

**GRANITE FALLS
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
210 Ninth Avenue
Granite Falls MN 56241
Change Service Requested
THE ENCOUNTER
December Issue No. 12**



CHURCH LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

PASTOR: REV. DAN MAIDEN

MODERATOR: SPENCER KVAM

OFFICE ASSISTANT: KAREN SCHMIDT-DILL TREASURER: JANIE ATOR

ORGANIST: JOAN LUNDELL

CHOIR DIRECTOR: JEFF IVERSON

NEWSLETTER EDITORS: KAREN SCHMIDT-DILL, PASTOR DAN MAIDEN, SUE SELDEN

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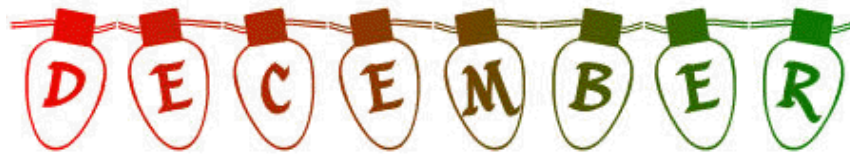
HOME PHONE: 320-379-1051 CELL PHONE: 941-932-0163

**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
TU & TH —MONTEVIDEO**

WEB SITE: www.granitefallsucc.org





DECEMBER RESPONSIBILITIES

	December 4	December 11	December 18	December 25	
Usher	Mike & Shelly Gaffaney	Mike & Shelly Gaffaney	Mike & Shelly Gaffaney	Mike & Shelly Gaffaney	
Usher	Steve & Vicke Zumhofe	Steve & Vicke Zumhofe	Steve & Vicke Zumhofe	Steve & Vicke Zumhofe	
Fellowship	Jeff & Sheila VanOverbeke	Rich & Sue Rollins	Karen Schmidt-Dill	Sue Selden	
Fellowship	Peggy & Bryan Mooney	Ruby Hieb	Stan & Nellie Kompelien	Dick & Sharon Anderson	
Liturgist	Terry VanDerPol	Karen Schmidt-Dill	Sharon Anderson	Sue Selden	
Clean Up	Bea Read	Pearl Lenzen	Babe & Sherri Gatchell	Gail Rohlik	
Clean Down	NA	NA	NA	Gail Rohlik	

Please have the church cleaned by the listed date.

CIRCLE OF STONES



WHEN: Thursday, **January 5**, 6pm

WHERE: Pearl Lenzen's home

WHO: Women of the church and friends

WHAT: Our annual **Christmas meal**

followed by Bible study-Bring a Bible, any translation.

We will be studying Ecclesiastes 3-4:8.

No meeting in December.

Dinner at Your Door Greetings

A special thank you to all of our drivers and deliverers during the week of November 27 to December 3.

Our faithful drivers were:
Sharon Anderson, Amanda and Brad Hall, Karen Schmidt-Dill, Pearl Lenzen, Meredith Lieser, Helen Stukel, Joel Beninga, John Butterbrodt.

Your next opportunity to drive will be the week of
January 8-15.

2016 ANNUAL MEETING

January 25, 2017 is the Annual Meeting date. A potluck is planned for 6 PM with the meeting to follow at 7 PM.

COMMITTEE REPORTS and **MINUTES** need to be in to the church office by **JANUARY 9.**

Thank you!

JANUARY ENCOUNTER

Deadline for articles for the January ENCOUNTER is
December 23.

mission MOMENTS

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

THE CHRISTMAS FUND 2016 FOR THE VETERANS OF THE CROSS AND THE EMERGENCY FUND

God's Love Colors Everything

For 115 years, the Christmas Fund for the Veterans of the Cross and the Emergency Fund has been a tangible expression of God's love. One of the four Special Mission Offerings of the United Church of Christ, the Christmas Fund provides UCC congregations and members an opportunity to reach out in loving compassion, providing assistance to those who have so faithfully served our Church and who now find themselves facing unexpected financial needs.

In 2015, UCC congregations and members generously contributed \$1,528,481 to the Offering. This enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide, on behalf of the whole Church, Pension Supplementation, Health Premium Supplementation, Emergency Grants, and Christmas "Thank You" Gift Checks to individuals and families in need.

On behalf of the hundreds of clergy and lay employees and their families whose lives were touched by your support of last year's Christmas Fund Offering, we offer our sincere thanks to you for your generosity and for the love that colors everything in God's name!



The United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance
presents this certificate with sincere thanksgiving to

United Church of Christ
Granite Falls, Minnesota



For its generous and faithful support of the 2015 Christmas Fund
with gifts totaling \$477

Brian R. Bodager
Brian R. Bodager
President and CEO
The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, Inc.

Krista L. Hetz
The Rev. Krista L. Hetz
Director, Ministerial Assistance
The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, Inc.

DECEMBER

GRANITE FALLS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST (Congregational)

Thurs-Sat	Dec. 1-Dec. 3	11:30am	Dinner at Your Door Driving
Thursday	Dec. 1	7:00pm	Pastor Parish Relations Committee
Sunday	Dec. 4	9:00am	Worship/Communion/Advent 2
Sunday	Dec. 4	10:30am	Budget Brunch and Discussion
Wednesday	Dec. 7		PEARL HARBOR DAY
Wednesday	Dec. 7	6:30pm	Choir Practice
Saturday	Dec. 10		HUMAN RIGHTS DAY
Sunday	Dec. 11	9:00am	Worship
Wednesday	Dec. 14	6:30pm	Choir Practice
Wednesday	Dec. 14	7:30pm	Council Meeting
Sunday	Dec. 18	9:00am	Worship/Noisy Offering
Wednesday	Dec. 21	5:30pm	Caroling/Party at Hazel & Darrell's
Saturday	Dec. 24	4:00pm	CHRISTMAS EVE Worship Service
Saturday	Dec. 24		FIRST NIGHT OF HANUKKAH
Sunday	Dec. 25	9:00am	CHRISTMAS DAY/Worship
Monday	Dec. 26		FIRST DAY OF KWANZAA
Wednesday	Dec. 28	6:30pm	Choir Practice
Saturday	Dec. 31		NEW YEAR'S EVE/WATCH NIGHT

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS

- Dec. 4** Isaiah 11:1-10; Psalm 72:1-7, 18-19;
Romans 15:4-13; Matthew 3:1-12
- Dec. 11** Isaiah 35:1-10; Psalm 146:5-10;
Matthew 11:2-11; Luke 1:47-55;
James 5:7-10
- Dec. 18** Isaiah 7:10-16; Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19;
Romans 1:1-7; Matthew 1:18-25
- Dec. 24** **CHRISTMAS EVE** Isaiah 62:6-12;
Psalm 97; Titus 3:4-7; Luke 2:1-20
- Dec. 25** **CHRISTMAS DAY** Isaiah 9:2-7;
Psalm 96; Titus 2:11-14; Luke 2:1-20
- Dec. 31** **NEW YEAR'S EVE** Ecclesiastes 3:1-13;
Psalm 8; Revelation 21:1-6a;
Matthew 25:31-49



DECEMBER BIRTHDAYS

- Dec. 5 Calvin Mooney
- Dec. 11 Lynn Holmstrom
- Dec. 15 Ethan Ator

DECEMBER ANNIVERSARIES

- Dec. 28 Mike & Shelly Gaffaney



WORSHIP SERVICE

Granite Falls UCC at 9 AM

Montevideo First Congregational UCC
CANCELLED

December 24
4:00 PM at
Granite Falls UCC

5:30 PM at
Montevideo First
Congregational

FAT TUESDAY
MEATBALL AND CAJUN
FUNDRAISER MEAL
FEBRUARY 28



**October 12, 2016 Approved meeting minutes
Granite Falls United Church
of Christ Church Council**

\$400.00 each to the Backpack,
Turnabout, Santa's Sleigh.
Janie/Peggy/U

Devotions: Bryan

Present: Spencer Kvam, Bryan Mooney, Peggy Kvam, Sharon Anderson, Terry VanderPol, Janie Ator, Steve Zumhofe. John Butterbrodt,

1. Agenda: Add to new business,
snowplowing
Peggy/Bryan/U
2. Approve minutes: Peggy/Janie/U
3. Committee Reports
Christian Education: Sunday School has started with the two pre-schoolers and will continue every other week. Samone and Peggy are meeting every week before choir.
Worship and Membership—has not met
Building and Maintenance—outdoor cleanup is scheduled a week from Saturday at 9:30 AM. Stumps are ground and out. Heat seems to be working.
Dehumidifiers are shut down for the season.
Stewardship—We are into the stewardship campaign
Memorials and bequests—Has not met
Joint Parish Council: Pastor's Contract is an item under new business
Wider Church Happenings: Minnesota Conference Minister Shari Prestemon and UCC General Minister and President John Doerhauer are with about 100 other faith leaders in the southern U.S. at the fence near Mexico protesting border policy.
Bryan/Sharon/U
4. Financial Report—looks good this month.
We came out ahead this month (I/E) and OCWM giving is strong.
Peggy/Bryan/U
5. Pastor's report: Pastor Dan went home sick this afternoon.
6. Meatball dinner proceeds. Bryan—some percent of it should go to the backpack program. (The backpack program is now a gift card to Almich's.)
6. Turnabout needs money at Christmas time for residents to buy Christmas gifts.

8. No movement on the Directory. This is probably a winter project.
 9. No movement on the sound system. Can we look for another vendor? Let's try a better quality of battery and see if it helps.
 10. Community Dinner at Granite Falls Lutheran. We are all set for helping with service and clean up.
 11. Church Facebook page – Terry will kill the extra pages and work with Worship and Membership to help set up new page and protocol.
 12. Update on Dan's contract – Joint Parish Council recommends extending it for 25 months.
Move to accept the recommendations.
Sharon/Peggy/ U
 13. New Business
We should be doing regular computer back up on Dan's and Karen's computers.
Motion to do the backup. Terry will find and buy the units.
Peggy/Sharon/U
- Thanksgiving services—Let's do a community service here on the evening before Thanksgiving.
- Fat Tuesday Meatball dinner—February 28th.
- Snowplowing
Eric Soine—\$35 per push. Clear for Sundays only unless we request more.

Devotions in November
Janie

8:45 Adjourn with the Lord's Prayer
Bryan/John/U

Terry VanderPol, Clerk

The Pastor's Quarter



Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

As I considered this article for this of Season of Advent, I am mindful of the story of Joseph and Mary. I can't think about this story without thinking about the ongoing dialogue of immigration. Needless to say, the immigration of peoples throughout history has sent forth thousands and thousands to provide food and security for their children. Indeed, my parents moved from rural Iowa to the Twin Cities where new opportunities were opening up. I was the only child to have been born in Minnesota, a "true native son, and the recipient good schools and health care."

Needless to say, the urge for new opportunities has sent our ancestors across this nation, displacing those who already lived in this bountiful land, and making it "theirs."

This conversation is carried further as we think about our natural resources that so many of us rely upon. Do we have the right to do with our land as we will, irrespective of those who live around you? Does it matter which chemicals we use to nourish better yards and gardens? Having no children, it would easy to say, "It's not my problem."

As communities of faith, do we have responsibility for our neighbors, whether we like them or not? Indeed, are we responsible to the other members of the congregation? It's not simply attending church; it's building bridges and being attentive to those who live next door. Sad to say, I just met one of my neighbors because of the last snowstorm. I was shoveling; he was getting his mail. I said "Hi." He said, "Hi" back."

Is it possible that we have lost the art of conversation?

As I worked on this article, I remembered one the stories of the Rabbi who taught my Jewish professor. He told the story of a renowned Rabbi. It was said that this Rabbi was seen coming, and so the whole community began to prepare for the Rabbi's visit. They cleaned the town from one side to the other. They prepared a feast. And then they waited. And waited. And they waited.

As they began to think about it, they wondered whether if one of the neighbors was the Rabbi in disguise. They quickly began to look at each other closely, and their behaviors began to change. They began to show more respect for one another. They reached out to those who had been dismissed as part of the community. In recognition of the holy other in themselves, they were never the same.

Perhaps this is our challenge in the new year. What if we approached each other as if its Christ before you? Might it be a policeman, or an editor, or a teacher, or retiree, or a farmer, or a sales clerk... How would this change your approach to the Advent Season this year?

May this Holy Season be filled with Hope, Joy, Peace, and Love for you and yours;

Pastor Dan