



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 2026

This newsletter is also posted on our website; for safety and privacy, last names and personal contact information are omitted there. That version is also sent, upon request, to various native inmates in Pennsylvania who greatly appreciate our attention, respect, and our work advocating for their rights to their spiritual practices.



SPRING FORWARD

Spring Forward!! And Wake Up Sleepy Head

March 8, Sunday Morning

Remember to set your clocks ahead one hour on Saturday or you will be late for church on Sunday; but that's ok as then you get to run the dishwasher after Fellowship!!

Loaves & Fishes

March 5, Thursday

After a longer-than-usual hiatus, Cherokee Park's Loaves and Fishes volunteers will be called upon to serve again on the first Thursday in March at St. Matthews Catholic Church cafeteria.



Wayne talked to the St Matt's L&F supervisor about future plans in serving procedure; she said that L&F has decided to make NO CHANGES, despite earlier rumors that they would offer eat-in meals. So, we will prepare and distribute take-out meal boxes, as usual.

We will need at least 5 volunteers for the first shift beginning about 3:15 and ending about 5:00, and at least another 5 for the second shift volunteers to start about 5:00 and end about 6:30.

Please consider helping. Send Wayne an email if you want to work with L&F and thanks so much for joining in this much appreciated and needed service.

Palm Sunday Action Led by ISAIAH

March 29, Palm Sunday 2 pm

On the day Christians celebrate as the first “Palm Sunday”, Jesus entered Jerusalem in opposition to the greed, cruelty, and oppression of the Roman Empire on a donkey, a symbol of a just, humble leader who cares for the poor, the hungry, the sick, and the stranger.



ISAIAH's Black Church Power Project and ISAIAH's Mainline Protestant Congregations are organizing a Palm Sunday afternoon Procession and Worship at the State Capitol in St. Paul. Our goal is more than 10,000 Christians joining together to highlight our call to love the neighbor, heal the sick, feed the hungry, and welcome the stranger in this critical moment in our nation's history.

It will be led by the Black Church Power Project. Those interested in being part of their choirs have rehearsals at Shiloh Baptist March 24 and Greater Friendship Church March 27. Both rehearsals are 7-9PM. The walk will begin at 2PM Sunday in the University/Dale Avenues area and at the former Sears parking lot. Pastor Matthias and Sandy Dodson will assist in logistics. Plans are being made for persons to attend with mobility concerns.

The church in Minnesota has been powerfully proclaiming that loving the neighbor should be at the center of our public life, and we will continue to lead! Please consider signing up and attending one of the Lay Leader trainings being offered.

palmsunday2026.com



Virtual Palm Sunday Turnout Training for Lay Leaders

- Monday, March 2, 7-8:30pm on zoom | sign up
link: https://secure.ngpvan.com/IF_F5f8SREmuuy53zqYe4Q2
- Thu March 5, 7-8:30pm on zoom | sign up
link: <https://secure.ngpvan.com/xJETLye93U2fcbK8tWNNWA2>



Known MPLS Dinner!

March 23, Monday

CPUC will be serving an evening meal as usual on their monthly rotation, for Known MPLS, a high school youth of color choir.

If you'd like to be a part of the team you can help out by cooking/ baking or donating funds/items. You can also volunteer to help serve on-site. Signup during fellowship time or talk to Alicia or Pastor Matthias.

Many thanks to all who made the meal on February 23rd a success!

Easter Breakfast

April 5, Easter Sunday

The Renewing Seasonal Team is sponsoring a potluck breakfast at 8:30 am (before worship service) on Easter Sunday.

If you would like to help, we will need people to bring

- a breakfast casserole
- fruit
- bread/pastries
- or help with clean up

Watch for a sign-up sheet in early March.



Earth Day Worship at CPUC

April 12, Sunday preparation 9:00 am

April 19, Sunday worship 10:15 am

Please mark your calendars for a special service celebrating the life-giving gifts of our earthly home at worship. We will share the

Thanksgiving Address: Greetings to the Natural World

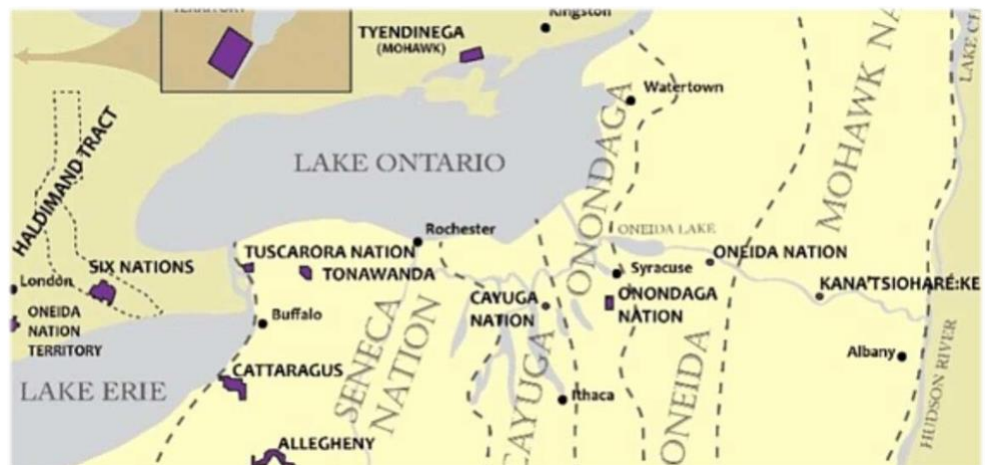
which is used by the Haudenosaunee * tribe to give thanks for many aspects of nature.



You can be a part of this special day! People are needed to read parts of the meditation as well as provide art to reflect each aspect; prayer sections focus on earth mother, waters, fish, plants, food plants, medicine herbs, animals, trees, birds, four winds, thunderers, sun, grandmother moon, stars, enlightened teachers, Creator. Plan to join us for an Intergenerational Forum on Sunday, April 12th at 9 am to volunteer for parts and create some images to

honor our natural world. If you'd like to read or want to create some art but are unable to attend on April 12th please contact Jill Jackson. A sign-up sheet for parts and art will be available at church in March.

* Haudenosaunee is pronounced *hoh den uh SHOH nee*, and when said quickly sounds more like *hodnuh show nee*. The Haudenosaunee Confederacy is also known as the Iroquois – which is the name the colonizers called them. The Confederacy was comprised of the Oneida, Onondaga, Cayuga, and Seneca, and later joined by the Tuscarora.



A Message from Pastor Matthias

Dear CPUC,

A month ago, as Operation Metro Surge was at its most frenzied and violent, the popular podcast host Joe Rogan took to his podcast (which ten million people listen to regularly) and compared ICE's tactics and actions to the Gestapo of Nazi Germany.



While some were grateful for him speaking plainly about the abuses we here in Minnesota were living through, plenty of others were exasperated. Many felt Rogan should not get credit for naming the obvious when he has a sordid history of spreading misinformation about vaccines, promulgating transphobia, and platforming Trump and RFK in interviews on his podcast. For many, it was too little too late, when so much preventable harm has been done and Rogan himself had used his clout in ways that helped us arrive at this point.

Both of these can be, and are, true. There are plenty of people who have supported a politics of cruelty, buoyed the rising tide of Christian Nationalism, and shrugged off our slide towards authoritarianism. Many of those same people have become disillusioned as the harms have hit closer to home, the abuses have become more flagrant, and the lies become more bald-faced.

I empathize with the urge to rage at these late-comers and feel that anger myself at times.

Yet one key piece of successful resistance movements as noted by historians who study them is that they must make space for defectors to join.

One of the songs that the Singing Resistance has become most beloved for has an upbeat tune and lyrics that go: "It's okay to change your mind / Show us your courage / Leave this behind. It's okay to change your mind / And you can join us / Join us here anytime."

2,000 singers raised this mighty chorus outside a Minneapolis hotel where ICE was believed to be staying.

While it feels righteous to nurse that resentment at those who have gone along with the present authoritarian movement, lies, and cruelty, it does not help get us out of the dire circumstances in which we find ourselves as a nation. Further, repentance, grace, and reparation are key virtues of our faith.

Times like these surely put those virtues to the test. Nor do I believe that righteous anger and making space to receive those who repent of their allegiance to the politics of cruelty are mutually exclusive. It behooves us—both practically and spiritually—to practice a politics and faith that are empathetic and compassionate, even towards those who are finding their way towards compassion so late in the day.

Yours in Christ,
Pastor Matthias

Contrary to some reports, ICE threat has not diminished



Support Riverview Elementary families against fear of ICE presence
Riverview has an urgent need for people to be present at school start and end times. They haven't been able to gather as many parent volunteers as other schools - not surprising given how many of their families are at risk themselves.

The morning shift is approximately 8:30-9:30 and the afternoon shift is 3:30-4:30.

You do not have to have attended an observer training.

Connect with Jane for more information.

The UCC Minnesota Conference is part of a lawsuit filed this week alleging that ICE and DHS are violating the religious rights of those who are being held in custody by denying them access to pastoral visits, sacraments, and care. Despite White House advisor Tom Homan's Feb. 12 [announcement](#) that a majority of federal agents would be leaving Minnesota, the clergy members say that DHS continues to block them from providing spiritual care to detainees. "The alleged drawdown of ICE agents has had no impact on the inability of faith leaders to provide pastoral care to detainees at Whipple," the plaintiffs write. See mprnews.org for complete news on ICE in MN.

Notes from the February Council Meeting...

- 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, both at CPUC and the Presbytery. He represented CPUC at several clergy actions opposing Operation Metro Surge – two at the airport and one at the Whipple Building. He worked on and facilitated the Annual Meeting of our church on February 8th. Matthias met with the Lay Ministry Team and Mike Bates (who is the assistant Clerk of Council) to prepare for the Annual Meeting.
- The Council approved the Annual Statistical Report required by the Presbyterian Church (USA). Thanks to Mike Bates for preparing that report.
- The Council received a report from Maria McNamara telling of the Presbytery meeting she attended on February 7th on our behalf. Midst other news, she said the PTCA is encouraging submission of written overtures regarding Minnesota's resistance to Immigration and Customs Enforcement's presence in our communities in recent months. Overtures are due by March 15th. An overture, if approved, would be presented at the General Assembly Meeting of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) this summer in Milwaukee, WI.
- The Council discussed ways to communicate with church members and friends about the opportunity to serve a two-year term on the Lay Ministry Team.
- Pastor Matthias will convene an Inquirer's Dinner and Meeting on Tuesday, February 24th for people interested in learning more about CPUC and/or becoming members. Several Council members will support the effort.
- Climate Makers cleaned the church's boilers. Thanks to Jim Shatek of the Property Management Team who oversaw the work.
- Tom Murphy of the Tech Team is working to resolve an issue around the sound on the livestream broadcasts of recent worship services. Thanks to Tom for his time and expertise on this.
- Pastor Matthias will start the process of hiring the part-time administrative assistant in the near future.
- Shannon Johnson helped provide an employee badge for our custodian, Jair.
- The next Council meeting is scheduled for March 17, 2026.

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 Council members are Sebastian, Kathy, Maria, Sandy Dodson, Lynne, Kay, and Jill.

One Great Hour of Sharing

During the season of Lent, we invite you to consider an offering towards the One Great Hour of Sharing.

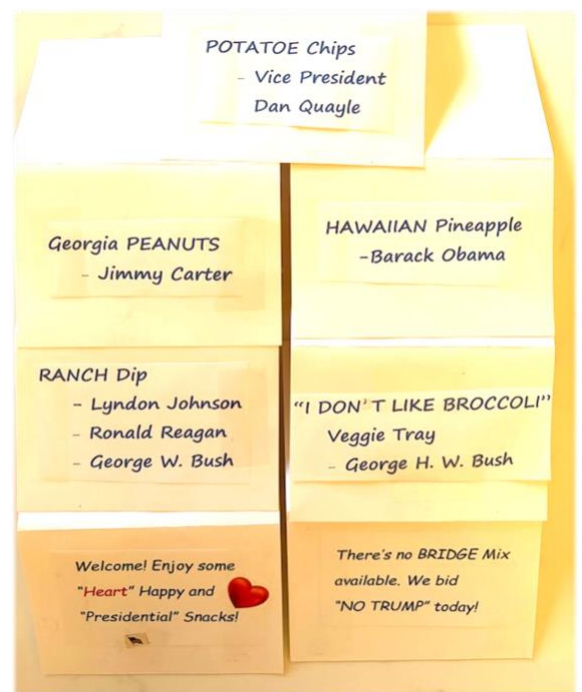
This special offering, collected by both the PCUSA and UCC, goes to support global efforts to ameliorate poverty and hunger, aid disaster relief, and assist immigrants and refugees.

We will have special OGHS offering envelopes available in the sanctuary entry ways and will put any offerings received in those envelopes towards CPUC's contribution to One Great Hour of Sharing.

Presidents and one VP

born in Hawaii, a peanut farmer, living on ranches, confused spelling?

Our fellowship snacks for *Presidents' Day* included clever food tags by Jill, to remind us of certain presidents. If you didn't understand one or more clues, it is simply because you are too young to remember!



Minnesota Nice Migrates

from our friend, Sasha, in New York

In late February a terrific snowstorm hit the eastern coast, including New York; Sasha posted online that she'd be willing to walk someone's dog if they were not able to brave the drifts. Someone replied asking "Do you mean you'd walk a dog for FREE?" and Sasha said yes, this is what Minnesotans do; when it snows, we offer to shovel out your car; in New York we offer to walk your dog.

(Sasha also took the cover photo of our church a few winters ago.)

Staying connected! - CPUC e-directory

Our new e-directory will be available and sent to you soon. No need to be an "official" member; if you are with us often and consider us your church home, you may also be included. Please send your contact information – name(s), address, email, cell phone, home phone– to Jill Jackson asap. You may also include a formal or informal photo of yourself/family. (It will be cropped to a small image.)

This directory is only sent to those already included in our weekly emailed updates. Let us know if you need to be added to that list.



Newsletter

Please submit articles by the 23rd of preceding month to susanstrebig@gmail.com

Editor: Susan

Proofreader: Mary M

Collator: Kathy

March Birthdays

Members and Friends

08 - Valerie

09 - Jim

20 - Gabriel

21 - Philip

23 - Sarah

♥ 24 - Dean and Meliza

31 - Sandy D

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 am, online and in person
<https://www.facebook.com/cherokeeparkchurch/live>
Pastor: Rev. Matthias Peterson-Brandt
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cpuc@usfamily.net
cherokeeparkunited.org

*Found on FB of Renee
Noojimo'iwe*

