



CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ
Published Semi-Monthly
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Board of Shared Ministries to Be Established



*No matter who you are
or where you are
on life's journey,
you'll find a home here!*

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of Christ**
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Under the new CGUCC by-laws that were adopted at the Annual Meeting on December 3, 2007, the congregation has been given the responsibility of establishing a new Board of Shared Ministries. The Board will be responsible for

meeting quarterly each year to receive and review reports from the Shared Ministry Teams; to hear proposals for new ministry teams and approve those teams whose mission is consistent with that of CGUCC; to advise teams with regard to available resources; and to assign teams accordingly within the new operating structure.

The Board of Shared Ministries will be made up of elected leaders from the five main operating Teams of the church (Finance, Nurture & Education, Outreach/Mission, Property Maintenance & Administration, and Spirituality and Worship). Each of the Shared Ministry Teams within the church will be assigned to one of the five main operating Teams. For example, the Altar Team will reside under the Spirituality and Worship Team. All the Teams that make up a main operating Team will be responsible for selecting one (1) person to represent them on the Church Council.

The Church Council will thus be made up of the four Executive Team members (President, Past President, President Elect, and Secretary) and the five representatives of the main operating Teams. In order to officially establish this new structure, the Shared Ministry Teams need to consult with one another and come up with the five nominees they would like to elect to represent the main operating Teams.

In order to provide more clarification and information about the new operating structure, the Executive Team has called a **Special Meeting of the Shared Ministry Teams on Monday, January 14, 2008**, beginning at 7 p.m. All CGUCC members and friends who currently serve on one or more of the church's Shared Ministry Teams or who would like to serve on a Team are invited and encouraged to attend this meeting. Nominations for the representatives of the five main operating Teams will also be made at this meeting, so please come and let your voice be heard.

**Rev. Bryan Olson
Transitional Pastor**

Office Hours
Monday—Thursday
Beginning at 10:00 a.m.

Office Phone:
(651) 459-1501
Rev. Olson's e-mail:
olsonbw@hotmail.com

Name Tags!



Help us be a welcoming church!
Please wear your name tag
each Sunday morning.



PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

Ken and Nora Krahn; Ron and Joyce Fries; Don Fiedler; Denise Heschke Krech; Eileen Wilson; Don Hanson; Abi Christopherson; Alan Gausman; Ruth Rabe; Michelle Boudreau; Lynsay Nieman; Judy Bonnevier; Connie Meyer; Dara Moritz; Ruby Hanson; Bernice Kuehn; Steve Biscoe; JoAnn Nelson; Bill Bothun; Audrey Shirley; Greg Bonngard's grandmother Eleanor; Rev. Bryan Olson and our church during this time of transition.

PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!



Happy New Year! It is hard to believe, but with the simple turning of the clock, the year 2008 has been ushered in and the year 2007 placed in the annals of history. The turning of a New Year always provides an excellent opportunity to look back and reflect on the year-gone-by, but

also to look ahead with anticipation at the year-to-come.

The past year at Cottage Grove United Church of Christ has certainly been one of commemoration and celebration. Below are just a few of the amazing highlights of 2007:

The new addition to the church building was completed in January and dedicated in March.

Six young people became members of the church when they confirmed their baptism during a special service of worship in May.

Eleven youth and six adults spent a week serving as the hands and feet of Christ for people in need in Cincinnati, OH, in July.

A new Farmer's Market team was started and CGUCC hosted a community harvest festival every Thursday from July through October.

CGUCC hosted a Sportslife Camp in August that ministered to over 60 elementary school students in the local community.

In August, the congregation said goodbye and Godspeed to Rev. Gary Titusdahl as he accepted a call to serve the "OZ" churches in Southern Minnesota.

The Pastoral Search Team was formed in September and began its work of finding a new full-time pastor.

September marked the successful return of the CGUCC Turkey Dinner. CGUCC hosted the South Washington County CROP Walk in October, with the event raising funds of over \$13,000 for Church World Service and the local food shelves.

The CGUCC Chancel Choir performed a special cantata, "The Music of Christmas," in December.

Looking at the above list, it is not hard to see how the Holy Spirit has been working in and through the congregation over the past year. A new building brought about a new attitude at CGUCC and many people offered their gifts for ministry in a variety of ways to help build-up the Body of Christ.

This congregation, however, cannot live in the past. And 2007 is now the past. The upcoming year has its own celebrations and challenges ahead. Over the next year, the church will be calling a new full-time pastor, hiring a Music Director, implementing a new by-law structure, and preparing for its 150th Anniversary Celebration. Many important decisions will be made about the future make-up and ministry of CGUCC over the next twelve months. There is a lot on the table. The good news of Christmas is that God will be with us every step of the way, guiding our thoughts and actions. All we have to do is to remember to let God in and make God the center of everything we do in the church. If we can do that, then the work will be easy and the burden light.

Happy New Year! See you in church!
Peace,
Rev. Bryan



Something New!

If your birthday is in the church records, it will appear here. If yours does not appear, please let Becky in the office know when your birthday is and we will get it in next year.

January Birthdays

- 1 - Todd Hanson
- 3 - Arlean Kropelnicki
- 5 - Barb Meyer
Morgan Herrmann
- 6 - Linden Marty
- 7 - Cody Brown
Ruby Hanson
Bryan Welck
Melissa Wilkoske
- 8 - Brian Larson
- 9 - Bonnie Ries
Jacob Sorensen
- 10 - Michael Jeffrey
Paul Wohlers
- 12 - Robert Janicek
- 14 - Derek Harvieux
Alyssa Wilkinson
- 15 - Mark Marty
- 16 - Wally Fritze
- 18 - Loretta Gorgus
- 19 - Wayne Lindberg
Becky Mindrum
Taylor Stensgaard
- 21 - Doris Fiedler
- 22 - Bea Sauve
- 23 - Calle Fritze
Bonnie Power
- 25 - Richard Nieman
- 26 - Hunter Hakkila
Cadan Kropelnicke
Austin Murr
- 27 - Lana Meyer
Gary Thyren
- 28 - Hailee Marty
- 29 - Mikayla Hanson
Kathy Trout
- 31 - Ruth Radke



Y.A.H.O.O.

(Youth Aspiring to Help Out Others)

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cguccyouth>

Y.A.H.O.O.s is the Youth Ministry program of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ in Cottage Grove, MN.

As Y.A.H.O.O.s, we work to serve Christ by using our spiritual gifts for the benefit of our church, our community, and our world.

All youth grades 7 through 12 are invited to participate.

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/cguccyouth>

YOUTH Events Calendar

January 20-21—Y.A.H.O.O. Lock-in

January 26—Middle School Youth Gathering

February 15-17—Winter Conference Youth Event

Y.A.H.O.O. Overnight Lock-in

The Annual Y.A.H.O.O. Winter Lock-in will be held on **January 20-21, 2008** at CGUCC. Mark your calendars today! (Note that there is no school on Monday, January 21st due to the Martin Luther King, Jr. holiday) We will spend the night hanging out with friends, playing games, snacking, and watching movies. Come and be part of the fun! All youth in grades 7-12 are invited to attend. Add to the fun by inviting your friends. All are welcome. Please **RSVP** for this event with Rev. Bryan by **January 13, 2008**. There are sign-up sheets on the Welcome Table in the Gathering Room as well as in the youth lounge. Sign up today!!!



Confirmation

Confirmation 9 students and mentors will gather for their third class session on **Saturday, January 5, 2008**, from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. The session is entitled, “**Values and the Christian Life**” – An exploration of how we develop our individual value system through the examination of personal, societal, and Christian values.

Confirmation 8 students will resume meeting on Wednesday evenings from 6-8 p.m. beginning January 2.



Middle School Youth Gathering

All Middle School youth in grades 6-8 are invited to participate in a daylong retreat (iFaith.come) at Peace United Church of Christ in Rochester, MN on Saturday, January 26, 2008. This event will be filled with food, fun, fellowship, and a whole lot of music. UCC musician Bryan Sirchio, along with youth drumming group, Sheltered Reality, will lead the youth in an exploration of real faith for real life!

A flyer and registration form for this event was mailed to all CGUCC Middle School youth last week. Please complete the registration form and return it to Rev. Bryan by January 1, 2008. Registrations are limited, so please reserve your spot today! Transportation and food will be provided. The cost of the event is \$5 plus a canned food donation for the local food shelf in Rochester.

Youth or parents, please contact Rev. Bryan if you have any questions about this event. Rev. Bryan can be reached via e-mail at olsonbw@hotmail.com or by telephone at 651-459-1501.



Winter CYE

Mark your calendars! The Winter Conference Youth Event will be held **February 15-17, 2007** in Hopkins, MN. Registration forms for this event will be available soon. Scholarships are available for this event! Please see Bryan Olson for more details.



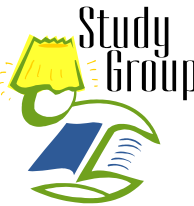
Bible Challenge Continues

It's not too late to start the One Year Bible Challenge. Copies of the full-year reading plan are available on the Welcome Table in the Gathering Room, while the weekly study guide questions are posted on the church web site www.cgucc.org. The third Bible Challenge small group discussion session will take place on Sunday, December 30 following worship from 11:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. Come and join us as we walk through the Holy Scriptures together.



New Adult Study

Looking to engage your brain before worship on Sundays? Then join the Adult Sunday school class. The Adult Sunday school class will resume on January 20, 2008, at 9 a.m. to begin a six-week study of the book, "Why Men Hate Going to Church," by David Murrow. Murrow's book examines the unhealthy decline in male participation in mainline churches and how to reverse that trend. Please RSVP for the class by Sunday, January 13th. To RSVP, please sign-up on the sheet in the Gathering Room or e-mail Rev. Bryan at olsonbw@hotmail.com. Come and join the discussion! New members are always welcome.



Office Closings During the Holidays

The church office will be closed December 31, and January 1—New Year's Eve and New Year's Day. Please contact Rev. Bryan Olson or Becky Graff, Administrative Assistant, as needed during this time. They may be reached by e-mail or telephone.



Thank You

When I walked into church on December 9th I was met with shouts of "It's a miracle!" I very humbly raise a big thank you to all of you who have kept me in your prayers these many months. We have been blessed with many delicious home cooked meals (Ron sends his thanks too!), cards, support, and all your healing prayers and words as I've gone from severe pain to being pushed in a transport chair to now being able to stand and walk again with hardly any pain. A big thank you goes out to all my friends at CGUCC for all you have done to help me get back on my feet!



Thanks , Judy Bonnevier.

Golden Agers Meet and Greet

The South Saint Paul Clark Memorial UCC Golden Agers invite you to a "Meet and Greet" on Wednesday, January 9, 11:30 a.m.—1:00 p.m. They would like to meet and socialize with retired members of surrounding UCC congregations, and join in discussion about how members can cross church barriers and be in ministry together. Lunch will be provided. Rev. Bryan is planning to attend this event. Please **RSVP** with him by **Friday, January 4, 2008**, if you are interested in attending and carpooling to this event.



Thank You

Thank you to all the members of Cottage Grove U.C.C. for the generous Christmas gift you gave us this year. We are overwhelmed by your kindness. It has truly been a blessing to minister and serve with you in this community of faith. We look forward to continuing that ministry into 2008! Thank you again for the wonderful gift. It is truly appreciated. Merry Christmas and blessings to you all!



Peace,

Rev. Bryan and Emily Olson

Key Found

About a month ago a key was found in the Sanctuary and brought to my office. It is a single key on a simple key chain. If you are missing your key, please call me in the office and tell me what it looks like, and you may have it back.



Becky Graff

Cross Connection

A Periodical Newsletter of
**Cottage Grove United
Church of Christ**
Published on the 1st and 15th
of every month
Edited by Becky Graff

**Back issues available on
our Church web site at
www.cgucc.org**

Deadline	Issue Date
January 10	January 15
January 25	February 1
February 11	February 15

Submit articles via e-mail at cgucc@usfamily.net or drop them off at the office. Thanks for all the information you submit to share with the congregation! Keep it coming!

Becky Graff, Editor

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If you would rather not receive this news
letter, please call or send an e-mail, and we
will take you off our mailing list. Thanks!

STOP!!

Many Thanks for Special Christmas Season

So many people worked together to make the Christmas events at CGUCC so very wonderful this year.

- Thanks to Emily Olson for the music of the Children's Christmas Pageant, the Chancel Choir's "The Music of Christmas," Christmas Eve and Christmas Day special music, and the gift of music that you share with this congregation in so many ways.*
- Thanks to the Chancel Choir and JC Rock for beautiful music of the season.*
- Thanks to Danyll Mills and the Sunday School teachers and parents for "The Christmas Gift," and for blessing our children with loving care and instruction year round.*
- Thanks to the ushers and the altar team for extra efforts during the Advent season.*
- Thanks to the Decorating and Design Team for the festive decorations.*
- Thanks to the Women's Fellowship for sponsoring special events and fundraisers.*
- Thanks to the snowplow team who kept sidewalks and parking areas clear of snow.*
- Thanks to John Greenwell and Bud Gross who take the pictures of special events that we all enjoy seeing.*
- Thanks to those who help in the office to get newsletters and bulletins prepared and out to all of us.*
- And many warmest thank yous to our Rev. Bryan Olson for leading us through a season of waiting and watching, then welcoming the birth of our Savior.*

