



CROSS CONNECTION

The Newsletter of Cottage Grove United Church of Christ
Published Semi-Monthly
January 1, 2009



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:

Meet the New Pastor	1
Good News	2
Opportunities	3
Y.A.H.O.O. Lock-In	4
Calendar	5
Pick Me	6
Christmas Photos	7
Christmas Cantata	8

Cottage Grove United Church of Christ

7008 Lamar Avenue South
Cottage Grove, MN. 55016-2397
Tel: 651-459-1501
Web: www.cgucc.org
Email: cgucc@usfamily.net

New Pastor Coming to Cottage Grove UCC



In keeping with the Christmas season, The Search Team brings to you great joy, that we have an agreement in principal with **Rev. Desiree Gold** to become our next pastor.

Rev. Gold comes to us from Baltimore, MD where she has been a transitional pastor at St. Mark's UCC in Baltimore. Rev. Gold is originally from Fargo, ND. She graduated from Frank & Marshall College in Lancaster, PA in 1998, then went on to Eden Theological Seminary in St Louis, MO, where she received her Master's in Divinity in 2002. After her graduation from Eden, she moved to Sacramento, CA, where she was the Pastor of Faith Community UCC before moving to Baltimore with her husband Ben. Ben is currently working at a post-doctoral position at John's Hopkins University in Maryland. Desiree and Ben have no children, but they do have a cat.

Here is a quote from a reference that we hope will provide a little more insight into Rev. Gold's background: "Rev. Gold is a pastor who leads by example. She carries herself with grace, confidence, peace, and compassion. Her sermons combine scripture, history, humor, current events, and her speaking style makes God's word accessible to all ages, backgrounds, and learning levels."

The candidate weekend for Rev. Gold will be the weekend of January 10th and 11th. We are currently planning a potluck supper on Saturday, January 10th, at 5:00 p.m. for a meet-and-greet, then she will lead the worship service on Sunday January 11th. After the service, there will be a time for additional questions, and then we will hold a congregational meeting to approve or disapprove Rev. Desiree Gold as our next pastor. Upon approval, Desiree is scheduled to start around March 1st.

Potluck Details: Saturday January 10th at 5:00 p.m.

- If possible, bring food according to your last names
- A – L – Hot dish, or other types of hot food
- M – R – Salad
- S – Z – Dessert

Please come and share this joyful time and meet Desiree

The Search Team is very excited about this opportunity to have Rev. Gold be the next pastor for Cottage Grove UCC, and we hope that the members will join us in this excitement.

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!

Daniel Bies; Bill and Isabel Board; Bill Bothun; Beth Davies; Bob Fox; Ron and Joyce Fries; Russ Gausman; Don Hanson; Wes Hillman; Delores Janke; Chris Miller; JoAnn Nelson; Sandy Rabe; Emily, Chris, and Joel Spicer; families facing unemployment issues; the Search Team and pastoral candidate Rev. Gold, Rev. Bryan Olson, and our church during this time of transition.

Family of Tom Avenriep who died recently; Alma Buechler (former pastor's wife); Abi Christopherson (Elaine Mitchell's friend); Alex (Dorothy Crampton's grandson, who is also Deb Tilson's son); Dorothy Brown (Ashley & Luke Longmuir's great-aunt); 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); Agnes Thyren (Gary Thyren's mother); Beth Vinge (Bill & Arlene Kropelnicki's daughter); Midge Youngquist's grandmother; our soldiers around the world.



As the calendar shifts from 2008 to 2009, many of us will make resolutions to better ourselves in the coming year. Some will resolve to eat less and exercise more. Others will dedicate themselves to working harder, being more organized, or staying in better contact with family and friends. In the past I have personally made resolutions to get more sleep, watch less television, and learn to play an instrument. Unfortunately, I am often one of the millions who fail to live up to their resolutions early in the New Year and end up resolving to uphold more stringent resolutions the following year.

I am not a huge proponent of New Year's resolutions because I believe we often set unrealistic goals for ourselves and then become discouraged when we fail to attain them. For example, how many of us have vowed to lose 20-30 pounds in a year and then stop exercising by the middle of February because the pounds are not melting away from doing our 30-minute workouts three times a week? Many times New Year's resolutions are motivated more by vanity than personal transformation. We want to look better, feel better, and make more money to improve our material and social status. I believe we fail to adhere to these types of empty resolutions because we are not truly sold on the idea that they will improve our lives or make us better people.

New Year's resolutions in of themselves are not bad things but we need to be realistic about what we are trying to change about ourselves and why. This year, instead of making cliché resolutions to improve administrative habits and physical appearance, try committing yourself to doing one or two things to strengthen your faith and soul. Below are a few recommendations:

Spend time reading a book every day – Getting in the habit of reading literature (any literature) will focus your mind in an active and positive way and engage your imagination on a daily basis. Imagination, after all, is the true gateway to experiencing and interacting with an invisible yet ever-present God.

Obey the Sabbath – Take the opportunity to rest in the presence of God each week. If Sunday is a busy day for you then carve out other times during the week to rest and refresh your soul.

Give thanks to God for one thing every day – Do this for even a few weeks and you will begin to realize all the things for which you truly are thankful.

Pray every day for a person you have never met – Do this to connect your mind and heart to others whom are often forgotten in our world.

Commit yourself to one new mission project this year – Find an area of ministry you are passionate about (i.e. feeding hungry people, assisting the homeless, teaching Sunday school) and jump into it with both feet!

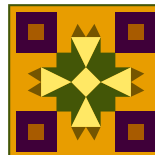
These are just a few suggestions. Only you and God know what you need to do to transform your life for the better in 2009. Choose wisely! May it truly be a blessed New Year for you and your families. Take care and God bless.

See you in worship!

Peace,
Rev. Bryan

Help Make a Church Quilt

A team is forming to put together a "signature quilt" to help celebrate Cottage Grove United Church of Christ's 150th Anniversary, and you are invited to be a part of that team. The vision is a patchwork quilt with each of the families of CGUCC signing their names on a square. Church members won't have to create a square or sew, but the team does need more folks to help do the cutting and sewing. Their first get-together to sew is Sunday, January 18 following Worship, and all are invited to come and be a part of putting the quilt together. Bring your sewing machine and supplies. Please call Sue Weiby at 459-1023 with questions.



FYI

Waste Management has rescheduled our church's regular garbage pick-up from Tuesdays to Thursdays. I just thought you might like to know.

Becky Graff
Administrative Assistant



Help Needed After Worship on Sunday

If you could stay for a few minutes after Worship this Sunday, January 4, your help would be appreciated in taking down and putting away the Christmas decorations. Thanks!



Army of Women

Join the Movement to go Beyond a Cure!

The Love/Avon Army of Women offers a revolutionary new opportunity for YOU to partner with research scientists to move us beyond a cure. Breast cancer has been around for decades, but it does not have to be our future. We can be the generation that eliminates breast cancer by identifying what causes this disease and stopping it before it starts. This is your chance to be part of the research that will end breast cancer. Sign up for your sister, mother, daughter, granddaughter, best friend, and the woman you met last week.

Help us eradicate breast cancer once and for all. Join the Army of Women today!

Check out the web site at <https://www.armyofwomen.org/>

This is an organization that is compiling lists of women who would be willing to be part of breast cancer research. Please check out what their web site has to say, or talk with Becky Graff in the office, Leona Perkins from Avon, or Diane Davies who is an advocate for breast cancer research. We CAN make a difference when we join an **Army of Women**.



Greeters Wanted

Each week we welcome members and visitors to worship with a smile and a friendly greeting. Please prayerfully consider helping with this ministry. Greeters are needed both before and after worship each Sunday. If you would like to volunteer to be a greeter, please sign up on the sheet in the Gathering Room. A few minutes of your time will make a world of difference in the life of our church! Volunteer to be a greeter today!



Coming Up in Worship

Sunday, January 4, 2009 2nd Sunday after Christmas

No Sunday School
10:10 a.m. Announcements
10:15 a.m. Worship with
Christmas Cantata
11:30 a.m. Coffee & Fellowship

Sunday, January 11, 2009

9:00 a.m. Welcome Back to
Sunday School
10:10 a.m. Announcements
10:15 a.m. Worship led by Rev.
Desiree Gold
11:30 a.m. Congregational
Meeting

Sunday, January 18, 2009

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

Sunday, January 25, 2009

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



January

- 1 - Todd Hanson
- 3 - Arlean Kropelnicki
- 5 - Morgan Herrmann
Barb Meyer
- 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 - Alyssa Wilkinson
- 15 - Mark Marty
- 16 - Wally Fritze, Jr.
- 18 - Loretta Gorgus
- 19 - Becky Mindrum
Taylor Stensgaard
- 21 - Doris Fiedler
- 22 - Beatrice Sauve
- 23 - Calle Fritze
Bonnie Power
- 25 - Richard Nieman
- 26 - Hunter Hakkila
Cadan Kropelnicki
Austin Murr
- 27 - Gary Thyren
- 28 - Hailee Marty
- 29 - Mikayla Hanson
Kathy Trout
- 31 - Ruth Radke

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

The Annual Y.A.H.O.O. Winter Lock-in will be held on **January 18-19, 2009** at CGUCC.

Mark your calendars today! (Note that there is no school on Monday, January 19th 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 12, 2009**. Sign up today!!!



Remember When?

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

Do you remember when we built the new church?

They had ground breaking on June 29, 1953. The excavating was on April 1, 1953. and the cornerstone laying was June 28, 1953. The opening service was July 18, 1954. Dedication Sunday was August 8, 1954. Remember the day we had the opening service, we had half the service in the old church, then we took a hymnal and marched over to the new church and had the last half of the service there? We got a new organ in our new church, and remember how good Rev. Huenemann could play it? The church roof was leaking and between songs you could hear drip, drip, drip.



Winter CYE

Mark your calendars! The Winter Conference Youth Event will be held **February 13-15, 2008**, at United Theological Seminary in New Brighton, MN. Registration forms for this event will be available soon. Scholarships are available for this event! Please see Rev. Bryan for more details.



Call to the 27th General Synod

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

Sisters and Brothers in Christ:

The 27th General Synod of the United

Church of Christ will convene Friday afternoon, June 26, 2009 in Grand Rapids, Michigan, and will adjourn at the close of business on Tuesday evening, June 30. With the Grand River flowing beside the DeVos Convention Center, the theme for this year's Synod will be "Immerse Yourself!" We will be reminded of the waters of baptism that signify the grace of God and welcomed each of us into the community of Christ's people. We will consider the important significance of water for life on this planet, and our responsibility to care for and share the water that covers our earth in a time of accelerating climate change and environmental crisis. We will reflect on how our Church will immerse itself in the mission of God for justice and peace.

Guest registration opens in December and there will be instructions for registering on the website. Please join us in Grand Rapids for the 27th General Synod, and "immerse yourself!"

John H. Thomas, General Minister and President

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 26	February 1

Submit articles via e-mail at
cgucc@usfamily.net or drop
them off at the office.

Becky Graff, Editor

Contact Us

Cottage Grove United Church of Christ

7008 Lamar Avenue South
Cottage Grove MN 55016
(651)459-1501 www.cgucc.org

Rev. Bryan Olson, Pastor
olsonbw@hotmail.com

Emily Olson, Director of Music

Becky Graff,
Administrative Assistant
cgucc@usfamily.net

**Deb Hanson, Brenda
Herrmann, BobbiJo Janicek**,
Sunday School Team

Sheri Wohlers, Custodian
sherileewohlers@msn.com

Diane Davies, Gifts Coordinator
dianedavies48@yahoo.com

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

“Pick me . . . Pick me . . . Pick me!!!”

Service as understood by Shrek’s favorite Donkey

With the beginning of a new year, the church has a couple of openings in key volunteer positions. Please give prayerful thought to each of the opportunities listed and perhaps you will find one that fits your schedule, and more importantly your gifts.

1. **The Communication Team** – This team is seeking new members that would be willing to help provide a means of informing the congregation and the public of church activities. They hold monthly meetings and are responsible for the church website, press releases to local newspapers and general advertising. An interest in communication, a willingness to learn and some computer skills would be of great help on this team. If interested in serving in this way, please contact the church office for more information.
2. **Volunteer Coordinator** – This position is responsible for assisting in the recruitment of volunteers, maintaining the volunteer database, writing a volunteer opportunities column for the Cross Connection, and attending Church Council meetings to be informed of activities within the church. This person also attends all Board of Shared Ministry meetings. People-to-people skills, the gift of organization and some basic computer skills are important in this position. The job can be done in just a couple of hours a week. We do ask for a 1 year commitment. Diane Davies will train this person on the use of the database. (This is not difficult.) If interested, please contact Diane Davies at 651-436-7234 or Dianedavies48@yahoo.com

It would be wonderful to have these positions filled by the time our new pastor comes on board. Give some thought to teaming with another person to fulfill either of these positions if you do not want to do it alone.

I hope to hear from you.

See you in Church,
Diane Davies

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 seeing where God is leading all of us in 2009! Thank you again for the wonderful gift. It is truly appreciated. Merry Christmas, Happy New Year, and blessings to you all!

Peace,
Rev. Bryan and Emily Olson

M&M’s Help Feed Children

Remember to support Feed My Starving Children (FMSC) by purchasing a tube of mini M&M’s for \$1, enjoy eating the candies, then fill the empty tube with quarters and bring them back to church. Filling the container with quarters 5 times feeds a child for a year. The display with tubes of mini M&M’s is in the Gathering Room. Pick up a tube and leave a dollar if you would like to participate.





The Backward Christmas Pageant

December 21, 2009

Sunday School Christmas Pageant

Photographs by John Greenwell



Cottage Grove United Church of Christ
7008 Lamar Avenue South
Cottage Grove, MN. 55016-2397
Phone: 651-459-1501
Email: cgucc@usfamily.net

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!

Christmas Cantata January 4, 2009



Christmas Cantata

*Come and celebrate the coming of Jesus Christ on Epiphany Sunday.
The CGUCC Chancel Choir under the direction of Music Director Emily Olson
will be singing a variety of Advent and Christmas music.
Bring your family and friends to this annual Christmas event
during Worship on Sunday, January 4, at 10:15 a.m.*