Friendship News, February 2022

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Brainerd

An Open and Affirming Congregation

The Church Office Winter Hours: Wednesdays – Fridays from 10:00 am – 1:00 pm

Pastor Leslie’s Drop-in Hours: Wed. 1:00pm – 3:00pm, Friday 10:00am – 12:00pm

Office phone 218-829-2528 Office E-mail uccbrainerd@gmail.com Pastor’s E-mail: pastorleslieucc@gmail.com Website: [www.uccbrainerdmn.org](http://www.uccbrainerdmn.org)

**Schedule a 1 to 1 (in-person or by Zoom or Phone) with Pastor Leslie:**

[www.calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1](http://www.calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1)

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

**Entering the Third Year of “Coronatide”**

Rev. Elizabeth Dilley who works at the national setting of the United Church of Christ recently posted the following on her Facebook page. With her permission, I offer her words of wisdom…

In seminary I took a course called Conflict in Congregations taught by the indomitable Speed Leas. In it he talked about tension points at years 3, 7, and 12 in a particular ministry context. These are times when conflicts rise up, often to a crisis point.

I talk about the Year 3 Conflict with my colleagues A LOT. It's the time when the ministry setting realizes the minister isn't Jesus come to save them all, and the minister realizes that the ministry setting isn't the Promised Land always overflowing with milk and honey. It's very hard, and stuff comes up that feels very personal - often it's presented that way, in fact, as "your ministry is a failure" or "you are a failure" or things like that.

It's important to remember that this happens in healthy and unhealthy systems alike, that the ways through are through investing in relationship-building, listening, and making generous assumptions (a great phrase I recently picked up from another colleague). It comes from working through the conflicts, from figuring out the kernel of truth in a mountain of unfair assumptions and accusations and dealing with that rather than the other stuff, and from continuing to invest in your inner prayer life (for individuals) and corporate prayer life (for congregations).

I share this today because we're coming up on Year 3 of “Coronatide.” Stuff that used to work isn't working as well. Our ministers and our ministry settings are exhausted (and very possibly burnt out, though that's not the focus of this post). What we've been doing hasn't solved/fixed all the big problems of our communities. We're tired and angry and would just like to blame someone or enact all the "If only....." scenarios running through our head. If, instead, we can continue to be "hard on issues and gentle on people," invest in our relationships and the health of our systems without blaming people and systems for not being perfect, then very likely we'll see our ministries deepen to a new level of trust and faithfulness.

Clergy: please rest and do not take on the responsibility for \*all this\* (flails hands about). Pray. Listen. Be curious, not judgmental.

Congregations: please rest and trust that everyone is doing the best they can. Do not give into the temptation of believing it's possible to solve \*all this\* (flails hands about). Pray. Listen. Make generous assumptions.

I don't know what is on the other side, but I do know that when clergy and congregations are able to make it through these particular touchpoints, their ministry deepens and flourishes in beautiful ways.

Thank you to Rev. Dilley, for reminding us to pay attention to this touch point, to offer grace and compassion to one another and ourselves. This third year of Coronatide is off to a bit of a rough start. But if we focus on strengthening our relationships with one another and our community, this year could be one of transformation.

With the hope and peace of Christ,



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**First Congregational UCC News & Updates**

**How to watch Sunday worship**
The worship service is **broadcasted on the church Facebook page every Sunday at 10:00 am.**
To watch worship on Facebook, go to <https://www.facebook.com/uccbrainerd/live>
We are working with a new system for streaming are still working out the kinks for streaming to YouTube.

**Worship Bulletins are available for download each week at** <http://tinyurl.com/UCCBrainerdBulletins>**.**The bulletins will be ready for download first thing Sunday morning. They are available in both Word and PDF formats and are labeled by date. You can download the document and print it at home or follow along on your screen.
We can also send a copy of the bulletin in the mail each week as we have been doing for some of our home-bound members. Just contact Terri in the office.

**Financial Help Available**
Your Church Council voted last year to allow the **Pastor's Discretionary Fund** to be used to assist church members and others in the Brainerd area who are experiencing financial distress during this time. We received many generous donations! If you need assistance, please email, call, or text Pastor Leslie. Let her know what your situation is and how the church might be of help.

**You can now donate to the church online!**We are now accepting your offerings and donations using **PayPal.** You do not need to have a PayPal account to make an online donation with a credit card. To use PayPal, go to: <https://www.paypal.me/uccbrainerd>

**February Birthdays**

Yvonne Leiser February 2

Annie Grabowski February 7

Roger Maas February 11

Georgia Harris February 15

Mary Reardon February 17

Ann Turnbull February 18 Colleen LeBlanc February 24 Autumn Caldwell February 27 Ken Moughty February 28

Grace Johnson February 29

**NEW Church Office Hours – Winter Hours February Update!**

 **Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays 10:00 am to 1:00 pm.**

Please call Terri at the office for further assistance at 218-829-2528

**Pastor Leslie’s drop-in hours\* cancelled until further notice**

**Wednesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm Fridays 10:00am – 12:00pm**

*\*These are hours that, barring an emergency, Pastor Leslie will be in the office and available for drop-in conversations or meetings.*

*Appointments are preferred to best manage her schedule, but don’t hesitate to drop in during the above times. Pastor Leslie will be in the office at other times but may not always be available due to other obligations.*

*To make an appointment outside of the drop-in hours, go to* [calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1](https://calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1) *or call or email Pastor Leslie directly to schedule an appointment.*

**Church Leadership**

***Get Involved, Give Back, Grow Connections – Volunteer at Church!***

There are many opportunities for you to share your talents:

--**Treasurer,** serves a 1-year term (may renew for 6 terms). The primary role is oversight of bookkeeping, church finances and Executive Committee discussions.

This candidate should have a strong background or interest in finance or banking.

**Committees needing fresh faces**

-Christian Education -Trustees -Memorial -Christian Ministry

-Music -Arts -The Foundation Board

Call or text Joe Stattine - Moderator, with your nominations: 218-838-1311

*“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” ~Elizabeth Andrew*

**Highlights from the Council Meeting, January 21st, 2022 - 7:00 pm (via Zoom)**

~ These are highlights. If you would like a copy of the full minutes, please contact the church office ~

**Present**: Joe Stattine, Colleen LeBlanc, Barb Stokke, Marcia Ferris, Sue Hadland, Lowell Johnson, and Pastor Leslie.

**Report Highlights:**

**Clerk:** David Crum passed away January 3, 2022. Service on May 14, 2022 at First Congregational.

**Pastor:** Pastor Leslie participated in a Zoom meeting with people from several area churches and towns who are interested in planning an event that would offer a progressive look at Anti-Racism and the Christian Faith. The event may be hosted by First Congregational later this spring.

**Financial:**  ConsultantYvonne Leiser and Admin Terri are finishing work on the end of the year reports and have figured out how to process credit card transactions to show up more accurately on the financial statement. At this time, First Congregational appears to have ended the year well and strong.

**Trustees:** Trustees reported that help is needed to clean the church. A notice for help will be in the church bulletin and Trustees will have an article in the February newsletter.

**Stewardship:** Stewardship will begin meeting again in March to plan a membership appreciation brunch to be held in April.

**Christian Ministry:** CM had a good turnout to de-green the church. Some suggested leaving the greens up a few weeks longer. •Council commended CM for taking good care of the guest ministers and the church the first two Sundays in January.

**Christian Education:** The January 16 Adult Forum went well. Nine people participated and the evaluations were very positive. Due to COVID, the 100 Conversations/WISE Conversation Adult Forum will likely be postponed until February, and the Men’s Lunch Group may take a hiatus as well.

**Old Business:**

1. Joe Stattine, Colleen LeBlanc and Pastor Leslie have been working on the revisions of ***First Congregational UCC Bylaws*** and the ***Membership Policies and Procedures***. Council unanimously approved the revisions to the Bylaws of First Congregational UCC (Dec 2021) and the Membership Policies and Procedures (Dec 2021).
2. Moderator Stattine is waiting to hear from the Foundation concerning the request for monies to purchase the **T-Coil Hearing Assistance**. Meanwhile, He would like to determine if the loop system remains the best and most current technology for hearing aid assistance
3. The **new lighting system** has been installed in the sanctuary.

**New Business:**

1. Due to the increase in **COVID** cases, the January 23 Sunday Service and possibly more services will be live-streamed only.
2. Council determined the time frame for the **150th Anniversary celebration** will be June 15–August 15, 2022.
3. Council approved the formation of an **ad hoc committee for the 150th Anniversary Celebration. •**A Zoom meeting will take place Wednesday, February 9, at 7 P.M. to brainstorm possible celebration. •Council previewed and approved the distribution of an outreach video on First Congregational produced by Dan Hegstad and Marcia Ferris.
4. A **nomination committee** for new officers, department members, and committee members was formed. Members include Joe Stattine, Colleen LeBlanc, Barb Stokke and Pastor Leslie. Officer positions open include Asst. Moderator, Clerk, and Treasurer.

**Next Regular Council Meeting: Thursday, February 17th, 2021, 3:00 pm in-person & via Zoom**

**- From Your Trustee Team – Need Help With Church Cleaning -**

**“MANY HANDS MAKE LIGHT WORK”**

**If you are physically able and have a desire to volunteer, the trustees need your help in church cleaning. Tasks include vacuuming and dusting of**

**vacuuming and cleaning fellowship hall, bathrooms and kitchen. Currently 3 people clean weekly, and more are needed, (weekday and time can be decided, although currently people are cleaning on Tuesdays and Fridays). If we have a list of at least 6 (or more) people, then a schedule can be made so not everyone has to clean every week. Cleaning and vacuuming supplies are supplied by the trustees.**

**Please consider volunteering and let any trustee member know if you are interested : Cynthia**

**Janes, Jim Newgord, Reed Campbell, Ryan Kelly, Deb Griffith. You can also call and leave your**

**name with Terri at the church office, 218-829-2528 and you will be contacted. Thank you.**

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**150th Anniversary of First Congregational UCC**

**Let's Have Some Fun!**

August 13, 2022, is the 150th Anniversary of First Congregational UCC. We are at the beginning stages of planning a celebration and YOU are invited to participate. On **Wednesday, February 9, at 7 P.M.,** there will be a Zoom meeting for all who would like to participate in a brainstorming session about what our celebration might look like. Please attend with your creative mindset on! The Zoom link is [tinyurl.com/UCCBrainerdZoom](https://uccbrainerd.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7358d6fe5c26410d29dfb93f0&id=c9d249cf01&e=d0e1cab4c2)

**Adult Forums in February**

Due to the unknowns around Covid and in-person church worship scheduling, we are looking at hopefully doing 2 Adult Forums in February, dates to be determined. Assuming church worship will resume in person at some point, we would like to offer 2 of the following 3 topics.

**100 Conversations Project Summary -** Originally scheduled for 1/30/22, this session will consist of members of our WISE Ministry Team sharing their experiences of interviewing marginalized and underrepresented folks in our community.

**Self and Group Care During Covid -** Using a circle process, participants will share their experiences of coping with the stress of the pandemic. Resources will be offered.

**Resilience - Big Picture and Techniques -** This session will include a PowerPoint on the research on Building Resilience, plus a sharing of specific techniques around breathing, mindfulness, body work, and other strategies.

Lowell Johnson at johnsonlowells@gmail.com or c 218-820-5290.

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***Every Wednesday at Noon***

**You are invited to a casual fellowship at various locations in the Brainerd Lakes area.**

**Please contact Jack Kraywinkle for location each week.**

**Jack’s cell” 612-396-3480 or email:** kraywinklej@gmail.com

**Cooking For Everyone**

This group is OPEN FOR EVERYONE!

Email Lowell johnsonlowells@gmail.com and he will add you to the member list so that you will know when and where we will next meet.

**TheShop Meal – *February 16th - 3:45 pm church kitchen****.*
We meet once a month on the third Wednesday.

We are working with the young people from TheShop (Brainerd/Baxter's Youth Empowerment Center) and are preparing a meal and serving it at TheShop for the participants in the program.

Thanks to all who have expressed an interest in helping out. If you are interested in helping,

please call Sharon Carlson at 828-1581.

**Choir Practice - Postponed until further notice**
Please contact Diane Hauan for more information:
218-839-0669 or [diane.hauan5@gmail.com](https://uccbrainerd.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7358d6fe5c26410d29dfb93f0&id=7bae397a8f&e=5e2c6f93e6)

**Calling all singers and musicians!**

**We want to include your voice and instruments during the worship services.**

Please contact Diane Hauan for more information: 218-839-0669 or [diane.hauan5@gmail.com](https://uccbrainerd.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7358d6fe5c26410d29dfb93f0&id=7bae397a8f&e=5e2c6f93e6)

**The Columbarium at First Congregational UCC, Brainerd**

The Columbarium is located in the historic space that once was our church’s front entry way.

How appropriate it is that our Columbarium now marks another entry way into a new life — where the Spirits of Love and Truth are always present!

Our Columbarium is now complete. Should you wish to learn more about the purchase of a niche for your own cremains or for the ashes of a loved one, please call the church office at (218) 829-2528.

Terri Chidester, Administrative Assistant, can send you a packet of materials via email or regular mail.

The Memorial Committee has prepared the information packet, and it contains all the details you will need as you consider inurnment here at First Congregational UCC.

Have any other questions? Contact Dawn Stattine at dawnstattine@gmail.com

**Special Offering Sunday Worship February 27th**

**Food Shelf/Salvation Army**

Your generosity helps provide the essential gifts of food, shelter, and hope to those hurting right here in your community.

Please send your donation to First Congregational UCC, 415 Juniper St. Brainerd, MN 56401. Make sure to note on your offering: “Special Offering Food Shelf”.

Or for your convenience use our Paypal account at: [paypal.me/uccbrainerd](https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/uccbrainerd)

Be sure to note on your offering “Special Offering Food Shelf”. in comments. Thank you!

**Annual Connection Letter**

Keep your eyes on your mail box!

We are creating a letter with the intention of making it easier for us to stay connected. In addition to some information about the life of the church, you will be encouraged to complete and return a short form with updated contact information for the church office and an updated directory. Your response will help us better connect with one another and better serve our members and friends.

**Prospective Member Classes Starting February 13**

**Have you thought about becoming a voting member of First Congregational UCC? Whether you know you definitely want to join or you aren’t sure if joining is right for you, please join Pastor Leslie for the three-session series. You will meet other prospective members, hear each other’s faith journeys, learn about the history and governance of United Church of Christ and the history and culture of our congregation. You’ll also learn about healthy and unhealthy communication in a faith community, as well as what you can expect from your church and what will be expected of you!**

**Classes will be held on Sundays after worship.**

**Brainerd Lakes Area Information**

**~ Opportunities to Know and Share God’s Love ~**

**Brainerd Lakes Area Community Warming Shelter**
At Bridges of Hope, we are thankful for all who have helped make the Warming Shelter a reality. The new [Warming Shelter](https://www.bridgesofhopemn.org/warmingshelter) is open from 8 PM to 8 AM for those aged 18+ who need a warm place to sleep at night. **THANK YOU!**



**The Brainerd Baxter Youth Center**

Because of your generous donations of time, supplies, resources and money, we are able to provide a safe space for our youth to gather, learn and have fun. We provide meals and snacks for each evening the shop is open, along with our ShopCart program that delivered over 300 meals to families in the area that had food insecurities. Toiletries and hygiene products are always readily available for anyone who walks in our door, along with clothing, towels and linens. It has also allowed us to host parties and events for youth to connect with the community and be a part of something outside of school activities. This year our mission is ongoing and unwavering, to be a safe space for our community youth to flourish and grow into community involved citizens. Please consider donating to the TheShop to continue our mission. Links to GiveMN, TheShop website and our Paypal for any monetary donations.

GiveMN Weblink-   <https://www.givemn.org/organization/Theshop>

TheShop homepage-  <https://theshopbrainerd.org/>

Paypal-  <https://www.paypal.com/donate?hosted_button_id=SB5MFUME7V7TS>

**Crisis Services** - All are available 24-hours (unless noted), FREE and confidential

**Crisis Line & Referral Service:** 218-828-4357, 218-828-HELP or 1-800-462-5525

**CRISIS:** from cell phone call CRISIS (274747)

**Crisis Nursery-Crow Wing County:** 218-692-2859

**Crisis Text Line:** Text “MN” or HopeLine” to 741741

**Bridges of Hope:** 218-825-4357 or 1-800-462-7682

**Minnesota 1st Call for Help:** 211

**Minnesota Farm & Rural Helpline:** 833-600-2670

**National Suicide Prevention Lifeline:** 1-800-273-8255

**Poison Control Center:** 1-800-222-1222

**Suicide & Mental Illness:** 1-800-462-5525

**Teen Crisis Line***:* 310-855-4673

**The Trevor Project (LGBTQ Crisis & Suicide Hotline – Youth under 25):** 866-488-7386

**Trans Lifeline:** 877-565-8860

**Veteran’s Crisis Line:** 1-800-273-8255 – press 1

**WARMLINE:** Speak with peers who are there to listen and support adults experiencing emotional distress. 1-844-739-6369 from 5:00pm -7:00am.

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| February 2022 Calendar |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|  | Office Closed Open by Appt.  | Office ClosedOpen by Appt.  | Office Hours10am – 1pmPastor Drop-inSuspended  | Office Hours10am – 1pm  | Office Hours10am – 1pmPastor Drop-inSuspended  |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  |  | 2pm Emotions **1** Anon- **Y**5:30pm Overeaters Anon- **Y**  | 10am Pray Crcle-**Z 2** 12pm Mens Grp- **C**7pm AA Common-**Y** |  **3** |  **4**  10:30am Book Grp-**Z** |  **5** |
| 8:30am Choir- **C** **6**  8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y** 10am Wrship & Communion-**V**11am Fellowship-**C**  |  **7**  12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom** | 2pm Emotions **8**  Anon- **Y**5:30pm Overeaters Anon- **Y**  | 10am Pray Crcle**-Y 9**  12pm Mens Grp- **C**7pm Trustees- **Y**&**Z**7pm 150th Anniv Plan Mtg -**Zoom** 7pm AA Common-**Y** |  **10**6:30 BLUE -**V**  |  **11**   10:30am Book Grp-**Z**  |  **12**  |
| 8:30am Choir- **C** **13**  8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y** 10am Wrship-**Y&V** 11am Fellowship-**Y**11:30am Perspective Member Mtg --**Y**  |  **14**12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom** 4pm Grl Scts #373-**Y** **Valentine’s Day**  |  **15**2pm Emotions Anon-**Y**5:30pm Overeaters Anon-**Y**  | 10am Pray Crcle-**Y** **16**  12pm Mens Grp- **C**3:30pm TheShop Cooking-**Y**7pm AA Common-**Y** |  **17**   3pm Council Mtg-**Y&V** 7pm AA Dist-**Y** |  **18**  10:30am Book Grp- **Z**  |  **19**  9:30am AAUW Mtg– Fellowship Hall |
| 8:30am Choir- **C** 8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y** **20**    10am Wrship-**Y&V**11am Fellowship-**Y*****\*\*Newsletter Deadline\*\**** |  **21**  12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom**  | 2pm Emotions **22**  Anon-**Y**5pm LeMesa-**V**5:30pm Overeaters Anon-**Y**  |  **23**10am Pray Crcle-**Y** 12pm Mens Grp-**Y** Poncho’s & Lefties7pm AA Common-**Y** |  **24**   |  **25** 10:30am Book Grp- **Z** |  **26**12pm Baptism |
| 8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y** **27**    10am Wrship-**Y&V**11am Fellowship-**Y*****Special Offering:******Food Shelf*** |  **28**  12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom**  |  |  **Adult Forum – Sunday Dates TBD** |  **Memorial Mtg – N****Stewardship Mtg - N** |  | **V** or **Z** –**Virtual** Online or **Zoom****C**- Cancelled**Y**- Mtg. in personN-None |