



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

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uccbrainerd.org

September 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

Where did the summer go? It has certainly been a busy one for me, and I know it has been busy for many of you! I hope you have found time within the busyness to enjoy the sun and the flowers and maybe even some travel or a few dips in the lake. As sad as I am to acknowledge that summer is quickly coming to an end, I am excited for what is going on in church this fall!

We usually see our children and youth more frequently once school starts. Sunday school begins on September 10 and we are facing a wonderful problem – we may have enough pre-k and kindergarten children to warrant a third Sunday school class. But we need someone to lead them! If this is something you might be interested in, please let me know or talk to Sharon Carlson.

September brings the Alzheimer's Walk on September 23. We have always had a strong turnout of both walkers and financial contributions. I know that this year will be no exception! Contact Arlene Jones for more information.

Once you have your walking shoes out, please also consider participating in the CROP Walk. This walk is an event to benefit Church World Service in their efforts to end hunger around the world. Half of the money raised goes to CWS and half stays right here in Brainerd to benefit local programs like the Food Shelf and Operation Sandwich. This year's walk is on Wednesday October 4 at Bethlehem Lutheran. Registration begins at 5:15pm, dinner at 5:30pm and the walk will start at 6:00pm. We are in need of a coordinator for our team to collect donations and encourage participation. Please let me know if this might be something you can do.

Adult forum is starting up again and is kicking off on September 17 when I will be leading a session called "Bible 101 – A Beginner's Introduction to Engaging the Bible." We will start with the basics: who wrote the Bible, how it was put together, what authority it has, how to approach reading it, and more. Eleanor Burkett and I will also be leading an Introduction to White Privilege this fall, date tbd. We are also planning to offer an in-depth class on White Privilege this winter and spring called "White Privilege: Let's Talk" which is a curriculum through the United Church of Christ. Arlene Jones and I will be attending the training on November 18 and I am looking for one more person to join us as a co-facilitator.

There is so much more that will be happening like our annual stewardship season, Halloween trick or treating at church, Fall Conference Youth Event at Pilgrim Point, the Blessing of the Animals... and the list goes on. I don't know about you but I feel so blessed to be part of this church!

With peace and many blessings,

Pastor Jestic

Moderator's Notes

The end of August has always been a memorable and bittersweet time of year for me. As a former educator, these days were consumed with getting ready for school. I can still remember not being able to sleep the night before school started. These last days of August also remind me of summer camp. It has been a joy to watch my granddaughters enjoy these last days of summer. They recently spent 2 weeks at "Camp Grandma". Their days were spent swimming, tubing and painting rocks. I hope that they will be cherished memories for them.

When I was going into eighth grade, I had the privilege of being sponsored to Luther Crest Bible Camp. I vividly remember lying awake at night listening to the waves of the water and the singing of the loons. I also still remember how much I missed my mother at night. However, during the day it was exciting to be at camp. There were many fun activities and adventures I had never experienced before. Looking back, I would say that attending Luther Crest Bible Camp was one of the “life changing” events in my early youth.

Recently I asked Macyn, Michael and Kyd to share some of their thoughts regarding going to Pilgrim Point. Their favorite part was meeting new friends, swimming and the Spirit Dash. Macyn said that she learned to never give up in the Lord and always do what is right. She also shared that she even learned how to be a living sanctuary. Michael says that he learned what it truly means to be a sanctuary to others. Kyd learned new music and games. When asked if they would recommend that others go to camp, all three said that you should go because you get to meet new people and it is a good way to connect with people. Michael said that you can be in a community with like-minded kids at camp. Macyn even said that camp is like a home away from home! It sounds like camp will be an event that they always remember too.

The weather is changing and the days are getting shorter. It is a time of transition. Our children are going back to school with wonderful memories of the summer. Once again, I will play Summertime from Porgy and Bess to savor the last days of summer and the warmth of September. September is my favorite month as I take some last kayak rides around the lake, start seeing the leaves change color and listen to the children’s stories of their new school year at school. God bless the children!

Claire Steen
Church Moderator

Blessing of the Animals – September 17 @ 10am

Furry, feathery, scaly – all God’s critters are welcome! Bring your pets (stuffed animals are also welcome) to be blessed during our annual Blessing of the Animals. While dogs and cats are the most common pets, no pet is too small to be blessed (I once blessed a snail) or too big. (I would love to bless a horse some day!) Scales are also awesome – I love snakes! Is your pet a little shy or doesn’t play well with others? Bring a collar or a photo or some other representation of your beloved companion.

This year we will also be receiving donations for H.A.R.T (Heartland Area Rescue Team) which is a low-kill shelter in Brainerd.

This fun and casual service will be held during our normal Sunday worship time and weather permitting, will take place on the lawn in front of the church on 5th Street. Tell your friends and neighbors! The more the merrier!

September Birthdays

9/3	Todd Froemming	9/14	Rod Carlson	9/25	Kaylo Brooks
9/9	Tom Nelson	9/14	Bob Spear	9/27	Kyd Lukanen
9/12	Joyce Libra	9/14	Lois McBroom	9/28	Judy Whiteman
9/12	Bob Ogdahl	9/15	Kay Kraywinkle	9/29	Leslie Moughty
9/13	Wayne Mayer	9/19	Allison Crum	9/30	Mark Stadem

HUGS

September 3

Hosts: Carla Benjamin & Jan Morton
Ushers/Greeters: Roger Best, Greg Johnson,
 Ken Nelson & Gary Whiteman
Counters: Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

September 10

Hosts: Jack & Kay Kraywinkle
Ushers/Greeters: Marina Grabowski,
 Mary Harder, Lois McBroom & Itty Newgord
Counters: Deb Griffith & Judy Whiteman

September 17

Hosts: Marina Grabowski & Deb Griffith
Ushers: Claire Steen & Barb Stokke
Greeters: Austin & Itty Newgord
Counters: Mabel Schultz & Tracy Lyons

September 24

Hosts: Sharon Carlson & Joey Halvorson
Ushers/Greeters: Ellie Burkett, Jolene Hojem,
 Tracy Lyons & Ann Turnbull
Counters: Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

Food Shelf Offering – August

The Salvation Army Food Shelf serves 400 families each month. In August, we donated 31 lbs of food \$240 and 33 lbs of school supplies! Our next offering will be Sunday, September 24. **Thank you for help!**

Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen

A Rough Night for Our Volunteers

Last night was difficult for our team from Grace UMC. They attempted to enforce our "No Pets Policy" and a couple freaked out to the extent that police were summoned. The Police did a great job and things were settled down well but this led me (Pastor Bob) into lengthy conversations with Brainerd Police, the Department of Health and the City of Brainerd.



I want to apologize to all of you wonderful volunteers for any confusion this has caused. My previous letter on this subject was in response to guidance I

had received from our DOH Inspector who has been very gracious to us and does a great job.

What I discovered over the last day or so is that this is a very complex issue in which there may be an inherent conflict between the DOH and the Federal "Americans with Disabilities Act". I will include a link to the ADA "Frequently Asked Questions" for those who may be interested [here](#).

The bottom line is that we need to reformulate our approach to these folks in order to be in compliance with the ADA.

Our New Policy

Since the ADA prevents us from asking for evidence of registration or certification for animals where the claim is that the animal is a "Therapy Dog", we will no longer do so.

We will default to our long-standing position of grace and acceptance, giving the benefit of the doubt to the person making the claim. This person is responsible to control the dog and see that it in no way interferes with or is threatening in any way to other guests.

Please keep me informed regarding any difficulties that may arise around these issues and I will do everything I can to help sort things out.

Thank you all for your service to the hungry of our area!

Blessings,
 Bob

Youth News

Katherine "Kiki" Bender, daughter of Jean Gustafson, recently enrolled at St. Cloud Technical and Community College and was accepted into the pre-cardiovascular technology program. She would love to receive cards or letters of support and encouragement for this next chapter of her life. Her new address is

711 8th Ave S
Apt A
St. Cloud, MN 56301

Featured Artist – Karen Eighmy

Who is Karen Eighmy?

Karen's love of calligraphy (the art of beautiful handwriting) was inspired by studying land deed documents from her mother's family in England, dated 1600-1800. These were written on animal skin and had the original wax seals. After receiving an art degree at South Dakota State University, she took all variety of jobs, from lettering a 40-foot scroll for a prom, to painting on a Jeep canopy, to working at a small television station. She began teaching adult education calligraphy classes in 1977, and continues today.

Karen joined the art department of Jostens, Inc. as their calligrapher in 1979, and her work is displayed on framed presentation class ring art in high schools, colleges and championship organizations around the United States and Canada. Her designs also appear on graduation announcements, greeting cards, thank you notes and class rings.

Artist Statement:

Karen's focus is on integrating playful abstract colorful backgrounds with meaningful interpretation of the author's words. She loves to experiment with new letter styles and media. In her artwork and teaching, Karen desires to show how calligraphy can be an exciting approach to personal artistic expression and spiritual introspection.

Walk to End Alzheimer's

SEPTEMBER 23, REGISTER AT 8:30, WALK AT 10:00, FORESTVIEW SCHOOL

Alzheimer's is the most common form of "dementia", a general term for memory loss and other cognitive abilities serious enough to interfere with daily life. Alzheimer's disease accounts for 60 to 80% of dementia cases.

Register to walk with our team, **GUARDIANS OF THE EARTH AND SPIRIT**, or donate to a walker on our team. The First Congregational UCC and St. Mathias Farm have joined to make the team with the new name. Go to www.alz.org to find the team and register or donate to the team or a member of the team. Support our team by wearing your tie-dyed tee shirt to the Walk. If you have questions, contact Arlene Jones or Karen Ford.

YFU – International Student Exchange Program

YFU, an international student exchange program, is looking for volunteers who could be Area Representatives. This job only requires a few hours per month, contacting students and host families and writing a short report in the computer. It's as great way to promote more international understanding and you get to meet the greatest kids!

Please respond to Pat Scott, 218-330-3476 or patwak@charter.net, if you are interested.

Church Council Minutes

August 16, 2017

Moderator – Claire Steen	Assistant Moderator – Mike North
Clerk – Barb Stokke	Treasurer – Cheri Maxwell
Christian Ministry – Karen Ford	Trustees – Deb Griffith
Christian Education – Barb McColgan	Stewardship – Judy Whiteman
Council at Large – Bonnie Crum, Bob Jones, Gary Whiteman	

Present: Claire Steen, Mike North, Barb Stokke, Barb McColgan, Judy Whiteman, Bob Jones, Gary Whiteman and Rev. Leslie Moughty.

Claire Steen called the meeting to order. Barb shared the poem “What If?” by Ganga White. Leslie will provide September’s Food for Thought.

CLERK’S REPORT – No changes to report

PASTOR’S REPORT – **Highlights:** •Accompanied 4 youth to Pilgrim Point camp •Attended Retirement worship service for Rev. Michael Small at Union Congregational Church, Hackensack, MN, and a Cooking Group Dinner with guest of honor Marcia Mans •Met with UCC Clergy Cluster **Community engagements:** •Organized planning meeting for “Stand Against Hate,” a local response to White Supremacy (prompted by the violence in Charlottesville, Virginia) to take place Friday, Aug. 18, at Gregory Park. •Attended planning meeting for CROP Walk scheduled for Wednesday, Oct. 4, at Bethlehem Lutheran Church •Worked with Volunteer Coordinator of WeARE to discuss best practices for Clinic volunteers. **Pastoral Care:** 3 hospital visits, 1 home visit, 2 phone calls, 3 home-sickness contacts during camp and multiple ad-hoc interactions at church events this month •No drop-in visits for pastoral care during office hours. **Upcoming Events:** Visitation Team meeting Friday, Sept. 1 and Pet Blessing, Sunday, September 17

TREASURER’S REPORT – At this time, we are seeking a co-treasure who can be a treasure-in-training.

TRUSTEES’ REPORT – The committee did not meet this month.

STEWARDSHIP – Stewardship continues work on the October 2017 pledge drive.

The Planned Giving and End of Life Times presentations will take place during Lent, February 18 – March 25.

Community service, social justice, radical hospitality, and meaningful worship are some of Stewardship’s responses to the question, ‘What is our church known for?’

Stewardship members are satisfied with the current meeting schedule.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY – The July 30 service planned and delivered by Rev. Lilja Behr was informative and timely.

Blessing of the Pets will take place in September and may be offered jointly with St. Paul’s Episcopal Church.

Jan Kurtz will organize the Dia de los Muertos service on November 5.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – Sunday, August 27, Blessing of School Supplies during the service; ice cream sundaes served by CE after the service.

Sunday, September 10, Sunday School begins. The service will include Blessing of the Teachers, Sharon Carlson and Jolene Hojem, and presenting Kai Lukanen, our only 4th grader, with his Bible.

Leslie continues to develop plans for the new confirmation class.

Our youth may have two upcoming opportunities: an Interfaith Excursion weekend and an Urban Emerson Service Retreat.

Christian Ed discussed committee meeting options and will check with members who were absent. Christian Ed is down to 4 members. One or two additional members are needed. A question was raised: Should adult forum be part of Christian Ed?

MEMBERS AT LARGE – No report

OLD BUSINESS – The Executive Committee will meet after Labor Day to work on the Performance Review.

Council will continue to discuss Safe Church policy, including background checks and Critical Instance Reviews.

An increase in contributions has eliminated the deficit at this time, but a balloon mortgage payment is due in January 2018.

NEW BUSINESS – The Council will be working to focus/prioritize the many items on the New Business lists.

(Charity, Justice and Witness; Vitality – Poverty; Youth as Members; By-Laws – Dan Hegstad, Phil Kuehn, Michael Kuehn and Mike North; Church Insurance Company – Critical Incident Review; and Fundraising)

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be Wednesday, September 20 at 7:00 PM.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stokke, Clerk of Council

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd				
Financial Results - General Fund				
Year to Date Results as of 7/31/2017				
	2017 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 7/31/17	% of Budget	Actuals Through 7/31/16
<u>Income:</u>				
From Giving Units	\$117,365	\$97,672	69.72%	\$94,447
Other Giving	<u>\$32,146</u>	<u>\$9,490</u>	25.31%	<u>\$10,982</u>
Total Income	<u>\$149,511</u>	<u>\$107,162</u>	60.17%	<u>\$105,429</u>
<u>Expenses:</u>				
Council	\$102,901	\$66,163	59.04%	\$59,729
Christian Ministry	\$3,120	\$2,690	64.27%	\$2,761
Music Committee	\$12,220	\$4,909	36.49%	\$4,409
Christian Education	\$650	\$35	5.31%	\$284
Stewardship	\$600	\$442	65.52%	\$377
Trustees	\$55,110	\$26,578	47.49%	\$27,424
Total Expenses	<u>\$174,601</u>	<u>\$103,816</u>	53.73%	<u>\$94,984</u>
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	<u>\$(25,090)</u>	<u>\$3,345</u>		<u>\$10,444</u>

Church Calendar – September 2017

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1 10:30 Book Group 1:00 Care Team Meeting	2
3 10:00 Worship & Communion 11:00 Fellowship	4 Labor Day Office Closed	5	6 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 11:30 Clergy Cluster	7	8 10:30 Book Group	9
10 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School	11	12	13 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	14 5:30 Committee Meetings	15 10:30 Book Group	16
17 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship/Pet Blessing 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	18	19	20 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Council Meeting	21	22 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	23 Alzheimer's Walk @ Forestview Middle School 8:30 Registration 10:00 Walk
24 10:00 Worship & Food Shelf Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	25	26	27 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	28 5:30 PPRC	29 10:30 Book Group	30