Friendship News, November 2021

First Congregational United Church of Christ, Brainerd

An Open and Affirming Congregation

The Church Office is open Wednesdays – Fridays from 9:00 am – 1:00 pm

Pastor Leslie’s Drop-in Hours: Wed. 1:00pm – 3:00pm, Friday 10:00am – 12:00pm

Office phone 218-829-2528 Office E-mail [uccbrainerd@gmail.com](mailto:uccbrainerd@gmail.com) Pastor’s E-mail: [pastorleslieucc@gmail.com](mailto:pastorleslieucc@gmail.com) Website: [www.uccbrainerdmn.org](http://www.uccbrainerdmn.org)

**Schedule a 1 to 1 (in-person or by Zoom or Phone) with Pastor Leslie:**

[www.calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1](http://www.calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1)

*No matter who you are, or where you are on life’s journey, you are welcome here.*

**The Power of Story and Truth-Telling**

by Conference Minister, Rev. Shari Prestemon

**Story. Our faith would be nowhere without it.**

Our Biblical narrative is filled with the stories of our ancestors in faith. From the creation accounts, through the prophets’ proclamations, to the teachings of Jesus and on to the apostles’ letters, we are drenched in the stories of those who have gone before us. We find in those stories testimony of those who struggled and lost, met with injustice, occasionally doubted and yet persevered in faith. We discover truths about our human capacity to hurt, to heal, and to sustain hope. The lessons of these ancient stories still shape and inform our faith today.

**Story can transform us.**

On the afternoon of Sunday October 3, 30 Conference members gathered to hear other sacred stories. Led by Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs, co-director of racial justice at the Minnesota Council of Churches, and Rev. Kelly Sherman-Conroy, a Native theologian and Ph.D. student at Luther Seminary, we sojourned to three different sites in the Twin Cities area that hold powerful meaning for Indigenous people in Minnesota.

As Jim Bear and Kelly narrated our experience, we heard about [treaties with Native peoples](https://www.usdakotawar.org/history/treaties/minnesota-treaties) that were ignored (and were unjust in the first place), the [complicity of the Christian Church](https://doctrineofdiscovery.org/) in oppressing and harming Indigenous peoples, the [U.S.-Dakota war](https://www.usdakotawar.org/) & [execution of 38 Dakota men in Mankato](https://indiancountrytoday.com/news/traumatic-true-history-full-list-dakota-38), the "concentration camp" where women, children, and elderly Indigenous people were held and died, and [sacred burial grounds on Pilot Knob that were desecrated.](https://religionsmn.carleton.edu/exhibits/show/pilotknob/pilotknob)

These are stories central to the Indigenous experience, marked by brutality and broken promises as well as by resilience and strength. They are stories we must know and confront as Minnesotans, as Americans, and as Christians.

In 2019, delegates to the Annual Meeting of the Conference approved a resolution entitled [“Racial Justice Through Reparations”](https://uccmn.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Printed-Racial-Justice-Final-Submitted-Resolution.pdf), calling “on the Minnesota Conference, member churches, and congregation members to make meaningful efforts to repair the historic and sinful violations that perpetuate white privilege today.” There are multiple ways to engage in such repair. Rev. Jim Bear Jacobs told us on Sunday that one small step in this work is doing exactly what we were doing that day: receiving the stories of others and opening ourselves to confession and transformation in doing so.

Hearing and receiving the stories of our Black, Indigenous, and other communities of color, making room for truth-telling and allowing those testimonies to shape our future ministry is part of the work we’re called to as a “courageous church alive with Christ’s transforming love.” We pray that in facing the truths of our past we won’t repeat such harm and sin in the future.

What stories might there be in your community that need to be heard? What can you learn from the testimony of those whose experience has been vastly different from your own? What relationships do you need to build in order to create sacred space for hard truths and stories to be shared and honored?

As Christians we know the profound power of story to shape the faith we proclaim. I urge all of us to seek out the hidden stories all around us, sacred testimonies of our communities and people of color. Their stories can teach us what we need to hear and strengthen our witness as a courageous church committed to repairing what’s been broken.

Grace and peace,

Reverend Shari Prestemon, Conference Minister

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*Learn more about the* [*Healing Minnesota Stories*](http://www.mnchurches.org/what-we-do/healing-minnesota-stories) *program of the MN Council of Churches (a partner of the MN Conference UCC) and plan to participate in a future tour of sacred sites.*

**First Congregational UCC News & Updates**

**What to Expect for In-Person, Indoor Worship**

Join us for worship this Sunday in the sanctuary!

* Due to increased spread of the **Delta variant**, everyone must **wear a mask** regardless of vaccination status.
* Fellowship Hour after worship will be downstairs.
* No one will be asked to show proof of vaccination.
* Physical distancing will be observed by closing off every other pew.
* Children and youth will stay seated for the Time with Young Disciples.
* Prayers will be done with written prayer cards, read by Pastor Leslie (no passing the mic).

*The Covid Response Team will continue to monitor the situation locally and may decide to make further changes as the need arises.*

**How to watch Sunday worship**  
The worship service is **broadcasted on the church Facebook page every Sunday at 10:00 am.**  
To watch worship on Facebook, go to <https://www.facebook.com/uccbrainerd/live>  
We are working with a new system for streaming are still working out the kinks for streaming to YouTube.

**Worship Bulletins are available for download each week at** <http://tinyurl.com/UCCBrainerdBulletins>**.**The bulletins will be ready for download first thing Sunday morning. They are available in both Word and PDF formats and are labeled by date. You can download the document and print it at home or follow along on your screen.   
We can also send a copy of the bulletin in the mail each week as we have been doing for some of our home-bound members. Just contact Terri in the office.

**Financial Help Available**  
Your Church Council voted last year to allow the Pastor's Discretionary Fund to be used to assist church members and others in the Brainerd area who are experiencing financial distress during this time. We received many generous donations! If you need assistance, please email, call, or text Pastor Leslie. Let her know what your situation is and how the church might be of help.

**You can now donate to the church online!**We are now accepting your offerings and donations using **PayPal.** You do not need to have a PayPal account to make an online donation with a credit card. To use PayPal, go to: <https://www.paypal.me/uccbrainerd>

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**November Birthdays**

Floyd Schultz Nov. 2

Eleanor Burkett Nov. 4

Dale Hadland Nov. 9

Jan Kurtz Nov. 20

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**Wednesday, Thursday and Fridays  
9:00 am to 1:00 pm.**

Please call Terri at the office for further assistance.

218-829-2528

**Pastor Leslie’s drop-in hours\* are as follows:**

**Wednesdays 1:00pm – 3:00pm**

**Fridays 10:00am – 12:00pm**

*\*These are hours that, barring an emergency, Pastor Leslie will be in the office and available for drop-in conversations or meetings. Appointments are preferred to best manage her schedule, but don’t hesitate to drop in during the above times.*

*Pastor Leslie will be in the office at other times but may not always be available due to other obligations. To make an appointment outside of the drop-in hours, go to* [**calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1**](https://calendly.com/pastorleslieucc/1to1)*or call or email Pastor Leslie directly to schedule an appointment.*

**Church Leadership**

***Get Involved, Give Back, Grow Connections – Volunteer at Church!***

There are many opportunities for you to share your talents:

--**Treasurer,** serves a 1-year term (may renew for 6 terms). The primary role is oversight of bookkeeping, church finances and Executive Committee discussions. This candidate should have a strong background or interest in finance or banking.

**Committees needing fresh faces:**

-Christian Education -Trustees -Memorial -Christian Ministry

-Music -Arts -The Foundation Board

Call or text Joe Stattine - Moderator, with your nominations: 218-838-1311

*“Volunteers do not necessarily have the time; they just have the heart.” ~Elizabeth Andrew*

**Highlights from the Council Meeting, October 21st, 2021 - 7:00 pm (via Zoom)**

~ These are highlights. If you would like a copy of the full minutes, please contact the church office ~

**Present**: Joe Stattine, Colleen LeBlanc, Barb Stokke, Deb Griffith, Gale Landem, Lowell Johnson, Alvin Velsvaag, Admin Terri Chidester, and Pastor Leslie.

**Report Highlights**

**Clerk:** Pastor Leslie officiated at three services: the wedding of Kimberly Paulson and Jaime Pieschke at First Congregational on September 25, 2021; the wedding of non-members Ahnicka Perez Krueger and Jonathan Nelson September 25, 2021 at a private residence; and the memorial service for member Shirley McConnell Utzman on Saturday, September 18, 2021, at First Congregational.

**Pastor:** Highlights: Officiated at two weddings and one memorial service; attended a virtual Leadership Institute; represented the church at National Coming Out Day at CLC; and met with Brainerd High School Principal Andrea Rusk to discuss the GSA (Gender Sexuality Alliance) club. Pastor Leslie informed Council of a gift of $30,000 from the McConnell-Utzman family which has been placed into the McConnell-Utzman Justice Fund. (See full announcement in the newsletter).

**Financials:** Joe Stattine will contact departments and committees requesting their 2022 budget proposals. The Executive committee will review finances and determine a 2022 budget to be presented to Council at the November Council meeting.

**Trustees:** The outside work preparing the Columbarium, the Memorial Garden, the sprinkler and hoses for winter is done, and the mowing crew will take care of the leaves. Remaining work includes removing pine cones and cleaning the rain garden. Work on the sanctuary lights is on hold until Holden Electric receives the material necessary to complete the job. Brothers Fire inspected the sprinkler inspection and determined some works needs to be done. Hershfield’s will be meeting with the Trustees to determine the amount of paint necessary to paint the entry and walls this fall.

**Stewardship:** Member Georgia Harris has resigned her position on the Stewardship committee; activities for the Stewardship Drive continue with Alvin Velsvaag speaking on Sunday, October 24; Pledge Sunday is October 31 with a possible fellowship gathering depending on the COVID situation.

**Christian Ministry:** CM thanks all who helped with Celebration Sunday, September 12. Fifty people attended and forty stayed for brunch. CM has revised the HUGS sign-up sheet that will be passed around during the service. Pastor Leslie will review the ushers and greeters duty sheet to make sure it is up to date. CM plan to help Trustees paint the entry and hall.

**Christian Education**: The second meal at TheShop went well, but the monthly funding from the Elks to pay for food was discontinued. A contribution of $25 will pay for a monthly meal. (See Memorial Committee highlights) Sharon Carlson met with youth and adults to discuss the ups and downs of the past year, Confirmation, and possible activities including Halloween dinner, a monthly evening of a meal and games, tubing at Ski Gull. A future Adult Forum on the topic Suicide Prevention for Faith Leadership was introduced.

**Memorial:** The Memorial committee has completed the update of the policies, procedures, financing, and the pamphlet of the Columbarium and Memorial Garden. Memorial approved a $100.00 gift to TheShop from the family of Shirley McConnell Utzman. This gift will provide the food at TheShop for four months. The committee will begin meeting quarterly rather than monthly.

**Members at Large:** This coming Sunday Four Winds Lodge will present an Adult Forum on Native American Spirituality. The Wild & Free Wildlife Program from Garrison, Minnesota, was suggested as a topic for a future Adult Forum. It was recommended that a celebration of the 150th Anniversary of First Congregational be put on Council’s agenda.

**COVID-19 Task Force:** Two positive cases in our church were reported. Fellowship is again cancelled for October 24 due to COVID. Gathering for fellowship will be determined on a week-to-week basis. Choir is also suspended until further notice.

**Unfinished Business**

1. Professional Staging: Design Consign took 2 pews to see if they would sell. Two additional pews are for sale.
2. Ushers and Greeters Duty Sheet: It was recommended that an updated ushers and greeters duty sheet be printed and laminated.
3. T-Coil Hearing Assistance Funding Request: The Foundation has not reviewed the $2,000 request to purchase the system.
4. Insurance Claim: The church’s insurance claim is on hold until Holden Electric’s work is finished and the claim can be closed.
5. Council members extend their gratitude to Mary Reardon for her donation of a Chromebook to be used as a back-up computer and for streaming services and meetings.
6. First Congregational By-Laws Task-Force members Colleen LeBlanc, Joe Stattine, and Pastor Leslie introduced recommended changes to the bylaws and asked Council for comments. The task force will meet in two weeks to finalize the changes and then will present them to Council at the November Council meeting.

**New Business:**

1. Colleen LeBlanc has compiled a history of all committee and department members on a spreadsheet which she will send to Council members in preparation for compiling the new slate of members to fill vacancies for the 2021-22 church year.
2. The Executive committee will explore short- and long-term investments options.

**Next Regular Council Meeting: November 18th, 202, 3:00 pm in-person and via Zoom**

**Annual Budget Meeting**

The congregational budget meeting to review and vote on the 2022 church budget will be held **Sunday, December 12th, at 11:15 am** after worship in-person and via Zoom.

Meeting packets will be distributed in person on the previous Sunday (12/6) and emailed to voting members. Please notify Terri in the office if you need a packet sent to you by mail.

**Announcement! New Shirley McConnell Utzman Justice Fund**

We celebrated the life of Shirley McConnell Utzman on September 19 in a beautiful service in the church sanctuary. In a moving eulogy, Shirley’s son Michael shared parts of Shirley’s life that many of us may not have known about – her early activism for women’s rights, her commitment to working to better the lives of people living in poverty. And her general passion for social justice.

Shirley also deeply loved her church, our church. Twice married to ordained ministers, Shirley had a unique perspective of the work of the church and the ability of our congregation to do vital and courageous ministry that would have a direct impact on the quality of people’s lives.

With that love, with deep generosity, and prophetic hope, Shirley made a final donation to the church in the amount of $30,000! Shirley had one condition for this donation: “the Pastor alone is to decide the proper use of the funds.” This is a great honor and a great responsibility and one that I do not take lightly. Out of respect for our congregational polity and the covenantal nature of our faith, I will be seeking input and wisdom from church leadership, community leaders, and the leaders of the UCC Minnesota Conference, as well as spending time in prayer and discernment before any decisions are made. Knowing Shirley’s passion for justice, I my desire is to put this money to work to in a way that has a direct and meaningful impact on people’s lives.

- Pastor Leslie

**From Your Trustee Team – Need Help with Projects!**

**Christian Ministry plans to help Trustees paint the entry and hall. Thank you!**

**We still need help with weekly cleaning of the church**

Now that in house worship is happening, the church is resuming weekly cleaning. In past years roughly 6 church members have volunteered to do this but currently only 3 are available and 3 more are needed, (weekday and time are to be determined, although currently people are cleaning on Tuesdays and Fridays).

Please let any trustee member know if you are interested: Cynthia Janes, Jim Newgord, Reed Campbell, Ryan Kelly. You can also call and leave your name with Terri at the church office, 218-829-2528. Thank you for considering to volunteer.

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**Stewardship Commitment Season is Here**

**Rooted With Love**

Dear Church Family,

The Stewardship Pledge Drive for our 2022 budget is nearly over. There are so many things our church can share with our community and greater outreach when the mindset of abundance sees the fullness of God’s love.

When well rooted with love it is easy to imagine all the good things we can bear.

Please return the pledge form if you have not done so already. A blessing ceremony was held during the worship service on October 31st and many pledges were returned.

Thank you for your thoughtful and prayerful consideration.

Thank you, Your Stewardship Committee Gale, Judy, Marcia, Carla, Georgia, Sarah Jo

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This group is OPEN FOR EVERYONE!  Email Lowell  [johnsonlowells@gmail.com](mailto:johnsonlowells@gmail.com) and he will add you to the member list so that you will know when and where we will next meet.

**TheShop Meals**  
We are working with the young people from TheShop (Brainerd/Baxter's Youth Empowerment Center) and are preparing the meal at the church kitchen and serving it at TheShop for the participants in the program. We will continue once a month on the third Wednesday, meeting at the church kitchen at 3:30 pm. Thanks to all who have expressed an interest in helping out. If you are interested in helping out, please call Sharon Carlson at 828-1581.

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**Choir Practice**  
**First three Sundays of each month at 8:30 am.**

We meet in the sanctuary.  
You are all welcome to join and we would love to have you!  
Please contact Diane Hauan for more information:  
218-839-0669 or [diane.hauan5@gmail.com](https://uccbrainerd.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7358d6fe5c26410d29dfb93f0&id=7bae397a8f&e=5e2c6f93e6)

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**We want to include your voice and instruments during the worship services.**

Please contact Diane Hauan for more information: 218-839-0669 or [diane.hauan5@gmail.com](https://uccbrainerd.us2.list-manage.com/track/click?u=7358d6fe5c26410d29dfb93f0&id=7bae397a8f&e=5e2c6f93e6)

**The Columbarium at First Congregational UCC, Brainerd**

The Columbarium is located in the historic space that once was our church’s front entry way. How appropriate it is that our Columbarium now marks another entry way into a new life — where the Spirits of Love and Truth are always present!

Our Columbarium is now complete. Should you wish to learn more about the purchase of a niche for your own cremains or for the ashes of a loved one, please call the church office at (218) 829-2528. Terri Chidester, Administrative Assistant, can send you a packet of materials via email or regular mail. The Memorial Committee has prepared the information packet, and it contains all the details you will need as you consider inurnment here at First Congregational UCC. Have any other questions? Contact Dawn Stattine at [dawnstattine@gmail.com](mailto:dawnstattine@gmail.com)

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**Soup Kitchen/Bridges of Hope**

This month we have an opportunity as we give our Fourth Sunday Special Offering to the Bridges of Hope & Soup Kitchen. A lifeline for hungry souls in the Brainerd Lakes Area since 1987. The Soup Kitchen’s mission is to demonstrate the love of Christ by providing meals to the hungry of our community. We offer meals to-go for those that aren't comfortable dining in (must be present to receive meal). Address: 923 Oak Street, Brainerd. Soup Kitchen hours: Sunday: 12:30-1:30pm, Monday- Saturday: 5:00-6:00pm.

Please send your donation to First Congregational UCC, 415 Juniper St. Brainerd, MN 56401. Make sure to note on your offering: “Soup Kitchen”. Thank you! Or for your convenience use our Paypal account at: [paypal.me/uccbrainerd](https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/uccbrainerd) Be sure to note on your offering “Soup Kitchen” in comments.

**Habitat for Humanity Faith Build**

**Our church, First Congregational and other area churches (16 total) have partnered with Faith Build and** we are so excited to bring the Svoboda family home! Together we have raised over $59,000 in cash and in-kind donations toward our goal of $62,500. **Thank you for your generosity!** We will update you once we have made plans for the dedication and open house. Until then, please continue to pray for the Svoboda family, for Habitat, and for the successful completion of our 2021 Thrivent Faith Build project. Please send your donation to First Congregational UCC, 415 Juniper St. Brainerd, MN 56401. Make sure to note on your offering: “Faith Build”. Or for your convenience use our Paypal account at: [paypal.me/uccbrainerd](https://www.paypal.com/paypalme/uccbrainerd)

Thank you! Be sure to note on your offering “Faith Build” in comments.

Contact **Cathy Wells** to volunteer!

[www.lakesareahabitat.org](http://www.lakesareahabitat.org/) Main: 218.828.8517

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The Central Lakes College Cultural **Thursday, November 4th** (First Thursday of the month at Noon – Chalberg Theater and streaming)  
Gary Payne is a frequent presenter, offering two opportunities, **Noon and 7:00 p.m.**   
  
The link: <http://www.clcmn.edu/events/cultural-thursday-the-very-first-americans/>  
I am delighted – as the founder of this venue some 25 years ago. I am so pleased that it is not a victim of COVID! Abrazos, Jan Kurtz

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**Community Thanksgiving Dinner**

**Once again this year, The Brainerd Legion, VFW, Elks and Eagles Clubs will sponsor a Community Thanksgiving Dinner to be held at the Brainerd Legion on Thursday, November 25th.**

**Thursday, November 25th**

**Delivery: 10 a.m. - 11 a.m.**

**Pickup: 11 a.m. - 1 p.m.**

**BRAINERD LEGION - 708 FRONT STREET, BRAINERD**

**\*DELIVERY or CONTACTLESS PICK UP ONLY!**

**Please RSVP by noon, November 22nd**

**Brainerd Legion (829-2249) Brainerd VFW (829-6393)**

**Brainerd Elks (829-2643) Brainerd Eagles (829-4216)**

**Free-will Donations Gratefully Accepted!**

**Excess donations go to Teen Challenge**

*Your donations of pies for this event have been much appreciated in past years, and we are asking you to consider donating pies to the 2021 Thanksgiving Dinner. Cash donations are also acceptable to purchase pies.*

***Donated pies should be delivered to the Brainerd American Legion by Wednesday, November 24.******Thank you****so much for your generosity in the past and we hope you will continue to support this event this year!*

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| Church Calendar November 2021 |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|  | Office Closed  Open by Appt. | Office Closed  Open by Appt. | Office Hours  9am – 1pm  Pastor Drop-in  1pm-3pm | Office Hours  9am – 1pm | Office Hours  9am – 1pm  Pastor Drop-in  10am-12pm |  |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | 12pm  **1**  Vets Bk Grp- **Our Zoom**  4pm Grl Scts #373-**Y** 7pm BACP-**Y** | **2**  2pm Emotions Anon- **Y**  5:30pm Overeaters Anon- **Y** | 10am Pray  **3**  Circle-**Y**  12pm Mens Grp-**Y**  7pm AA Common-**Y** | **4**  10am Uppity Women Stdy-**Y&Z** (final session until mid-January) | **5**  10:30am Book Grp-**Z** | **6** |
| 8:30am Choir **7**  Practice**-Y**  8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y**  10am Wrship (All Saints Service) & Communion-**Y&V**  11am Fellowship-**Y** | 12pm  **8**  Vets Bk Grp- **Our Zoom** | **9**  2pm Emotions Anon- **Y**  5:30pm Overeaters Anon- **Y** | 10am Pray **10**  Circle-**Y**  12pm Mens Grp-**Y**  12pm Memorial-**Y**  7pm Trstee- **Y**  7pm AA Common-**Y** | **11**  4:30pm Stwdshp-**Y**  6:30 BLUE park /chrch bckup | **12**  10:30am Book Grp-**Z** | **13** |
| 8:30am Choir  **14** Practice**-Y**  8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y**  10am Wrship-**Y&V**  10:15 NUUF Mtg-**Y**  11am Fellowship-**Y** | **15**  12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom**  2pm AWUU-**Y**  4pm Grl Scts #373-**Y** | **16**  2pm Emotions Anon- **Y**  5:30pm Overeaters Anon- **Y** | 10am **17**  Pray Circle-**Y**  12pm Memorial-**Y**  12pm Mens Grp-**Y**  3:30pm TheShop Cooking-**Y** 7pm AA Common-**Y** | **18**  3pm Council Mtg-**Y&V**  7pm AA Dist-**Y** | **19**  10:30am Book Grp-**Z**  3:30pm Stewardship-**Y**  5pm Wedding Rehearsal | **20**  4pm?  Wedding/  Widmark  Official TDOR (Transgender Day of Remembrance) |
|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 8:30am Choir  **21**  Practice**-Y**  8:30am Bnrd Frnds-**Y**  10am **TDOR-?** Worship-**Y&V**  11am Fellowship-**Y** | **22**  12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom**  5pm LeMesa? | **23**  2pm Emotions Anon-**Y**  5pm LeMesa-**V**  5:30pm Overeaters Anon-**Y** | 10am Pray  **24**  Circle- **Y**  12pm Mens Grp-**Y**  3:30 TheShop Meal Prep-**Y**  7pm AA Common-**Y** | **25**  **Thanksgiving**  **Worship Service @ Parks 10am** | **26**  10:30am Book Grp-**Z** | **27** |
| 8:30am Bnrd **28**  Frnds-**Y**  10am Wrship-**Y&V**  11am Fellowship-**Y**  ***Special Offering:***  ***Soup Kitchen***  ***\*\*Newsletr Dedline\*\**** | **29**  12pm Vets Book Grp- **Our Zoom** | **30**  2pm Emotions Anon-**Y**  5:30pm Overeaters Anon-**Y**  1:30pm 1st Cong host MN Conf Gathering |  |  | **Cancelled til Fall**  \*Sun. Bk Stdy  \*Poetry Happy Hour  \*Process Film Group | **V** or **Z** –**Virtual** Online (FB/ YouTube) or **Zoom**  **C**- Cancelled  **Y**- Mtg. in person  ?- no updates  N-None |

\*\*\*Terri Admin. Asst. is on vacation 10/10 thru 10/12/21\*\*\*