



The Messenger: January 2016
Edina Morningside Community Church, UCC
We are an Open and Affirming congregation

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From Pastor Howard

In This Issue

[From Pastor Howard](#)

[Moderator's Corner](#)

[Christian Education](#)

[Settled Pastor Update](#)

[Daylight Update](#)

[Financial Update](#)

[Preschool News](#)

Message from Interim Pastor
Rev. Howard K. Bell
***A Page Turner, Section 3,
Chapter 9***



In the September 2015 Messenger, I wrote: "*I am beginning to think of our Interim Ministry Time together as though we are writing a most interesting book - in fact, I find it to be quite 'A Page Turner'*". I suggested that each month spent together could be considered one chapter and that the first four months/chapters seemed to be the conclusion of one section of the book. Thus, as I write this message for the January 2016 Messenger, we have now completed eight months together, end of Section 2 and ready to begin Section 3. Before we begin what could be the last section, let us review some accomplishments from Section 2.

Rally Day kicked off our fall programming year in a fun and exciting fashion. Plans for ministries were shared at tables, children were able to enjoy exploring an Edina Fire Company fire truck, and we all enjoyed the "instant band" and ice cream social. This day also marked the announcement of **Morningside U**. The Vision for Morningside U came originally from the Membership Committee, gained momentum from the Board of Christian Education (BOCE), and was fully implemented by **Janet Anderson**, as a unique outreach program for our church. The vision is that church members offer to teach community classes based on the particular skills they have, without any expectation that the classes have a religious function. They are offered free or with a free will offering, for everyone in the community - church members and non-members. The participation in Morningside U has exceeded anyone's highest hopes and expectations. **Mary Rogers** filled her spiritual writing group which has

[Front Porch Friday](#)

[Pastoral Care](#)

[Taize Worship](#)

[VEAP Update](#)

[January Calendar](#)

[Women's Fellowship](#)

[Messenger Deadline](#)

[Morningside After Dark](#)

[Morningside Theatre Camp](#)

[Stewardship Update](#)

Pastoral Care



Join us in the EMC
Sanctuary on Sunday,
January 17th for our regular
Taize service, from 7-7:30
pm, followed by a light soup
supper in the library. All are
welcome!

continued beyond the one-time offering due to popular demand; **Dan Jurgens** enthralled young and old teaching about his cartoon creations; **Pam Olson** and **Marge Ellingson** demonstrated Lefse Making while offering scrumptious holiday treats for more than 75 people; the youth group, supported by the BOCE hosted and entertained more than 125 people for the Halloween Party; and the Advent Workshop, coordinated by **Cathy Baldwin** brought in another 100 or more fully satisfied Morningside U registrants.

Eight **Confirmands** kicked off this year's confirmation program with a lock-in at church and have been fully engaged in learning, discussion and fun activities. **Kris Kulevsky** is co-teacher with me and Janet Anderson our wonderful advisor and fill-in. Service projects have been integrated with many more group activities planned to complete the year. A dedicated, bright, inquisitive group of humans!

Other snapshots of accomplishments in the last four months:

- The updated website was inaugurated ahead of schedule thanks to heroic efforts by **Steve** and **Robin Ray** and the participation of most of our lay leaders.
- Thanks to **Charlie Green's** research and management, we purchased a new church database to upgrade record keeping for membership, contributions, church groups, etc.
- Our third floor space was painted and remodeled thanks to **Greg Martens'** Eagle Scout Project.
- Music Program, directed by **Alex Heetland**, continues to provide inspiration for our worship experiences.
- **Worship attendance**, which often is a challenge during Interim Time, has largely kept pace with last year and actually increased a bit

VEAP UPDATE



*Meeting Basic Needs.
Building Stronger Communities.*

[A holiday greeting of thanks from VEAP](#)

Thank you for your support to the VEAP Toy Drive!! We've wrapped up another very successful year for the VEAP Holiday Toy Program. Last week, more than 1,600 households came to VEAP seeking assistance this holiday from VEAP. Gifts for more than 4,200 children were provided. Volunteers worked one on one with parents as they went from shelf to shelf in the Toy Store to select the best gifts for their children. We had Barbies, Legos, Frozen Toys, stuffed animals, sleds, Apples to Apples, hand knit hats and much more. The variety and selection was great for parents. When we opened the Toy Store we were very short on donations but people heard we needed help and soon donations

during Advent.

- **Pastoral Search Committee** has completed a draft of the **Church Profile**.
- Fulfilling **Advent Season** including a Sunday morning Bible Study and culminated in a delightful Christmas Pageant and Christmas Eve services.
- New rental relationship with **The Hand of AA** started in December on Wednesdays 5:30 - 6:30 pm.
- Significantly increased **financial support** in both current 2015 giving and 2016 pledges. (See elsewhere in this newsletter for details.)

I am so grateful for the gifts of time, talent and treasure that have both made all of the above accomplishments possible and have established a firm foundation for the last section of our Interim Ministry Book. The Interim Ministry Steering Committee of **Pam DeLaitre, Sarah Gednalske, Sonja Martens, Steve Ray, and Doug Toth** met recently to define our next priorities. In addition to completing the **call** of a new **Settled Pastor**, three priorities have been identified.

1.) The Cabinet, Trustees and the Congregation will address the need for **building repairs and upgrades** - as well as the funding of these projects.

2.) Specific **goals** for living into our vision will be approved; and

3.) A revision to our **governance structure** will be brought to the Congregation for approval on the April 17, 2016 Annual Congregational Meeting.

One final thought about the end of our Interim Ministry Time. My contract as your Interim Minister expires at the end of April 2016. That is the one-year timeframe I have been using for completing this "Page-Turner Book". However, when a church

arrived faster than we could keep up sorting. Volunteers continuously sorted, filled the shelves for families and in the end we had plenty for everyone.

The week flew by and the days were so busy helping hundreds of families that it's easy blur everything together but two parents really stick out in my mind. One mother began shopping and soon found two sleds. She was giddy and I'm pretty sure her feet left the ground as she exclaimed, "This is just what they wanted! And now I can give it to them."

Another mother had tears going down her face as she stopped and thanked a group of volunteers, "you have no idea how much you help me every time I come here. It means so much." It was a special shopping experience for that volunteer as they found gifts for her children. It really was a happy week at VEAP with so many joyful and grateful parents.

Warmer weather and no snow was also helped keep everyone's spirits up. I hope and wish the joy the season continues as the families begin their special holiday celebrations at home.

undertakes a Pastoral Search, there are no guarantees as to the time for completing that search. There is also time required for the successful candidate to make arrangements for starting as your Settled Pastor. Therefore we are prepared to write an **epilogue**, if necessary. I am available to extend my contract past the end of April in order to ensure a smooth transition from the Interim Time and into the next book to be written by your new settled pastor and this beloved community. Thanks be to God for the ministries of Edina Morningside Community Church, United Church of Christ.

Moderator's Corner

by Sonja Martens

MISSION STATEMENT: At Edina Morningside Community Church, we are building a vibrant home for spiritual exploration and growth, where we care, learn, create and serve with each other in times of joy and in times of challenge. We warmly welcome people of all backgrounds and beliefs. Together, we deepen our connection with our Creator, and live Christ's commandment to love one another.

VISION STATEMENT: We welcome all into our loving Christian community. We strengthen families, friends, each other and our wider community as we joyously rise to the challenge of living Jesus Christ's example.

Happy New Year! As we enter 2016, we have a lot to be grateful for. We have accomplished a lot in 2015 (see Pastor Howard's message for a recap - I won't make you read it twice :-). We have really proven that, together, we can make amazing things happen.

As we come to an end of this year's Toy Program I can't thank you enough for your support. VEAP is very fortunate to have a community that continues to come thru and meet the needs of their neighbors. Thank you to everyone who contributed to the Toy Drive. Every book, gift card and toy helped us reach our goal and meet the needs of all the families who came to VEAP this holiday. It takes the support of thousands of generous, giving people to have a program for this many children and you came through for VEAP's families this year.

Again, thank you for your support the VEAP Toy Drive. It was a great year thanks to your support!

Happy Holidays,

Krista, on behalf of the VEAP toy drive

And don't forget that the food shelf can always use donations, at any time of the year. Let's fill up our narthex grocery cart!!

Barb Green, Deacons

And it has been a real community effort! If I tried to list everyone here who has contributed to our exciting year, it would take way more space than just a corner, so please, read your name here: _____! Thank you! I do want to say a special thank you to Pastor Howard, Janet Anderson, and Alex Heetland, who have provided so much guidance, support and inspiration to our community.

2016 promises to be just as exciting as we continue to move forward, to grow and revitalize as a community. We will be addressing a number of areas central to our communal life, including governance structures and maintenance of our beautiful building. The search for a new settled pastor will move into a new and exciting phase as the Search Committee moves toward identifying individual candidates. We have a balanced budget for the year and, as part of that, we are planning a rummage sale this summer (so save your unneeded and unwanted stuff for just a little bit longer)! And reach out to someone you haven't seen or talked to in a while. It is a time of new beginnings - and what better way to take advantage of a new start than to continue to strengthen our community and our living of Jesus Christ's example? May our love and compassion be a reflection of God's love in this bright new year.

January Calendar

January Calendar

Women's Fellowship



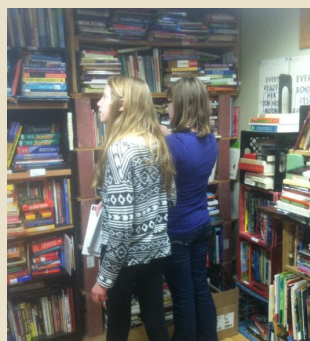
**MANY THANKS
FROM WOMEN'S
FELLOWSHIP!!**

The Christmas Bake Sale was a huge success! We made over \$700.00. Many thanks to everyone who contributed and/or purchased delicious things and creative crafts or served at the sale. Please know that all of the proceeds will be used for projects to benefit the church. We hope that this event made your holidays

Christian Education

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 3, 12:00-2:00: WOMEN'S
PRISON BOOK PROJECT**

Middle and high school students are encouraged to grab a bite to eat in Fellowship Hall after the service and then drive to Boneshaker Books (2002 23rd Avenue South, Minneapolis) to pick and pack



titles for shipment to women incarcerated throughout the United States. Jesus asked us to remember prisoners just as we remember the poor and the hungry, knowing that it is the grace of God that separates our circumstances. This is a joyful ministry of sending presents: a wonderful thing to do in this season of the magi and their gifts. If you have books to donate to the project, please bring them to church on the 3rd.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 16, 10:00-12:30:
MEMOIR WORKSHOPS FOR ADULTS & KIDS**

Due to the call of family love and obligation, Cathy Baldwin will be unable to present a memoir workshop exclusively for kids. But, as necessity is the mother of invention, Janet Anderson will welcome children for an intergenerational class on writing memoir for ages 10 and up. Janet has been adjunct faculty in English at St. Kate's and a mentor to gifted and talented elementary school students in the St. Louis Park Schools. She will present exercises designed for all ages to shape memories into interesting stories to be shared. No reading aloud required! Come and be inspired to create art from experience.

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 17, 5:00, MLK, JR
WORSHIP SERVICE**



TRUST, an interdenominational group of South Minneapolis churches, will present its annual worship service in celebration of the life

and legacy of The Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. at Living Spirit United Methodist Church (4501 Bloomington Avenue, Minneapolis.) We are encouraging confirmands to attend and invite the

all the merrier. Blessings from Women's Fellowship.



The Mitten Tree is Loaded!

Thank you! With every project our wonderful congregation digs deep and gives from the heart. The Mitten Tree is covered with beautiful warm hats, mittens and scarves for the clients of Community Emergency Services (CES). These items along with the loose change offering that has been collected during December will be delivered to CES to further their mission of helping people in need. Thank you again from Women's Fellowship.



rest of the congregation to join us after a year in which our consciousness has been raised about the need to continue reaching toward fair and loving race relations. We'll organize a caravan to a burger or pizza joint afterward for those who would like to eat together.

**WEDNESDAY, JANUARY 27, 6:30-8:00 p.m.
PLANNING FOR YOUTH MISSION**

Youth and their parents are encouraged to attend a presentation by Bill Peterson of St. John's Episcopal Church about long-term mission programming. St. John's does both a youth pilgrimage in Spain and intergenerational mission work in Guatemala. Bill directs both programs and will talk about their structure, logic, and cost, as well as show slides of recent visits. This is an opportunity for EMC to start thinking about and raising money for a big mission trip in 2017, which could be partnering with St. John's in Guatemala, or adopting a similar program.

**SATURDAY, JANUARY 30, 12:00-5:00 p.m.
OUTREACH SEWING CIRCLE AT PARKWAY
UCC**

Parkway UCC holds a periodic sewing circle to make blankets for use with Families Moving Forward. Participating does not require sewing skills: seamstresses and quilters are welcome, but so are those who can cut fabric and tie knots. This is an open house format at the church (3120 Washburn Avenue N., Minneapolis), but a light lunch is served at noon. Please RSVP to [Janet Anderson](#).

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 31, 10:15 a.m. PREP FOR
PANCAKE BREAKFAST!**

JANUARY BIRTHDAYS

| | |
|--------|------------------|
| Jan 1 | Kira Engelke |
| Jan 2 | Joan McCarthy |
| Jan 5 | Maggie Stevenson |
| Jan 10 | Janet Preston |
| Jan 11 | Michael Toth |
| Jan 15 | Hugh Jones |
| Jan 18 | Sarah Gednalske |
| Jan 22 | Harper Yang |
| Jan 23 | Annabelle Joyce |
| Jan 29 | Alex Beyerl |
| Jan 31 | Daniel Toth |

Please let us know if we've missed your big day!!

**Messenger
Deadline**



January 25th is the deadline for articles to be included in the February Messenger.

**Morningside
After Dark**

There will be no Sunday school lesson on January 31, but all ages will meet with Christian Education Director Janet Anderson to prepare for the Mardi Gras Pancake Breakfast which will be held the following week, on February 7th. Please connect with [Janet](#) now if you are an adult who can commit to helping with shopping, set-up, cooking with the kids, or clean-up. Thank you!



**BOCE MEETING THIS MONTH IS AT 7:00 P.M.
ON THURSDAY, JANUARY 14th.**

Janet Anderson
Director, Christian Education, Youth, & Family Life

Settled Pastor Update

Greetings from the Settled Pastor Search Committee, and Happy New Year!

We have a big year ahead in 2016. Just a quick update on the settled pastor search: we have completed the final draft of the church profile! If you were able to attend church during Sundays in Advent, you heard a brief update from the search committee members. We will post the draft on our secure church website soon, in case you would like to read it.

We are planning a information meeting where we will walk through the profile highlights on **January 31st.** Hope to see you there!

Doug Toth, on behalf of the search committee



Morningside After Dark (abbreviated as MADark) is thrilled to offer its fourth season of live music and storytelling hosted by EMC. Each winter program is centered around a theme and comprised of fourteen 3 to 5 minute sets alternating between the spoken word and live music. We will launch the 2016 series on January 25th from 7:30 to 9 pm with the theme "Hush" followed by February 22 (Dumped) and April 25 (Lost and Found). Caribou will provide coffee and we look for volunteers to help us with treats. The event is FREE but donations are encouraged and given back to EMC. If you or someone you know is interested in performing (or baking!), please contact me directly. As an added bonus, look for a full feature article on the show in the January issue of Edina Magazine. Past coverage has included the Sun Current and this feature in [Southwest Journal](#). On behalf of my fellow co-

organizers Laurie Lindeen and Jim Mahoney as well as our EMC volunteers who make it happen, big thanks for your support and we hope you join us for an exciting program on January 25th!
Rebecca Sorenson

DAYLIGHT CENTER & SCHOOL, KENYA



EMC Contact:
Pam DeLaitre
pdelait@earthlink.net

The circle of inclusiveness at the Daylight Center and School continues to grow and grow. To read about the vision for the future of Daylight in the upcoming year just click on the update link.
[Daylight January Update.](#)

Please continue to keep the people of Kenya, the dedicated people who support Daylight, and the staff and children at Daylight in your prayers.
Blessings!

Pam

Financial Update

December 19, 2015 Update on Status of Pledged Income

| | |
|------------------------|-------------|
| Pledge Income | YTD Dec. 19 |
| Budgeted Pledge Income | \$185,045 |
| Actual Pledge Income | \$188,873 |

Morningside Theatre Camp



Morningside Theatre Company Presents!

Edina Morningside Church offers 3 summer camps for children of all ages. Show announcements and registration forms and will be available on January 18th. Join in the fun!

**Children's Camp
AGES 5-7
M-F June 13th-17th 1:30-3:30 PM**

Variance

\$3,828

2015 Contributions toward Pledges through December 19, 2015 show that, as of that date, actual contributions have exceeded the budgeted amounts by \$3,828. If contributions continue through the end of December at budgeted amounts, we will have exceeded our total pledge amount for year. Thank you to everyone who fulfilled and exceeded your pledged amounts this year. Thank you for your faithful giving to the ministries of this church.



PRESCHOOL NEWS

Our holiday program was on Tuesday, December 15th. The children did a wonderful job singing and playing bells and drums. Family and friends attended the program. We had over 100 people come to Edina Morningside Preschool to celebrate the season. We enjoyed fellowship with cookies and juice after the program. It was a wonderful time! The preschool will be closed for Winter Break over Christmas and New Year. School will resume on January 5th. Our theme for the month will be community helpers. We will be discussing who are community helpers, what their jobs are and why they are important in our community. We'll be going to the Edina Police Department on Thursday, January 21st. We will have a tour of the department and see the police cars.

January 13th will be pajama and cooking day. The

This one-week camp focuses on making merry, while learning stage basics, singing and movement. A 20-minute recital for family and friends ends this weeklong camp.

Elementary Camp

AGES 8-11

M-F June 13- 24 8:30-12:30

This "new" two-week theatre intensive culminates in a 30-minute "kids" version of a musical, with 2 performances open to the community. Performances: June 24 @ 7PM and June 25 @ 10AM

Youth Camp

AGES 12-16

M-F June 6/27- July 7/15

This three-week intensive produces a 60-minute junior version musical, with four performances open to the community.

Curtain up!

Performances:

July 14-15 @ 7PM.

July 15-16 @ 10AM

children will be able to come to school in their cozy pj's and have a fun day at school. We will have a cooking project which we get to eat for snack. We will read a bedtime story before going home! The children are hopeful for snow in January. We are planning a sledding day on Thursday, January 28th. We are going to walk to a local park for sledding fun with friends.

Thank you for your continued support of Edina Morningside Preschool and wishing you all the best in the coming year!

[Melissa](#)

Front Porch Friday



FACES OF WAR - Russia in World War I
(1914 -1918)



Join the Front Porch Friday outing to **The Museum of Russian Art** on **Friday, January 15, 2016.**

Meet at the church at 10:00 AM to carpool to the Museum for the exhibit, followed by lunch at the Wise Acres Eatery nearby. The exhibit portrays Russia's role in World War I - that war that most of us don't know much about. In that era, 1914-1918, events happened that shaped the last century, and our world today. Russia was our ally in that war.

The exhibit features photos and artifacts illustrating the war and its effect on Russia as the monarchy was overthrown and communism arose.

If we have time, we can visit the downstairs display of Russian Samovars. Don't know what a Samovar is? Join us and find out!

There is a sign up sheet posted in the narthex or contact [Molly Cox](#) or [Laura Simonson](#).

2016 Stewardship Drive Surpasses Goal!

The 2016 Stewardship Drive was a huge success!

As reported prior to the Congregational Meeting to approve the budget for 2016, the Stewardship Board secured written and verbal commitments exceeding the goal of \$221,551 set by the Board of Trustees.

Highlights of this year's effort included:

- **\$225,654 in gifts and pledges**, representing a 14% increase over 2015 from 66 gifts/pledges made by members and friends.
- **New and Increased giving**: 79% of the gifts and pledges (52) represented either first-time or increased gift commitments. 10 individuals/families (18% of those giving in 2015) moved from one

gift level to the next giving level.

- **The stimulus of the EMC Women's Fellowship Challenge:** the challenge raised \$16,439 in new and increased pledge commitments, and effectively put the *2016 Stewardship Drive* over the top. See below for details.

Many, many thanks to everyone who made this year's drive so successful.

Your Stewardship Board

"Women's Fellowship Challenge" a tremendous success!

Three weeks ago, Edina Morningside's Women's Fellowship issued a challenge to the congregation...for every \$2 dollars of increased or new pledges for the *2016 Stewardship Drive*, \$1 from a "matching pool" would be made available.

Joining Women's Fellowship in this challenge were three families who increased their previous commitments to create a pool totaling \$6,000.

This meant an additional \$12,000 needed to be committed by members and friends!

The response was nothing short of phenomenal!

- \$16,439 in new and increased pledge commitments were received... over-subscribing the challenge by \$4,439!
- 23 individuals or families responded (35% of those making commitments to the *2016 Stewardship Drive*), including: 16 member individuals/families and 7 non-member individuals/families.

In summary, the Women's Fellowship Challenge stimulated a total of \$22,439 of new and increased gifts towards the *2016 Stewardship Drive*.

| | |
|--------------------|--------------|
| Challenge Pool: | \$ 6,000 |
| Challenge Goal: | 12,000 |
| Over-subscription: | <u>4,439</u> |
| Total: | \$22,439 |

A heart-felt "thank you" to the Women's Fellowship and to everyone who made this challenge such a success!

Your Stewardship Board

Contact Us

Church Office,
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Interim Pastor
pastorhoward@emcucc.org

Christian Education
ce.youth@emcucc.org

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Edina Morningside Community Church is Open and Affirming.

Find us online: [EMC's Facebook page](#)

And find archived newsletters and calendar information at our web site:

[Edina Morningside Community Church](#)