



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 April 2023

Easter Garden

If you would like to contribute to this year's Easter Garden, please mail your donation or put it in the offering plate (suggested donation \$10). Mary Murphy will purchase plants at Trader Joe's to decorate our Easter worship, and you can take one home with you after the service.



The Awakening Seasonal Steering Team Hops Into Spring!

Soon April will arrive with Holy Week, Easter, and many signs of nature's rebirth. The Awakening SST invites you to engage in this season as an active participant! Please put these events on your spring calendar.



Palm Sunday, April 2 – Worship with palms at 10:15 am



Maundy Thursday, April 6 – Family friendly soup dinner and worship with Communion in Fellowship Hall at 6:00 pm

Easter Breakfast, April 9 – Meal served 8:45 to 9:45 am

Easter Sunday and Memorial Garden – Worship at 10:15 am

(Thank you to Mary and Tom Murphy for organizing the Memorial Garden!)

The Awakening SST plans other exciting, meaningful events for the months ahead. Stay tuned for more “hoppy” news!

The Awakening SST – Carly Evans, Maria McNamara, Kay Myhrman-Toso, Jackie Rico, Karen Shatek. Lay Ministry helpers – Pastor Matthias, Diane Spicer, Jill Jackson



Maundy Thursday (April 6)—This Maundy Thursday we're trying something different. We'll gather for a soup and bread supper worship. Gather in the fellowship hall at 6pm to sing, pray, eat together, and share Communion around tables. All ages welcome!



Soup is covered, but we need a couple **volunteers to bring bread or cookies** and to help clean up afterward. You can sign up here:

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

For those who wish to spend some time in contemplation, the sanctuary will be open for a time after the dinner. The lights will be dim and the chancel will have been stripped down.

Easter Sunday (April 9)—Joyful Easter worship at 10:15 a.m. We'll have an Easter breakfast from 8:45 – 9:45 a.m. before worship. We need some folks to **bring an egg bake (or other hearty breakfast items), fruit**, and some volunteers to help clean up before worship:

<https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C45AFA72AA1FFC16-easter1>

We will forego our after-worship coffee hour as many folks have family commitments and/or will be at church early to prepare breakfast. So come ahead of worship to enjoy a meal and fellowship time together!

April Earth Month

Watch for later announcements on how our congregation will respect the earth together.



Loaves and Fishes

In only one short month, we will again have the opportunity to serve a meal with Loaves and Fishes. That's right!

Thursday, May 4

In March we broke a record for meals served (235), at least a record for us.



From Pastor Matthias

Dear CPUC

Growing up in a decidedly Protestant household, crosses that I encountered in church or home were bare. That is, even if they were beautifully crafted and decorated, there was no Christ hanging on them. I don't remember when I encountered my first crucifix, but I do remember being surprised and confused. I understood what it depicted, that this was Jesus; but I didn't understand why someone would choose to portray the horribleness of the crucifixion as a devotional item.



While these days I have more understanding of why a crucifix might hold emotional and spiritual appeal for some Christians, I still find myself wanting to skip Good Friday.

It does mark a significant moment in the story of Jesus, and many theologians are quick to point out that you cannot have resurrection without death.

The urge to skip the trauma and sadness of Good Friday worship is related to an aversion to violence and feeling that we do not benefit from more exposure to this particular story of Jesus' death.

Indeed, I believe that we already experience Good Friday reading the news most days. We see the contours of Jesus' last days mirrored in stories of Black lives stolen by police violence. We hear the echoes in the deaths of those disowned by their families or abandoned by their friends.

I feel aware that there is already a surfeit of pain in this world without a need for some additional spiritual mortification.

If marking Good Friday is particularly meaningful to you, there is nothing wrong with that. After our Maundy Thursday dinner worship in the fellowship hall, the sanctuary will be dimly lit and open for those who wish to sit a while and contemplate the stripped-down chancel area.

If, however, you feel spiritually you do not need to dwell on more pain, I think that too is a faithful and valid spiritual choice.

However you feel about it, my prayer is that God would lead all creation and all humanity out of pain and into healing, out of cruelty and into justice, out from death and into resurrection.

Yours on the journey,
Pastor Matthias



Pre-meeting thought: God meets us in our actual lives...

(...not in the lives we previously thought we would have.)

At the March Meeting the Council...

- received the pastor's February report. In addition to the normal tasks that reoccur daily, weekly or monthly, Pastor Matthias attended the final (of four) workshops on Reparations for Congregations led by MN Interfaith Power and Light, attended a pastors training worship on family systems theory offered by the Presbytery, convened the Presbytery's Pastoral Leader Care Team meeting, attended Presbytery's Anti-Racism Task Force meeting, attended discussions with Chief Ammon Bailey and others for an update on the prison sweat lodge, prepared and led Ash Wednesday service with adjustments made to pivot to zoom due to heavy snowfall, co-facilitated first meeting of the Awakening Season Steering Team.
- approved the pastor's request to use two weeks of his vacation in August; July 26-August 2 and August 14-20 .
- received a report on the Presbytery meeting from Jill and Mike; the meeting began with a land acknowledgement to Dakota Peoples; they are organizing small church networks; they used the bulk of the meeting to talk about bills and overtures to be voted on; they reported on congregational grants given to six churches ranging from \$7400 o 20K which is something to remember in case we are ever in need.
- pastor gave a short history of our work with Chief Ammon Bailey starting in Fall of 2020 being involved in holding/disbursing funds donated by indigenous inmates at a PA prison toward the building of a sweat lodge. The build is Thur-Fri-Sat April 13-14-15 and the pastor would like to attend; other CPUC members are invited to volunteer also. Council agreed that this would not be counted as vacation time as the pastor is attending as a representative of the congregation and this is part of our calling. Two other members will also travel there and volunteer; the council voted to grant each of the three a stipend of \$500 to be used for travel expenses or other needs relating to the trip as they occur.
- received a suggestion from Jill who observes that our website is needing attention as the pictures and information are outdated. Jill previously worked on this through the Outreach Ministry. We could consider hiring someone to work on this as the previous tech-savvy person is no longer a member; Tom volunteered as his time commitments have changed in the past year to where he might be able to work on this. Susan volunteered to find any updated photos needed.



Thank you to Kay and the children
for fellowship refreshments March
19 & 26



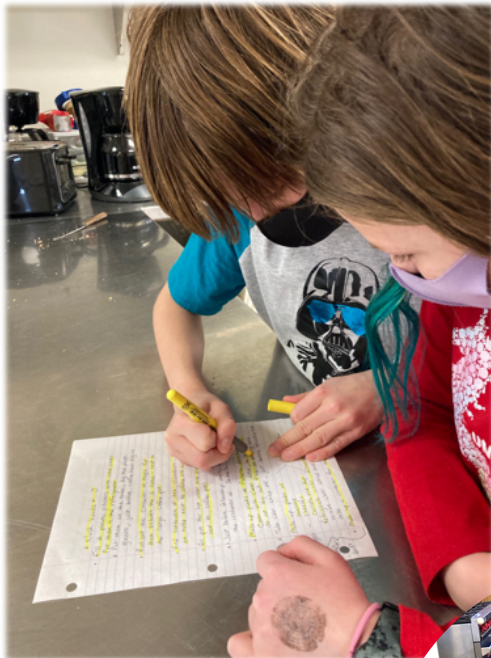
Checking off all the details



March 26 included a

Celebration of Trans-Visibility.

We sang of the "Dazzling Bouquet" with six -foot
gladiolas, appreciated our guest homilist
Rev. Dr. Justin Sabia-Tanis, ate transflag krispies,
celebrated the
beauty of diversity.



Thank you to Nona for leading our centering prayer to the four directions.

She also presented Pastor Matthias with wind chimes (you can hear them with attached email file), and shared items of her indigenous heritage at Fellowship March 19. (centering prayer on page 11)



Thank you to Mike and Gina for resuming & organizing gathering meals



CPUC's secret Ice-B-Gone weapon, Miss Jane



Several Minnesota UCC congregations are hosting 29:11, an amazing group of performers from South Africa who share their *music and story of reconciliation*. Upcoming performances are at Lyndale UCC on **April 9**; Peace UCC in Duluth (with St. Mark's AME) on May 7; and Plymouth Congregational on **May 14**.

29:11 International Exchange is a music ministry based in South Africa and the U.S. whose mission is to facilitate hope and reconciliation through musical performance and collaboration, artist development, and cross-cultural relationships. In their words, "By recognizing that each of us is worthy of understanding and love, we can bridge the ideological, racial, and socio-economic gaps that divide us, and live together as citizens of the world."



Earth Day - Saturday April 22

International Earth Day is a global day of action, celebrated in over 190 countries, raising awareness of ideas to support a healthy planet. In 1970, Wisconsin Senator Gaylord Nelson and San Francisco activist John

McConnell separately asked Americans to join in a grassroots demonstration to help address the environmental crises of the day. Nelson chose April 22, (McConnell had preferred the spring equinox, March 21.) The first Earth Day “teach-in” focused on engaging thousands of students on a sunny, spring day.

Groups that had been fighting individually against oil spills, polluting factories and power plants, raw sewage, toxic dumps, pesticides, freeways, the loss of wilderness and the extinction of wildlife united on Earth Day around these shared common values.

Earth Day 1970 achieved a rare political alignment, enlisting support from Republicans and Democrats, rich and poor, urban dwellers and farmers, business and labor leaders. By the end of 1970, the first Earth Day led to the creation of the United States Environmental Protection Agency and the passage of the Clean Air, Clean Water and Endangered Species Acts. “It was a gamble,” Senator Gaylord recalled, “but it worked.”

1990: EARTH DAY went global

As 1990 approached, a group of environmental leaders approached Denis Hayes to organize a global Earth Day, mobilizing 200 million people in 141 countries, giving a huge boost to recycling efforts worldwide and helped pave the way for the 1992 United Nations Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro. It also prompted President Bill Clinton to award Senator Nelson the Presidential Medal of Freedom — the highest honor given to civilians in the United States — for his role as Earth Day founder. The theme for Earth Day 2020 was climate action. The enormous challenge — but also the vast opportunities — of action on climate change distinguished the issue as the most pressing topic for the 50th anniversary.

We are recognized as a Presbyterian Earth Care Congregation!



We joined nine locally and over two hundred more as a certified Presbyterian Earth Care (PEC) congregation. PEC recognized our past efforts and expects ongoing work, including infrastructure, advocacy, educational / outreach, and creation care centered worship. We celebrate a long and continuing commitment (Solar Panels since 2012!).



Pick up your fork

and do your part to help fight global warming by eating vegetarian on April 22.

Vegweb.com, VegCooking.com, VegRecipes.org, Vegancheff.com, GoVeg.com,
VegSource.com, Vegancheff.com, GoVeg.com

If you are already fully or partly eating vegetarian, or vegan, bless you twice!



*We may have missed an opportunity last week,
but we can plan ahead for next year!*

People across the globe came together to switch off their lights for one hour 8:30 pm to 9:30 pm in their local time zone to observe the *15th earth hour*. Earth hour is known as the 'World's Largest Grassroots Movement For The Environment'. Every year on March 26, this day is observed. It aims to unite millions of people across the globe to show unanimity for both people and the planet. This year the event invited people around the world to come together in a moment of reflection on the relationship with each other and one shared home.

Earth Hour was famously started as a lights-out event in Sydney, Australia in 2007. Since then, it has grown to engage millions of supporters in more than 185 countries and territories, inspiring individuals and organizations worldwide to take action for the environment, and driving major legislative changes by harnessing the power of the crowd.

Newsletter

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

April Birthdays & Celebrations

- 02 - Daphne
- 06 - Okogyeamon
- 13 - Barb
- 18 - Laura Beth
- 18 - Dean
- 19 - Tommy
- ♥ 25 - Gina & Jerome



The Centering Prayer
from the Sicangu Tribe of the Lakota Sioux Nation



WEST

We pray to the Grandfather who sits where the sun goes down and paints his face BLACK. We ask the Thunderbeings to be GENEROUS with gifts of life and we ask the Horse Nation to provide us with the necessary functions so we may continue to enjoy life.

NORTH

We pray to the Grandfather who sits where winter resides and paints his face WHITE. We ask the Buffalo Nation to give us COURAGE so we may be able to defend our values and our heritage. We ask Grandfather to protect the people who perform our ceremonies so we can maintain a strong culture.

EAST

We pray to the Grandfather who sits where the sun rises and paints his face RED. We thank the Elk Nation for the new life so we may LOVE all the creations WAKAN TANKA has given us. We thank the morning star for the guidance it has given us.

SOUTH

We pray to the Grandfather who sits where summer resides and paints his face YELLOW. WE ask the Spider Nation for their blessing so we may always speak the TRUTH and be healthy.

UP

We pray to the Grandfather who sits above us and paints his face BLUE. We ask our brothers the Eagles to give us the vision so we may be able to see around us as well as ahead of us and have WISDOM.

DOWN

We pray to our Grandmother who sits beneath us and gives us everything and takes everything away. We ask for guidance so we may take care of our environments with RESPECT so our children will also enjoy Grandmother earth.

CENTER

We now travel to our body, the center of our environment and to our heart the center of our body. We ask WAKAN TANKA for the gift of the seven values so we may have PEACE in our hearts for our environment and have PEACE for each other. We ask WAKAN TANKA for all the gifts of life so we can live in PEACE and HARMONY with all of our relatives.

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 stumble over
what happened to you yesterday*
inspiration found on the back
of Carly's T-Shirt