

From Pastor Moira's Desk...

It's just about Easter. As I write this Holy Week is still ahead of us, but since this is the April newsletter, and Easter Sunday is April 4th, I figured it would be ok to talk about my favorite Easter flowers. You're thinking of lilies, but actually no I don't really care for them. They're fussy, needing certain amounts of light and water to be happy, and shedding their bright orange pollen on everything. OK, maybe you're thinking tulips, lilacs, hydrangeas, begonias or some other fabulously beautiful and sweet smelling spring flower. But no, my favorite Easter flower is ... dandelions. Yes, dandelions, those bright yellow flowers that creep into every lawn about this time each year; dandelions that turn into white balls of fluff that we pick and whisper our wishes to, casting them into the gentle breezes; dandelions whose greens make a most delicious salad; dandelions that can be turned into wine or made into tea; dandelions that are the first spring pollen and nectar for the bees and other pollinators. Yes, I know, lots of people spend a tremendous amount of time trying to get rid of dandelions. They pluck them, and mow them, and poison them (please don't do that ... it's really not good for the bees and other living things). I even had a neighbor once who would lay down on her stomach and inch her way across the lawn carefully pulling each dandelion up from the roots, day in and day out all spring.



So, you're thinking to yourself, "Pastor, dandelions aren't flowers, they're weeds, and even if they were they're not symbols of Easter." We could spend a lovely long summer's evening drinking iced tea and lemonade and discussing what is a weed, what is a plant, and who gets to decide. But in the meantime, hear me out about why dandelions are great symbols for Jesus' resurrection. The resurrection is God demonstrating to us that life and love are stronger than any of the forces of evil. It's God saying to us that even the worst we can do to each other, even the power of a painful and cruel death, is no match for the fierce, tender, gentle, gracious, abundant love of God. Dandelions are like that too. They're pesky and even if you think you've plucked up the root and gotten rid of it for good, chances are you'll see another two or twenty sprout up nearby. They'll grow in good and bad soil, in clay and sand, in fertile fields and in the middle of your driveway. They'll survive drought, floods, and even all those pesticides we put on them. They're just as relentless as God's love, creeping into places where we think there might not be any room for love, filling fields full of hope and wishes for a better world, sprouting in the least likely places to remind us that God is with us, that God's love will never leave us. The resurrection is not some fragile, temperamental plant like an Easter lily, but much more like a dandelion that comes to remind us each and every year that God's love for us is real, and true, and everlasting. So as we celebrate Easter this year we'll adorn our sanctuaries with lilies, but I'll be thinking of dandelions, of their hope and promise that will sneak into every yard, and every heart, and every corner of creation until God's kingdom comes.

Peace and grace, Pastor Moira

*Church Council "Preliminary" Meeting Minutes
March 9, 2021*

The meeting was called to order by President Bob Menning with Pat Schomisch, Todd St. John, 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 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 Video and In Person Worship Services and 1 Funeral
- Attended church meetings, and confirmation class

Committee Reports

Membership: The directory is being worked on and should be ready by Easter.

Christian Ed: Meeting was March 2. See Christian Ed meeting notes for details.

Worship: Nothing at this time.

Music: Nothing at this time.

House: The fire inspection was done and all is good. Steve Hanson fixed the door in the back entrance by the storage room hall. There was a gap in the bottom and cold air was coming in. Thank you Steve!

Stewardship: For March, we are collecting for OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing). For April, we will be collecting for Haiti Allies.

council minutes continue - - ->

Old Business:

- The AV System is up and running. Pastor Moira will begin using it and explaining things the next few Sundays.

New Business:

- Wyatt Samson got the approval for his Eagle Scout project. He will be taking apart the existing cabinets in the classrooms and rebuilding them to be more user friendly and not so deep with an opening door not a sliding door that it has now. He is planning to work on these on April 10.

Prayers and Thank You's:

Prayers for Charlie VanSwol (transplant went well),
Pam (Connie's co-worker with back surgery that went well),
Baby Lydia (Connie's co-workers daughter, needs a liver transplant),
Peace UCC (Interim Pastor)

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

Next Council Meeting will be April 13, 2021 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Year of Giving ~ Haiti Allies

Haiti, the poorest country in the western hemisphere, is only 90 minutes from Miami, FL. It was the first slave colony to gain its independence, and has a long history of foreign occupation and exploitation of both the people and natural resources. Haiti also suffers from frequent hurricanes and earthquakes. Aid groups have come in to help and have sometimes done more damage than good. Despite this, the Haitian people are a strong, resilient, and joyful. They are resourceful, loving, and hopeful about building and renewing their country. Haiti Allies works to, "empower Haitians to better their lives and country through education, meal programs, adult literacy, and job creation." Haiti Allies works with Cite Soleil Community School, located in one of the largest slums around Port au Prince, leading trips of mutual learning and exchange to help learn from the wisdom, spirit, and passion of the people of Haiti themselves.

Scripture Readings

Italics = sermon focus

April 1, 2021

Maundy Thursday
Psalm 116.1-2, 12-19
John 13.1-7, 31-35

April 2, 2021

Holy Friday
Hebrews 12.1-3
John 18.1-19.42

April 3 & 4, 2021

Easter Weekend
Acts 10.34-43
Mark 16.1-8

Sunday April 14, 2021

Acts 4.32-37
Psalm 133
1 John 1.1-2.2
John 20.19-31

Sunday April 18, 2021

Pastor Moira on vacation
Randy Miller leads worship
Acts 3.11-26
Psalm 4
1 John 3.1-7
Luke 24.36-49

Sunday April 25, 2021

Break The Silence Sunday
Acts 4.5-12
Psalm 23
1 John 3.16-24
John 10.11-18

Holy Week & Easter

Maundy Thursday ~ April 1st

Worship at Black Creek at 7pm
Remembering Jesus' last meal with his disciples and celebrating communion

Holy Friday ~ April 2nd

Worship at Trinity at 7pm
Remembering Jesus' arrest, trials & crucifixion

Easter Weekend

Worship with communion at all three churches

Saturday April 3rd ~ Cecil

Worship at 4pm
With a basket of treats for every family to take home to their own Easter tables

Sunday April 4th ~ Trinity

Worship at 7:45am
Followed by fellowship of donuts & drinks (to eat in at distanced tables or to go)

Sunday April 4th ~ Black Creek

Breakfast at 8:30am
Scrambled eggs, sausages, donuts & drinks served cafeteria style with distanced table seating
Worship at 10:15am

Plan Now For The Rummage Sale

Our rummage sale is back!
Thursday - Saturday
June 17, 18, 19 & 24, 25, 26
AFTER EASTER you can bring things to the yellow room & fellowship hall.

Furnace Fund



Time marches on and the “new” addition is now nearly 20 years old which means so are the boilers that heat the offices, classrooms, bathrooms & gathering room. The furnaces are still working, but it is becoming more difficult to find replacement parts. As we mentioned at the January annual meeting, we are keeping an eye on things and planning for the future replacement of the furnaces, so we have established a furnace fund. If you have discretionary income or would like to make a memorial gift you can help increase the fund so that when we need to replace the furnaces we are prepared. Please make checks to the church and put “Furnace Fund” in the memo. If you have questions, please talk with any member of the Council or Pastor Moira.



Break The Silence Sunday April 25th

Break The Silence Sunday (BTSS) is Pastor Moira’s work to help churches better support survivors

of rape & sexual violence. Because of covid we didn’t have an observance in 2020, and this year we won’t have a full BTSS service either. There will, however, be some prayers during worship that honor the reality of sexual violence in our homes, congregations, communities, and around the world, remembering that survivors are our friends, neighbors, and members of our congregation. We will acknowledge the painful reality, and commit ourselves to being a listening people, dedicated to changing the reality of violence in our world. Portions of worship might be difficult and challenging. Please take time to prepare yourself, and ask God for the strength to open your heart so that we might support all survivors, everywhere. If you have questions or concerns, please talk with Pastor Moira.

Parish Celebrations

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

April Birthdays

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

1st	...	Elton Wendt
2nd	...	Val Abel Jeff Rasmussen Grace Krull
4th	...	Sadie Fenske
9th	...	Denis Shepard
14th	...	Berniece Shepard
16th	...	Noah St. John
17th	...	Tanner St. John
19th	...	Stephen Sassman
23rd	...	David Tesch
24th	...	Marian Goodwin
24th	...	Eliana Roesler
25th	...	Bridget Shepard
28th	...	Esther Meyer David Rohloff
30th	...	Kenneth Melchert

April Anniversaries

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

April 30, 2014

Dallas & Lisa Waterstradt

St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report February 2021

	02/07/2021	02/14/2021	02/21/2021	02/28/2021		Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	543.00	1424.00	2426.50	2553.50		300.00	7247.00
Member Giving Towards Budget							
General Fund	483.00	1358.00	1783.00	2053.50		150.00	5827.50
Total Member Contributions	483.00	1358.00	1783.00	2053.50		150.00	5827.50
Other Income (in & out funds and income for designated purposes)							
	02/07/2021	02/14/2021	02/21/2021	02/28/2021		Direct Deposit	Total
Building Fund		61.00	134.50	45.00		150.00	390.50
UCCI (Camps)	10.00	5.00	220.00	300.00			535.00
Memorial (Don Gregorious)	50.00		100.00				150.00
Endowment Fund			150.00				15.00
Special Salvation Army (Food Pantry)			174.00	155.00			329.00
Total Other Income	60.00	66.00	643.50	500.00		150.00	1419.50
Total Checking Deposit	543.00	1424.00	2426.50	2553.50		300.00	7247.00

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

February 2021

Building Fund	Deposits	\$393.50
	Interest	\$4.76
	Disbursements	(\$1,603.49)
Memorial Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	(\$6,940.00)
Organ Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
General Fund	Deposits	\$6,856.50
	Disbursements	(\$17,350.00)

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 or Treasurer Dallas Waterstradt

Totals	Beginning Balance	\$243,759.80
	Deposits	\$7,247.00
	Interest	\$4.76
	Disbursements	(\$47,536.09)
	Ending Balance	\$203,475.47

General Fund	\$16,669.27
Building Fund	\$19,820.73
Memorial Fund	\$16,381.47**
Organ Fund	\$4,997.00
Parsonage Fund	<u>\$147,607.00</u>
TOTAL	\$03,475.47

YTD Membership Giving*	\$17,360.50
YTD Expenses*	(\$20,478.43)
Net Amount*	(\$3,117.93)

* 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 April 4, 2021 ~ Easter & Communion

Reader Sue Biese
Greeters Joe Biese
Sue Biese

Sunday May 16, 2021

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

Sunday April 11, 2021

Reader Connie Wheeler
Greeters Connie Wheeler
Hollie Wheeler

Sunday May 23, 2021

Reader Vi Brown-Luebke
Greeters Vi Brown-Luebke
Darwin Ethington

Sunday April 18, 2021

Reader Bob Menning
Greeters Mike Dickinson
Sally Dickinson

Sunday May 30, 2021

Reader Jan Rohloff
Greeters Mike Rohloff
Connie Rohloff

Sunday April 25, 2021

Reader Roberta Lorenz
Greeters Mark Hooyman
Kelcie Hooyman

Sunday June 6, 2021 ~ Communion

Reader Randy Miller
Greeters Gary Vander Linden
Bonnie Vander Linden

Sunday May 2, 2021 ~ Confirmation & Communion

Reader Robin Schmidt
Greeters Steve Schomisch
Pat Schomisch

Sunday June 13, 2021

Reader Robin Schmidt
Greeters Barry Zuleger
Steve Hanson

Sunday May 9, 2021

Reader Connie Wheeler
Greeters Connie Wheeler
Audrey Blake

Sunday June 20, 2021

Reader Bob Menning
Greeters Bob Menning
Carla Menning

Sunday June 27, 2021

Reader Randy Miller
Greeters Kelly Stevens
Dallas Waterstradt

April 2021

How to reach Pastor Moira: phone 715-851-3080
email 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	
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 Maundy Thursday Worship at Black Creek,	2 Holy Friday Worship at Trinity, 7pm	3 Holy Saturday Worship at Cecil, 4pm	
4 Easter Sunday <u>Trinity</u> Worship 7:45am Fellowship after <u>Black Creek</u> Breakfast 8:30am Worship 10:15am			7 1:30pm BC Women's Guild	8 5:30pm T Council		10 Association Annual Meeting 10am T Baptism BC all day Wyatt Samson Eagle Scout work day	
11 BC Baptism C Consistory after worship		13 9am ALC Pantry Board 6:30pm BC	14 9am T Circle	Pastor Moira on vacation 4/14 - 4/23			
18 Randy Miller leads worship at all three churches			21 5-7pm ALC Pantry distribution	22 9am C Closet work day		24 9-11am ALC Pantry distribution	
Pastor Moira on vacation 4/14 - 4/23; Randy Miller available for emergencies							
25 Break The Silence Sunday		27 Noon - 3pm C Closet distribution	28 5:30pm BC Confirmation (2nd years only)			Tomorrow... Confirmation at Trinity & Black Creek	

April
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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Website www.stjucbc.com
Facebook: St. John's UCC Black Creek
YouTube: search for Moira Finley

Pastor Moira Finley
Phone 715-851-3080
Email pastormoira73@gmail.com

Wisconsin Conference UCC
www.wiucc.org

United Church of Christ
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.