

**GRANITE FALLS
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
210 Ninth Avenue
Granite Falls MN 56241
Change Service Requested
THE ENCOUNTER
July Issue No. 7**



CHURCH LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

**PASTOR: REV. DAN MAIDEN
OFFICE ASSISTANT: KAREN SCHMIDT-DILL
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NEWSLETTER EDITORS: KAREN SCHMIDT-DILL, PASTOR DAN MAIDEN

CHURCH ADDRESS: 210 NINTH AVENUE, GRANITE FALLS, MN 56241

CHURCH E-MAIL ADDRESS: uccgf@mvtvwireless.com CHURCH PHONE: 320-564-2442

PASTOR DAN'S E-MAIL ADDRESS: revmaiden@msn.com

HOME PHONE: 320-379-1051 CELL PHONE: 941-932-0163

G.F PASTOR'S HOURS: 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 PM WEDNESDAY & FRIDAY & BY APPOINTMENT

OFFICE HOURS: 9:00 A.M. to 3:00 P.M.

**WED & FRI—GRANITE; MON. (optional);
TU & TH —MONTEVIDEO**

WEB SITE: www.granitefallsucc.org





Minnesota Conference

United Church of Christ

Diving Deeper,

A Pictorial Recap of the 2016 Conference Annual Meeting

Race, Economics and Faith



Taken from the June 15, 2016 issue of the COMMAntary www.uccmn.org

Stories of Faith

This story of Faith is going to be a mystery person. Can you guess who this person is? My only clue to you is that she is a she. She could be someone from the Granite Falls UCC or from First Congregational UCC. Let's see how good your powers of observation and friendliness are during July. Oh, clue #2. She is a member in good standing and well known to both congregations.

A first memory for this person is sitting on the back stoop eating an ice cream cone, the scoop of ice cream fell off and tears ensued. Luckily her brother, Nicky, came to her rescue and handed her his cone. Gosh, what a wonderful brother!

The oldest relative was Grandma, she was STRONG and the only grandparent that was living yet. Grandma lived in a large farmhouse with no indoor plumbing and cooked amazing food on the old wood stove.

Parents met through a mutual friend introducing them. Mom was in nurse's training and Dad was in the Army. They got married and Mom never finished nursing school. (Seems to me that scenario played out quite a few times around the nation.) Growing up with 5 siblings meant that they needed a four bedroom house and there was usually a dog or 2, cats, even a bird or fish that filled the house with noise and love. Now the challenge was that the family moved several times during her childhood, they moved twice in Iowa and again twice in Arizona.

"Holidays always were celebrated with LOTS of food! Grandma and Mom loved to cook, so did Dad. Mom and Dad always made each of us 6 children feel special and we had fun decorating and making cookies."

She met her spouse at a success education company. His best friend set them up. The wedding was a simple affair with a justice of the peace and a couple of friends were present. The newlyweds had to go back to work for a few hours after the wedding. Our bride picked out her dress, shoes, veil and earrings the night before and had a friend fix her hair for her.

Baby number 1 was born about 22 hours after those first contractions started. She went into the hospital a bit too early but had a CNM (a midwife) with them. It sounds like all the extra pushing and length of time was rather memorable!

School was fun, she developed a crush on Mr. Painter, the geometry teacher, until she realized he was a married man! Sister Theresa was the 5th and 6th grade teacher and was a favorite. They could always get her to tell stories about her childhood in Ireland! (I suspect they liked her accent as well plus if she was telling stories they weren't "learning" anything were they?) History, science, chemistry and biology were favorite subjects.

Friends were plentiful, but oh, was it difficult to move away and lose touch with those people. Girl Scouts was a good way to make/meet friends and get to go camping together. Modern technology has helped her to reconnect with many of those youthful friends through Facebook!

First paycheck was from babysitting and most likely went to buying candy or a record. The youthful first job was babysitting for neighbors and even for Mom's friend's children. There was a class held to teach young people first aide and how to work with kids that our church member even took. It was a serious responsibility taking care of other's children! And maybe not surprisingly, she says her favorite job has been being a mom! The hard times and times of doubt were awful, but it is pretty amazing to see how your own children have become responsible adults out in the world!

Some heroes were/are her own parents, her grandmother, and the in-laws who both served in the military. There are also heroes such as Maya Angelou, Mother Theresa, Michael J. Fox and those who work to make the world a better place to live in. Along somewhat the same vein (heroes & history) she was only 3-4 years old when President Kennedy was shot. Only vague memories of the event exist but does recall wondering why Mom and sisters were so sad and crying and she could not understand what they were trying to tell her.

Modern technology is amazing and it is difficult to imagine life without all of the new conveniences. Just in her life time there have been so many advances. "Who would have believed we can carry a computer in our pockets? The smart phones.)"

Family heritage-mother's family comes from Ireland, Scotland and England, while father's family hails from Czechoslovakia. (Czech Republic now) "We had lots of fun and I would say I really enjoy being with my family, being out-of- doors in nature, spending time at the ocean, nature. There was a swimming pool when

(STORIES OF FAITH, CONTINUED)

we lived in Phoenix, the mountains in Flagstaff, fun with neighbors in Des Moines, I was pretty lucky getting to experience so many places.”

Favorite songs, movies, books—'Ever After' would be the most watched movie, enough to know the dialogue almost completely by heart. She has a very eclectic taste for books, movies and TV shows. Anything from Downton Abbey to Walking Dead, but NOT horror movies.

Early church life memories include one having a little purse that had a few small books in it that went along to mass. At about age 6 or 7, she received a little hymnal so that she could follow along during worship.

She was invited by Lorine Hanson to attend church at First Congregational. Two sons were already part of their lives and it just seemed natural and like “home” being with this community. There were plays put on by the high school age youth that were always so much fun and the younger children were always favorites. She has been to Pilgrim Point Church Camp once as well as getting to go to St. Croix and that was wonderful! The church building itself has also changed a lot since she has been here, an addition, with the elevator, lobby and open staircase makes things seem so much more inviting and accessible, open.

Baptism occurred in Iowa as an infant so she doesn't really have any memory of that church experience. However attending a series of church classes with Kay and Annette Fernholz was amazing. Learning that the Creator is indefinable and more than her mind can comprehend actually seems to have brought her into a very close relationship with God.

She has been quite active with the church and its ministries. Sunday School superintendent, on Diaconate committee, led Summer Bible Camp, helped with Crop Hunger walk, the annual HOG ROAST, Fellowship, sewing projects as well as chaperoning a youth event group going to Sioux Falls. She was also a confirmation mentor many times. There are any number of people, some still here and some long gone that have made this church truly a “home.” Naming just a few would be Larry and Connie Pray, Dee Lundberg, Lorine Hanson, Florence Mills....

The most important thing that happened in choosing the UCC to be in covenant with is because of being invited! The message from Larry Pray and then the social justice focus of this congregation were really important factors for our mystery person in becoming a member. She notes that “we differ in that we are accepting of people wherever they are on their faith journey and exploration.”

“There have been several really great pastors here, one that did not seem to be a good fit at all and that seemed to bring things down. Financial challenges are really hard but it seems that we pull together to keep going. We do have a lot of good work in the community going on. Over the years membership has declined and there are also fewer young people in the community, however we have been learning to think about the change and move ahead to different worship ways,” she stated.

Ok, so who is our mystery person in the pew? You now know that she is a member for quite a few years of the Montevideo First Congregational UCC, that she was born about 1959-60. Has a strong love of nature, youth, and social justice. Grew up as a Catholic, had 5 brothers and sisters, moved around some as a youth.

*Written by our mystery guest, edited by Karen Schmidt-Dill
(Answer can be found on the church council page.)*

Don't Miss the

DEADLINE!

ENCOUNTER Newsletter deadline is always the third Monday of the month. Please get articles in to the church office assistant prior to that date. The newsletter is no longer timely. PLEASE! July 18, August 22 (exception), September 19



GRANITE FALLS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



July 2 Darrell Carter
 July 8 Karla Slettedahl
 July 10 Julia Kvam
 July 10 Bev Nordang
 July 11 Janelle Kompelien
 July 11 Kamdin Lynn Varpness
 July 12 Eric Soine
 July 16 Dick Anderson
 July 17 Hazel Carter
 July 17 Tom Bukowski
 July 17 Jacob Anderson
 July 18 Peggy Kvam
 July 23 Pat Putnam
 July 26 Alison Ator
 July 27 Karen Schmidt-Dill

Sunday	July 3	9:00am	Worship/Communion
Monday	July 4		INDEPENDENCE DAY
Wednesday	July 6	6:00pm	Joint Potluck/Worship at Wegdahl County Park
Sunday	July 10	9:00am	Worship
Sunday	July 10	12:45pm or so	Gathering/Swimming/Potluck at Poier's Lake Louie
Wednesday	July 13		NO Council Meeting
Sunday	July 17	9:00am	Worship/Noisy Offering
Monday	July 18		ENCOUNTER Articles Deadline
Sunday	July 24	9:00am	Worship
Sunday	July 24-30	11:30am	Dinner @ Your Door
Sunday	July 31	9:00am	Worship



July 2 Jeff & Sheila VanOverbeke
 July 11 Bill & Sue Krinke
 July 19 Helen & Gene Stukel

JULY RESPONSIBILITIES

	July 3	July 10	July 17	July 24	July 31
Usher	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter
Usher	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter
Fellowship	Karen Schmidt-Dill	Rich/Sue Rollins	Karen Schmidt-Dill	Bryan/Peggy Mooney	Stan/Janelle Kompelien
Fellowship					
Liturgist	Karen Schmidt-Dill	Terry VanDerPol	Sharon Anderson	Sue Selden	Helen Stukel
Clean Up	Dick/Sharon Anderson	Sue Selden		Steve/Vicke Zumhofe	Gail Rohlik
Clean Down	NA	NA	NA	NA	Gail Rohlik

Please have the church cleaned by the listed date.



The Pastor's Report on the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ, which was held at the College of St. Benedict in St. Joseph.

Perhaps the greatest surprise for me at the conference happened shortly after we entered the conference hall. Even from a distance, I immediately recognized two women who were rehearsing music in front of the stage, and even before I reached them, they called out, "Is that Dan Maiden?" And we were soon engulfed with hugs and introductions. They were friends of mine from New York City, and I had met them through a LGBT Chorus. Indeed, one of them was the Director. They had just moved to Minneapolis. From there on Paul and I became their groupies, as I still recalled the power of their music. (Of course, I shamelessly offered them an opportunity to spend time in the country, as well as an opportunity to share their gifts with you!)

Another blessing from the conference was an opportunity to meet directly with some of my colleagues. Over the past year we met regularly "online," but it was nice to actually sit down with each other and share a meal. Indeed, we discussed possible venues, such as a retreat, that we might deepen our relations with each other. (While I welcome the camaraderie of my Lutheran brothers and sisters, it's nice to have connections within our denomination.)

There was one surprise that I now embrace as a blessing. As some of you know, I had been nominated to serve as a candidate on the Committee on Ministry based upon my previous experience in the Presbytery of Tampa Bay. However, I had actually had been named as a "back-up" nominee! Admittedly, I'm not too disappointed. Indeed, I was wondering how I was going to get Dick Anderson to serve as my chauffeur for all those meetings!

There were two resolutions that were presented to the congregations of the conference. The first called upon the churches to stand in support of establishing a basic guaranteed income for all citizens of the United States. The benefits are described as insuring increased access to nutritious food, adequate shelter, clothing, and educational opportunities.

Some of the rationale can be found online: www.basicincomeaction.org/about_basic_income and <http://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2014/08/why-arent-reformiconc-pushing-a-guaranteed-basic-income/375600/>

The second resolution called upon local congregations to Covenant as *Immigrant Welcoming Congregations*. The resolution draws upon growing awareness of the displacement of whole communities throughout the world.

The motion reads, "Be it resolved that the Fifty-Fourth Annual Conference of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ calls on its members and congregations to become active 'Immigrant Welcoming Congregations and Communities;' and that it assist in this process by making available on the Conference website the following resources which include additional resources: *Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming and Immigrant Congregation – The Journey Is Made by Walking*.

As a member community of the United Church of Christ in the Minnesota Conference, I would be open to scheduling a time to discuss how these motions affect our church in our community. Please let me know if you are interested, as I would prefer no less than 5 participants for a discussion.

Peace be with you all.

Pastor Dan

(Continued from page 7, Resolution on Immigrant Welcoming)
FUNDING The funding for the implementation of the Resolution will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.
IMPLEMENTATION The Conference Minister, in consultation with appropriate ministries or other entities within the Minnesota Conference UCC will determine the implementing body. Upon request, the MN Conference Immigration Team will assist congregations in the implementation of this resolution.

Minnesota Conference Reflections as shared by Paul Ledford and written by Pastor Maiden

Admittedly, this report would usually have been written by a lay person, but no one had stepped forward to represent the congregation. At first it seemed odd to me, but then I realized that there have been many spouses who have filled the gap over the years, especially among those serving smaller congregations, filling in when no one was able from their congregation. Thanks Paul!

One of the key lessons that Paul referenced in his notes is familiar to most of us: we need to listen to one another. Or in his own words: "Listen to people without judgment." Indeed, I am honored when I see him engaged in conversations with our members – an indication of his commitment to this ministry and its people.

As an informational note, this resolution is not a position of the UCC but it is a CONVERSATION.

Resolution Calling on the Fifty-Fourth Conference of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ and its Congregations to Covenant as Immigrant Welcoming Congregations.

The name of the submitting body is the Minnesota Conference UCC Immigration Team, spokesperson, chair Diane Haines.

WHEREAS the International Association for Refugees has stated, "The world is in the midst of a long-term refugee crisis;" and
WHEREAS thousands of refugees and migrants come from throughout the world to the United States seeking safety, security, freedom, and opportunity; and
WHEREAS our immigrant brothers and sisters continue to suffer as they fear raids, deportation, and seeing their families torn apart; and
WHEREAS the Jewish and Christian traditions honor this text: "When an immigrant resides with you in your land, you shall not oppress the immigrant. The immigrant who resides with you shall be to you as the citizen among you; you shall love the immigrant as yourself, for you were immigrants in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:33-34, adapted from NRSV); and
WHEREAS Jesus says, "'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.' There is no other commandment greater than these." (Mark 12:31, NRSV); and
WHEREAS Jesus further says in Matthew 25 of those who will receive the kingdom, "When I was hungry, you gave me something to eat, and when I was thirsty, you gave me something to drink. When I was a stranger you welcomed me..." (Matthew 25:35 Contemporary English Version); and
WHEREAS migrants bring us as offerings their stories and experiences, dreams and hopes, energy and skills; and
WHEREAS our new neighbors experience difficulties adjusting to life in a new country, difficulties such as language barriers, culture shock, a sense of loss,

Another emphasis that he noted is that we need to be more involved in the community. However, Paul's notes could have two aspects: getting to know the members we don't know, as well as renewing and deepening the relationships we already have.

Paul also picked up on an abiding emphasis that we need to "listen to the hurts" and to be open and supportive of each other."

Paul's final concluding words were: "Welcome the love of God. Welcome everyone. The Song of the Church!"

While Paul is not likely to speak from the pulpit, he would certainly welcome your questions as someone sitting in the pews alongside him!

WELCOME!



**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

and isolation; and
WHEREAS the welcome and support immigrants receive helps in the building of safe communities and future prosperity; and
WHEREAS the United Church of Christ (UCC) declares "No matter who you are or where you are on life's journey, you are welcomed here;" and
WHEREAS the Twenty-ninth General Synod passed a compassionate immigration resolution that included encouraging "congregations to further engage in education work on immigration from a faith perspective, participating in border delegations and work toward making your congregation an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation;"
NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Fifty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ declares itself an "Immigrant Welcoming Conference" and that it encourages the development of policies dedicated to facilitating the respectful welcome and inclusion of all immigrants into Minnesota.
BE IT RESOLVED that the Fifty-fourth Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ calls on its members and congregations to become active "Immigrant Welcoming Congregations and Communities" and that it assist this process by making available on the Conference website the following resource which includes additional resources; "Becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Congregation - The Journey is Made by Walking," as well as any assistance requested of the MN Conference Immigration Team.
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that upon adoption of the Minnesota Conference at its Fifty-fourth Annual Meeting that other Conferences and settings of the United Church of Christ be invited to join as co-sponsors and that this resolution be forwarded to the Committee on Disposition of the United Church of Christ Board of Directors for consideration by delegates to the Thirty-first General Synod meeting in Baltimore, Maryland in 2017.

(Continued on page 6, below the pastor's page report)



Granite Falls United Church of Christ (Congregational) May Council Minutes May 11, 2016

7:30pm start with Terry leading devotions.

Present: Spencer Kvam, Sue Selden, Janie Ator, Terry VanDerPol, Peggy Kvam, Brian Mooney, Steve Zumhofe, Sharon Anderson.

Agenda:

Add to the agenda— Sunday's community dinner.

Approve as amended: Peggy/Sharon/U

Minutes:

Approve: Peggy K/Sue/U

Committee Reports:

Christian Ed— Nothing to add. We held the final pre-confirmation class.

Worship and Membership— Nothing to report

Bldg. and Maintenance— We need an electrician to replace ballasts on some of the lights. Downstairs sewer gas coming through. It comes and goes in the women's and men's bathrooms. We need to keep the traps full. We need to get the side of the building pressure washed. That needs to be a high priority. There is leakage around the exit sign on the lower north door.

Stewardship— Have not met.

Memorials and Bequests— Bid from Aus' for the carpet and cement work for front steps. Under \$500 max.

Joint Parish Council— Dan brought a list of what he wants to get started in the two churches. Shared with Council.

Wider Church Happenings— no report

Sue/Peggy/U

Treasurer's report:

Treasury is a little down for the month. We had some quarterly payment (insurance and annuities) that brought our expenses up. Bryan/Steve/U

Pastor's Report: Dan provided a written report to be shared.

Accept report: Peggy/Sharon/U

New Business:

1. Pack the Pews—September 18th— Would this be a good time for the puppeteer presentation?
2. What form needs to be fill out to admit Paul to membership? Is there a card to send to follow up? Sharon believes she knows where they are and will look after the Council meeting.
3. Clean up June 16th at 9:02 am

Old Business:

1. Leave the meatball money alone for now. See where we need it.
2. Memorial Day weekend Sunday Service at 11:00 at Wegdahl Park. Potluck picnic and burgers and brats on the grill.
3. Annual meeting coming up the second week of June. Dan is going. Paul wants to go. Is Paul going a conflict of interest? NO, no one else is stepping up. There are a lot of Dan's peers there and Paul should meet them. We can pay registration, meals, lodging on campus. Motion to have Paul as delegate and pay his expenses.

Sharon/Sue/U

4. Church Directory: Helen's going to check with Advocate Tribune to see about what their charge for publishing. People will submit their own pictures.
5. Dinner on Sunday, May 15th at Granite Falls Lutheran Church. They do not need us on Saturday. Some of us should come at 2:30 on Sunday to help set up. After church we will mix and assemble the turkey mix for the sandwiches. Entertainment starts at 4:30, with the meal at 5:00. Can we pay the bill at EconoMart out of Fellowship? Let's pay for all of it—including the bakery.

Sharon/Peggy/U

New Business:

We need to clean up the office storage room. Computer and printer stuff to Monte to recycle on the 23rd.

Peggy/Sue/U

Church Use Requests: none

Devotions for next month: Dan

Next Council meeting starts at 6:30 on June 8, 2016

Adjourn with the Lord's Prayer, 8:40 PM

Terry VanDerPol,

Story of Faith answer
Celeste Suter