



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 February 2023

Celebrating the life of Dr. King

Huge thank-you's to all who helped with the Fellowship Potluck after our joint MLK service with Clark-Grace on January 15. Kathy B. took the lead and recruited the many willing hands and hearts to bring yummy foods* and warm and serve them; a special thanks also to Jim and Mike for keeping up the energy and heading the clean-up after our full house. There are many, many hands who reached in to make this possible again, after years of distancing restrictions preventing us from being together. (**Eric's fabulous Tiramisu dessert recipe is found on last page.*)



Besides the annual MLK service and potluck, we are providing more foods than just Panera "doughnations" at fellowship, plans are underway for a focus on Reparations during Lent, and artworks having been changing on the walls in the sanctuary (remember to look around!).

We live our values

Our church documents state that we "value extravagant welcome, engaging worship and heartfelt prayer, and each other" (plus more).

A rich church life is possible with help from those of you *not on the planning team*. Please reach out with a helping heart; The Creator calls us in both big and little ways.

Gathering Meals are again being organized as a way to get to know each other in a more relaxed, social, extended time period. Small groups will come together for a shared meal, prepared by a host or done as a potluck, from late February to early April. Please contact Gina or Mike by February 8 if you are interested in attending a meal in someone's home or hosting it in yours.

Greeters are still needed to fill in a few Sunday times. Please contact Glen if you are able to come just a bit early to welcome everyone to worship with a smile!

Sunday fellowshippers always appreciate a bit of *food variety* (ie. veggies, fruits, cheese) to supplement the sweets already donated. This does not necessarily involve setup or cleanup, although that help is always appreciated. Contact Susan if you wish to help; she also has plenty of simple ideas of foods/quantities.

"Preparing" Seasonal Steering Team: Gina, Mike, Glen, Susan Kathy B., Pastor Matthias

From Pastor Matthias

Dear CPUC,

Toward the end of this month, we will mark (or, more accurately be marked by) Ash Wednesday and the beginning of the season of Lent. These forty days are a time the Church meditates on Jesus' life and the ways his radical ministry led to his execution at the hands of an Empire protecting its interests.



It has often been observed by Christians as a season of repentance and humility. Sometimes this has swung too far into the territory of shame and guilt-inducing, rather than an honest and appropriate season of reflection.

This year during Lent, the Preparing Season steering team—who is leading us during January, February, and March—has chosen to spend some time exploring the theme of reparations.

In our worship we'll discern connections between our faith, our spiritual roots, our country's history, and our present-day life as they relate to reparations. We are also planning for one or two guest speakers to share wisdom and insight on the meaning of reparations. We'll offer some table questions during fellowship time to encourage further conversation.

It can be an overwhelming topic, as I have discovered while doing some reading and study in preparation. In this is an invitation to return to the foundational grace of our faith. A sure trust that God loves us no matter what, without precondition or hidden catches.

And this grace then, in turn, allows us to be bold, to put ourselves in new situations of taking risks for the sake of justice and love. It is from that foundation of grace that the Spirit impels us out to learn, to face uncomfortable truths, to try and try again in our efforts to live our faith. That sure foundation remains, making us courageous to learn together and hear where the Spirit calls us forward.

Yours on the journey,
Pastor Matthias

At the January Meeting the Council...

-set the 2023 **communion dates** as the first Sunday of every month, plus Maundy Thursday and/or other dates as may be required by superseding events i.e. pandemics, emergencies, or vacations.

-Gratefully received names of volunteers (* need to be council members) to take various church positions, namely: church treasurer, financial secretary, accountant, (Sunday) counters, auditor, Presbytery commissioners, Minnesota Conference delegates, *Lay Ministry Chair, *Lay Ministry Vice Chair, *Council Moderator and *Vice Moderator, Clerk of Council, *Personnel Ministry representative. (listing on last page)

-received the pastor's report; much of his time was focused on Sunday worship preparation, the holidays, weathering the snow, working with the new seasonal team, and preparing for the joint MLK service with Clark-Grace UCC.

--shared personal ideas on where we feel **God is calling us towards** in 2023, and conversely, any areas we feel **called away from**.

-received updates from various ministries: Property Management is still waiting for a new part to get the **lift** back in working order; **Tech Team** worked out a system of enabling one person to do more so another might be free to participate in another worship ministry such as cantor, liturgist, etc.

-spent time **praying for each church member** - each person was mentioned and held in love by name. (Some of the council members find this the most impactful and meaningful time spent each year in a council meeting.)

Council Humor: New to our church vocabulary - "voluntold", meaning, when a member is involved in a ministry but also signs up a significant other with a presumption that the answer must be yes!

Black History Month|

The March issue will contain a focus on Black History, although February is the usual designation. Through our focus on Reparations, perhaps we will be mindful that our brothers and sisters require more than a token month of consideration.



Bonus Sermons!

(an editorial)

Most of you who receive this newsletter also receive the weekly Thursday e-blast update on doings at CPUC. At the bottom you will find the worship bulletin for the coming Sunday AND a bonus in the format of music, inspiration; on January 19 there was a link to Dr. King's 1963 "**Letter from a Birmingham Jail**" written to eight clergymen.

Upon opening the file, whew, you see it is lengthy (about 6,000 words), the equivalent of three of these newsletters; these issues also contain many pages of images, but Dr. King's words are every bit as full of imagery. This is well-worth the read.

There are aha moments when you realize, "oh, that's where that quote comes from!" There is a wonderful but tragic read of civil rights history to be had. It offers a simpler way to understand this complicated issue...and a needed reminder that we are often insulated from this behind our stained-glass windows on Sundays. Indeed Dr. King goes so far as to see " 'white moderates who are more devoted to 'order' than to justice" as more of a roadblock to the Civil Rights Movement than outright racists."

Pastor Matthias goes on to muse, "There is much in the [Presbyterian Church USA] Book of Order that facilitates and commends justice, to be sure. But I find myself wondering: what would it look like if we were as devoted to justice as we were to order? What if our denomination had a "Book of Justice" as part of our governing documents?"

Do yourself, and the world, a favor and read this.

<https://www.csuchico.edu/iege/assets/documents/susi-letter-from-birmingham-jail.pdf>

I also have a personal appreciation for the physical effort it took Dr. King to write this from a jail, as I receive many letters from incarcerated people in Pennsylvania prisons; inmates write under challenging conditions. The paper they can afford to write on (yes they need to purchase it, and no one from the outside is allowed to send anything in) is the cheap, soft, yellow lined paper of our youth, the pencils are often unsharpened (inmates are allowed nothing sharp), they sit on a cold, hard bunk or a small steel desk on a small cold plastic stool - not any writer's ideal of a cozy place, a cup of tea and a laptop, or even a typewriter, or a ball point pen. This takes determination!

If you would like to know what typical inmates write, borrow a prison newsletter from the round table in Fellowship Hall. They do not have the education degrees of Dr. King, but they have the hearts and souls that need listening to. A disproportionate number are people of color - black, indigenous - most vulnerable to incarceration because they live in generational poverty after their ancestors' labors and properties were stolen.

Loaves and Fishes

At our latest Loaves and Fishes outing, January 5, we once again showed our Cherokee Park commitment to serving others, pushing against tough travel conditions and surmounting greater-than-average challenges with the meal preparation. We served about 125 meals that night. We will do it again on March 2.



Happy Birthday Bob at 95

A few members surprised Bob with song, balloons, and a cupcake. Bob has kept his Covid haircut, as have many of us and rocks the northwoods Gov.



Wendell Anderson flannel! Bob is doing well in his assisted living arrangement and Jill sees him often. He enjoyed the cards and greetings sent to him and welcomes more news of his church family.

(Midwestern) Musings from Rev. Sandy - Fairview Hospitals Chaplain

The devotional readings I have spent time with today reflect on the nature of salt and light - properties that can accentuate whatever they touch. Most build from scripture's "You are the salt and light, go and be that salt and light in the world."

Got to thinking about salt and the icy roads, my dirty car. This quote struck me as open to many interpretations. Made me laugh.

Eat, Your Highness.

"Everything tastes like doom,"
he whispered.

Then add salt.



February Birthdays

13 - Eric J.

26 - Jackie

Sign up for the Awakening Seasonal Steering Team!

The next season (April-May-June) in our Garden Ministry is "Awakening." The Seasonal Steering Team will share their leadership with the congregation in the ministries of fellowship, caring, outreach, worship, justice, and faith life.



The team will meet in mid-February to listen to each other and dream and will meet again in March to get focused on where the Spirit is calling. The SST will gather other volunteers from the congregation to help in fulfilling the shared tasks of congregational life. You can sign up using the link below. Thank you for being part of the adventure!

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

Eric's Fabulous Tiramisu

13 x 9 pan for pot luck plus a little extra, maybe a 5 x 5 on the side:

8 eggs: Pasteurize by adding them to about two quarts of water heated to 145 F - usually it comes out of the tap close to that, and microwaving gets it the rest of the way there. The eggs should be in the water *just* for 3 minutes and then drain the water and rinse eggs with cold water. Over-heating the eggs will make beating the whites more difficult.

-Separate and put yolks in a 3 quart or larger bowl and whites in a 2 quart or larger bowl.

-Beat the whites to give medium peaks, set aside.

1.5 C sugar: add to the yolks and beat till paler and smooth consistency--not too granular.

2 lb mascarpone cheese fold into the egg yolk / sugar.

-fold the beaten egg whites into the yolk/sugar/mascarpone mix and set aside.

8 shots of espresso: make or buy.

2 pkg Savioardi (crispy) lady fingers: dip in espresso - very fast, just to get them wet on both sides - do not soak. (buy at Buon Giorno, Cosetta's or Restaurant Depot.) - Layer half in pan.

-Pour about *half* of the yolk/sugar/mascarpone mix onto the lady fingers in the pan

-3 heaping tsp cocoa powder sprinkle over (put it in a spoon and tap the spoon with a second spoon) -repeat last 3 steps with lady fingers dipping, mixture, cocoa powder

E' finito! (as they say in l'italiano). Best if refrigerated overnight, or 6 hours in fridge is OK too.

Cherokee Park United Church
United Church of Christ/Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)
Open & Affirming, Multicultural, Antiracist
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Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m., online and in person
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*Be assured that if you knew all,
you would pardon all.*

Thomas a Kempis