

**GRANITE FALLS
UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST
210 Ninth Avenue
Granite Falls MN 56241
Change Service Requested
THE ENCOUNTER
November 2020 Issue #11**

CHURCH LEADERSHIP DIRECTORY

PASTOR: RANDY MOE

OFFICE ASSISTANT: KAREN MOE

ORGANIST: Randy Moe

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Karen Moe

MODERATOR: JOHN BUTTERBRODT

TREASURER: Konnie Holtz

CHOIR DIRECTOR: Randy Moe

CHURCH ADDRESS: 210 NINTH AVENUE, GRANITE FALLS, MN 56241

CHURCH E-MAIL ADDRESS: uccgfmn@gmail.com

CHURCH PHONE: 320-564-2442

PASTOR E-Mail: Randy_Moe@ymail.com

CELL PHONE: 612-296-1210

PASTOR'S OFFICE HOURS: Saturday 2:00pm-5:00pm or by Appointment

OFFICE HOURS: 10:30 A.M. to 2:30 P.M.

Monday, Tuesday, Thursday, Friday

WEB SITE: www.granitefallsucc.org

NOVEMBER

WEEKLY SCRIPTURE READINGS

| | |
|--------|--|
| Nov 1 | Revelation 7:9-17, Psalm 34:1-10, 22, 1 John 3:1-3, Matthew 5:1-12 |
| Nov 8 | Amos 5:18-24, Psalm 70, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-18 , Matthew 25:1-13 |
| Nov 15 | Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18 , Psalm 90:1-12 1 Thessalonians 5:1-11, Matthew 25:14-30 |
| Nov 22 | Ezekiel 34:11-24, Psalm 95:1-7a, Ephesians 1:11-23, Matthew 25:31-46 |
| Nov 29 | Isaiah 64:1-9, Psalm 80:1-7, 17-19 1 Corinthians 1:3-9, Mark 13:24-37 |

Birthdays

| | |
|--------|-------------------------------|
| Nov 4 | Audrey Zempel Jerry Koepke |
| Nov 5 | Bea Read |
| Nov 10 | John (Snig) Halling |
| Nov 17 | Cheri Fjermestad |
| Nov 23 | Sherri Gatchell |
| Nov 25 | Peggy Mooney Butch Olson |
| Nov 27 | Bryan Mooney |



INFORMATION YOU NEED TO KNOW

REMEMBER TO CONTINUE TO GIVE

Please do not forget that the expenses of the church go on even when we can't be there so it will be appreciated if you continue to send your offerings to the church. You are all the best!

COUNCIL

The church council will be meeting at the church on Sunday November 15 at 4:pm with safety precautions taken.

CIRCLE OF STONES

Circle of Stones will meet on Thursday, November 19th by Zoom only.

MISSION EMPHASIS FOR NOVEMBER IS FOOD SHELF AND COATS FOR KIDS

2020 continues to a truly memorable year and most of the reasons are negative. With over 33million jobs furloughed, laid off or lose, the demand for assistance continues to escalate, even though the economy begins to learn how to cope with Covid-119 and recover. Food assistance needs stand at an all time high for our food shelf. And with the sudden onset of the winter weather the needs of our local school system for coats, hats, scarfs, boots, gloves, mittens, snow pants for the elementary children. November mission emphasis is to benefit the Food Shelf and Coats for Kids. Please remember to make a generous gift this month in support of those in need.

OPENING OF THE CHURCH AND OFFICE HOURS

For now we will continue to hold our Sunday Services on FaceBook live at 9:30am with a Zoom coffee hour after. (Note Change In Time) We feel it is safer to do things on line rather than in person. We have actually been able to connect with some extra people this way. Also please join us on Wednesday evenings for our zoom devotion-coffee time. It is a great way to connect with our church family. The church office will be closed until the church is open for services. I can be reached by email or phone as I am working from home. You can reach Randy at 612-296-1210 and Karen at 612-296-7072

SUNDAY SCHOOL

A packet of Sunday School materials and activities has been sent out to each child in our church. This will take place every month so they can have Sunday School at home. The Christian Ed Committee has spent lots of time and energy doing this. They would appreciate any feed-back from our Sunday School families— do you like this? Do you use the materials? Do you make the crafts? If not they will discontinue this service. Thanks in advance for your response.

A DEVOTION FROM PASTOR RANDY

1 Thessalonians 4:13-18

13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brothers and sisters, about those who have died, so that you may not grieve as others do who have no hope. 14 For since we believe that Jesus died and rose again, even so, through Jesus, God will bring with him those who have died. 15 For this we declare to you by the word of the Lord, that we who are alive, who are left until the coming of the Lord, will by no means precede those who have died. 16 For the Lord himself, with a cry of command, with the archangel's call and with the sound of God's trumpet, will descend from heaven, and the dead in Christ will rise first. 17 Then we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up in the clouds together with them to meet the Lord in the air; and so we will be with the Lord forever. 18 Therefore encourage one another with these words.

This passage brings us a picture of a dramatic scene. It's a picture of Jesus returning to earth, uttering a commanding cry, and the cry of the archangel and the sound of God's trumpet. The dead rise from their graves, and living believers rising from the earth to join them in the air, and all of them descending into heaven to be with God forever.

Christians have looked forward to the return of Christ since the beginning of Christianity. The first generation of believers were certain it would occur during their lifetimes. And they had practical questions: why hasn't it happened yet? Will those of us who are still alive go to be with God and leave those who have died behind? Will the coming of Christ cause us to be separated from our loved ones?

Paul responded to these questions with great pastoral wisdom. He wasn't primarily trying to give them a picture of how these events would unfold, but rather to encourage them in their faith. Those who belong to Christ will be joined together. Together with one another, and together with Jesus. Believers could live confidently, knowing that the reconciliation they had already received from Jesus would continue and would ultimately be fulfilled completely.

Here in this world, we live in a state of being that's sometimes called "already, but not yet." The reign of God has begun on earth, but it is not yet complete. We live in unity with God and with one another, but this unity is not yet complete. Sin and human rebellion prevent the fullness of God's kingdom from being achieved yet. But the day is coming when the reign of God will complete. Sin and rebellion and death will no longer hold it back.

This is something to look forward to with joyful anticipation. The return of Christ isn't some kind of sneak attack that we should be afraid of. God isn't waiting to catch us asleep so that he can kick us out of the kingdom. Rather, the passages of scripture that tell us to be ready are meant as an encouragement. The wait may seem long, but he's really coming. The night is long, but daylight will break forth. In Christ, God has reconciled with us. There's no longer a barrier. The rift has been healed. And someday that reality will be visible, full and complete. Death, sickness, fear, doubt—none of these things can keep us away from perfect fellowship with God and with God's people.

So today, when life seems tense and nerve wracking, when our nation is divided and angry, when we long to be together but we're afraid to be together, let's be encouraged as we look forward to that day when all of God's people will be together with God in perfect love and unity.

**Granite Falls United Church of Christ (Congregational)
Council Minutes
September 16, 2020 (Rescheduled from September 9)**

John called the meeting to order at 7:08. Council members present: Bea, Dennis, John, Konnie, Peggy, Randy, Sharon, Spencer, Sue. Steve is not feeling well.

Devotions: Sharon

1. **Review, Modify, and Approve the Agenda:** Add 8A—Sign Snow Removal Contract. Approve as modified: Peggy/Spencer/U.

2. **Minutes of August 13, 2020 Council Meeting:** Approve: Sharon/Dennis/U.

3. **Committee Reports:**

Christian Education: Meeting Monday at 5 pm to plan for distance learning Sunday school.

Worship, Sanctuary, and Membership: Not met

Building and Maintenance: No report. Spencer will see that the new tree gets watered.

Stewardship: September mission emphasis is Neighbors in Need and October will be the fall Stewardship campaign.

Memorials and Bequests: Will meet again October 28.

Pastor Parish Relations Committee: Not met

Wider Church Happenings: A portion of Pilgrim Point camp is being sold to Douglas County for a park.

Approve: Spencer/Sharon/U

4. **Financial Report:** The phone bill is high because of Century Link's billing cycle and will be small next month. The abandoned car is gone, but no bill from Meyer's yet. If one doesn't come soon, John will take the \$130 payment to them. The bill from the electrician for the AC is still not in. As of 9/1 there was \$7,481.82 in the checking account. Approve: Peggy/Dennis/U.

5. **Moderator's Report:** John expressed gratitude to Randy for keeping the church together during this time.

6. **Pastor's Report:** The kinks have been worked out of the Sunday morning service. The church will need to purchase a laptop eventually, and Randy currently owns all the other equipment being used.

Randy updated the Council on the internet situation. He could not contact CenturyLink and Mediacom would have to install cable to the building. MVTV put in a new receiver on the roof and reconfigured it to get increased speed on both download and upload. The Council recommended putting Mediacom on hold to see how MVTV now works.

Randy installed an extender for the wireless system to help during Circle of Stones.

7. **Old Business:**

Church Bell: Microphone switched out with one from the sound system, but not yet installed.

Parsonage Fund Investment: Spencer talked to Thrivent and they will send materials, which he will forward to the Council when they come in.

Membership Approval of By-Law Changes: TABLED

Membership Approval of Church Start Time (Council recommends 9:30 AM): Randy was asked to write a letter to the congregation with an update on what is happening. The start time proposal will be put in the bulletin and mentioned at Sunday's service.

Randy Moe Licensure with Minnesota Conference: Randy needs proof of membership in our congregation. Motion to accept Randy into membership of Granite Falls United Church of Christ: Peggy/Spencer/U.

Fund Raising for Air Conditioning: TABLED

Junked Car in Parking Lot: See item #4.

Consider Minnesota Conference Pandemic Assistance Grants: Karen will apply for a grant to cover a laptop and other equipment purchased for broadcasting the service.

Gradual Church Reopening: Anyone who cannot access the service on line will be invited to call Randy and he can allow them to come to church on an exception basis. We will not fully open the church for a while yet.

Stained Glass: Sleepy Eye can't get the plastic needed to replace the cracked covering on the window and has no one who could install it if they did get some. Sharon contacted French Glass and they can't get the plastic either. She will contact them to put us on the list for when it does become available.

8. **New Business:**

Sign Snow Removal Contract: Soine rate increased by \$5 to \$45 per push. Approve: Spencer/Dennis/U.

9. **Church Use Requests:** None

10. **Devotions for Next Meeting:** Sue

11. **Next Meeting:** Since, Wednesdays require both John and Randy to make a mid-week trip to Granite Falls, the council meetings will be moved to the second Sunday of the month. Next meeting will be Sunday, October 11, 2020 (4:00 PM)

12. **Adjourn with the Lord's Prayer:** Peggy/Spencer/U



To the members and friends of Granite Falls United Church of Christ:

Pastor Randy and I would like to wish you all a very Blessed and Happy Thanksgiving! We are so grateful for the privilege of serving you and thankful for each of you. Thank you for being so good to us and always being there for us. We love you all!!

Karen