



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 ~ December 2024

COOKIES!!!

December 7, Saturday, 11 am to whenever we get tired maybe 1pm ? maybe 2 pm? or? Join us for our third annual COOKIE BAKE. Those in the know will bring their own cookie cutters, and the extra-ambitious ones also will bring their own raw dough ready to cut and bake.

Some dough and cutters also will be available at the site in case bakers didn't get around to mixing and/or finding their own.

To be successful, **this event will require many young-ish bakers to sample the products** as they come out of the oven, and few more experienced bakers to actually bake. New ovens are said to be available this year. Frosting or otherwise embellishing the cookies after they are baked will be encouraged, though supplies will be at the discretion of the baker/decorator. Don't forget, now. **DECEMBER 7** (...the day that lives in infamy, or used to, but now can have a more positive connotation.)



Holiday Dinner Together

December 15, Sunday evening

We will celebrate the holidays with our traditional Church Christmas dinner. Sign up during fellowship time for what you might bring to help us have a full meal, or connect with Mike Bates for questions and details.

and Children's Program!!

Our children, led by Sebastian, will give a special nativity presentation after our meal. It promises to be creative, thought-provoking, and sometimes spontaneous!!

Christmas Eve Worship

We will worship in our tradition of gathering on December 24, Christmas Eve for a special service at 5 p.m. Watch the upcoming Thursday emails from the pastor for any details.

Spreading Christmas Joy by Sponsoring a Family



The Harvest Seasonal Team has worked with Kae Jae of ROCC (Residents of Color Collective) to identify a nearby family that can use our help. The family has a Mom and 6 children, ages 3 months to 11 years.

As of November 27, ALL of the sign-up slots have been filled. This means each child will receive a toy and a clothing item. Thank you CPUC!!

Gifts of money are still most welcome and will be used to buy a Target gift card. If you would like to contribute this way, donations can be mailed in or put in the offering plate

If you have signed up, please bring your wrapped gift to CPUC by Sunday, December.15, marked with the child's name and note " From friends at Cherokee Park United Church".

Cherokee Park United Church 2024 Donations

To the Neighborhood House Food Market

(and thank you to Pat for coordinating and delivering)

<u>Date of delivery</u>	<u>Pounds of Food</u>	<u>Cumulative Total</u>
February 29, 2024	77	77
March 18, 2024	132	209
April 4, 2024	175	384 (March Food Drive)
April 25, 2024	30	414
May 30, 2024	41	455
June 29, 2024	37	492
September 18, 2024	21	513
November 11, 2024	127	640
November 22, 2024	29	669

December Birthdays

- 01 - Michele
- 05 - Jaime
- 14 - Sophie
- 14 - Audrey
- 14 - Karolyn
- 16 - Glen
- 19 - Isaac
- 20 - Jerome
- 27 - Russ

Dear CPUC,

Winter feels as if it has fully arrived now with temperatures dipping below freezing for a consistent stretch. With it too comes the Church season of Advent, in which we hope, wait, and prepare for Christ's arrival, the birth of God in the form of a vulnerable newborn.

Jesus' humble birth foreshadows his life's ministry and leadership. While he was bold in word and deed, he was not violent or antagonistic towards those he disagreed with. He led with an empathy and gentleness that belied his power as God incarnate.



In the deepest wells of most spiritual traditions, this is a common thread. Humility, sacrifice, compassion, and truth-telling are lifted as values and virtues.

Jesus points this out to his disciples in Matthew 20 when the mother of James and John asks that Jesus grant them positions of honor—at Jesus' left and right hands. Part of Jesus' response is to note how the rulers appointed by the Romans "lord it over them, and their great ones exercise authority over them" (v. 25). "It shall not be so among you," he goes on, disappointing their dreams of grandeur and power. "Whoever would be great among you must be your servant."

Similarly, in describing the role of leaders among his tribal community, Gary Batton of the Choctaw Nation of Oklahoma writes that leaders are expected to make sacrifices for their people. In fact, in some ceremonies where one is elevated as a leader, they are expected to give gifts to the gathered community. "Their stature was affirmed by how much they had been able to give to the people, not by how much they had been able to take," he writes. (Christian Century Magazine, Dec. 30, 2020).

It is dismaying to watch the naming of political appointees who are billionaires, TV personalities who thrive on rumor and sensationalism, or have histories of scandals and abuse.

We will continue to demand that our leaders live with integrity and care for all people and the earth. We will honor the leaders who listen to the problems facing us and address them with poise, understanding, and compassion.

Meanwhile, we will continue to deepen our spiritual roots in the values of love, justice, and grace, that when turbulent winds blow, our roots will hold fast.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Matthias

Notes from the November Council Meeting...



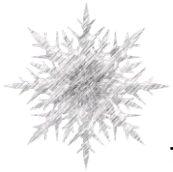
At their meeting on November 19th, the Council addressed a wide range of topics. Highlights include-

- Pastor Matthias reported on his ministry over the last month. He spent time on the usual demands of being pastor and other varied activities. This included his study leave time in Chicago; completion of a course on recognizing implicit bias; taking part in the East Metro UCC event (Voices United for Hope) on Oct. 27; and helping some CPUC volunteers provide a meal for Known MPLS (a Black youth choir) on Nov. 4.
- The Council discussed recruiting a Sabbatical Team to oversee church life when Pastor Matthias is away from May 14 to August 6, 2025. Several possible member's names were surfaced for Pastor to contact.
- The Council approved the renewal of the property and liability insurance for CPUC with MGT Insurance Company. The coverages remain the same with a premium increase of \$175.65 to \$4,498.71 for 2025.
- The Lay Ministry Team is looking for a Chairperson when Jill finishes her term early in 2025. At least one Council member is willing to meet with Jill to learn what the role entails and perhaps volunteer. The Council is contemplating the viability of the current by-laws that require two people on the Council (with as few as six people) to be dedicated to Lay Ministry service. The need for reporting to the Council from this team is recognized. The Council may look at changing the terms and numbers of lay representatives on the team.
- Jim Sh. reported Curt scraped, primed, and painted outside of the stained-glass window closest to the office door on Baker Street. Thank you, Curt!
- Tom M. reported that the Tech Team solved the problem of new microphones that were easy to turn off when holding. He also said that Shannon brought the wonderful slideshow shared on Gratitude Sunday (Nov.17) ready to plug in and run. Many thanks, Shannon! (and Tom!)
- Sebastian said that he is writing an original script for the children's Christmas presentation. It will be shared at the Christmas Dinner on Dec. 15. Shannon and he will work with the young folks after Children's Time in

worship the next few weeks. There is a need for animal costumes. See Sebastian for the species needed.



- Kathy B. said there is a family for CPUC to sponsor for Christmas. She is working with ROCC in W. St. Paul. Details and sign-up sheets will be shared soon.
- The next Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, December 16, 2024.



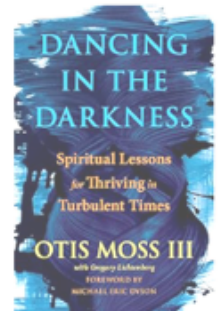
Newly Elected Council Members

Congratulations to Sebastian and Maria who were elected for three-year terms., starting in 2025. We appreciate their offering of energy and talents to the church family in this way.

Spiritual Lessons for Thriving in Turbulent Times

Sunday, 9 - 9:45 am

The Adult Forum continues each Sunday, reading and sharing thoughts on *Dancing in the Darkness*, with Glen leading the discussions. All are welcome even if you are not read the chapters.



Our member with the most infectious smile, Jaime, was chosen

to be on a city billboard advertising her college, Concordia College in Moorhead. If you don't travel that way, you can see her here!!



All Souls' Day altar/ Día de los muertos ofrenda

We extend a special thank you to everyone for helping us celebrate, remember and honor our dearly departed. Thank you for sharing all of the beautiful photos, special items and most of all, the stories and memories. Many enjoyed seeing the variety of expressions throughout the three weeks the ofrenda was present.



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

Who is the most important person in the world?

What is the most important thing?

When is the most important time to do things?

The most important person
is the person in front of you
who needs your help.

The most important thing is
to help them.

The most important time is
right now;
you can't delay, not even for a minute.