

From Pastor Moira's Desk... Three Thoughts

The Summer Of Covid: It's summer, but it's a summer like no one I have ever experienced before. It's summer in the shadow of covid-19. We've emerged from the long months of shelter at home. Some worked through the pandemic, providing essential services, and so their life continues as it had been. Some are resuming their pre-pandemic activities with changes to accommodate masks, and extra hand sanitizing, and preventative distancing. For a variety of reasons, others are more cautious and are still staying pretty close to home, venturing out for only what is necessary. Because we all have a different story, different needs and tolerance for risk, we are all going to have a different approach to the next phase of the pandemic. I remind you that, unless someone is actively attempting to harm others, please try to reserve judgement since you probably don't know what factors influenced their decision making. And please, we are not clear of the risk of covid-19. As I write this there are several states with rapidly increasing numbers of positive tests. The hospitals in Texas and Arizona are nearly overwhelmed, and Wisconsin has seen a spike in positive tests in recent days. In addition, we have had several cases in our very immediate area, and a couple of members of the parish who were experiencing symptoms, but have thankfully tested negative. Please continue to be careful. Hand washing, or sanitizer when you don't have access to running water, is incredibly important, and masks (when you can't maintain a good distance from others) help you from getting someone else sick. And please, if you have symptoms or worries, talk to your health care folks, and if you think you need a test but don't know how to get one, please be in touch with me and we can figure it out together.

Facing Racism & All The Isms: In addition to all that covid-19 challenged us with, we are living through a major social upheaval. Protests surrounding the killings of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, Rayshard Brooks and others have spread throughout the United States, and around the world. These protests have been largely peaceful, but as you know outside forces have come and caused damage, sowing seeds of hatred, chaos, and division. At the heart of the protests though are questions that ask us as individuals, a country, and indeed the world to deal with things that many would rather ignore ~ the racism and bigotry in our history. Our faith in Jesus demands that we face truth of our past ~ the racism towards native people on whose land we live, blacks who were bought and sold as property, and others who were and are discriminated against based on skin color, age, gender, sexual identity, economic status, and more. Our faith also demands that

we work together to listen, to hear, and to find ways to build a more just world for all of God's children, in every place around the world. And, our faith demands that we allow no excuse or justification for racism and bigotry against anyone. It is against everything that Jesus taught, and all the ways he asked us to live. We are called to love and trust, and speak out against the many connected -isms that destroy and dehumanize others, and ourselves. My deepest hope and prayer is that this time might bring about real, meaningful, and lasting change for all God's children; that we might live into the fullness of who we are and can be, united and dependent on one another as we move into the future.

Breathing Space: In a "normal" summer in Wisconsin we try to pack everything into just a few months, knowing that sooner than some of us are ready, the fall will come and after that snow won't be far behind. So we cram the days and nights with everything we possibly can to soak it all up. I think we're more tempted to do that this year, given our months of isolation, because we miss each other so very much. But I also want to encourage you to slow down and find some breathing space. Everything that has been happening is hard to process, to get our brains, hearts, and souls on the same page. So maybe don't pack every minute of every weekend. Find some time to sit and admire the beauty of where we live, or breathe in the glory of the garden you tend so carefully, or simply look at the people you love and smile because they're a part of your life. Remember you don't have to do it all. You can sit on your porch and have a cool drink because the world will continue to spin even if you're not pushing it.

In peace and grace, *Pastor Moira*

Year of Giving ~ United Church Camps Inc. (UCCI)

Usually we focus on our wonderful Wisconsin UCC camps in April, but then we were sheltered at home during April of this year so that didn't happen. In addition, because of covid-19 all activities and programs scheduled until September, at both our facilities, Moon Beach (on a hundred acres up north near St. Germain) and Pilgrim Center (near Ripon on the shores of Green Lake), have been cancelled. So we thought July would be a good time to remind you of this incredible ministry that has and continues to offer incredible opportunities for folks to connect with the outdoors, the beauty of God's creation, and deepen their faith as well. Your gifts to UCCI help continue to provide these ministries, and scholarships to all UCC church members at both facilities. Please consider making a gift to our camps to ensure their work for the future. Make checks to the church and put UCCI in the memo section.

A reminder ... current worship changes because of covid-19

As we resume in-person worship together, we will be making changes to help ensure our collective health & safety. Please talk with Pastor Moira if you have any questions.

- ♥ signs at all entrances reminding people to keep social distancing, 6 feet apart from people they have not been with during the pandemic (if you don't live with them, don't sit with them);
- ♥ interior doors will remain open whenever possible to limit the number of surfaces you have to touch (this means sanctuary doors, classroom and office doors, but also the inside entrance doors at Black Creek's west entrance, etc.);
- ♥ hand sanitizer available at every entrance to each of our sanctuaries;
- ♥ an encouragement to please wear a mask, and disposable masks available at each sanctuary (you can take the mask off in your pew)
- ♥ no passing of the peace as we've done it before
- ♥ for the rest of the summer, a shorter service (somewhat like what we did during the shelter at home time) to limit the amount of time we are together in a relatively confined space;
- ♥ no congregational singing – at least for a while, some folks need to sing so if that's you, please put your mask on and sing quietly;
- ♥ communion will be changed to limit physical contact ~ prepared by folks wearing masks & gloves and for serving, wafers and cups will be handed to folks by servers who have sanitized their hands immediately before serving;
- ♥ the offering will be collected in plates at each door rather than passing the plates;
- ♥ no fellowship time unless it involves prepackaged food and drink and social distancing;
- ♥ we will take a record, by name, of who is present in worship in case contact tracing becomes necessary (that's where someone tests positive and they need to know who might have been exposed), when the crisis has ended these records will be destroyed;
- ♥ and there may have to be other changes to our shared life together as we get information from scientists, public health officials, denominational and parish leadership.

As we know, everything is subject to change if the number of positive tests increases, particularly in our area/counties. Your parish leadership ~ the Black Creek Council, Cecil Consistory, and Trinity Council, along with Pastor Moira ~ is working hard to find a balance in a reopening without moving too quickly, putting any of us at unnecessary risk. As with all things, each of us will have to evaluate what our comfort is in returning to pre-pandemic activities, assessing our personal and family risks and responsibilities. There will be no judgement from anyone if you need to wait, want to continue receiving materials in print or online, and aren't ready to be in larger groups of people. And it's ok if your comfort level changes from week to week, as the situation changes too. Let's all be as kind, gentle, and compassionate as possible while we live through this together.

Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes

The Church Council met on Tuesday June 9th at 6:30pm and reviewed the minutes from the last in-person meeting which was held on Tuesday March 10, 2020. Those minutes were printed in the April 2020 newsletter. The minutes were reviewed and approved as printed. If you would like a copy of the March minutes, please talk with Pastor Moira. The next Council Meeting is Tuesday July 14, 2020 at 6:30pm.

Women's Guild Report

The Guild last met on Wednesday March 4, 2020.

The minutes of that meeting appeared in the May 2020 newsletter. If you would like a copy of the minutes, please talk with Pastor Moira.

The next Guild Meeting is Wednesday July 1, 2020 at 1:30pm with Devotions from Donna Stucki and Hostess Audrey Hooyman-Blake.

All are most enthusiastically welcome.

Scripture Readings

July 5, 2020

Genesis 24.34-67

Psalm 45

Romans 7.15-25

Matthew 11.25-30

July 12, 2020

Genesis 25.19-34

Psalm 119.105-112

Romans 8.1-11

Matthew 13.1-8, 18-23

July 19, 2020

Pastor Moira away, Randy Preaches

Genesis 28.10-22

Psalm 139.1-12

Romans 8.12-25

Matthew 13.24-43

July 26, 2020

Pastor Moira away, Randy Preaches

Genesis 29.15-30

Psalm 105.1-11

Romans 8.26-39

Matthew 13.44-52



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

May 2020

	05/17/2020	05/31/2020				Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	4030.00	3943.00				300.00	8273.00
General Fund	3687.00	3333.00				150.00	7170.00
Building Fund	143.00	610.00				150.00	903.00
OGHS*							
NIN*							
STC*							
Christmas Fund							
Fuel Fund							
Total Member Contributions	3830.00	3943.00				300.00	
Other Income							
Haiti	200.00						200.00
Total Other	200.00						
Total Checking Deposit	4030.00	3943.00				300.00	
*OGHS = One Great Hour of Sharing NIN = Neighbors In Need STC = Strengthen The Church							

During the pandemic, deposits were only made twice a month.

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

May 2020

Building Fund	Deposits	\$903.00
	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	\$7,370.00
	Disbursements	(\$7,228.81)

As we begin reopening,
if you are more comfortable,
please feel free to continue
sending contributions by mail:
Contributions can be sent to:

St. John's UCC
PO Box 264
Black Creek, WI 54106

If you have questions, please be
in touch with our financial
secretary, Gary VanderLinden

Totals	Beginning Balance	214,983.29
	Deposits	\$8273.00
	Interest	\$8.77
	Disbursements	(\$7,228.81)
	Ending Balance	\$216,036.25

General Fund	\$12,376.96
Building Fund	\$14,605.82
Memorial Fund	\$21,099.47**
Organ Fund	\$4,997.00
Parsonage Fund	<u>\$162,957.00</u>
TOTAL	\$216,036.25

YTD Membership Giving	\$45,109.25
YTD Expenses	(\$43,367.73)
Net Amount*	\$1,742.52

* excludes contributions and disbursements for special offerings

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

Reader & Greeter Schedule

We will be resuming the reader and greeter schedule in July. Greeters will NOT hand out bulletins, or shake hands, but will point out the location of bulletins, sanitizer, and offering plates, and generally help make people feel welcome. They will also help in serving communion on first Sundays of the month. If you have questions or concerns, or if you're not quite ready for this yet, that's understandable. PLEASE talk with Connie Wheeler or Pastor Moira and we can rearrange the schedule.

Sunday July 5, 2020 ~ Communion

Reader	Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeter/Usher	Vi Brown-Luebke Darwin Ethington Two to be decided

Sunday July 12, 2020

Reader	Robin Schmidt
Greeter/Usher	Robin Schmidt Carol Schmidt Verla Pingel Kelly Stevens

Sunday July 19, 2020 ~ Randy Miller preaches

Reader	Roberta Lorenz
Greeter/Usher	Ryan Julius Stephanie Julius Gene Blake Audrey Hooyman-Blake

Sunday July 26, 2020 ~ Randy Miller preaches

Reader	Jim Rucci
Greeter/Usher	Devin Schmidt Barry Zuleger Steve Hanson Jim Rucci

Sunday August 2, 2020 ~ Communion

Reader	Randy Miller
Greeter/Usher	Randy Miller Keith Kruse Steve Schomisch Pat Schomisch

Sunday August 9, 2020

Reader	Lisa St. John
Greeter/Usher	Todd St. John Lisa St. John Tanner St. John Jonathan Tesch

Sunday August 16, 2020

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

Sunday August 23, 2020

Reader	Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeter/Usher	Vi Brown-Luebke Darwin Ethington Gary VanderLinden Bonnie VanderLinden

Sunday August 30, 2020

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

Sunday September 6, 2020 ~ Communion

Reader	Trudy Koon
Greeter/Usher	Trudy Koon Morgan VanderLinden Ryan Julius Stephanie Julius

July 2020

How to reach Pastor Moira: phone 715-851-3080
email pastormoira73@gmail.com
Sunday Schedule: 8:45 am Trinity Worship
10:15 am Black Creek Worship
7:00 pm Cecil Worship

Pastor's Office Hours

All are welcome at Black Creek
 Most usually:
 Tuesdays & Thursdays, 10am - 5pm
 Please call/text to make sure
 or to make an appointment.

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 1pm BC Women's Guild	2	3	4 Independence Day
5 BC Communion T & C SCRIP	6	7 9am ALC Pantry board	8 9am T New Hope Circle	9	10	11
12 C Consistory after worship	13	14 6:30pm BC Council	15 5-7pm ALC Food pantry distribution	16	17	18 9-11am ALC Food Pantry distribution
Pastor Moira on vacation; Randy Miller available for pastoral care						
19 Randy Miller preaches at all three churches	20	21	22	23 9am C Closet work day	24	25 Lisa Schmidt wedding (C)
Pastor Moira on vacation; Randy Miller available for pastoral care at 920-213-1852						
26 Randy Miller preaches at all three churches	27	28 12-3pm C Closet distribution	29	30	31	August 1 Tomorrow... worship, communion & SCRIP order
Pastor Moira on vacation						

July Birthdays

We give thanks, Gracious God, for those you have brought into our lives and we celebrate their birthdays with joy and thanksgiving.

1st	...	Barbara Volkman Chad Lison
2nd	...	Roberta Lorenz
3rd	...	Skylar Stucki
5th	...	Jade Rihm
8th	...	Holdyn Volkman
10th	...	Susan Jochman
11th	...	Elly Menning Taleah Nelson
12th	...	Wyatt Lison
13th	...	Emma Holz
14th	...	Cole Marcks
15th	...	Jason Krsue Elizabeth Tesch
16th	...	Kheenan Halvorson
17th	...	Ashley Nelson Jaden Nelson
18th	...	Tara Nabbefeld
18th	...	Ashley Lison Samantha Rasmussen
22nd	...	Cody Parker Anders Waterstradt
23rd	...	Tori (Scott) Erickson
26th	...	Ethan Biese
27th	...	Gary Helein
28th	...	Pat Schomisch
29th	...	Debra Daelke

If your special day is incorrect, or is not listed, please let Pastor Moira know.

July Anniversaries

We give thanks for those whose love we celebrate as they remember their vows in the covenant of marriage.

July 5, 1986 Stanley & Susan Jochman
July 5, 2000 Tom & Deborah Schmidt
July 6, 1979 Don & Diane Henning
July 22, 2006 Eugene Blake & Audrey Hooyman-Blake
July 24, 1964 Timothy & Faye Veldt

"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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Black Creek, Wisconsin 54106

Church Phone 920-984-3845
Office email stjcreek@gmail.com
Website www.stjuccbc.com
Worship & Newsletter Archive:
www.t2sjwi.wordpress.com

Pastor Moira Finley
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Wisconsin Conference UCC
www.wiucc.org

United Church of Christ
www.ucc.org



July 2020 Newsletter

