



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 May 2021



Loaves & Fishes

May 6, Thursday, 3:30 p.m.

Once again, we will help with distribution of meals in our Loaves and Fishes mission. Last time, we gave out about 150 meals, and they were received with gratitude by the community. We will need about 5 or 6 volunteers to prepare the bread and salad and heat up the main course, starting about 3:30 p.m. Then, around 5 p.m., a different crew of up to 7 volunteers will be needed for serving and clean-up, ending around 7 p.m. Please consider helping. Thanks! Contact :Wayne Bjorlie

Women's Affinity Group Zoom ~ Share your creations!



Friday, May 7 at 7 p.m.

Cherokee Park United is blessed with many creative people — they express themselves in many different ways and mediums. Poems, paintings, needlework, songs, flower arranging – so many things we create! Bring something you made to share at Women's Affinity Group. **We will meet outside** (weather permitting) at church in a safe, physically distant way. Please bring your mask, chair, and own beverage.

Please let Jill Jackson know you are coming. She will notify folks if we need to move to a Zoom gathering for

weather or other reasons.

(Zoom lovers – We're open to ways to have Zoom participants when we meet in-person. Ideas for how to include virtual friends are welcome!)

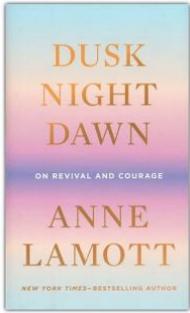
Women's Affinity Group Zoom Meeting link.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84994330469?pwd=Ujh1NFhnN1Rlc3U3KzFnU1lzR3VXZz09>

Dial by your location = +1 312 626 6799 US

Meeting ID: 849 9433 0469

Passcode: 119136



Adult Forum

Wednesdays Zooms in May

The Adult Forum will finish discussing Anne Lamott's new book *Dusk, Night, Dawn* in early May. You're invited to obtain the book and join us for the humor and humanness that it encourages all to embrace. Chapter readings are included in Pastor Matthias's weekly email.

After that, we will use a resource Joanne Sylvander suggested called ***Gonna Trouble the Water: Ecojustice, Water, and Environmental Racism***. Different topics from the book will be discussed each week.

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81725210424?pwd=cVrU0NHdHZSWjIBd2ZoMFdBNE1hQT09>

Meeting ID: 817 2521 0424

Password: 056975

Being Church in Covid Times - Continuing online worship

Attn: computer geeks, video streamers and social media junkies

A group of volunteers have attended two zoom workshops entitled "So you want to build a hybrid worship" offered by the Indiana-Kentucky Conference. Topics included: building a team, getting technology to get online, how to build it on a budget, copyright issues, tending to multiple audiences at one time, virtual audience engagement, how do you know it's working.



Not surprisingly, Tom Murphy and Pastor Matthias — through trial and error, patience, and expertise — had already accomplished over half of what was being taught. After coming back into the building for in-person worship, we hope to continue to offer worship online, but it needs adaptation since this would now be two different, but simultaneous, audiences.

But, one most needed component is a few more tech-savvy people who are willing to train in and rotate in on some Sundays; we should not be reliant on just one person 52 Sundays a year — too great a volunteer expectation! If you feel called to share your talents in this way, please contact Pastor Matthias.

When can we resume in-person worship?

As weather warms and many are getting vaccinated against COVID-19, you may be wondering when we will be able to resume in-person gatherings and worship. Here is a pithy summary to some of those questions:

- We do not have a hard and fast return to in-person date set. We continue to see rising case numbers in Minnesota. Even as the number of vaccinated people increases (yay!), they do not fully prevent one from getting COVID or spreading it. So we are approaching the "in-person" question cautiously and attentive to latest data and recommendations from health experts.
- Resuming in-person, outdoor small group gatherings will be a first step. Then in-person, indoor small groups. Worship and fellowship will come last due to the more complicated logistics of having more people in the space together.
- Before we can resume in-person worship or indoor gatherings, we are required by the state of Minnesota to have a COVID-19 Preparedness plan addressing how we will keep our congregation and community safe and comply with specific state requirements. This includes creating a clear outline of who is responsible for implementing the various parts of the plan.
- This plan entails a lot detail-oriented thinking, careful consideration, and time to pull together. There is a small team doing diligent and dedicated work on this plan (thank you Maria, Joanne, and Jill!). If you have energy and willingness to help with this or questions or concerns, please contact Pastor Matthias.

Your **Council/Session** represents you in church directions and decisions and they look forward to your questions and feedback at any time.

Pastor Matthias Peterson-Brandt: cpuc@usfamily.net, 651-227-4275

Diane Spicer
Jackie Rico
Curt Fleming
Joanne Sylvander
Mike Bates
Maria McNamara
Tom Murphy
Jim Shatek
Carly Evans
Susan Strebig
Kay Myhrman-Toso
Karolyn Gilbertson

Coordinates of Love
Latitude 44.9267
Longitude -93.1012

Dear CPUC Community,

I love the church season of Lent—that wilderness journey leading up to Holy Week and Resurrection. The way it slows us down, invites our contemplation, and intentionality in tending towards our spiritual life.

We are now well into the liturgical season of Easter, and will be until our celebration of Pentecost on Sunday, May 27. Lent is behind us.



But I am struck that the idea of taking on a particular spiritual practice for a season (as we do during Lent) is powerful. For one thing, it acknowledges that our rhythms change. What feeds us and inspires us and motivates us: these can shift and grow. Checking in on how your spiritual practices are working for you can be a way we keep ourselves from stagnation or ruts.

So too does setting a spiritual discipline for a season give us permission to experiment. We can be bold in trying out a new way of praying or living our faith knowing that at the end of the season, we will have learned something new about ourselves and God, and we can decide to continue that practice or seek out some new way.

My encouragement to you is this: pick a new spiritual practice or discipline or way of praying and commit to trying it for the month of May.

Some possibilities:

- Pray over the news each morning. Many of us look at the news first thing in the day. See what it would mean for you to pray as you read, rather than just absorbing the content.
- Change what you do with your body as you pray. If you normally pray sitting down, try praying standing. Try praying kneeling or sitting cross-legged.
- Explore your faith through writing letters. Sit down with a piece of paper, light a candle, ask God's guidance and presence. Then write. Write to loved ones near or far. Write to your elected officials. Write to yourself. Or write to God.

Unflinching critic and lover of the Church Martin Luther writes: "This life therefore is not righteousness, but growth in righteousness, not health, but healing, not being but becoming, not rest but exercise. We are not yet what we shall be, but we are growing toward it, the process is not yet finished, but it is going on, this is not the end, but it is the road."

Yours on the journey,

Pastor Matthias

At the April meeting the council...

...received **clerk** Mike Bates' report on the quarterly disbursement of funds committed to various organizations and denominational bodies we support.

...received the **pastor's** report which included his **gratitude** for so many who participated in the Holy Week and Easter Sunday services; information that our **custodian** has resigned to move to New Jersey to be closer to family so the Property Management Ministry and Personnel committee are in consultation on how to find a replacement; an (approved) request for **vacation days** on July 12-18, and July 26-August 1.

...received the first quarter **financial** report from Lynne Bates; we currently are spending under the budgeted amount but the offerings are also under budget; a great savings is experienced in solar credits now being 1K ahead of our energy expenses; we will apply for the latest Federal Paycheck Protection Program forgivable loan which will be close to 20K (5K larger than last year).

...received gratitude for support, and drawings from a native American inmate (see next page) in the PA correctional system, for which we are raising funds for their spiritual ceremonies - currently have raised \$1700 through **GoFundMe**, \$1900 in direct contributions to CPUC with an overall goal of 10K.

...approved request from WSCO to endorse the St. Paul Rent Stabilization Ordinance.

...received an inquiry from the **St. Paul Mennonite Fellowship** on when we, and they, might be back in person in the building. All of their members have received the immunizations. (Answer: out of an abundance of caution we will wait and see what happens in the next four weeks re: disease transmission reports).

...received a report from **Lay Ministry** that they are forming focus groups with a design-thinking model from the pastor to determine members' thoughts on their most meaningful connection with CPUC this past year, what we should focus on now, what is most valued about our connection to CPUC.

...received a report from **Property Management** that they are planning outside and inside clean-up days; that the kitchen refrigerator has now stopped functioning and needs replacing; that Tom is working on plans to be able to record worship services from the balcony once we are back in the building.

...received a report from **Faith Life** for a planned outdoor family event Saturday, April 24, relating to Earth Day and a sacred water focus.

...received a report from the **Being Church in Covid Team** that another survey is sent out to gauge how people feel about coming back into the church spaces; once a plan to resume being in the building a plan administrator is needed to be the person that all information is funneled into; some team members will attend seminars on how to resume worship safely. Pastor is keeping confidential track of those who let him know of their immunization status, and responses to the COVID survey so far show almost everyone has had at least one dose to date.

Next council meeting zoom: Tuesday May 11, 7-8:30 p.m.



Blast from the past

In cleaning out a few more storage areas we came across the cache of photos from the Building Blocks tutoring ministry. Although most of us knew Jill Jackson as the director, there was one before her, Anne Durkee (left), who was here the first 5 years, and Jill directed the next 21. The furniture in the Parent Room included the lovely plaid couch (ouch), and see if you can guess who the (right) pictured tutor is; answer on page 9.



Newsletter article deadline is the 22nd of the month; please submit articles or ideas to editor Susan at kellystrebig@comcast.net
-proofreaders Phyllis Clark, Mary Murphy
-collate/mail team Phyllis & Cal Clark

Let's eat!

Fellowship zooms after worship end up in a variety of topics, and recently we were sharing restaurant tips to patronize those places supporting social justice and BIPOC owners. The first five are on, or close to, the WestSide. The other three are just across the river in S. Mpls.

Parlour Bar: recommended by Pastor Matthias as he noticed that they add a 5% charge to help cover their employees benefits, including healthcare and mental health.

TacoNMadre: (in former Jerebek bldg) recommended by Maria noting that this possibly authentic Mexican food as you may be the only white person in the place; also visited often by Sasha.

El Cubano with patio: recommended by Maria and many others.

Black Market BBQ: food stand just south of high bridge: recommended by Maya; you send in your orders via website and pick up Friday/Saturday evenings (only).

Day by Day Cafe with great patio: recommended as a favorite by Susan as they employ waitstaff people in recovery, and they keep their own tips, so try to tip 100% - it feels good!

Sassy Spoon: recommended by Maya as also including the same charge as Parlour Bar; and is a business working with ASDIC.

Birchwood: recommended by Maya as supportive of social justice issues

All Square: with patio: a favorite of Susan and Laura Beth; a small cafe specializing in grilled cheese with a twist. (Try the *apple brie pecan caramel grilled cheese!*) This is a nonprofit social enterprise that invests in formerly incarcerated leaders through a 12-month fellowship anchored in mental health, wealth, and entrepreneurship, to ensure that those impacted by the criminal justice system have the support and opportunities they warrant to become our country's future leaders, business owners, legal practitioners, and entrepreneurs.

It's best to find these online so you can see what days and times they are open, plus see their menus. Assistance for this available from Susan at kellystrebig@comcast.net 651-4567-1404



Answer from page 6: Jan Howe



May Happy Birthdays & Celebrations

- 13 - Mike & Lynne Bates ♡
- 16 - Maria McNamara
- 21 - Sasha Aslanian
- 21 - Michael Woods
& Kristin Rafferty ♡
- 27 - Diane Spicer
- 28 - Jim & Karen Shatek ♡

Possible future volunteer need: Sleeping Mats for the Homeless Project

Volunteers at Thompson Park Activity Center in WSP are making sleeping mats for the homeless, crocheted out of plastic bag yarn (PLARN); between 500 and 700 plastic bags are used for each mat. Jobs include, cutting, sorting and crocheting with 16mm or size Q crochet hook (people bring their own scissors and hooks). Non-crafty jobs are also available with directions for all tasks provided. Current health guidelines are followed.

Currently it is too cold to be outside so a limited number of volunteers work inside, by reservation only. Watch for future notice on when this is done outside, in front of TPAC, (bring your own lawn chair.) Or contact Susan to be put in contact with the organizer to get directions to do this on your own.



Mats are donated to the *Friday Night Street Gang*, an organization that supports the homeless in Minneapolis with donations of food and supplies.

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

651-227-4275

cpuc@usfamily.net

cherokeeparkunited.org

Newsletter articles:

submit by the 22nd of preceding month

to Susan at kellystrebig@comcast.net



If speaking kindly
to plants
helps them grow,
imagine what
speaking kindly
to humans
can do