



# 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 656-0096, E-mail  
[firstcong@brainerd.net](mailto:firstcong@brainerd.net).

[uccbrainerd.org](http://uccbrainerd.org)

November 2015

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

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Pastor Leslie will be on vacation from Saturday, November 21 through Friday, November 27 to visit her family in Washington. Rev. John Stiles will be available for pastoral care emergencies and can be reached at 612-418-1406.

## Pastor's Pen

Dear beloved church family,

I recently read about a group of eight pregnant women who regularly met together for two hours to snack, watch videos about labor pain, and share about their experiences. Their meeting looked like a social gathering or a support group, but in this case it was actually a shared doctor's appointment. Instead of making appointments with eight women in 15-minute intervals, the doctor could spend two hours with all of them. They would rotate through stations for basic prenatal checkups and to chat with the doctor, and they would also talk together about critical topics like gestational diabetes, exercise, and blood pressure.

Studies showed that participants in these group meetings were 33 percent less likely to have a premature birth. In many cases, the women were more willing to follow healthy prenatal routines when the recommendations did not simply come from the doctor but were reinforced by their peers. These gatherings were times for mutual accountability as well as emotional support, laughter, and camaraderie.

What does this have to do with church? I believe there is a measurable difference between sitting through worship as a stranger and worshipping in a church where you are known and know others. Maybe the people you know are simply the folks who sit near to you week after week. Maybe they are ones with whom you volunteer, or the people you see when you pick up your kids from Sunday school. These are precisely the people who might call if you miss church for several weeks, or who would offer to pray for you if you shared a personal concern or special need. These are the friends and acquaintances whose actions reinforce the messages you hear from the pulpit, the choir, and each other during shared prayers. It has been said many times that our deepest desire as human beings is to be known. So how can we help every person who enters our doors feel seen and acknowledged – affirming that they have a place in our community, too?

As we get closer to the Advent and Christmas season, I expect that we will see an increase in visitors who are looking for a place to worship on Christmas Eve. This provides us with a wonderful opportunity to examine and improve our hospitality skills. I urge you to take the initiative to meet someone new. Seek out a stranger and leave that day as an acquaintance, or strike up a conversation with an acquaintance and make a friend. Try to learn something about them, and if they share about a transition or challenge in their life, ask them out to lunch, offer to hold them in prayer. (After all, studies show that 70% of those who return to church after a long absence or go to church for the first time do so because they are experiencing a major life transition and are looking for a community to help them make meaning of it.)

Please wear your nametags! If you see someone without a nametag, gently encourage them to put one on. Nametags are not only helpful for visitors but also for people with memory issues in our congregation who may be embarrassed that they can't remember the name of the person they have known for many years. If you need a nametag, send an email to our Admin, Bobbie Borg at [firstcong@brainert.net](mailto:firstcong@brainert.net) or call her 829-2528.

For more ideas on how to be welcoming to visitors, I encourage you to read the article called "7 Things Church Members Should Say to Guests in a Worship Service" which is at this link: <http://tinyurl.com/churchvisitors>.

In today's individualistic world, we are urged to be self-focused and self-sufficient, but the Scriptures have always challenged this view. We are created in God's image, and just as everything in creation, down to the

tiniest cells, exists in relationship, we too were made from the beginning to be in relationship with God and one another.

Of course you can pray alone, but it feels qualitatively different to know that someone else is praying for you. Yes, you can be moved by solitary worship experiences, but the services that are most memorable invariably involve praising God as part of a larger family of faith where you feel included, known, and welcomed.

Let us make sure that everyone who enters our doors knows that feeling as well.

Peace be with you,  
Pastor Leslie

## Moderator's Musings

Good day!

Thank you for choosing me as your assistant Moderator in May. Phil has had to resign so I will complete his term through next May and then continue with my term until May of 2017 (unless I'm forced from office by a torch and pitchfork mob!).

I certainly understand Phil's dilemma. People who actually do something rather than just say, 'somebody oughta,' can take on too much – especially if we take our obligations seriously and roll up our sleeves and get into it. We all need to take care of ourselves.

So I am now our Moderator, a leader leading a whole bunch of leaders. My style of leadership is one of suggesting and herding which I think will be a good fit. I believe nothing is a crisis unless it's life threatening. Further, I've learned that there is a good, workable solution to every problem. Just because the answer isn't clear, doesn't mean there isn't one. We just have to keep looking (and listening) until we find it. I love this church! There is an amazing group of people that gather here. We have something special and, unfortunately, it seems to me, rather unusual. I am proud and honored to serve as Moderator.

Dan Hegstad

## Thank You

With much regret, Steve Crum stepped down from Trustees and Phil Kuehn resigned as moderator. We would like to thank both of you for your hard work and dedication. Dan Hegstad will be our moderator, which means we are in need of an assistant moderator. We will also need another person on the trustees committee. If you are interested or would like more information, please call the church office.

## Adult Forum

**Sunday, November 1<sup>st</sup>:** Living the Question

**Sunday, November 8<sup>th</sup>:** Trans Ally Training by OutFront Minnesota 11:30 am—1:30 pm

**Sunday, November 15<sup>th</sup>:** Living the Question

**Sunday, November 22<sup>nd</sup>:** Greening of the Church

**Sunday, November 29<sup>th</sup>:** Living the Question

## Youth Activities

### November:

**Family Fun Day** will be Sunday, November 15 – the youth will be visiting nursing homes.

### December:

**Make 'n Take** will be on Sunday, December 6 – an intergenerational event!

**Sunday School Christmas Program** will be Sunday, December 13.

## HUGS

### November 1

**Hosts:** Mark & Becky Stadem

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

**Greeters:** Bobbie Borg & Karlee Micek

**Counters:** Jeff Behr & Jerry Kuehn

### November 8

**Hosts:** Karen Ford & Tom Nelson

**Ushers/Greeters:** Maria Bertram, Lance James, Itty Newgord & Preston Newgord

**Counters:** Deb Griffith & Judy Whiteman

### November 15

**Hosts:** Deb Barten & Shirley Lundberg

**Ushers:** Austin & Preston Newgord

**Greeters:** Marcia Mans & Barb Stokke

**Counters:** Coleen Carder & Vi Heiser

### November 22

**Hosts:** Karen Ogdahl

**Ushers/Greeters:** Joey Halvorson & Tracy Lyons

**Counters:** Nancy Gould & Lowell Johnson

### November 29

**Hosts:** Sue Hadland & Lisa Wigand

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

**Greeters:** *To Be Determined – any volunteers?*

**Counters:** Steve Crum & Judy Whiteman

## November Birthdays

11/1	Chris Kelly	11/16	Barb Burton
11/1	Brita Springstead	11/17	Nicole Spear
11/2	Madeline Maurer	11/20	Jan Kurtz
11/4	Eleanor Burkett	11/21	Itty Newgord
11/9	Dale Hadland	11/24	Kelly Erickson
11/10	Jackie Froemming	11/26	John Burton
11/13	Becky Stadem	11/26	Janet Budack
11/15	Meg Foster		

## Columbarium and Chapel

Dear Church Family,

The abatement of the asbestos has brought us a wonderful opportunity to turn the small chapel on the south side of the Sanctuary into a Columbarium and Chapel. While we are still in the process of working on a cost estimate, we have received a wonderful gift. An anonymous donor has offered to match contributions for this project up to \$10,000. In the next few weeks we will have plans to share with you and will actively pursue contributions.

If there are any of you who would like to add the name of a family member or loved one to our Memorial Garden granite plaque, please contact me. The cost to have a name engraved is approximately \$250 for the first 10 letters and then \$10 per letter for subsequent letters.

Feel free to contact me if you have questions.

Sue Hadland  
dghrose@charter.net  
218-829-2381

## Food Shelf Offering – October 25

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. On October 25 we received \$270 and 26 pounds of food. Our next offering will be Sunday, November 22. **Thank you for helping to feed our hungry neighbors!**

## New Pathways

Sunday Nov. 8-15, 2015

*Please consider volunteering for:*

Staying overnight: Sue Hadland – 829-2381 ([dghrose@charter.net](mailto:dghrose@charter.net))

Kathi Hefti – 839-1578 ([hefti3@gmail.com](mailto:hefti3@gmail.com))

Dinners: Sharon Carlson – 828-1581 ([sharoncarlson62@charter.net](mailto:sharoncarlson62@charter.net))

Set up and take down: Deb Griffith – 828-4841 ([debrange@brainerd.net](mailto:debrange@brainerd.net))

Transportation: Scott Gutierrez – 838-7066 ([sljtgutierrez@gmail.com](mailto:sljtgutierrez@gmail.com))

Activities: Lance James – 330-6329 ([lancejames@gmail.com](mailto:lancejames@gmail.com))

The members of our New Pathways team hopes you will consider helping out the single dads or moms, married couples, toddlers, young school children, teens and young adults. These folks are working with Lutheran Social Services and the New Pathways organization to find a home, employment and a better life for themselves and their families.

Please consider becoming a part of our team by volunteering by transporting, making dinner, doing activities with the children and staying overnight. Those volunteering to overnight will be paired with someone who has done it before. Even if you come and talk to or play with the children, it may just give them a boost and you will feel great too.

Thank you from The New Pathways Team!!!

## Church Council Minutes

October 22, 2015

Moderator – Dan Hegstad	Assistant Moderator –
Clerk – Karen Ogdahl	Treasurer –
Christian Ministry – Joey Halvorson	Trustees – Nancy Gould
Christian Education – Marina Grabowski	Stewardship – Marcia Mans
Council at Large – Ann Turnbull, Nicole Grabowski, Bonnie Crum	

Present: Dan Hegstad, Phil Kuehn, Nancy Gould, Karen Ogdahl, Joey Halvorson, Bonnie Crum, Rev. Leslie Moughty, Marina Grabowski, Marcia Mans

The meeting opened with a prayer by Rev. Leslie. Karen will find a devotional for November.

CLERK'S REPORT - Death: Chuck Schmid, September 26, 2015, service September 30.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

Giving is up compared to last year, thanks to the generosity of members and friends. There were some questions, which will be directed to Bobbie and Lisa. Bonnie will not be able to take on the treasurer's role but will still help as she can.

### PASTOR'S REPORT

Rev. Leslie's activities included accompanying youth to the fall event at Pilgrim Point, leading an adult forum called TransAction, officiating at one funeral and one wedding, participating in CROP and Alzheimer's walks and attending a webinar regarding sex offenders and the church. Watch for her article in the Brainerd Dispatch's Clergy View on October 30. Confirmation begins on October 25. Upcoming vacation dates: November 21 – 27 and December 26 – January 1.

### STEWARDSHIP REPORT

Stewardship members produced three game show themed skits encouraging giving. Pledge cards have been sent to church members, and pledges will be received on Sunday, October 25.

### TRUSTEES' REPORT

The fellowship hall remodeling is continuing. The project is on budget so far. Volunteers will be needed for sanding, patching and painting. It is hoped that money will be available for new carpeting. The small chapel needs insulation and electrical work at a cost of approximately \$800.

The gardens and grounds have become too labor intensive. Nancy offered some changes that would alleviate some of the work. Fall Clean-up will be November 5 from 3:00 – 5:00.

### CHRISTIAN EDUCATION

Events: youth will be serving at the soup kitchen on October 23 and will go to a nursing home on November 15 to perform for and visit with residents; Make-N-Take on December 6; Christmas Program on December 13. CE has been discussing fund raising ideas for the National Youth Event next summer. Cost is approximately \$1,000 per person.

### CHRISTIAN MINISTRY

CM will conduct a workshop preparing for Dia de los Muertos (Day of the Dead) on October 25. Participants will learn about this Mexican tradition and make paper flowers, decorate sugar skulls and create memory boxes. All church members are encouraged to bring a picture or memento of deceased loved ones to display at the church service on November 1.

**AT LARGE**

Council members noted that the church website needs updating. Is this something that Bobbie could be doing? Also, it was recommended that the Marketing Committee become active in working on church publicity.

**OLD BUSINESS**

Rev. Leslie shared information on developing a safe church policy. She has talked to some church members about serving on a task force and will continue with that project. The task force should involve the pastor, a CE member, a Council member and two church members.

Committees need to send their proposed budgets for 2016 to Bobbie as soon as possible.

**NEW BUSINESS**

Citing too many other responsibilities, Phil Kuehn submitted his resignation as Council moderator. With deep regret, the Council accepted his resignation and thanked him for his very able service. Dan will serve out Phil's term.

There are concerns that our church's obligation to the Soup Kitchen isn't always consistent. Karen will contact the Cooking Group about finding a coordinator.

A congregational meeting to accept the 2016 budget will take place after the church service on December 6.

The meeting was adjourned with the Lord's Prayer. The next meeting will be November 18 at 7:00.

Respectfully submitted,  
Karen Ogdahl, Clerk of Council

## Church Financials

**First Congregational UCC of Brainerd  
Financial Results - General Fund  
Year to Date Results as of 9/30/2015**

	2015 Annual Budget	Actuals Through 9/30/15	% of Budget
<b><u>Income:</u></b>			
From Giving Units	\$ 143,220	\$ 121,165	84.60%
Other Giving	\$ 11,510	\$ 21,297	185.03%
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$ 154,730</b>	<b>\$ 142,461</b>	<b>92.07%</b>
<b><u>Expenses:</u></b>			
Council	\$ 103,318	\$ 92,729	89.75%
Christian Ministry	\$ 10,400	\$ 9,087	87.37%
Christian Education	\$ 1,450	\$ 2,573	177.44%
Stewardship	\$ 300	\$ 461	153.72%
Trustees	\$ 60,816	\$ 33,133	54.48%
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$ 176,284</b>	<b>\$ 137,984</b>	<b>78.27%</b>
<b>Net Income (Loss) Year to Date:</b>	<b>\$ (21,554)</b>	<b>\$ 4,478</b>	

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## COMMUNITY EVENTS

### Habitat for Humanity Update



Heather, Lilly, and Ava—100th home in honor of Paul Mans 2015

Because of **YOU**, Heather has a home she can **USE**, and Ava and Lilly can cook with their mom again in their Kitchen!

**YOU** helped us build a **Handicap Accessible** home for their family to cook up some new memories in!

*First Congregational church,*

**THANK YOU!**  
from all of us at  
Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity!

*Melissa*  
*Julie May*

*Laurie*  
*Jeanette*

## Lakes Area Music Festival

Join the Lakes Area Music Festival for the first concert of their winter series! Festival directors Scott Lykins (piano) and John Taylor Ward (baritone) take on Beethoven and Schubert for an evening of German song cycles. All concerts are free of charge.

### LIEDERABEND

Friday, November 6  
7:00 pm  
Walker Bay Theater  
100 Highland Avenue  
Walker

Saturday, November 7  
7:00 pm  
Lutheran Church of the Cross  
5064 County Road 13  
Nisswa

## Hope for the Holidays

Essentia Health St. Joseph's Medical Center is offering a holiday program for those who are grieving the loss of a loved one. The "Hope for the Holidays" presentation is meant to support those who have someone they love missing from the upcoming holiday season. We include other special days like anniversaries, birthdays and traditions that can remind us of loss. It will provide education and suggestions for coping through these days that can feel overwhelming.

The "Hope for the Holidays" presentation will take place at Essentia Health St. Joseph's Medical Center from 4-6:00 pm on Thursday, November 5, 2015. Please join us.

For more information about "Hope for the Holidays" or Grief Support, please call 218-828-7442 or 218-828-7531.

Jeanne W. Christensen LSW  
Grief Program Coordinator

## Community Thanksgiving Dinner

# COMMUNITY THANKSGIVING DINNER



**BRAINERD LEGION**  
**Thursday, November 26<sup>th</sup>**  
**11 a.m. to 1 p.m.**

**\*Free-will Donations Gratefully Accepted!**

**\*\*Please RSVP by noon, Nov. 23<sup>rd</sup>**

**to reserve a place or arrange for delivery!**

Brainerd Legion (829-2249) Brainerd VFW (829-6393)

Brainerd Eagles (829-4216) Brainerd Elks (829-2643)

## Church Calendar – November 2015

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
<b>1</b> 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday School 11:30 Living the Question	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> 9:30 Prayer Circle @ Sawmill Inn 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 5:00 Music Committee	<b>5</b> 3:00 Church Grounds Clean up	<b>6</b> 10:30 Book Group	<b>7</b>
<b>8</b> 8:30 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum *New Pathways*	<b>9</b> *New Pathways*	<b>10</b> *New Pathways*	<b>11</b> 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn *New Pathways*	<b>12</b> 11:30 Clergy Cluster 5:30 Committee Meetings *New Pathways*	<b>13</b> 10:30 Book Group *New Pathways*	<b>14</b> *New Pathways*
<b>15</b> *Visitor Sunday* 8:45 Choir 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday School 11:30 Living the Question	<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Council Meeting	<b>19</b>	<b>20</b> 10:30 Book Group 6:00 Process & Film 6:00 Transgender Remembrance Service	<b>21</b>
<b>22</b> 10:00 Worship & Food Shelf Offering 11:00 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday School 11:30 Greening the Church *Newsletter Deadline*	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> 9:30 Prayer Circle 11:30 Men's Group @ Sawmill Inn 7:00 Thanksgiving Eve Service @ Bethlehem	<b>26</b> <b>Thanksgiving</b> <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>27</b> 10:30 Book Group 4:00 Soup Kitchen <b>Office Closed</b>	<b>28</b>
<b>29</b> 10:00 Worship 11:00 Fellowship 11:00 Sunday School 11:30 Adult Forum	<b>30</b>					

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**Pastor  
Rev. Leslie Moughty**

**Administrative Assist.  
Bobbie Borg**