

**GRANITE FALLS
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
210 Ninth Avenue
Granite Falls MN 56241
Change Service Requested
THE ENCOUNTER
July 2018 Issue #7**

CHURCH LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

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PASTOR

CELL PHONE:

G.F. PASTOR'S HOURS:

OFFICE HOURS: 10:00 A.M. to 2:00 P.M.

Tuesday—Friday

WEB SITE: www.granitefallsucc.org

JULY

	July 1 2018	July 8, 2018	July 15, 2018	July 22, 2018	July 29, 2018
Usher	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter	Darrell Carter
Usher	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter	Hazel Carter
	Stan & Nellie		Spencer & Peggy	Ron & Marty	Dick & Sharon An-
Fellowship	Kompelien	Rob & Janie Ator	Kvam	Bergman	derson
Liturgist	Terry VanDerPol	Helen Stukel	Sharon Anderson	Sue Selden	Steve Zumhofe
		Keith & Deb Koer-		Rich & Sue Rol-	
Clean Up	Bea Read	lin	Helen Stukel	lins	Gail Rohlik
Clean Down	NA	NA	NA	NA	Gail Rohlik

Please have church cleaned by the listed date

Dear GFUCC Friends,

It is with heavy hearts that we are expressing our need to move on in our spiritual lives. We have been members since the 1990's and have truly enjoyed our church family and all that UCC had to offer to fulfill our religious needs as well as our children's growth and fulfillment. All of you helped shape them into the special adults that they have become. They speak highly of the congregation members when the topic arises.

Please remove us from our yearly commitments as members and accept this letter as an official transfer out of GFUCC. We will keep all of you in our thoughts and prayers as you transition to a permanent pastor. It has also been a pleasure providing our yard services in the past several years.

Respectfully,

Shelly Gaffaney
Mike & Shelly Gaffaney

JULY CALENDAR

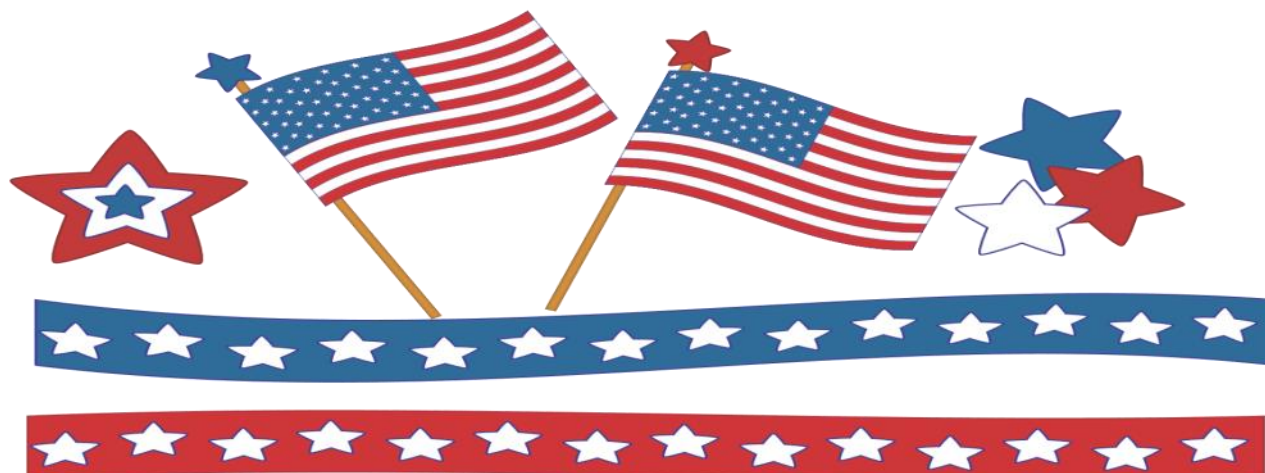
Sunday	July 1	9:00 am	Worship
	Pastor Robert Vedell		
Sunday	July 8	9:00 am	Worship
	Allen Gislason		
Sunday	July 15	9:00 am	Worship
	Karen Schmidt-Dill		
Sunday	July 22	9:00 am	Worship
	Allen Gislason		
Sunday	July 29	9:00 am	Worship
	Pastor Larry Olson		

JULY BIRTHDAYS

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

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

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



WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS

July	1	2 Samuel 1:1, 17-27, Psalm 30 2 Corinthians 8:7-15, Mark 5:21-43
July	8	2 Samuel 5:1-5, 9-10, Psalm 48 2 Corinthians 12:2-10, Mark 6:1-13
July	15	2 Samuel 6:1-5, 12b-19, Psalm 24 Ephesians 1:13-14, Mark 6:14-29
July	22	2 Samuel 7:1-14a, Psalm 89:20-37 Ephesians 2:11-22, Mark 6:30-34, 53-56
July	29	2 Samuel 11:1-15, Psalm 14, Ephesians 3:14-21, John 6:1-21

Whenever you can't reach anyone in the church office please call Sharon or Dick Anderson at 320-564-0964 or 320-212-2005. They will know who is on call to handle emergency situations.

LAURA'S TRAVELS

As some of you may know, I spent the past semester in Bulgaria studying abroad. It was the experience of a lifetime and I learned far more from traveling than I would have if I were just sitting in a classroom lecture, although I did learn a lot in my classes, too.

The first thing I get asked, both while I was in Bulgaria or when I talk about being there, is “Why Bulgaria?” Really, I wondered the same thing sometimes. It was a school that offered classes within my major of journalism, and it was listed as easy to be accepted into. I figured that was really all I needed. I could learn more about the country I could hardly point out on a map when I got there.

Well, I was lucky to learn that one other perk about Bulgaria and the Balkan region in general, is that it is MUCH less expensive than the United States and Western Europe. Because of the affordable daily lifestyle, I could afford to travel to seven other countries in the four months of my visit: Macedonia, Romania, Greece, Belgium, the Netherlands, France and Spain.

It was through these travels that I observed the different cultures that encompass each of these places and the people within them. Although there are many obvious differences in languages, food and clothing styles, many things are exactly the same as they are in America. I became closest with other exchange students from all over the world, and despite the ocean between us our entire lives, we had more things in common than I do with many people I have lived in the same region or town as my whole life.

Although I knew it before, studying abroad really taught me that people all around the world are so alike. We all go through the same emotions, have the same hopes and dreams and experience many of the same things throughout our lives. To me, the idea that someone who comes from a different place than me would be any different or less of a person than me is impossible to think. I wish more people understood that.

Since returning from Bulgaria, I don't feel as different as I was warned I might. I don't feel “superior” to people who haven't had a chance to travel to the place as I did, and I wasn't shocked that most things had stayed the same in Granite Falls and my American life while I was gone. Instead, I'm trying my hardest to use the experiences I had to help teach people about what life is like in the Balkans and how it is *very* different, but still familiar enough that I was welcomed and at home most of the time I was there.

I plan to continue traveling Europe and the rest of the world throughout my life, and to continue to learn and observe the similarities and differences between places and cultures as frequently and often as I am able. I had an amazing experience abroad and will hold the memories I made with me forever.