

From Pastor Moira's Desk... If you've ever looked closely at my business card you'll see that it says "Professional Optimist". I sincerely believe that's part of my job ~ to hold out hope in the midst of the uncertainty of our lives. My optimism isn't naïve, and unrealistic. Instead it is deeply rooted in my knowledge that God can and does see us through when we are not strong enough to stand on our own; that God sends signs and signals to us that we are not ever alone; and that God comes to us in folks who reach out to us offering comfort, love, and hotdishes when we need them most. It's taken quite a lot of work to become this way, a lot of training to be able to look honestly at the challenges we face ~ as individuals, and communities, and a country, and the world ~ and see the potential for goodness, for hope, for change, for courage that will help us transform lives, and institutions. Some days it's pretty easy to hold on to hope, and other days I have to remind myself (sometimes minute by minute) that there is good in this world. Mostly what it takes, though, is a decision every morning to try and see the world through the eyes of love; to decide that the world is a beautiful place despite its flaws; to resolve that people are good and full of potential even in their most challenging moments.

We have to choose with our thoughts, and words, and actions to see the world the way that God sees it, to put on the glasses of love and let them color everything we do.

These days it might be even more important than ever to see the world with love. We're in the midst of the impeachment of the President, and a presidential election year, and the new coronavirus seems to be spreading uncontrolled, and climate change, and it's still winter, and Australia is on fire, and there was flooding in Indonesia, and protests in Lebanon, and war in Syria, and You know what I'm talking about. The news screams at us of hatred, division, and violence, selling us fear just as easily as they sell us laundry soap. But, my friends, our faith in Jesus demands that we live differently. We need to know what's going on in the world. We need to be informed citizens, of our communities, and our state, and our country, and the world. We need to do something (many things) to bring the planet back from the brink of destruction, to help people who are struggling against injustice and violence, to stand with all who seek a better life, a more just and humane distribution of resources. BUT at the same time we cannot give in to the fear, to the hatred, to the nastiness and bitterness. We can choose to put on the glasses of love, to look for good with every fiber of our being, to seek it out, to promote it, to talk about it, to celebrate it no matter how small it might seem in the face of overwhelming odds. You see, my friends, we are people who follow someone who didn't listen to the odds, who gathered together a rag-tag group of fishermen, and tax collectors, and women no one thought had any value and together they changed the world. They didn't have an army, some conquering force that would dominate those who disagreed with them. Instead, they had the incredible love of God that defies all logic. They had the love of God that challenged injustice without ignoring the humanity of those doing the oppressing. They had the love of God that reaches into the depths of people's fears and meets them there confident that their fear can be transformed. In these days the world is waiting for us to bring that same love, to BE that same love in the world, to find hope, to speak grace, to work for peace, and to live a love that remembers we are all, absolutely all of us, children of God, created in God's very image, and that we need each other. May this month, and indeed all our days, see us following in Jesus' footsteps, bringing the love; the real, tough, fierce, passionate, creative, compassionate, gentle, vulnerable, courageous love the world so desperately needs. In love, peace and grace, *Pastor Moira*



Congregational Meeting ~ Sunday March 15th

At the Annual Meeting on Sunday January 26th, the congregation heard from the Council about the need to make repairs to the steeple. The Council is receiving estimates to replace the wooden louvers with heavy gauge aluminum and metal flashing. Because those estimates were not available by the time of the January meeting, the Council asked for a special congregational meeting to be held on Sunday March 15th immediately after worship to evaluate and vote on the repairs (including sources for funding from the building and memorial funds as well as the endowment fund and funds from the sale of the parsonage). Pictures of the needed repairs are available in the Gathering Room. If you have questions, please talk with members of the Council.

Ash Wednesday

Wednesday February 26th

In prayer, and silence, and scripture we will think about what we need to receive from God this year, and what we can return to the world during the season of Lent. Join us for worship with communion and the receiving of ashes.

**Worship at Trinity at 5pm
and at Black Creek at 7pm**

Exploring The Beatitudes

Wednesday Lenten Worship

Looking at Matthew 5.1-16 we will think about what Jesus' words from the Sermon on the Mount mean for us today.

Dinner at 5:30pm

Worship at 6:15pm

(Choir practice at 7pm)

Wednesdays March 4th through April 1st

Women's Guild Minutes

The All-Church Christmas Party was held on Thursday December 4, 2019 at 6:30p.m.

Everyone was invited to a potluck dinner and everything was delicious.

The program was under the direction of Sue Biese, Ila Mae Jens, Vi Brown-Luebke, Connie Rohloff, and Jan Rohloff. The evening was started with a welcome by Trudy Koon with "It Was The Night Before Christmas". A beautiful song, "Silent Night" was shared by Cailey Wheeler and friend Jamie which was very nicely done. The offering was taken by Trudy and given to Good Shepherd with beautiful Christmas songs played by Jan Boman. Robin Schmidt read a poem "Just A Little Donkey" with help from Ethan Biese. It was very cute. Then Vi Brown-Luebke as Mrs Claus shared an interesting story. There was a skit presented by Randy Miller, Cailey, Jamie, Connie R, Connie W., Sue, Bonnie, Gary & Jordan. They did a great job of entertaining with only a few minutes of practice.

We thank all so much who lovingly volunteered. It was a super program which brought the Christmas message of hope, peace, joy, and love to all. We closed with a closing prayer from Connie Rohloff and the Lord's prayer in unison.

There will not be a January meeting. We will gather again on Wednesday February 5th, 2020 at 1:30pm with Sally Dickinson for devotions and hostess. Come join us & God bless all.

Secretary Audrey Hooyman-Blake

Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes

January 14, 2020

The meeting was called to order by President, Bob Menning with Pat Schomisch, Todd St. John, Gary VanderLinden, Lisa Waterstradt, and Connie Wheeler present.

The meeting was opened with a prayer from Bob Menning.

A motion was made by Pat Schomisch and seconded by Todd St. John to accept the minutes from last month. Motion passed.

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

Pastors Report

- Conducted 6 Worship Services, including Christmas Eve and Good Shepherd
- Conducted 1 Funeral
- Made 12 home/hospital/hospice/counseling visits

Committee Reports

- **Membership:** Nothing to report at this time.
- **Christian Ed:** Next meeting will be held on March 3, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
- **Worship:** Next meeting will be held on February 25, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
- **Music:** Next meeting will be held on February 25, 2020 at 6:30 pm.
- **House:** We need to get all contact information from Aron R.
- **Stewardship:** Collecting diapers, and baby items for January.
- **Campital Campaign/Mission Projects** - For the month of December we collected \$315.00. We have collected \$4,760.00 YTD.

Old Business:

- There was a congregational meeting on January 12 with a few questions asked.
- We are getting another quote for the steeple repair.
- The land next to the parking lot is 120' deep and approximately 12' wide. We are waiting for the survey to be done by the owner. It was approved to have this discussion at the annual meeting.

Council Minutes continue on next page — — ->

Council Meeting minutes continued from previous page

New Business:

- The discussion of serving communion by the ushers/greeters will be at the annual meeting. The congregation will be told that if they don't feel comfortable to serve they will need to let Connie Wheeler know so she doesn't put them in for that week.
- We are in need of a new large Christmas tree. The one we just took down broke and bent the pole. Bob is looking at a company and we will discuss at another month since we have some time.
- We are looking into changing the offering envelopes, Gary will take care of it. We will be taking Missions off, adding Endowment, and removing the wording Evangelical and Reformed.
- Looking ahead to 2021, this will be our 150th anniversary. We will need to have a picture directory done in October 2020.

Prayers and Thank You's:

The family and friends of LeRoy (Mike) Minlschmidt, Lindsey, Kim and Ron, Kim Leech (Pat's niece)

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

Next Council Meeting will be Tuesday, February 11, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Wheeler, secretary

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.

Communion Servers

At the congregational annual meeting, the Council announced a change to who will be serving communion. Rather than members of the Council, the assigned ushers and greeters for the day will be serving.

A list of instructions for communion servers can be found in the folder on the bulletin board in the gathering room, and in the Annual Report packet.

We understand that, for a variety of reasons, some folks may not feel comfortable serving. If you do not wish to serve communion, please let Connie Wheeler know and she will make sure that you are not on the schedule for a communion Sunday.

If you have any questions, please talk with Pastor Moira or a member of the Council.

A Note About our secretary Kim...

Kim is recovering from her surgery and has been able to begin physical therapy, although she still has considerable pain in her foot and leg. Ron has been tremendous through all this, though it is taking its toll on him physically as well. There is still a long road for recovery, but your prayers and love surrounding her and Ron are much appreciated. While she is away, Sally Dickinson and Lisa Raaths are working with Pastor Moira to make sure that bulletins, newsletters, and more are prepared. All the typos are Pastor Moira's! 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

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.psalmmersion.com/>

St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report December 2019

	12/8/2019	12/15/2019	12/22/2019	12/25/2019	12/29/2019	Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	4149.50	2359.25	2493.00	1719.00	2724.75	600.00	14045.50
General Fund	3952.50	2304.25	2037.00	1699.00	2704.75	350.00	13047.50
Building Fund	72.00		186.00	20.00	20.00	150.00	448.00
Campital Campaign	55.00	30.00	130.00			100.00	315.00
OGHS*							0.00
NIN*							0.00
STC*							0.00
Christmas Fund	70.00	25.00	140.00				235.00
Fuel Fund							
Total Member Contributions	4149.50	2359.25	2493.00	1719.00	2724.75	600.00	
Other Income							
Total Other							
Total Checking Deposit	4149.50	2359.25	2493.00	1719.00	2724.75	600.00	
*OGHS = One Great Hour of Sharing NIN = Neighbors In Need STC = Strengthen The Church							

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

December 2019

Building Fund	Deposits	\$448.00
	Interest	\$8.37
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Memorial Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Organ Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
General Fund	Deposits	\$13,597.50
	Disbursements	(\$13,543.16)
<i>Campital Campaign</i>	Deposits	\$315.00
	Total YTD	\$4,760.00



Totals	Beginning Balance	\$215,309.03
	Deposits	\$14,045.50
	Interest	\$8.37
	Disbursements	(\$13,543.16)
	Ending Balance	\$215,819.74

General Fund	\$13,195.45
Building Fund	\$13,610.82
Memorial Fund	\$21,059.47*
Organ Fund	\$4,997.00
Parsonage Fund	<u>\$162,957.00</u>
TOTAL	\$215,819.74

YTD Membership Giving	\$101,488.20
YTD Expenses	(\$109,402.65)
Net Amount	(\$7,914.45)

*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 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

Sunday March 1, 2020 ~ Communion

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

Sunday March 8, 2020

Reader Randy Miller
Greeter/Usher Randy Miller &
Steve Hanson
Greeter/Usher Ryan & Stephanie Julius

Sunday March 15, 2020

Reader Connie Wheeler
Greeter/Usher Connie Wheeler &
Hollie Wheeler
Greeter/Usher Verla Pingel &
Kimberly Stevens

Sunday March 22, 2020

Reader Robin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher David & Brenda Holz
Greeter/Usher Gregory & Arcadia Holz

Sunday March 29, 2020

Reader Jim Rucci
Greeter/Usher Jim Rucci &
Brandon Rohloff
Greeter/Usher Steve Hanson &
Keegan Hooyman

Scripture Readings

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

Sunday March 1, 2020 ~ First Sunday of Lent

Communion Sunday

Psalm 32 & Matthew 4.1-11

Sunday March 8, 2020 ~ Second Sunday of Lent

Psalm 121 & Genesis 12.1-9

Sunday March 15, 2020 ~ Third Sunday of Lent

Psalm 95 & John 4.5-42

Sunday March 22, 2020 ~ Fourth Sunday of Lent

Pastor Moira on vacation; Randy Miller preaches

Psalm 23 & John 9.1-41

Sunday March 29, 2020 ~ Fifth Sunday of Lent

Psalm 130 & John 11.1-45

Focus For Giving

January

Diapers & Hygiene Products

You were incredible & generous with your donations for our January collection of diapers & hygiene products. Two tables were filled to overflowing at the front of the sanctuary (see pictures). Items were donated to Harbor House in Appleton, Black Creek Salvation Army, and Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry (that Trinity helps run). Thank you for your faithfulness as we reached out to help those in need. Now we turn to food ...



February – Food Pantry

According to the most recent research*, one in seven families in the United States suffers from what is called 'food insecurity' meaning that they aren't entirely sure where their next meal will be coming from. Too many children go to school without enough food, and too many others have to make tough choices between paying for their prescriptions or buying food. Your generous donations to area food pantries will help provide support to families that are struggling. You can donate non-perishable food items. If it's something you would eat, it's something another family would be grateful to have. You can also make cash donations so food pantry volunteers can shop for items they need most. * Source: Coleman-Jensen, A., Gregory, C., & Singh, A. "Household Food Security in the United States in 2013." USDA Economic Research Service, 2014.



February 2020

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
<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> 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 </div>						1
2 T Annual meeting BC Communion SCRIP	3	4 9am Food Pantry Board ALC	5 1:30pm BC Ladies Guild 6:30pm BC Choir practice	6	7	8
9 11:30am BC Confirmation 1:30pm Good Shepherd C Consistory	10	11 6:30pm BC Council meeting	12 9am T New Hope Circle NO Choir practice	13 5:30pm T Council meeting	14 	15
16 11:30am BC Confirmation <i>3pm Installation at Fremont UCC</i>	17	18 Shared Ministry Meeting, location & time TBA	19 5-7pm ALC Food Pantry distribution 6:30pm BC Choir practice	20 9am C Closet work day	21	22 9-11am ALC Food Pantry distribution
23 Guest Musician Richard Bruxvoort Colligan at all three churches	24	25 Noon-3pm C Closet distribution 6:30pm BC Worship & Music Committees	26 Ash Wednesday Worship 5pm Trinity 7pm Black Creek <i>Choir practice after worship at BC</i>	27	28	29 Tomorrow... • First Sunday of Lent • Communion at BC • SCRIP • Confirmation class

“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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February 2020 Newsletter

