

From Pastor Moira's Desk... As I write this, it's Ash Wednesday, the beginning of the Lenten Season. I'm thinking of kinds of traditions that surround this season ~ paczkis, pancakes, beads, parades, parties, giving something up, taking something on, self-denial, fasting, prayer, and worship. Mostly though I'm thinking about those ashes we will use in worship tonight. They're made by burning palms from Palm Sunday, connecting this Lent to last year's celebration of Jesus' entry into Jerusalem. In my little container of ashes there are probably remnants of palms from 2002 when I started parish ministry, and I'd love to think that in a church somewhere there are a few ashes hanging around from the earliest days of the church, connecting what we do this Lent with the very first remembrances of Jesus' life and ministry, death and resurrection. It's usually called the "imposition" of ashes and the words used are something like "to ashes and dust to dust" a reminder of our mortality, of how fragile our lives are, and how brief our time on this earth is. I don't know that I particularly care for either of those things. Imposition is a burden, an extra weight we have to carry, and no one I know needs any more of that. The world we are living in is a lot to carry. If you add that to the worries and struggles of our lives, our families, our friends, our congregations, and our communities we don't need to impose more things on people. And I'm not sure we really need to be reminded of our mortality and how fragile our lives are. Unless you've been living in a bubble under a rock with blinders on, you already know how fragile life is, how much of our lives hangs on an instant when an accident, a misstep, a breath can change everything. So what if, instead of thinking of those ashes and the season of Lent as a burden, something to weigh us down and make us feel dusty and insignificant, we thought of them as an opportunity to remember our connection to the God who created us and loves us? What if we heard, in our hearts and souls, the words I'll say when I offer folks ashes at worship ... "remember, you came from God and you will return to God"? What if we saw this season of Lent as an opportunity to open our hearts, and our minds, and our lives to all that God is doing in the world, in us, and through us? What if this Lent ~ in the midst of all that challenges us as individuals, communities, a country, and the world ~ we decided to be more, more loving, more hopeful, more gracious, more giving, more generous, more kind, more caring, more everything? We would have to sit down and think, and pray about where we could offer our hearts, our minds, our hands, our resources, and our talents to a world in need. And even before that, we would have to sit down and decide that we wanted to, that we wanted to be a part of God's work of love in the world. These times ~ both in the life of the church with Lent and in the life of the world with the constant barrage of negativity, bitterness, and fear ~ can either isolate us, or invite us to open up to the thousand different ways God needs us (yes us, yes you) to be living in the world. Underneath the snow that covers the ground, there are flowers waiting to burst through, reminding us that life and love are the strongest forces in the world. So too, the season of Lent nurtures in us a promise that cannot be locked away in a tomb, a grace that can endure all things and emerge tender and kind, and a love that is stronger than even the forces of death. I pray that we might embrace all that this season in the church, and in the world, offers to us and asks of us that we might come to Easter, and to Spring with newness of life, with a hope that cannot be destroyed, with a faith that can move mountains, and with a knowledge that through it all we go together as God's people. 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.

Break The Silence Sunday ~ April 26th

In the United States, every 73 seconds someone is sexually assaulted. The survivors of those assaults are our friends, neighbors, colleagues, and members of our congregation. They need us to help them speak out, to create a place where they can share their stories without fear, and without judgement. In worship we will acknowledge the painful reality of rape and sexual violence. We will hear stories of survivors, trusting in the good news of God's love, and we will commit ourselves to being a listening people, a people dedicated to changing the reality of violence in the world. This service may be difficult and challenging. Some parents may not want their young children to be present, and survivors themselves may not be ready to attend this year. Please take time to prepare yourself. Ask God for the strength to open your heart and mind that we might support all the survivor who are a part of our church, our community, and our world. Questions or concerns? Please talk with Pastor Moira



Easter Flowers For The Sanctuary

To celebrate Jesus' resurrection we would love to beautify our sanctuary with flowers and plants on Easter Sunday.

Both Kailhofer's in Seymour (920-833-2321) and Black Creek Garden & Gifts (920-984-3494) will have a variety of lilies & other plants available, but you need to call early to get the best choice.

Both greenhouses must have your order by Friday April 3rd.

For your dedication to be included in the Easter Sunday bulletin, your information must be received by Sunday April 5th.

You can return the form enclosed in this newsletter to the offering plate or the box by the office. You can also email Pastor Moira with your dedication.

Additional forms are available at church, on the newsletter table in the front right corner of the sanctuary.

Questions? Talk with Carol Schmidt

From Kim Hakenjos...

My friends with St. John's United Church of Christ:

Oh, this is a tough letter to compose ~ not just for physical reasons, but for emotional and financial reasons too. I LOVED my job working with and for you. It was a real ministry for me ~ I felt called by God to serve Him there!



I want you to know I am [sic] very thankful that you have been generous, gracious, understanding, and most loving and prayerful for Ron and me, for quite some time. THANK you! We sincerely ask you to continue to pray for us...we genuinely need God's healing touch.

We welcome you into our lives...we are neighbors and fellow journeyers as we walk with Jesus in His plans and purposes for our lives. We are better equipped to work together and alongside one another than we are alone (Ecclesiastes 4:9). God brought us together for good reason, and that purpose hasn't ended just because my position has.

The prophet Jeremiah wonderfully declares "For I know the thoughts and plans that I have for you, says the LORD, thoughts and plans for welfare and peace and not for evil, to give you hope in your final outcome" (Jeremiah 29:11 AMP)! It is hard to sense God's peace and plans when the future is unclear and filled with anticipated struggles, but trusting Jesus and seeking His help is the best advice we can give ourselves and our friends as we all journey in the great adventure we call life.

My back surgery has taken a lot longer to recover from than anyone of us could have known it would take. As I was about to begin physical therapy, a harsh infection burst one of my surgical incisions open to drain bacteria-infested fluids. Once I am able to go to PT and gain strength and vigor back, Ron and I need to have surgeries, one is for Ron's right knee (from the car accident we were in last May). Then, once I am released by my back surgeon, I need to have shoulder surgery (due to the same car accident). The road of recovery is soooooo... long and difficult, but we are sure by God's grace we'll get past all of this someday.

Without the income from St. John's, things will be significantly more challenging for us financially, but with prayers from His faithful followers and by God's grace, we will be proof that God is still actively working on behalf of all of His children!

Please don't be strangers...we warmly welcome your visits, calls, cards...as we move forward together and individually! Pastor has our address and phone number, so please feel free to ask her for our contact information. As I remember you in my prayers, I thank God for you. Don't be strangers now!

With much love,
Kim & Ron

Women's Guild Minutes

The Women's Guild met on Wednesday February 5, 2020 at 1:30pm with 15 members present. Our devotional leader was Sally Dickinson sharing the history of Valentine's Day from the 14 hundreds. In 1840 a mother made beautiful cards of lace, ribbons, and pictures and sent them to many people. In the 1900s cards were printed by a printing company with beautiful pictures and loving messages. In about 1928 the Hallmark cards became famous and still are. Valentine's Day cards are the second largest day of cards purchased with Christmas cards the largest day. Sally placed beautiful red Valentine's bags on the table with love tucked inside. She shared a poem of love and each time she said "love" we passed our bag to the right. It was fun and lots of mixed up bags were shared. Love isn't love unless you give it back. As we did this, we also signed Valentine's cards to our shut-ins and mailed out our love and wishes. The business meeting was called to order by president Roberta Lorenz. The secretary and treasurer's reports were read and approved. There is a balance of \$10,826.72 in the general fund and \$487.90 in the memorial fund. The president read a thank you from Good Shepherd Services. Jan Rohloff shared a topic on children with cancer and loss of hair and around 550 volunteers crocheting yarn wigs for the children which are just beautiful for these special children. A suggestion of a new banner for a special holiday was made as some of ours are in bad condition. A discussion on a new Christmas tree was had because our tree has suffered a broken rod. There was discussion about new decorations as well. The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer in unison. We sang the doxology and were served beautiful, delicious colored Valentine's day cup cakes by our hostess, Sally Dickinson.

Our next meeting will be on Wednesday March 4, 2020 at 1:30pm with Vi Brown-Luebke with devotions & hostess. Come and join us.

Secretary Audrey Hooyman-Blake

Good Shepherd Services News

January 15, 2020

Originally 15 churches helped start the home in 1978 and we had two meetings a year.

Good Shepherd wants to decrease the power of the churches to make decisions at the facility. All delegates will need to be elected by their churches every two years. There will be a meeting on April 28, 2020 to vote on this.

Respectfully submitted

Judy Samson & Roberta Lorenz

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

Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes

February 11, 2020

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

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

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

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

Pastors Report

- Conducted 4 Worship Services and 1 Funeral Service
- Attended 2 church meetings - Parish Relations and Woman's Guild
- Made 7 home/hospital/hospice/counseling visits

Committee Reports

- **Membership:** Gary will get the past confirmation students on the list to receive offering envelopes.
- **Christian Ed:** The next meeting will be March 3 at 6:30 pm.
- **Worship:** The next meeting will be February 25 at 6:30 pm.
- **Music:** The next meeting will be February 25 at 6:30 pm.
- **House:** Van's will be coming on February 19 to check fire extinguishers. Pat will meet with them.
- **Stewardship:** For the month of February we will be collecting for the Food Pantry.

Old Business:

- We are still waiting for some additional quotes for the steeple repair.
- The BMO branch in Black Creek will be closing in April. We proposed that we have 3 signers on the account. They will be Bob Menning, Pat Schomisch and Dallas Waterstradt. Motion was made by Connie Wheeler and seconded by Todd St. John.

Council Minutes continue on next page — — ->

Council Meeting minutes continued from previous page

- The Christmas tree was broken after this holiday so we looked into purchasing a new one. We looked at Balsam Hill website and there is a sale going on so we will be purchasing a 10 foot pre lit tree for around \$999 with the sale. Motion made by Connie Wheeler and seconded by Dallas Waterstradt.

New Business:

- There was discussion of the future of the church secretary position.
- We appointed our new council member, Dallas Waterstradt, as the Treasurer. All other members will stay in the same position. Approved by vote.

Prayers and Thank You's:

- We would like to THANK Lisa Waterstradt for her 6 years on the church council. You did an amazing job!!
- Prayers for Lindsey, Darwin and Karen Zuleger, the Arnold family, Kim Leech (Pat's niece), and David Holz

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

Next Council Meeting will be on March 10, 2020 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully submitted, Connie Wheeler, secretary

Coming Soon
Youth Service on Sunday April 19th
Our youth will lead worship,
and share stories of the work we do in the world.
Look for more information in the April newsletter.
Questions? Want to help?
Talk with Sue Biese

Holy Week & Easter

Palm & Passion Sunday ~ April 5th

We will think about Jesus' entry into Jerusalem
and the week that awaits him.

Worship at the usual times at all three locations.



Maundy Thursday ~ April 9th ~ Black Creek at 7pm

Worship with communion as we think about the last earthly meal
Jesus shared with his disciples

Holy Friday ~ April 10th ~ Trinity at 7pm

Worship to remember Jesus' arrest, trial, and crucifixion
and wait patiently for the miracle of the resurrection.



Holy Saturday ~ April 11th ~ Cecil Dinner at 4pm & Worship at 5pm

Join us as we gather for Easter worship
to remember that God's miracle is real for us
in every hour of our lives.

Easter Sunday ~ April 12th

Trinity

worship at 7:45am and breakfast after

Black Creek

breakfast at 8:30am and worship at 10:15am

Celebrate the good news that the stone is rolled away,
the tomb is empty, and love has the final word.

*For all three Easter meals there will be sign-up sheets
about what you can bring and how you can help! Stay tuned!*

**St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report
January 2020**

	1/5/2020	1/12/2020	1/19/2020	1/26/2020		Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	1743.00	487.00	1866.00	7362.50		300.00	11758.50
General Fund	1743.00	486.00	1856.00	2906.50		150.00	7141.50
Building Fund		1.00	10.00	456.00		150.00	617.00
Campital Campaign							
OGHS*							
NIN*							
STC*							
Christmas Fund							
Fuel Fund							
Total Member Contributions	1743.00	487.00	1866.00	3362.50		300.00	
Other Income							
Charitable trust fund				4000.00			4000.00
Total Other				4000.00			
Total Checking Deposit	1743.00	487.00	1866.00	7362.50			
*OGHS = One Great Hour of Sharing							
NIN = Neighbors In Need							
STC = Strengthen The Church							

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

January 2020

Building Fund	Deposits	\$617.00
	Interest	\$8.77
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Memorial Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Organ Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
General Fund	Deposits	\$11,141.50
	Disbursements	(\$9,143.36)



Totals	Beginning Balance	\$215,819.74
	Deposits	\$11,758.50
	Interest	\$8.77
	Disbursements	(\$9,143.36)
	Ending Balance	\$218,443.65

General Fund	\$15,202.36
Building Fund	\$14,227.82
Memorial Fund	\$21,059.47*
Organ Fund	\$4,997.00
Parsonage Fund	<u>\$162,957.00</u>
TOTAL	\$218,443.65

YTD Membership Giving	\$11,758.50
YTD Expenses	(\$9,143.36)
Net Amount	\$2,615.14

*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 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 &
Kelly 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

Sunday April 5, 2020 ~ Communion

Palm & Passion Sunday

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

Thursday April 9, 2020 ~ Maundy Thursday

Reader Trudy Koon
Greeter/Usher Trudy Kuhn & Ester Meyer
Greeter/Usher Barry Zuleger & Keith Kruse

Sunday April 12, 2020 ~ Communion

Easter Sunday

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

Sunday April 19, 2020 ~ Youth Service

All to be announced

Sunday April 26, 2020

Break The Silence Sunday

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

Sunday May 3, 2020 ~ Communion

Confirmation Sunday

Reader Robin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher Steve & Pat Schomisch
Greeter/Usher Mike & Sally Dickinson

Scripture Readings



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

Sunday April 5, 2020 ~ Palm & Passion Sunday

Communion Sunday

Matthew 21.1-17 & Matthew 26.6-35

Thursday April 9, 2020 ~ Maundy Thursday

Worship with communion at Black Creek at 7pm

Exodus 12.1-4, 11-14 & John 13.1-7, 31-35

Friday April 10, 2020 ~ Holy Friday

Worship at Trinity at 7pm

Psalm 22 & John 18.1-19.42

Saturday April 11th & Sunday April 12th ~ Celebrating Easter

Look for the article about worship times in this newsletter!

Acts 10.34-43 & Matthew 28.1-10



Focus For Giving



February – Food Pantry

You were INCREDIBLY generous with your donations of non-perishable foods during February. The pictures above show a portion of what we collected. It was divided between the Black Creek Salvation Army and the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry that Trinity helps run. Our youth took some of the donations over to the Salvation Army earlier in the month to learn how they do their work. Your donations will help many folks provide food for their families! Don't forget, you can bring food donations at any time to the Salvation Army box under the table at the west entrance!

March - One Great Hour Of Sharing (OGHS)

OGHS is a special offering of the United Church of Christ. Working with international partners OGHS provides sources of clean water, food, education, and health care; micro-credit loans for small businesses; resettlement for refugees; and emergency relief. OGHS also supports domestic and international disaster preparedness and response. Along with several other Christian denominations – American Baptist Church, Christian Church Disciples of Christ, Church of the Brethren, and Cumberland Presbyterian Church – the UCC works with Church World Service to develop common promotional materials and goals while retaining control of all their own denomination's offerings. Sixty-two percent of the UCC's offering supports international development including annual support for missionaries and others working in disaster relief, health care, education, development of sustainable agriculture, and refugee support. Nearly one-fifth of the UCC's offering is shared through Church World Service to support refugees and disaster programs around the world. *Look for the special donation envelope in this newsletter!! Extra envelopes will be available on the newsletter table in the west corner of the front of the sanctuary!*

March 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
1 BC Communion 11:30am BC Confirmation SCRIP	2	3 6:30pm BC Christian Ed meeting	4 1:30pm BC Ladies Guild 5:30pm BC Worship & Dinner 7pm BC Choir	5	6	7 Daylight Savings Time Starts Tomorrow ... Clocks AHEAD one hour before bed
8	9	10 9am ALC Food Pantry Board 6:30pm BC Council meeting	11 5:30pm BC Worship & Dinner 7pm BC Choir	12 Tri-Jo Council Meeting at Trinity Trinity 6:30pm Joint 7pm Cecil after	13	14
15 T Cong Mtg for furnace BC Cong Mtg for steeple 11:30am BC Confirmation	16	17	18 5-7pm ALC Food Pantry 5:30pm BC Worship & Dinner 7pm BC Choir	19 9am C Closet work day	20	21 9-11am ALC Food Pantry
Pastor Moira on vacation, 3/16-3/24; Randy Miller available for pastoral care at 920-213-1852						
22 Randy Miller leads worship at all three churches	23	24 Noon - 3pm C Closet distribution	25 5:30pm BC Worship & Dinner 7pm BC Choir	26	27	28
Pastor Moira on vacation			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			
29 11:30am BC Confirmation 1:30pm Good Shepherd	30	31	April 1 1:30pm BC Ladies Guild 5:30pm BC Worship & Dinner 7pm BC Choir	April 2 5:30pm T Trinity Council	April 3	April 4 <i>Tomorrow.. Palm & Passion Sunday</i>

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

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United Church of Christ
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March 2020 Newsletter

