



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 ~ May 2024



Loaves and Fishes

Thursday, May 2, 3:30-5 and 5-6:30 pm

It is again our turn to serve at Loaves and Fishes. The need for additional food among those less fortunate among us remains great, and we have the opportunity to respond to it as we have in the past.

Please consider helping at either the first shift (3:30 to 5:00) or the second shift (5:00-6:30). We will need about 6 volunteers for each shift and a few of our regular volunteers will not be available, so we need a few more extra people. Kindly email Wayne Bjorlie at weugbj@yahoo.com to volunteer. Thank you.

Many food-related gatherings!!

Greetings from The Growing Seasonal Team! Get ready to share delicious dishes and deepen connections with our upcoming **fellowship potlucks** after church service. Here's a sneak peek at the themes:

- **May 5th: "Cinco de Mayo"** - Celebrate the spirit of Mexico with vibrant flavors and festive dishes!
- **June 9th: "Rainbow in Your Tummy"** - Bring a dish bursting with colorful ingredients – a feast for the eyes and the soul!
- **July 14th: "What Would Jesus Eat?"** - Explore the potential foods Jesus might have enjoyed, considering local ingredients of his time.
- **August 11th: "Vintage, Throwback Potluck"** - Dust off your grandma's recipes and bring a dish reminiscent of a bygone era!

We look forward to sharing a delicious journey with you!

The Growing Seasonal Team [May-June-July-August]



Name change? In a recent conversation a member related to me that someone planned to talk about an upcoming event at happy hour. I didn't understand her point. Then realized it was a name change; but that did not sound unusual at all, as our Fellowship Time after worship is indeed, Happy Hour. (And some of us prefer, happy two hours!) The drinks are always on special, the company always a blessing, and since we usually wear name tags, everybody knows your name.

Free yoga classes, all levels welcome!

Wednesdays, May 29th - July 31st: 6:15 - 7:15pm

This gentle yoga class will allow us to mindfully flow through low impact poses that improve our posture, strength, flexibility and balance. Enhance mind, body and spirit awareness. Learn breathing techniques that calm, soothe, balance or energize us.



Chairs are available and there will be seated options throughout practice.

For those who are comfortable doing floor exercises, please bring a yoga mat. Classes will be held in the Fellowship Hall at CPUC.

Wednesdays, May 29th - July 31st, BUT **No** class July 3rd, 6:15pm-7:15pm
Questions? Please speak to or email Alicia Juárez. rosa.alicia@live.com

Braver Conversations:

Engaging Polarization With Equity and Faith in Mind

Saturday, May 18: 9am-1pm

Join us at Cherokee Park United Church as we host the Presbytery anti-racism gathering on the theme of *Braver Conversations*. Through speakers and small group conversations we'll address issues like providing responses to Christian nationalism grounded and based in good research about human nature and ethics, and framing conversation where polarization has taken a toll.

Lunch will be included. Keep an eye out for registration and let Pastor Matthias know if you would be willing to volunteer to help as a welcomer/CPUC host.



Dear CPUC,

One day recently, when I found myself with a few moments between things, I ended up on the second floor landing. I took in the chaos of the scene: a pile of unfolded, clean laundry; Legos strewn about one kid's bedroom floor; a box of band-aids sitting; a pair of shoes that had been shed in the hallway for some reason; a cardboard box and cut scraps from an abandoned art project.

It was not the messiest the house has ever been, to be sure. But it was certainly no Marie Kondo ad either.

Miraculously, I did not feel exhaustion or despair at the messes, but delight. Somehow, the Spirit surprised me and said: "This is your life. Love it for what it is."



There it is: love your life for what it is, not just what it could be if, if, if... Or, as the poet Maggie Smith puts it: "You could make this place beautiful." Part of our work, with the Spirit is to see that beauty, that love is already present. No, everything is not perfect. Yes, our hearts are prone to breaking, we get in our own way sometimes, we get stubborn, we mourn the state of the world. Still, God says, this is your life. Love it.

This isn't to say there is no sense making changes or trying. The wisdom of the serenity prayer holds true: courage to change what can be changed, acceptance for the things which cannot be changed, and wisdom to know the difference.

When we practice loving our lives as they are right now, not how they might be after some self-improvement projects, we get a glimpse of the way God loves us. Not for some future potential which may or may not come, but right now, as you are amid all the clutter and chaos (whether material or emotional).

I paused to fold some of the laundry there (but not all of it. Those pesky socks!), taking in the early evening sun through the window. May God grant us all such glimpses, such sacred and needed reminders.

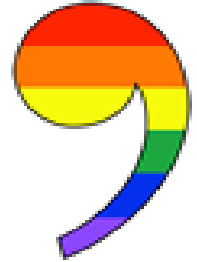
Yours,
Pastor Matthias

Notes from the April Council meeting...

At their meeting on April 16, the Council addressed a wide range of topics.

Highlights include-

- Pastor Matthias' report shared that he offered the opening prayer for the MN Senate on April 8 at the Minnesota capital. He was invited to do this by Senator Sandy Pappas, District 65.
- The Council approved Sasha Aslanian's request to transfer her membership (via letter) to Old First Reformed Church in New Your City.
- Accountant Lynne Bates reported that CPUC's income is good and the church is meeting its budget as of March 31, 2024.
- The Council approved offering CPUC as the site for a Presbytery-wide anti-racism gathering on Saturday, May 18, from 9 am to 1 pm. CPUC volunteers are needed to "host" the event. The meeting's theme will be having courageous conversations in a contentious political climate. All CPUC members are welcome to participate.
- The Council approved moving CPUC worship to the First Presbyterian Church of South St. Paul on Sunday, June 30th at 10 am. Pastor Matthias will preach and officiate the installation of new Elders and Deacons at First Presbyterian. First Presbyterian's pastor, the Rev. Tom Watson, will be on sabbatical.
- The Council approved the purchase of a new remote camera with approximately \$1,000 from the Memorial Fund. The new camera will offer many optional angles for the Facebook Live broadcast. It will also eliminate the need to climb a ladder to manually turn off the camera. Many thanks to Tom Murphy for doing the legwork and advocacy on this tech need. Thanks also to those who helped with the ladder in recent months.
- Jim Shatek reported for the Property Management Team. Jim built a new table/cabinet for the landing up from the Manomin St. entry. It will hold bulletins, nametag stickers, etc. He also fixed a leaky toilet. Thank you, Jim!



Your 2024 Council Members

Lynne Bates, Kathy Bergthold, Sandy Dodson, Sebastian Ellefson, Barb Herrington-Hall, Jill Jackson, Deborah Morse, Tom Murphy, Jackie Rico, Jim Shatek, Diane Spicer, Sandy Settevig.

Spring (forth with thy rake and trowel) landscape cleanup

Watch for upcoming future announcements on date and time for our next beautification efforts on the church property. This sacred ground came to us not through ethical means, but we can steward it as best we can, as long as it is in our hands.

We will do our traditional cleanup but there is also room for innovation. Some areas have become over-grown and unmanageable and one idea floating around is to plant some native medicine plants and invite our Dakota neighbors to harvest what they need. These are harvested in such a way as to leave the roots and seeds so they are perennial. Ideas are to possibly plant with sage and/or sweetgrass and cedar. We already have red twig dogwood (the three tallest shrub/trees on south side) used in tobacco.



If you have knowledge, or heart, or energy for this please contact Susan at kellystrebig@comcast.net 651-402-8070 talk/text. For general questions on the cleanup please contact Diane at dspicer1954@gmail.com

*A most joyful
Easter worship as
the music
ensemble sings us
into a vision of
new life.*



At Our *Earth Day*-themed worship April 21, the members combined voices to provide the sermon. There were poems, prayers, artwork, and even an original song. And during our time together, we viewed a montage of changing images, member-provided, which were projected on the wall. Our worship was truly a Spirit-led, group effort. Gratitude to Alicia Juarez for her inspiration, and to Pastor Matthias for his never-ending flexibility.



CPUC plays a part in reparations ~ celebrate the Web of Connections!

Mitakuye Oyasin. As the wisdom of our Native siblings says: "We are all related."



When the Presbyterian church in Baldwin, WI closed and the building was sold, the Presbytery recognized that the proceeds from this represented wealth from stolen land. In acknowledgement of this, a motion was passed by the full Presbytery that some of the proceeds be given as a reparative offering.

Thanks to our congregation's long-standing relationship to the Mendota Mdewakanton Dakota Tribal Community and our reputation of supporting indigenous prisoners in Pennsylvania, the Presbytery reached out for input and advice through Pastor Matthias. In early March, Pastor Matthias and Rev. Kendra Grams (chair of the Presbytery's Antiracism Task Force) delivered a check for \$20,000 to the MMDTC. (Another \$20,000 went to Makoce Ikkicupi, a Dakota land recovery project)

The relationships CPUC has nurtured and maintained with the MMDTC for over a decade made this possibility come to fruition.



They will be celebrating their 30th anniversary **Wednesday, June 19** at St. Peter's Church, Mendota, with a potluck and auction/fundraiser. All are welcome. 11 am-7 pm. 952-239-9969.

Annual Wacipi, Fri-Sat-Sun September 13-15.
St. Peter's Church Grounds

Newsletter

Please submit articles by the 22nd of preceding month to

kellystrebig@comcast.net

-proofreader: Mary Murphy

(in search of one more & not proofread this month as not enough time!)

-assembler: Kathy Bergthold

May Birthdays and Celebrations

♥ 13 - Mike & Lynne Bates

16 - Maria McNamara

21 - Sasha Aslanian

27 - Diane Spicer

♥ 28 - Jim & Karen Shatek

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

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

Reminder from Laura Beth,
reminiscing on her birthday:
things we should all be willing to say
as we learn and grow.

