



# CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ  
Published Semi-Monthly  
November 1, 2008



## 150 Years and Going Strong



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

### Inside this Issue:

- Bryan Sirchio Concert ..... 1**
- Good News.....2**
- All Saints' Day..... 3**
- Care Packages..... 4**
- Calendar ..... Insert**
- Photo Gallery ..... Insert**
- Photo Gallery ..... 5**
- News of the Congregation. 6**
- Many Thanks..... 7**
- Red Cross Blood Drive ..... 8**

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## BRYAN SIRCHIO



## in CONCERT at CGUCC

U.C.C. singer/songwriter, Bryan Sirchio, will play a live concert at Cottage Grove United Church of Christ on **Sunday, November 23, 2008**, beginning at **6 p.m.** The concert is **FREE** and **OPEN TO ALL!** A goodwill donation will be taken the night of the concert to support Bryan's ministry.

"Bryan's music has inspired my ministry since I was a youth growing up in Wisconsin," said Rev. Bryan Olson. "He has a unique ability to sing God's Word into your heart and make it come alive for people of all ages, tongues, and races."

To hear a sampling of Bryan's music, go to his new web site, [www.bryansirchio.com](http://www.bryansirchio.com), and listen for free. For as the web site states, "If you've been searching for a Christian singer/songwriter with a keen intellect and a great sense of humor... who sings about personal faith, social justice, honoring the earth, and compassion for the poor... who writes songs for kids, teens, and adults that cause people to reflect deeply upon the choices they make and that sometimes even change the course of people's lives...who is committed to using inclusive lyrics, a progressive world-view, and theology that reflects the best of 'mainline' Protestantism, the 'Emergent Church' movement, and the Social Justice teachings of the Roman Catholic tradition... then you've got to check out Bryan Sirchio's music."

So bring your family and friends to CGUCC on Sunday, November 23<sup>rd</sup>, for an evening of faith-filled music, fellowship, and fun with Bryan Sirchio! To RSVP for the concert, please contact Rev. Bryan or sign the sheet in the Gathering Room at church.



## 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**



### PRAY! PRAY! PRAY!

Karen Banaszewski; Sue Brown and family; Daniel Bies; GeorgAnn Biscoe and family; Bill and Isabel Board; Bill Bothun; Beth Davies; Bob Fox; Ron and Joyce Fries; Russ Gausman; Don Hanson; Delores Janke; Sandy Rabe; Emily, Chris, and Joel Spicer; families facing unemployment issues; the Search Team, Rev. Bryan Olson, and our church during this time of transition.

Family of Jim Auers who died recently (Karen Banaszewski's friend); Tom Avenriep (GeorgAnn & Steve Biscoe's friend); Jason Biscoe (Joyce & Jerry Biscoe's son); Alma Buechler (former pastor's wife); Abi Christopherson (Elaine Mitchell's friend); Alex (Dorothy Crampton's grandson, who is also Deb Tilson's son); Alan Gausman (Russ Gausman's brother); Ken & Nora Krahn (missionaries); Denise Heschke Krech (Marilyn's Heschke's daughter); Steve and Eboné Koerselman family; Molly Livingston (Eboné Koerselman's grandmother); Margie Mattison (Farmers' Market vendor); Mary Schmidt (Karen Schmidt's mother-in-law); Ann Schmitt (Sue Brown's cousin) and her 5 small children, Ann's husband Troy Schmitt died recently; Agnes Thyren (Gary Thyren's mother); Beth Vinge (Bill & Arlene Kropelnicki's daughter); Midge Youngquist's grandmother; our soldiers around the world; farmers in Minnesota and Wisconsin.



Over the past month I have been doing a lot of reading about church revitalization. As you might imagine, there are many different strategies that mainline Protestant churches are using these days to try and attract new members. In the midst of all these new schemes and tactics, however, a simple truth remains when it comes to doing evangelism well in the local church... testify and invite!

Laurene Beth Bowers, in her book entitled, "*Designing Contemporary Congregations*," reminds us just how important testimony and invitation are to the work of evangelism and church growth. Bowers, a pastor at First Congregational Church in Randolph, Massachusetts, argues that in order to distinguish the church from other social organizations, we must lift up its unique and defining characteristics in conversations with our friends and neighbors. She says that as Christians we must be willing to talk about our faith and share with others where and how we have experienced God working in our lives. It is that testimony that will attract others to seek out their own "holy interactions" with the God we serve and worship in Christ.

Along with testifying to our faith, however, Bowers believes we must also be comfortable with invitation. She upholds the notion that the best way to get people into the church is to invite them to experience it for themselves. She says the most likely reason why people begin attending a church these days is because someone from inside the church witnesses to a defining moment of divine intervention in their own lives and they want a similar experience.

Bowers tells a story about a woman she met at a local high school band concert who, upon learning that Bowers was new to town, immediately invited her to come to worship with her. When Bowers asked the woman why she invited her to visit her church, she replied by saying, "Because I know it's hard to meet people in this town. It's my job as a Christian to make sure that no one feels lonely in a new community." Bowers' example demonstrates that when we are confident in our ministry and mission, talking about faith becomes easier and our invitations become more natural.

Bowers believes, and I agree, that inviting people to worship is much like recommending a good restaurant to a friend because, if we like what we find inside, whether it be a church or a café, we are going to want to share that good news with others. Ultimately, Bowers reminds us that if we want our church to grow, we need to let others know why we follow Christ and then invite them along on the journey. I pray that each and every one of us is ready to do that work!

See you in worship (hopefully with a friend or two)!!!

Peace and blessings,

Rev. Bryan

### Sermons on Line

Rev. Bryan Olson's series of sermons on the Ten Commandments are now on-line through a link on the church web page. They are media files and require a media reader to be able to download them. Check it out on the home page—click on "Rev. Olson's Sermons."

### 10 Commandments Sermon Series



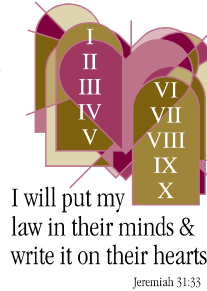
## All Saints' Observance

On Sunday, November 2, in worship we will observe All Saints' Day, the day when the Christian church remembers all those who have gone before us in the faith. There will be a special time during Worship when you will be invited to bring forward a small item, a poem or a prayer of remembrance to place on the altar to honor the saints in your life.



## Sermon Series Continues

Our extensive study of the Ten Commandments during worship continues through Sunday, November 9<sup>th</sup>. Rev. Bryan has examined the first two commandments (*No Other Gods, No Idols*) in his sermon, "American Idols"; the Commandments *Do Not Misuse God's Name* and *Do Not Bear False Witness* in his sermon "Gossip: The Anti-Gospel"; the Commandment *Remember the Sabbath and Keep It Holy* in his sermon "Who has time for Sabbath?"



Upcoming sermon titles and topics will include:

November 2 – "Learning from Cain's Collapse"  
(*Commandments: Honor your parents, No murder*)

November 9 – "Human Hearts Can Be Broken"  
(*Commandments: No stealing, No adultery, No coveting*)

## Get Out and Vote Next Tuesday

As citizens of the United States of America, we have a right and a responsibility to vote for those we wish to lead us in our communities, states, and nation. Please exercise your right to vote in the election on Tuesday. For some dramatic background, rent the movie "*Iron Jawed Angels*" to learn what sacrifice was made by women young and old to win the right for women to vote—and it was only 1920 when we were given that right! Be a responsible citizen. GET OUT AND VOTE!



Becky Graff, Editor

## Church Renewal Event

Is our church ready to be renewed? That is the question Rev. Paul B. Nickerson will address with members of the Minnesota Conference UCC during a half-day event on **Wednesday, November 5, 2008**, at **Mayflower Community Congregational Church UCC** in Minneapolis.

Rev. Nickerson has served local UCC churches in Connecticut and Massachusetts and has spent 14 years consulting with congregations about renewal, vitality, and growth. He is currently the Associate Conference Minister for Evangelism and Church Vitality in the Massachusetts Conference UCC.

Over the next several years Paul will be working with the Minnesota Conference, helping us to build an indigenous Conference system of church vitality and new church starts that becomes the DNA of the Conference, enabling our churches to go deeper in faith and to reach out in creative new ways.

The event is free and open to all. It will begin at 12 p.m. and go until 4 p.m. with beverages and light snacks provided. Rev. Bryan will be attending this event and would enjoy having other representatives from CGUCC attend with him to learn new ways to increase vitality in our local church. If you would like to attend this event with Rev. Bryan, please contact him by **October 31, 2008**.



## Coming Up in Worship

### Sunday, November 2

#### All Saints' Day

9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
9:00 a.m. Adult Education  
10:10 a.m. Announcements  
10:15 a.m. Worship  
11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship

### Sunday, November 9

9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
9:00 a.m. Adult Education  
10:10 a.m. Announcements  
10:15 a.m. Worship  
11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship

### Sunday, November 16

9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
10:10 a.m. Announcements  
10:15 a.m. Worship  
11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship

### Sunday, November 23

9:00 a.m. Sunday School  
10:10 a.m. Announcements  
10:15 a.m. Worship  
11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship  
1:00 p.m. Eagle Scout Ceremony  
6:00 p.m. Bryan Sirchio Concert



# Y.A.H.O.O.

*(Youth Aspiring to Help Out Others)*

**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/cquccyouth>

## YOUTH Events Calendar

November 23, Bryan Sirchio Concert

## Care Packages for College Students

All Y.A.H.O.O. youth are invited to come and help assemble care packages to send to our college students on **Sunday, November 2nd**, beginning at **6 p.m.** This is a fun ministry we do to let our college-age members know we are thinking about them and praying for them while they are away from home. Also, come for pizza and pop as we share a meal together!!!

6:00 p.m. - Dinner

6:30 p.m. - Assemble Care Packages

(Note: Confirmands earn time for community service by helping with this project)



## Confirmation

Confirmation students and mentors will gather for their second class session on **Saturday, November 1<sup>st</sup>** from 9 a.m. – 12 p.m. The session is entitled, “**What is the UCC?**” – An exploration of the past, present, and future of the United Church of Christ as a denomination, and Cottage Grove U.C.C. as a local congregation.



## Planning a Holiday Party?

Looking for beautiful holiday music, or delicious food for your family gathering? Contact Emily Olson--she is happy to offer either piano background music or special event catering during November and December. Reasonable rates and professional service--contact Emily at 651-353-3816 or [edholson@gmail.com](mailto:edholson@gmail.com). Happy Holidays!



## Farmers' Market Wrap Up

This was a fantastic year for the second Farmers' Market, held in our church parking lot every Thursday afternoon from mid-June to mid-October. Hundreds of shoppers came to our church to buy locally grown, fresh produce. Dozens of vendors took the opportunity to sell their products to their neighbors. So many members and friends baked, cooked, and canned goods to bring for the amazingly successful weekly bake sale. We grilled hot dogs and brats, and scooped ice cream to satisfy the crowds. And as a result, we donated a water buffalo again this year to Heifer International, and put \$7100 into the Capital Campaign fund. The Farmers' Market Team continues to grow and each member works so hard at their own special tasks; thanks, Team! Many others come to set up, clean up, sell goodies, and help out so in many ways. You are too numerous to mention each by name, but we thank you all! To show our appreciation, the Farmers' Market Team will serve coffee and treats after worship on Sunday, November 9.



With thanksgiving,  
Becky Graff, Farmers' Market Team

# 150 Years of Horsepower Show Celebrating CGUCC 150th Anniversary August 23, 2008



# Cottage Grove United Church of Christ 150th Anniversary Celebration August 24, 2008



Alma Buechler says "Thanks" to Women's Fellowship for the bouquet.

The clean-up crew for Adopt-a-Highway on October 25



Lots of fun at the Sunday School Halloween Party on October 26.



*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. And please call if your birthday is wrong so we can get it right.*

### NOVEMBER

- 1 - Lucas Fiedler  
Nan Palmer  
Stephanie Miller
- 5 - Jean Gausman  
Paige Madsen
- 8 - Marissa Bonngard
- 9 - Molly Murr
- 10 - Jim Herrmann
- 12 - Kayla Howard  
Emily Olson
- 13 - Sheri Wohlers
- 16 - Michael Euerle
- 17 - Jim Berndt  
Densie Sutter  
Starian Vink
- 18 - Hailey Wilkoske
- 21 - Kathy Bloomquist  
Gary Weiby
- 22 - Jill Richter  
Russ Trout
- 23 - Taylor Tungseth
- 25 - Michele Stensgaard
- 26 - Don Schmidt
- 17 - Karen Schmidt
- 28 - Alison Burns
- 30 - Sue Howard



### Gratitude Group Makes Prayer Shawls

Gratitude Group meets the first and third Mondays of each month at the church. Their next meeting is Monday, November 3, where they will be making prayer shawls to give to those who need to be wrapped in prayer. All are invited to join the group. Please bring your scissors for cutting shawls, and be prepared to stay for pizza lunch.



### Holiday Greenery Orders

Orders are now being taken for greenery (wreaths, garland, swags, etc) to decorate your home for the Christmas and holiday season. Proceeds from the greenery sale will be used to help support local families in need during the holidays. All orders must be received by Sunday, November 2<sup>nd</sup>. You may place your order on the sign-up sheet in the Gathering Room. For more information regarding the greenery sale, please contact Bruce Fiedler or Midge Youngquist.



### Note from a Friend

Enjoying my transition very much. I have a lovely new home – great neighbors and weather wonderful – NO MORE snow shoveling. In these 2 years I haven't missed the cold nor snow. Health is still very good!!

Greet all, Eleanore Crump



### Volunteer Opportunity

FamilyMeans is recruiting volunteers for our Caregiver Support Program. The Caregiver Support Program is a program for any Washington County resident needing respite from full-time caregiving of a child, adult or senior with a disability, chronic illness, or who is frail.

We are in need of caring, dependable, people-oriented individuals, couples, families, and mature youth age sixteen or older to spend some quality time with a child or children whose caregiver could benefit from a short break. Our volunteers do receive training and will need to pass a criminal background check before being accepted to the program.

Volunteers find this a great way to give back to their community, help another person in need, and enrich their own lives. Volunteers can volunteer in their own community and at times that are convenient for them. The interview and orientation can take place right in your community and can be done in one meeting.

We are in need of volunteers for the Cottage Grove area for families with a child or children.

Dianne Vierling, Family Means Volunteer Coordinator  
(651) 789-4055, [dvierling@familymeans.org](mailto:dvierling@familymeans.org)



### Cottage Grove Prayer Breakfast

The Third Annual Cottage Grove Area Prayer Breakfast will be held on Tuesday, November 11, from 7:00—8:45 a.m. at the Mississippi Golf Course. This ecumenical event is patterned after the national Prayer Breakfast held annually in Washington, D.C., and is designed as a time of prayer for our city, state, nation, our leaders, and as a time of rededication of individuals to God. For more information, please see the flyer on the bulletin board in the Gathering Room, or call 651-458-5565.



## Halloween Party Thanks

Thank you to everyone who attended our First Annual Halloween Party. A good time was had by all! Thank you to our youth for helping out with the festivities! A special thank you to GeorgAnn Biscoe for donating gift cards for the costume contest prizes. We also raised \$41 for Feed My Starving Children.

BobbiJo Janicek and Brenda Herrman



## Thanks from Wolfpack

Our church hosted the football team from Park High School for their weekly meal and meeting on October 14. We received a thank you signed by each of the team members: "Thank you for supporting Park Wolfpack Football."



## Thank You for Your Prayers

My friend, Jim Auers, that we have been praying for died a peaceful death last week. Please thank the congregation for their prayers and keep his family in mind and prayers as they accept God's plan.

Thank you - KarenBanaszewski



## Gideons Say Thanks

The Gideons International and the Washington South Camp would like to express our gratitude for the faithful support of your congregation at the October 19 service. We received gifts of \$132.

Thank you for the opportunity to worship with you. The people of Cottage Grove UCC are very friendly and we were blest by them and your worship service.

Your support for Gordy Weum and myself and that of the congregation is very affirming. We pray that God's Word will continue to be spread everywhere to bring His love and redemption to the world. Our prayers are with the congregation for calling a new pastor.



Sincerely in Christ,  
Bob Eberspacher, Washington South Gideon Camp

## Thanks for the Yard Work

Lyle Biscoe has been working hard at putting our church yard to rest for the winter. He has collected and carried out trailerfulls of leaves. Thanks a bunch, Lyle! And thanks to all who have mowed, watered, and tended all season long. It takes many dedicated hands and strong backs to care for our property. Thank you all who have helped.



## Remember When?

*From stories told in 1940 by Lucy (Brown) Spicer and Hilda (Bahls) Lindeman*

Remember the time that Gary Hanson dug the church cesspool by hand for Rev. Huenemann? They put Gary down in the hole to fill up the pails, and someone else pulled the pails up with a rope. It was a hot day, so Ben Bahls brought some beer. Then Rev. Huenemann came out of the house with the coffee pot. He said "Here's some coffee, but it isn't quite as good as what Ben brought." But coffee is all he could afford because he had just gotten out of seminary.



## Cross Connection

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

**Back issues available on  
our Church web site at  
[www.cgucc.org](http://www.cgucc.org)**

Deadline	Issue Date
November 10	November 15
November 25	December 1

Submit articles via e-mail at  
[cgucc@usfamily.net](mailto:cgucc@usfamily.net) or drop  
them off at the office.

Becky Graff, Editor

## Contact Us

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*Office Hours: Monday-Friday  
9:00 a.m.—12:00 noon*

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**STOP!!**  
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!

**CGUCC to Host Blood Drive**

On **Wednesday, November 19, 2008**, Cottage Grove U.C.C. will be teaming up with the American Red Cross to host a fall blood drive in South Washington County. Donation times to give blood will be available from **2:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.** at the church. If you would like to reserve a donation time on November 19<sup>th</sup>, please contact Bob Dickie at 651-436-5566. Your offering will be the gift of life for a neighbor in need, so please prayerfully consider giving blood this holiday season.



**Volunteers Needed for Blood Drive**

The church is looking for a team of 4-5 people who would be willing to assist with the Red Cross blood drive on **November 19, 2008**, at CGUCC. Volunteers are needed to greet and direct donors, oversee the refreshment area, and assist the Red Cross workers in getting set up before the event and cleaned up afterwards. If you are interested in volunteering your services, please contact Rev. Bryan.

In addition, cookies and bars make for a nice and necessary treat for donors after giving blood, so we are asking members and friends of the church to bring a pan or plate of goodies to donate to the refreshment area. All baked goods should be dropped off at the church before 12 p.m. on November 19<sup>th</sup>. To volunteer to bake for the blood drive, please contact the church office or place your name on the sign-up sheet in the Gathering Room. Thank you!

