

THE MUSTARD SEED



Vol. 36, Issue 1, September, 2008, Edition

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See You There!

Great Fall Get Together Sunday, September 14

Come and celebrate the beginning of a new church year in worship at 10 a.m., September 14.

WATER RITUAL

Please bring water from the lake, from your rain catcher, or from your own kitchen sink on September 14. During the opening hymn, we will be asking all members of RUCC to bring water forward as a symbol of our coming together and rejoining the community. Add yours to the mix and may we all find strength in our return home.

A potluck lunch will follow the worship service. Please bring a dish to share and greet your RUCC friends!



From Your Pastor And Teacher

“Go to the people. Learn from them. Live with them.

Start with what they know. Build with what they have. The best of leaders when the job is done, when the task is accomplished, the people will say we have done it ourselves.” —Lao Tzu

Leadership is something that people yearn for. They want to see it in themselves and they want to surround themselves with people skilled in leadership. One of my dreams for Robbinsdale United Church of Christ is to be a leadership academy of sorts. I want each member to hone the skills of leadership in themselves and to encourage those skills in one another. A congregation of leaders may seem like a headache for the pastor, but I think it is a vibrant place to be. I see a congregation of leaders as one that shares, not blame, but responsibility. I see a congregation of leaders as not holding the process hostage, but encouraging new and creative ideas. I see a congregation of leaders accepting the cost and joy of discipleship.

Great leadership involves lifting up the folks around us to greater and greater heights, and also understanding our own limitations. What we really have to do is learn to live with each other, learn about each other's lives so that we can understand the gifts that each of us brings into this mix. When I look at our VERY busy church calendar for the fall, I see every event, every gathering, every meeting as an opportunity to grow as leaders. We are moving in this ministry of ours. We are growing, and we are exploring the possibilities of greatness. Our faith assures us that creating God's kin-dom is the goal.

One of my favorite lines in the presidential campaign so far was Senator Obama responding when asked about when a child should be guaranteed human rights. He responded, “That's above my pay grade.” When asked about the origin of life in a mother's womb, Senator Obama doesn't try to get the answer “right.” Instead, he showed humble leadership. Only God knows when life begins. This is a moral decision for every individual and good leadership allows people to wrestle with their faith and their God for their own answer. None of us know God's will in every instance, but all us know that any decision involving life is one that filled with personal, communal, and societal implications.

As we grow as leaders at the Robbinsdale United Church of Christ Leadership Academy, I hope that each of us will take on the big issues, speak our truth, and allow for the room to grow. Great leaders are able to change course and never stop discerning what is next. As we get ready for the Great Fall Get Together on September 14th, I hope that we'll come ready to lead, to share, to grow, and to explore who God is calling us to be.

See you in church,
T. Michael



September Schedule

Worship in September

September 7. Twenty-second Sunday in ORDINARY TIME. Worship at 10:00 a.m. Infant and Toddler Care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 year olds through 5th grade, from 10:15-11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Exodus 12:1-14; Psalm 149; Romans 13: 8-14; Matthew 18: 15-20.

September 14. Twenty-third Sunday in ORDINARY TIME. Great Fall Get Together. Worship at 10:00 a.m. Holy Communion. Infant and Toddler Care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 year olds through 5th grade from 10:15-11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Exodus 14: 19-31; Psalm 114; Romans 14: 1-12; Matthew 18: 21-35.

September 21. Twenty-fourth Sunday in ORDINARY TIME Service at 10:00 a.m. Infant and Toddler Care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 year olds through 5th grade, from 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Exodus 16: 2-15; Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45; Philippians 1: 21-30; Matthew 20: 1-16.

September 28. Twenty-fifth Sunday in ORDINARY TIME. Service at 10:00 a.m.. Infant and Toddler Care available. Bible Adventures for children 3 year olds through 5th grade, from 10:15 - 11:15 a.m. Lectionary texts: Exodus 17: 1-7; Psalm 78: 1-4, 12-16; Philippians 2: 1-13; Matthew 21: 23-32.

Worship at RUCC is the central event of our community. We come to share stories, search for truth, and praise our God. Attending worship is part of your spiritual practice. Singing the hymns and praying the prayers are important, but sometimes attending coffee fellowship and sharing stories can further connect us to God and to each other. Worship and fellowship are both ways to praise God. The other two practices are serving others and attending Bible Study. This year think about becoming whole and committing yourself to worship, fellowship, service and study. I guarantee the benefits of this approach to faith.

September 7th – Guest Preacher – Lyn Koss
Sacrament of Baptism for Blake Anderson

Lyn is a member of RUCC and has been serving on the Trustees Ministry and as the coordinator for Families Moving Forward. She also brought us the opportunity to share and sacrifice during the holiday season last year. Lyn will welcome us into this church year and challenge us in walk of service and discipleship.

September 14th-GREAT FALL GET TOGETHER and Communion Sunday

Scripture Texts: Exodus 14:19-31 and Matthew 18:21-22

Sermon: “Marching to Freedom” - Rev. T. Michael Rock

Welcome home for many in our church as our program year begins and we celebrate the gift of being in community and bearing our burdens together. We will be challenged to explore our fears and doubts and our own opportunities to heal and be healed. Come to the table and know that you have always been welcome. Let us invite our friends to the journey of Exodus and faith.

September 21st-National Neighborhood Day

Scripture Text: Matthew 20:1-16

Sermon: “Bringing in the Sheaves”– Student Minister, Frank Bennett

What a gift it is this week to experience the gifts of our student minister. It will be a time to support Frank, but also engage in both his learning process and ours. One of the wonderful gifts of sharing this process with our local seminary is that it reminds all of us that we can always learn from those around us. As we witness Frank’s call to ministry, I wonder what our call to ministry will be?

September 28th -Sacred Conversation on Race

Scripture Texts: Philippians 2:1-13 and Matthew 21:23-27

Sermon: “Dancing Together: Humility and Authority”– Rev. T. Michael Rock

Can these two attributes dance together? Can we actually use our power and authority to serve others? The struggle of the early church is our struggle as well. Truth is revealed in faith and authority is gained, but it is hard to wield the sword of truth gently. Let’s come this Sunday to confront our power and privilege and seek to serve.

**Let's Be Prepared to Welcome
Our New Student Minister
FRANK BENNETT**

Frank is a member at Wayzata Community UCC and is entering his final year at United Theological Seminary. He brings a wealth of experience and energy to this ministry, and we are fortunate to be able to help him and learn from him. Please make it point to introduce yourselves to Frank, and remember to wear your nametags.

**Sunday, September 21st
National Neighborhood Day
www.neighborhoodday.org**

There will be an **ICE CREAM SOCIAL** following the church service for our neighbors and friends. Let's meet out on the parking lot and show our neighbors what a wonderful family of faith we have at RUCC.



This event is sponsored by the Community Outreach and Communication and Evangelism Ministries.

Consider hosting an event in your neighborhood as well.

**YEP - 2
YOUTH KICK-OFF
Sunday, September 21st
12:30 p.m. in the Youth Room
After the ICE CREAM SOCIAL
Parents and youth are invited to come**

We'll talk about activities for both High School and Middle School youth and also play some games and do some initial brainstorming about the coming year. If you have questions, contact T. Michael or any member of the Youth Ministry.

**WORSHIP LEADER TRAINING
SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27th
9:00 to 11:00 a.m.**

Have you wanted to take part in leading worship? Have you already signed up to be a worship leader? This training will cover the purpose and meaning of worship and nourish your gifts as a prayerful leader. It is required for people who plan on leading worship to attend at least one of these trainings every year, but it is open to anyone who want to find out more about why our liturgy looks and feels the way it does.

**NEW MEMBER CLASSES
BEING FORMED NOW!**

So many wonderful new families of every size and shape are among us. What a blessing. If you would like to become a member of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ, please join us for lunch following worship on Sunday, October 19th, for a time of Introduction to Membership, and Sunday, October 26th, for a more in-depth look at RUCC and how to be involved. The last meeting will take place on Monday, October 27th, at 7:00 p.m. at the church. It is this final meeting where people choose to join our family of faith. If you have any questions or know someone who may be interested, please contact T. Michael at 612-275-0387.

**SACRED CONVERSATION ON RACE
September 28th – following worship**

Grab a cup of coffee and head back to the sanctuary for an important discussion on race, diversity, the role of the church and our personal power. Last year, our denomination encouraged all UCC churches to engage in this conversation as a way to start the discussion. This is important for all of us and I hope you'll attend. There will be child care provided. If you have any questions, please contact T. Michael.

**Threads of Hope Quilting Group
Will Meet Again This Fall**

The quilting group will resume working on Monday, Sept. 8, since the first Monday is Labor Day. EVERYONE is welcome - anytime between 5 and 9 p.m. in the Heritage Hall. New quilt tops have been cut and prepared for sewing - a machine will be available for anyone interested in sewing, rather than tying, quilts that night. Help is available - be brave - try something new! And anyone who wants to come and choose fabrics from our LARGE stash is welcome - to design and sew something at home. Anyone who wants to come and knit prayer shawls for the prayer shawl ministry is also welcome. Chatter is enjoyed by all! Any questions? Call Nancy Bossert (763-473-0714) or Dawn Conn (763-424-6525).



RUCC SERVES FAIRLY TRADED COFFEE



Robbinsdale UCC is committed to serving coffee and other products that are fairly traded for greater benefit to the people who work to produce them. Fairly traded products are good for the producers and good for our ministry to the world. Through direct arrangements with the distributors, farmers who labor to produce the products receive a higher income and improved quality of life, often resulting in better medical care and education for their children. This is in contrast to the large coffee companies that forcibly depress prices at the detriment of the underpaid workers in developing countries. Several visitors have been impressed to see our emphasis on fairly traded products, that we really do "walk the talk."

We have many generous people who have donated coffee for use during hospitality time and other events at church. We appreciate their thoughtfulness and generosity. We now urge you to provide Fair Trade coffee for all uses at RUCC. If you want to donate coffee for use at the church, you may make a donation directly to the Hospitality Ministry for the purpose. For those who want to continue this ministry in their personal lives, most stores are now selling Fair Trade coffee.

RUCC NAMED "GREEN CHURCH"

RUCC has been recognized by the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ for our efforts in energy conservation and sustainability principles. At the Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the UCC in June 2008, we were recognized as a "Green Church 2008, Recognition of Earthwise Stewardship." We achieved this recognition because of our efforts to save energy, including the installation of energy saving lighting and controlling the temperature in separate parts of the building. Credit for these improvements should go to the Trustees and to everyone who turns off lights when leaving a meeting area.

An Invitation to Join Pilgrim Guild and Discover Motorcycling with the Puffers

We would like to extend a special invitation to adults of all ages to join us the second Tuesday of each month for the RUCC Pilgrim Guild. The Guild continues to be an active group, providing an important link in the chain that makes RUCC such a special place. We would love to see new faces at our

first meeting.

Our first meeting this fall will be Tuesday, September 9. The Social Gathering begins at 12 noon. Dessert and beverages will be served by our hosts, Ken Evans and Jan Paulsen. We will have a short business meeting to finalize plans for the coming year. Dues are still only \$5.00 a year. What a bargain!

Our first program will feature Jim and Louiva Puffer. They have recently traveled by **motorcycle** to South Carolina and Georgia, camped at a BMW rally in Gillette, Wyoming, and visited Jasper and Banff National Parks in Alberta. Jim also has recently traveled to Nova Scotia. Wow!

We encourage you to join us. If you are not on our calling list, just let Jan Paulsen 763-529-1986 know. Mark your calendars and plan to attend.

We All Learn from "Children's Time"

Thanks from the Worship Ministry to all those who contributed items for "the box" and who took time to help the children explore the many ways in which every-day things enhance our relationship to God. We are all grateful for your willingness to enhance our worship service through Children's Time.



Time Capsule Opened

On August 26 construction workers demolished the entry steps so new steps can be constructed, and removed the time capsule that was placed there in 1960. Bill Bossert, who was moderator when RUCC's new building was begun, opened the time capsule which contained bylaws and leaders of the church at that time, as well as a brief history and a newspaper of the day. A new time capsule will be placed in the new steps.

Women's Group Will Meet September 7

The next meeting of the Women's Group will be Sunday, September 7, at 11:30, after the church service. Since that day is Grandparents' Day, our topic for the day will be to share memories of one of our grandparents or another "elder" who influenced us as we grew up. Bring your own lunch and join us as we begin a new year of fellowship. All are welcome.



Happy Birthday!

Greetings and best wishes to all members and friends of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ who celebrate their birthdays in September.

Debra	Evans	September	2
Caol	Abild	September	3
Keith	Smith	September	3
Jim	Conn	September	6
Erin	Johnson	September	6
Denise	Morin	September	6
Karen	Clara	September	7
Jennifer	Broms	September	8
Pat	Bobleter	September	10
Rick	Hackney	September	12
Jim	Gausman	September	13
Willa	Truehart	September	13
Mary Jane	Lee	September	15
Barbara	Sexton	September	15
Sheryl	Fisher	September	16
Dale	Fisher	September	19
Dawn	Conn	September	20
Justin	Blaine	September	22
Josh	Gausman	September	22
Bill	O'Brien	September	22
Janet	Johnson	September	23
Kassie	Gausman	September	24
Erin	Greenwood	September	26
Coley	Walker	September	26
Barbara	Webber	September	26
Karen	Abild	September	27
Todd	Greenwood	September	27
Shelley	Olsen	September	27
Janice	Paulsen	September	27
Susie	Klatke	September	29
Kent	Rasmussen	September	29
Barbara	Wills	September	30

Commemoration of RUCC's Beginning

The Robbinsdale Historical Society will dedicate a plaque commemorating the original site of Robbinsdale United Church of Christ at 42nd Avenue North and County Road 81, where Pilgrim Cleaners is now located. The church was then known as First Congregational Church of Robbinsdale. This dedication will take place on Saturday, September 27, at 10:30 a.m.

September Schedule...

INTERFAITH LEISURE AGE
9 AM. SOCIAL HOUR
12 NOON LUNCH AND PROGRAM:
Lunch Reservations Required
Elim Lutheran Church.

3748 West Broadway in Robbinsdale

Sept. 4—Bob Clark and Mary Kopet, vocalist and pianist.

Sept. 11—“One Man Quartet” Terry G. Hall.

Sept. 18—Blood pressures taken 9:30-11:30 a.m. Program: Kevin Doely, musical ventriloquist.

Sept. 25—September Birthday Party. Program: Bud Kraehling and his wife Shirley Lockwood perform a program of stories from the early days of WCCO.

Leisure Age meets on Thursday from 9:00-2:00. Lunch costs \$8.00. It is now necessary to make reservations if you plan to attend. If you're present one week, you can sign the reservation book that is passed at the table to attend the following week. If you are not present, you can make reservations Monday 9 a.m. to noon by calling Jean Lindstrom at 763-537-1171. You may also use this number to cancel a reservation.

If you have any questions, please contact:

Leonard Sidle, 763-504-0465, or Keith Smith, 612-588-1401

OUR PICTURE DIRECTORY

Final steps are underway to complete the picture directory and distribute it to all RUCC members. A complete draft has been sent to Olan Mills, the company producing the directory. Accounting for review of a final proof book and a quite lengthy production period for Olan Mills, our strong expectation is that the finished directories will be available by the end of October. Photographs of all members who have joined since the formal portraits were taken will be included in the directory. Contact Jim Benshoof if you have any questions.

Community News

We extend our sympathy to the family and friends of Arlene Whelan who passed away on August 18th.

David Plumb officiated at the baptism of Lissi and Doug Weiss' grandson on the July 13th. Tyler and Emma Smith and Noah Duwenhoegger, children of Kristi Smith and Nancy Duwenhoegger, were baptized by T. Michael Rock on July 20th.

September 21st:

A Special Day to Be at RUCC

Our new student minister from United Theological Seminary, Frank Bennett, will be preaching on September 21st. Also on that day, third graders will receive their own Bibles to use, and the NEW sanctuary Bibles will be dedicated.



Come to greet, dedicate, worship, and celebrate on September 21st. Then have a treat at the Ice Cream Social following the service.

What's our response to the financial crisis facing our schools?

The schools in our community have fallen on hard times. On average, state funding for public schools has dropped over 5% in the last five years due to a "no new taxes" policy and declining state revenue. The Minneapolis, Robbinsdale, Osseo, and Brooklyn Center school districts are all asking the voters to approve referendums this fall in order to increase the amount of money raised by property taxes. While all school districts have been taking steps to decrease costs and improve efficiency, most are facing more tough choices that decrease a child's ability to achieve: increasing classroom size by laying off teachers. There is no justice for kids in this situation, as both the federal and state government's have failed to adequately supply schools with necessary resources and local taxpayers revolt at having to pay more. I invite you to learn more about this crisis and learn what we can do together to nurture and protect our society's most vulnerable and valuable assets: the children. Please join me on Sept 21st after the service to get involved.

Scott A Johnson
763-537-4564

Opportunity Next Door Update

The Opportunity Next Door "Phase II" committee will give an update to the congregation on Sunday, September 14th, during the Great Fall Get Together. We've been working all summer and are still moving forward with the project. We'll see you at the wonderful meal following the service on the 14th! If you have any questions, please ask Ken Beck, Chioma Onwukwe, or T. Michael Rock.



Men's Breakfast Group will meet Saturday, September 6, at 7:30 a.m.

PLANNING AHEAD...

One of the kindest things you can do for those you love is to plan your funeral and memorial. We have created a booklet to help with such a plan. They are available in the church office at anytime. Just pick one up or ask T. Michael or Gretchen to mail you one. Many of you have already made plans, and this will be just one more assurance for you and your loved ones that your wishes are carried out. T. Michael will also be glad to sit with you to help with your plan. Please let us know if you have any questions.

Coordinating Council August 19, 2008

- *Treasurer: We are behind in pledge income year-to-date. Expenses are as expected.
- *Vacation Bible School starts Aug. 25. Good number of kids and volunteers!
- *T. Michael will be on vacation the first week of September.
- *Opportunity Next Door: The committee has worked through the summer with PCNF to explore funding.
- *Langer Construction will replace the entry steps beginning Aug. 26. The Time Capsule, which was included in the original steps in 1960, will be opened. Parking lot repair, including striping, will also be done.
- *Church Directory is scheduled to be delivered by the end of October.
- *Planning ahead for budgeting process, Nominating Committee, and Stewardship campaign.
- *New Bibles for pews are here.
- *Youth: Our Whole Life (OWL) will kick off in September and end in December.
- *Bible Adventures begins September 7.
- *Participation in Whiz Bang Parade was fun. Thanks to all who participated and helped with the float.
- *RUCC is committed to providing 60 volunteers for Feed My Starving Children on Sept. 13. Please sign up.
- *Colleen Rawley (FBI whistle-blower) will offer a presentation at RUCC on October 16, sponsored by NW Neighbors for Peace and hosted by National and Global Mission Ministry.
- *Faith Formation will be airing "For the Bible Tells Me So."

Tuesdays w/T —A Bible Study for Beginners
Begins on Tuesday, September 23rd
12 Noon – at Waterford Housing
(County Road 81 and 63rd Ave. No.)
6 p.m. – in Heritage Hall

Theme for the Year – Our Friend Paul

The Apostle Paul is the author of more words in scripture than any other single writer. His letters are filled with questions and answers to some of our great theological issues. Come and join our exploration of one who found in the Risen Christ a reason for living and giving and, along the way, had to deal with some of his own sufferings and weaknesses.

This Bible Study will ask people to pick up the Bible and read aloud every Tuesday. Together, we will search for wisdom, insight, and God's voice. All questions are welcome. No prior knowledge of the Bible is required. Everyone will laugh and learn. If you have any questions, please talk with T. Michael.

October Issue. . .

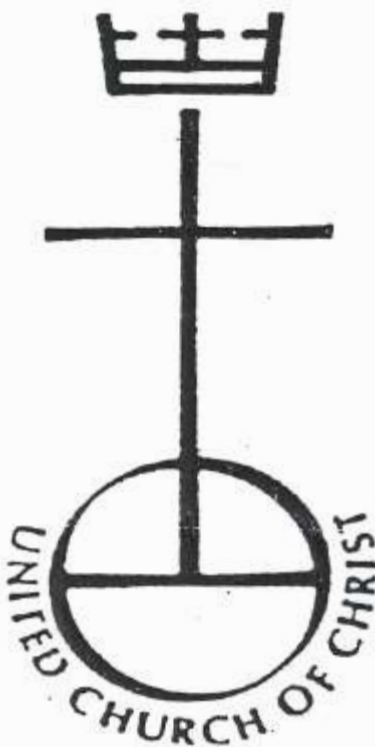
Mustard Seed



Please place all articles for the next issue of the Mustard Seed in the box marked "Mustard Seed" on the shelf inside the door to the workroom in the church office, *e-mail* to thewillses@aol.com (preferred) or mail them to Barbara Wills, 6214 Upland Lane No., Maple Grove 55311, so that they are received by the deadline.

PLEASE NOTE: Early Deadline
OCT. ISSUE
Sunday, Sept. 14, 11 a.m.

(Oct. issue will be mailed Friday, Sept. 19.)



Robbinsdale United Church of Christ
4200 Lake Road
Robbinsdale, MN 55422

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