



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

September 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

How many of you have read the entire Bible? Maybe not every word but something from every book in the Bible? Reading the bible can feel like a daunting task. After all, when you read the Bible, you're not just reading one book, but 66 books written by dozens of authors over thousands of years. The Bible is not a novel with a plot line. In fact, the Bible contains many different genres of writings – historical writing, poetry, gospels, letters, prophecy... It's no wonder that the Bible might feel intimidating to some. It is important to note that the Bible has sometimes, perhaps often, been misused and caused a lot of harm and trauma. But as Rev. Anthony Robinson reminds us, the answer to misuse is never disuse; it is always better use.¹

Starting in on September 9 with our Animal Blessing, we will begin using what is called the Narrative lectionary to select the scripture passages for worship. In the past, I have been using what is called the Revised Common Lectionary or the RCL. One of the major downsides to the RCL is that the readings can feel out of context. When one week the message is from John and the next week it is from Exodus, it can be difficult to get a good feel for the Bible as a whole.

The Narrative Lectionary is different. The NL starts in September at the beginning of the Bible with the book of Genesis. Each week the readings progress through the Bible selecting passages from almost every book. When the schedule gets to the gospels, the Narrative lectionary picks one of the four gospels and we read a section from the same gospel each week. By the end of the Narrative Lectionary year (the schedule ends in June for a summer break), we will have read through a pretty good portion of the Bible together! This pattern repeats each year (always starting with Genesis in September) choosing different texts to highlight from the different books of the Older Testament and then focusing on one of the 4 gospels to focus on. By the end of the 4-year cycle, we will have walked through a huge portion of the Bible together; hearing stories and writings from almost every book.

I am really excited about this change as I think it will greatly enhance our church's relationship with the Biblical story and in the process deepen our faith and broaden our understanding.

Looking forward to this new adventure with you!

Pastor Leslie

1. "The Bible and the United Church of Christ" (<https://tinyurl.com/bibleucc>) is a great resource for learning about how our denomination understands that Bible and some suggestions for engaging with it meaningfully.

Pastor Leslie's upcoming out of office dates:

September 24 - 30: Attending Leadership Institute at Church of the Resurrection (part of the Next Generation Leadership Initiative program of the UCC.) The Rev. Joyce Rush will be on call for urgent pastoral care concerns. You can reach Pastor Joyce at 218-838-8287.

Moderator's Message

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION, ADULT FORUMS, AND BEING W.I.S.E.

It is late August. I just took my daughter to Duluth to start her college experience. And how many of us are really looking forward to when school starts again? Let's be honest! But not only traditional school education is important, so is our spiritual and religious education. And not just for our children/grandchildren, but life-long learning for adults.

Our Christian Education committee could use your help. I'm not necessarily talking about teaching Sunday School, but just being part of the planning would help. And then there is Adult Forum. Our bylaws say Adult Forum is supposed to be part of the purview of the Christian Education committee, but for several years we have deviated away from that. Ellie, as the new Adult Forum leader, had graciously agreed to become part of the Christian Education committee, but after she broke her other arm that became difficult.

One of the things the Christian Education Committee is working on right now is revising the Sunday School program. One idea is to focus on one topic repeatedly over a month using different formats. The first Sunday would be the basic lesson; the second Sunday will build on the lesson with art or a craft; the third Sunday will build on the lesson with music and an activity; and the fourth Sunday will build on the lesson with games. Another option is to seek volunteers to commit to one month of teaching using an easy to follow curriculum. We will be consulting with Associate Conference Minister Kevin Brown to guide us into a format that will best serve the needs of our children and youth with the resources we have (both human and financial). The bottom line is, we have an opportunity to provide a meaningful foundation of faith education for our young people, but for that to happen, we need your gift of time and talent.

I am asking that you prayerfully consider how you can support the faith formation of our church community. Maybe you will serve on the Christian Education committee helping to organize, plan and vision. Maybe you could lead one month of Sunday School, or volunteer to be a set of helping hands and a second set of eyes a few times a year. Maybe you will step forward to plan and lead an Adult Forum either presenting something yourself or arranging for a speaker or showing a video and facilitating a discussion.

I want to thank Alvin for doing just that. Alvin has brought the W.I.S.E. concept to the attention of the Church Council, which voted in July to endorse the concept. W.I.S.E. stands for "Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaging" congregations for mental health, and its adoption was encouraged by the 30th General Synod. There are less than a dozen W.I.S.E. congregations in the country, but one of those is in Minnesota. Did you know that 1 in 4 Americans experiences some form of mental illness in a given year? And that a mental illness or brain disorder affects not only the family member, but their loved ones as well? And with society (government) and the medical/insurance profession withdrawing from their responsibilities to address mental illness, more people are ending up behind bars (or dead)? So look for some Adult Forum opportunities to learn more about the W.I.S.E. program as we deliberate on what our church's role can be, and be open to the idea that some of these forums may need to occur on evenings during the work week. Thanks Alvin!

Respectfully submitted by Mike North, 24 August 2018

Special Offering – August

In August we donated \$270.00 to New Pathways! Our next special offering will be on Sunday, September 23 and will go to the Crop Walk.

September Pet Blessing

Blessing of the Animals

Sunday Sept. 9th at 10am

First Congregational UCC



Furry, feathery, scaly – all God's critters are welcome! Bring your pets (stuffed animals are also welcome) to be blessed by Pastor Leslie during our annual Blessing of the Animals. 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. The fun and casual service will be held during our normal Sunday worship time. Tell your friends and neighbors! The more the merrier!

September Birthdays

9/3	Todd Froemming	9/14	Rod Carlson	9/25	Kaylo Brooks
9/8	Mark Utzinger	9/14	Lois McBroom	9/27	Kyd Lukanen
9/9	Tom Nelson	9/15	Kay Kraywinkle	9/28	Judy Whiteman
9/12	Joyce Libra	9/19	Allison Crum	9/29	Leslie Moughty
9/12	Bob Ogdahl	9/24	Lynn Fox	9/30	Mark Stadem
9/13	Wayne Mayer				

HUGS

September 2

Hosts: Carla Benjamin & Jan Morton

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

Counters: Jeff Behr & Gale Landem

September 9

Hosts: Mary Harder & Lois McBroom

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

Counters: Deb Griffith & Georgia Harris

September 16

Hosts: Marina Grabowski & Deb Griffith

Ushers: Claire Steen & Barb Stokke

Greeters: Shirley Barten & Deb Lundberg

Counters: Tracy Lyons & Mabel Schultz

September 23

Hosts: Tracy Lyons & Mike Schrader

Ushers/Greeters: Jolene Hojem, Erik, Kai & Kyd Lukanen

Counters: Nancy Gould & Judy Whiteman

September 30

Hosts: Sue Hadland & Lisa Wigand

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

Counters: Sharon Carlson & TBD

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES)



ADVERSE CHILDHOOD EXPERIENCES (ACES): A FAITH FILLED RESPONSE



Join local clergy and
others interested in
faith communities

An introduction to ACEs
(Adverse Childhood Experiences)
and Resiliency Building:
Participant discussion of
theological and practical
implications for working with
ACEs and trauma

Topics may include theology, sin,
scripture, free will, forgiveness,
suffering and reconciliation.

SEPTEMBER 8
9 AM – 12:30 PM

First Lutheran Church
424 So 8th St
Brainerd MN

ACE Interface Presentation
Resilience Building Strategies:
Small group discussion of issues
intersecting ACEs and
faith communities.

Cost \$5 – Snacks provided

Register online at
<http://bit.ly/faithaces>

Church Council Minutes – August 15, 2018

Moderator – Mike North

Clerk – Barb Stokke

Christian Ministry – Karen Ford

Christian Education – TBD

Council at Large – Bob Jones, Gary Whiteman, Claire Steen

Assistant Moderator – Vacant

Treasurer – Deb Lundberg

Trustees – Deb Griffith

Stewardship – Judy Whiteman

Present: Deb Lundberg, Deb Griffith, Jolene Hojem, Mike North, Gary Whiteman, Karen Ford, Judy Whiteman (recorder for this meeting)

Mike North called the meeting to order. Judy shared the thought for the day. Mike will give the next thought for the day.

CLERK'S REPORT - No report

PASTOR'S REPORT - No report

TREASURER'S REPORT - Deb and Bobbie are monitoring the monthly number changes so everything is accounted for. It is time to plan the budget for 2019. Committees will get a notice by 8/24 to work on this at the 9/13 meetings. Information should be returned to Bobbie by 9/14 or 15 for use at the regular council meeting on Sept 19.

TRUSTEES' REPORT - The Chapel/Columbarium project is progressing. The cabinets will be in place soon, then the carpet will be installed. Plans are being made for the financing for the use of the spaces.

- There are 2 bids for the repair of the parsonage garage roof. - There will be new stripping of the north parking lot and a new plan for access to the lot.
- The art room floor has been thoroughly cleaned by Cynthia Janes - THANKS.
- The office phone system is being changed but more study needs to be done. The problem is the furnace safety system is analog and may not change to digital as the other phones in the building will do.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT - The meeting was delayed and minutes will be sent later.

MINISTRY REPORT - Two Sunday worship services were prepared in August. The Taize services will begin again in Sept. Also in Sept will be the blessing of the animals and on 9/30 Mike North will do the service.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION REPORT - Kids had fun at camp and at the swimming party. Rally Sunday will be Sept 2nd. There will be a new concept for the Sunday School this year. Each Sunday of the month will have a different emphasis. The 1st Sunday will be a prepared lesson. The 2nd Sunday will be a craft to follow up the lesson of the week before. The 3rd Sunday will be music and/or art. The 4th Sunday will be a service learning project based on the lesson of the month. These will be sign-up opportunities for congregation volunteers.

- There will be the second annual school supply drive.
- Questions will be asked about the youth expectations before entering confirmation.

MEMBERS AT LARGE - There is still a need for an assistant moderator volunteer and another volunteer for the Christian Ed committee as Ellie Burkett resigned due to health problems.

MODERATOR REPORT - A discussion was held with Tom Cox of the Union UCC in Hackensack concerning rural churches. They would like to work to create more interaction between churches for better relationships and problem solving. This applies to both rural and city churches.

OLD BUSINESS - The nursery staffing planning is going ahead. Mike will check in on the WISE program with Alvin and Leslie. The safe church policy will stay on hold but may work with the nursery planning.

The question was raised about the whereabouts of the Rainbow Flag? It was stated that it was in poor condition because of being in the weather all of the time.

The meeting was adjourned.

NEXT COUNCIL MEETING: SEPTEMBER 19, 7:00 COMMITTEE MEETING: SEPTEMBER 13, 5:30

Judy Whiteman, substitute recorder

Church Financials

First Congregational UCC of Brainerd				
Financial Results - General Fund				
Year to Date Results as of 7/31/2018				
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 7/31/18	% of Budget	Actuals Through 7/31/17
Income:				
Giving Units	\$ 129,892	\$ 116,001	89.31%	\$ 89,472
Loose Offering (10% to OCWM)	\$ 3,278	\$ 2,078	63.39%	\$ 1,902
Other Giving	\$ 4,938	\$ 6,114	123.82%	\$ 4,128
Revolving Income	\$ 3,933	\$ 11,028		
Total Income	\$ 142,041	\$ 135,221	95.20%	\$ 95,501
Expenses:				
Council	\$ 101,821	\$ 56,875	65.54%	\$ 56,303
Christian Education	\$ 2,300	\$ 678	42.33%	\$ 35
Christian Ministry	\$ 1,900	\$ 1,559	92.70%	\$ 2,191
Music	\$ 8,990	\$ 5,314	67.28%	\$ 4,909
Stewardship	\$ 695	\$ 358	61.81%	\$ 442
Trustees	\$ 56,810	\$ 67,841	127.58%	\$ 29,562
Revolving Expense	\$ 3,724	\$ 9,353		
Total Expenses	\$ 176,241	\$ 141,977	89.52%	\$ 93,442
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (34,200)	\$ (6,756)		\$ 2,059

Financial Results - Revolving Accounts			Financial Results - Designated Funds		
Year to Date Results as of 7/31/2018			Year to Date Results as of 7/31/2018		
	2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 7/31/18		2018 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 7/31/18
Income:			Income:		
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -	Building Fund		\$ 23,740
Flower Income	\$ -	\$ 365	Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 1,147
OCWM Income	\$ 8,398	\$ 5,370	Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ 1,214
Other Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 2,165	Total Income	\$ -	\$ 26,101
Special Offering Income	\$ -	\$ 73	Expenses:		
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 1,286	Building Fund		\$ 8,660
UCC Mission Income	\$ -	\$ 1,769	Columbarium	\$ -	\$ 4,064
Total Income	\$ 8,898	\$ 11,028	Camp/Youth	\$ -	\$ 878
Expenses:			Total Expenses	\$ -	\$ 13,601
Film License	\$ 225	\$ -	Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ -	\$ 12,500
Flowers	\$ -	\$ 719			
OCWM Payments	\$ 8,398	\$ 4,629			
Other Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 1,925			
Special Worship Services	\$ 500	\$ 271			
UCC Mission Payments	\$ -	\$ 1,809			
Total Expenses	\$ 9,123	\$ 9,353			
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (225)	\$ 1,675			

Church Calendar – September 2018

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 Rally Sunday 10:00 Worship & Communion 11:00 Fellowship	3	4	5 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 6:00 Confirmation	6	7 10:30 Book Group	8
9 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship – Pet Blessing 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School	10	11	12 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 6:00 Confirmation	13 5:30 Committee Meetings	14 10:30 Book Group 11:30 Clergy Cluster	15
16 8:30 Choir Practice 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School	17	18	19 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Council Meeting	20	21 10:30 Book Group	22
23 10:00 Worship & Special Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 5:00 NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	24	25	26 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	27	28 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	29
30 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School						