

From Pastor Moira's Desk...

"We are only really in control of two moments in our lives - here and now."

from the internet probably said by lots of famous people sometime or another

Somewhat it's nearly January, the beginning of a brand new year. 2019 was full: of tremendous good, and incredible heartache; of laughter and tears; of opportunities and challenges. Maybe it's a feature of my age, but time seems to both speed up and slow down at the same time. I'm pretty sure 2019 lasted both fifteen minutes and seventy-six years at the same time. But a new year is here, and a new decade (cue all the bad jokes about 2020 vision ... you get to make three and then we'll be done, ok?). There's something beautiful, filled with tremendous hope, when the calendar is new. All the potential of the coming months lie ahead of us. We know some of what will happen - weddings, babies, graduations, parties, vacations, confirmations, and more. But a lot of what 2020 will bring is a great big unknown - a Packer's Super Bowl win & a Red Sox World Series (I'm told I'm supposed to say it that way to will it to happen), new opportunities and joy-filled challenges, new friends, renewed and strengthened relationships, opportunities to reach out to a world in need, and the heartbreak of loss, pain, and loved ones who walk on to eternal life. We have to live somewhere in the tension between all of these things, in the glorious mess of life, of things unexpected and grief-filled, and things planned and hoped for. In order to do that faithfully, and well, we have to remember that we really only ever have this very moment, the one we are breathing in right now. None of us can know what the next ten minutes will really hold, much less what tomorrow, or next August will have for us. We have to stand and rest in this moment, recognizing God's presence that has carried us to this place, is loving and caring for us in this second, and will guide us through whatever our tomorrows might bring.

I know that's a lot to ask, particularly in the world we are living in. Our world moves pretty fast. The second that Christmas is "over" the stores will have exercise equipment for all our New Year's resolutions right next to the Valentine's Day candy and gifts. There isn't a break in any of it, and before you know it we'll be doing taxes, and then it will be Easter, and then summer, and then back to school, and Thanksgiving, and then Christmas will roll around again all in the time it takes us to brew some coffee, take a breath, and blink twice. And, if that wasn't enough to make living in this moment hard, there's a lot of confusing days ahead of us as a country. Whatever your politics, these are days that demand we think about what it means to be a part of the U.S.A., who is welcome, who has worth, whose vision is the one we want to live into as a people. And it's an election year so we have ten months of non-stop political ads ahead, extra here in Wisconsin because we live in a swing state (or a battleground state some call it). Ten months of promises, boasting, name calling, and more as we consider together who we are, and who we want to be in the years ahead. (FYI, if you'd like to stop by for a chat about all this I'd love to, and we can think together about what the Gospel of Jesus asks of us in the public sphere, how it should shape our relationships with one another and our network of social care.)

So what do we do? How can we slow all that down and live in the moment? Well, we can't. We can't slow the world down, but we can slow ourselves down. We can choose how we're going to

live in our electronically connected, chaotic, fast paced world that tries to define us by what we spend, what we own, and how we look. We have to live in this world, but we can choose how we live. Last year I wrote to you about some resolutions of faith, and looking over that list today I realized they are all about choosing how to live in this world, how amidst the chaos to find time for body, mind, and spirit; to prioritize connections and love; to live as patiently and gently as we can in our fragile, hurting world. So humbly I offer you some 2020 resolutions for living in the moment, each and every one we've got.

2020 Resolutions For The Moment (in no particular order):

- ♥ Breathe - really, seriously breathe from the depths of your belly; you can't do much if you can't breath, and breath doesn't come from our chests, but way down deep in our diaphragm that rises and falls to bring us the air we need for our brains, and hearts, and bodies to be possible;
- ♥ Drink Water - no, coffee doesn't count, and neither does SunDrop; get yourself a glass and drink some water, and then do it again; much like breathing, your body can't and won't work if you don't give it what it needs and you need water; plus you'll spend a lot of time going off to the bathroom so think of all the campaign ads you won't have to hear!;
- ♥ Get Sunlight - seriously, we're really not all that different than the plants sitting in my window, the sunlight helps regulate our emotions, helps us be our best, so soak it in when you can;
- ♥ Move - no, not your house, but your body, in whatever way you can; raise your arms, or your toes, or your eyes, or your tongue; stretch some part of you (and if your body doesn't stretch, stretch your mind, that counts!);
- ♥ Eat - good food slowly at least once a week; pause and set the table with fancy dishes, or unfold that napkin and make a placemat at work, but learn to slow down enough to really taste what you're eating because it's giving your body the energy you need to do what lies ahead;
- ♥ Pray - take your life to God, the joys and struggles, the excitement and fear, the hope and grief; take it all to God for at least a minute or two each day; put it into God's hands and trust in the God who has carried you this far (further than you probably ever though you'd get);
- ♥ Connect - don't let this world isolate you; we are designed to need each other, to depend on one another; seriously, human beings weren't created to live alone, we are relational creatures who thrive when we are connected to others so call up a friend for coffee, go out to dinner with someone, watch sports with someone, form a knitting/reading/sewing/cribbage/something group with a couple other folks, put the dates on the calendar and make them as much a priority as anything else in your life;
- ♥ Love - passionately, fiercely, with everything you have; not the sweet sappy kind of love of TV and movies that doesn't ask anything of anyone, but the deep, hopeful, committed, messy love that wants the best for ourselves and for others; love when it would be easier to hate; love when you're tired and don't think you can go on; love when you're having your best day and when you're having your worst; love, and then when you think you're done and you've loved all you can, love some more, over and over and over again until it becomes who you are in the deepest part of your being.

Here's to 2020, together, in love, peace and grace, *Pastor Moira*

Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes

December 10, 2019

The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Menning with Todd St. John, 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 Gary VanderLinden and seconded by Lisa Waterstradt to accept the minutes from last month. Motion passed.

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

Pastors Report

- Conducted 3 Worship Services and 1 Baptism
- Made 6 home/hospital/hospice/counseling visits & calls

Committee Reports

- **Membership:** Nothing at this time.
- **Christian Ed:** The next meeting will be March 3, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
- **Worship:** The next meeting will be February 4, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
- **Music:** The next meeting will be February 4, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
- **House:** The handicap stall toilet in the women's bathroom needs a part and Bob will get.
- **Stewardship:** The Giving Calendar for January is ??
- **Campital Campaign/Mission Projects** - For the month of November we collected \$150.00. We have collected \$4,445.00 YTD.

Old Business:

- There are 8 louvers that need to be replaced in the steeple. The bid came in at \$48,000.
- The 2020 budget of \$109,385.00 was approved.
- Gary is still working on the land next to the parking lot that the neighbor would like to purchase. We are hoping it is settled for the annual meeting for approval.
- Safety Deposit Box was opened and contained deeds, drawings of headstones, vhs and list of inventory from 1990's. We decided to close the box but will be charged \$25 for the loss of one key.

New Business:

- Snow Days are upon us this time of the year. We will advertise on Facebook and Channel 11 if the church will be not having service. You can also text/call Pastor Moira if unsure. Please use your judgement even if we do have church service.

Prayers and Thank You's: Kim and Ron, Lisa St. John, Judy (Bob's mother)

A motion was made by Todd St. John and seconded by Lisa Waterstradt to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Next Council Meeting will be Tuesday, January 14, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Wheeler, secretary

Women's Guild

We had a fabulous time at the all church Christmas Party on Thursday December 5th. A delicious potluck was shared with all kinds of wonderful foods & many delicious desserts. We had a lovely program with Mrs. Claus, ribbon dancers, singers, a story from Mary's donkey, and lots of laughter. A free-will offering was taken to support the work of Good Shepherd Services in Seymour. Thank you to everyone who helped in any way, and particularly to Sue Biese for coordinating the program. Plan on joining us next year for all the merriment. ~ Pastor Moira

The next guild meeting is Wednesday February 5th, 2020 at 1:30pm with Sally Dickinson for devotions and hostess.

Directory Update Information Request

We are planning to publish an up-to-date church family directory in February 2020. Please let Pastor Moira know your correct contact information, including cell phones & email addresses (for office use, only). Households will be listed in one listing, so be all inclusive. Thank you.

The Big Dream Board

You've probably seen the large white board that's been installed across from the gathering room. It's for our dreams about how St. John's can serve the community—in Black Creek, in the slightly wider area including Seymour, the state, the country, and the world. This board is a place for us to write down our dreams, hopes, and ideas about how to do that. ***No idea is too strange, and there are no limits.*** Write down your dreams (sign your name if you want), and read other people's dreams. We'll see where they overlap and how many people might have the same idea about our service to the world. Then we'll see what we can do, little steps or giant leaps, to be Jesus' followers, to share his love, and to support and strengthen our community.

Annual Meeting Notice ~ Sunday January 26, 2020

St. John's UCC's annual meeting is scheduled for **Sunday, January 26, 2020**, following our worship service. Please plan to join us for the meeting and stay for our church-wide potluck lunch. As Kim is out recovering from surgery, we need your reports in the office as soon as possible, but definitely no later than Tuesday January 7th.

In addition to approving the 2020 congregational budget, the Council will be bringing several items to the congregation for their approval:

- Repair of the louvers on the steeple
- Sale of a small strip of land on the east side of the black top parking lot to the owner of the neighboring home on Burdick St. (pending a revised proposal from the property owner, and the Council's approval at their January meeting);
- Election of new Council members - two positions are up for election; pending congregational approval Connie Wheeler has agreed to serve a second term and Dallas Waterstradt has agreed to serve a first term; if you are interested in serving (now or in the future), please talk with Bob Menning
- Changing communion servers from members of the Council to the ushers/greeters of the day

More information about all of these items will be available in the annual reports which will be ready by Sunday January 12th. In addition, the Council invites you to listening sessions on Sunday January 12th and Sunday January 19th in the Gathering Room following worship. Members of the Council will be available to answer questions you may have about any of these items for discussion.

Special Worship Guest ~ Richard Bruxvoort Colligan Sunday February 23, 2020

Richard is a traveling psalmist, writing songs for the church many (most) of which are based in the ancient songs of the scriptures, the psalms.

Richard will bring us songs, scriptures, and some bad jokes (he loves a pun, the more groan-inducing the better), and help us prepare for Lent.

He will be in worship at all three churches at the usual times.

You can learn more about Richard, and hear some of his music on his websites:

<https://www.worldmaking.net/>

<https://www.psalmimmersion.com/>

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

November 2019

	11/3/19	11/10/19	11/17/19	11/24/19		Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	1252.00	4876.50	1775.00	2021.50		300.00	10225.00
General Fund	1037.00	3234.50	1514.00	1951.50		100.00	7837.00
Building Fund	45.00	163.00	11.00	70.00		100.00	389.00
Campital Campaign			50.00			100.00	150.00
OGHS*							0.00
NIN*							0.00
STC*							0.00
Christmas Fund							0.00
Fuel Fund		125.00					125.00
Total Member Contributions	1082.00	3522.50	1575.00	2021.50	0.00	300.00	
Other Income							
Turkey Fund	170.00	1354.00	200.00				1724.00
Total Other	170.00	1354.00	200.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	
Total Checking Deposit	1252.00	4876.50	1775.00	2021.50	0.00	300.00	

*OGHS = One Great Hour of Sharing

NIN = Neighbors In Need

STC = Strengthen The Church

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

November 2019

Building Fund	Deposits	\$389.00
	Interest	\$8.10
	Disbursements	\$0.00



Memorial Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00

Organ Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00

General Fund	Deposits	\$9836.00
	Disbursements	(\$9,984.59)

<i>Campital Campaign</i>	Deposits	\$150.00
	Total YTD	\$4,445.00

Totals	Beginning Balance	\$214,760.52
	Deposits	\$10,225.00
	Interest	\$8.10
	Disbursements	(\$9,984.59)
	Ending Balance	\$215,009.03

General Fund	\$12,832.74
Building Fund	\$13,162.82
Memorial Fund	\$21,059.47*
Organ Fund	\$4,997.00
Parsonage Fund	<u>\$162,957.00</u>
TOTAL	\$215,009.03

YTD Membership Giving	\$87,907.70
YTD Expenses	(\$100,043.18)
Net Amount	(\$12,135.48)

*of which \$15,060 is designated for building projects

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 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 the office 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, please speak with Connie Wheeler.

Sunday, January 5, 2020 ~ Communion

Reader	Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeter/Usher	Vi Brown-Luebke
	Darwin Ethington
Greeter/Usher	Mike & Sally Dickenson

Sunday, January 12, 2020

Pastor Moira away; Randy Miller preaches

Reader	Bob Menning
Greeter/Usher	Bob & Carla Menning
Greeter/Usher	Gary & Carla Lathrop

Sunday, January 19, 2020

Reader	Sue Biese
Greeter/Usher	Joe & Sue Biese
Greeter/Usher	Wes & Angie Biese

Sunday, January 26, 2020 ~

Annual Meeting Day

Reader	Trudy Koon
Greeter/Usher	Trudy Koon
	Marian Goodwin
Greeter/Usher	Duane & Carol Henke

Sunday February 2, 2020 ~ Communion

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

Sunday February 9, 2020

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

Sunday February 16, 2020

Reader	Devin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher	Devin Schmidt
	Barry Zuleger
Greeter/Usher	Dallas & Lisa Waterstradt

Sunday February 23, 2020

*Special guest musician
Richard Bruxvoort Colligan*

Reader	Roberta Lorenz
Greeter/Usher	Gene & Audrey Blake
Greeter/Usher	Mark Hooyman
	Cailey Wheeler

Wednesday February 26, 2020 ~

Ash Wednesday, 7pm

Reader	Bob Menning
Greeter/Usher	Bob & Carla Menning
Greeter/Usher	Keith Kruse
	Gary VanderLinden

Scripture Readings

Sunday January 5, 2020 ~ Second Sunday of Christmas

Communion Sunday

Jeremiah 31.1-14 & Matthew 2.1-15

Sunday January 12, 2020 ~ Baptism of Jesus

Pastor Moira on study leave; Randy Miller preaches

Isaiah 42.1-9 & Matthew 3.13-17

Sunday January 19, 2020 ~ Second Sunday of Epiphany

Acts 10.34-43 & 1 Corinthians 1.1-9

Sunday January 26, 2020 ~ Third Sunday of Epiphany

Annual Meeting Sunday & Potluck

Psalm 27 & Matthew 4.12-23

Sunday February 2, 2020 ~ Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

Communion Sunday

Micah 6.1-8 & Matthew 5.1-16

Sunday February 9, 2020 ~ Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

Psalm 112 & Isaiah 58.1-12

Sunday February 16, 2020 ~ Sixth Sunday of Epiphany

Deuteronomy 30.15-20 & Matthew 5.38-48

Sunday February 23, 2020 ~ Transfiguration Sunday

Special guest musician Richard Bruxvoort Colligan will join us to sing, think about the psalms, tell a few jokes, and get ready for the beginning of Lent.

Wednesday February 26, 2020 ~ Ash Wednesday

Communion & receiving of ashes

2 Corinthians 5.20-6.10 & Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

Newsletter Information

If you have submissions, reports, announcements, articles, expressions of gratitude... , for our February 2020 Newsletter, please have it to the office by the morning of Wednesday, January 22, 2020. In addition, if you have a meeting or other event going on, for church, it is important 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 can. To coordinate three churches we have to all know what's going on. If you have questions, please talk with Pastor Moira.

A Note About Kim...

Kim had surgery on her back on November 29th and is recovering well at home. She has had her stitches out, is able to get around with the help of a walker, and the doctor is pleased with how things are going. There's still a long road ahead, but your prayers and love surrounding her are surely helping. While she is away, Sally Dickinson and Lisa Raaths are working with Pastor Moira to make sure that bulletins, newsletters, annual reports, and more are prepared. Your patience and grace is much appreciated. If you'd like to send a card, their address is:

Kim & Ron Hakenjos
W5632 Schnabl Rd.
Black Creek, WI 54106

January Focus For Giving ~ Diapers & Hygiene Products

It's the beginning of a new year, and baby new year needs diapers, but diapers are expensive. As we start this year we think of those families that struggle to pay for this essential item for their children. In addition, we think about starting this year off cleanly and the kinds of hygiene products that families in need may have difficulty obtaining. Public assistance funds help with food, but do not allow you to purchase items like shampoo, body soap, laundry or dish soap, deodorant, or feminine hygiene products. During this month we will collect both items and cash to purchase these items and donations will go to area women's shelters and food pantries to provide to their clients.

Please bring your items to the tables at the front of the sanctuary & monetary donations can be placed in the church box on the table, or in the offering plate. Questions? Talk with Pastor Moira

January 2020

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

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

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	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Happy New Year NO Choir BC	2	3	4
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						
5 BC Communion SCRIP order 11:30am BC Confirmation	6	7	8 6:30pm BC Choir practice	9 5:30pm T Council meeting	10	11
Pastor Moira on study leave to St. Louis (until 1/17), Randy Miller on call						
12 Randy Miller preaches 11:30am BC Listening session before annual meeting C Consistory	13	14 6:30pm BC Council meeting	15 5-7pm ALC Food pantry distribution 6:30pm BC Choir practice	16	17	18 9-11am ALC Food pantry distribution
Pastor Moira on study leave to St. Louis (until 1/17), Randy Miller on call						
19 11:30am BC Confirmation 11:30am BC Listening session before annual meeting	20	21 6:30pm BC Parish Relations meeting	22 6:30pm BC Choir practice	23 9am C Closet work day	24	25
26 11:15am BC Annual meeting after worship & then potluck C Annual meeting after worship	27	28 Noon-3pm C Closet distribution	29 6:30pm BC Choir practice	30	31	

"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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United Church of Christ
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