



## **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 ~ January 2025***

## *Loaves and Fishes ... swinging into action again on*

**January 2, Thursday**



Congregation members have been very good in volunteering for this important work throughout 2024 and well before. (Pats on backs) According to L&F, this month we will be handing out food servings at the front door of the St Matt's auditorium, rather than inside. (I suspect there is a conflict in the use of the inside space on that night.) For those who deliver the food to the public, it will be like the old Covid days, when you needed a good coat and

gloves. Otherwise, our service will be the same as always.

Please consider helping and please email me so I can keep track of who is coming. Many, many thanks.

## *Un-Greening (but still green)*

**January 5, Sunday , after worship service**

Join us immediately after worship to take down our Christmas adornments -the twelve days of Christmas, from Christmas Day December 25 to January 5 is now liturgically concluded.

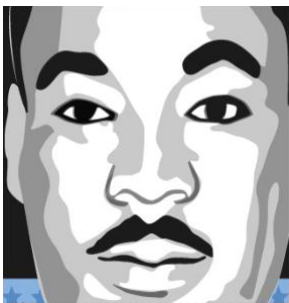
Sidebar - It marks the days from the birth of Christ to the visiting of the three magi - although this visit following the star did not take place at Jesus' birth, but is estimated two years later.

This activity will not take nearly as long as putting things up; many hands make light work. You will still have green in the near future, as we now enter one of the seasons of Ordinary Time.



## *MLK Sunday with Clark Grace*

**January 19, Sunday**



Our siblings from Clark Grace UCC will join us in worshipping at CPUC as we celebrate and commemorate Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s life and legacy. Clark Grace is hosting an ecumenical MLK Service on Monday morning at 9 a.m.--All Are Welcome! As such, however, our usual potluck meal after the Sunday worship will be a robust fellowship time, but not a full-on potluck. Join us for this decades-long running partnership and collaboration around our MLK Weekend Worship!



*MEMORIES: Together during the holidays*  
*First event: COOKIES (bake - decorate - eat!)*





Second event: DINNER TOGETHER!!



Third event:  
Children's Nativity Pageant!!!

the cast:



four sheep



a disagreeable donkey



a chicken



a camel



a cat who knew pretty much everything



a little field mouse



a shepherd



creativity, musicality, angel Shannon

a foreign exchange student from Egypt (I'm a crocodile!)



Mary



french horn player and violinist

playwright/narrator Sebastian



Dear CPUC,

Our two children have reached an age where the best possible diversion is to rummage through the recycling bin for the best cardboard; gather tape, scissors, markers, glue, string, and any other useful crafting items; and make something.

The resulting creations are delightful and imaginative. The resulting mess usually goes un-tidied. Cardboard scraps litter the floors, as do bits of paper, scissors, and tape. We have taken to calling our children, affectionately, 'chaos monsters' because of this whirlwind effect upon whichever room they pass through.



In some moments, it is crazy-making. In others, I am able to receive the mess as signs of joy, creativity, and free exploration in a safe space.

The writer KC Davis writes helpfully about resetting our moral judgement on messiness. Our homes, our spaces, are meant to serve us and not the other way around. Therefore, if a space is a bit untidy, so long as it is functional for the purposes we need it for, why judge ourselves harshly for some arbitrary moral standard of tidiness?

How tidy or chaotic your house is—or your life, for that matter—does not suggest how good a person you are. Your house may be wildly messy, your life may feel out-of-control sometimes; this does not mean you are a bad person, a failure, a bad partner or parent.

As we move into the new year, I am carrying these learnings about grace and reframing what I see as my “failings” in as generous a light possible. This is grace, and it is how, I believe, God too looks at us. Rather than berating us for our messes, I believe God looks at us with compassion for our tiredness, desire for our well-being and rest.

After all, as Davis puts it so succinctly: “No person can do all the good things all the time and expecting yourself to, just sets up an oppressive perfectionism to which no one can live up. Imperfection is required for a good life.”

May you live into the new year with grace and appreciation for all that is imperfect, seeking the goodness that accompanies it.

Yours in Christ,

Pastor Matthias

## Notes from December's Council Meeting...



Highlights include -

- The Council welcomed visitor Maria who will be installed for a new term on Council in January.
- The Council heard from leaders of FREC (Facilitating Racial Equity Collaborative) for whom CPUC is the fiscal agent. They are in the process of assessing the organization's direction and surfacing new leadership. They will not host a conference in 2025.
- Pastor Matthias reported on his ministry over the last month. He spent time on the usual demands of being pastor and duties of his job. He attended lots of meetings – the Finance Team, the Lay Ministry Team, twice with the Renewing Seasonal Steering Team, and a Presbytery meeting. He planned Music Sunday in late November and the services for Advent and Christmas Eve. Pastor Matthias also recruited Mike, Gina, Glen, and Jim to be the Sabbatical Team. They will meet in January to prepare for Pastor's time away from mid-May to early August.
- The Annual Meeting of Cherokee Park United Church will be after worship on Sunday, February 2, 2025.
- The Council approved a 2025 budget as recommended by the Finance Team, with one adjustment to the income line: \$140,000 instead of \$127,000. This budget will be presented at the annual Congregational Meeting on Sunday, February 2 after worship.
- The Council discussed the challenge of filling the roles on the Lay Ministry Team. A current Council member has agreed to be the Chair starting at the 2025 Annual Meeting. The viability of the CPUC by-laws that require two people on the Council (now with as few as six people) to be dedicated to the Lay Ministry remains a concern. Feedback from current Lay Ministry Team members included the somewhat daunting commitment of a three-year term. The Council may make a recommendation for changing the structure/ operation of this team in coming months.

- The Council received a report of a Presbytery meeting that included the installation of new a moderator and vice-moderator, some losses and creative changes in member churches, and productive time taken to address confusion and communication challenges between the Presbytery and a church made up of culturally and ethnically diverse people.
- Jim reported the heating system needed some maintenance and new parts recently.
- Tom reported that the Tech Team will set up one static camera on Christmas Eve so technicians can worship with their families that evening.
- Jill reported that the Renewing SST of Glen and Eric M. has made some choices for the first few months of the season. They might be seeking help to do some of the activities planned. Diane, Jill, and Pastor Matthias support them on behalf of the Lay Ministry Team.
- Pastor Matthias and the Council members thanked Deborah, Jackie, and Sandy S. whose terms expire this month.
- The next Council meeting is scheduled for Tuesday, January 21, 2025.

### *Known MPLS Choir Meal*

#### **February 3, Monday**

CPUC is signed up to prepare and bring a meal for Known MPLS, an audition-based youth Gospel choir. We were invited to be in support of this group of young people by Laura Beth G., a former intern here at CPUC who has kept close ties with many members. Their rehearsals run Monday nights from 6 - 8 pm with many singers arriving by bus straight from afterschool activities.

As such, they take a dinner break around 7pm. We will provide the meal on February 3. Let Pastor Matthias or Glen know if you might be willing to help with cooking or want to go along for serving the meal (and the utter treat of getting to sit in on part of the rehearsal!!)

Music feeds the soul. We can help feed the bodies.





## Join us at the Website Party!

**January 25, Saturday**

Our new church logo needs an up-to-date website! While some of us never search for CPUC on the internet, many people do before checking us out. With Audrey and Sophie's help, we are re-vamping our site. Please join us at 10 am at church as we team up to suggest text and visuals for this important outreach platform. You are welcome to bring a laptop computer or tablet. There will be treats and beverages, too! See you there.

### January Birthdays and Celebrations

05 - Sandy S.

05 - Bjorn

08 - Sandy W.

19 - Brad

♥ 31 - Russ & Sandy

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



### Newsletter

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

Many thanks to proofreader Mary M. and collator Kathy B.

Cherokee Park United Church ~ Sunday Worship 10:15 a.m. online and in person

<https://www.facebook.com/cherokeeparkchurch/live>

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United Church of Christ/Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Open & Affirming, Multicultural, Antiracist

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*We have no desire to be the world's policeman.  
But America does want to be the world's peacemaker.*

President Jimmy Carter  
1979 State of the Union Address