Project up-dates: The Gethsemane stained glass window has been repaired and installed. Trustees are researching ventilation needed for the preservation of the windows. Dead bushes have been replaced and mulch spread in the Memorial Garden (Thank you, Dale Hadland!), and work in the Columbarium may be completed by mid August. Upcoming projects include placing grab bars in bathrooms, repairing and painting the parsonage porch, and washing the windows in the narthex and Columbarium. Nancy Gould and Deb Griffith will continue as Trustees reporter and Council representative, respectively.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT—Stewardship reported welcoming new committee members Gale Landem and Georgia Harris and reviewing the committee's work and schedule for the upcoming year. This year's Stewardship reporter is Mabel Schultz, and the Council rep, Judy Whiteman.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY REPORT—CM announced the Jazz Service, prepared by Pastor Leslie and Chris Fogderud, to be held on the church's front lawn Sunday, July 1, with musicians Chris Fogderud and Central Standard Time. If you have lawn chairs, please bring them. If it rains, don't bring them; we'll be inside. An ice cream sundae social will follow the service.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT—No report

MEMBERS AT LARGE REPORT—Needed: an Assistant Moderator and 2 additional Christian Ed committee members. Please contact Gary Whiteman, Claire Steen, or Bob Jones if you are interested in serving or would like more information.

OLD BUSINESS:

1. Budget Information— see Treasurer's Report.
- 2–3. Nursery staffing and Contribution Recognition—tabled until July.
4. Discretionary Fund —Mike Northway reviewed the need for the approved Discretionary Fund and reminded Council of the \$250 challenge grant offered by an anonymous church member.
5. Safe Church Policy—Before July's meeting, Council members are reminded to review the three examples of Safe Church policies emailed to Council members May 22 by Deb Griffith.
6. By Laws Task Force will remain on hold.

The meeting was adjourned.

The next Council meeting will be July 18 at 5:30 PM. Committees meet July 12, 2018.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stokke, Clerk of Council

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd				
Financial Results - General Fund				
Year to Date Results as of 5/31/2018				
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 5/31/18	% of Budget	Actuals Through 5/31/17
Income:				
Giving Units	\$ 129,892	\$ 95,578	73.58%	\$ 61,374
Loose Offering (10% to OCWM)	\$ 3,278	\$ 1,508	45.99%	\$ 1,372
Other Giving	\$ 4,938	\$ 4,705	95.28%	\$ 2,491
Revolving Income	\$ 3,933	\$ 8,128		
Total Income	\$ 142,041	\$ 109,919	77.39%	\$ 65,237
Expenses:				
Council	\$ 101,821	\$ 38,666	47.65%	\$ 45,564
Christian Education	\$ 2,300	\$ 610	39.39%	\$ 35
Christian Ministry	\$ 1,900	\$ 742	49.71%	\$ 1,248
Music	\$ 8,990	\$ 4,409	57.21%	\$ 3,714
Stewardship	\$ 695	\$ 243	45.23%	\$ 344
Trustees	\$ 56,810	\$ 62,678	118.49%	\$ 22,150
Revolving Expense	\$ 3,724	\$ 4,990		
Total Expenses	\$ 176,241	\$ 112,338	72.71%	\$ 73,054
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (34,200)	\$ (2,419)		\$ (7,817)

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - Revolving Accounts		
Year to Date Results as of 5/31/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 5/31/18
Income:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -
Flower Income	\$ -	\$ 365
OCWM Income	\$ 8,398	\$ 3,928
Other Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 1,695
Special Offering Income	\$ -	\$ 40
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 351
UCC Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 1,749
Total Income	\$ 8,898	\$ 8,128
Expenses:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -
Flowers	\$ -	\$ 719
OCWM Payments	\$ 8,398	\$ 2,103
Other Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 920
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 371
UCC Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 877
Total Expenses	\$ 9,123	\$ 4,990
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (225)	\$ 3,138

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd		
Financial Results - Designated Funds		
Year to Date Results as of 5/31/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 5/31/18
Income:		
Building Fund		\$ 23,740
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 153
Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ 223
Total Income	\$ -	\$ 24,116
Expenses:		
Building Fund		\$ 1,181
Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 731
Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ 690
Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ 2,602
Net Income (Loss)	\$ -	\$ 21,514

Church Calendar – July 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 10:00 Jazz Service 11:00 Fellowship/Build Your Own Sundaes	2	3	4 Independence Day Office Closed No Prayer Circle or Men's Group today	5	6 10:30 Book Group	7
8 10:00 Worship & Communion 11:00 Fellowship	9	10	11 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	12 5:30 Committee Meetings	13 10:30 Book Group 11:30 Clergy Cluster	14
15 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship New Pathways Host Week	16 New Pathways Host Week	17 New Pathways Host Week	18 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 5:30 Council Meeting New Pathways Host Week	19 New Pathways Host Week	20 10:30 Book Group New Pathways Host Week	21 New Pathways Host Week
22 10:00 Worship & Special Offering 11:00 Fellowship NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	23	24	25 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	26	27 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	28
29 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	30	31				