



## **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 ~ April 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 for rights to their spiritual practices.*

## ***Staying connected! - CPUC e-directory of members and friends***

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.

## ***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 bring food, these are the items we would like as our basics: breakfast casserole, fruit, bread/pastries. We also will need help with clean up.



## ***Easter Garden***

You may have noticed we have not invited people to purchase plants for our sanctuary Easter garden this year. The communion table will need space for the elements as it is a communion Sunday. But there still will be live flowers to celebrate this day.

## Known MPLS Dinner

### April 27, Monday

CPUC will be serving a meal for Known MPLS, a high school youth of color, choir, as we have been doing monthly for some time now. If you'd like to be a part of the team you can help by cooking/ baking or donating funds/items and/or volunteer to help serve on-site. Signup during fellowship time or talk to Alicia or Pastor Matthias.

Our March visit!

Many thanks to our March team! Thank you, Jill, for a crockpot of homemade cooking! **Thank you**, Lynne & Mike, for donating items and being a part of our onsite team! Thank you, Jackie, for being onsite and being our driver! Thank you, Pastor Matthias, for helping us prep and keep our supplies in good order!

Known MPLS is currently working on an album they aim to release this summer! We are excited for them and will keep them in our prayers! We were treated to an excerpt from the album; "Minnesota Stand Up", a powerful and heart moving song about resistance through unity and the strength that it can give us to overcome living in fear.

### April Birthdays and Celebrations

02 - Daphne  
13 - Barb  
18 - Laura Beth  
18 - Dean  
19 - Tommy  
♥ 25 - Gina & Jerome

### Save the Date

### Neighboring/ Bring a Friend Sunday

#### May 17, Sunday

During recent months in Minnesota, many of us have learned new ways of being neighbors to people in our communities. Relationships were forged or refreshed as we stood-up for each other with countless compassionate efforts. The Council of CPUC encourages all members and friends to ask a neighbor or friend to join us for worship at 10:15 am.

We'll have our "Welcome" signs out and a special fellowship hour for all to share after the service. Start making plans now and asking your neighbors to join us!

STARTING OFF MY DAY WITH 2 EGGS FOR BREAKFAST...THEY'RE CADBURY EGGS BUT WHATEVER. THE DIET PLAN SAYS 2 EGGS, I DON'T MAKE THE RULES.

## Earth Day Worship at CPUC

April 12, Sunday forum 9 am

April 19, Sunday worship 10:15 am

CPUC looks forward to a special service celebrating the life-giving gifts of our earthly home, sharing the **Thanksgiving Address: Greetings to the Natural World**, from the Haudenosaunee\* tribe, to give thanks to the diverse aspects of nature. Many people are signed up to read parts of the meditation as well as share art to reflect each earthly element.



Volunteer readers will receive the *Thanksgiving Address* and the parts you'll read via email early in April. If you volunteered to create/bring art reflective of an element lifted up in the prayer, please remember all art is due on Sunday, April 12. Bring your art to the fellowship hall either before or after worship. If you want to finish your art or create pieces for elements not covered in the sign-up, please plan to join us for the Intergenerational Forum on Sunday, April 12<sup>th</sup> at 9 am. All art will be returned to its creator(s)/ donor(s). Please contact Jill Jackson with any questions or ideas. It's going to be a worship filled with beautiful words, images, and space for silent meditation. Be sure to attend and bring your friends.

Make it Earth Day every day!

\* 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.

## Congratulations Mayor Felix!

Felix, grade 4, recently won an honor to be Mayor for a Day in Woodbury, for his award-winning essay, first among 600+ entries, published in the League of Minnesota Cities magazine, on how the city could be improved. His idea is to allow backyard chickens or ducks; he laid out all the requirements and rules to make this an environmentally safe and healthy opportunity for both humans and our feathered relatives. (a limit of 6 chickens, as they could cumulatively lay 1,800 eggs per year! As Felix stated “that’s a lot of eggs!”)



## A Message from Pastor Matthias

Dear CPUC,

In a recent column for *Christian Century* magazine, Stephanie Perdeu writes about how she has come to see the term “progressive Christianity” with some misgiving. For Perdeu this has nothing to do with the underlying values that “progressive” might suggest (e.g. LGBTQ+ affirming, theologically open-minded, antiracist). Rather, she finds it unhelpfully vague, serving as a shorthand that can let congregations off the hook for reflecting on how they actually embody and live these values.



While I find that Perdeu makes some points worth discussing, her writing prompted me to consider another potential drawback to “progressive” appended to Christianity. It suggests a linearity, a persistent upward and forward trajectory, which we know from experience is not always how life and faith go.

Kate Bowler recently wrote, “...we live under this terrible pressure to narrate our lives as progress. *Before* I was broken. *Now* I am healed. *Before* I was a caterpillar. *Now* behold: butterfly.”

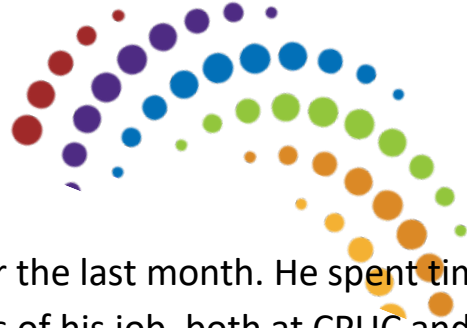
While on one hand, I believe we are always moving towards a goal of faithfulness in our living and walk with Christ, it doesn’t always move in a predictable fashion. Sometimes we skip steps that might seem like logical progressions. Sometimes what faithfulness looks like today doesn’t follow in an obvious way from what it looked like yesterday. We move backwards, laterally, stay stuck sometimes.

I don’t mean to suggest we should scrap the term “progressive Christianity.” It is, I believe, a helpful signifier for folks looking for a congregation that affirms that justice and compassion in our living are linked to our faith. I do wonder about what other descriptors we might use to augment how we think of our faith. “Open-hearted Christianity”? “Christianity en la lucha”? “Liberation Christianity”?

What imaginative words would you use to describe the type of faith we profess and aspire to?

May we ever be drawn to new dreams by the Spirit together.

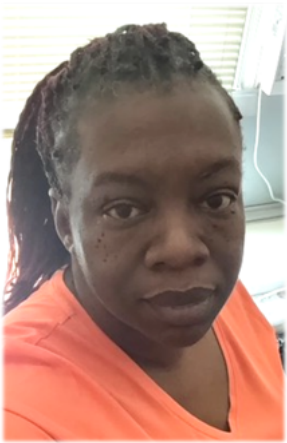
Pastor Matthias



## *Notes from the March 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 planned and led worship services, with two that needed to move to Zoom because of wintry weather. (Ash Wednesday (2/18) and worship (3/14)) He met with several teams (Lay Ministry, Personnel, and the Renewing SST) to support their work. Pastor Matthias organized and led an Inquirer's Dinner for people interested in church membership. He spent considerable time offering support and solidarity to Native inmates at SCI Benner in PA. He collaborated with Sandy D. on a Lenten Supper and Learning planned for March 19.
- The Council approved Pastor Matthias' requested dates for a week of Study Leave (one of two) and his four weeks of vacation.
- The Council approved membership at CPUC for Moe, Alicia, Jacob and Ruffo.
- The Council decided to hold a "Bring a Friend/ Neighboring" Sunday on May 17<sup>th</sup>. Advertising and announcements promoting the day will be forthcoming.
- Pastor Matthias said the Personnel Ministry Team interviewed a person for the part-time administrative assistant position. A six-week trial period for this person is planned.
- Council member Lynne reported the Finance Ministry Team will be meeting soon to consider investment changes and roof and bell tower repairs needed this year.
- Kay and Pastor Matthias encouraged prayer for the MN Conference of the UCC dealing with unexpected personnel transitions.
- The next Council meeting is scheduled for April 21, 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 D., Lynne, Kay and Jill.



## Welcome Demari

We are excited to welcome Demari to join the CPUC staff offering office support up to five hours a week. She joins us from having a background training in healthcare billing. She describes herself as "a hardworking, determined strong woman who is very family oriented." Demari will take on the weekly eblast and bulletin creation responsibilities gradually over a 6-week probationary start. If you cross paths with her at church, be sure to introduce yourself

and greet her.

## Lenten Supper

Families gathered at church during Lent to explore together what makes church. Each table scoured the building for a collection of items that represented what church is to them. It was playful, inspiring, and prompted good conversation.



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  
651-227-4275  
cpuc@usfamily.net  
cherokeeparkunited.org

*Being really bad at something  
Is the first step  
To being kind of good at something.  
Through Art P., from Jake the Dog*