



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.

Office phone 829-2528, Pastor’s residence 454-0453, E-mail
firstcong@brainerd.net.

uccbrainerd.org

August 2014

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

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Announcements

Pastor Search Update

The search committee has nearly completed our "Church Profile" and will have it available for the Church Council to approve in the next week. The profile will also be available in the church office after worship and during office business hours for members to review. You may contact me if you have questions or comments about the profile.

The process for developing a church profile has been a large project and we have all learned so much about our church. The next step will be getting the job posted on the Minnesota and National UCC websites.

We appreciate the continued support of the congregation and ask for your prayers as we move forward.

Sue Hadland
dghrose@charter.net

HUGS Volunteers Needed...

We are still in need of Hosts and Ushers/Greeters for the 4th Sunday rotation, which is the 24th for the month of August. Please contact the office if you would like to volunteer to help with this.

School Supplies For Our Community

The Salvation Army and Kinship Partners will be distributing school supplies to children in Crow Wing County. We are invited to help the children of our community prepare to learn and succeed by providing them with needed school supplies. Many stores have terrific sales on school supplies right now! Shop the sales, and bring your donations to church on in the next 2 week. We will bless the school supplies before taking them to the Salvation Army for distribution in mid-August.

Supplies needed include: backpacks, erasers, binders, folders, markers, glue sticks, pens, pencils, highlighters, scissors, notebook paper, rulers, etc. Monetary donations are very welcome!

Bless you for sharing!

Leadership Retreat

for the h n else!)

Saturday August 16, 2014 from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. in the Fellowship Hall

Beverages and meat & cheese tray will be provided.

Please bring a salad, or desert to share.

Join us to celebrate God's work in our midst and to plan activities and events for the coming year. We'll set the dates for all that we do together as a community of faith. We'll look closely at what it means to be a "Faith Forming Congregation", an initiative of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Christian Education Needs Teachers

The Christian Education Committee is looking for people to help teach Sunday school for the 2014 – 2015 Season. Eco-Justice is the theme for the months of September and October and cultural awareness will be the theme for spring. Anyone interested can get a hold of Itty Newgord, Marina Grabowski or Maria Bertram. Any amount of time you would be able to volunteer would be appreciated. Thank you!

THE PASTOR'S PEN

Rev. Linda K. Crowe, Interim Pastor

Thank you so much for your prayers for my father, Dave Hamm, and for our family. I am very grateful that Randy and I were able to fly home for precious time to visit with Dad before he died. During the week we were home in Spokane, I spent a good portion of each day at the hospital with Dad. Dad was in the Hospice unit of the Spokane VA hospital, where he received wonderful care.

Bright handmade patchwork quilts cover each patient in that wing of the hospital as they spend long hours in bed. Those colorful comforters add a cheerful touch to a place well-acquainted with grief and loss.

As I gave my father a final blessing, I invited him to let the comforter on his bed be a reminder of the Comforter, the name for God found in more than one place in the Bible. "You are always covered with God's love," I told Dad, "just as this patchwork comforter is covering you now."

During Dad's final days, family and friends were with him at all times, surrounding him with a circle of love. During those days, it was so comforting to me to know that Dad was being lifted up in loving prayers.

Here in Brainerd, I was working on a small patchwork prayer quilt to use as a sermon illustration. Just after 5 p.m. on July 15, when the phone call came from my sister to let us know that Dad had just died, I was tying knots on that little comforter. More than a few tears fell on that quilt as it was completed that night.

As I was working on that little patchwork comforter 1300 miles east of where my father was spending his final days and hours, one of the prayers on the quilt was particularly meaningful: "May God, the eternal Comforter, surround and embrace you always. Know that you are loved. God created you that you might bring comfort to others even as God comforts you. Be at peace in this world, feel comfortable, you are not alone."

Thank you so much for your prayers. Thank you for providing comfort to me and my family in a time of grief.

Peace, Pastor Linda.

Moderator's Musings

By Ann Turnbull

July has been a busy month at First Congregational. There was a packed agenda at our monthly council meeting.

- Lowell Johnson brought an **idea for a shared ministry with the Elks Club**. The council supported the idea provided insurance and health concerns are addressed. The idea is for the Elks to apply for a grant which will allow them to provide some meals during the school year for young people who hang out at The Shop. Some members of the "Cooking for Everyone" group are excited by the idea of teaching interested young people to cook more than hamburgers (in the church kitchen) while providing a meal for their friends at [The Shop](#). If all goes well, the hope is that Elks and First Congregational volunteers will cook alongside the young people establishing meaningful relationships. See Lowell Johnson to volunteer.
- When we met as a large group with Rev. Linda and Randy Crowe during the process of discerning what our church's future ministry may look like, there was strong interest in **environmental justice**. It seemed like such a huge endeavor, we weren't sure how we could go about it but opportunities are presenting themselves! Under the leadership of Ellie Burkett and Nancy Gould and with the help of the Board of Trustees, the church applied for a Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) grant to do two projects to control rain water. The water that comes off the roof next to the elevator addition will be stored in tanks to be used for watering the garden with provision to control overflow. A rain garden will be added to handle storm water from the parking lot. The original grant is now revised and re-approved to provide additional funding to ensure the parking lot water is collected efficiently on its way to the rain garden. The revised grant agreement awards the church \$10,048.00 for these projects.

This is new technology and our project will serve as a local demonstration for how storm water that eventually flows into the Mississippi from business and church parking lots can be handled in an environmentally friendly way. Construction is anticipated in the middle of August. Call Nancy Gould if you want to help.

I am particularly thankful for Ellie's leadership on this project. She works for the U of MN Extension Service and is a specialist in native plants and rain gardens among other things. We definitely could not have gotten this far without her knowledge and dedication. Thanks Ellie!

- Our church needs an **organized planner** with a heart for environmental justice to work with the Unitarians to organize an [Honor the Earth](#) event coming to Brainerd on Tuesday, August 19th. A potluck and concert event is anticipated at the Arboretum. Please contact me (651) 216-2592 if this is a ministry for you. Winona LaDuke and others from the White Earth reservation are riding horses through McGregor, Aitkin, Brainerd, Pine River and Hackensack to educate and publicize the [Enbridge Sandpiper Pipeline](#). The pipeline is to start in North Dakota at the Bakken oil fields and run 616 miles across northern Minnesota to Superior, Wisconsin. There is great concern about the impact of fracking oil spills. This oil is extremely combustible and previous spills have caused much damage. The current pipeline route crosses wild rice beds, valuable water resources and pristine ecosystems. Honor the Earth's effort is to get our communities informed and encourage our participation in contacting our State Representatives and Senators about these environment concerns. According to the timeline set forth by Enbridge Energy, construction on the pipeline is expected to start in late 2014 and early 2015, and be completed by 2016.
See: <http://www.brainerddispatch.com/content/honor-earth-brings-pipeline-protest-brainerd>

If you know anyone in the Gull Lake area who has a back yard for camping and pasture for the horses, I believe a host for the riders that night is still needed.

- Don't forget the **Leadership Retreat** on Saturday, August 16th!

Christ's Peace be with you,

Ann Turnbull

Christian Ministry Department

H.U.G.S.

August 3

Host: Eileen Kurpiers & Jan Morton

Greeters/Ushers: Roger Best, Greg Johnson, Gary Whiteman

Counters: Jeff Behr & Marcia Ferris

August 10

Hosts: Lois McBroom and Mary Harder

Greeters/Ushers: Itty Newgord, Lance James

Maria Bertram & Preston Newgord

Counters: Sharon Carlson & Lowell Johnson

August 17**Hosts:** Marcia Mans & Deb Griffith**Greeters/Ushers:** Austin Newgord, Preston Newgord,
Pat Scott & Dan Hegstad**Counters:** Coleen Carder & Vi Heiser**August 24****Hosts:****Greeters/Ushers:****Counters:** Nancy Gould & Vi Heiser**August 31****Hosts:** Lisa Wigand & Sue Hadland**Greeters/Ushers:** Roger Best, Greg Johnson & Gary Whiteman**Counters:** Steve Crum & Judy Whiteman

Soup Kitchen – August 22

Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve an evening meal at the Soup Kitchen on August 22. 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.

June 2014 Statistics**Meals – 1909****Days of service – 28****Average Meals served per day – 68**

Thank you so much for your service and support over the last month! We can't do this unless we keep hanging in there together. Because you are faithful we can say no one needs to go to bed hungry in our area! Later this month we will be launching a fundraiser to help us through the summer slump. We will be contacting coordinators and asking for your help in getting information and materials to our churches and other supportive organizations. Board members will be contacting you with more detailed info.

Thanks for your help!

Sincerely,
Pastor Bob EvansContact Us: pastorbobWebsite: Sharingbread.com**Bless you for helping with this ministry!**

Food Shelf Offering – August 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. Our next offering will be on Sunday, August 24. On July 27 we collected **184 pounds of food and \$395.**

OUTSTANDING - THANKS TO EVERYONE!!

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!

All in the Church Family In Our Prayers

These joys and concerns were shared on prayer cards during recent services.

Pray for those in times of significant transitions. Pray for wisdom, peace, and comfort, strength, compassion, and courage. Pray for all who grieve. Pray for the girls kidnapped in Nigeria. Pray for the healing of relationships. Pray for caregivers. Pray for those suffering because of war, violence, abuse, neglect, disaster, or destruction. Pray for those struggling with family relationships or living with financial insecurity. Pray for those seeking employment or shelter. Pray for traveling mercies. Pray for those who are struggling with addictions, co-dependence, or abusive relationships. Pray for those living with pain and ongoing suffering. Help us God, to love our neighbors as ourselves. Pray for our Pastor Search Committee. Thank God for this church, supporting in a time of need. Dear Lord, Thank you for your many blessings!



August Birthdays

08/01	Charles Schmid	08/16	Emily Trtanj
08/02	Nicole Grabowski	08/17	Jill Carlson Ferrie
08/08	Diane Huan	08/21	Maria Bertram
08/10	Jack Olson	08/23	Jean Schaeffer
08/10	Bodie Brooks	08/27	Terry Boman
08/12	Brian Twamley	08/27	Dana Watson
08/13	Joe Stattine	08/27	Kathy Hegstad
08/14	Sophia Trtanj	08/28	Arlene Jones
08/15	Addison Ferrie	08/30	Samuel Stadem
08/16	Emma Widmark		



Happy Campers!



Church Council Minutes July 16, 2014

Moderator – Ann Turnbull

Assistant Moderator – Phil Kuehn

Clerk – Karen Ogdahl

Treasurer – Lisa Wigand

Christian Ministry – Joey Halvorson

Trustees – Coleen Carder

Christian Education – Itty Newgord

Stewardship – Lowell Johnson

Council at Large – Gary Whiteman, Dan Hegstad, Paul Mans

Present: Rev. Linda Crowe, Coleen Carder, Joey Halvorson, Gary Whiteman, Lowell Johnson, Phil Kuehn, Ann Turnbull, Karen Ogdahl, Lisa Wigand, Paul Mans

Moderator Ann Turnbull called the meeting to order with a prayer from Pastor Linda Crowe.

The May minutes were approved.

The Council voted to approve Phil Kuehn as the assistant moderator.

CLERK'S REPORT – nothing to report

TREASURER'S REPORT – See attached report.

Giving continues to be generous for both the general fund and missions. All the children going to camp received scholarships. The financial statement shows a deficit of \$3,000, but by the end of September that should make that up.

PASTOR'S REPORT – See report.

Highlights: Vacation Bible School, Annual Conference Meeting, blessing of the church garden, the history week service in the park, Community Action training led by OutFront Minnesota and sermons using comforters and quilts. Linda and Randy will accompany the young people to Pilgrim Point Camp. Linda reported the death of her father, Dave Hamm. The service will be held when she returns to Spokane at the end of the interim session. Our condolences go out to Linda's family.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Stewardship will meet in September to plan the pledge campaign. They have chosen a theme, which will remain unrevealed until the campaign kick-off.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

Coleen reported on the rain garden grant. The rain garden will help the parking lot drainage and the problem of roof run-off leaking into the basement. The Council discussed the grant requirement to maintain the rain garden properly for 10 years. If this requirement were not met, the church would be obligated to pay back 150% of the grant money. After examining the maintenance requirements, the Council approved signing the grant agreement.

Trustees are looking into switching to energy-efficient lighting. Because of the expense, this would need to be done over time.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CE heard a report on Operation Sandwich, a summer program that makes and delivers lunch to children in the community. Several students from the church are attending Pilgrim Point Camp this summer. Vacation Bible School was held at the Methodist Church, and confirmation classes started on June 1 with six students.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

The laity-led history service was a success. CM is reviewing its by-laws to determine its responsibilities and to determine any change proposals. Linda will consult with the associate conference minister regarding faith forming congregations. Several projects are already planned. CM created a list of upcoming special worship themes, including campers sharing their stories and a blessing of the animals.

AT-LARGE MEMBERS

Gary noted that the bell choir director has resigned. A volunteer replacement is being sought. Paul has information to share on attracting people to church. He will give that to Bonnie Crum on the hospitality committee.

OLD BUSINESS

Ann reported on the status of the church website. The initial information is ready and Joey will be adding pictures. We are waiting for our tech support to get it up and running. There was a discussion of having a church directory on the website. It would be accessible by members only. The group weighed the pros and cons of allowing people to update their own information.

The leadership roster is being updated. The Pastoral Search Committee is nearing completion of the church profile which will be available for congregational review before it is placed on the employment website.

NEW BUSINESS

Ann suggested that, in order to make our meetings more efficient, committees send their reports to Karen each month prior to the Council meeting. She will forward them to the Council members so that we won't need to spend time reading them at the meeting. It was also suggested that committee report writers begin their reports with a list of the main discussion topics from the meeting: Things You Need to Know.

Lowell Johnson presented a proposal that our cooking group, in partnership with the Elks, use the church kitchen to help young people from The Shop (a drop-in center for teens) learn to cook simple meals. The kitchen would be used twice a month for nine months. The Elks are applying for a grant that would cover the cost of food products. Coleen, representing the Trustees, had contacted our insurance company about liability. The Council agreed that this would be a valuable mission project but was concerned about health and safety issues. A motion to approve the program passed, providing those concerns are resolved.

The Executive Committee (moderator, assistant moderator, treasurer and clerk) will meet to discuss giving the pastor the 3% raise which was not given earlier because of tight church finances.

The Pastor Parish Relations Committee is reviewing its responsibilities and will bring a job description to Council for approval.

Soup Kitchen volunteers are always needed. Council discussed a variety of ways of organizing that might alleviate the problem. Examples: a church group or committee could sign up for one month; families could volunteer with a veteran organizer to help them.

NOTE: Church Leadership Retreat, August 16, 9 a.m. – 1:00 p.m. in the church fellowship hall. Bring your own lunch. All church members and friends are encouraged to attend this important time of planning for the future.

The meeting was adjourned with a prayer. The next meeting will be August 20, 2014 at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Ogdahl, Clerk of Council

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd
 Financial Results - General Fund
 As of June 30, 2014

	Annual Budget	Results Through June 30, 2014	% of Budget
Income:			
From Giving Units	\$ 131,090	\$ 79,181	60.40%
Other Giving	\$ 26,820	\$ 13,490	50.30%
Total Income	\$ 157,910	\$ 92,671	
Expenses:			
Council	\$ 106,261	\$ 56,034	52.73%
Christian Ministry	\$ 10,800	\$ 7,207	66.73%
Christian Education	\$ 1,300	\$ 945	72.69%
Stewardship	\$ 440	\$ 194	44.09%
Trustees	\$ 47,900	\$ 31,324	65.39%
Total Expenses	\$ 166,701	\$ 95,704	
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (8,791)	\$ (3,033)	

God's Garden



Wider Church and Community

LAKES AREA MUSIC FESTIVAL

2014 Season

Scott Lykins, Artistic and Executive Director

Community Concert

Sunday, August 3, 3 p.m.

Sommermusik

Wednesday, August 6, 7 p.m.

Works by Schubert, Schumann, Brahms, Mahler and more

Family Concert: Outdoor Adventure!

Sunday, August 10, 3 p.m.

Featuring Flight of the Bumblebee and works by Beethoven, Copland, and Gershwin

The Four Seasons

Wednesday, August 13, 7 p.m.

Vivaldi's well-known classic, followed by an Argentinean twist

Hansel & Gretel

Saturday, August 16, 7 p.m.

Sunday, August 17, 3 p.m.

Engelbert Humperdinck's opera transforms the stage into a beloved fairy tale

A Summer Pastoral

Wednesday, August 20, 7 p.m.

A woodwind celebration featuring Mozart, Stravinsky and more

Finale: Summer Celebration!

Saturday, August 23, 7 p.m.

Sunday, August 24, 3 p.m.

Works by Alfvén, Britten and Tchaikovsky

Tornstrom Auditorium
804 Oak Street
Brainerd, Minnesota

www.lakesareamusic.org

**All concerts
are free!**

Photography courtesy of David Boran



CHURCH CALENDAR — August 2014

					1 10:30 Book Group	2
3 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	4	5	6 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	7	8 10:30 Book Group	9
10 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	11 Operation Sandwich	12 Operation Sandwich 3:00 Christian Min. 5:30 Trustees	13 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	14 Operation Sandwich	15 10:30 Book Group	16 9:00 – 1:00 Leadership Retreat in Fellowship Hall
17 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	18	19	20 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Church Council	21	22 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	23
24 ** FOOD SHELF OFFERING** 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship	25	26	27 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	28	29 10:30 Book Group	30
31 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship						

Check the **Calendar** for up-to-date changes

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Linda Crowe**

**Admin. Assist.
Colleen Todd**