



Friendship News

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Brainerd
An Open and Affirming Church

The church office hours are 8am-12pm, Monday – Friday.

Our Pastor, Leslie Moughty is also available at other times by appointment.

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uccbrainerd.org

October 2016

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

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October Birthdays

10/7	Jolene Hojem	10/15	Jim Newgord	10/25	Kamery Hauan Hahn
10/7	Robert Jones	10/16	Melissa Bible	10/28	Tracy Lyons
10/11	Fred Fisher	10/16	Megan Kath	10/30	Elizabeth Paulson
10/11	Eileen Kurpiers	10/20	Louis Grabowski	10/31	Paxie Imsdahl
10/15	Andrea Bertram	10/22	Faye Echnernacht	10/31	Luann Rice

Pastor's Pen

There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1

Have you noticed the leaves this week? Ken and I took our visiting moms to the Cuyuna Recreation Area to see the lakes, but the changing of the leaves stole the show! Growing up in Phoenix, Arizona, the brilliant burst of oranges, reds, and yellows wasn't nearly as spectacular as it is here. This time of year I am usually reminded of the above verse in Ecclesiastes. Nothing lasts forever, and that isn't necessarily a bad thing. Cycles and season serve a purpose. As the leaves change from green to orange to brown, fall to the ground and decay, they make room for new leaves and release much needed nutrients back to the earth.

Of course the author of this text is speaking about much more than changing leaves. He writes about a time to cry and a time to laugh. A time to grieve and a time to dance. A time to be quiet and a time to speak. You get the idea. Churches and their ministries also go through seasons. Programs and structures that were once full of life and energy will often die away when their season has come to an end. But this isn't a bad thing! If we allow it, this can create space for something new to burst forth, full of life and energy.

On October 15, we will be gathering as a church to envision how God might be leading us into a new season. From 9:00 am to 1:00 pm in Fellowship Hall, we will open our hearts and our minds and prayerfully and creatively imagine our next season together. Your thoughts and ideas are important if you have been part of the church for 50 years or 5 weeks, if you are 92 years old or 12 years old. God uses all of us in creative ways beyond our human understanding. I hope you will come to witness and participate in the creative unfolding of our new season together!

Pastor Jessie



Moderator's Notes

I Could Outrun Usain Bolt!

Dan Hegstad – Council Moderator

You wouldn't know it by looking at me, but I'm pretty sure I can run faster than Usain Bolt. He ran 100 meters, about the length of a football field, in 9.81 seconds. How could I be faster? Keep reading.

We all agree our church needs buckage to keep the lights on, heat in, rain out and pastor in residence. All the money to do all that comes from us. There's no flow of money from any 'mother ship.' There's no pot o' gold to draw from. It's you and me. I like that!

It can be challenging, but we are 'Congregational.' This really is our church. It works, or doesn't, because of you and me.

This is the part where I would normally talk about the foundation needing work, the windows we should replace and on and on, but that's a given. The need is assumed. It's the giving that's the question.

But how much should you give? And I mean beyond, 'more, more, more.' There is an amount that's just right.

I recently learned that some churches insist that all members give 10% of their income. They go so far as to ask to see your tax return. If a church did that to me I'd run away so fast I'd pass Usain Bolt on my way out the door! There is no way I'd put up with that.

Our church would never do that. It's not between you and Church leadership. It's between you and God.

But, again, how much? What is the right amount? What I've found is that if I ask the question and then sit quietly a number pops in my head. God is still speaking. It's the listening that can be challenging.

I've been told that at some churches the members give mainly to the church and (hopefully) the church supports outside missions and charities. Folks in ours and similar churches give money to the church and also to many good causes outside of the church. I know we are very generous people and we do a lot of good work outside of church. *Keep it up, but don't forget our church.*

I'm increasing my monthly donation and, if you feel led to do so, I hope you do too.

Keep in mind that a regular, automatic withdrawal from your checking account is a great benefit to both you and our Church. It's super easy to set up. You don't have to think about writing a check, remember to write a check, write the check and then remember to bring it on Sunday. That's all done for you. Our church benefits from having a steady, predictable income. It really helps. Please consider automatic withdrawal.

Thank you!

Food Shelf Offering – September

Each month we bring groceries, necessities and financial donations to help feed hungry neighbors in our community. The Salvation Army Food Shelf serves 400 families each month. In September we received \$115 and 47 pounds of food. Our next offering will be Sunday, September 25. **Thank you for helping to feed our hungry neighbors!**

Friday Morning Reading Group

Beginning on October 7 the Friday Morning Reading Group will begin reading *Bill Moyers Journal: The Conversation Continues*. The PBS series, which ran from 2007 - 2010, contains interviews with 47 "independent thinkers." The topics are far reaching (faith, populism, aging, health care, capital punishment). According to Publisher's Weekly, "In an era of much instant and ephemeral talk, it is a pleasurable thing to hold this 'book of ideas.' These challenging, engaged conversations reward the reader's serious attention. There are no sound bites here, just food for thought."

Ironically, the book group is not particularly serious, but we like great ideas. We also like talking, which has resulted in occasional lapses of reading. To keep us on the straight and narrow, we are trying a change of schedule. We will begin reading at 10:30 and save our lighter conversations for 11:30.

We meet in the second floor conference room and all are welcome. Please bring your own copy of the book.

CROP Walk

October 9 is the big day to raise money for those who are in need of help. One third of the money raised goes to support our local organizations serving the hungry in the Brainerd area. The rest goes to the wider world to help others who are going hungry every day. Our church has always taken a big part in making this a successful event thanks to the great leadership of Ann Turnbull. She has graciously decided that she has done her part, rightly so, and is retiring as a team member. I have taken up the mantle for this year and hope that we can continue to support this worthy cause. If you like walking in the beautiful fall weather with or without your favorite pet, then join us. If walking is not your style, then please support your UCC walkers. I will put up a sign up sheet in the narthex for those who want to join the team the first Sunday in September, so others can support your efforts. Let's make this a banner year for those who need our help.

Día de Muertos: October 30th Celebration

On Sunday, October 30th, we will be observing "All Saint's Day" following the Mexican traditions from Día de Muertos/ Day of the Dead. In the Mexican culture, November 1st and 2nd are days for remembering their 'dearly departed' through arranging family altars, preparing special foods, sprucing up the cemeteries and naming the names of the dead, to keep their memory alive.

To help us remember our church family and our own family members, please participate by bringing in a photo or item that reminds you of the person you wish to commemorate. Examples of items might be a football, for a football fanatic; a Hersey bar for a chocolate lover, a favorite book or an actual possession left to you by the person. Photos and items will be placed on a table/altar during the church service.

At Fellowship Hour, you are encouraged to share stories about the people pictured or the item brought in. We will be served Pan de los Muertos (Bread of the Dead) a sweet, coffee cake found all over Mexico at this time of year. Note the decorations portray a celebration of life, joy and humor. Through foods, candles, flowers and family altars, the Mexican rituals bring healing to grief, peace through acceptance and joy in the memories. Maybe you will adopt a new ritual of remembrance into your traditions.

If you have photos that could be used in our tri-fold photo wall of past church members, please contact Jan Kurtz at 218.829.1192.

Halloween at First Congregational UCC

Every year, hundreds upon hundreds of children and teens and their parents flood into the Gregory Park area to trick or treat on Halloween. At the parsonage, we gave out candy to over 500 trick-or-treaters last year! I watched as little kids and their families walked by our darkened church and wondered if we weren't missing an opportunity to be relevant to the local neighborhood. Our Christian Ed committee has agreed to lead us in offering a little Halloween Hospitality at First Congregational this year! We will have treats to give to our costumed visitors and hot drinks for anyone who needs a bit of warmth. I know you are wondering how you can participate! There are lots of options!

- **Donate a bag (or two or five!) of candy.** Since the church is on a corner, it is quite possible that we will have more trick-or-treaters than at the parsonage. It would also be wonderful to supplement the candy for the parsonage if we have enough. (One neighbor said he gave out 1,000 pieces!)
- **Hand out candy.** I have heard from many of you that you live in neighborhoods where trick-or-treaters are rare and that you miss giving out candy on Halloween. What a wonderful reason to come to church on Halloween and hand out candy! Wearing a costume is encouraged but not required.
- **Make or serve hot cider.** More details to come.
- **Set up Luminaries.** We need people to know that we are open and have candy to give! At 4:00 pm, we will set up white paper bags with candles inside from the 5th street sidewalk leading to the front entrance of the church to guide people to our front door.



More opportunities for participation may come up as this event unfolds. Stay tuned! – Pastor Leslie

HUGS

October 2

Hosts: Mark & Becky Stadem

Ushers: Roger Best, Greg Johnson, Ken Nelson & Gary Whiteman

Greeter: ?

Counters: Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

October 9

Hosts: Karen Ford & Tom Nelson

Ushers/Greeters: Mary Harder, Jack & Kay Kraywinkle & Lois McBroom

Counters: Deb Griffith & Marcia Mans

October 16

Hosts: Charlotte Goedsche & Marina Grabowski

Ushers: Cynthia Janes & Marcia Mans

Greeters: Dan Hegstad & Barb Stokke

Counters: Coleen Carder & Vi Heiser

October 23

Hosts: Erik Lukanen & Tracy Lyons

Ushers/Greeters: Ellie Burkett, Sharon Carlson, Joey Halvorson & Ann Turnbull

Counters: Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

October 30

Hosts: Sue Hadland & Lisa Wigand

Ushers/Greeters: Roger Best, Greg Johnson, Ken Nelson & Gary Whiteman

Counters: Sharon Carlson & Judy Whiteman

September 21, 2016 Church Council Minutes

Moderator – Dan Hegstad	Assistant Moderator – Claire Steen
Clerk – Barb Stokke	Treasurer – Mike Schrader
Christian Ministry – Ann Turnbull	Trustees – Coleen Carder
Christian Education – Marina Grabowski	Stewardship – Judy Whiteman
Council at Large – Mike North and Bonnie Crum	

Present: Dan Hegstad, Claire Steen, Barb Stokke, Mike Schrader, Ann Turnbull, Nancy Gould, Marina Grabowski, Judy Whiteman, Mike North, Bonnie Crum and Pastor Leslie.

Dan Hegstad called the meeting to order. Mike North shared Food for Thought. Barb Stokke will provide October's Food for Thought.

CLERK'S REPORT – One family transferred out in August 2016.

TREASURER'S REPORT – Work continues on the treasurer's job description. \$18,000 that had been designated for the Columbarium was transferred into the Columbarium Fund. Council approved the expenditures - from Council's budget - for Bobbie Borg to attend a two-day QuickBooks course. Council approved a salary increase for Bobbie Borg, Bookkeeper/Assistant, retroactive to April 12, 2016, the anniversary date, and extends a sincere apology to Bobbie Borg for not addressing a salary increase on the occasion of her one-year anniversary.

The remaining Executive Committee's 2017 budget proposal was introduced, and a lengthy discussion followed. Council determined that a greater understanding of the different types of accounts was needed before a revised proposal on pastoral continuing education and Sabbatical leave could be made. Leslie explained an annuity option for the Bookkeeper/Assistant position and expressed her concern about a lack of sick leave benefits. She also explained a jump in her own health insurance was due to a move from one age category to another.

PASTOR'S REPORT – Highlights: Continued "Bible Stories You Thought You Knew" sermon series; worked with the Moderator and Assistant Moderator to plan Visioning Retreat; worked with Treasurer and Executive Committee to develop Council budget proposal; worked with music committee to fill organist position for the next two months; supported Youth bagging groceries at Cub; met with Northeast Clergy Cluster; made 9 Pastoral Care Consultations.

Leslie introduced the Congregational Care Team concept to the Council and expressed her interest in starting one.

We are in need of an organist for Christmas Eve and an accompanist for Christmas Day. Many area accompanists are not available.

STEWARDSHIP – The fall pledge drive will take place the four Sundays in October. 'Generosity Coaches' will make presentation each Sunday. Pledge cards will be distributed on Sunday, October 2, and turned in Sunday, October 23.

TRUSTEES' REPORT – (See OLD and NEW BUSINESS)

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION – CE reported the new Sunday School curriculum began September 11, and plans are in progress for Children's Sabbath Sunday on October 16. Halloween event may also be planned.

CHRISTIAN MINISTRY – Blessing of the Animals will take place Sunday, September 25. If it rains, the service will be held indoors and the Council strongly recommends that pet owners bring towels to dry off

their pets. Planning is also in progress for Worldwide Communion Sunday October 2 and Dia de los Muertos/All Saints Day October 30.

OLD BUSINESS – Bonnie Crum presented the final drafts of the Pastoral Assessment and the Pastoral Self-Assessment and explained MN Conference UCC's recommendations for obtaining quality responses from congregation. Council approved the final drafts of the assessments and concurred with the recommendations. A motion passed that the evaluations be given to the cross-section of congregants and returned within a week.

Plans are in place for the Visioning Retreat, Saturday, October 15, from 9-1. Snack and lunch will be served. A person to provide childcare is needed.

The new Girl Scout Troop has not submitted the building use agreement form. A concern was raised about the supervision of children. It was noted that all children using the church's facilities must be supervised at all times.

Suggestions for the sanctuary modifications to accommodate wheelchairs and walkers continue to be sought.

Justice Committee, Safe Church Policy, and Bylaws Task Force will remain on the agenda for a later date.

NEW BUSINESS –

A request was made to use the church's facilities for private music lessons. Leslie will contact the conference for policy guidelines.

Council recommended that gift policy guidelines be established.

Also recommended was a conflict of interest policy.

The meeting was adjourned with a benediction. The next meeting will be October 19, 2016 at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Stokke, Clerk of Council

Church Financials

Financial Results – General Fund Year to Date Results as of 8/31/16	2016 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 8/31/16	% of Budget
Income:			
From Giving Units	\$ 150,481	\$ 105,808	70.31%
Other Giving	\$ 5,500	\$ 13,059	237.44%
Total Income	\$ 155,981	\$ 118,867	76.21%
Expenses:			
Council	\$ 97,324	\$ 73,152	75.16%
Christian Ministry	\$ 13,150	\$ 7,376	56.09%
Christian Education	\$ 2,950	\$ 598	20.28%
Stewardship	\$ 570	\$ 496	87.03%
Trustees	\$ 60,170	\$ 34,416	57.20%
Total Expenses	\$ 174,164	\$ 116,038	66.63%
Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:	\$ (18,183)	\$ 2,830	

Coats for Kids

Coats can be dropped off in the church office or at Crystal Cleaners.

COATS FOR KIDS

Jackets, hats, mittens, boots. . . .

all the outerwear kids need for Minnesota winters.

(Many adult coats will also be distributed)



FREE!!



Dates/Times: Saturday October 29 2016 from 9am-3pm

*****NEW DISTRIBUTION SCHEDULE*****

***Saturday October 29 2016 **9am - 11am**: free coats and winter outerwear will be given only to children accompanied by their parent, guardian or adult Kinship Partner. One pair boots, one coat, one pair snowpants, mittens, hat and scarves applies to all until 11 am

***Saturday October 29 2016: distribution to all in need. NO LIMITS on numbers of items needed and need not be present **AFTER 11:00 AM**

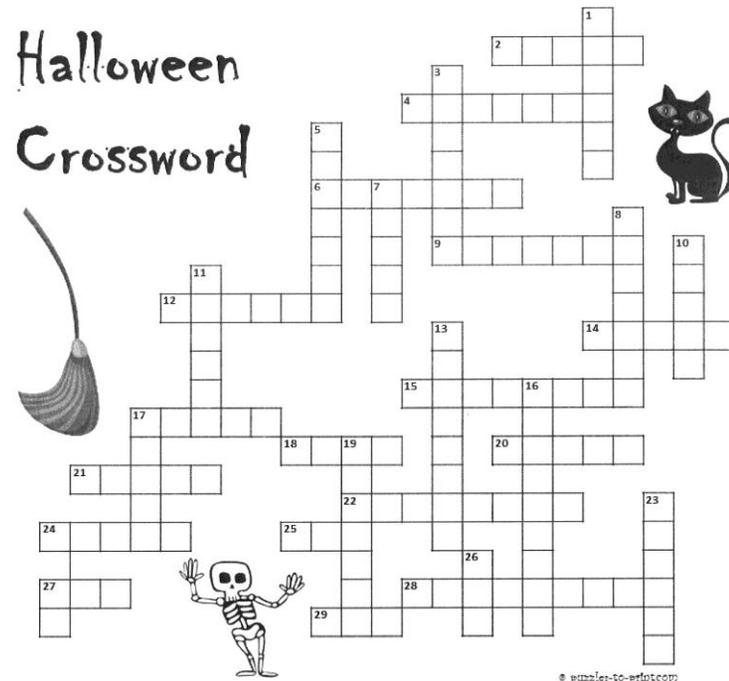
Place: WESTGATE MALL

Church Calendar – October 2016

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship/Communion Neighbors in Need Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Painting the Stars	3	4	5 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	6	7 10:30 Book Group	8
9 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	10	11	12 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 11:30 Clergy Cluster	13 5:30 Committee Meetings	14 10:30 Book Group	15 9:00 Visioning Retreat
16 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Painting the Stars	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 & Food Shelf Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum NEWSLETTER DEADLINE	24	25	26 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn	27 5:30 PPRC	28 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen	29
30 All Saints Day 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:15 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	31 4:00 Halloween Hospitality Have a Safe & Happy Halloween					

Halloween Crossword

10/6/2016



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Across

2. Frightening
 4. He hates garlic
 6. Frankenstein had one
 9. The Count
 12. Where a vampire sleeps
 14. ____ or treat
 15. Scare
 17. A skeleton is just a bunch of these
 18. Mr. O'Lantern
 20. What the pot might call the kettle
 21. ____ stories
 22. A boney sort of fellow
 24. Found in Egypt
 25. Lives in the belfry
 27. Who? Who?
 28. Playground for ghosts
 29. What a spider spins

Down

1. When something makes our skin crawl, it's this
 3. ____ house
 5. Makes a popular pie
 7. When ghosts come out to play
 8. Fire burn, and ____ bubble
 10. Samantha for example
 11. Evil or mischevous creature
 13. Comes out on full moon nights
 16. October 31st
 17. Witch transportation
 19. Disguise
 23. Incey wincey is one of these
 24. Might be full, half, or new
 26. He swallowed the canary