



## **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 2022**

## What does the Seasonal Ministry Planning Team have in store for us?



Seems we often have food in mind, so we are going from pies in November to cookies in December!

### *Christmas Cookie Bake Day*

**December 10, Saturday, 2 pm**

Children of all ages are invited to a holiday cookie bake in the Cherokee Park church basement. 2:00pm is the start time and the ending time is whenever your desire to bake cookies has had its run.

There will be several ways for you to participate. You choose. You can prepare your cookie dough at home and bring it to the kitchen, where a huge selection of Christmas and outdoorsy cookie cutters will be available for your use. If you want to use your own favorite cutter, bring it, but you are responsible for getting it home again. You can bake your cookies there or take them home to bake. If you want to teach others to make your favorite dough, you can bring all of the necessary ingredients and whip it up at the church kitchen.

There will be sugar cookie dough available for your use at the kitchen which will require no effort from you other than to roll out and cut. Please advise us if you plan to use this option, as we will need to have sufficient dough on hand.

Other accoutrements such as colored sugar and frosting will be available in limited quantities. If you plan to cut and/or bake at the church kitchen, bring the following for your use: rolling pin; timer; cookie sheets; waxed paper. Some kind of plastic protective sheeting to use while rolling out would also be useful. Other holiday products such as edible wreathes may be manufactured that day, too.

Please, please, let us know if you plan to attend on December 10. Who is coming? What are their ages? (or approx.) Do they want to use our ready-made dough? Do they like to eat cookies? You can send an email to either Diane or Wayne to let them know your plans for December 10.

### *Stories During Advent*

Each Sunday during Advent we will hear a short story from a local author, Roger Barr. His Advent-Christmas season stories first appeared in the Highland Park Villager in 1996. Tales of the fictional Bartholomew family ran through 2010 when an anthology was published, *Getting Ready for Christmas and Other Stories*.



Share your blessings this season...

*Provide Christmas gifts for a West Side family!*

The love we have for our community can be made more visible this time of year. A West Side family's Christmas wishes can come true - with CPUC's help! There is a "wish list" with the family member's names available at church or attached to the Pastor's weekly email. (If you need it another way, please contact Jill Jackson.) Use the link below to indicate the family member(s) for whom you will provide a gift. Please write the gift you choose from the list in the "Comments" section of the Sign-Up Genius form. *Please read the gifts already chosen for your family member as you sign up. This will help us avoid duplicates!* Our goal is to have three (3) gifts for each family member. (If you need help with the e-form, contact Jill or Pastor Matthias for assistance. We can help you sign up at church on Sundays, too!)

Please wrap your gift(s) and label each with the family member's name. Stay tuned to Pastor's weekly email for the exact date to bring them to church. If you choose to sign the gift tag, it's recommended you write "From friends at Cherokee Park United Church" and not your name. Thank you for spreading the love of CPUC to our neighbors this Christmas!

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C45AFA72AA1FFC16-christmas1>



## From Pastor Matthias

Dear CPUC,

While I am so grateful that vaccines have opened up many more opportunities for seeing each other this Advent and Christmas season, I do want to hold onto the slower pace of the holidays that I experienced the past two years with fewer holiday gatherings or gift exchanges or other seasonal events.



A writer and fellow pastor, Mary Ann McKibben Dana, recently wrote that the period from Thanksgiving to New Year's feels like doing a 500-piece puzzle but having 600 pieces in the box. Not everything fits or belongs. Add in the grief that can swell around the holidays, and it really can be just too much.

My nudge to you this month is this: be gentle with yourself. You do not have to fill every available moment with chores, people, gatherings. You are not obligated to feel cheerful if you are overcome by a wave of sadness. You do not need to stretch yourself thin getting gifts for every acquaintance or person you think might get you a gift.

If the point of this season is moving us towards God's incarnation as a child born to two exhausted parents, then I believe God invites us to let our own faith be one that is tender with others and with ourselves. It is a faith that encourages the afternoon nap you are contemplating. It is the faith that listens to your body and its needs: connection or solitude, a glass of water or another piece of pie, a day to lounge in pjs or the energy to tackle a project.

Let us take a cue from the newborn Christ child and tend to those most basic of needs: rest, touch and connection, warmth, sustaining food. Let's not try to cram 100 extra puzzle pieces in where they don't fit, and even more so, I promise you'll be fine if the puzzle doesn't get completed. God, Immanuel, will still draw near.



Advent blessings,  
Pastor Matthias

## At the October Meeting the Council...



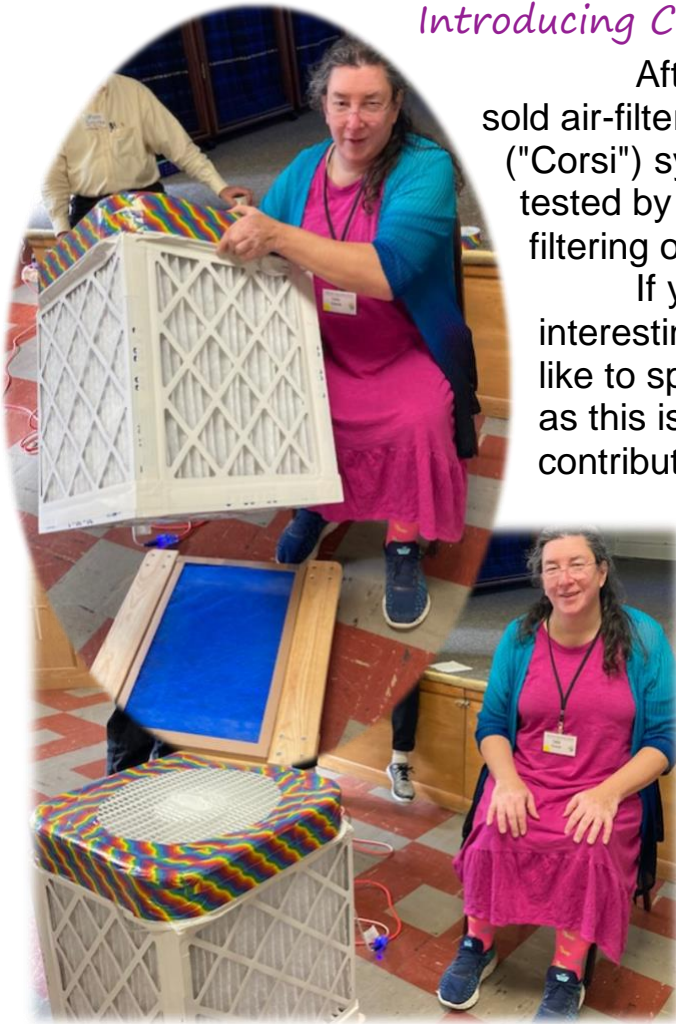
- ◆ accepted the pastor's monthly report. Items not recurring on a monthly basis were the 3-4 cases of people contacting CPUC for *emergency assistance*, such as needing help with advance renters' damage deposits which might prevent them from being able to secure housing. Pastor Matthias also does referrals to other local assistance resource programs. He has now created an information form for requests to help speed up the process and clarify the needs. Thanks to the generosity of members this emergency account is presently adequately funded.
- ◆ reviewed the membership rolls to determine whether people who are not involved in any way should remain on; those in question were divided among council members to contact and ask if they wished to remain on the rolls. This should be done annually but was not done during the pandemic when no one was encouraged or allowed to be together in the building or elsewhere.
- ◆ discussed how the church holds strategic plans (such as outreach or council visioning) in relation to the Seasonal Steering Team model, which is less conducive to those longer-term needs.
- ◆ discussed an idea put forth by the Finance Team to include in our stewardship response, an effort to discern our possible duty for *Reparations* (to indigenous people and others of color). This could be a focus started during Lent which is always a good place to look to the past, present, and future. Five members attended a four-part series on this topic earlier in the year, and the same organizers of that zoomcast are also available as resource.
- ◆ received a report from Property Management that small and large *repairs* continue in this older building. Curt recently fixed one of the kitchen sink stoppers. The Tech Team is now creating more flexibility as some of the team also wish to be involved in the music ministry on Sundays.
- ◆ received a report from Lay Ministry that the second *Seasonal Steering Team* will meet soon and make plans for Jan-Feb-Mar. The Fall team is going well and excited about a cookie baking event on Saturday Dec 10. Also a *new church treasurer* is needed as Phyllis C. wishes to retire from that role. (Thank you, Phyllis, for many years of service.) This has evolved into an easier task recently as most bills are now paid automatically online.
- ◆ received a report from the Personnel Team that they have updated the job description for a *nursery coordinator* and put it out to various church areas. It was suggested to also post in local coffee shops & restaurants and contact WSCO.

## *Introducing Cubies and their fabricator Carly*

After following up a lead for a commercially-sold air-filtering system, Carly discovered this DIY ("Corsi") system online, which has been studied and tested by various labs and found to be effective in filtering out most of the covid viruses.

If you would rather see air filters and interesting duck tape than grey metal, and if you'd like to spend \$150 instead of \$2000, you are in luck, as this is what we chose!! (Actually a member contributed to pay for Cubie 1!)

Cubie 1, Cubie 2, and Cubie 3 are completed and working, with Cubie 4 yet to be assembled. They will be gently filtering air for us in our worship and social spaces.



## *Let it Snow Let it Snow Let it Snow*



CPUC members Kathy B. and Sandy S. used their sewing and knitting skills to help keep the children attending school at Guadalupe Area Project (GAP) warm in this Minnesota weather. This is an extra challenge for those immigrating from countries where they have never seen snow or (shiver) temperatures below zero.

## *Last words about pie (promise) - THANK YOU*

...to **Jill** for being our composer-in-residence and providing the Stewardship Worship Pie Doxologies, a Seasonal Steering Team (SST) song, the going-away song for Sasha, and many others written over two decades in honor of birthdays etc.....and thank you to this year's pie bakers, **Jerome** (pecan), **Lon** (apple), and **Lynne** (apple) for offering their culinary talents...and thank you to **all who turned in** pledges for 2023. If you have not yet done so, it's never too late.

## December Birthdays

01 - Michele  
 05 - Jaime  
 14 - Sophie  
 14 - Audrey  
 14 - Karolyn  
 19 - Isaac  
 20 - Jerome  
 27 - Russ

**My voting plan**  
**is...**

walk to vote  
 to vote at my new polling place on N. 6v. 8  
 first thing then out to breakfast! Me too! Me three

pick up Alex and together go to polls  
 walk over to Humboldt & vote when my husband gets off work - we have always voted together  
 we live 1 house from the polling place - for 30 years! I have no excuse not to vote!

Get to St. Matt's in the morning  
 Vote this week!  
 Already Voted!  
 I'm using  
 "Take Action MN."  
 absentee ballot

Plans to vote were shared at fellowship hour in the weeks before November 9. EVERY vote counted, and made a difference !!

### Newsletter

-submit articles by the 22nd of the preceding month to editor - Susan: kellystrebig@comcast.net  
 -proofreaders Phyllis C., Mary M.  
 -collator Kathy B.

**I am voting because...**

I can! Hope for change

DEMOCRACY REQUIRES PARTICIPATION.

I am a citizen of the United States of America  
 It is my civic duty  
 It's important!

I am called by the Spirit  
 I care what our society is like!

It gives us the right to complain later.

It's my right and a way to express my opinion.

Voting expresses trust in our neighbors that they shall neither falsify their votes nor miscount the votes of others, and this trust is the necessary foundation of democracy.

It's one way to  
 -make change  
 -have my voice be heard  
 -oppose my life

**I am voting for...**

(no candidates; think values, priorities, policies...)

Those who can't - justice for all  
 Me, too!!

Respect  
 For those living and protecting their voices and lives of marginalized people.  
 Women's Rights  
 Progressives  
 Justice for those who are in poverty  
 Justice for the vulnerable - those whose voices can not be heard or have historically been silenced.  
 (I'm a straight white male - I'm safe - a lot of others are not)

For the times I believe in  
 the continuation of our democracy

...our democratic system

I vote for the better or the less bad political party available; improving my options requires speaking out in between elections.

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 and in person  
<https://www.facebook.com/cherokeeparkchurch/live>  
Pastor: Rev. Matthias Peterson-Brandt  
651-227-4275  
cpuc@usfamily.net  
cherokeeparkunited.org

Don't wait to see the evidence  
that God's good news is coming.

*Be* the evidence  
that God's good news is already here!

*Jared A. Rardin*

