



Cover image from a 1920's Christmas program  
at (then) Cherokee Heights Presbyterian Church

## **Cherokee Park United Church**


Fierce Justice  
Radical Love  
Abundant Grace

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

Theological Elbow Room  
Global Music  
Community Connected  
Kid Friendly

## **Newsletter December 2019**

| SUN   | MON | TUE  | WED                                 | THUR                    | FRI   | SAT |
|---|-----|--|-------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-----|
| 1 <b>DEC</b><br>1st Sunday in Advent  | 2   | 3  | 4<br>Choir practice<br>6:30-8 pm    | 5                       | 6<br>Women's<br>Group 7 pm  | 7   |
| 8   | 9   | 10   | 11<br>Choir practice<br>6:30-8 pm   | 12                      | 13<br>   | 14  |
| 15<br>4 pm<br>Christmas<br>Dinner  | 16  | 17   | 18<br>Choir practice<br>6:45-8 pm   | 19<br>Council<br>7 pm   | 20  | 21  |
| 22<br>Children help<br>present<br>Nativity story  | 23  | 24<br>5 pm<br>Christmas<br>Eve Service  | 25<br>Christmas<br>Day              | 26                      | 27<br>   | 28  |
| 29  | 30  | 31   | 1 <b>JAN</b><br>(no choir practice) | 2<br>Loaves &<br>Fishes | 3<br>Women's<br>Group 7 pm  | 4   |
| 5   | 6   | 7  | 8<br>Choir practice<br>6:30-8 pm    | 9                       | 10<br> | 11  |

- No men's group gathering in December.
- Sunday, January 12, special organ music during worship
- Sunday, January 19, worship at Clark Grace, SSP; choir will participate.
- MN Transgender Alliance meets every other Friday, 6-7:30 p.m. 
- Loaves & Fishes - first Thursday of odd- numbered months.

Choir sings 

**Happy December Birthdays**

- 01 - Michele Johnson
- 05 - Jaime Dodson
- 14 - Sophie LeMeur
- 14 - Audrey LeMeur
- 14 - Karolyn Gilbertson
- 18 - Helma Rogers
- 20 - Jerome Graf
- 27 - Russ Sottoria



## Roses of Remembrance

Starting December 1, you are invited to order Roses of Remembrance for Christmas Eve. Long-stemmed rose(s) will be provided to honor your departed dear ones at the Christmas Eve service. You can take your rose(s) home that evening. Order forms and envelopes for contributions will be available until December 15. The box for your orders will be in Fellowship Hall.

## Women's Affinity Group

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

The December group will meet at the home of Susan Strebig; RSVP will be helpful, especially if you would like access to a no-steps entrance. Parking in lot across street, end of street, or in driveway.

Our topic will be: the best Christmas ever!! Search your memories for one you would like to share.

Phyllis Andrews will host on January 3; other dates needing hosts (*or maybe just a topic organizer*) for the coming year are January 3, February 7, March 6, and May 1. Contact: 612-308-6746, [jilljacksonmn@comcast.net](mailto:jilljacksonmn@comcast.net)

## Choir notes from music director Sandy Waterman

Wednesday, December 18: Slight delay in start time. Rehearsal will start at 6:45 p.m., (with usual ending at 8 p.m.,) due to a scheduling logistic for director.

Tuesday, December 24: Choir will sing at the Christmas Eve service. Please report to sanctuary a half hour before the service's start time to warm up.



Wednesdays December 25 and January 1- No choir rehearsals. Choir rehearsals for 2020 begin on Wed., January 8th. A special MLK Sunday service is scheduled for Sunday, January 19, at Clark-Grace UCC in SSP, in which the choir will participate.

Blessings as you celebrate Christmas and the New Year!

## *November council meeting notes*

- ❖ This month Pastor Matthias held a new member orientation class with Maya Rose and Jill Jackson. Maya will be officially welcomed at a future worship service.
- ❖ The Sexual Harassment and Abuse Prevention and Sex Offender policies were presented as completed by Jane Peterson, checked by the Presbytery, and accepted with a few minor format cleanups. Copies of the final policy will be posted on the clipboard in back of church.
- ❖ CPUC accepted an invitation to worship together at St. Matthew's on Thanksgiving Eve, with Pastor Matthias invited to preach.
- ❖ Membership rolls were discussed and council members assigned to contact those people who we don't see in the pews and we are not sure want to remain on our rolls.
- ❖ Council agreed that we would again ask Lone Butler to come to play the organ during worship on the occasion of Bob Lockwood's birthday, Sunday, January 12.
- ❖ The annual Christmas Dinner will be held Sunday, December 15 at 4 p.m., coordinated by the Fellowship committee. Caroling has no coordinator yet but suggestions for caroling stops are Helma's care facility, Ted Abdulla, neighbors Ethan & Jayden and corner home Jeff & Jefferey, Bill Albertson (& Bob Lockwood if he is not along) at Walker Methodist Westwood Ridge.
- ❖ The budget update shows that we may finish out this year with income covering expenses and 20 K left in savings. However, we may receive up to 20 K less in income next year due to people who have left or passed on.
- ❖ Pastor Matthias proposed that Council work with the congregation to set 1 or 2 goals for our congregation for 2020. In doing so we would hone our focus for the year and gain clarity about our shared hopes and vision for CPUC. This will not replace other meaningful programs or commitments CPUC has; however, it will help us direct our energy towards a common goal (or goals). Council members offered suggestions, and it was agreed that each person on Council would talk to at least one CPUC member to elicit suggestions and ideas. Other fruitful means of getting congregational feedback are being discussed. Feel free to talk with any Council member with thoughts or questions.



## Christmas at Cherokee Park United

### The Christmas Story

How will we pass on this story to our children? We will first share it with children during Sunday School (during the last half of worship time) on December 8 and 15. We may even have a real shepherd join us!

Children who attend these can then choose to be in costume and help relate the story to everyone in the pews the last Sunday before Christmas, **December 22**.

We look forward to "kidrash", (the children's version of midrash - the tradition of rabbis interpreting and clarifying the scriptures), listening for not only the bible account, but children's own retelling and response, which may help us understand in new and delightful ways. We will also prepare for any last minute children who arrive and would like a costume and to be included.

*(photos from 2011)*



For more information please contact Kay Myhrman-Toso, Jane Peterson, or Pastor Matthias at the church office, 651-227-4275

### Our Christmas tree

Advent is a time of quiet preparation. Inwardly we prepare our hearts; outwardly we prepare our spaces, anticipating the celebration of Christmas. Our tree is one ongoing area, first appearing with no ornaments. Children and adults alike are invited to add a few ornaments each week, found in a basket under the tree. These were donated by our members and friends throughout the years - you may find something you brought in many years ago. As we near Christmas, the lights will be lit, and stay lit through the Christmas season, which extends to Epiphany, January 6 (the twelfth day of Christmas.)

### Christmas Dinner

Join the church family on Sunday, December 15, at 4 p.m. for a potluck supper, with some foods provided by the church, and for those willing and able, caroling after the meal. There will be a sign-up sheet in Fellowship Hall.



### Christmas Eve Candlelight Service

As is our tradition, we will celebrate this holy time together starting at 5 p.m. (No service on Christmas Day.) The roses mentioned on page 3 will be used at this service.

## From Pastor Matthias

Dear Friends,

Halfway through the first act of the musical *Hamilton*, Aaron Burr sings “Wait For It.” It is heartfelt and aching, full of longing and self-control. Throughout the show, he is cast as a foil of Alexander Hamilton. Where Hamilton is voracious in his appetites, unrelenting in his writing and taking action, Burr is cautious, patient, willing to wait for the opportune moment.

During Advent, we are in just such a season of waiting, yearning, moving towards the fullness of time when God was born among us. The Advent season is a time when we are called to hone our sense of patience. Our yen for justice and peace and love and joy whetted each day, as we move towards God and God towards us. There is a deliberate slowing down to observe, savor, and wait.

Yet, at the same time, Advent is the busiest time of the whole year for many of us. Gatherings fill up the calendar, there are arrangements to make, food to prepare, cookies to bake, gifts to shop for. Errands take on a new urgency, and simply cannot wait.

It is a tale of two seasons.

I am by no means immune to it either. Nor do I have a snappy “10 tricks to ease your holiday stress” listicle to offer. I do wonder about what life was like for those shepherds of Jesus’ time. No screens to distract them. No stores to run off to for shopping. No cable news pinging them. They just waited, and Good News came to them, to us all.

May we too experience grace in navigating the season and in learning the deep lessons of waiting.

Peace,

Pastor Matthias





## Installation - Successful!

Many of us attended this wonderful occasion here at Cherokee Park United - truly a day of thanksgiving for our church family. Below are a few more photos of the event. Clockwise from top: the surprise gift presented to Pastor Matthias as a memento of the day - a custom-made stole with his favorite Spirit symbol, the hummingbird, Tom's welcome wall projection, Kay's beautiful altar floral arrangements, receiving stole, reception, Pastor Matthias wearing new stole one week later, laying on of hands, Pastor Matthias wearing new stole one week later, laying on of hands.







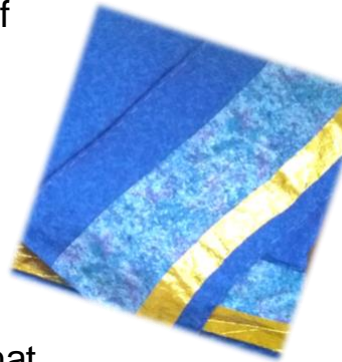
### *Other installations also successful!*

Everywhere you look - something new. Members continue updating, repairing, and beautifying around the building. Curt moved from his 30-foot ladder down to the kitchen floor as he and Jim installed a garbage disposal (saving us literally thousands of dollars), Kelly and Bob devised a system to prevent kitchen vent heat loss over the winter. New windows on the north side may be installed by the time you read this. New lighting is due to be installed in the front entryway to both beautify and increase the number of lumens. The old stained-glass box that housed the original 60 W bulb in the front

entryway will still be seen, taking a place of honor as a candle holder. A new rainbow flag has replaced the previous - this one



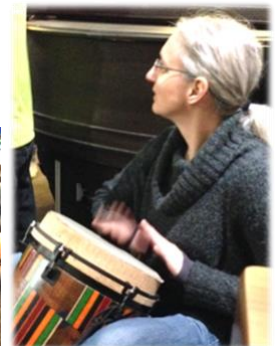
includes the colors of black and brown, a visual reminder that homophobia and transphobia often intersect with racism - that racism exists within the queer community



just as trans/homophobia do within communities of color. New paraments have been sewn for Advent and Pentecost so now we have a variety from which to choose - thanks to Kathy for her 20 years of sewing paraments and banners. (Lighting and paraments were covered by donations.) Change is exciting, yes?

### *If you march to the beat of a different drum....you'll fit right in!*

Have you been hearing drums? Our music director Sandy brought her world drums, combining them with any brought by members, offered basic drumming lessons and off we went. A few seasoned and budding drummers did solos and the rest kept the beat going on, and enjoyed a few "free for all" moments. Watch/listen for future pop-up drumming offerings.

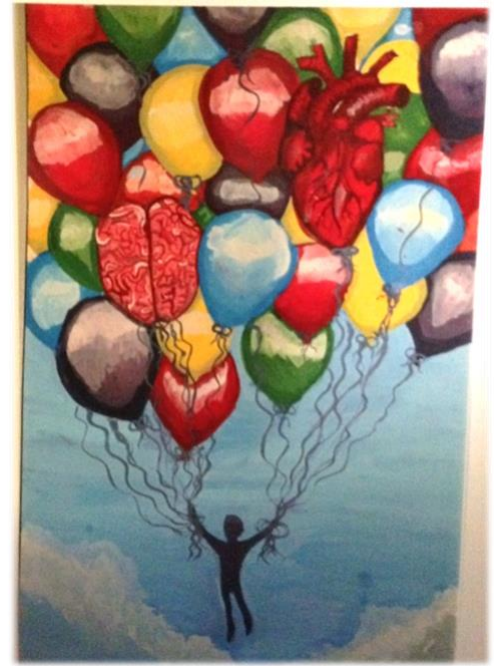






## *All Saints Remembrance*

The worship ministry and Pastor Matthias offered a touching time on November 3 to remember our departed loved ones. Photos and mementos graced a temporary place of honor, names were spoken, gratitude shared. A longer-lasting, one-month place of honor is provided at the corner shelf display in back of the sanctuary.



## *Member Moments*

Pictured is a painting by Nora Murphy, studying at St. Paul College and headed soon for the U of M. Her creative and arts instincts may be somewhat hereditary as her dad, Tom, is musically inclined as well as her brother Tommy, and her mom Mary is an avid reader and the main mentor for a local book club. Test your powers of observation, and check page 11.

## *Listen up - organ music!*



This year we will again mark the birthday of Bob Lockwood with organ music at worship, January 12, Bob's actual birthday. Bob and his late wife appreciated fine music, Bob was also involved in choir work, and paid for half of the organ when it was purchased for installation at CPUC. We will celebrate Bob's musical DNA. Birthday cake will follow.



## We need your data.

With our newly installed pastor, it seems a good juncture to create a data base/ spreadsheet for Cherokee Park United. This will be useful to various ministries and the leadership at CPUC to help with planning, communications, and things like name tags in the future. The information will available only to CPUC people.

The church laptop computer is set up in Fellowship Hall so you can enter your data easily - the Outreach Team will assist you in this process. If you'd rather fill out a paper form, those will be available, too. Pastor Matthias and the team will work to keep this up to date – with your cooperation! Thank you for helping us in this “census” for our faith community.

### *If anyone shouts **BINGO** during worship....*

don't worry it's just our children discovering important or interesting aspects of our time together. Jane, chair of Faith Life Ministry, sometimes gives the children a bingo card with squares containing words or actions that they are encouraged to look for during worship. They mark them off and five in a row merits a bingo win! Put on your thinking caps and think of an alternate five letter word we can use on the top of the card. Pray-O? (Jill will probably win this one.)

## *Do you do a little day-dreaming during the sermon?*

It happens to everyone. You are focusing on Pastor Matthias' sermon, and suddenly you can't resist looking at little Rita's smile or are distracted by a tap-tapping of a child reliving the last lively hymn. And then, everyone is nodding or chuckling and you missed an important point. Fear not, you now can read the full sermon on-line on the website; all the pastor's sermons, since arriving here, are posted there, thanks to the efforts of Tom Murphy and Jill Jackson; postings are also now being done by Sarah Ellefson and Pastor Matthias. <https://cherokeeparkunited.org/sermons/>

## *Modern day loaves and fishes*

On one Sunday we heard the story of the loaves and fishes. Then, miraculously? a member found Camembert cheese and crackers in her purse at fellowship hour, and it was shared!



Newsletter article deadline is the 20th of the month; please submit articles or ideas to editor Susan at [kellystrebig@comcast.net](mailto:kellystrebig@comcast.net)  
-proofreaders Phyllis Clark, Mary Murphy  
-collate/mail team Phyllis & Cal Clark,  
winters - Kathy Bergthold, Kandy Heiman

Nora's image of balloons shows her interest in medical science as she often incorporates the human form (see brain and heart) in depictions of unrelated objects.



**Cherokee Park United Church**

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

Open & Affirming, Multicultural, Antiracist

371 W. Baker Street

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Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m.

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