



Cherokee Park United Church

*Welcoming people of all ages, sexual orientations,
races, and ethnic origins*

A Progressive Congregation
Theological Elbow Room
Global Music
Community Connected
Kid Friendly

Newsletter December 2013

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						30 10 am hanging of the greens
1 December -Families Exploring Spirituality 9am -Foodshelf - Faith Action Vigil 2:30 pm	2	3	4 -Advent intergener ation 5:30 pm -choir 6:45 pm	5	6 Women's Group 7 pm	7
8 -Adult forum -Sunday School -Fellowship cookies -FairTrade Mpls	9	10	11 Choir 6:45 pm	12	13	14
15 -Adult forum -Sunday School - Ramsey Co gifts due - Christmas Dinner 4 pm Caroling 6 pm	16	17	18 Choir 6:45	19	20 Men's group	21
22 -Children's music 9:15-9:45 -Adult Forum	23	24 Candlelight worship 5 pm	25 <i>Christmas Day</i> (no choir)	26	27	28
29 (no adult forum)	30	31	1 January (no choir)	2 Loaves & Fishes*	3	44
5 (no adult forum) -Foodshelf	6	7	9 Choir 6:45	9	10	11 Art exhibit opens

* the first Thursday of odd numbered months

First Sunday of Advent & Families Exploring Spirituality

December 1, 9-10 a.m.

Looking for ways to celebrate the season that go deeper than sales and Santa? Join us as we become better acquainted with Advent, the Christian church season that teaches us about preparing and purposeful waiting. To help us in our waiting and preparing for God's word to become flesh, we are making Advent Calendars!

Each family will make a special calendar that counts down the days until Christmas. Every day will have an activity that helps us "celebrate the dignity and joyful diversity of all God's creation." (language lifted from our CPUC Mission Statement. Cool, eh?)

All participating families, of whatever configuration, will receive the Advent devotional booklet, *Behold!*, published by the United Church of Christ. It will be available for others at cost, \$3.00.



And also, **Behold**, little Roxanna, born November 26, 3 a.m., to Jane Peterson and Eric Jacobsen. More later on this newest member of our CPUC family.



Advent Intergenerational Evening

Wednesday, December 4, 5:30 p.m.

Candle-making

Costume-creating

Cookie decorating

Carol singing ~ BYOG (bring your own guitar)

Bring your hearts and hands and join the CPUC family for an evening of socializing and creating, organized by the Faith Life Ministry. Start with a supper of pizza and fruit, and then visit the various project tables. We will be creating very simple props to use at worship on the 15th, creating a family candle, decorating and eating cookies, and if you have a voice and/or guitar, you are invited to help us practice your favorite Christmas carols.



Women's discussion group

Friday, December 6, 7:00 p.m.

'twas the month before Christmas
and all through our hearts,
memories were coming in fits and in starts.

Good Christmases, bad ones, ones we forgotten,
happy memories, warm memories,
days full of tradition.

Women, come and share your holiday memories and traditions. We'll read a story or two (guaranteed to bring tears to our eyes), sip hot cider and chocolate, and eat cookies by Wayne, at the home of Renee Pfenning.



Christmas Cookie Fellowship Hour - Sunday, December 8

You are invited to bring a dozen Christmas cookies to share for fellowship hour. Please bring your cookies down to the kitchen before worship and they will become our fellowship treat. Hosted by your Fellowship Ministry Team.

Children's Nativity Worship

Our 4th annual children and youth led telling of the Nativity Gospel will take place during worship on Sunday, December 15. All children & youth at Cherokee are invited to help us re-tell this sacred story through song, drama, and liturgy. In addition, any adults attending will also be invited to take a simple prop and be an impromptu "actor" in the nativity scenes. Practice (Saturday, December 14, 10 a.m. or by other arrangement) will only be required for youth with reading parts.



In addition to reading and "acting", youth are invited to share their musical gifts; the service has plenty of opportunity for singing or playing an instrument. Please speak with lone if this is something your youth is willing to share.

Musical talents are also welcome at our annual caroling party (see next article). Curt and Ingrid are organizing youth who are willing to share their musical gifts for this event. It may be possible for youth to prepare something that could be shared both during worship and while caroling.

Annual Christmas dinner and caroling

Join us Sunday, December 15 beginning at 4:00 p.m. at church. We begin with a turkey & mashed potatoes meal (sign-up sheet will be available for extra foods needed); at 6:00 p.m. we will go caroling at HealthEast Care Center (off Humboldt Av.) and then end the evening with dessert at the home of Pastor Tim and Michele. You may join us for dinner, caroling, or hopefully all. Give Pastor Tim a call if you should need a ride. This is a great evening for people of all ages. Children are welcome.

Help Decorate Our Tree

Families are invited to bring one ornament to donate to our sanctuary Christmas tree; bring and add anytime between December 1 and 22. We will save them and have our children help re-trim each year. No family heirlooms please, as these will not be returned; and this would be a great opportunity to talk about the appropriateness of ornaments that express the spirit of Christmas, rather than our attraction to Star Wars or Disney characters. Homemade ornaments are very welcome! Faith Life Ministry

November Families Exploring Spirituality

Twenty-three children and adults joined together to locate on a world map where their earliest ancestors lived, and then Okogyeamon helped us find where Jesus lived; we guessed what he probably looked like, and what games he played, what he wore, and sampled foods he might have eaten. Children colored their own versions of our sanctuary's stained glass window of Jesus - a thoughtful exploration of culture and artistic interpretation.



Sunday school update, grades 4-8, from Tom Liddle

The children of Cherokee Park United Church are amazing! It is a joy to walk with the 4th through 8th graders on their journey of faith this year. These past few weeks we've been focused on the theme of "waiting." We've been reading the first chapters of the story of Jesus in Luke's gospel, and through it we have been thinking about that it means to wait and why waiting can be hard but worth it.

As you know, kids are very perceptive listeners. When they listen to biblical stories they often pick up on parts of the story that lead to rich conversations about life and faith. The biblical story has a way of opening up parts of our lives that often don't see the light of day and kids have a way of hearing the questions raised by the stories that we adults often miss.

In the coming weeks we will continue our time together by learning about the Seasons of Advent and Christmas. We always look for ways to connect the story with our lives today. I encourage you to talk with your kids about what they are learning in Sunday School. Have them tell you the stories they learned and the questions they asked. Open up the Bible and review the story. Be honest about your own questions. Read the stories -- and let the stories read you.

Sponsor a family in need

CPUC is again bringing Christmas joy to families living in Ramsey County. You are invited to sign up to purchase a toy or clothing for children (suggested range \$20-\$30) or clothing for adults (suggested range \$30-\$50.) A sign up sheet is available at the Baker St. entrance. All gifts are to be brought to the church by Sunday, December 15. Cash donations are needed as well.

Please have a gift receipt with the gift and clearly put the name of the gift recipient on the gift. It is suggested you include a note, "From your friends at Cherokee Park United Church."



Presbyterian and UCC Christmas Joy offering

On our Advent wreath, the third candle is pink, the "joy" candle, which represents our joy that the promise of Christmas grows closer. Each year a joy offering is taken during Advent and the monies collected are designated as assistance for retired church workers who have encountered special needs and are on limited incomes. The Presbyterian offering is also used to support educational scholarships for youth and racial ethnic schools affiliated with the PC (USA). The envelope in your bulletin may be used for your contribution to these special offerings, and may be returned any time in December.



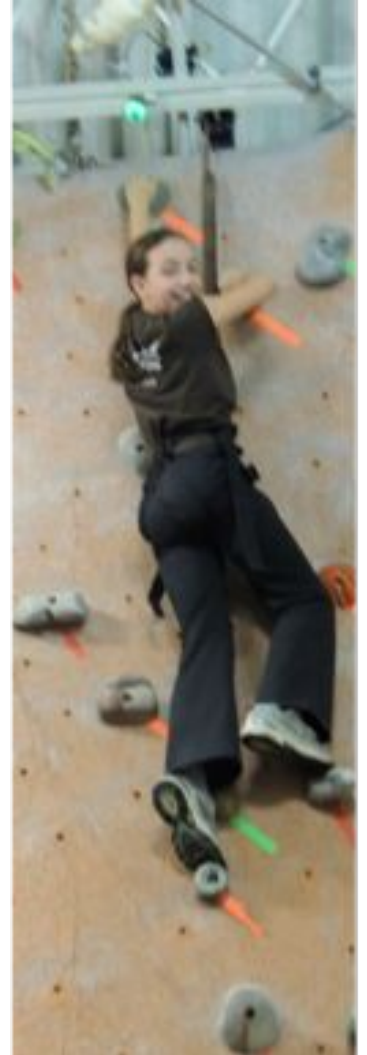
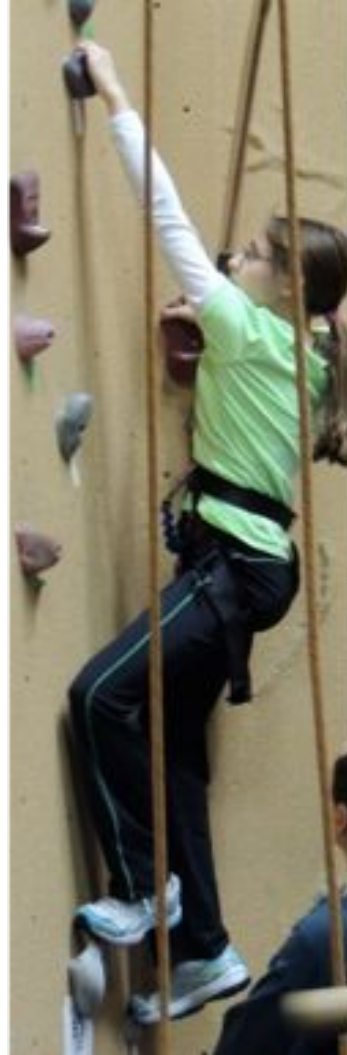


2013 pledges

Thank you to everyone who has turned in a pledge for 2014. If you have yet to turn in a pledge, doing so will be of great assistance to the Finance Ministry as they help the Finance Ministry firm up a proposed budget for the coming year. If you have lost your pledge card, please speak with Karen Shatek. All donations and offerings for 2013 are needed at the church by no later than December 31. Any offerings after that day will be posted for 2014.

CPUC Youth "hang out" at Vertical Endeavors

The first youth gathering was held on November 17, organized by Deborah Morse and daughters Sophie and Audrey. The wall was climbed, and cake (celebrating everyone's birthday) was eaten.



Fr. Jose Angel Renderos Díaz

A fiesta was held at Cherokee United Church in support of the efforts of Fr. Angel. He shared Archbishop Romero's story, how he came to his conversion of heart toward the suffering poor, what was happening in El Salvador at the time, and where Archbishop Romero focused his energies after his conversion. He also talked about Archbishop Romero's vision for a transformed world and how that vision can inform our own efforts to make a difference with our lives. He is shown below visiting in our homes - connections of the heart and new commitments through the Spirit.



Fair trade/union-made holiday sale

Sunday, December 8, 10a.m. to 6p.m.

CWA Local 7200 Hall, 3521 E Lake St., Minneapolis.

When you do your holiday shopping will you know where the gifts you buy came from? Were they made by child labor?... in a sweatshop by someone making \$2 a day?

This year, be sure that the workers who make your gifts are treated fairly and ethically, whether made by union members right here in the USA or artisan crafts from another part of the world.



This sale benefits the Minnesota Fair Trade Coalition, a nonprofit coalition of over 50 faith, labor, environmental, family farm, consumer, and human rights groups, that advocates for trade policy, promoting social and environmental justice. Entertainment and refreshments will also be available. www.mnfairtradecoalition.org

Practicing faith workshop coming to CPUC
Saturday, February 1, 9 a.m. - 12 noon

People who study faith formation tell us that the most important place for helping children learn about and grow in faith is not the church – it's the home. And that is good news because talking about and practicing Christian faith in your home will strengthen your family. It will help you get to know you kids and stay connected to them as they grow and change. But you might be thinking, "Wait a second, I don't know anything about that, that's why I take my kids to church." If so, don't panic.

*FAITH....
caught,
not
taught*

CPUC will be hosting a workshop with Rhoda Gingrich, a doctoral student in children's ministry at United Seminary. Rhonda will help equip families with simple faith practices for use in the home. If you are a parent or Sunday School teacher, the Faith Life Ministry Team encourages you to put this one-half day learning experience on your calendar. Arrive anytime after 8:30. Coffee will be ready, and child-care is available for all who register in advance and request it.

The workshop won't be about fancy theology or academic study. It's an opportunity to learn about simple practices that root us in the story of our faith, strengthen connections within the family and help us notice and experience God in our lives rather than studying about God as an academic subject. Stay tuned for more details in the coming weeks. In the mean time, if you have questions, feel free to ask Tom Liddle or any member of the Faith Life Ministry.

Food shelf news

Holidays are especially hard for families with limited means. Please help by donating to the food shelf. Add personal care and household cleaning items, both of which are badly needed. A collection is done the first Sunday of each month.



*The Glory of Minnesota?
One Version of History
in Public Art*

Friday, January 24, 2014 at CPUC

Join us for a 6 p.m. meal followed by a presentation from 6:30 to 8:00 p.m. by Jim Bear Jacobs, the visionary founder of Healing Minnesota Stories and a member of the Mohican Nation. He holds degrees in Pastoral Studies and Christian Theology. Healing Minnesota Stories grew out of the work of the Saint Paul Interfaith Network (SPIN) on religion and racism.

Building Blocks raises needed funds and hosts welcome dinner

Building Blocks Tutorial continues to live out its mission of providing one-to-one volunteer-based tutoring to students who attend school on the West Side. Even though the program is now housed at Riverview School, the generosity and support of Cherokee Park members and friends make so much possible! Donations to the program in November topped \$2, 800. That includes over \$1,000 raised through GiveMN and Give to the Max Day on November 14. Thank you to everyone who gave any amount, large or small. You are helping us bridge a funding gap in the program's budget.



On November 19th, students, their families, and tutors gathered at CPUC for the Welcome Dinner hosted by the Building Blocks Ministry Team. Participants were able to meet each other, hear about the program, and enjoy a delicious meal. Each student received a "Home Kit" filled with educational items to use to support their learning away from school. A big "Thanks" to all the ministry team

members, headed by Joanne Sylvander, and all who serve as tutors in the program. Your caring is at the "heart" of this special ministry! I am grateful for all the prayers, hard work, and support of Building Blocks by Cherokee Park United folks this fall. We continue to spread God's love through this program, wherever we are located!

Sincerely,

Jill Jackson, Program Director

Cherokee Park United ...

a Green Congregation leader

This past fall Pastor Tim was contacted by John Crampton on behalf of Oak Grove Presbyterian Church in Bloomington, and two other churches that call themselves "Green Congregations". They are interested in learning more about the work CPUC has done in converting to LED lighting and our power generation through our solar roof panels.



On November 9 Tom Murphy led a tour of a dozen people, sharing with them all the work that had been done and the success achieved in reducing energy consumption at CPUC. Tour participants included Michael T'Kach of Enerchange, an affiliate of the Minnesota State Department of Energy, whose business card tagline reads "Helping Nonprofits Save Money by Saving Energy." Tom has offered to make CPUC available as a demonstration site for Enerchange, to further support congregations and non-profits seeking to get into this exciting, Earth sustaining arena.

Tom has calculated that the energy savings and production exceed our expectations by a wide margin. On the energy saving side, our tubular fluorescent bulbs were (con't)

changed to those of a higher efficiency; sanctuary, chancel and miscellaneous lighting was changed to CFL and LED; and exit signs and outdoor lighting changed to LED. Previous to this change, in 2010-2011, our energy consumption ranged from 1600 kW to 2100 kW per month, at a cost of \$182-\$273/month, totaling \$2,935 for the year. (We pay 8 to 10 cents per kW, depending on the season.) After the retrofits, annual electrical cost has dropped to \$1,037, a very impressive reduction of about 65%.

On the solar energy production side, our monthly electric bill now shows a credit of \$10 to \$100 because we are generating more than we use. The credit is paid back to Sundial Solar as part of our lease-to-own agreement; however, as of summer of 2017, when the church completely owns the solar array, the church will be receiving that credit through the net metering arrangement contracted with Xcel Energy.

Cherokee Park United Church has already achieved some of our goals of our energy conservation and solar power project. We can give ourselves a pat on the back as we are already an example of what John Crampton calls a "Green Congregation".

Roses of Remembrance for Christmas Eve

Christmas is a season that provides wonderful opportunities for families and friends to be together sharing in love and fellowship. Christmas is also a time when many of us are painfully aware of those from whom we are separated by death or distance. During Advent, scripture, song, and symbols of the season remind us of the promise that we are united in God's love through both our joys and sorrows.



Roses will be available to place on the altar in remembrance. If you would like to remember someone in this way, please fill out the form below and place it in the box in the church entrance. *Suggested donation is \$4.00/rose.* Names of those being remembered will be printed in the bulletin if you so desire.

Roses Reservation

Person(s) requesting remembrance rose(s)

_____ How many roses would you like? _____

Who do you wish to remember? _____

Would you like their name(s) included in a list prepared for Christmas Eve? _____

Christmas Day – Peace and Blessings wherever you may be celebrating.

Cherokee Park United Church

United Church of Christ/Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Open & Affirming, Multicultural, Antiracist

651-227-4275

cpuc@usfamily.net

cherokeeparkunited.org

371 W. Baker Street

St. Paul, MN 55107

Sunday Worship - 10:15 a.m.

Dr. Timothy M. Johnson - Pastor

Ione Boettcher Butler - Organist/Choral Director

Jill Jackson - Building Blocks Tutorial Director

Rebecca Knott - Nursery Supervisor

Andrew Gbaa - Custodian

“La gratitudine e la memoria del cuore.”

“Gratitude is the memory of the heart.”

Sister Halina, Villa Merlo Bianco,
Florence monastery guesthouse