



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 2025

Special offering in support of Refugee Services

With deep cuts from the federal government for refugee resettlement services and more intense scrutiny on the agencies that provide this essential care, Council has decided to gather a special offering on **Sunday, March 2** in support of the Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services. We belong to the MCC by virtue of our UCC and PCUSA identity, and their Refugee Services has been active since 1984, supporting to refugee migrants in Minnesota through immigration, education, employment, and case management.

Please consider making a special offering and write "Refugee Services" in the memo line or on the offering envelope.

Ash Wednesday - Lent starts this week

March 5, Wednesday at 7pm

Join us for an Ash Wednesday worship service on the sanctuary. This worship service that intertwines our call to do justice and to remember our mortality marks the start of the season of Lent. We will offer the marking of ashes for those who wish to receive it either on the forehead or the back of the hand.



March 6, Thursday

Are you rested up after 3 months off from Loaves and Fishes? Wonderful!

We have a chance to get back into action at our next regular workday for Loaves and Fishes. Please volunteer for either the first shift (3:30-5:00) or the second shift (5:00-6:30). It will be a rewarding experience.

Wayne

Daylight Saving Time Change

Sunday March 9

Spring your clocks ahead one hour



Dear CPUC,

For someone who spent several stints imprisoned by the Roman Empire, and who reported that he suffered a “thorn in his side” which likely refers to some sort of illness or disability, the apostle Paul sure talks a lot about rejoicing.

In the closing of his letter to the church in Philippi—which was likely written from prison—Paul writes “Rejoice in the Lord always. I will say it again: Rejoice! Let your gentleness be evident to all. The Lord is near. Do not be anxious about anything, but in every situation, by prayer and petition, with thanksgiving, present your requests to God. And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.” (4:4-7)



It can be hard to tap into a place of joy, or to even feel like it is appropriate to feel joy at the present moment when so much in our world feels frighteningly unstable and destructive.

Though perhaps counter-intuitive, I do not believe that seeking joy is frivolous or a denial of horrible current events. Rather, it is an essential spiritual practice. It keeps us rooted in the love and presence of God, of the beauty of the world, of small wonders, and surprising delights.

In the past month, we have had a website party and a church game night. These were both gatherings where creating joy and enjoying time together was a central purpose. Such gatherings are not a substitute for prayer or worship or other spiritual practices. However, they do express our belief that God calls us to know joy.

Seeking joy and enjoyment as a spiritual practice also helps us break the dismal spiral of anxiousness and despair. Do a puzzle, go for a walk, savor a good book, call up a friend just to talk, bake something, or make art. Any act that gets us into our bodies, in relationship, into creativity helps us reset and know something of God’s presence with us. It may not come easily, but keep trying and help others to do so too.

Know that you are loved and needed. Seek joy. Resist evil.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Matthias



Cherokee Park United Church

Notes from the February Council Meeting...

Highlights include-

- 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 supported various efforts of the Renewing Season Team, and has been working to prepare plans for CPUC during his sabbatical. Pastor Matthias agreed to serve on an Administrative Commission seeking truth and healing around allegations of misconduct by a former pastor in the Presbytery.
- The Council approved the purchase and installation of a Heartsine Automated External Defibrillator (AED) for CPUC. Member, Dr. Jane recommended several options. Thanks to Jane for her time and expertise in explaining and advocating for this life-saving device.
- The Council authorized the collection of a special offering on Sunday, March 2, 2025. Proceeds will be sent to The Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Ministries program along with \$500 from the CPUC Peace Fund. This decision is a response to federal cuts to refugee services.
- The Council discussed different approaches to constitute the Lay Ministry Team. Several ideas for filling the team from a smaller church Council and for recruitment of lay representatives surfaced. Changes to the Lay Ministry Team require a congregational vote. Pastor Matthias will draft a possible replacement By-law for the next Council meeting.
- The Council heard the recommendation of the Personnel Ministry Team (PMT) and the Sabbatical Support Team to hire an administrative support person during Pastor Matthias' sabbatical. This person would be a contractor, 5-10 hours per week, and be responsible for compiling/ sending the weekly email and producing/ printing the bulletin. The Council authorized the PMT to negotiate with a prospective candidate. Money to pay this salary and pulpit supply pastors will come from the Sabbatical Fund.
- Pastor Matthias and Maria reported on the Presbytery meeting they attended on February 11, 2025.
- Lynne church accountant, reported CPUC hired a payroll service called Gusto for \$40/ month. They will generate reports and W2s needed going forward.
- Tom reported that the Tech Team has a new supply of needed batteries.

- The Renewing SST is getting ready for Lent and some possible earth care programs in the next few months.
- The next Council meeting is scheduled for March 18, 2025.

If you would like to know more about any of these items in detail, the Council members would be glad to talk with you. The current Council Members are: Jill, Sebastian, Barb, Kathy B., Tom M., Jim Sh., Maria, Sandy D., Lynne.

Known MPLS Choir Meal

March 17 Monday evening

CPUC is signed up to prepare and bring a meal for *Known MPLS*, an audition-based youth Gospel choir. Their rehearsals run Monday nights from 6 - 8 pm with many singers arriving by bus straight from afterschool activities.

Donated food providers and warm welcomers are needed to join us to create a world of loving hearts for these 35+ young women and men, the leaders and creators of the future. We need all the ingredients for tacos, plus something sweet that is easy to handle i.e. cookies or bars. We also provide containers for leftovers as they appreciate taking them home but most travel by bus. Contact Pastor Matthias.

Unforgettable summer!!

Let's make this summer unforgettable!

Join the *Growing Seasonal Team*

and help us plan a season of fun and fellowship.

We need your creative energy and enthusiasm to make our May-August events a success. Contact Shannon to sign up or ask any questions.



February's game night was warm and cozy!!



Member News

We enjoy Shannon's creativity here at church in many areas involving children, families, and inclusivity. In her "spare" time her energies even thrive in Minnesota outdoor temperatures. She and her *Snow Angels* team took first prize at the St. Paul Winter Carnival for their snow sculpture, "Cynthia's Snowbot". And at their home the family



built a colored iceball igloo. (325 balloons, 14 layers using snow as mortar)



two kinds of faith

Maku (Rainbow Dancer Thunderbird) speaks out from the belly of the beast
from Pennsylvania: Benner State Correctional Institution

Two kinds of faith;
one like burning fire, the other like flowing water.

Faith like fire, is blazing when first lit.
But as time goes by,
the fire can start to die down
if no fuel has been added.
As time passes faith
can start to weaken.

Faith like flowing, running water is strong;
getting stronger the longer it flows;
gaining momentum, other streams join, it does not stop;
over time it can even erode the hardest stone.
Flowing, running faith,
can develop strength and conviction over time.



Newsletter

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

March Birthdays and Celebrations

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

(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

