

Join us for installation of new Council
Members in worship, Sunday, January 8



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 January 2023

An Awesome Start to 2023!

The Lay Ministry Team is excited to begin 2023. We have some **new church Council members** to welcome. Deborah will join the Class of 2024 to fill a vacancy. The Class of 2025 will have Tom and Jim returning for new three-year terms. Barb and Jill will join them. We thank these people for serving in these leadership roles at CPUC.

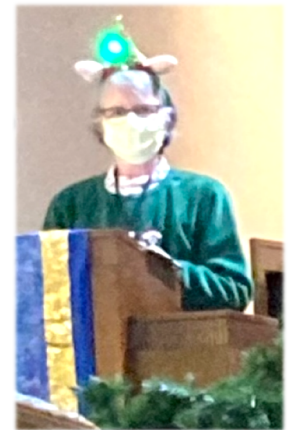
The people on the teams with specialized roles now start their yearly terms in January. They are the Finance Team, the Tech Team, and the Property Management Team. The people agreeing to serve on these teams are listed below. We thank them for giving of their time and talents to do these skilled jobs on our behalf.

During worship on **Sunday, January 8**, the new members of Council will be installed. We will also celebrate the yearly team members. We encourage all of these servant leaders to be present at church that day.

The **Preparing Seasonal Steering Team** (SST) has lots of wonderful things planned for the months of January, February, and March. We thank Kathy B., Jerome, Glen, and Susan for volunteering for this season. Mike and Gina are the Lay Ministry members supporting this team.

We also are grateful to those completing their service as the very **first SST** at CPUC. They embraced the model of ministry we are trying with faith and dedication. The SST members were Wayne, Sandy D., Mary M., and Joanne. Lay Ministry members Karolyn, Diane, supported them. Thank you!

[photo: Sandy captivates all during Advent Sunday reading with mesmerizing blinking headpiece.]



The Lay Ministry Team also thanks Mike Bates as he moves off of the team after a pandemic-lengthened term. Mike lead during a time of new ideas and much discernment. Thanks for your faithfulness, Mike.

Finance Team- Lynne Bates-Accountant, Meliza Thurstin-Treasurer, Karen Shatek-Financial Secretary, Jerome Graf, Ingrid Fleming, and Susan Strebig

Tech Team- Mike Bates, Tom Murphy, Jim Shatek, Stefan Sylvander

Property Management- Curt Fleming and Jim Shatek, Co-chairs. (Helpers recruited for projects when needed.)

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

Seasonal Steering Team Offerings - Jan Feb Mar 2023

The team met on December 6 to decide what ministry efforts can be provided during the *Preparing Time* which encompasses the liturgical seasons of Epiphany and Lent. Jesus has appeared and we are invited to make felt his Spirit through our own daily lives. Lent invites us to examine where we are and where we go from here. The Spirit will guide us forward.

January will start off with the sanctuary environment change to **Ordinary Time**. This involves the **un-greening** of the church Sunday January 8 and all are invited to stay after worship and accomplish this in a short (20-minute?) period of time. Kathy B. and Susan will change the paraments, and again change for Lent by February 22, Ash Wednesday. **Ash Wednesday** service will be provided by Pastor Matthias and hopefully a few others assisting.

Late January /early February include a return of the much-enjoyed **Caring Meals** which will be organized by Gina and Mike. If we have newcomers join us and returning us for a few times Gina may revive the tradition of bringing them a loaf of **Friendship Bread**. After-worship Fellowship foods anchored by Panera sweets will hopefully continue through the organized rotation schedule of people, and be supplemented by a few different items organized by Susan. Outreach to find **greeters** for Sunday worship will be organized by Glen, as online sign-up does not seem to fill the need.

As we progress into **Lent** you will find **art pieces** changed around the sanctuary, organized by Glen and Jerome. This visual change will herald in a focus during **Lent** on the topic and effort of **Reparations**. The Creator asks us to repair that which we have broken. Our fellow human beings have not all been treated as sacred creations, so what can we do to help repair that which took centuries to break down? Since this focus originates and mainly takes place during worship, it will be organized by Pastor Matthias and Susan with help from other members who attended the Reparations workshop in early 2022.

Lenten palms will be coordinated through Kathy B. Susan will provide Lenten focus for children in the Peace Room.

Pastor Matthias is contacting Clark Grace and Pastor White to see if they want to revive the **MLK shared worship** in January. For **Trans-Visibility Sunday**, Glen will look for a speaker through UTS. Since that is also the traditional Sunday honoring **St. Romero**, it will be suggested that this include a recognition of other modern-day saints, and be scheduled during a less-packed month in the future.

The hope is that the current organizer Wayne and all the worker bees can continue to staff the **Loaves and Fishes** that occurs the first Thursdays in January and March. (cont'd next page)

Easter falls in the next season, *Awake Time*, which starts in April. However the Winter/Preparing team can overlap with them and help with tasks needed to be started in March, such as taking orders for the Easter garden plants, if desired.

If the Spirit calls to you in any of the above efforts, or anything else you would like to help happen, please contact any of the people mentioned below. (You can use your new congregational directory!) Contact Susan if you would like a paper copy.) All efforts can use extra hands and hearts. Do not hesitate. Jump in!! No fear!!

Seasonal Steering Team: Kathy B., Susan, Glen, Jerome, Pastor Matthias

Lay Ministry Guides: Mike, Gina

Loaves & Fishes

Thursday, January 5

Volunteers, new and old are invited to join us for our next Loaves and Fishes service, feeding hungry souls at St. Matthew's Church. There have been changes, and L&F folks are still feeling their way. A special email will be sent to all of the likely L&F volunteer suspects soon. Contact Wayne.

Gifts headed for a West Side family to help create a happy Christmas Day



CPUC indoor Little Lending Library

Sometimes things sprout up unplanned. Such is the little library growing on a round table in Fellowship Hall. It started with (a box of) books on Native American culture and history, courtesy of Karen and Jim, recommended by Rainbow Dancer Thunderbird, a Yamasic shaman incarcerated at Benner State Prison in PA. He is a friend and mentor of indigenous advocate warrior Running River (also incarcerated, and friend of Susan).

Next came a book written by Running River, and reprints of an article from the PA prison inmates newsletter, thanking him for his legal efforts on behalf of prisoners. And more, such as issues of *Graterfriends* written by incarcerated men and women, and *Sojourners*, a faith in action social justice magazine; (January issue titles: *Why the Gun Lobby Loves Christians*, *The Tragic Testimony of the Daughters of Magdale -imprisoned Irish unwed mothers*, *A secret Van Gogh Drawing unveils His Complicated Faith*.)

From Pastor Matthias

Dear CPUC,

Our four-year-old has been very into coloring lately, and his newest delight is recognizing and replicating patterns. Coloring in a candy cane in a coloring book, alternating colors for a picture he is drawing, have brought about exclamations of: “Look! A pattern!”



At its most basic level, recognizing patterns is about finding things that repeat. If you know the candy cane stripes go red-white-red-white, then you can reasonably predict what the next color in the sequence will be if you know what has come before.

At the end of December and early January, there is a lot of year-in-review, best-of-2022 type lists and articles. There are also plenty of self-help guides to making resolutions for the new year. While I tend to feel ambivalent about New Year’s Resolutions, I do believe it is worthwhile to reflect on the year that has been and look ahead to the year to come. It can be even more helpful to look for patterns.

Where did you experience joy this past year? In which did you feel most grounded, spiritually connected? When did you struggle the most?

It may be that if you reflect on these questions, the answers will be a hodge podge, bearing little discernible connection. On the other hand, the answers can also point to patterns. Perhaps particular people seem to often be involved in your most joyful moments. Or maybe you can see similarities in the moments this past year when you felt most spiritually nourished.

Sometimes it is easier to see the Spirit moving in our lives in hindsight, which may then help us cultivate practices that help sustain our faith and move us in the paths of love and justice in the year ahead.

Pastor Matthias

At the November Meeting the Council...

-received the clerk's report that he will be sending out the monies we commit to various missions each year. Mike attended the November 18-19 Presbytery meeting at House of Hope Church. Of interest was a presentation from Peace Church about how they used grant money from the Presbytery to offer exercise classes for seniors.

-received the Pastor's report including hours spent with both the Harvest (Oct-Dec) and Preparing (Jan - March) ministry steering teams. He plans on two weeks of study; one to work on the Preparing team focus on Reparations and one to attend a festival of homiletics in the Twin Cities.



Council members expressed concern that the pastor's study weeks should be more open for repairing and lifting the pastor's spirit and being with colleagues, rather than preparing for the next round of worship at church, and also expressed concern that he works doubly hard to prepare for Sunday worship services in advance so that they are taken care of in his absence. To be further discussed.

-approved the revised congregational rolls; council members had volunteered to contact various members if there was a question as to whether they wished to remain on the rolls as members.

-voted to elect Meliza as new CPUC Treasurer; many thanks to Phyllis C. for filling this role for many years. Check paying will now be handled by Meliza, with Lynne handling payroll and accounting, and Karen handling pledges and donations.

-passed a motion to accept the Personnel Committee's recommendation of a 4% pay increase as a 2023 cost of living adjustment for our 1 full-time and 2 part-time employees.

-authorized payment from our Capitol Improvement fund for a boiler pump which must be replaced at a cost of \$800-\$1000.

-approved the 2023 budget as proposed by the Finance Committee

-thanked the outgoing council members Maria and Mike for their past six years of service on the council.

Advent cookie baking (and eating) Thanks to Wayne and Diane for organizing.



