



## **Cherokee Park (virtually) 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 September 2020***

## Loaves and Fishes

### Thursday, September 3

Once again, it is our turn to host and serve the evening meal for Loaves and Fishes at St. Matthew's Church. Some have already volunteered (thank you!) and Stefan continues to be our stalwart organizer in leading this ministry. Reach out to him with questions or to volunteer.

### Happy September Birthdays & Celebrations

02 - Lynne

06 - Phyllis

07 - Gina

♥ 10 - Kelly & Susan

18 - Nora

25 - Cal

26 - Jayden

26 - Ellen

28 - Mike

29 - Susan

30 - Joanne



### Share an evening of travel adventures with the Women's Affinity Group!

#### Friday, September 4, 6:30 p.m.

Most of us have been staying close to home these days. Our stories of past travels can take us to another place – at least in our hearts and minds! Bring the story of your favorite trip or tour to share.

**We will meet outside at church, safe, & physically distanced. Please bring your mask, chair, and own beverage.** Before we go home, Susan will offer us a “tour” of church so we can see all the hard work that has been going on there while we have been away. Let’s “get-away” together!

Please let Jill know if you are coming. She will call folks if we need to cancel for weather or other reasons.

*From Pastor Matthias*, at home

Dear CPUC Community,

This Fall, as students around the country prepare to head back to school, it looks very different than what we are used to.

In many places, school is all being done through virtual distance learning, making use of technology to connect students and parents with teachers, and to handle assignments and lessons. In those places where school is resuming in person, masks and social distancing are often in place. Even as I write this before the school year has begun here in the cities, other school districts around the country are already aborting in-person learning after outbreaks of COVID-19 have cropped up within days or weeks of opening.



This is hard on everyone—parents and guardians, teachers, students, school administrators. There is plenty of grief, anxiety, and frustration to go around. And it is okay to not be okay. In fact, putting on a smile when at our wit's end can be toxic. When we are authentic and vulnerable about our struggles, we defy the myth that we have to face life alone.

Even Jesus surrounded himself with community.

I am reminded of something I occasionally tell one of my sons if they are having a hard time with a task or situation: “You can do hard things.” (To be honest, I sometimes tell myself the same thing when needed).

However, I wonder if that affirmation isn't better modified to the collective: “We can do hard things together.” Jesus says something similar to the disciples, noting that they will “do even greater things” than Jesus' own works.

As we move into the Fall season, different ministry teams and a Council task force will be listening for the needs in our community and planning for how we can safely support each other through the months ahead.

We can do hard things together.

Grace and peace,

*Pastor Matthias*

## August Council Notes



At the August meeting, the council....

- ...received the Pastor's monthly report, including his work with Jane and Joanne leading 3 middle school anti-racism zooms and planning two more including a pilgrimage to the George Floyd Memorial site, in conjunction with another UCC church
- ...received the quarterly financial report from Lynne; although donations are down, some of our expenses are also lower. The option of online giving has been used by some members as well as non-members who are joining on-line Sunday worship.
- ...approved a motion to refund or credit ASDIC with their rental payments as they could not use the Rainbow Room as hoped
- ...decided to celebrate communion on August 16 since the service provided by the Presbytery on August 2 did not include communion.
- ...**decided to extend the policy to not meet inside the church until the end of 2020**; this can be modified if the Covid outlook greatly improves before then. Before resuming inside gatherings we are required by the state to develop and implement a *COVID-19 Preparedness Plan*  
(See next page for points from the 7-page, 93 point plan)
- ...approved Pastor Matthias' offer to take the lead on exploring, with a small task force, how we can meet outside before the weather turns colder and make plans beyond that.
- ...received a report from Property Management that the contract to replace old boiler valves has been signed and the work will be done this Fall; and that Curt has been doing extensive work outdoors to re-direct rain water flow away from the building to minimize water in the basement
- ...received a report from Lay Ministry that they met in July and again in August and will be meeting with Pastor Matthias to discern how Covenanting Sunday can be held virtually.
- ...received a request through Pastor Matthias from Ammon Bailey, a tribal chaplain in Pennsylvania, (contacted us through Joy S.N.), who is requesting that we hold and distribute funds obtained through a lawsuit that now allows indigenous people in the state prisons to practice their cultural religious practices; the funds would be disbursed for uses i.e. supplies for sweat lodge experiences. More information is needed.
- ...*Note: Members may join any Zoom meeting. Please contact Pastor Matthias for access codes and also relate if you wish to speak on a particular topic. Next meeting Tuesday, September 8, 7 p.m.*

## UCC MN Conference also delaying in-person plans until 2021

### COVID-19 Update from the Conference



In light of increasing COVID numbers in Minnesota and continued uncertainty surrounding the pandemic, the Board of Directors voted on Saturday that the Conference staff are to continue working remotely through at least December 31, 2020.

### A few of the 93 points taken from the *Stay Safe MN policy for PLACES OF WORSHIP | Minnesota Employer Preparedness Plan*

No singing or chanting except for pre-recorded or single cantor • routine sanitizing of areas and equipment i.e. light switches/door handles, railings • no use of hymnals • limit the amount of people in meetings & restrooms • maintain a distance of at least 6 feet from people not in the same household at all times, including in front and behind • remove or block off pew/chair seating • no communal food sharing • consider implementing usher directed entering and exiting of the seating area to maintain proper social distancing and clearly mark entrances and exits to ensure adequate spacing of participants • signage on entry points • no community drinking stations/water-fountains unless touchless • no-touch disposal bins for tissues • maximize fresh air flow into spaces but not blowing across people to other people • six feet of distance between communion distributor and receiver (requiring both parties to extend arms as much as possible) and distributor using hand sanitizer if touched another person or object • identify sick or at-risk staff and members and take appropriate action.



### *Time With Children August 16*

Pastor Matthias tells the story of Joseph, second youngest brother of 12, being thrown into a pit and sold as a slave by his (admittedly egged on) jealous brothers.



And then, years later, Joseph forgiving all and saving his family from famine. Could I do that?



## *From Sandy Waterman, Music Director*

Hello to all CPUC members and friends... I hope this finds you well and enjoying the beginnings of a beautiful fall season! It truly is my favorite time of the year.

Because the church council decided to extend the lockdown through the end of 2020, the draft choir calendar I've been working on will go on the shelf for a while until such time as it is practical to revise it. If things improve in the meantime, and as the church council directs, we can adjust our plans.

I want you to know how special our Sunday services are to me, as we connect virtually in this unprecedented time of distancing. Pastor Matthias, Tom Murphy, and I are all committed to giving you our best each Sunday, and to interacting with you virtually so that a meaningful worship experience can be ours collectively. Every Sunday, when I come to the church, I notice loving touches of care, thanks to dedicated members:

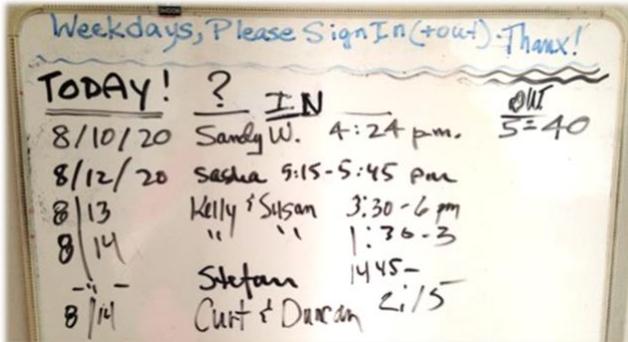
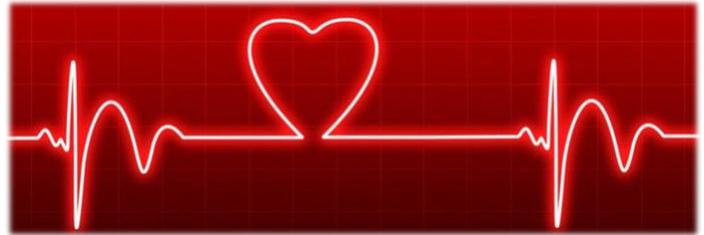
- ...a cleaned sanctuary carpet;
- ...new floral arrangements for the top of the piano;
- ...the piano being tuned, as needed;
- ...much activity in the basement of the church, to clean out and organize different spaces;
- ...improved and new tech equipment for live-streaming our services, due to Pastor Matthias's grant application to the Presbytery;
- ...Tom's continued refinements to our live-streaming setup options;
- ...continued email communications with newsletter material to keep everyone updated;
- ...gardening beauty and landscaping outside the church;
- ...and new signs welcoming passersby in the neighborhood to connect with us. Your loving presence is felt and appreciated!

The risk of the virus is still all around us, even as many of us had hoped it could be gone by now. The Atlantic magazine recently printed an article (June 2020) <https://www.theatlantic.com/health/archive/2020/06/choir-practice-during-pandemic/612868/> about the significant risk of singing as a transmitter of the COVID-19 virus. Several CPUC members have written to me, telling me how much they miss singing, either in the choir, as a soloist or duet singer, or as a member in the pews on Sundays. I encourage you to keep singing, at home, on Sundays, and at any other times when singing, in a safe environment, will help lift your spirits, and keep your heart whole. Singing, and playing instruments, can be such healers of the spirit.

Blessings, and know that I think of you often and miss you!

## Behind the scenes, the heart of the building beats on

If you'd like a "tour" and don't have a key just call and you can check this all out. We may look quiet from the outside but the inside is a hub of activity, even though we are working at different hours from one another. Many improvements, that could not be done without a complete shutdown, are being achieved.



It's not at the "pretty" stage yet, but we'll get there in the next few months. The frig is cleaned out and the freezer cleaned and unplugged (Creation Care.) Curt has been completely re-walling, putting in new shelving, and sometimes reflooring property storage areas and changing water drainage outside;

Jim and Karen can be found many days a week, doing their usual things - taking care of financial mail, making shelving (note new shelf for storing lawn signs), checking on mechanicals. The dried-up paint cans, splintered tables, moldy chalkboards, crumpled cardboard, dirt behind the heavy shelving, are out.



The stage is actually a staging area for neat Property

Management supply shelving (found free by Curt) for the former coal room.

Management supply shelving (found free by Curt) for the former coal room.



Outside landscape care is a challenge as the frequent rains help things grow too quickly, and as the plants mature, their needed trimming includes much larger branches and fuller foliage. Don't worry - we'll get to it! (Please tell us if you can help with this - both distanced groups and individual weeding/trimming is being done.) And help yourself to the free stuff table!!

*Meanwhile, what are people doing at home?*



**Gabriel and Pastor Matthias** enjoyed paddling through the BWCA. Few fish, lots of bugs, but still fun.

**Roxanna, Isaac, Simon, Daphne and Felix** harbored eggs and caterpillars until they matured and morphed into Monarch butterflies



**Sasha** found a starving kitty on the sidewalk and had a CPUC-inspired moment, thinking “who



needs me?” and adopted little Luna. Friends helped foster her as Sasha went out of town, the vet reported she was p.g. (the cat) and had fleas (also the cat.) Luna is now the newest member in the household, while elder cat Snickers is yet to decide if this is ok or not.

**Abricot (another cat)** was again temporarily at "Camp Jackson" with Jill before taking her next cat trip to UMN Morris to join Audrey.



**Stefan and Joanne** are chasing out their squirrel friend who has been sneaking through the screen door and musically scampering over their piano. Stefan had placed acorns on the railing for it, but the welcome was somewhat over- interpreted.



## Covenanting Sunday ~ September 13

Curt, chair of Lay Ministries is working with his ministry and Pastor Matthias to fashion a virtual service of covenant. You can bet it involves a bit of tom-foolery! Yea, Tom!

Show us your masks...



Can you identify these friends?  
Some sparkle, some moo, some like the color blue.



*Small group visit in Jill's yard... Join us for the next one!*



Let's get together - safely. You are invited to attend/or host, a small group get-together in an accessible yard, patio, driveway, deck. Contacts: Pastor Matthias or Jill. BYOM/B/C (mask/beverage/chair).

## **Cherokee Park United Church**

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

Open & Affirming, Multicultural, Antiracist

371 W. Baker Street

St. Paul, MN 55107

Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m., online only, until further notice

Pastor: Rev. Matthias Peterson-Brandt

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cherokeeparkunited.org

