

## *From Pastor Moira's Desk...*

The cold of winter is really here. It was barely +3° (F) when I was pumping gas this morning, a temperature that makes me wonder about the wisdom of living in a place where the weather forecasters call that the beginning of “milder” temperatures, and it’s a temperature that definitely makes me count the days until baseball spring training begins. Thankfully, I suppose, this stretch of cold weather has at least come with some sunshine which has helped my mood, and many others I suppose, as life with covid continues.

According to my computer and a countdown calendar, we’ve been dealing with the changes covid has caused for 318 days (I’m writing this on January 28th, and we started some kind of covid related procedures on March 17, 2020). I’m tired of it, as I’m sure you are too. But at the same time, our collective health, the health of our communities and indeed the entire world, needs us to continue being as careful as we can ~ wearing masks, using hand sanitizer, practicing good distancing, avoiding large crowds, and balancing our needs with our collective risk. Sometime, as more people become vaccinated (I get my first shot on February 10th), prayerfully perhaps by mid-summer, we will be coming through this great challenge, transformed by what we have learned is truly important in our lives, and in the life of the world.

Meanwhile, we find ourselves in the church on the edge of another Lenten season. This is a time to turn our hearts, minds, and spirits towards reflecting on what God offers to us, and needs from us at this particular place in our lives, at this particular time in the life of the world. While every Lent brings with it thinking about Jesus’ death and resurrection, I’m wondering if this particular Lent, after a year when so much feels like it’s been taken from us, we might also think and reflect on what has been given to us. As a small child I thought that Lent was called that because God had lent us something, given something to us to borrow for a time. I’m not sure I was entirely wrong. These weeks of Lent, that will begin with Ash Wednesday on February 17th, are a gift, a gift of time given to us by God that we might deepen our faith in prayer; consider and reflect on what we believe and why we believe it; think about how our faith and beliefs affect what we do and how we do it in the world; and strengthen our understanding of God’s incredible love for us, a love so fierce and tender, so strong and compassionate that it will never, ever let us go. I pray that this season ~ both winter and Lent ~ might be for us one of growth in spirit, in heart, in our capacity to love and be loved, and to become ever more the community of God’s people that we were designed to be.

*Peace and grace, Pastor Moira*

*Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes  
January 12, 2021*

The meeting was called to order by President Bob Menning with Pat Schomisch, Gary VanderLinden, 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 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 Video and In Person Worship Services
- ♥ Distributed Christmas Eve/Program services DVD to those who receive paper worship materials

Committee Reports

- ♥ Membership: Nothing to report at this time
- ♥ Christian Ed: Next Meeting is March 2, 2021 at 6:30 pm.
- ♥ Worship: Nothing to report at this time
- ♥ Music: Nothing to report at this time
- ♥ House: Nothing to report at this time
- ♥ Stewardship: January collection for diapers and hygiene products. February collection for UCCI camp

Old Business:

- ♥ The steeple project is almost complete, weather permitting them to paint. They will bill us in February or March.
- ♥ For the projection system, the cable is here to run and we are hoping it will be completed before Easter.
- ♥ Wyatt Samson will not be updating the Prayer Garden due to cost increase.

*minutes continue - - ->*

## *Council Minutes Continued*

### New Business:

- ♥ A recommendation from the Parish Relations committee to add Professional Expenses of \$3,000 to the Pastor salary package, listed in the budget.
- ♥ Due to the 2020 Covid-19 situation and not being able to have committees functioning or council being able to meet regularly, we, the council, recommend to the congregation to suspend the by-laws for one year pertaining to church council positions.
- ♥ We had to replace some parts on the furnace that have cost about \$3000 in the past 6 months. The boilers are almost 20 years old and may need to replace one and keep for parts for the other old one until that one would need to be replaced. This way they are not both the same age.
- ♥ We switched our internet carrier to Spectrum for faster speed and unlimited data.

### Prayers and Thank You's:

- ♥ Thank you to Dallas Waterstradt for his time on getting the internet installed and switched .
- ♥ Prayers to the Kruzicki family (Hooyman side) (loss of their mother, a month after their father), to anyone dealing or healing from Covid, Peace UCC in Shawano (Pastor Lew), and Pastor Moira (for healing of her eye)

A motion was made by Connie Wheeler and seconded by Dallas Waterstradt to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Next Council Meeting will be February 9, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

## *Women's Guild NEWS*

Because of continuing concerns about covid and no pressing business, the Women's Guild will not meet in February. ***Our next meeting will probably be Wednesday March 3rd at 1:30pm.*** We are looking forward to our summer rummage sale, with precautions for covid. The dates are: June 17, 18, 19 & June 24, 25, 25. You can bring donations to church at any time, and put them downstairs, in the fellowship hall near the kitchen. If you have questions, please be in touch with Guild President Roberta Lorenz

*Ash Wednesday*  
*Wednesday February 17th*

In prayer, 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.

Because of covid, ashes will not be distributed during worship ... see the article about the Living Lent In Our Living Rooms kits for more information about how you will receive ashes this year.

**Worship at Black Creek at 7pm**

*All are most welcome!*

***Grab & Go Meals***  
*for those over 60*

This program to provide meals to older adults in Outagamie County has been extended through March. There is no cost, but you do have to register, and order meals.

Carol Schmidt has volunteered to coordinate this for members of our parish. She can help you with registration, and delivery. You can reach Carol at 920-450-0984.

The County is also moving the farm to table pick up site to the Timber Rattlers Stadium. Distribution will be February 4th and it is not yet clear if there will be any additional distribution after February.

***Living Lent In Our Living Rooms***

Last year we had Advent At Home kits, ways to help you and your household strengthen your faith as we waited for Jesus' birth in Bethlehem, distanced as we must be because of covid.

Now Lent is just around the corner and even with increasing numbers of folks getting a covid vaccine, we still need to practice good social distancing.

We will be distributing  
***Living Lent In Our Living Room*** kits containing:

a calendar of giving suggestions  
to help our food pantries;

a compassion calendar to help you  
treat others, the world, and yourself  
with more compassion;

a booklet with prayers for every Wednesday of Lent  
(since we can't have dinner & worship gatherings);

a Holy Week prayer booklet;  
a candle to use during your prayer time;

and each person in your household will receive a small  
fabric square with a palm ash cross on it.

My prayer is these kits will help each us as we journey,  
together but apart, towards Jerusalem,  
towards what happens at Calvary,  
and towards the miracle of the empty tomb.

Kits will be available on Sunday February 14th  
for pick up & deliveries will also be made  
in the days before Ash Wednesday.

Please be in touch if you have any questions.

## Scripture Readings

*\*\*Italics = sermon focus\*\**

### February 7, 2021

Fifth Sunday of Epiphany

Isaiah 40.21-31

Psalm 147

1 Corinthians 9.16-23

*\*\*Mark 1.29-39\*\**

### February 14, 2021

Transfiguration Sunday

2 Kings 2.1-12

Psalm 50.1-6

2 Corinthians 4.1-6

*\*\*Mark 9.2-10\*\**

### February 17, 2021

Ash Wednesday

*Worship at 7pm at Black Creek*

2 Corinthians 5.20-6.10

Matthew 6.1-6, 16-21

### February 21, 2021

First Sunday of Lent

Genesis 9.8-17

Psalm 25.1-10

1 Peter 3.18-22

*\*\*Mark 1.9-15\*\**

### February 28, 2021

Second Sunday of Lent

*\*\*Genesis 17.1-22\*\**

Psalm 22.25-31

Romans 4.13-25

Mark 8.31-38

## February Birthdays

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

1st	...	Leo Halvorson
2nd	...	Aubrey Stevens
3rd	...	Lindsay Seefeldt
6th	...	Maggie Seefeldt Hadley Seefeldt
9th	...	Jim Rucci Bonnie VanderLinden
11th	...	Crissy Zuleger
13th	...	Bradley Holz Trevor Rohloff Ryan Schomish, Jr.
14th	...	Adam Holz
15th	...	Steven Felton
17th	...	Stephany Boettcher
25th	...	Sue Biese
26th	...	Nate Seefeldt
27th	...	Steve Seefeldt Keegan Hooyman Raphi Jochman

## February Anniversaries

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

February 7, 1970

Duane & Carol Henke

February 14, 1952

Ralph & Helen Sassman

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

## St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report December 2020

	12/6/2020	12/20/2020	12/27/2020	12/31/2020		Direct Deposit	Total
<b>Checking deposit</b>	1988.00	2517.00	7377.50	950.00		300.00	13132.50
<b>General Fund</b>	1977.00	2467.00	6089.50	850.00		150.00	11533.50
<b>Building Fund</b>	11.00		683.00	50.00		150.00	894.00
<b>OGHS*</b>							
<b>NIN*</b>							
<b>STC*</b>							
<b>Christmas Fund</b>		50.00	350.00				400.00
<b>Fuel Fund</b>							
<b>Total Member Contributions</b>	1988.00	2517.00	7122.50	900.00		300.00	
<b>Other Income</b>							
Endowment			55.00	50.00			105.00
Memorial from Julie Hein			200.00				200.00
<b>Total Other</b>			255.00	50.00			
<b>Total Checking Deposit</b>	1988.00	2517.00	7377.50	950.00			300.00

\*OGHS = One Great Hour of Sharing  
 NIN = Neighbors In Need  
 STC = Strengthen The Church

**NOTE: In-person worship was cancelled October 11 through October 25th due to rising covid-19 rates**

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

## December 2020

<b>Building Fund</b>	Deposits	\$894.00
	Interest	\$8.77
	Disbursements	\$0.00
<b>Memorial Fund</b>	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
<b>Organ Fund</b>	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
<b>General Fund</b>	Deposits	\$12,038.50
	Disbursements	(\$8942.73)

Feel free to continue sending your contributions by mail if you are more comfortable doing so. You can mail them 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

<b>Totals</b>	Beginning Balance	\$22,4962.36
	Deposits	\$12,932.50
	Interest	\$8.77
	Disbursements	(\$8,942.73)
	Ending Balance	\$228,960.90

<b>General Fund</b>	\$17,154.71
<b>Building Fund</b>	\$20,730.72
<b>Memorial Fund</b>	\$23,321.47**
<b>Organ Fund</b>	\$4,997.00
<b>Parsonage Fund</b>	<u>\$162,957.00</u>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>\$229,160.90</b>

<b>YTD Membership Giving</b>	<b>\$100,427.25</b>
<b>YTD Expenses</b>	(\$36,956.28)
<b>Net Amount*</b>	<b>(\$3,470.97)</b>

\* 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, we understand. PLEASE talk with Connie Wheeler or Pastor Moira.

### Sunday February 7, 2021 ~ Communion

Reader	Randy Miller
Greeters	Steve Schomisch Pat Schomisch

### Sunday March 7, 2021 ~ Communion

Reader	Connie Wheeler
Greeters	Connie Wheeler Cailey Wheeler

### Sunday February 14, 2021

Reader	Jan Rohloff
Greeters	Jan Rohloff Trevor Rohloff

### Sunday March 14, 2021

Reader	Sue Biese
Greeters	Mike Rohloff Connie Rohloff

### Sunday February 21, 2021

Reader	Robin Schmidt
Greeters	Robin Schmidt Carol Schmidt

### Sunday March 21, 2021

Reader	Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeters	Gary Vander Linden Bonnie Vander Linden

### Sunday February 28, 2021

Reader	Tanner St. John
Greeters	Tanner St. John Todd St. John

### Sunday March 28, 2021

Reader	Roberta Lorenz
Greeters	Mike Dickinson Sally Dickinson

## **Year of Giving ~ United Church Camps, Inc.**

It was a hard year for United Church Camps Inc., our Wisconsin Conference UCC camps at Moon Beach and Pilgrim Center. Because of covid, just about everything in-person was cancelled and that affects the ability of our camps to continue to do their vital, and important ministry. Your gifts during February will help restart programs during this year, and sustain the work of our outdoor ministries for generations to come. **Please write your check to church and put UCCI in the memo line.** If you have any questions, please talk to Pastor Moira or Gary Vander Linden.



# February 2021

How to reach Pastor Moira: phone 715-851-3080  
email [pastormoira73@gmail.com](mailto:pastormoira73@gmail.com)

Sunday Schedule: 8:45 am Trinity Worship

9am Sunday School/Bible Study & 10:15 am Black Creek Worship

7:00 pm Cecil Worship

## Pastor's Office Hours

Tuesdays & Wednesdays, 10am - 5pm

Please call/text to make sure  
or to make an appointment.

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1	2 9am ALC food pantry board	3	4	5	6
				<b>Key to locations:</b> <b>BC = St. John's U.C.C. Black Creek</b> <b>T = Trinity U.C.C. outside Nichols</b> <b>C = St. John's U.C.C. Cecil</b> <b>ALC = Ascension Lutheran Church Navarino</b>		
7 <i>Communion</i> T & C SCRIP Trinity Annual Meeting	8	9 6:30pm BC Council	10 5-7pm ALC Food Pantry	11 5:30pm T Council	12	13 9-11am ALC Food Pantry
14 C Consistory after worship  Living Lent In Our Living Room kits	15 <i>Presidents' Day</i>	16	17 <b>Ash Wednesday Worship</b> 7pm Black Creek	18 9am C Closet work day	19	20
21 First Sunday of Lent	22	23 Noon - 3pm C Closet distribution	24 4:30pm BC Confirmation	25	26	27
28 Second Sunday of Lent	March 1	March 2 6:30pm BC Christian Education meeting	March 3 1:30pm BC Ladies Guild	March 4	March 5 <i>World Day of Prayer</i>	March 6 <i>Tomorrow... Communion, SCRIP, Third Sunday of Lent</i>

February  
2021

"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

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YouTube: search for Moira Finley

**Pastor Moira Finley**  
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**Wisconsin Conference UCC**  
[www.wiucc.org](http://www.wiucc.org)

**United Church of Christ**  
[www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org)



### Continuing worship changes because of covid-19

As we continue with in-person worship, we have made changes to our time together for our collective health and safety. Please talk with Pastor Moira if you have questions:

- ♥ **MASKS/FACE COVERINGS ARE REQUIRED** (for everyone over age five)
- ♥ we can sing quietly and with masks on
- ♥ social distancing (6' apart from folks you haven't been with during the pandemic)
- ♥ interior doors will remain open whenever possible;
- ♥ hand sanitizer available at every entrance to each of our sanctuaries;
- ♥ no passing of the peace or fellowship time;
- ♥ communion will be changed to limit physical contact;
- ♥ the offering will be collected in plates at each door rather than passing the plates;
- ♥ contact tracing (attendance) records will be taken;
- ♥ other changes might come as we respond to this ever changing virus pandemic.

Our online worship and print worship delivery continues as well. Let's all be gentle, kind, and compassionate with ourselves and one another as we live through these days.