

FIRST UNITED
CHURCH of CHRIST
Northfield · Minnesota

The Chronicle

A monthly newsletter of The First United Church of Christ, Congregational
300 Union Street, Northfield, 55057
An Open and Affirming, Just Peace Church



Church Office Hours

Office hours through September 3 will be 7:00 a.m.-12:00 noon, Monday-Thursday.

The church office will be closed on Monday, September 7 for Labor Day.

Starting on Tuesday, September 8, regular church office hours will be from 8:00 a.m.-3:00 p.m., Monday - Friday.



Homecoming Sunday September 13

Plan now to come to church on Homecoming Sunday, September 13. It will be a great day. *(It is also the Defeat of Jesse James Days.)*

- Intergenerational Worship Service with music by the Spirit Voices.
- A special gift for every household, including our guests and visitors.
- Lots of information about this fall's programs and activities.
- Plenty of good food at our all-church potluck meal.

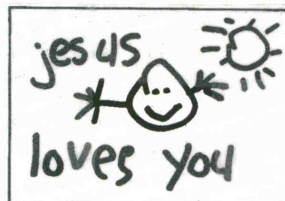
- We'll be done in plenty of time for you to enjoy the DJJD parade! Invite your neighbors and friends to join you for this lively start to the new year!




Homecoming Potluck

Join us for the annual Homecoming Potluck following worship service on September 13. Take a break from the town festivities to eat together with your church family and extended guests! Please bring a generous dish to pass (we often have many guests on this day), and also bring tableware (plates, cups, and silverware) for your family. We hope to see you there!

Please notice that this year Sunday School will open on Sunday, September 20.



September Sunday Worship Services

Sunday, September 6:
 Bell Ringer: Bill Poehlmann
 10:00 a.m. Worship & Communion 
 Focus: Yes, But
 Readings: Psalm 125
 Mark 7:24-37

Sunday, September 13:
 Bell Ringer: Leota Goodney
 10:00 a.m. Worship
 Focus: What Matters: God's Extravagant Welcome
 Readings: Genesis 9:12-17
 Luke 19:1-10
 Music: Spirit Voices
 Following Worship:
 Homecoming Potluck

Sunday, September 20:
 Bell Ringer: Nancy Johnson-Maloney
 10:00 a.m. Worship
 Focus: What Matters: People of Covenant
 Readings: Genesis 9:12-17
 John 17:20-23

Sunday, September 27:
 Bell Ringer: Julie Maxson
 10:00 a.m. Worship
 Guest Preacher



In our Prayers

Those who are unemployed or underemployed, and especially the young adults who are not able to begin their careers

Jerry Hankins, regaining strength after recent surgery

Nancy Carriel, recovering from breast cancer surgery

Pete Duys, recovering from an industrial accident

Children and staff of the PALS program in Alamosa, Colorado, where our mission trip youth worked this summer

Mary Wood, recovering from an injured shoulder

Roy Grow, recovering from recent surgery

Carol Rutz, accompanying her mother, Kathleen, recently diagnosed with lung cancer

Karen Peterson and her family, mourning the death of her father, Clemmet Peterson

Prayers for the family of Nancy Lee Slater, a friend of many members of First UCC, who passed away on Sunday, August 23

Tina Schlottman, recovering from minor surgery

Members of the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America), who voted to allow clergy in same-sex relationships to serve as pastors

Dana Holden, walking the Three-Day Breast Cancer event to raise money for research and treatment

Julia Savina, recovering from a recent bout with pneumonia

Mary Hakes, finished with her round of chemo, and continuing her treatment for breast cancer

Opening of Sunday School

This year, Homecoming Sunday and the Opening of Sunday School will be on different days! Mark your calendar now for:

- **Sunday, September 13:**
Homecoming Sunday – Bring a Friend or Neighbor (it's also Defeat of Jesse James Days weekend).
- **Sunday, September 20:**
Opening of Sunday School for children of all ages.

Women's Spirituality Group

We will have a Fall "kick off" on Monday, September 28 at 7:00 p.m. Please join us for a potluck meal and a game of "LifeStories".

This is open to all women of First UCC and their friends.

If you have any questions, please call Cathy at 645-7532 ext 203.

Inquirers' Class

An Inquirers' Class for those who wish to know more about our church and/or for those wishing to join will be held in the Parlor on Sunday, October 11, after worship.

For those wishing to join, new member information forms will be due in the office by Sunday, October 18.

Those planning to join will meet with their sponsors at 7:00 p.m. on November 1.

Update on Air Conditioning Project

In January, the Trustees engaged in earnest on the air conditioning project. As part of our exploration, we realized that due both to the age of our existing heating and ventilation systems and our continued commitment to a leadership role as a steward of God's Earth, we needed to think holistically about the project. While this delayed the project from a 2009 delivery, we remained committed to air conditioning as a means to ensure accessibility to worship for all members of our congregation. In addition, we are excited about the possibilities this project offers to do this in an environmentally friendly manner. We are on course to engage with a wider audience this fall. Look for more information and discussions coming late fall/early winter.

God's Peace, *The Trustees*



Sing the New Century at Pilgrim Point Camp!

On October 3 at Pilgrim Point Camp, Minnesota's own effervescent Arthur G. Clyde, the editor of our New Century Hymnal, will be present to lead us forward singing into the new century.

Choral experience is not at all a requirement for participation in the events of the day. For added information, check the Pilgrim Point website, www.pilgrimpoint.org, ask your music director or call Judy Rose at 1-320-852-6973.



Dear Friends

People who are visiting our church often ask the question, “*What do you believe in your church?*” As you all know, that is a very difficult question to answer for the United Church of Christ. There is a wide range of theological positions in the UCC – and we see that fact as a strength and not a weakness.

If people want to know more about the UCC, I wish they would ask this question instead: “*What matters most to the members of your church?*” Every religious tradition emphasizes some beliefs more than others, and it is those emphases that tell us most about life in that tradition.

This fall I am going to be preaching a six-sermon series called “What Matters?” I was inspired by two books (and lots of supporting materials) from the UCC’s Congregational Vitality initiative. Here’s the schedule:

September 13: We Are People of God’s Extravagant Welcome

September 20: We Are a People of Covenant, a United and Uniting Church

October 4: We Are One at Baptism and the Table

October 11: We Belong to Christ

October 18: We Thank God by Working for a Just and Loving World

October 25: We Listen for the Still-Speaking God.

My hope for this series is that it will help renew our commitment

to what matters to us – and will focus our attention on these key aspects of our faith. I am looking forward to some lively feedback on these topics – I hope you will be present to be part of the conversation.

See you September 13 for our great Homecoming Sunday!

Grace and peace, *Sandy*

Pastor Sandy’s Schedule

Pastor Sandy will be on vacation from September 22 to 28. Please call the church office if you have a pastoral need during that time.



Have You Gone Electronic Yet?

Remember, you can sign up to receive this newsletter by email (just contact Elaine, at church@firstucc.org), or you can always find it on our church’s website, www.firstucc.org.

And remember you can sign up to receive all the new posts and/or information on the website in your email, or add our website to your RSS feed. Stay in touch!



September Coffee Hour Hosts

September 6: Shana Hodel

September 13: Homecoming Sunday (PLF)

September 20: _____

September 27: Ross and Jan Shoger

Church Office Hours
June through September 4
Monday through Thursday
7:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon

September 8 through May
Monday through Friday
8:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Phones: (507) 645-7532, 645-4694

Fax: (507) 645-0930

Websites: www.firstucc.org
www.uccjrhigh.blogspot.com

Staff

Minister: Rev. Sandra Johnson
sandyjohnson@firstucc.org

Pastoral Care Associate:
Cathy Cammack
cathycammack@firstucc.org

Director of Educational and Youth
Ministries: Cher Duys
cherduys@firstucc.org

Director of Music: Chris Brunelle
chrisbrunelle@firstucc.org

Director of Children’s Music: Janet
Lewis Muth, janetmuth@firstucc.org

Director of Spirit Voices:
Bob Gregory-Bjorklund
bobgregory@firstucc.org

Organist: Theo Wee
theowee@firstucc.org

Office Manager: Elaine Malecha
church@firstucc.org

Bookkeeper: Andrea Pegram
andreapegram@firstucc.org

Custodian: Ron Olson

Childcare Coordinator: Tammy
Rischmiller
tammyrischmiller@firstucc.org

Night Security: Mark Fischer

Officers

Moderator: Ed Lufkin
Vice Moderator: Tracy Fossum



Pastoral Ponderings

My husband, whom I often refer to as “Mr. Greenjeans” during gardening season, has just finished creating a meditation garden in part of our backyard. It’s a lovely spot with perennials, a willow bench, stones, and a fountain.

Sometimes we think we have to go to a special place or set aside a block of time in order to pray. While it can be fun to do that, it’s not always practical. There are some days that prayer just has to fit in with life. Here are a few suggestions for creating spots of the sacred in ordinary moments:

1. Light a candle near your kitchen sink. As you prepare or clear away a meal, give thanks that you had food to feed yourself or your family. Give thanks for having dishes on which to serve that meal and clean water with which to wash them.
2. When brushing your teeth, don’t just let the water run down the drain in a steady stream. Hold in prayer those people for whom water is a luxury.
3. When you hear emergency sirens, say a quick prayer for whoever is in distress and also for those who hurry to assist.
4. Ask for a blessing (instead of a curse!) on someone who races past you on the highway. Pray for their safety and the safety of others on the road with them that day.
5. Before going into a meeting or making a visit you fear will be painful, ask God to send the

Holy Spirit to give you the words, and/or the discernment to know what to say or not to say.

6. Try to find gratitude when paying a bill. A school loan payment represents a goal you set and achieved for yourself. A house payment represents an investment you made in your and/or your family’s life. The utility bill reminds us that we have electricity, warmth, water, etc. Not all in the world have these luxuries.

I encourage you to take some time and see where you can fit some “meditative moments” into your own life. It may be in a favorite spot, or it may be in the middle of a traffic jam. God is with us always and everywhere....not only in those places we deem to be holy.

Peace always, *Cathy*



Welcome to Ruth MacKenzie

Please welcome our seminary intern for 2009-10, Ruth MacKenzie. Ruth is an accomplished musician and artist as well as a student at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities. She will be working at our church for about 10 hours each week as part of her Master of Divinity program there.

There will be an opportunity to hear more about her at a Sunday Forum on October 18, but in the meantime, please introduce yourself and help her to get off to a good start!



Special Conference Meeting

There will be a special meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the UCC on Saturday, September 26, in Wayzata.

The purpose of this meeting is to approve the 2010 budget for the Conference, a decision that was postponed from the regular Annual Meeting in June.

At issue is whether the Conference will sponsor (and financially subsidize) camping programs in 2010 at Pilgrim Point. The Board of Directors has recommended that programming be suspended while study continues about sustainable ways to offer outdoor ministries in our Conference. Many individuals and churches are eager to have these programs and have used the time since June to raise money designated for camping.

Our delegates to this meeting are Sue Mieska, Nancy Johnson-Maloney and Kasey Johnson. Please speak to them if you would like to learn more or express your opinion.

Different Styles of Grieving , Different Ways of Healing

Douglas A. Smith, a nationally recognized expert on grief and loss, will be the featured speaker at Northfield Hospice’s bereavement meeting Wednesday, September 16 from 6:30 to 8:30 p.m. at St. John’s Church. For more information contact Nancy Moe at 507-646-1035 moen@northfieldhospital.org.

Coming in October

Every fall, members and friends of the church are invited to make financial pledges to support the many ministries of our congregation. This October, our stewardship drive will be updated, more convenient, and "greener" :

- Our pledge brochure is going to be replaced by a multi-media program you will see in worship, during coffee hour, and on our website
- Information and pledge cards will be included in mailings we already make: quarterly giving statements and *The Chronicle*
- Materials will also be available in our Sunday worship bulletin, and from the church office
- You will be able to make your pledge online if you wish
- You will be able to sign up for your automatic electronic funds transfer online if you wish
- And you will be able to make donations -- at any time -- on our website using your bank account, or credit or debit card.

Watch the Chronicle and the website for more details about this year's opportunity to support the ministries of the church!



**Give Online at
www.firstucc.org**

We are pleased to announce the addition of online giving capabilities to our website at www.firstucc.org. Now, you can create and manage your donations to First UCC quickly and securely from the comfort of your own computer. You have the ability to draft one-time or recurring transactions from your

checking, savings, or credit card account directly to the church's bank account. Coming soon, we also plan to offer online transactions for church fundraisers and other special purchase events. Visit our website and click on the "Giving" page, and you will be directed through the process of online giving.



First UCC Accepts Credit Cards!

In addition to accepting cash and checks, First UCC now accepts credit cards for donations and purchases. This payment option is available through our website at www.firstucc.org, or by stopping into the church office and completing an authorization form. When using your credit card, please consider offering an additional \$3 to help the church offset the transaction cost.



Confirmation Class

Calling all 9th and 10th graders – our Confirmation program for this year begins with a Family Meeting on Sunday, September 20, at 4:00 pm in the Sanctuary.

Come and hear about some of the great things we have planned – field trips, service projects, as well as weekly sessions. Meet the leaders, ask any questions you may have, and sign up for a year of making friends and exploring your faith.

You'll also have a chance to sign up for our first fun event: the

Northfield CROP Hunger walk on September 27. We'll meet at the church and carpool over to the starting point, Bethel Lutheran Church. This is a way to work against hunger in our community and in the wider world.

PS: If you are an 8th grader, you have a choice of joining the 2009-10 group or waiting for the 2011-2012 session. If you are not sure, talk with Pastor Sandy or Pete Duys.



Vintage Jewelry and sewing notions sale

Where: First UCC parking lot

Dates & Times: (During JJ Days)

- Friday, September 11 from 4:00-7:00 p.m.
- Saturday, September 12 from 8:00-5:00 p.m.

Sponsored by: Arts Committee

Needed:

- Old costume jewelry, buttons, lace, etc. to sell (drop off at the church office or contact Jan Stevens)
- Workers for:
Setting up: 2:00-4:00 p.m. Friday
Selling: 4:00-7:00 p.m. Friday, 8:00-11:00 a.m. Saturday, and 11:00 a.m.-2:00 p.m. Saturday
Selling and Packing Up: 2:00-5:00 p.m. Saturday

I believe I have located a simple tent for us. This is easy and fun – like people watching at the state fair! Two volunteers per shift will be enough. Email Jan at www.janstevens@realtor.com or call 507-244-0500.



Faith Formation through Christian Education

Sharing, Caring, Learning and Serving



Northfield CROP Hunger

Walk

The Northfield CROP walk will be held on Sunday, September 27. The walk will begin at 2:00 p.m. at Bethel Lutheran Church. For more information contact Lynne Severson at 645-4871.

Conference Youth Event

October 16-18 at Pilgrim Point Camp.

Minnesota Conference UCC fall high school youth event, "Pluralism: Putting God in More than One Box", Early registration by September 14, cost: \$75/youth and \$50/adults (after September 14 - \$85/youth). Scholarships available. Ask Cher. Registration forms: <http://www.uccmn.org/childrenandyouth/Wiki%20Pages/Home.aspx>

2010 Mission Trip to Alamosa, Colorado - July 23 through August 2, serving Habitat for Humanity and La Puente



Confirmation

(Grade 9) begins September 27, each Sunday from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Please see previous article in this Chronicle.



Children

Summer Sunday School

Thanks to all who:

- shared time with the children
- helped fill the car trunk with books for PALS, Alamosa, Colorado

Sunday School Leaders Meeting

September 16 from 7:00 to 8:30 p.m.

September 20: School Year Sunday School at 10:15 a.m.

Ages 3-Grade 6 after children's time in worship; return for worship closing

Parents meeting on September 27 during worship

Junior High Youth

Grades 7 & 8

Each Sunday, beginning, September 20 from 11:15 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

Senior High Youth

Grades 9-12 (check email for updates)

Senior High Youth Group meets each Sunday, beginning, September 20 from 11:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m.

We are looking for more adults to support this group. Please contact Cher Duys if you would like to volunteer.

Sunday Forums

September 20: Science and Religion in China Today: A Power Point presentation by Ian Barbour on his trip to Beijing, his talks there on science and religion, and a celebration of his 85th birthday (he was born in Beijing).

Sept 27: The Religious Sensibility of Abraham Lincoln:

A Bicentennial discussion of Lincoln's religious views and attitudes as they developed through his life. Led by Ed Santurri, St. Olaf Religion Department



Thank you . . .

- Words cannot capture the appreciation we feel for all the care and concern expressed by this congregation through cards, food, and visits by various members and by Sandy and Cathy – even in the hospital in Hastings. Jerry is growing stronger day by day, though energy and appetite lag. Thank you all. *Jerry and Liz Hankins*
- Our 20th Northfield Church Softball League Benefit All-Star game broke the record for a single year with total donations, including funds from four sponsors, of \$7,425.92. In the economic times we are in, this will make a huge impact on the lives of many people right here in Northfield. Thanks to all who contributed.

Church Activities
First United Church of Christ
 300 Union Street
 Northfield, Minnesota 55057

Opportunity	Contact Person	When Offered/ More Information	Sign-up required? Start Date
MUSIC			
Senior Choir (Junior High, Senior High, and Adults)	Chris Brunelle 663-0953 chrisbrunelle@firstucc.org	7:00-8:15 p.m. Wednesdays & 9:00 a.m. Sundays	Come any time September 16, 2009– May 2010
Spirit Voices (Senior High, and Adults)	Bob Gregory-Bjorklund 663-8889 bobgregory@firstucc.org	Practice on two Wednesdays per month at 8:15-9:15 p.m. Repertoire includes Gospel, Spirituals, and Global Music	Come join us – whether you sing a little or sing a lot
Rainbow Choir (Grades 1 thru 5)	Janet Lewis Muth 650-0909 janetmuth@firstucc.org	4:30–5:30 p.m. Wednesdays	Starts September 16, 2009
Angel Choir (Age 4 thru Kindergarten)	Janet Lewis Muth 650-0909 janetmuth@firstucc.org	3:45-4:30 p.m. Wednesdays	Starts September 16, 2009
SUNDAY EDUCATION			
School Year Sunday School (Age 3 through grade 6)	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	After Children’s Time in Sunday Worship	Starts on September 20, 2009
Summer Sunday School (Age 3 - Grade 3)	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	Father’s Day through last Sunday in August	
Youth Opportunities (Grades 7 and 8)	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	11:15 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Sundays	Starts on September 20, 2009
Grades 9 -12 Senior High Youth	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	11:30 a.m.-12:30 p.m. Sundays	Starts on September 20, 2009
Grade 9 CY (Confirmation Youth)	Sandy Johnson 645-7532 ext. 201 sandyjohnson@firstucc.org	Most Sundays at 4:00-6:00 p.m. Includes supper.	Starts on September 27, 2010. Register with Pastor Sandy.

OTHER GROUPS, ACTIVITIES, EDUCATION

Bible Study	Sandy Johnson 645-7532 ext. 201 sandyjohnson@firstucc.org	12:00-1:15 p.m. Tuesdays	Come any time
Children and Youth Ministries	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	Many options!	
Crop Walk	Lynne Severson 645-4871 Service & Social Responsibility Committee	2:00 p.m. on Sunday, September 27 at Bethel Lutheran Church	Sign-up required
Habitat for Humanity Rice County	hfhricecounty@gmail.com	Various Times Winter/Spring 2007	Sign-up required
Knitting Prayer Shawls	Adrie Mohrig 645-7738 Liz Hankins 664-3935	10:00-11:30 a.m. 1 st Thursday of each month	September-May Come any time
Koinonia Groups	Jan Shoger 645-5236	Spirituality groups. Meet twice a month for dinner and discussion	Call for Information
Nine to Dine Dinner Fellowship	Anne Larson 663-1675 Parish Life & Fellowship Committee	Potluck dinners in different homes. 4 times/year	New groups will form in January 2010
Pilgrim Point Camp	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	Camps for children, youth, adults, and families	
Senior High Mission Trip	Cher Duys 645-7532 ext. 205 cherduys@firstucc.org	Watch for details about the 2010 Trip	
Softball Team "Fighting Apostles"	Scott Richardson 645-8475	May through mid-August	
Women's Retreat at Pilgrim Point	Liz Hankins 664-3935	Usually during September	Sign-up required
WOW's Wise Older Women		Monthly	Watch for details
Women's Spirituality Group	Cathy Cammack 645-7532 cathycammack@firstucc.org	4 th Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.	Come any time
Men's Group	Ed Lufkin 663-9022 Jerry Mohrig 645-7738	Usually meets 2 times per month (1 afternoon and 1 morning for breakfast)	Call ahead
Holiday Stress Reduction	Bob Bruce 645-9279	To be announced	All are welcome
Grief Group	Cathy Cammack 645-7532 cathycammack@firstucc.org	May 26, 2009 – June 30, 2010.	Sign-up requested
Other Great Ideas	You!		Show your interest.



Wednesday Evenings this Fall

WFFF (Wednesdays for Food,
Fun, and Faith)

5:30 to 7:00 p.m., starting on
Wednesday, September 16

The overwhelming success of our Wednesday gatherings during both Advent and Lent has led a small group of dedicated church members to create WFFF (Wednesday for Food, Fun, and Faith) an ongoing gathering throughout the entire academic year. We are excited to announce that WFFF will begin on the Wednesday after Homecoming Sunday and continue until late spring.

The first few gatherings will include a treasure hunt, skit night and bread making for children.

Adults will be discussing “God for Beginners” a book by Ralph Milton.

If you have questions or are interested in helping to plan WFFF, please contact Lynne Severson, Janet Lewis Muth, or Sarah Currier.

Come for supper (we’ll have a free-will offering for the food), and stay for activities for people of all ages!

Children’s Choir



Angel Choir (ages 4
through Kindergarten)
3:45 to 4:30 p.m.

Rainbow Choir (grades 1-5) 4:30
to 5:30 p.m.



The Angel and
Rainbow choirs will

begin on Wednesday, September 16th. We meet in the preschool room on the Sunday School level. If you have any questions about which choir your child should be in, please contact Janet Lewis Muth at 650-0909.



Senior Choir

7:00-8:15 p.m. Wednesdays

Senior Choir will rehearse every Wednesday starting on September 16.

Our first Sunday service (with 9:00 a.m. rehearsal) is on September 20.

Watch your emails for information on the September 13 potluck!