

From Pastor Moira's Desk...

As I write this, the first snow has fallen, most of it since melted, covering the gold and red leaves blanketing the yard. I'm not sure I was quite ready for the snow even if I knew it was coming and spent the day before doing some yard clean-up, bringing in the last things that need to be stored away for the winter, putting up driveway markers for the snow plow, moving the bird and critter feeders so they're easier to get to in the depths of winter. It always feels sad, a little final, to me to take in the yard decorations, change from the bubbling fountain to the heated water dish, and look at all the drying stems of my perennial garden even though I leave it all stand, using the stems, the fallen leaves, and the spent veggie plants (that tried and failed to produce much this year because of the rain). The bean plants and trellises even stay in the garden to provide shelter for the Artic tit which winters here from its home in far northern Canada. It's not much work in the fall, and a lot of work in the Spring, but it's how I learned to garden, letting things take their natural course. But somehow it still feels like the end of a chapter, the closing of a door, and I suppose it is. The days are shortening, and getting darker. The skies are changing (though I do love that Orion is more visible this time of year). The earth itself seems to get quieter with the trees shaking themselves free of turning leaves, and animals hunkering down against the coming cold.

But as I looked at the snow of winter sitting on top of the crunchy autumn leaves this morning I was reminded that rarely, if ever, do we have only one thing to deal with at a time. We celebrate great joys the same day we grieve tremendous losses. Sometimes in the space of a week we hold the hands of new babies, and those who are leaving this life. We have success and setbacks at the same time. They're still playing baseball (barely), but there's also rugby, football, hockey, and basketball all going on. We are constantly living in the tension of juggling the good, the hard, the joyful, the sorrow-filled, and the mundane of every day life all at the same time. So maybe stores with Halloween, Thanksgiving, and Christmas decorations at the same time, or snowfall on golden leaves just a few days before Halloween is the perfect metaphor for our lives.

We live full, complicated, sometimes contradictory lives every day. All the more reason that November brings us Thanksgiving. I said in worship a few weeks ago that part of our call as people who follow Jesus is to be thanks-giving people every day, not just one Thursday in November when we sit down to a table groaning under the delicious food we've prepared for family and friends. Stopping and finding something to be grateful for isn't reserved for the week of Thanksgiving, but is supposed to be a daily part of our lives.

Some times, some days, the things we are thankful for will be extremely obvious, they'll come to mind quickly, and maybe we'll even have so many of them we can hardly contain ourselves.

Some days it will be harder. In the midst of grief, struggle, sorrow, pain, job loss, the uncertainty of the times we are living in and so much more it's sometimes hard to find anything to be grateful for. On those hard days I invite you to stop and slow down. Put your hand over your heart and take a few breaths, as slowly and deeply as you can, feeling your heart beat, your belly rising and falling with your breath. We are each and every one of us a miracle, a collection of our particular DNA, our passions and dislikes, our gifts and failings, our strengths and struggles. None of us HAD to be here, but here we are, living as the amazing, unique, brilliant, humans we are, made in God's very own image.

On the hard days that should be something we can give thanks for, but perhaps it's not enough. So on those very, very hard days reach out to someone ~ someone you share a pew with on Sunday, someone you pick at random from the church directory, someone who is say your Pastor and waits for your call (give me a couple minutes at 2am to get more fully awake!). That's why we're here, as a community, to love and support each other. We're here to listen, not to fix, but to accompany each other through all the twists and turns that life brings. We're here to help you pick up a few of the things you drop while you're juggling, or maybe juggle for you for a bit while you take a much needed break. We're here to be together, a true community where you can be all of who you are, to be friends in the deepest sense of the word as the artist Shania Twain says... "A friend is someone who knows the song in your heart and can sing it back to you when you have forgotten the words."

So let us go into this season confident of God's grace and love surrounding us, and as grateful people, filled to overflowing with the goodness of God's love, the power and strength of community, and the miracle that is our lives. And so may we transform the whole world, or at least our little corner, more and more into the place that Jesus lived for, the place that fulfills God's dream for the world ~ the kingdom of heaven here on earth.

Peace and grace, Pastor Moira

**"If the only prayer you ever say in your entire life
is thank you, it would be enough."**

Meister Eckhart, German theologian & mystic (1260-1328)

Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes

October 8, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Menning with Pat Schomisch, Gary VanderLinden, Lisa Waterstradt, Connie Wheeler and Pastor Moira Finley present.



The meeting was opened with a prayer from Pastor Moira Finley.

A motion was made, by Pat Schomisch and seconded by Gary VanderLinden, to accept the minutes from last month. Motion passed.

A motion was made, by Connie Wheeler and seconded by Pat Schomisch, to accept the Financial Secretary's and Treasurer's reports. Motion passed.

Pastors Report

- Conducted 4 Worship Services
- Attended 2 church meetings, 1 Funeral Service and WI Conference Clergy Retreat
- Made 8 home/hospital/hospice/counseling visits

Committee Reports

Membership: *Nothing to report at this time.*

Christian Ed: The 3rd graders will be receiving their Bibles. Family Daze committee is looking for a group to work the games area. They need about 6-8 volunteers from 12:00-4:00 p.m. They will get all the prizes and games.

The next meeting is November 3, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.

Worship: *Nothing to report at this time.*

Music: *Nothing to report at this time.*

House: *Nothing to report at this time.*

Stewardship: The Calendar of Giving for October is Neighbors in Need.

Campital Campaign/Mission Projects - For the month of September, we collected \$550.00. We have collected \$3,895.00 YTD.

Old Business:

- ♦ Jack's Restoration is looking into the steeple repairs. In the past, there have been bad brick repairs, so he will need to take that all down and start over in those areas. He is still taking pictures for a quote.
- ♦ The flooring/carpet in the basement needs to be replaced; it's not urgent, so we will get it cleaned professionally for now. Connie will check with a friend of hers, from

Freedom, who has a carpet cleaning business for a quote of 2,337 square feet.

- ♦ The sensor on the elevator door was replaced, so it should be working now.

New Business:

- Sanderfoot will be surveying the land by the parking lot. The neighbor will take care of the trees that need to be trimmed or removed.
- Pastor Moira's insurance will change as of January 1, 2020. She will be taking Plan B. In addition, the church will begin participation in the UCC Pension Board's Flexible Benefit Plan with the following motion, approved unanimously: Resolved that, the Flexible Benefit Plan for UCC Ministries that operates in and is administered through the Pension Boards – United Church of Christ, Inc. be, and the same hereby is adopted for the employees of St. John's United Church of Christ of Black Creek, Wisconsin: and resolved further, that such a Plan shall include provision for participating clergy and lay employees to elect a health care reimbursement account, a dependent care account or both according to Plan provisions that are substantially of the manner described in the attached materials; and Resolved further, that this Plan shall be made available to our clergy and lay employees as soon as administratively feasible.

Prayers and Thanks:

- ♦ Lisa St. John
- ♦ Ron and Kim
- ♦ Kim Leech (Pat's niece)
- ♦ Gene Blake.

Thank you to the group that went to Pilgrim Center for work camp. All your help was greatly appreciated.

A motion was made, by Lisa Waterstradt and seconded by Gary VanderLinden, to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Next Council Meeting will be Tuesday, November 12, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Wheeler, secretary



Christian Education Meeting – October 1, 2019

There were seven people present at the meeting. Current Balance is \$ 520.31.

Rally Sunday went well, again, this year, with about 50 people in attendance. We have a few new children, who have joined us,, welcome! We had a wonderful potluck after our worship service. We had a bean-bag tournament, Bingo game, and the Fish game. We had everything in the basement, so that everyone could join in the fun and enjoy watching the games. Ice cream was served after the games.

Candy Bars will be sold, again, for \$1.00 each. Funds raised will be going to sponsor the Haiti's Feeding Program at their school. The offerings from the 1st Sunday each month in Sunday School will be allocated for this also.

Bibles will be handed out to our 3rd graders on Sunday, October 13, during the service.

Christmas program will be during the worship service, on Sunday, December 15. Practices for the children will be Saturday, December 7, and Saturday, December 14, from 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Then, during Sunday School time of 9:00 - 10:00 a.m., on Sunday, December 8. Please make sure your child(ren) is/are at these practices. We will be providing candy bags, again this year,, Audrey and Connie have volunteered to organize.

Confirmation class on Sunday, October 20th, will be with their mentors.

There is a group from our church going to Pilgrim Center in Green Lake, Wisconsin, from Friday, October 4 - Sunday, October 6, to help the camp with clean up and get ready for winter.

The Turkey Fundraiser will kick off on Sunday, November 3, with a meal made and served by the youth group. Please plan to stay, after worship service that day, and enjoy a delicious meal. Proceeds will go to the Salvation Army for Thanksgiving meals.

Family Days, in 2020, will be on Saturday, June 6th, and they are looking for a group to maintain the games. We would like to get a group of 6-8 people to help with this. We would like to get t-shirts made to help promote our church.

Our next Christian Education meeting will be Tuesday, November 5, 2019, at 6:30 p.m.

(edited to add ... due to scheduling problems, the meeting will be held Sunday November 10th after worship)

Connie Wheeler, Secretary



St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report

September 2019

	9/1/2019	9/8/2019	9/15/2019	9/22/2019	9/29/2019	Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	\$1,375.00	\$17,440.86	\$2,374.50	\$1,652.75	\$1,985.50	\$300.00	\$25,128.61
General Fund	\$1,255.00	\$2,136.00	\$2,234.50	\$1,582.75	\$1,455.50	\$100.00	\$8,763.75
Building Fund	\$70.00	\$77.00	\$100.00	\$20.00	\$80.00	\$100.00	\$477.00
Campital Campaign				\$50.00	\$400.00	\$100.00	\$550.00
OGHS*							
NIN*							
STC*							
Christmas Fund							
Fuel Fund		\$95.00	\$40.00		\$50.00		\$185.00
Total Member Contributions	\$1,325.00	\$2,308.00	\$2,374.50	\$1,652.75	\$1,985.50	\$300.00	\$25,128.61
Other Income							
St. Andrew's Lutheran REFUND**	\$50.00						\$50.00
Couples' dartball		\$72.86					\$72.86
Kent Abel Memorial Fund Bldg Project		\$15,060.00				\$15,060.00	\$15,060.00
Total Other	\$50.00	\$15,132.86					
Total Checking Deposit	\$1,375.00	\$17,440.86	\$2,374.50	\$1,652.75	\$1,985.50	\$300.00	\$25,128.61
*OGHS = One Great Hour of Sharing NIN = Neighbors In Need STC = Strengthen The Church				**St Andrew's Lutheran REFUND, refunding an overpayment for registration for Pastor Moira's continuing education event			

St. John's United Church of Christ Treasurer's Report

September 2019

Building Fund	Deposits	\$447.00
	Interest	\$8.10
	Disbursements	\$0.00

Memorial Fund	Deposits	\$15,060.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00

Organ Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00

General Fund	Deposits	\$9,621.61
	Disbursements	(\$6,346.32)

<i>Campital Campaign</i>	Deposits	\$550.00
	Total YTD	\$3,895.00



Totals	Beginning Balance	\$198,723.77
	Deposits	\$25,128.61
	Interest	\$8.10
	Disbursements	(\$6,346.32)
	Ending Balance	\$217,514.16

General Fund	\$16,004.87
Building Fund	\$12,495.82
Memorial Fund	\$21,059.47*
Organ Fund	\$4,997.00
TOTAL	<u>\$162,957.00</u>
	\$217,514.16

YTD Membership Giving	\$73,090.70
YTD Expenses	(\$82,604.59)
Net Amount	(\$9,513.89)

*of which \$15060 is designated for building projects

Women's Guild



The Women's Guild met on Wednesday, October 2, 2019, at 1:30 p.m., with thirteen members present.

Our devotional leader was Pastor Moira Finley, who shared with us a message of *Breath Prayer*. We closed our eyes and brought to our attention our own body paying attention to the sound of own breathing. We relaxed. We could hear God speaking to us, "Be still and know that I am God." We were encouraged to think about our joys in life and being alive, being healthy, remembering all of our friends for whom we grieve their loss. We thought about the needs in our world and in our lives. We focused on the thoughts of God, who taught us, Who God is, what God does, where from we gather together in scriptures, family, worship, books, music, and more. God is our Creator. As God spoke to Moses, "I Am Who I Am. I will be what I will be." We opened our eyes and prayed the *Lord's Prayer* in unison.

The business portion of our meeting was called to order by President Roberta Lorenz. Secretary and Treasurer Reports were read and approved. There is a balance of \$9,750.53, in the general fund, and there is \$478.88 in the memorial fund.

Fall Feast to be held Sunday, October 13, 2019, was discussed. Plans are well underway [at the time of our meeting].

There was much discussion regarding replacing the basement carpet. There is much to repair on our church building. It was decided that the building tower and other repairs will come before the carpet replacement. Carpet discussion was tabled.

Many thanks to Kerri Cournoyer for the new utility cart she donated to the church, for which we have many uses. Thank you, Kerri!

Pastor Moira is checking into the Guild by Laws.

Church clean up is going to be Wednesday, October 23, this year. We will work from 1:00 to 3:00 p.m. Everyone is welcome to help.

The meeting closed by singing the *Doxology*, and we were served a delicious pumpkin dessert with cream on top, by our hostess, Jan Boman.

Our next meeting is Wednesday, November 6, 2019, at 1:30 p.m. , with Jan Boman leading devotions and Esther Meyer hosting..

Guild Secretary, Audrey Hooyman-Blake.



Reader & Greeter Schedule

The scripture passages for worship are listed in this newsletter. If you would like to have your readings emailed to you, please let Pastor Moira and Kim know. Otherwise, your readings are printed and in the hanging file, between the church's and Pastor's offices. If you cannot greet, usher, or read on your assigned date, please arrange a substitute and let Kim and Pastor Moira know as soon as possible. If you cannot find a substitute, please let Pastor Moira know. If you have questions about the schedule talk with Connie Wheeler.

November

Sunday, November 3, ~ Communion

Reader	Trudy Koon
Greeter/Usher	David & Brenda Holz
Greeter/Usher	Greggory & Arcadia Holz

Sunday, November 10, 2019

Reader	Roberta Lorenz
Greeter/Usher	Ryan & Stephanie Julius
Greeter/Usher	Duane & Carol Henke

Sunday, November 17, 2019

Reader	Devin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher	Devin Schmidt
	Wyatt Lison
Greeter/Usher	Heather & Ashley Lison

Sunday, November 24, 2019

Reader	Jan Rohloff
Greeter/Usher	Jan & Trevor Rohloff
Greeter/Usher	Mike & Connie Rohloff

December

Sunday, December 1 ~ Communion

Reader	Robin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher	Steve & Pat Schomisch
Greeter/Usher	Aron Rasmussen & Terry Rihm

Sunday, December 8

Reader	Lisa St. John
Greeter/Usher	Todd & Lisa St. John
Greeter/Usher	Tanner & Noah St. John

Sunday, December 15

Reader	Jim Rucci
Greeter/Usher	Verla & Caitlyn Pingel
Greeter/Usher	Dallas & Lisa Waterstradt

Sunday, December 22, 2019

Reader	Connie Wheeler
Greeter/Usher	Connie & Cailey Wheeler
Greeter/Usher	Mark & Kelcie Hooyman

Tuesday, December 24, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m.

Christmas Eve

Reader	Bob Menning
Greeter/Usher	Bob & Carla Menning
Greeter/Usher	John & Connie Wheeler

Sunday, December 29, 2019

Reader	Marian Zuleger
Greeter/Usher	Barry & Duane Zuleger
Greeter/Usher	Gary & Bonnie VanderLinden

Scripture Readings

Sunday November 3rd ~ All Saints Sunday & Communion

Psalm 32 & Luke 20.27-40



Sunday November 10th

2 Thessalonians 2.13-17 & Luke 19.1-10



Sunday November 17th

Psalm 98 & Isaiah 65.17-25

Sunday November 24th ~ Thanksgiving Sunday

Deuteronomy 26.1-11 & Colossians 3.12-17

Sunday December 1st ~ First Sunday of Advent (Hope) & Communion

Isaiah 2.1-5 & Romans 13.11-14

Sunday December 8th ~ Second Sunday of Advent (Peace)

Isaiah 11.1-10 & Matthew 3.1-12

Sunday December 15th ~ Third Sunday of Advent (Joy)

Children's Christmas Program Day

If you'd like some scriptures to read at home this week consider:

Isaiah 35.1-10 & James 5.7-8

Sunday December 22nd ~ Fourth Sunday of Advent (Love)

Psalm 80 & Romans 1.1-7

Tuesday December 24th ~ Christmas Eve (worship at 7pm)

Isaiah 9.2-7; Luke 1.26-56; Matthew 1.18-25

Luke 2.1-20; Matthew 2.1-12



Newsletter Information



If you have submissions, reports, announcements, articles, expressions of gratitude... , for our December Newsletter, please have it to the office by the morning of Wednesday, November 13.

In addition, if you have a meeting or other event going on, for church, it is vital that you have it on the wall calendar, in the hallway by the main office (*please use pencil; write time and event in chronological order*). Please feel free to write meetings and events as far ahead as you'd like; 2020 calendar is available. It is important that we be all on the same page. If you have questions, please feel free to speak with Kim or Pastor Moira. Thank you!

A Note About Kim...

Our secretary needs to have back surgery. This is a result of the injury she had last December which was made worse by the car accident she and Ron were involved in earlier this year. As this goes to press, she is still waiting to hear from her doctor about a surgery date (they're all waiting on the insurance company's approval). We have a plan for the time she will need to be away during and after surgery so that she can fully recover. Sally Dickinson will be working with Pastor Moira to make sure newsletters and bulletins get prepared, as well as perhaps even the 2020 annual report depending on when surgery gets scheduled. We ask your prayers for Kim who is understandably anxious about surgery, for Ron as he also needs to have knee surgery at some point (a consequence of the accident as well). Pastor Moira asks your patience if there's a typo or two in things in these coming months. You can find Kim & Ron's mailing address in an envelope on the prayer board outside the west door of the sanctuary if you'd like to send them a card.

Advent Candle Lighters

The season of preparation for Jesus' birth will soon be upon us. Pastor Moira is looking for people who would be willing to light the Advent Candles at the beginning of worship each week beginning Sunday December 1st. It could be you and your children, or parents, or cousin, or best friend, or your pew buddies, or just you by yourself. There is a sign-up sheet on a clipboard on the newsletter table in the front corner of the sanctuary. Go ahead and sign up now ~ you'll get a reminder!

Fall Feast Thank You!!

It was a busy day on Sunday October 13th with our annual fall feast. We had more than 150 people come in the first hour and a half we were open! That means there were some shortages of food, even with preparing more than we have in previous years. And there were some things beyond our control (a busy time at Sal's where they prepare our chicken resulted in some delays). But even with these challenges, it was a great success and a wonderful community time. Thank you to everyone who helped with the feast in any way ~ preparing, serving, advertising, baking, eating, cleaning up. *We couldn't have done it without you!*

November Focus of Giving ~ Turkey Fund

As we prepare to gather around the Thanksgiving table we remember that not everyone is as blessed as we are, that there are families in our area who cannot provide all the special things that a Thanksgiving dinner requires. Our Turkey Fund works with the local Salvation Army to ensure that area families have the turkey they need, allowing them to gather with family and friends and rejoice in all God's gifts. Everything you contribute to the Turkey Fund goes directly to a local Black Creek area family in need.

Our goal this year is \$1500 and we will collect through November 10th.

Plan to join us

Sunday November 3rd after worship

Italian Extravaganza

Spaghetti & fettuccini with sauces (meat on the side)

Pizzas & homemade desserts

A free will offering will be received towards the Turkey Fund

Questions? Talk with Sue Biese

Gift Bags For Our Kids

As we move through November we'll be looking forward to the children and youth bringing us the Christmas Story on Sunday December 15th during worship.

As part of that service, we will have gift bags with candy, juice, and other treats for our children and youth.

Towards the end of the month, please look for a sign-up sheet on the newsletter table in the sanctuary for items we hope you will be able to donate towards these gift bags. If you have questions, please talk with Connie Wheeler.

November 2019

How to reach Pastor Moira: phone 715-851-3080
email pastormoira73@gmail.com

Pastor's Office Hours

All are welcome at Black Creek
 Tuesdays 10 a.m. - 6 p.m.
 Wednesdays noon - 7:30 p.m.
Please call/text to make sure of times!

Sunday Schedule: 8:45 a.m. Trinity Worship

9:00 a.m. Christian Education & 10:15 a.m. Black Creek Worship

7:00 p.m. Cecil Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Key to locations: BC = St. John's U.C.C. Black Creek T = Trinity U.C.C. outside Nichols C = St. John's U.C.C. Cecil ALC = Ascension Lutheran Church Navarino					1	2 <i>Daylight Savings Time ends Set your clocks BACK one hour before bed!</i>
3 <i>SCRIP</i> All Saints Sunday 11:30a.m. BC Youth Turkey Fundraising Lunch	4	5 Cecil Potato Pancake Day Serving 11am—6pm	6 1:30 p.m. BC Women's Guild 5:30p.m. BC Budget Meeting 6:30p.m. BC Choir practice	7	8	9
10 11:30am BC Christian Education Meeting	11 Veteran's Day	12 9am ALC Food Pantry Board meeting 6:30pm BC Council meeting	13 BC Newsletter information due in office.  6:30p.m. BC Choir practice	14	15	16
17 11:30a.m. BC Confirmation Randy Miller preaches at Cecil	18	19	20 5-7p.m. ALC Food Pantry 5:30pm ALC Community Thanksgiving Dinner 6:30p.m. BC Choir practice	21 9:00a.m. C Closet work day	22	23 9-11a.m. ALC Food Pantry
Pastor Moira at a workshop in Minnesota After confirmation 11/17—evening 11/19 Please call the cell phone in an emergency						
24 Thanksgiving Sunday	25	26 Noon-3:00p.m. C Closet distribution	27 NO BC Choir	28 Happy Thanksgiving!	29	30 C Bake Sale at Doc's Harley Davidson 9am BC Sanctuary decorating

"The purpose of this congregation is to be a faith community promoting the kingdom of God through worship, teaching, and action ... get ready!"

St. John's United Church of Christ
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Wisconsin Conference UCC
www.wiucc.org

United Church of Christ
www.ucc.org



November 2019 Newsletter

GIVE
thanks
with a
GRATEFUL
heart

