



be a beacon in the dark

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 ~ March 2024

Let's everyone eat!!

Cherokee Park is up again for Loaves and Fishes at St. Matthew's on **Thursday, March 7**. The new system for delivering meals worked fine last time and should again be in effect.

The two shifts will still be needed. One, beginning about 3:15pm, will prepare any fruits, breads, or salads that are available and will do any heating that is needed. They will also lay out the take-out trays and begin to fill them. The second shift about 5pm will continue to fill trays and hand them out, then clean up. It should wrap up by 6:30 or before.

Please email Wayne if you are able to help.

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 the sanctuary for our Easter worship, and you can take one home with you after the service.



It's the season to bloom!

Join the "Growing" Seasonal Steering Team!

The Growing Seasonal Steering Team, covering the months of May, June, July, and August, will share their guiding talents throughout this season.

They meet in mid-March to listen to and dream with each other about possible activities at CPUC and again in April, possibly also June, to get focused on where the Spirit is calling. They will recruit other volunteers from the congregation to help in fulfilling the shared tasks of congregational life.

Sign up at church or talk to a Lay Ministry member supporting this seasonal team: Shannon Johnson, Alicia Juarez, Sandy Dodson or Pastor Matthias. Thank you for considering serving CPUC in this way.

CPUC MUSIC NEWS



After a daunting three-year pandemic, ensemble singing "re-launched" at CPUC in November 2023. The current members of the Ensemble Singers are Lynne Bates, Mike Bates, Sarah Ellefson, Curt Fleming, Eric Jacobsen, Alicia Juarez, Jane Peterson, Pat Peterson, Jim Shatek, and Diane Spicer. Some of these singers also provide scheduled cantor leadership on various Sundays at CPUC throughout the year. Our music is of many genres, including classic church hymns, global music repertoire, contemporary vocal arrangements, jazz, and folk music.

EASTER SUNDAY SPECIAL MUSIC

The Ensemble Singers will offer two selections for Easter Sunday. Our Easter selection will be "Oh Happy Day," and we will also honor Trans Day of Visibility by offering an arrangement of "For All The Children." Please join us at CPUC on March 31 for a vibrant morning of music! Lend your own singing voice to our all-sing hymns and celebrate the Risen Christ.

Our general schedule: Rehearsals on most Wed. evenings, Sept. through May, 6:30 to 8 p.m. We have "singing Sundays" once or twice per month, with special worship services added periodically, Sept. through May, with a summer recess. Emails go out regularly to keep members in the loop on schedule changes, song selections, and upcoming plans.

Some of our members read music, while others do not. Music is sometimes written in parts, and sometimes in unison. While we welcome anyone who would like to sing, it is not a "drop-in" choir experience. We seek (mostly) regular attendance, and to grow our artistry and skills over time, as a team of musicians.

Please confirm your plans to attend a rehearsal, a couple days in advance, and to confirm that a rehearsal is happening on the night you plan to attend. Would you be more likely to come, if you could bring your young children to play in the neighboring activity room while you attend ES rehearsal? Let us know.

Food for our Neighbors

This month, we brought another donation of food to Neighborhood House for the food shelf. This was our second donation this year. In January, Cherokee Park congregants contributed 42 pounds of food. This month we gathered 34 pounds, for a total so far of 76 pounds of food. The staff at the food shelf was very grateful, and happy to see our continued commitment.

Let's keep it up!! The food shelf collects shelf-stable items like canned fruits and vegetables, flour, canned tuna or chicken, cooking oil, cereals, and snacks like granola bars. Look at the Wish List for more ideas. You can drop your contribution off at church any time; just put it in the shopping cart at the back of the sanctuary. Our next food delivery to Neighborhood House will happen on Monday, March 4. What do you think,

can we put together a gift of 50 pounds this month? Let's try!

Thank you for your help. (Pat Peterson)

Food Market ● Wish List ●

Shelf-stable staples:

- ☐ Rice
- ☐ Flour
- ☐ Oil
- ☐ Sugar
- ☐ Canned tuna
- ☐ Canned chicken
- ☐ Oatmeal
- ☐ Coffee (ground beans)
- ☐ Tea

Culturally specific items:

- ☐ Canned bamboo
- ☐ Rice noodles
- ☐ Rice flour
- ☐ Corn flour (masa, maseca)
- ☐ Dry beans (black or pinto)
- ☐ Canned chiles (chipotle, jalapeño, green chiles)
- ☐ Nopales (jamed cactus)
- ☐ Dates
- ☐ Fish sauce
- ☐ Soy sauce
- ☐ Canned coconut milk
- ☐ Curry paste
- ☐ Canned sardines

Miscellaneous:

- ☐ Paper shopping bags with handles, not ripped
- ☐ Plastic shopping bags in good condition
- ☐ Reusable bags, in good condition
- ☐ Gallon Ziploc Bags

Donations can be accepted at the following:

Wellstone Food Market

179 Robie St, Saint Paul
651-789-3630

Mondays-Fridays | 9 am – 12 pm and 1 – 4 pm

Drive around to the back of the Wellstone Center and call 651-789-3630 and someone will come out and assist you.

Francis Basket Food Market

(located in Sibley Manor Apartments)
1293 Maynard Dr #410, Saint Paul

Mondays | 9 – 11:30 am

Tuesdays and Fridays | 9 – 11:30 am and 1 – 1:30 pm

Park in the spaces in front of the apartment building. When you arrive at the Francis Basket Food Market, ring the doorbell and our staff will assist you.

Buy Nothing

If you are familiar with these FB groups, you know it's fun to obtain what you need at no cost, and also give away your "extras." Currently our church office could use paper clips both regular and large size, and white-out in liquid or tape form. But no fair going out and buying these! Leave in office or give to Susan.

Dear CPUC,

There are things we take for granted. I imagine you are nodding; it sounds obvious to write it out. We cannot hold in mind all the basics that we take as givens upon which our lives are built until we are confronted with our assumptions or intentionally seek to examine them.

The Palestinian poet Mosab Abu Toha's writing jarred me out of some of my comfortable day to day recently. His poems are searing and, having lived his entire life in Palestine, he shares the devastations he has weathered which epitomize the lived experience of many Palestinians.

He has buried friends who've died in Israeli drone or F-16 attacks. He has had multiple homes bombed to rubble. His university was destroyed in an Israeli attack. He himself carries bodily scars too. As a young teenager, his parents sent him to the store for eggs. On the way, an Israeli Defense Force attack on a nearby building left him unconscious from shrapnel, waking days later in the hospital. In the most recent wave of attacks that have persisted for months, Toha and his family escaped to Egypt after being detained by IDF.

We like to pretty up hope, sometimes. Emily Dickinson writes of hope being the thing with feathers, perched in the soul which sings and never stops. This is a pretty image.

For Toha, however, hope is much grittier. It would have to be given what he's survived. He writes:

Don't ever be surprised
to see a rose shoulder up
among the ruins of the house:
This is how we survived.



Toha founded the Edward Said library, gathering hundreds of books donated and sent from around the globe. Often it would take books weeks to get into Gaza as deliveries must go through Israel where packages can be inspected or delayed. It has become a place for children to gather. Where smiles can be shared, along with stories and music.

The current status of the library amid the ongoing attacks is unknown. It cannot be taken for granted that the library building will still be standing whenever the current attacks stop, I suspect the library, as with the people, will persist through the grief and rubble.

Blessings to you and yours,

Pastor Matthias

Notes from February Council Meeting



At their hybrid meeting on February 20, the Council discussed a wide range of topics. Highlights include:

- Approval of Pastor Matthias' report which included many "extras" to his usually busy workload. This encompassed several evening meetings, Ash Wednesday Service, and a Leader's Retreat all in the same week. The last of his four weeks of vacation will be July 15 to 21.
- The fiscal agent agreement often signed annually with the Facilitating Racial Equity Collaborative (FREC) is on hold until the organization makes decisions about their programming in 2024.
- Pastor Matthias will talk to some members about forming a team to suggest possible ways of changing the size of the Council from the current 12. If and when the Council agrees on a recommendation, a By-Law revision and a congregational vote would be needed to approve this change.
- The Council discussed the idea of young people assisting with serving communion. The Council will draft some parameters to consider at future meetings.
- The Council approved Pastor Matthias inviting the West Side's St. Paul City Council person, Rebecca Noecker, to make an announcement before an upcoming worship service about the "Yes for St. Paul Families" campaign around creating dedicated funding for early childhood education and childcare in St. Paul.
- The Property Management Team reported a part for the lift will be replaced to fix the issue of the lift getting stuck recently. Jim Shatek and Curt Fleming will replace a pipe in the nursery that developed a leak that resulted in water flowing into the fellowship hall in early February. Many thanks to Karen and Jim Shatek for donating a new wet/dry vacuum to the church for future clean-up efforts.

A few fun tasks to join or experiences to try:

Money (from the offerings) **counter**, after worship for 20 minutes, on a rotating basis: contact Karen.

Proofreader for newsletter, (in addition to one we already have), once a month: Susan
Assistance for a half hour to *re-supply* the children's worship activity bags: contact Susan.

Liturgist: Ever wonder what the church looks like from the chancel? Curious to try out being a liturgist? Talk with Pastor Matthias. If you enjoy it, you can do it again; and if not, you've tried something new and learned about church from a new angle.



Fellowship Hour: We all enjoy our fellowship time together after Sunday worship. Seems no one wants to leave! But this miracle of welcome also depends upon individuals who will take a turn at setting up the Panera goodies that arrive before worship, and possibly supplementing with a few things. (Purchases are easily reimbursed. Ask Jim or Susan.) See the signup sheet in Fellowship Hall and volunteer and/or partner with someone else who has already signed up to organize the food or to help with clean-up afterwards.

Feb 25 Susan, Barb & Glen; March 3 Jackie & Dave; March 10 YOU?, March 17?



Sandy Waterman, music director/composer of the 35th youth musical for Unity Church-Unitarian in St. Paul, invites you to a family friendly show, "**The Dream Maker**," being performed March 7, 8, and 9, 2024. A group of youths wonder whether a mysterious wanderer, a Dream Maker, can foretell their future occupations or not. Details at www.unityunitarian.org.

Also: Discounted tickets (50% off) available for Concert at Cathedral of St. Paul, March 10, from Yunyue Liu, Executive Director of the Bach Society of MN. (She subbed for Sandy this past summer.)



Access the discount directly using this link.

[Ticket: \\$5 student | \\$17.5 regular \(50% off included\)](#)

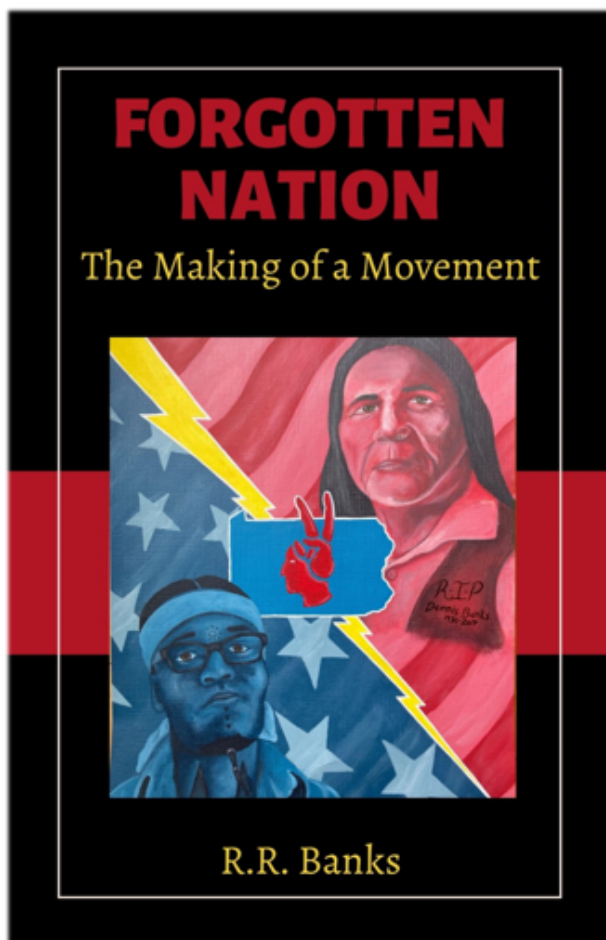
Helping our indigenous brothers and sisters regain what our country has tried to stamp out, is an act of Reparation.

PROTECT INDIGENOUS CULTURE & PRACTICES

The inmates in Pennsylvania prisons continue their efforts to regain their constitutional rights to worship in their traditional ways. Many of these practices are denied them, even though some decades back, they had been allowed. Through the court system they regained the right to build, use, and maintain a sweat lodge; the first, **Wanbli Nunpa Inipi, Two Eagle Lodge**, is now built at Benner SCI, actually built by the hands of our members and other supportive people.



Inmates, under the leadership of Running River, are now looking for funds for legal defense expenses, to continue to pursue other religious practice rights through the courts. Filing a law suit costs a minimum of \$400; bringing in expert indigenous witnesses costs much more. (This is why low-income people do not get the benefit of the constitution - they cannot afford it!) They also need funds to maintain the first sweat lodge such as purchasing firewood & rocks. Donations can be given to Cherokee Park United Church with a note in the memo line as to its preferred use.



Another way to support and raise funds is through purchase of a new book, *Forgotten Nation*, by Marvin Running River Banks, available in paperback (\$14.95 + \$1.00 MN tax) or electronic version (\$7.99) through Amazon.com. All royalties (\$5.00 per book) are designated to the fund for legal fees. To avoid shipping costs, if you do not have Amazon Prime, paperback books can be ordered through Susan.

(Running River's first book, *Our Ancestors Are Proud*: a native american prison story, is also available from Amazon.)



Never a dull moment

Thank you to Curt, Jim, Karen, and Pastor Matthias for their emergency efforts to mop up the lower level floors on a February Saturday. It is no surprise that a water pipe, probably 80 years old, can spring a leak but a wonderful miracle that our own members have the expertise to detect the source and do a quick mend. A permanent future mend may be possible with supplies already in Curt's garage. "Let's see, I think I might have a 20 foot-long piece of Pex in there from a previous job."



Leadership Retreat

Retreating away from our own church building and homes, we were gathered and nurtured by our gentle shepherd, Matthias. (All sheep were welcome!) Where two or more gather in my name there is love, food, fun, and dreaming. (slight paraphrasing). So, yes, lunch and snacks and balloons and games and then sharing our thoughts on paper for future pondering.





At Our Leadership Retreat, participants were asked to write things we've done that have been meaningful, fruitful, or successful in the areas of Outreach, Antiracism, and Faith Formation recently.

FAITH FORMATION (kids and/or Adults)

Adult Forum ★★

Nativity Play
Kids sermons ★★

Open Table Communion - bring some adults & children when they see someone who would like it. (Just say, can we have some?)

Children's worship Space ★

allowing children to be who they are when they feel like it.

ANTIRACISM (reparations)

Help with Wacipi. ★★

Matthews' help with Presby. grant for MMDTC

Inmate project - Sweet Lodge ★★⊕★

Letters for inmates.

Books for reading -

FREC / ~~our~~ Overcoming Racism Conference ★

Helping the work of the Presby. of the Midwest (Presby. of the Midwest)

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Then all were invited to dream up ideas that draw on strengths and successes we've already had, adding these on post-it notes.

What ideas do you have to add? **POST THEM UP!**

March Birthdays

- 08 - Valerie
- 09 - Jim
- 20 - Gabriel
- 21 - Philip
- 23 - Sarah
- ♥ 24 - Dean and Meliza
- 31 - Sandy D.

Newsletter

please submit articles by the 22nd of preceding month to kellystrebig@comcast.net

Daylight Saving Time

Spring ahead one hour
Sunday March 10

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

