

July 2019

FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
319 DOWNTOWN PLAZA
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How to reach us....

Church Office
507-235-5382

Hours:
Tuesday—Friday
9:30-12:30 p.m.

E-mail
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Rev Cory Germain
Pastor

Ann Osborn
Administrative Assistant

Rev. Cory Germain

Office Hours:

Tuesday 9 :30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m.
Wednesday 12:30 p.m. through
evening meetings & activities
Friday 9:30 am—12:30 p.m.

Rev. Cory's phone: 507-399-8282

Worship Hours

Worship 9:30
Communion the first Sunday of
every month.

The Reverend's Ruminations



Greetings to you from sunny and warm Fort Jackson, SC! You may be thinking that central South Carolina is a strange place to vacation in late June, and you'd be right. It wouldn't have been my first choice to once again endure the oppressive early-summer humidity of the South, but sometimes Army training opportunities come along when I least expect them!?!

Such was the case at the beginning of June, when an email arrived in my inbox offering a few late-notice slots for Army Reserve or National Guard chaplains to attend a two-week class called the Operational Religious Support Leader Course. A quick check of my calendar showed no big events or appointments on the horizon, so after jumping through the requisite "hoops" to get enrolled, receive orders, and get a plane ticket, here I am at the Army's Chaplain Center and School, jotting some

Our nation will soon pause to celebrate its independence, draping ourselves in red, white, and blue to express patriotism in various ways on the Fourth of July. But let us not forget the freedom of religion that drew so many of our early immigrant ancestors to make this country what it is today. In many places around the world to this day, people are still not allowed to freely choose whom they will worship.

The writer of Psalms, though originally speaking to the nation of Israel, offers some words of wisdom for us to ponder during our patriotic gatherings, and indeed throughout the year:

"Happy is the nation whose God is the LORD, the people whom he has chosen as his heritage. The LORD looks down from heaven; he sees all humankind. From where he sits enthroned he watches all the inhabitants of the earth—he who fashions the hearts of them all, and observes all their deeds.

A king is not saved by his great army; a warrior is not delivered by his great strength. The war horse is a vain hope for victory, and by its great might it cannot save. Truly the eye of the LORD is on those who fear him, on those who hope in his steadfast love, to deliver their soul from death, and to keep them alive in famine.

Our soul waits for the LORD; he is our help and shield. Our heart is glad in him, because we trust in his holy name. Let your steadfast love, O LORD, be upon us, even as we hope in you." (Psalm 33:12-22 from the New Revised Standard Version)

I hope you will take some time during our national holiday (and every day, in fact) to pray for our country and its leaders as we continue to face very real challenges both here and abroad. God has blessed America—and by keeping our faith firmly planted in the one who creates, sustains, and redeems, we can ensure that our fair nation will continue to serve as a beacon of religious and personal freedom to the rest of the world for ages to come.

*Pro Deo et Patria (For God and Country),
Rev. Cory Germain*

Council Minutes for June 19, 2019
First Congregational Church UCC
Fairmont, MN 56031

Present – Catherine Johnson, Mary Don Kislingbury, David Adams, David Meschke, Jodi Kuhlens, Larry Thompson, Julie Elliott, Marilyn Forstrom

Absent – Deb Thate, Robbin Celander, Cory Hainey, Ellen Germain, Rev. Cory Germain

Visitor – Jim Bock

The meeting was opened by Moderator Johnson with devotion and prayer.

Motion was M/S/C (Ace/Larry) to approve the minutes of the May meeting.

Reports:

Treasurer's Report: Dave Meschke presented the report and noted that offerings are falling a bit behind budgeted amount but not too concerning yet. Motion was M/S/C (Larry/MaryDon) to receive report.

No Pastor's Report: Pastor is taking opportunity for an unanticipated 2 week Chaplaincy training. He will be gone one Sunday and Ellen Germain will do pulpit supply in his absence.

Christian Education: No report

Diaconate: No report

Facilities: Larry Thompson reported that money has been donated to fix the sidewalk drainage issue and replace the sidewalk. Motion was M/S/C (Julie/Marilyn) to proceed with the project. Larry shared that there is some tuck pointing and sealing of the exterior of the church that will need attention soon. Measuring has been done for new carpet in Christian Ed area. Jetter Clean will run camera down tile on south side of church to try to determine cause of water issues in Heritage Hall.

Finance: Discussed concern regarding diminishing size of Board.

Hospitality: No report

Mission: MaryDon reported Blessing Boxes for July are Heaven's Table Backpack Program & Summer Hunger. June Community meal will be prepared and served by East Chain 4-H and July by Council. Board inquired as to the possibility of having a bulletin board put up in place of unused window by copy/coffee room. Larry will take it to Facilities Board.

Worship Board: Ace reported plans are finalized for joint service in the park with St. John's on July 28th. Golf carts will be available for transporting participants.

Old Business: Began planning for serving July Community Meal. Catherine presented a revised Safe Church Policy. It was reviewed, discussed and tabled to gather further information.

New Business: Jim Bock shared his report on the Conference Annual Meeting. Discussion was held regarding difficulty Finance Board has been having achieving a quorum. Motion was M/S/C (Julie/MaryDon) to have the Finance Board and Council meeting jointly on the 3rd Wednesday of the month for the remainder of 2019, to be reviewed at end of year.

Meeting was adjourned

Respectfully Submitted, Marilyn Forstrom, Clerk

Memorials

Date	Memory/Honor of	Designation		From
19-May	Memory of Ron Kost		Starfish	David & Nancy Bishop
19-May	Memory of Doug Forstrom			Deb Heinrich
19-May	Memory of Ron Kost		Starfish	David & Sharon Miller
19-May	Kevin & Kelly Moller Anniversary			Margaret Weaver
19-May	Larry & Carolyn Thompson Anniversary			Margaret Weaver
19-May	Memory of Ron Kost		Starfish	Donald Weisgram
19-May	Memory of Ron Kost		Starfish	Stephen & Diane Weisgram
19-May	Memory of Ron Kost		Starfish	Memorials
16-Jun	Memory of Dick Kotewa		Music	Mildred Brodt
16-Jun	Memory of Dick Kotewa	Music		Janine Draper
16-Jun	Memory of Patrick John Murphy	Music		Janine Draper
16-Jun	Memory of Dick Kotewa	Capital		Dolores Gronewald
16-Jun	Memory of Lorraine Harper	Capital		Dolores Gronewald
16-Jun	Memory of Lorraine Harper			Donna & Dean Grotte
16-Jun	Memory of Dick Kotewa	Music		Gail Stremel
16-Jun	Memory of Dick Kotewa	Music		Sherry Voyles
16-Jun	John & Sherry Larson Anniversary			Margaret Weaver
16-Jun	Eric & Catherine Johnson Anniversary			Margaret Weaver

July & August Blessing Box – Backpack Program



Heaven's Table offers a backpack program for needy children in Martin County's public schools, including Martin County West, Truman, Fairmont and Granada-Huntley-East Chain. The food shelf bags food for children in kindergarten through sixth grade.



Children who come from families that meet the guidelines for free and reduced school lunches also meet the guidelines for the backpack program.



The program began in 2015. When it first started it served 136 students. By the end of the first year, that number increased to 256. In the 2017-18 school year, **Heaven's Table packed food for about 350 kids in Martin County each week.** The bags are distributed by the schools on Fridays before the children go home for the weekend. Teachers discreetly place the bags in the backpacks of participating students.



The bags include kid-friendly meals and snacks that are easy for kids to prepare over the weekend, including two main courses, two breakfast items, two drinks, and four to five snack items. The food shelf tries to include items that are as nutritionally-balanced as possible.



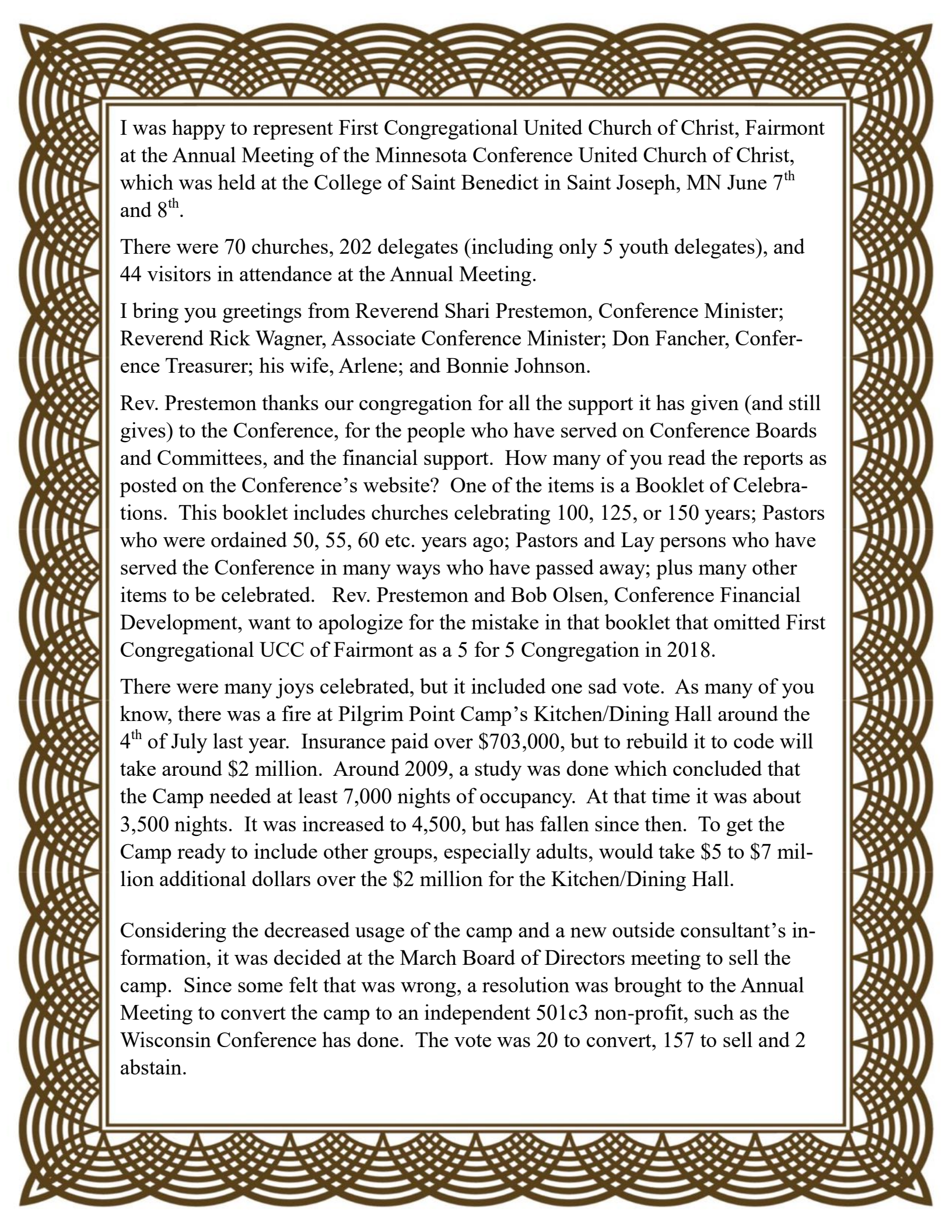
The average cost per bag is \$2.50. Heaven's Table estimates costs for 2018-19 will be around \$35,000. We estimate it costs \$100/child/year.

Our goal is to sponsor at least 5 kids for the year!

Our blessing box offering for July and August will go to help support this program. *Please prayerfully consider*



**Remember,
don't just
count your
blessings . . .
share them!**



I was happy to represent First Congregational United Church of Christ, Fairmont at the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference United Church of Christ, which was held at the College of Saint Benedict in Saint Joseph, MN June 7th and 8th.

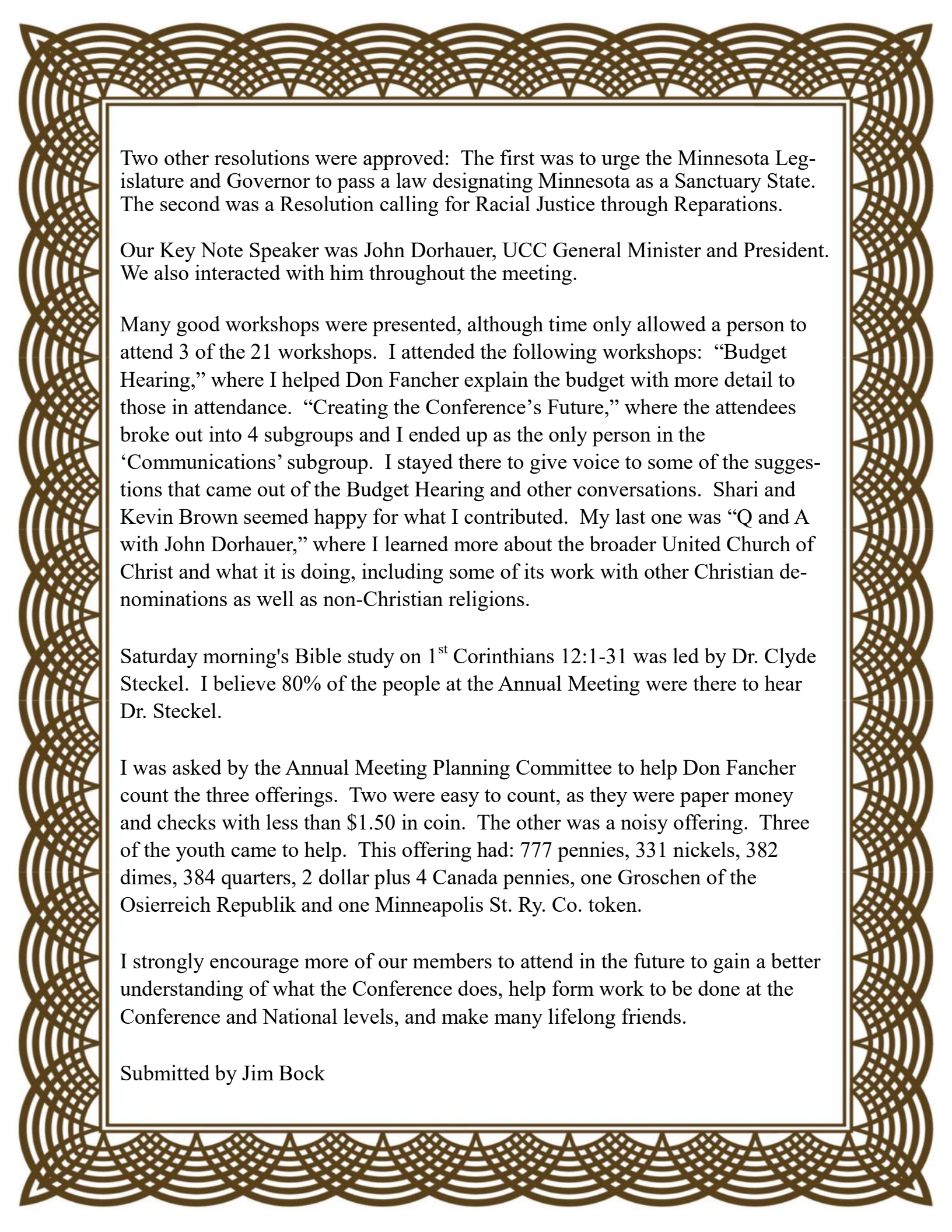
There were 70 churches, 202 delegates (including only 5 youth delegates), and 44 visitors in attendance at the Annual Meeting.

I bring you greetings from Reverend Shari Prestemon, Conference Minister; Reverend Rick Wagner, Associate Conference Minister; Don Fancher, Conference Treasurer; his wife, Arlene; and Bonnie Johnson.

Rev. Prestemon thanks our congregation for all the support it has given (and still gives) to the Conference, for the people who have served on Conference Boards and Committees, and the financial support. How many of you read the reports as posted on the Conference's website? One of the items is a Booklet of Celebrations. This booklet includes churches celebrating 100, 125, or 150 years; Pastors who were ordained 50, 55, 60 etc. years ago; Pastors and Lay persons who have served the Conference in many ways who have passed away; plus many other items to be celebrated. Rev. Prestemon and Bob Olsen, Conference Financial Development, want to apologize for the mistake in that booklet that omitted First Congregational UCC of Fairmont as a 5 for 5 Congregation in 2018.

There were many joys celebrated, but it included one sad vote. As many of you know, there was a fire at Pilgrim Point Camp's Kitchen/Dining Hall around the 4th of July last year. Insurance paid over \$703,000, but to rebuild it to code will take around \$2 million. Around 2009, a study was done which concluded that the Camp needed at least 7,000 nights of occupancy. At that time it was about 3,500 nights. It was increased to 4,500, but has fallen since then. To get the Camp ready to include other groups, especially adults, would take \$5 to \$7 million additional dollars over the \$2 million for the Kitchen/Dining Hall.

Considering the decreased usage of the camp and a new outside consultant's information, it was decided at the March Board of Directors meeting to sell the camp. Since some felt that was wrong, a resolution was brought to the Annual Meeting to convert the camp to an independent 501c3 non-profit, such as the Wisconsin Conference has done. The vote was 20 to convert, 157 to sell and 2 abstain.



Two other resolutions were approved: The first was to urge the Minnesota Legislature and Governor to pass a law designating Minnesota as a Sanctuary State. The second was a Resolution calling for Racial Justice through Reparations.

Our Key Note Speaker was John Dorhauer, UCC General Minister and President. We also interacted with him throughout the meeting.

Many good workshops were presented, although time only allowed a person to attend 3 of the 21 workshops. I attended the following workshops: “Budget Hearing,” where I helped Don Fancher explain the budget with more detail to those in attendance. “Creating the Conference’s Future,” where the attendees broke out into 4 subgroups and I ended up as the only person in the ‘Communications’ subgroup. I stayed there to give voice to some of the suggestions that came out of the Budget Hearing and other conversations. Shari and Kevin Brown seemed happy for what I contributed. My last one was “Q and A with John Dorhauer,” where I learned more about the broader United Church of Christ and what it is doing, including some of its work with other Christian denominations as well as non-Christian religions.

Saturday morning's Bible study on 1st Corinthians 12:1-31 was led by Dr. Clyde Steckel. I believe 80% of the people at the Annual Meeting were there to hear Dr. Steckel.

I was asked by the Annual Meeting Planning Committee to help Don Fancher count the three offerings. Two were easy to count, as they were paper money and checks with less than \$1.50 in coin. The other was a noisy offering. Three of the youth came to help. This offering had: 777 pennies, 331 nickels, 382 dimes, 384 quarters, 2 dollar plus 4 Canada pennies, one Groschen of the Osierreich Republik and one Minneapolis St. Ry. Co. token.

I strongly encourage more of our members to attend in the future to gain a better understanding of what the Conference does, help form work to be done at the Conference and National levels, and make many lifelong friends.

Submitted by Jim Bock



Special Thanks!

We would like to send a big thank you to everyone who helped with the pie social; whether it was donating ingredients, preparing pies and pork chops, or showing up to help (and eat!) on Saturday, everyone's contribution made it another successful church fundraiser!

Abby Namken

AUGUST NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

Friday, July 19th, 9:00 a.m.
This applies to calendar changes also. Thanks much!

Fareway and Hy-Vee Receipts

Report as of 16 June 2019

During the last four weeks, \$13,516.29 (9.01%) worth of Hy-Vee slips were turned in. After 14 weeks, we are at \$46,459.76 (30.97%) toward the 11th \$150,000 goal.

During the same four weeks, \$3,377.95 (2.25%) worth of Fareway slips were received. After 40 weeks, we are at \$40,705.11 (27.14%) toward our 3rd \$1,000 from Fareway Store.

Thanks for bring in all those slips. Slips have been going back many months since I have been telling you that we can use them back to March 1, 2011. During this five weeks, slips went back to March 2018, i.e. over a year. Keep those slips coming.



Reported by Jim Bock

Partners in Ministry

July 7

Diaconate: Carolyn Thompson
Head Usher: Everett Hanning
Reader: Joanne Eisenbarger
Greeters: Tranna Urban and Dolores Gronewald

July 14

Diaconate: Carolyn Thompson
Head Usher: Larry Thompson
Reader: Margo Weaver
Greeters: Christina and Paige Hainy

July 21

Diaconate: Carolyn Thompson
Head Usher: Brad Cone
Reader: Cathy Celander
Greeters: Don & Shelby Marks

July 28

Diaconate: Carolyn Thompson
Head Usher: Bill Cowing
Reader: Carolyn Thompson
Greeters: Sherry Larson and Mary Don Kinslingbury

Thank you to the many who support our unique **Starfish Fund** throughout the year. There were quite a few requests for help in late April and May, such that we could use a boost to this valuable fund in July in order to continue sharing God's love with those from our congregation and community who need it most. - Pastor Cory



Congo Friends

After moving to Fairmont in the summer of 1985, we were seeking a church home. Kevin's church history was Lutheran and Kelly's was Catholic. Kevin stepped through the hedges at church, and Duane Jordison came down the entry steps and greeted him. Rev. Lyle Norris was on sabbatical with Rev. Norm Lawton preaching that day. The people here were very friendly. Kevin went home and told Kelly "I have found our church!" When we next visited First Congregational UCC, we met Pastor Norris and liked him very much. We also met Mary Don Kislingbury, and she sealed the deal with Kelly. Our neighbors, Shirley and Dave Wallien, were members of this church, and were our introductory sponsors when we joined. Our children were baptized here, Jenna in 1986 and Dan in 1987. They were both confirmed here as well. In 2008, our first grandchild, Arianna, was baptized in our church also.

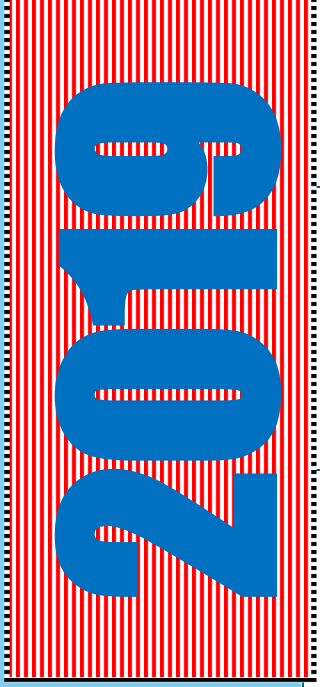
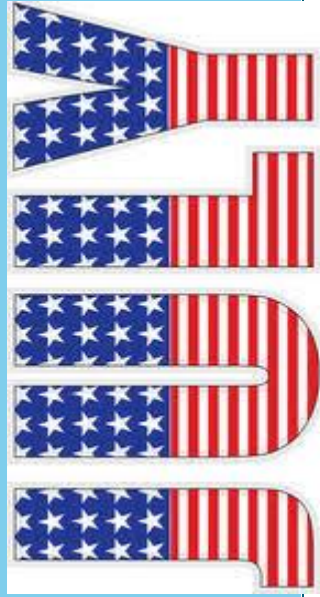
In 1988, Larry and Carolyn Thompson invited us to a Cursillo weekend. Ken and Sharon Howes were our sponsors. Doug and Marilyn Forstrom also attended with us. This was a very important spiritual event for both of us. Through the years we also enjoyed the fun and fellowship of Nomads and the annual New Year's Day gathering at the Shaffers. We were introduced to Pilgrim Point by Eric and Catherine Johnson. It was a wonderful week of family time being with others in one of God's most beautiful settings. Family Camp was our yearly vacation in August for many years, and wonderful friendships were formed from our time there.

Kevin's favorite activity through church as been the adult Sunday school time, and it started with Dr. Holstine's class. This time has taken him in many directions during his journey of "life in grace". All of those who attended those Sunday morning discussion groups have been great sounding boards. Kelly's favorite activity was singing in the choir. She is so very grateful they let her sing with the many amazingly talented singers and musicians over the years. The music deeply reaches her soul, and it brought her great joy to be part of the music ministry at our church. We have both served on several boards and council over the years as members and chairs and have learned so much through serving in those positions. We have many amazing leaders here!

We love this church and have been blessed by First Congregational United Church of Christ, Fairmont in our faith journey. The next part of the journey takes us to Mankato where we will be closer to all of our grandchildren. We will always cherish our time here and will miss you a lot. We will be sure to come back from time to time to fill our cups with the love, faith and friendship we have found here. We wish many blessings upon you all.

In Christ's love and friendship,

Kevin and Kelly Moller



Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1	2	3	4	5	6
7 9:30 Worship Communion	8 5:00-6:00 FCH Foundation	9 10:00 Lakeview Communion	10 5:00 Mission Brd 6:30 CE Board	11 7:00 Hospitality Bd 7:00 Facilities Brd	12	13
14 9:30 Worship Joint Service at St. John's UCC	15	16 10:00 Goldfinch Communion	17 7:30 Finance Board meets with Church Council	18	19 9:00 August Newsletter Submission Deadline	20
21 9:30 Worship	22 4:30-7:00 Parent To Parent	23	24	25 9:30 Bible Study	26	27
28 9:30 Worship Service in the Park Blessing Box Collection Backpack Program	29	30	31 5:30 Free Community Meal			

JULY BIRTHDAYS

July 1	Roger Lindell
July 3	Catherine Johnson
July 4	Judie Orr
July 9	Ken Howes
July 10	Julie Elliott
July 11	Sydney Hainy
July 12	Pat Rowan
July 14	Margo Weaver
July 15	Marilyn Forstrom Kevin Moller Emily Rose Cain
July 17	Haley Harder
July 18	Shelby Marks
July 19	Joy Rachuy
July 19	Abby Shoen
July 20	Kelly Moller
July 21	Alex Neitzel Sarah Wannarka
July 24	Nicholas Thate
July 25	Robbin Celander
July 26	Cheryl Ashland Dolores Gronewald
July 28	Whytnie Goerndt
July 30	Melissa Neitzel Asia Gilbertson
July 31	Courtney Grefe

JULY ANNIVERSARIES

July 6, 1963	Lyle & Charlene Norris	56 yrs
July 9, 2011	Jason & Amber Brummond	8 yrs
July 13, 1957	Roger & Marian Buchan	62yrs
July 14, 1990	Jon & Terry Riggs	29 yrs
July 17, 2004	Mark & Margo Becker	15 yrs
July 20, 2002	Tracy & Jessi Kotewa	17 yrs
July 21, 2001	Brad & Vonnie Cone	18 yrs
July 22, 1995	Lorin & Joy Pollock	24 yrs
July 22, 1985	Jeff & Nanci Skog	34 yrs
July 25, 2015	Tony & Jenna Smith	4 yrs
July 26, 2014	Matt & Brittany Goerndt	5 yrs
July 27, 1974	Mark & Rita Craven	45 yrs
July 30, 1983	Dave & Cindy Martens	36 yrs

