



## **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 June 2022***

(Cover photo by Pastor Matthias)



## *Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota fundraiser*

**June 4, Saturday, 12 noon - 4 pm**

Our neighbors and friends of the MMDTC are hosting a big fundraiser—meal, raffle, auction, and door prizes—in support of creating a community center facility. The event will be June 4<sup>th</sup> from 12 noon – 4pm inside St. Peter’s Church (1405 Sibley Memorial Hwy, Mendota). Check out the website for more information, or the Mendota Dakota facebook and twitter page.

## *Spring cleanup rakeup trimup headsup*

**June 18, Saturday, 10 am - noon**

We soon will pass no-mow May and get into please-do-rake June. Our grounds need their usual tune-up so please plan to join us for an hour or two to get it back into shape.



Tasks include pulling out dead flower stems, pulling out the eager to please dandelions, gently raking up leaves but trying to leave the mulch as much as possible, trimming back some unruly shrub branches; we will have extra gloves and shears but feel free to bring your own if they work best.

We might be able to lay down about six bags of mulch if someone can pick them up and transport from Menards.

We also will need someone to transport the weeds and leaves we rake up to the St. Paul compost site.

Please let us know if you plan to come so we can send an email reminder, or if needed, a postponement in case of rain. Susan (651-457-1404) [kellystrebig@comcast.net](mailto:kellystrebig@comcast.net) or Jim (651-357-7971) [JKShatek@comcast.net](mailto:JKShatek@comcast.net)



## *Congregational meeting*

**June 12, Sunday, after worship**

The purpose of this meeting will be to receive the report on our annual financial review (from 2021 financials) and to elect Diane Spicer to serve on the Lay Ministries Team. We will have an option for those wishing to join virtually (more details on this to come).



## *PRIDE celebration 2022*

We are participating in the West St. Paul PRIDE gathering on **Saturday, July 9, 11 am to 4 pm**. The event will be at the West St. Paul Sports Center (the big marshmallow dome) at 1655 Livingston Ave. **We need your help to represent CPUC at our table that day!** If you are available, please contact Pastor Matthias or Jill Jackson at [jilljacksonmn@comcast.net](mailto:jilljacksonmn@comcast.net) or 612 308-6747 (talk/text) Plan to come for an hour or two to meet the rainbow of people celebrating PRIDE together.

CPUC will not be marching in the Twin Cities PRIDE Parade on June 26. The UCC group we often join did not get registered this year. We will double our efforts to get signed up next year! We will celebrate PRIDE in worship that day. **Wear your rainbow T-shirts and other PRIDE colors on Sunday, June 26!**

## *Calling all website wizards!*

Cherokee Park United is looking for people with technology skills to help administer and update the church website. Wonderful Website Wizard Winnie Williams is offering a workshop on the software used on our site on **Monday, June 6, at 7:30 pm** at church. All are welcome! Please let Pastor Matthias know if you plan to attend. Bringing your own device (laptop, iPad, etc.) is optional. If you are interested but are unable to attend, please let Pastor or Jill Jackson know. They will follow up with information for you. Thank you!

## *Church reflected well*

Cherokee Park United Church volunteers next will serve Loaves and Fishes meals on July 7, six weeks away. However, it is well to report now that on May 5 they served 166 meals and that the turnout of volunteers, 16, was extraordinary and reflected very well on our church. (*Wayne Bjorlie*)



## *From Pastor Matthias*

Dear CPUC Community,

I forget how it happened, but a weekly Bible study I led once got on the topic of tattoos. The participants all had young adult children of their own, and there were some strong opinions about tattoos expressed.



One mother said she felt her children had ruined their bodies. Another thought it was shameful. Still others thought it was none of their business, or even found beauty in the ink their adult children had added.

I thought of that conversation last week when I came across a poem by David Gate titled “Like Every Selfie.” It is a short poem. I encourage you to Google it and read the whole thing, but in part he writes:

“Be kind about the names / your friends give to their children / Praise their haircuts / Love their Tattoos / It doesn’t really matter if that’s what you would do / Like every selfie / All of them.”

It is a helpful reminder that our criticisms of others’ personal choices—particularly ones that involve how people inhabit their bodies—are unlikely to accomplish anything we might want them to. Change the person’s mind? Unlikely. Build up friendship and rapport? Likely the opposite.

We each have choices about how we interact with others, whether we choose to affirm them, offer encouragement, show interest and care, or offer unsolicited opinions and criticism and point out flaws.

Social media does the latter plenty well enough already for most of us. Will we help do the former for one another? Let each other know the preciousness of who they are.

As Gate writes a few lines later in the poem: “You were born with a limitless / supply of encouragements / Use every one of them.”

Yours in faith,  
Pastor Matthias

## Sacred Solidarity

### Reparations Circle

This four-part, once a month Monday evening zoom series was attended by

Pastor Matthias, Maria McNamara, Mary Bren, Mary Murphy, Susan Strebis.



The majority of the time was used in fact-finding, as the clarity of "what" is not functioning, and "why" are needed before discussing "how" to repair. This month's study focused on black history (last month's study focused on native American history.) Following are some excerpts from "160 Years of the American Idea", *The Atlantic* June 2014 issue. These facts help illustrate the **failure** of our country's claim that all men (and yes, the federal government has never passed the Equal Rights [in gender] Amendment) are created equal and entitled to the same protection under the law, and the same rights to pursue life, liberty, and happiness.

**Social Security** was designed for the security of **white people only**: The omnibus programs passed under the Social Security Act in 1935 were crafted in such a way as to protect the southern way of life. Old-age insurance (Social Security proper) and unemployment insurance excluded farmworkers and domestics—jobs heavily occupied by blacks. When President Roosevelt signed Social Security into law in 1935, **65 percent of African Americans nationally and between 70 and 80 percent in the South were ineligible.**

**Only white people** could live in "**nice**" neighborhoods. As late as 1950, the National Association of Real Estate Boards' code of ethics warned that "a Realtor should never be instrumental in introducing into a neighborhood ... any race or nationality, or any individuals whose presence will clearly be detrimental to property values." A 1943 brochure specified that such potential undesirables might include madams, bootleggers, gangsters—and "a colored man of means who was giving his children a college education and thought they were entitled to live among whites."

The federal government concurred. It was the Home Owners' Loan Corporation, not a private trade association, that pioneered the practice of redlining, selectively granting loans and insisting that any property it insured be covered by a restrictive covenant—a clause in the deed **forbidding the sale of the property to anyone other than whites.** Millions of dollars flowed from tax coffers into segregated white neighborhoods. By the 1940s, Chicago led the nation in the use of these restrictive covenants, and about half of all residential neighborhoods in the city were effectively off-limits to blacks.

More than 98 percent of all the family public-housing units built in Chicago between 1950 and the mid-1960s were built in all-black neighborhoods. On July 1 and 2 of 1946, a mob of thousands assembled in Chicago's Park Manor neighborhood, hoping to eject a black doctor who'd recently moved in. The mob pelted the house with rocks and set the garage on fire. The doctor moved away.

In 1951, **thousands of whites** in Cicero, 20 minutes or so west of downtown Chicago, attacked an apartment building that housed **a single black family**, throwing bricks and firebombs through the windows and setting the apartment on fire. A Cook County grand jury **declined to charge the rioters**—and instead indicted the family's NAACP attorney, the apartment's white owner, and the owner's attorney and rental agent, **charging them with conspiring to lower property values**. Two years after that, whites picketed and planted explosives in South Deering, about 30 minutes from downtown Chicago, to force blacks out.

In 2001, the Associated Press published a three-part investigation into the theft of black-owned land stretching back to the antebellum period. The series documented some 406 victims and 24,000 acres of land valued at tens of millions of dollars. **The land was taken through means ranging from legal chicanery to terrorism.** "Some of the land taken from black families has become a country club in Virginia," as well as "oil fields in Mississippi" and "a baseball spring training facility in Florida."

Patrick Sharkey, a sociologist at New York University, studied children born from 1955 through 1970 and found that **4 percent of whites and 62 percent of blacks** across America had been raised in poor neighborhoods. A generation later, the same study showed, virtually **nothing had changed**. And whereas whites born into affluent neighborhoods tended to remain in affluent neighborhoods, blacks tended to fall out of them. Black families making \$100,000 typically live in the kinds of neighborhoods inhabited by white families making \$30,000. "Blacks and whites inhabit such different neighborhoods," Sharkey writes, "that it is not possible to compare the economic outcomes of black and white children." The implications are chilling. As a rule, poor black people do not work their way out of the ghetto—and those who do often face the horror of watching their children and grandchildren tumble back.

For the past 25 years, Congressman John Conyers Jr., who represents the Detroit area, has marked every session of Congress by introducing a bill calling for a congressional study (just a study) of slavery and its lingering effects as well as (just) recommendations for "appropriate remedies." HR 40 has never—under either Democrats or Republicans—made it to the House floor.

What will, or can, we do with this information? Truly, strength of the Spirit is needed here, so we can live out our vision of **Fierce Justice, Radical Love, Abundant Grace**.

## *At the May meeting the Council ...*

... passed a motion to **call a Congregational Meeting** after worship on June 12, 2022 to receive the financial review of the 2021 books, and elect Diane Spicer to serve on the Lay Ministries Team.



...received the **Financial report** including: a request that the next newsletter include a reminder for members to send in their per capita donations (see next page); information that our expenses are exceeding our income by \$2300 but this was anticipated in our budget; a reminder to **fellowship hosts** that we do have a cash reserve to reimburse for food they might purchase; information that the last funds from the Ruth Circle were spent on the **refrigerator**, that the church may need to purchase **software** for financial reports as we had been borrowing from a member's previous employer, and funding may be needed for **new technology** required for our hybrid worship services.

...received the pastor's report including: much time was spent this past month in attending, conducting, or preparing for quite a few **funeral** and visitation services. The church received a request from the chaplain at PA state prison Benner to help build their **sweat lodge** - a project we became involved in last year when asked to hold the funds for it. Help is needed from the outside as the the prison is dragging out the beginning of this and throwing up roadblocks.

...heard from the Lay Ministries team about a proposal for a new format for ministries - a **seasonal approach** - in which teams commit for a fourth of a year rather than a whole year, but then encompass most ministry aspects as chosen as possible by that group. The Lay Ministries team (Mike, Karolyn, Jill, Diane, Gina) has outlined the possible "how-to's" on this and will present the plan to the congregation. This plan will come to Council for a vote at the June meeting.

...approved a proposal from the **Faith Life** Team for a trial run of designing a portion of the Peace Room as a **children's/family space during worship**.

...approved the motion for establishing a **three-way covenant** between CPUC, Rev. Nancy Swanson, Minnesota Conference UCC.

...received the **Property Management** report: the annual lift maintenance has been done, the sprinkler system is on, the hot water valve serving Fellowship Hall is being serviced as the hall was not heating up, the solar system readout is again working, the protruding water pipe in the sidewalk on Manomin has been fixed by SPWS.

# THANK YOU

A HUGE **Thank You** to all who have contributed towards our per capita dues. Your response has been generous and a testament to how valuable our connections to our denominations are. For those who have not yet contributed to our per capita, there is still time! Please send in your per capita contributions (\$40/adult) to cover our affiliation with the UCC and Presbyterian denominations. We are charged \$2500 for this and have collected \$1800 from members to date.



## *Lay Ministries seasonal team model*

In June, the Council approved a proposal from the Lay Ministries Team for a trial run of a new model. In this approach, a team of those who feel called would gather for a 3-month season to discern where our energies lie as a congregation, how our Mission and Values might be lived out, and lead us over those 3 months. The seasonal team would take on the ministry areas currently done by Fellowship, Caring, Faith Life, Seeds of Resistance, and Worship. Our hope is that this shorter-term commitment and flexibility of the seasonal team to try out new ideas and follow the Spirit's leading will make for a creative and fruitful expression of ministry.

### *June Birthdays & Celebrations*

02 - Rita Ellefson

08 - Pastor Matthias

09 - Winnie Williams

19 - Mary Murphy

♥29 - Tom and Mary Murphy

30 - Nona Guerue





Translation:  
*I love in people  
what they are tomorrow.  
That's why I give them  
all their rights today,  
So that they may fight  
for their tomorrow  
And develop  
what is hidden  
within them.*  
Kurt Eisner



### *Newsletter*

- submit articles by the 22nd of preceding month to editor - Susan, at [kellystrebig@comcast.net](mailto:kellystrebig@comcast.net)
- proofreaders Phyllis Clark, Mary Murphy
- collator Kathy Bergthold



The after-worship on Sundays **zoom link, usually used by on-line virtual worshippers**, is not active at this time as no one seemed to be using it. **However it can easily be reactivated** if two or more people are interested, and if someone would be committed to attend it each Sunday. This could be a commitment shared by a number of people if you would not be there every Sunday. Please contact Pastor Matthias.

(Déjà vu all over again? it was either this or a blank page!)

## FLOWER WATCH

Just like our talents and virtues, these are not apparent all on one big occasion, but come to light/bloom over time; we need to be vigilant not to miss any. Fortunately our talents do not go dormant over the winter!

Watch for these blooming perennials around our church.

April: Magnolia

May: Bleeding heart, flowering redbud, forget-me-not, azalea

June: spirea, dwarf rose, daylily, karmina geranium, dwarf lilac, peony

July: coneflower

Aug: milkweed

Sept: brown-eyed Susan

Oct: Chinese astor

May-Sept: weeds!!



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. (church now **open** - masks and distancing required)  
and online at <https://www.facebook.com/cherokeeparkchurch/live>

Pastor: Rev. Matthias Peterson-Brandt

651-227-4275

[cpuc@usfamily.net](mailto:cpuc@usfamily.net)

[cherokeeparkunited.org](http://cherokeeparkunited.org)

*It's perfectly OK to not be OK.*

*Nona*