



# **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 2024***



## Earth Day Worship—April 21

This year for Earth Day worship, everyone is invited to share in proclaiming the goodness of God’s creation. Two ways to be involved:

1) In place of the sermon, we invite stories, scriptures, poems, prayers, blessings, art, or song from the congregation. You might find a favorite poem or scripture passage that connects to Earth Day to read in worship. Perhaps you have a short story of a time you felt God’s presence through the earth. Maybe you want to create a piece of art you could show. Or maybe you’d want to sing a song or

offer a blessing you wrote or found. Let’s see how the Spirit moves in us and speaks to us through the lens of all creation!

2) In lieu of our normal “Jesus Image” projection, our hope is to have a slide show of pictures that cycle contemplatively during worship. Send us pictures you have taken that speak to the beauty of God’s creation. Could be a beloved or beautiful animal, a landscape, a flower, as long as the focus is on non-human elements of creation.

Email pictures to Pastor Matthias by April 18<sup>th</sup>.

Questions? Talk with Pastor Matthias or Alicia.



### Newsletter

please submit articles by the 22nd of preceding month to [kellystrebig@comcast.net](mailto:kellystrebig@comcast.net)

## Food for our Neighbors

A note from Pat

Thank you for your generosity in providing food for our neighbors. And especially for meeting the request for flour, sugar, and oil so all can bake yummy things with their children and grandchildren (just like we all like to do!) Is it just luck that this church is located on **Baker Street!**



## CPUC MUSIC NEWS



*Our general schedule:* Rehearsals on most Wed. evenings through May, 6:30 to 8 p.m. and then a summer recess. We have "singing Sundays" once or twice per month, with special worship services added periodically. 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. While **we welcome anyone who would like to sing**, it is not a "drop-in" choir experience and we seek (mostly) regular attendance to grow as a team of musicians.

Please confirm your plans to attend a rehearsal, a couple days in advance. 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. Contact music director Sandy W.

*Dear CPUC,*

Rev. Nadia Bolz-Weber—a tattooed Lutheran pastor, an addict in recovery, and foul-mouthed feminist—writes that “The greatest spiritual practice is just showing up.”

This perhaps seems too simple to be realistic. Nor does “showing up” have quite the same spiritual ring to it as “prayer” or “vows of poverty.” Yet overcoming our inertia can be a challenge, whether that means getting out of the house or picking up the phone or making it to the next meeting.

How much of the Gospel narratives begin with people just showing up? Whether it be the crowds yearned to be fed, Jesus appearing to disciples or the ailing, Mary Magdalene and the women showing up at the tomb to find it empty. Showing up is the story of Easter morning; it is the story of Jesus with us in the guise of the stranger or enemy or mirror.

Often the best care we can offer a friend or loved one in pain is our presence. There usually no magic words to take away hurt or grief, no matter how meticulously we craft them. But having someone sit by your side in the absolute pits of life’s lowest moments can ease some of the sting of loneliness.

When we show up, God meets us there, even when we are exhausted, grumbly, under caffeinated, or uninspired.

I recently engaged in conversation with several congregations around the Presbytery on behalf of the anti-racism task force. The goal was to get a sense of what various congregations in our Presbytery are doing in the area of antiracism work.

A common theme was: “we wish we could do more” or “it feels like we aren’t doing enough.” However, when the efforts each congregation was undertaking were described—courageous conversations, pursuing partnerships, more honesty in self-reflection and sermons—the stories seemed to float. There was holiness present in each of these moments and efforts, all of which begin with the seemingly simple act of showing up.

Even when that feels like too little, it is enough, and God shows up there with us too. Alleluia!

Holy Week and Easter blessings,  
Pastor Matthias

## *Notes from the March Council Meeting*



The Council addressed a wide range of topics. Highlights including:

- Pastor Matthias' report included his participation in the delivery of a reparations check to the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community on behalf of the Presbytery of the Twin Cities Area. He also participated in lobbying efforts at the Minnesota capital organized by ISIAH concerning affordable housing and green infrastructure.
- Mike B. is willing to continue performing the Clerk of Council duties that involve reporting to our wider denominations. Barb is willing to take minutes at Council meetings. Thank you, Mike and Barb!
- Approval for Girl Scout Troop #58484 to meet at Cherokee Park United one Sunday afternoon each month. Sebastian will be the CPUC liaison and a leader of this group. Welcome!
- Pastor Matthias reported that Mike B. is willing to serve on a commission to look at CPUC's By-Law's and propose changes regarding the size of the Council. Jim S. also agreed to serve. Pastor will contact several folks from the congregation suggested by the Council. Once another member is found the commission will schedule its first meeting.
- Councilmember Sandy D. outlined an approach to worship participation and leadership for children and youth. The Council decided to move ahead with a Pastor-led orientation on the meaning of communion for all youth over age 6. Once this orientation is completed, interested youth will have the opportunity to assist adults in the preparation and the serving of communion. Other age-based opportunities to learn about aspects of worship and to participate/lead in these areas will be announced in the future.
- Councilmember Lynne B. reported that CPUC was bequeathed funds from the estate of our beloved Bob L.. Exact amounts are not available yet but include both cash and stock. The Finance Team will invest the cash in CDs that will provide a distribution to the church's General Fund for at least ten years. Proceeds from the stock will be invested with Vanguard Funds, the administrators of the church's Endowment Fund. These funds will be apportioned for operating, building, or other necessary expenses in the future.
- Pastor Matthias will ask adults in the congregation to sign up to receive the offering during Sunday worship. People are encouraged to volunteer for one or several Sundays. Instructions on how to receive the offering are available.

- The Property Management Team reported that the oven hood in the kitchen is clean (Thank you, Kelly Strebigh!) and ready for service for the next six months. Jim will arrange for the outdoor sprinkler system to be started in the near future.
- Jill from the Lay Ministry Team reported that the Growing Season Steering Team (for May through August) will include Mike B., Barb, Maria, and Kay. Lay Ministry guides for the season are Sandy D. Shannon, and Alicia.

## Your 2024 Council Members (new in 2024)

Lynne, Kathy B., Sandy D. Sebastian, Barb, Jill, Deborah, Tom M., Jackie, Jim S., Diane, Sandy S.

## 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: 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! Please consider signing up to

organize some snacks (usually a shipment of free Panera goodies are already there). Indicate if you need a partner or someone else for h clean-up afterwards.

March 24 *Roxy and Jane*, March 3 *Easter Breakfast Glen & Barb & congregation*, April 7 *Lynne and Mike*, April 14 *Jackie & Dave*, April 21 *YOU??*, April 28 *Susan & Diane*.

## April Birthdays

02 - Daphne  
 06 - Okogyeamon  
 18 - Laura Beth  
 18 - Dean  
 19 - Tommy M.  
 ♡25 - Gina & Jerome

(This list was compiled very informally; please let editor know if there are others that we could add.)

*Piano Arrangement:* Our Lenten piano arrangement includes the stained glass cover of the original fixture which lit the main church foyer entryway. About seven years back it was noted that the entryway was so dark as to not be very inviting. Our Curt-of-all-trades installed a new chandelier, as well as a matching fixture at the landing below. The lovely old glass shade serves as a reminder of our roots; we are thankful for the sacrifices made over a hundred years ago to plant this church, and then nourish it through succeeding generations of prayer, hope, and creativity. Today our new fixture emits 500 Watts, replacing the original 60 Watt bulb; we are invited to cast more light into the dark corners, and walk forward together. In the future it will be placed on the back corner display nook.



*April recap of children's sermons during Lent: Following Peter's experiences*

Measuring out in our sanctuary exactly how big (24' x 7' x 4') was the "Jesus boat" remains found in the Sea of Galilee ,used to estimate what the boats were like at the time.



*Peter walking (or not) on water*

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

*Better be prepared because  
there will be no time to get ready.*

Marvin Running River Banks  
Warrior-artist-civil rights activist  
incarcerated at Benner State Prison PA