

Friendship News, October 2024

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

The Church Office Hours: Wednesdays – Fridays from 10:00am – 2:00pm Office phone 218-829-2528 Office E-mail <u>uccbrainerd@gmail.com</u>

Pastor Leslie's E-mail: <u>pastorleslieucc@gmail.com</u> Website: <u>www.uccbrainerdmn.org</u>

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

Pastor's Pen

Our Faith, Our Vote

The following writing comes from https://www.ucc.org/our-faith-our-vote which is a program of the National UCC:

"The United Church of Christ's Our Faith Our Vote Campaign is our



ongoing commitment to equip you with the tools for nonpartisan faithful engagement in our democratic process. The campaign is made up of three main components: **voter registration**, **issue education**, **and voter empowerment**.

The 2024 Our Faith Our Vote campaign asks the church to answer the call of 1 John 3:18 to "let us not love with words or speech, but in action and in truth," by "voting with love." Vote with love for creation, for our neighbors both here and abroad, for a just peace, for repair and reconciliation of the brokenness of our nation. And encourage your family, friends, and community to do the same.

The 2024 election season is well underway, so please check the website for updates to learn how you can "vote with love" this year.

Politics is often taken to be a dirty word, but political processes are simply the way communities organize their common life. For people of faith, public policy is never merely politics. It is a way of living out the commandment to love our neighbor as ourselves. It is fitting for local congregations and church structures across the country to develop nonpartisan programs to help the faith community reflect upon the political order."

Many clergy are hesitant to talk about politics with their congregation. There is a fear that even neutral speech will be perceived as skewed toward one political party or another. But it is appropriate, and even necessary as people of faith, to engage in the political process in order to work toward a world in which the values of God's kin-dom are reflected in our public lives. A world in which people in positions power are actively

working to dismantle systems of oppression and marginalization. A world in which injustice, racism, misogyny, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia are replaced with compassion, hope, and speaking the truth in love.

To learn more about what it means to vote with Love, check out this link put together by the Voting with Love task force: https://www.ucc.org/vote-with-love/.



With Peace,

Purpose Statement of First Congregational United Church of Christ

"First Congregational UCC is a welcoming, inclusive, and progressive community committed to promoting social justice, spiritual growth, and love for all people.

We reject discrimination and advocate for equality and dignity for marginalized communities.

Through worship, education, and service, we work to make a positive impact on the world and invite all individuals to join us in this journey of faith and service."

First Congregational UCC News & Updates

Pastor Leslie's Workday Schedule >> Sunday through Thursday (Days off are Friday and Saturday) << Drop-in Hours* Wednesdays 11:00 am - 1:00 pm Thursdays 2:00 - 4:00 pm

*Drop-in hours are times set aside for "drop-in" conversations, much like a professor's office hours. Pastor Leslie is typically working at the church the rest of the week, but it is possible that she may be in meetings, at a community event, or working off-site.

Everyone is encouraged to make an appointment if the above times are not convenient. You can go to www.calendly.com/pastorleslieucc and select a day and time that works for you, or you can email Pastor Leslie at pastorleslieucc@gmail.com or call/text at 218-656-0096.

Pastor Leslie Out of the Office

Wednesday, October 8th Through Monday, October 21st for hip replacement surgery.

Pastor Leslie will be back in the Office Tuesday, October 22nd

For pastoral care emergencies please contact the following Pastors:

10/8 - 10/15: Rev. Patty Bjorkland at 651-341-6982. Text (preferred) or call 10/16 - 10/21: Rev. Joyce Rush call 218-838-8287





Church Office Hours

Wednesday, Thursday, Friday 10:00 am - 2:00 pm

Please call Admin. Asst. Terri at the office 218-829-2528

Stay Connected

How to watch Sunday worship: The worship service is broadcasted on the church Facebook page and the church's YouTube channel every Sunday at 10:00 am.

To watch worship on Facebook, go to https://www.facebook.com/uccbrainerd/live

**Live stream videos are saved and can be viewed at any time. All memorials, weddings and 12th Night Concert are on our church Facebook page.

How to stay connected with First Congregational friends and members: Join the private group for our Facebook Connections Page at https://www.facebook.com/groups/uccbrainerd.

<u>Financial Help Available</u> 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.

<u>Donate to the church online!</u> 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

Announcements & Reminders

October Birthdays						
Bob Jones	Oct. 7	Kamery Hauan Hahn	Oct. 25			
Jolene Hojem	Oct. 7	Elissa Hartwig	Oct. 28			
Thomas Highum	Oct. 8	Tracy Lyons	Oct. 28			
Eileen Kurpiers	Oct. 11	Andrew Pucko	Oct. 29			
Zachariah Johnson	Oct. 11	Elizabeth Paulson	Oct. 30			
Robert Morgan	Oct. 14	Paxie Imsdahl	Oct. 31			
Barb McColgan	Oct. 20	Luann Rice	Oct. 31			
Cynthia Janes	Oct. 25					





Stewardship Commitment Season is Here

Greetings Members & Friends of First Congregational UCC, Brainerd,

Fall is the time of year when Stewardship reaches out to members and friends who are connected to our church to ask you to consider support for our church, now and in the future.

Conversations about money are often difficult. Money is a topic which creates discomfort for many. We ask you to search your heart about what this church means to you and how you can help us continue. We value volunteers' gifts of time and talent that keeps our church alive; and we have a building, staff and vital outreach ministries that require funding.

Our theme this year is **IMAGINE TOGETHER**. God calls us into community. Faith is not a solitary life but one that brings us together. The spiritual practice of generosity arises from imagining all that God calls us to do as community. Financial support to our congregation makes it possible to turn what we imagine into reality. Through your annual commitments to this church, we imagine together all that we can do in our church, community and the world.

By mid-November we will set a budget for 2025 based on pledges and dedication. We ask you to consider supporting our church so it can thrive and make a difference. Our church is an open door to many in this community.

You can set up a monthly automatic donation (information is enclosed) or use an RMD (Required Minimum Distribution) that is tax free. Letting us know your intentions (weekly, monthly, quarterly or an annual donation) will help us set a realistic budget.

Pledge Sunday is October 27th. Please get your pledge to the church office by November 1st. We can then begin to plan for 2025. If you need assistance or have any questions, call the church office 218-829-2528 or talk to one of the Stewardship Committee members.

Because of you, this church can **IMAGINE TOGETHER**.

Your UCC Stewardship Committee; Marcia Ferris, Judy Whiteman, Sarah Jo Armstrong, Maggie Anderson



Drumming Circle



Celebration of the Solar Eclipse

Wednesday, October 2nd 2024 6:00 – 8:00 pm

First Congregational UCC Sanctuary

Focus and reflection will be on shifting awareness of connecting with community

~ Emptying ~ Grief ~ Release ~ Welcome

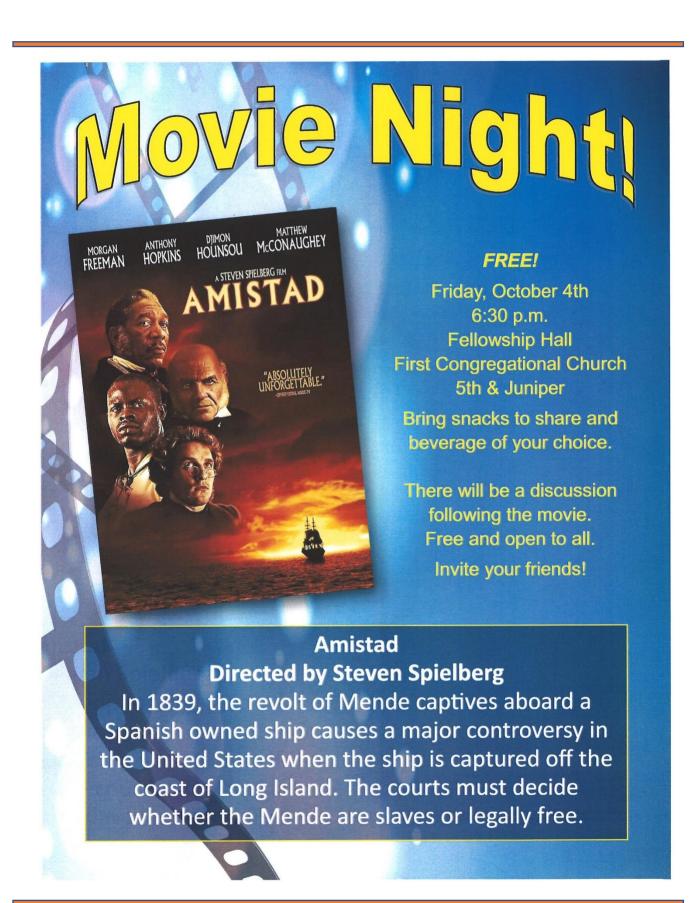
No experience required ~ Watch or participate

Bring your own drum or use what is available at the church

Hosted by Stephanie Lee



An annular solar eclipse will occur at the Moon's descending node of orbit on Wednesday, October 2, 2024. A solar eclipse occurs when the Moon passes between Earth and the Sun, thereby totally or partly obscuring the image of the Sun for a viewer on Earth.





Mary Anne Bennett Memorial Service

Two memorial celebrations are being planned. One will be held at Brainerd UCC church on Saturday, October 5th at 1:45 pm with a reception following service in the Fellowship Hall. The second will be held at Presbyterian Church of the Apostles in Burnsville.

Mary Anne Olivia Bennett was born September 27, 1937, in Leipzig, Germany. Mary Anne transitioned from her earthly home August 16, 2024, to her eternal abode surrounded by family, friends and a cloud of witnesses at her lake retreat on North Long Lake in Brainerd. Mary Anne is buried at Lakeview Cemetery, Palmers, MN - a green cemetery.

https://www.cavallinfuneralhome.com/obituaries/mary-anne-bennett-kertzscher-birkey



October Adult Forum - 11:30 after worship

October 6th: Co-sponsored by the Northwoods Unitarian Universalist Fellowship - Gayle Nielsen and Larry Fisk will give a presentation on their summer 2024 trip to Nicaragua to celebrate the ouster of Somoza, and their trip as part of a delegation to observe the Venezuelan Presidential election.

October 27th: Understanding and Reacting to Depression: A local subject matter expert and Congregational member will help participants understand the diverse cultural, familial and developmental origins of the common experience of depression. Guidelines for how to respond to this experience using discernment and being non-judgmental will be offered.



UCC Fellowship

Women's Coffee

Saturday, October 12th @ 9:30 am



First Congregational Fellowship Hall

Marcia Ferris is hosting

Everyone is welcome - no reservations are required for either gathering.

Women's Luncheon

Thursday, October 31st @ 11:30 am

Baia Della

15115 Edgewood Dr. North, Baxter.

Kay Cox is hosting





Men's Lunch

Each Wednesday of the Month

Wings Café Brainerd Airport @

No Agenda - Join us!

UCC & TheShop Meal!

Meal cooking has been scheduled for the fourth Wednesday of each month and beginning October 23rd at 3:30-5:30 pm in the church kitchen and Fellowship Hall.



Save the dates: November 27, December-cancelled for Christmas, January 22, February 26, March 26, April 23, May 2.

For the last several years, UCC volunteers have helped prepare a meal with and for the youth at TheShop - Brainerd Baxter Youth Drop-in Center. A number of youth and the staff from TheShop come over to our kitchen and help prepare a delicious meal that is then brought back to TheShop for the hungry and appreciative teens there. Join us in connecting with local youth, offering them a unique opportunity to learn a new skill with friendly compassionate adults.



October Special Offering - The Shop

Sunday October 27th

This month we have an opportunity to help as we give our Fourth Sunday Special Offering to TheShop Brainerd Baxter Youth Center (BBYC). TheShop is a non-profit organization committed to

providing community support to all teenagers and young adults as they transition into independence and adulthood. We are a safe space where youthful energy is harnessed into creative energy by providing opportunities to explore potential, build lasting relationships, and establish personal connections. To donate, send a check with "TheShop" in the memo line to: First Congregational UCC, 415 Juniper St. Brainerd, MN 56401 or donate online using PayPal https://www.paypal.me/uccbrainerd and indicate "TheShop" in the Note.



7th Annual Halloween Extravaganza!

Thursday, October 31st 4:00 pm - 9:00 pm

You can help the church connect with our neighbors!

- Donate Candy and/or non-candy item There is a box located outside the sanctuary for donations of candy and non-candy items.
- Decorate Wednesday, October 30th 5:00 7:00 pm
- Volunteer on Halloween Night Thursday, October 31st
 - Make cider and final set up starting at 4:00 pm
 - Hand out candy, serve cider, general friendly help from 5:00 8:00 pm (or earlier if trick-or-treaters are scarce). Come for an hour or the entire night!
 - Help with clean-up. Take down and put away the decorations: 8:00-9:00 pm (or as soon as we're done. More helpers = shorter clean up time!

Costumes are strongly encouraged but not required. Please keep them kid-friendly.

Sign-up sheet in the Narthex starting Sunday, October 6th.

An Introduction to Meditation

Monday, October 28
6:30 pm to 8:00 pm
Upstairs Forum Room
First Congregational United Church of Christ
5th & Juniper, Brainerd

Even though this is being held at our church, it is not religious.

You need bring nothing but an open mind.

Discussion following meditation.

We will focus on stress reduction, relaxation, mindfulness, and inner peace.



Facilitated by Dan Hegstad Questions: dan@danhegstad.com freewill offering for building use



Everyone can meditate and benefit from meditation.
This is a simple and wonderful practice!



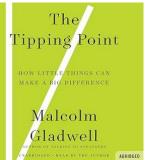
Welcome to our Facility

It is the policy and privilege of the First Congregational United Church of Christ (UCC) Brainerd, to share its beautiful church facilities for purposes that match the values of the church and its mission which is "to know and share God's love within us." We are an open church valuing the diversity of age, culture, gender identity, opinions.

physical and mental abilities, and sexual orientation.

To reserve a space for general use, ask for a "Request for Church Building Use" form and policy packet from the church office, administrative assistant Terri at 218-829-2528 or email uccbrainerd@gmail.com. Submit the request form to the administrative assistant.

For wedding or funeral use, contact the Pastor Leslie: pastorleslieucc@gmail.com



Friday Book Group

We meet each Friday morning at 10:30 am via zoom. Church Zoom link: https://tinyurl.com/uccbrainerdzoom

We are reading the book "Tipping Point" by Malcom Gladwell, about how trends start.

Contact Pat Scott for more information.

UCC Care Team

For anyone who wishes to join in making calls or visits, the Care Team meets every month on the first **Thursday at 10:00 am**. If you know of anyone who would enjoy a call from the care team, please contact one of our Care Team; *Barb Hoeft, Jack and Kay Kraywinkle, Pat Scott, Chris Yager, Deb Griffith, Joey Halvorson (text or email) and Pastor Leslie.*





Fall Garden Gleaning A Biblical (and environmentally) inspired activity

Gardeners and plant people bring in their "gleanings" to share. Fall is a great time to share apples, root crops, squash, pumpkins and daffodil bulbs, etc.

A table, poster and donation basket are in Narthex entrance. Enjoy the fruits of our labors!! All are welcome to help themselves – no charge! All monetary donations are given to the Food Shelf.

Historical note: Begun here circa 1988 when our church began Hunger Action outreach, Central America updates and global food connections.

H.U.G.S.

Hosts, Ushers, Greeters, Scripture-readers

Sunday morning greeters/ushers and coffee hosts play an important part in making our church a warm and welcoming place for all. Signup below for your first Sunday as the face of the church!



https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0E48A9A823A5FFC07-hugs/16034811

First Congregational Food Shelf Collection



Our church continues to collect non-perishable food items for the Salvation Army Food Shelf. Please consider bringing items and donating. There are two collection boxes: one in the parking lot entry hallway, the

other in the Narthex. **Thank you**, Brian Twamley and Stephanie Lee, for picking up and delivering the food to the Salvation Army.

You may also send a money donation to the church; First Congregational UCC 415 Juniper St. Brainerd, MN 56401. Or for your convenience use our Paypal account at: paypal.me/uccbrainerd Make sure to write in memo "Food Shelf".

The Columbarium & Memorial Garden First Congregational UCC, Brainerd

The Columbarium is 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!

The Memorial Garden is located on the south lawn of the church. The Garden provides a place for cremains of your loved one to be buried in the ground among natural plantings. The Garden fee includes the inscription of your loved one's name on a granite plaque that is mounted on the outside wall of the church.

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 and a packet of materials will be sent you 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.



Prayer Box in Memorial Garden

The Memorial Garden is located on the south lawn of the church. There is a prayer box where you may leave a request for the Pastor.

Thank you, Jack Kraywinkle, for your craftsmanship!



Church Leadership

Get Involved, Give Back, Grow Connections – Volunteer at Church! There are many other opportunities for you to share your talents!

Council & Committees needing fresh faces and leadership:

*Council Member-At-Large: Attend council meetings, act as a liaison for church members and council, help with nominations, spokesperson for historically underrepresented groups (HUGS).

*Christian Education *Music *Arts *Trustees Contact Mary Reardon - Moderator with your nominations

Council Meeting Minutes, September 19, 2024

In attendance: Rev. Steve Newcom, Lowell Johnson, Deb Griffith, Mary Reardon, Joy Persall, Rev. Leslie Moughty and Cynthia Janes

Lowell gave the Food for Thought. Approval of the August Council meeting minutes was postponed until October's meeting.

The Clerk's report stated that MaryAnne Bennett passed on August 16, 2024.

The financials were reviewed and there is a CD that will come due at the end of the week. In the past 6 months there was a significant unexpected increase to the church's obligations, an assessment from Brainerd for the road repair approximately \$17,500. Cynthia suggested that we ask the Foundation for the Assessment amount. Lowell moved and Steve second the motion. The motion passed unanimously.

During the reports section, Deb was concerned that due to deferred maintenance of the parsonage siding the trustees would be over budget. She was assured the repairs needed to be done or we would have further damage.

Steve arranged with fellow ministers to write articles for the "Clergy View" in Brainerd Dispatch. He also wondered if there could be a special offering for the "Brainerd Lakes Justice Table." Steve also submitted a proposal for a Grant of up to \$30,000 and that if received, 15% would go to FCUCC for administration.

Old business: we discussed that the Council's Leadership/Visioning Retreat would be held at Camp Confidence and lunch would be provided.

New Business: The Shop needs cash, they lost a grant and are working on getting another. A motion was made by Deb and seconded by Cynthia that we remove the Crisis Line from donation and replace it with The Shop; the motion passed unanimously. It was also discussed that WISE could have time during worship to share information with the congregation.

Next Regular Council Meeting: Thursday, October 17th 2024 @, 4:30 pm in-person and via Zoom tinyurl.com/uccbrainerdzoom

BRIDGE

PANIGHT SHELL

Volunteer for the Overnight Shelter

First Congregational UCC members and friends volunteer at the Bridge on 7th overnight shelter.

Our week to volunteer is October 27th -November 2nd



Volunteers help during the morning shift (6 am - 8:30 AM). Duties include helping to make beds up for the next night, vacuuming, possibly making lunches and helping to get all people out the door and on their way.

<u>Deb Griffith is our team organizer. If you did not receive an email from Deb to sign up, please</u> contact her to volunteer.

The Bridge on 7th Overnight Shelter is open to adults 18+ who are experiencing homelessness, are welcome to check in from 7 PM - 11 PM each night for a safe, warm place to sleep. Our staff will be happy to offer guests a hot cup of coffee and some snacks, as well



as toiletries and a change of clothes if needed. Check out time is 8 AM each day with no limit to how many nights you can stay.

This shelter is funded by individuals, churches, grant funders, and businesses in the community that see a need to help our neighbors who are unsheltered. We appreciate your support!



Upcoming Conference Retreats

Below is a brief highlight of the Fall event; you can find full details on the <u>Conference's website</u>.

To help facilitate a more comprehensive and secure registration process, the Conference has implanted a new registration system for overnight events in 2024. *Check out CampDoc!*



Fall 2024 Conference Youth Event

October 11–13: Osprey Wilds Environmental Learning Center

Brainerd Lakes Area Information

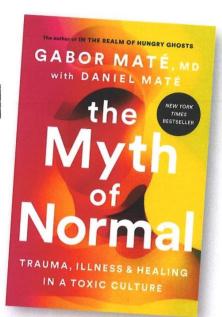
~ Opportunities to Know and Share God's Love ~

UCC Brainerd has a donation box in the Narthex



Myth Busting: Toward a Better World

In his book, The Myth of Normal:
Trauma, Illness & Healing in a Toxic Culture,
Gabor Maté demonstrates how "Our culture's skewed idea of normality is the single biggest impediment to fostering a healthier world."
This course, based on his book, is a series of participatory experiences designed to discover myths that debilitate us and truths that can free us to be better.



Session 1 – What Trauma Is and Does

This introductory session will explore how in the most health-obsessed society ever, all is not well.

Trauma is a foundational experience in modern societal and personal life.

Tuesday,
October 8

7-8:30pm

Session 2 - Trauma Prevention & Healing

This session will explore authenticity, agency, anger, and acceptance as tools for preventing and for healing trauma.

Five types of compassion that support healthy relationships will be considered.

Tuesday, October 29

7-8:30pm

Session 3 - Trauma: Conception to Birth

This session will ponder how the world in which children are conceived and born impacts well being when what is assumed to be "normal" is actually harmful.

Tuesday, November 19

7-8:30pm



Cost is \$10 for all 3 sessions!

Pre-registration is required

Scan the QR code to register

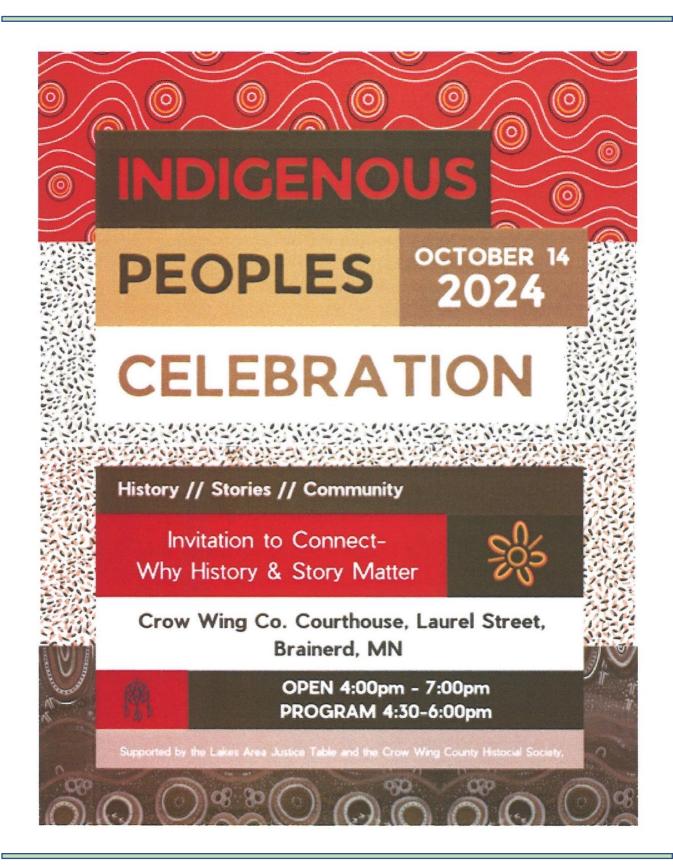
All sessions are held at

Forestview Middle School









October 2024 Calendar

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Y- Yes Meeting in person FB -Facebook Stream Online Z-our church Zoom	C- Cancelled N - No Meeting ? - No update TBD - To be determined		Office Hours 10am – 2pm Pastor Drop-in Hours 11:00 am – 1:00 pm	Office Hour 10am – 2pm Pastor Drop-in Hours 2:00 – 4:00 pm w/Daisy	Office Hours 10am – 2pm	
		1 2pm EA-Y 5:30pm OA -Y	11:45pm Men's 2 Grp @Wings Café-Y 1:30pm PRC Mtg-Y 4pm CM Mtg-Y 6-8pm Drum Circle-Y 7pm AA Common-Y	10am Care Team MtgY	10:30am Bk Grp- Z 6:30pm Movie Night-Y	1:45pm Mary Anne Bennett Memorial Service in Sanctuary & Luncheon follows in Fellowship Hall-Y
8:30am Bnrd Frnds-Y 10am Wrship & Communion-Y&FB Testimony Sunday 11am Fellowship-Y 11:30am Adult Forum-Y	7 7pm BACP/ BLUE- Z	8 10am Foundation Mtg-Z 2pm EA-Y 5:30pm OA -Y	9 10am Trustees-Y 11:45pm Men's Grp @Wings Café-Y 7pm AA Common-Y	4:30pm Exec. Team MtgY&Z	11 10:30am Bk Grp- Z	9:30am Women's Fellowship-Y
8:30am Bnrd Frnds-Y 13 10am Wrship -Y&FB Rev. Steve Newcome/Joy Persall preach/lead worship Testimony-Judy Whiteman 11:45am Fellowship-Y	14	15 2pm EA-Y 5:30pm OA -Y	11:45pm Men's 16 Grp @Wings Café-Y 7pm AA Common-Y	4:30pm Council Mtg- Y&Z 6:30pm Dist.7AA-Y	18 10:30am Bk Grp- Z	19
8:30am Bnrd Frnds-Y 10am Wrship -Y&FB Rev. Emily Goldthwaite preach Testimony Sunday 11am Fellowship-Y 1pm Girl Scout MtgY	21 Dept. Budget Proposals due to Admin Asst	22 2pm EA-Y 5:30pm OA -Y	11:45pm Men's 23 Grp @Wings Café-Y 3:30-5:30pm TheShop Cooking-Y 7pm AA Common-Y	24	25 10:30am Bk Grp- Z	26
8:30am Bnrd Frnds-Y 27 10am Sunday Wrship-Y&FB **Stewardship Pledge Sunday 11am Fellowship-Y **Special Offering TheShop ** Newsletter Deadline	6:30-8pm.Intro to Meditation-Y	29 2pm EA-Y 5:30pm OA -Y	30 11:45pm Men's Grp @Wings Café- Y	Halloween 31 11:30am Women's Luncheon @ Baia Della-Y 5pm Trick or Treat @ UCC Brainerd-Y 6:00pm NAMI Mtg-To Be Confirmed		Pastor Leslie out of the office from 10/8 through 10/21/24,