

November 2012



FIRST UNITED
CHURCH of CHRIST
Northfield · Minnesota

The Chronicle

A monthly newsletter of The First United Church of Christ, Congregational

300 Union Street, Northfield, MN 55057

An Open and Affirming, Just Peace Church



Minister's Musings

Visioning Update: At Pilgrim Point this summer, we had a conversation about who God was calling us to be as a church, and what God was calling us to do. Following that initial conversation we felt that God was calling us to focus on a “Big New Mission Something,” restructuring our Boards and Committees, Church Growth, Youth Ministry, and Congregational Care. The conversation continued at a council retreat held in September, and the Spirit has led us to even more clarity.

Pastor Bob and the Congregational Care committee have been doing great work in renewing the work of that committee by providing meals, rides, and visits to members of the congregation. We want to be sure we build on that work as we go forward, empowering members of the church to care for one another in ways that the pastoral staff alone could never do.

Last year there were many conversations about Faith Formation for children and we're now living into changes that are bringing positive results. Now we need to extend the conversation to our effort to form the faith of our Middle School and High School Youth. In this time of transition the pastoral staff and leaders will be especially mindful of the needs of our youth and youth leaders. Part of the work of our settled Associate Minister will be to staff this area of the church's ministry, and we are excited to see what gifts and skills this new staff person will bring to this work.

There's a growing sense that it is time for First UCC to reach out in a more intentional way to invite others into our life with God and mission as a church. A handful of leaders will be attending a Minnesota Conference event with church consultant Mike Piazza that will cover everything from reaching out in a networked world to assimilating new members. We hope to use this conference as a springboard for developing a communications and outreach strategy.

One project that has been stalled is a Board Restructuring process. The council has approved moving forward with a “Policy Governance” model that is becoming very popular with mainline churches. We will be forming a task force that will be responsible for implementing the process and will also be talking with consultants that have been helpful to other congregations. The hope is to begin the process in January of 2013, be ready to test drive a new structure by January of 2014, and then to evaluate the new structure at the end of 2014. The new structure will allow for a more nimble and responsive ministry while helping us direct more energy towards ministry and less towards maintaining a complicated committee structure.

Finally, many are sensing that God is calling us to what I've named a “Big New Mission Something.” As we've discussed at Council, focusing on sustainability seems to generate the most enthusiasm. Right now, the world needs churches that are sharing in God's work of healing creation. Starting April 1, 2013, the UCC will be beginning the Mission 4/1 Earth campaign. This will extend for the 50 days of Eastertide and focus on “greening up, powering down, shouting out for the environment.” As a first step in living out what may be a new direction in our mission as a church, we will be focusing on making the most of our participation in the “Mission 4/1 Earth” campaign.

We trust that the Spirit will empower us and guide us as we build on existing ministries and start some new initiatives.

Faithfully,

Pastor Todd



Moderator's Minute

In October, Church Council voted to renew our covenant with the Northfield Retirement Community, affirming our strong commitment to ministry and care for seniors in our community. We have been a "covenant partner" with the NRC for almost two decades, (Cynthia Lund is our current representative), partnering with an ecumenical group of other local congregations including St. Dominic's, St. Peter's, St. John's, the Methodist Church, and many Lutheran Churches. By renewing this covenant, we reaffirm our commitment to not only the NRC but to minister equally to residents in all senior care facilities in our community. Council expresses its gratitude to Pastor Bob and our Congregational Care Council for their leadership and advocacy in this important ministry.

Council also continued moving forward on our congregation's visioning and restructuring efforts. Pastor Todd drew Council's attention to the upcoming National UCC's Mission 4/1 Earth initiative, a "shared resurrection witness for Planet Earth during 50 great days of greening up, powering down, and shouting out." We anticipate our participation may be a springboard for a future "new big something" around the theme of sustainability. For more information, go to www.ucc.org/earth/.

On the governance restructuring front, Council agreed to create a governance task force to plan and facilitate the restructuring process (a recommended step in the model we have adopted). The task force is a small (4-5 person) subcommittee of Council that will initiate a listening process with the congregation, develop a restructuring process timeline (presented to Council for approval), initiate an iterative process of policy assessment and writing, and ensure that the congregation has opportunities throughout the process to weigh in. We plan to share more about the task force and the model in upcoming adult ed/WFFF sessions. Please don't hesitate to contact me or another Council member with questions.

Some have asked what a restructured governance model will look like. While nothing is yet determined, we will likely have a smaller Council that will be more focused on strategic questions (e.g., where do we want to go as a faith community?), freeing up time and energy for other members to engage in ministry (rather than meetings). Pastor Bob recently reflected that "though our new structure may be less representative than the current one (in that there won't be representatives from all the standing committees on the Council), it will be more purely democratic in that the standing committees, composed of people elected by the church to particular tasks, will be empowered to do their work without needing to obtain the approval of another body." May it be so!

Respectfully submitted,

Sarah Forster

Inquirers' Class #2 and New Member Sunday

The second Inquirers' Class for those persons wishing to join First UCC has been rescheduled to November 4, immediately following worship.

New Members will be received during worship on November 18. They will be listed in the December *Chronicle* along with information they submit to be shared with the congregation.

For more information, please contact Jean Haslett (650-0753) or Pastor Todd (645-7532).



Annual Reports from Boards and Committees

2012 Annual Reports from all boards and committees are due to Jennifer in the church office no later than Friday, December 14. Jennifer will send out more information and a template in mid-November.

Associate Minister Search Update

The full job description for the Associate Minister's position indicates the priorities that are emerging as Pastor Todd more clearly defines his own role in the church's ministry. It also addresses the importance of communication, collaboration and growth between the two ministers and with the congregation. See for yourself:

POSITION DESCRIPTION

Associate Pastor

First United Church of Christ (Congregational) Northfield, MN

Ministerial Focus: Faith Formation for All Ages

SUMMARY DESCRIPTION: To nurture the formation of faith and spiritual development of all ages and the share the work of ordained ministry at First UCC.

QUALIFICATIONS: Ordained Minister in the U.C.C. or other Mainline Protestant denomination, or Licensed Minister in the U.C.C.

RESPONSIBILITIES:

1. Faith Formation
 - a. Provide leadership in the faith formation of children
 - i. Work with Children's Faith Formation committee and provide support for leaders to ensure excellent faith formation programming for children.
 - ii. Help recruit and train children's faith formation leaders.
 - b. Provide leadership in the faith formation of youth
 - i. With Youth Committee and Senior Minister, develop a strategic, creative, and comprehensive program for youth and oversee the implementation of ministry for and with youth.
 - ii. Prepare and train volunteers needed to achieve youth ministry goals.
 - c. Provide leadership in the faith formation of adults
 - i. Guide the congregational leadership in the development of a small group model for adults.
 - ii. Recruit and train small group leaders.
 - iii. Work with Adult Education committee to maintain existing educational programming.
2. Perform other Ministerial Duties in Cooperation with the Senior Minister
 - a. Lead worship in regular rotation with Senior Minister, preaching once a month
 - b. Officiate at weddings, baptisms, and funerals.
 - c. Visit members of the congregation.
 - d. Be available for pastoral counseling.
 - e. Share in the administrative work of the congregation.
 - f. Continue professional development as an Ordained minister as defined by the Marks of Excellence in Authorized ministry of the United Church of Christ.

This position is accountable to the Senior Minister.

The committee hopes to be reading applicant profiles by the time you receive this Chronicle. Watch for news and updates in the Sunday bulletins and on the bulletin board in the Assembly Room.

Margit Johnson, Chair

Nancy Johnson-Maloney

Kaara Maki

Will Marroquin-Haslett

Jerry Mohrig

Greg Muth

Bill Poebmann

Jami Reister

Todd Smith Lippert, Senior Minister





Children's Faith Formation News

Our Sunday schedule: F.A.S.T. (Faith And Service Together) happens at 9:15 AM EVERY Sunday! The first Sunday of the month is always a large group gathering, where children and their families all gather together in the Assembly Room for song, story, and a reflection activity. The other Sundays of the month, the children meet in the Assembly Room for gathering music, then move to their classrooms with their leaders. Children are returned to the Assembly Room at 10:15 so we can all attend worship together.

Parents of F.A.S.T. Kids (preschool - grade 5): Our annual faith formation Open House and Coffee Hour will be held on the lower level on November 11, following worship. Please send a dozen treats (or fruit, crackers, etc.) with your child to F.A.S.T. Kids that day. Leaders and committee members will help set up for the event, but your assistance with goodies is very much appreciated! Thank you!

Congratulations to the 1st and 2nd graders who received their Spark Story Bibles in October! We hope you and your families enjoy sharing the story of our faith together.

In order to protect those in our congregation with food allergy issues, we ask that food be limited to the Assembly Room space. Thanks!

Parents of ALL kids: If you have not yet completed a yellow faith formation registration form, please do so as soon as possible. These forms are located in the wooden paper rack near the office and can be returned to the locked box next to the office door. This information allows our office manager to update our contact information and provides leaders with accurate class lists.

Thanks for everyone's fantastic support of our new F.A.S.T. faith formation program! Our committee and classroom leaders are enjoying the new program and are finding children to be involved and engaged with the new curriculum. You are welcome to observe your child's class at any time. Watch for additional information coming your way that will explain in more detail what your kids are doing on Sunday mornings!

If you have any service project ideas or volunteer opportunities, please let us know! We would like to provide more service projects for families.

What adult programming would YOU like to see happen at 9:15 AM on Sunday? Do you have a book you'd like to discuss? A parenting topic or dilemma to address? Faith or spirituality questions to ask? An idea for a speaker or presentation? We would like the 9:15 AM faith formation time to be one that meets parents' needs, too. If you have thoughts or ideas of what programming you'd like to see while your children are at F.A.S.T. Kids, let us know!!

~ Jami Reister, Children's Faith Formation Committee

Consecration Sunday Results

Thank you to all who attended Consecration Sunday on October 28th.

Please join us in worship service in the coming weeks as we announce and consecrate our shared contributions for the coming year.

~ Shawn Nuebel, Chair of Stewardship Committee





ALL SAINTS

A Day For ALL Families

7:00 PM, Thursday, November 1, 2012

All Saints Worship Service

Thursday, November 1 @ 7:00 p.m.

Hennepin Avenue United Methodist Church

511 Groveland Avenue

Minneapolis, MN 55403

www.day4allfamilies.org

Service and Social Responsibility (SSR) News

Please join others in serving God's call through our actions: **Campaign, Reflect & Vote Tuesday, Nov. 6.** We urge you to live out our Church's open and affirming pledge by helping **defeat the Marriage Amendment** and discriminatory limits it would enshrine in the state Constitution. Please help **defeat the voter ID amendment** meant to make it harder for elderly people, college students, and poor people to vote (i.e., people less likely to have "official" photo IDs and addresses that match the "official ID" they have on election day because their home addresses change more). Please help **support candidates who are advocates for peace, justice, and the well-being and dignity of all.**

Continue doing the good works so many pursue in their jobs and volunteering at places like the food shelf, etc. Various people affiliated with this church help disadvantaged kids in school programs, provide health services to those in need, etc. Consider how we all can do good works.

Be responsible stewards with your wealth, whatever amount that is. **As you pledge money** this year remember to **pledge a portion to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)**, which funds almost all of the good works helped by this committee. **Be responsible environmental stewards:** strive to be sustainable users of resources and to become carbon neutral in our daily lives, at our work places, and at our Church.

This past month 1st UCCers did much good through official channels: A big contingent went on CROP Walk with many giving generously and to *Neighbors in Need* a week later. The Church has made available its facility to fight the marriage amendment and with a handful of us showing up and working phones and knocking on doors. SSR designated \$300 to the UCC Back Bay Mission program, \$150 to The Samaritans, and \$250 to continue our Interfaith Power Light, environmental coalition work.



Please give generously November 18 to the *Bread for the World* offering.

Service & Social
Responsibility

Consider becoming a member of SSR next year and doing good works in this way.

Poultry for Sale

Main Street Project, whose local focus is "to create a replicable, sustainable system that allows aspiring immigrant farmers to walk a path out of poverty to prosperity," will be selling frozen free-range chickens from Latino producers in the First UCC parking lot the first Saturday of each month from 9:00-11:00 a.m.

November Sunday Faith Forums

Following Worship at 11:45 a.m.



Please join us at our Sunday Forums as we explore the many aspects of our faith.

11/4/12 **Working with Somali in Faribault; “Growing Up Healthy”:** Janet Muth

11/11/12 **Post-election Analysis/Discussion:** Rich Keiser (Carleton)

11/18/12 **No Forum** (*Harvest Meal luncheon after worship service*)

11/25/12 **First UCC Faith Story Series:** Mary Wood



November Bell Ringers

11/4: Frank Sheehy

11/11: Sarah Beimers

11/18: Leota Goodney

11/25: Scott Richardson



November Sound Techs

11/4: Henry Beimers

11/11: Alex Battiste

11/18: Christoph Hodel

11/25: William Beimers



November Counters

Leota Goodney

Gary Stromley

MCRC Seek Your Input

The Ministerial Congregation Relations Committee (MCRC) may be calling you. If your phone does ring, it is because we are seeking members to participate in time-limited focus groups that will help us evaluate our church ministries.

These groups will be critical to an evaluation process we are piloting this year. The goal is to get continuous feedback to help us align the work of our senior minister with the congregation's vision. It is based on the idea that evaluation is most effective when the congregation and the senior minister are engaged in a mutual process carried out in an environment that promotes authentic engagement and healthy communication. Rather than wait until the minister has been here a number of years before evaluating our church ministries, we will test a model of periodic, targeted feedback.

During the next several months, we will be forming focus groups comprised of 8 to 10 church members to discuss a specific aspect of our church ministry. We will start on November 7 with a conversation about worship, its structure and its content. After the holidays, we will be forming a group to talk about our faith formation programs.

Most group members will be randomly selected. If warranted, we will reserve space for some who represent a key demographic or are in a position to provide special insight.

We think this approach will create a foundation for a culture of respectful exchange and provide continual renewal and vitality to our collective ministry.

So, if you get a call from an MCRC member, this is what it is about. We want to hear your ideas, gather your impressions and weave them into a larger conversation about our collective faith journey.

~ Scott Richardson for the MCRC

SCRIP for the Holidays



This holiday season please consider purchasing gift cards through SCRIP, either for gift giving or to make your own purchases. Almost every major retailer is available, there is no cost to you, and the church receives a percentage of your purchase as income. It is truly a way to give “free money” to the church! Please see Mary Hakes with questions, or visit www.glscrip.com for a complete list of participating retailers.

November 2012

Sunday

Monday

Tuesday

Wednesday

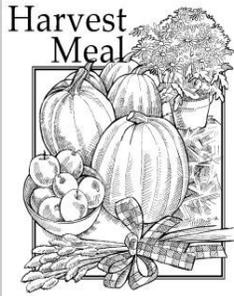
Thursday

Friday

Saturday

				<p>1</p> <p>10:00 AM Prayer Shawl Knitting Group</p>	<p>2</p>	<p>3</p> <p>9:00 AM-11:00 AM Main Street Project</p> <p>9:30 AM Stepsisters (#113)</p>
<p>4</p> <p>9:15 AM F.A.S.T. Families</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship with Communion</p> <p>11:30 AM Coffee Hour/ Sunday Forum (Janet Muth)</p> <p>6:30 PM Yoga</p>	<p>5</p> <p>9:00 AM Election Setup</p> <p>4:15 PM Men's Group</p>	<p>6</p> <p>6:00 AM - 10:00 PM General Elections</p> <p>1:00 PM Office Staff Meeting</p>	<p>7</p> <p>9:00 AM—12:00 PM Election Takedown</p> <p>9:30 AM Children's Faith Formation Committee</p> <p>12:00 PM Stepsisters (#113)</p> <p>4:45 PM Angel Choir</p> <p>5:30 PM WFFF</p> <p>6:00 PM Rainbow Choir</p> <p>7:00 PM Senior Choir</p>	<p>8</p> <p>5:30 PM Finance Committee</p> <p>7:00 PM Cabinet</p>	<p>9</p> <p>Irwin Wedding Rehearsal</p>	<p>10</p> <p>9:30 AM Stepsisters (#113)</p> <p>Irwin Wedding</p>
<p>11</p> <p>9:15 AM F.A.S.T. Kids</p> <p>9:15 AM Middle School Youth Group</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>11:30 AM Coffee Hour/ Sunday Forum (Rich Keiser)</p> <p>6:30 PM Yoga</p>	<p>12</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>14</p> <p>12:00 PM Stepsisters (#113)</p> <p>4:45 PM Angel Choir</p> <p>5:30 PM WFFF</p> <p>6:00 PM Rainbow Choir</p> <p>7:00 PM Senior Choir</p> <p>7:00 PM Trustees</p> <p>7:00 PM Deacons</p>	<p>15</p>	<p>16</p> <p>10:30 AM - 2:00 PM Growing Up Healthy Multi-Cultural Cooking Club</p>	<p>17</p> <p>9:30 AM Stepsisters (#113)</p>
<p>18</p> <p>NEW MEMBER SUNDAY</p> <p>9:15 AM F.A.S.T. Kids</p> <p>9:15 AM Middle School Youth Group</p> <p>9:30 AM High School Youth Group</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>11:30 AM Harvest Meal (No Forum)</p> <p>6:30 PM Yoga</p>	<p>19</p> <p>8:30 AM Men's Group Breakfast</p>	<p>20</p> <p>1:00 PM Office Staff Meeting</p> <p>6:00 PM Girl Scouts</p> <p>7:00 PM Council</p>	<p>21</p> <p>12:00 PM Stepsisters (#113)</p> <p>NO WFFF OR CHOIR REHEARSALS</p>	<p>22</p> <p>THANKSGIVING</p> <p>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>23</p> <p>CHURCH OFFICE CLOSED</p>	<p>24</p> <p>9:30 AM Stepsisters (#113)</p>
<p>25</p> <p>9:15 AM F.A.S.T. Kids</p> <p>9:15 AM Middle School Youth Group</p> <p>10:30 AM Worship Service</p> <p>11:30 AM Coffee Hour/ Sunday Forum (Mary Wood)</p> <p>6:30 PM Yoga</p>	<p>26</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>28</p> <p>12:00 PM Stepsisters (#113)</p> <p>4:45 PM Angel Choir</p> <p>5:30 PM WFFF</p> <p>6:00 PM Rainbow Choir</p> <p>7:00 PM Senior Choir</p>	<p>29</p>	<p>30</p>	

Harvest Meal is November 18



Everyone is encouraged to "save the date" Sunday, November 18 for the annual Harvest Meal. Immediately after worship in the assembly room, PLF (Parish Life & Fellowship Committee) will be serving a lunch of ham, potatoes, vegetable casserole, bread, and apple or pumpkin desserts*.

There will be a suggested donation of \$4.00 per person with a maximum of \$12.00 for a family.

*Bakers are again wanted: If you would enjoy baking an apple or a pumpkin dessert in exchange for a "free" meal ticket, please contact Bobbie Peterson (645-6782 or bobbie514@usfamily.net).

Please Note:

The church office will be closed Thursday, November 22 and Friday, November 23 in recognition of the Thanksgiving holiday.

