



## ***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 2014***

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THUR	FRI	SAT
						29 Hanging of the greens 9-11 am
30 -Children's music 9:15-9:45 -Adult forum <i>ADVENT</i>	1 <i>Dec</i>	2	3 -Advent intergenerational 5:00-7:00 pm -Choir 6:45 pm	4	5 Women's Group 7 pm	6
7 -Families Exploring Spirituality 9am -Adult forum -Sunday School -Foodshelf -Pancake brunch - Faith Action Vigil 2:30 pm	8	9	10 Choir 6:45 pm	11 Council 7 pm	12	13
14 -Adult forum -Sunday School - Ramsey Co gifts due	15	16	17 Choir 6:45	18	19	20
21 -Children's music 9:15-9:45 -Adult Forum -Nativity gospel -Christmas Dinner 4pm Caroling 6 pm	22	23	24 (no choir) Candlelight worship 5 pm	25 <i>Christmas Day</i>	26	27
28 (no adult forum) (no Sunday School)	29	30	31 (no choir)	1 <i>Jan</i>	2	3 Youth to water park and sleep- over
4 Foodshelf (no adult forum) (no Sunday School)	5	6	7 Choir 6:45	8	9	10

*Save the Date - Leader's Retreat*  
Friday-Saturday, February 27-28

## *Advent Intergenerational Evening* Wednesday, December 3, 5:00-7:00 p.m.

Candle-making

Nativity gospel prop-creating

Cookie decorating

Carol singing



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 pizza supper and then visit the various project tables.

## *Advent Families Exploring Spirituality* Sunday, December 7, 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. The two Sunday School classes under the leadership of Sandy Dodson and Andy George will provide leadership for this experience.



All participating families, of whatever configuration, will receive the Advent devotional booklet, *Tear Open the Heavens*, from the Stillspeaking Writers Group; this contains unique devotionals that encourage us to cry out to God and celebrate God's coming, everyday. (Is.64: 1-4) It will be available for others at cost, \$3.00.

## *Women's Discussion Group* Friday, December 5, 7:00 p.m.

We will carpool to Lyngblomsten Care Center so that Jan Howe can join us. We will meet in the small kitchen area just past her room (#155). Please bring a small dessert/snack; drinks will be provided including teas and hot chocolate. Bring a game if you wish and/or a short humorous reading to share. The address is 1415 Almond Ave.; go north on Snelling Ave., east/right on Como, north on Pascal two blocks to Almond Av., right. Enter on the west side where a sign indicates "Temporary Entrance for Care Center."

Contact: Karen at [jkshatek@comcast.net](mailto:jkshatek@comcast.net) or 651-453-1370.



## *Pancake Brunch Fundraiser*

**Sunday, December 7**



The Antiracism Team will hold a fundraiser following worship. Proceeds will help support their work, which in 2015 will include a first-ever authentic Mardi Gras celebration on February 14, a Genocide Awareness month forum on genocidal texts in the Scripture, and hosting the closing feast for the Mendota Mdewakanton Pow Wow. Please join us for a time of fellowship and support for this important work.

## *Advent Adult Forum*

*Dare We Speak of Hope? Searching for a Language of Life in Faith and Politics* by Allan Audrey Boesak will be the focus of discussion and reflection beginning Sunday, November 30. Allan Boesak is a former leader in the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa and is presently the first holder of the Peace, Global Justice and Reconciliation Studies. Curtis Paul DeYoung from Bethel University says about *Dare We Speak of Hope?* "This is a masterpiece...that invites readers to embrace the question of hope in a world of injustice and oppression, disappointment and depression. In this beautifully written and powerfully persuasive volume, Boesak reasserts the power of hope when it emerges out of woundedness, struggle and peacemaking." The book is available for purchase for \$15. Please join us.

## *Children's Nativity at Worship*

Our 5th annual youth-led telling of the Nativity Gospel will take place during worship on Sunday, December 21. 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. We are planning for the presence of another live "baby Jesus". (*Practice, Saturday, December 20, 9:30 a.m. or by other arrangement, is required for youth with reading parts.*)



Youth are also invited to share their musical gifts; the service has plenty of opportunity for singing or playing an instrument. Please speak with Pastor Tim 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*

**Sunday, December 21, 4:00 dinner, 6:00 caroling**

Join us for our annual turkey dinner (sign-up sheet will be available for extra foods needed), followed by caroling at Health East Care Center (off Humboldt Av.). The evening ends 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*

The Faith Life and Worship Ministries invite families to bring one or more ornaments to donate to our sanctuary Christmas tree; bring and add anytime between November 30 and December 21. 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 importance of ornaments that express the spirit of Christmas, rather than our attraction to Star Wars or Disney characters. Homemade ornaments are very welcome!

## *Sponsor a Family in Need*

CPUC is again bringing Christmas joy to a family 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 14. 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 money collected is 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.



## *2015 Pledges*

Thank you to everyone who has turned in a pledge for 2015. If you have yet to turn yours in, doing so will be of great assistance to the Finance Ministry as they 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 2014 are needed at the church by no later than December 31. Any offerings after that day will be posted for 2015.

## *Families Exploring Spirituality Past*

(and a short lesson in Tetum, a language of East Timor)

On the October 5th "family Sunday," Kay Myhrman-Toso led us on the topic of **World Communion**. At the conclusion, children and parents covered a globe with their one-word prayers for the world which included shelter, food, clothes, friends, free choice, safety, protect, love, peace, school, esparansa, teddy bear, and fiar ba maromak. The last words are in Tetum, meaning, believe/trust in God. "Fiar" implies both belief-head, and trust-heart. Tetum makes no distinction between the two when it comes to our relationship with God. Belief is trust and vice versa. "Maromak" is the Tetum word for God.



On the November family Sunday, Kate Spindler led us in a wonderful experience of **meditation**, why it's good for us, how to do it, when to do it, and what to expect. If you know any who attended, ask them what a breathing ball or a mandala is. Kate is also considering offering evening meditation sessions for adults in the coming year.



## *Stories for Children of All Ages*

During one worship service each month, the children are invited to the front for a short but special story time. Usually it will contain the same theme or focus as the day's sermon - here the "rainbow fish" is sharing her beautiful riches with all.





## *Confirmation Youth*

In June 2015 this group will head to Atlanta for a mission trip, staying with the Biehn family, who had been members of CPUC for many years. This pancake breakfast raised \$400 towards their goal of \$1,000 to fund the trip expenses. Thank you for supporting their experiences of service and community.

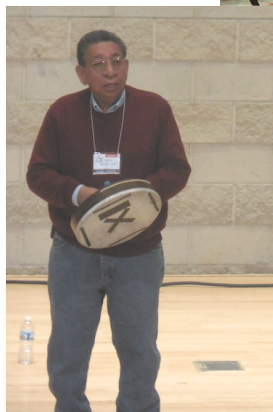


## *Antiracism Team*

Fundraising like the upcoming pancake breakfast supports events like the recent Doctrine of Discovery two-day workshop, attended by over 100 people.



Close to 500 people attended the 2014 Overcoming Racism Conference which found its beginning at Cherokee Park United Church in 2008. Photos show opening blessing and smudging by Sam Cook (professor at Metropolitan State University), keynote speaker, and Ka Vang (poet and word artist).



## *It Makes Me Wonder*

A few weeks ago I arrived at church to find a mother and daughter leaving, and in jest I said “Am I so late that I missed worship?” The mother whispered to me that she had laryngitis and was quite sick, but she had just come for an hour as her daughter did not want to miss Sunday School. Makes me wonder what kind of church this is, that children are begging to come? What type of congregation is this that makes such a welcoming atmosphere? What kind of Sunday School teacher is this, whose children insist they don’t want to miss out? That’s some sort of wonderful...full of wonder.

## *Can All God’s Children Be So Welcome?*

As a contrast to this experience, we’ve received accounts from (retired) El Salvadoran Supreme Court Justice, Mirna Perla, that children and young people deported back to El Salvador are in extreme danger of death. Many have no connections in El Salvador as they left when they were children, and their families are in the United States or dead. They have no money, family support, job, sometimes don’t even speak Spanish or know the culture, and there are no programs existing to receive them. They’ve usually been detained in U.S. jails prior to deportation, often for no criminal reason, but upon arrival will be presumed being a gang member and caught in the crossfire between police harassment and gang violence.

The conservative government in El Salvador has created illegal armed groups that carry out “social cleansing” and physically exterminated many of the deportees with tattoos. They have even attacked an organization of former gang members who have reformed and are trying to help current gang members to get back into a positive community life. The government plus the complicit media and corporate interests attack the prevention efforts and care sectors. In Mirna’s word, “I say without a doubt that a deported person has little chance of surviving in our country...because no one stops to question whether they are criminal or not.”

What can we do? Our own leaders at CPUC have been guiding us in various efforts. Some attend the faithful monthly vigils at the Ramsey County Detention Center, some have written letters to Congress urging immigration reform, some can attend immigration court as witnesses so that the judge feels pressure to stop deportation. And always — pray.

Deadline for newsletter articles is the 22nd of the prior month. Please contact editor Susan Strebig at [kellystrebig@comcast.net](mailto:kellystrebig@comcast.net) or 651-457-1404.

The newsletter team also consists of: pre-publishing fact editor Phyllis Clark, copyeditor Sara Strebig Pedersen, collate/mail team Phyllis and Cal Clark; winter team Kathy Berghold & Stefan Sylvander .



## *Happy Birthday Dear Helma*

90 years ago a baby was born in Wilton, N.D, and she was named Helma Loretta Thor. She was the third of five girls and her family moved to St. Paul when she was 18 years old. She worked at Western Electric where she met her husband-to-be and they wed in 1949. They joined Cherokee Park Church in 1955 and their three daughters were all baptized also at that time. She belonged to the Ruth Circle for many years; the fruit-cakes were their crowning achievement, known as the best cakes around. People still ask for them! Her daughter Diane is sharing Helma's birthday cake and ice cream with us at fellowship after worship on December 21.



## *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 by the Sunday before Christmas

*Suggested donation is \$4.00/rose.* Names of those being remembered will be printed in the bulletin if you so indicate below; after the service please take your roses home with you.

---

### ***Roses Reservation***

Person(s) requesting remembrance rose(s)

\_\_\_\_\_ How many roses would you like? \_\_\_\_\_

Whom 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.

## *News from our Partners in El Salvador*

### *"Agradecido por la Ayuda" (Appreciative of the Support)*

Our sisters and brothers in El Carrizal, Ostuma, El Salvador send thanks for money we sent to purchase equipment to help irrigate their papaya project, our most recent cooperative economic development project. Other efforts we have co-financed are the purchase of a corn mill and the building of a retaining wall.

Through Comunidades Contruyendo Esperanza -Communities Building Hope (CCE), CPUC hosts fundraiser meals periodically to support this community. The next effort is a dinner in February. They are also planning our annual celebration of the life of Archbishop Oscar Romero on March 22.

El Carrizal, a community of Ostuma has endured poverty and danger ever since May 31, 1980, when an armed government militia entered their village, massacring children, men and women. The survivors are seeking to rebuild their community. Our West Side neighbor, Pastor Porfirio Martinez, served as parish priest in El Carrizal from 1972 – 1978.

Recently, finally, the community received official recognition of the massacre. The bodies of the victims were exhumed from the mass grave on November 17 and family members were able to bury their loved one's remains in family plots in the cemetery.



# Cherokee Park United Church Annual Leader's Retreat

## The Rebirthing of God

*Christianity's Struggle for New Beginnings*

Friday and Saturday, February 27 & 28

ARC Ecumenical Retreat Center, Stanchfield, MN

This retreat will provide an opportunity for leaders of Cherokee Park United Church to reflect on how our community of faith can be and is part of a fresh beginning for faith in our day. The primary resource for discussion will be "The Rebirthing of God" by John Philip Newell. John Philip Newell is a peacemaker and scholar who draws from the tradition of Celtic spirituality with a great affinity toward all traditions that share an awareness of the sacredness in all of life. Newell argues Christianity in its present form is dying and something new is ready to be born. He draws on modern prophets from East and West who are showing the way, including: Thomas Berry, Aung San Suu Kye, Mary Oliver, Bede Griffiths, Thomas Merton, Mahatma Ghandi, Carl Yung and Simone Weil. It will not be necessary to have read the book. Brief summaries will be provided for discussion.

**Location:** The ARC Retreat Center is a wonderful old lodge in a beautiful wooded setting near Cambridge, Minnesota. It is known for superb vegetarian cooking! Linens are provided.

**Fellowship and relaxation:** There will be time for participants to hike on the grounds, fellowship and just relax.

**Who should attend:** Council members, ministry chairs and other leaders, as well as all interested members and friends.

**Cost:** \$120 per person, which includes over-night accommodations and breakfast and lunch on Saturday and a copy of "Rebirthing God". Scholarships available on request for whatever amount is needed. Contact Pastor Tim

**Time and Travel:** The retreat will begin at 6:00 p.m. on Friday with dinner and conclude by 4:30 p.m. on Saturday. Those wishing to car pool should be at the church by 4:00 p.m. on Friday.

\_\_\_ **Yes**, I would like to attend the Leader's Retreat on February 27 & 28. Enclosed is my \$20.00 deposit. \_\_\_ **Yes**, I plan to car pool. \_\_\_ **No**, I will drive on my own. **Do you have special dietary needs or restrictions?** \_\_\_\_\_

Please specify: Vegetarian, gluten-free, allergies, etc)

**Email address** \_\_\_\_\_ *(requested by the ARC)*

**Name** \_\_\_\_\_

***Please return to Pastor Tim by Sunday, February 1, 2014***

## **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

*Darkness deserves gratitude.  
It is the alleluia point at which  
we can learn to understand  
that all growth does not take place  
in the sunlight.”*

Joan Chittister,  
in *Uncommon Gratitude*