



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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firstcong@brainerd.net.

uccbrainerd.org

October 2014

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

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Announcements

Neighbors in Need

The Neighbors in Need offering, which we will receive on October 5, supports the UCC’s ministries of justice and compassion throughout the United States. Two-thirds of the offering is used by the UCC’s Justice and Witness Ministries to fund a wide array of local and national justice initiatives, advocacy efforts, and direct service projects. Through UCCTakeAction.org, our national Justice and Witness Ministries office offers resources, news updates, and action alerts on a broad spectrum of justice issues. Working with members of the UCC Justice and Peace Action Network (a network of thousands of UCC justice and peace advocates), Justice and Witness continues its strong policy advocacy work on issues such as the federal budget, voting rights, immigration, health care, hate crimes, civil liberties, and environmental justice. Neighbors in Need also supports our American Indian neighbors in the UCC. One-third of the offering

supports the UCC's Council for American Indian Ministries (CAIM). Historically, forebears of the UCC established churches and worked with Lakota, Dakota, Nakota, Mandan, Hidatsa, Arickara, and Hockak in North and South Dakota, Wisconsin, and northern Nebraska. Today there are 20 UCC congregations on reservations and one urban, multi-tribal UCC congregation in Minneapolis, Minnesota. These churches and their pastors are supported by CAIM. CAIM is also an invaluable resource for more than 1,000 individuals from dozens of other tribes and nations who are members of other UCC congregations in the US.

Neighbors in Need helps make another world possible. It needs your support.

Worldwide Communion Sunday on October 5

The first Sunday in October is Worldwide Communion Sunday, celebrated by a number of churches throughout the world since 1940. Holy Communion is celebrated in each church according to its traditions, with an awareness of the worldwide fellowship of the Christian church. On Worldwide Communion Sunday the Communion table is 25,000 miles long! Throughout the hours on this one day, millions of Christians are at the Communion table to do as Christ requested, "Do this in remembrance of me". On this day we celebrate that Christ's body has many parts and great diversity, and we are part of something much, much bigger than we can really imagine!

Join Our Crop Walk Team Sunday, October 12

Some 2000 communities across the country take part in Crop Walk each year. This year our church team will walk with many others in our community to take a stand against hunger. By walking and working together, we are able to raise awareness and to raise funds to make an impact on hunger locally and globally. **Crop Walk** funds designated for local distribution will go to the Salvation Army Food Shelf, Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen and Operation Sandwich.

Crop Walk will cover a distance of two miles and it will begin and end at Bethlehem Lutheran Church. Registration will be at 1:30 p.m. and the walk will begin at 2 p.m.

Join the team of walkers from our church family! Go to crophungerwalk.org and register for the Brainerd **Crop Walk**. Our team is designated First Congregational UCC.

Donations to help deal with hunger may be made by check to CWS/Crop Walk or online at crophungerwalk.org.

We are walking in the light of God!

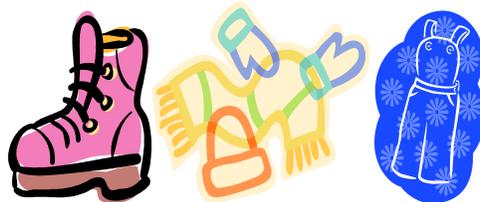
Children's Sabbath October 19

On October 19 we will join faith communities across the continent to celebrate Children's Sabbath. This annual event is an important reminder that God has blessed our congregation with children and young people and has charged us with their care. During our worship service we will share a special blessing with our young people. We will also receive and bless gifts of winter outerwear for our wider community.

COATS FOR KIDS

Coat drop off until October 25th

All donations can be dropped off at Crystal Cleaners in both the Brainerd or Crosby locations.



COATS, HATS, SCARVES, MITTENS, BOOTS, SNOWPANTS!
Have extras? Kinship Partners needs them for our annual coat drive! We ask that donations are clean and in good condition. We also ask that zippers are in working condition as we cannot replace them.

Distribution:

Where: Westgate Mall

When: November 1, 2014

Times: 9 am to Noon

- **Distribution of winter outerwear will be given to children (must be present) who are accompanied by a parent, a guardian or their adult Kinship Partner.**

Noon to 3 pm

- Distribution to all in need.



Kinship Partners Inc.
Phone: 218-454-8011
Toll Free: 877 730-5437

HOT DOGS & HAMBURGERS

Church-wide Read

During October, United Church of Christ congregations across the country will be reading and discussing **HOT DOGS & HAMBURGERS**, an inspirational book by Rob Shindler about adult illiteracy and one family's success story of helping illiterate adults learn to read. Books are now available in the church office (cost: \$10). We'll discuss this book during the **OCTOBER 12 ADULT FORUM**.

This book is a great read and is guaranteed to broaden your knowledge about the problems and solutions we have around literacy in our community and the nation. Lowell Johnson will lead the book discussion on October 12. Lowell may be reached at 218-828-6233.

THE PASTOR'S PEN

Rev. Linda K. Crowe, Interim Pastor

Today I am giving thanks for the blessings of this church community and all that we are able to accomplish together.

Last night this community shared a wonderful Greek dinner together. The food was absolutely fabulous! This incredible gourmet meal was served by the cooking group of this congregation. These are people who are passionate about good food. They believe in having fun as they cook! The church kitchen was filled with laughter as the four course meal was prepared and served. The laughter continued through washing dishes and cleaning up after the meal.

Last night's gathering included raffle baskets and silent auction items. Many in this community contributed wonderful items for the drawings and many donated generously for the dinner as well as for the drawings and the auction. Together, as a community, we raised funds to be used here at home and also to help respond to the Ebola crisis. In the process of working together to raise funds to help with projects and people, we had so much fun, as a community.

Last week in worship, we blessed our monthly offering of produce and groceries for the Food Shelf. Our offering included 85 pounds of squash grown in God's Garden, on the north side of our church grounds. The garden is an outreach project of this church community. Working together, we are helping and blessing others.

Last Saturday about twenty of us from this church family participated in the Alzheimer's Walk at the Arboretum. You could easily spot our church team; most of us were wearing bright tie-dyed t-shirts stating "God is still speaking," We walked together as a community, raising money for Alzheimer's research. In our church family and in our circles of friends and family members, all of us have been affected by dementia or Alzheimer's disease. It is empowering to be able to respond, as a community, to a disease that has touched our lives.

During the past few weeks, two rain gardens have been constructed on the north side of our church yard. In addition, the trim around the windows and door of the oldest part of our church building has been scraped and repainted. These projects represent the sweat equity of many members of our church community. Our church building and grounds are maintained and improved by the care and commitment of this community. With fun and good fellowship, some challenging projects have been accomplished by our community!

Each Wednesday as the Prayer Circle gathers, the prayers written during our Sunday worship service are shared aloud. From personal issues to the concerns of the world, the joys and concerns of our community are lifted in prayer. It is a holy privilege to participate in that community prayer.

Each and every time we gather as a community, no matter what purpose we have gathered for or which particular configuration we create, we are conscious of the community itself. We give thanks for who we are together, we give thanks for God's presence and guidance, and we celebrate all that we can accomplish as a community.

In this season of interim ministry with you, I am profoundly grateful for the rich and wonderful blessings of this church community! Each and every day, I thank God for our time together!

Peace, Pastor Linda

Moderator's Musings

By Ann Turnbull

Our faith community spent September working on fall projects and getting back in the swing of church programming with the startup of Faith Formation for children, youth and adults.

My biggest joy this month is having a published website! This project combined the talents of a number of people. Thanks to Joey Halvorson (photos), Joyce Libra (photos and editing) Lisa Wigand (Staff directory), Karen Ogdahl, Barb Stokke & Marcia Mans (content and editing) Bonnie Crum (research and design advice), Linda Crowe (Sermon, Welcome and Becoming a member content) Colleen Todd (sermon uploading). I so appreciate these contributions because this is truly a website built by members of the congregation and church staff to tell the story of who we are, how we live out our mission statement and that we have fun doing it! This truly was a team effort. I worked with our contractors, Matt Taylor and Jessie Borkenhagen, to select a WordPress theme and design pages for the site, learning about website creation along the way.

Publishing the web site and developing a pastor job description in the form of a litany that describes how the pastor and congregation work together to do our church ministry, allowed the Search Committee to move forward to circulate our church profile online and nationally in "UCC Ministry Opportunities". The committee is now studying minister profiles that have been received and moving forward with those that initially appear to match our congregation's criteria. The committee deeply feels the responsibility to the congregation of discerning God's leading in this process. Please pray that we will be open to the possibilities placed before us and work with the candidates to determine the person called to lead our congregation in the future.

The Walk to End Alzheimer's was a great success. Our church was well represented with over 20 people. The Brainerd walk set a new record of 357 walkers, and thus far has raised about \$48,000. To put this in context the goal is \$60,000 but \$48,000 is 25% more than has been collected in the past. Donations are accepted through the month of October. Alzheimers is a disease that affects all of us so if you haven't yet donated, you can go to www.alz.org, look for the Brainerd Walk under "Walk to End Alzheimers" by searching on zip code 56401. You can donate to an individual walker or donate to our team, First Congregational United Church of Christ.

On October 12th, our church is participating in the CROP Hunger Walk. There are over 1,600 of these community walks across the United States. CROP Hunger Walks help to provide food and water, as well as resources that empower people to meet their own needs. From seeds and tools, to wells and water systems, to technical training and micro-enterprise loans, the key is people working together to identify their own development priorities, their strengths and their needs--something Church World Service has learned

through some 64 years of working in partnership around the world. 25% of funds raised remain in our local community and are designated for the Salvation Army Food Shelf, Sharing Bread Soup Kitchen and Operation Sandwich.

The Trustees and other church volunteers have been working hard to finish up the warm weather projects. Check out the rain gardens, the preparation for Deb Celley's memorial benches, the new paint on the church peaks and trim, lines in the parking lot, sidewalk repairs... Stop a trustee and tell them how much you appreciate what they do and their great presentation for Adult Forum last week! Bring your rake and help with Fall Yard Cleanup on Monday, October 12th, 4pm. Enjoy Sharon's cooking when the job is finished.

October is Stewardship month. Rumor has it that Stewardship moments during worship are not to be missed, so see you at church!

Christ's peace be with you,

Ann Turnbull

Christian Ministry Department

H.U.G.S.

September 7

Host: Dorothy Blau & Jan Morton

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

Counters: Jeff Behr & Lowell Johnson

September 14

Hosts: Karen Ford & Tom Nelson

Greeters/Ushers: Lois McBroom and Mary Harder, Itty Newgord & Preston Newgord

Counters: Sharon Carlson & Claire Steen

September 21

Hosts: Barb Stokke & Paul Mans

Greeters/Ushers: Marcia Mans, Claire Steen, Deb Griffith & Pat Scott

Counters: Coleen Carder & Judy Whitman

September 28

Hosts: Karen Ogdahl and Sharon Carlson

Greeters/Ushers: Ellie Burkett, Sharon Carlson Mike & Beth Schrader

Counters: Nancy Gould & Marcia Mans

Soup Kitchen – October 24

Volunteers are needed to help prepare and serve an evening meal at the Soup Kitchen on October 24. 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.

August Statistics

Meals – 1,718

Days of service – 29

Average Meals served per day – 59

Thank you for your support and service. This ministry continues to be effective in feeding hungry people because of our faithful supporters and volunteers.

We still need a group for the second Saturday each month. Please let us know if you are interested in helping with this need.

Thank you!

Food Shelf Offering – October 26

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, October 28. **On Sunday, September 28 we collected 85 pounds of squash (from God's Garden), 168 pounds of groceries and \$250. Way to go!!**

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 healing and strength for: Sandy, Lyn, Mark, Kellie, Laurie, Mary, Betty, Grandma, Rachel, Tony, Stephanie, Marnie, Linda, Lenore, Paul, Baby James, Kay, Dale, Laura, Dana, Elaine, Suzanne, Maria, Ilona, Barbara, Chuck, Paul, Sue, Elizabeth, Jack, Lois, Tim, Roger, Kathy, Deanne, Debbie, Ellie, Sheri, and all who suffer with illness. Pray for all who are suffering with depression and for all who are sad and lonely. Pray for caregivers, and for all who are grieving. Pray for those who are experiencing dementia in any form. Pray for those in the midst of significant transitions. Pray for our neighbors throughout the world, and for peace in the Middle East. Pray for those working to overcome addictions. Pray for all who are suffering. Pray for those trying to find their way, and for families seeking to come together. Pray for the courage for peace and justice work. Pray for wisdom and courage for our world leaders. May decisions be made with compassion for people instead of a need for power. Pray for healing in this precious world. May violence, hatred, racism, and abuse end; may peace come. Pray for so many in our world who live in violence, in fear for their lives. Pray for children who are growing up without a sense of security and safety. Pray for our young adults as they move into independence; may they make good and safe choices for themselves. Pray for those who are homeless. Praise and thanksgiving for all God's bountiful gifts. May we remember to watch for God's presence around us every day. Thank God for God's gift of creation, with all its complexity and beauty. May we learn to care for creation with love and compassion. May we learn to take care of each other as well.



October Birthdays.....

10/07	Robert Jones	10/16	Megan Kath
10/09	Katherine Nelson	10/20	Louis Grabowski
10/11	Fred Fisher	10/22	Faye Echternacht
10/11	Eileen Kurpiers	10/30	Elizabeth Paulson
10/15	James Newgord	10/31	Paxie Imsdahl
10/15	Andrea Bertram	10/31	Mark Erickson
10/16	Melissa Bible		

Church Council Minutes

September 11, 2014

Moderator – Ann Turnbull

Assistant Moderator – Phil Kuehn

Clerk – Karen Ogdahl

Treasurer – Lisa Wigand

Christian Ministry – Beth Schrader

Trustees – Coleen Carder

Christian Education – Itty Newgord

Stewardship – Marcia Mans

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

Present: Itty Newgord, Rev. Linda Crowe, Ann Turnbull, Beth Schrader, Karen Ogdahl, Coleen Carder, Phil Kuehn, Gary Whiteman, Dan Hegstad, Lisa Wigand

Moderator Ann Turnbull called the meeting to order with a prayer from Pastor Linda Crowe. The August minutes were approved.

TREASURER'S REPORT

Lisa reported that the general fund is in the black by \$5,200. Giving is ahead of schedule, and if that continues, we are projected to end the year in the black. Thanks to all the generous givers!

PASTOR'S REPORT

Linda expressed gratitude at being able to work with a great group of kids in the confirmation class. They recently worked with Greg Johnson in taking lake water samples and learning how caring for the water is related to caring for all of God's creation.

Church members will be attending the women's retreat, and the youth will be going to retreats as well. Generous donations from the congregation helped the youth to attend camp this summer and the retreats this fall.

On September 14 worship will include the blessing of the animals, and on September 21 the Christian Ministry Team will lead the service while Linda is on vacation.

STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Stewardship has organized the counters' schedule and is planning the annual fall pledge drive.

TRUSTEES' REPORT

The peaks of the church are being painted. The painters found broken windowpanes, which will be replaced. The motor on the boiler pump needs replacement. The crumbling on the sidewalks will be repaired. Volunteers are needed for an Outdoor Painting Party on September 18 and 20 and for the Fall Cleanup on October 13, 4:00 – 7:00.

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

CE stills needs two Sunday School teachers. It was suggested that there be a sign-up sheet for congregation members to volunteer to teach for a few Sundays. Even one Sunday would be welcome. Also, the CE committee needs three new members. CE has been planning Church Family Funs Days. Both children and adults are invited.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

CM is planning a laity-led worship for September 21. Church members are encouraged to sign up for the Alzheimer's Walk on September 27 (contact Karen Ford) and the CROP Walk on October 12.

OLD BUSINESS

Search Committee: Karen reported that a sub-committee has completed the pastor job description, which will be included in the church profile. Another sub-committee will be working on questions to be asked applicants during interviews.

A new church directory will soon be finished. The directory will be sent to church members by email with print copies available at church. Church members should check the information to make sure it is accurate.

The 30-second limit for announcements at the end of the church service seems to be speeding things up. Thanks to Lisa, who gave a demonstration to the congregation.

NEW BUSINESS

The UCC church in Hackensack has requested that our church send a panel to discuss how we became and open and affirming church. The Council discussed how we could be of help.

The Council received a request for space in the church to hold Tai Chi classes. The instructor will be asked to check with Colleen Todd about whether space is available at the date and time requested.

Council will now begin meeting on the fourth Tuesday of the month at 5:30.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be Tuesday, October 28 at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,

Karen Ogdahl, Clerk of Council



Pictures from our Greek Dinner - 2014

(You can view more pictures on Joey Halvorson's facebook page)

CHURCH CALENDAR — October 2014

			1 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	2 Greek Dinner 5:30 Appetizers 6:00 Dinner	3 10:30 Book Group <i>Middle School Retreat</i>	4 <i>Middle School Retreat</i>
5 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship - Communion 11:00 Fellowship 11:30 Sunday School and Confirmation 11:30 Adult Forum - LTQ	6	7	8 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 5:00 Stewardship	9 5:30 Pastor Parish Relations Committee	10 10:30 Book Group	11
12 CROP WALK 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:30 Sunday School and Confirmation	13 4:00 Church Yard Cleanup	14 3:00 Chr. Ministry 5:00 Trustees	15 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	16 5:30 Stewardship	17 10:30 Book Group 6:00 Process & Film <i>High School Retreat</i>	18 <i>High School Retreat</i>
19 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:30 Sunday School and Confirmation 11:30 Adult Forum – LTQ <i>High School Retreat Ends</i>	20	21	22 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 5:30 Christian Ed	23	24 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	25
26 **FOOD SHELF OFFERING** 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:30 Sunday School/Confirmation	27	28 5:30 Council Mtg.	29 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	30	31 10:30 Book Group	

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

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**Admin. Assist.
Colleen Todd**