

From Pastor Moira's Desk... Resolutions

First I want to say THANK YOU for all your generous and heart-filled birthday and Christmas cards and gifts. Your generosity of spirit makes my heart so happy. It is my honor to be your pastor, to journey through this life with you, and I am so grateful for your love and support of me and my ministry among you. ♥♥♥♥♥

It's the end of the year, or almost. I'm writing this on December 30th so there is still a bit of 2021 left to live, and if recent years have taught me anything, these few days could bring all kinds of things. But since I'd like to be snuggled up in my bed on New Year's Eve night instead of in the office finishing this, I'll go ahead and think about the new year, twelve months full of ... well, none of us really know. Things will happen, some of them good, some of them challenging, lots of them kind of mundane. Whatever happens, I know one thing ~ God will get there before us, and we will continue to do learn, grow, adapt, and depend on God and on one another for all things. We've gotten this far together, and we can face whatever comes next. I believe in God, and in us, and we're amazing!

As it's the end of the year, it's also the time to make lists of resolutions, things we would like to do, or change, or take on in the coming year. Fresh from plates of cookies and all kinds of other delights, many of the resolutions are about our physical bodies, but I'd like to remind you that your worth, your value as a human being, is not dependent on your body size, or shape, or any set of numbers on the charts at the doctor's office. You, the you who ate Christmas cookies for breakfast, the you who had a salad because you like them, you are loved and valued as you are right this very moment. That said, I do have some resolutions that I'm making for 2022, things to help me hopefully connect to my body, heart, and soul better. I share them with you here because maybe you'll find them interesting, and to keep myself accountable, and honest about my goals.

Breathe More Intentionally ~ as every singer knows (or anyone who tried to get through the glo-o-o-rias last Sunday), breathing is incredibly important. It's the muscles of our diaphragm and belly that need to move in order to give us the deepest and fullest breaths we can have. But, when we're anxious, busy, tired, overwhelmed, confused, and all those other things we don't tend to breathe from our bellies. We do shallow breathing from our chest and then our brains don't get the oxygen they need to help us be our best. I'm resolving to breathe more intentionally. As much as I can I'll be paying attention to my breath, trying to move my belly and fill my lungs up, giving my brain and body all the air they need for all the things I'm going to ask them to do.

Eat More Attentively ~ this isn't about what I eat, but rather how I eat. I want to pay attention to what I'm eating whether it's a salad or a hot dog. I don't want to just mindlessly graze through foods, or sit at my desk and snarf something without paying attention to it. I want to notice what I'm eating, how it tastes, what my body feels like when I'm eating it, why I'm eating a particular food, and those kinds of things. I hope this will connect me more to my body, to what makes it feel better, and nurtures my body/soul/spirit connection for the long term future.

Ask More Questions ~ if you've ever spent time with a four or five year old you know that they ask LOTS of questions. Adults don't. Somewhere we lose our questioning hearts and souls, our wondering about the world we live in. So I'm going to try to ask more questions. Some will be silly: how do my cats generate so much heat while they sleep on my lap and how do we harness that energy? Some will be because there's just so much in the world I'd like to know: why is my favorite paint called Prussian blue? how do jellyfish know up from down? And some are deep questions I have about the world we live in and the world we want to live in: why do we allow poverty to exist and what do we do about it? what causes interpersonal violence and how do we end it? what is mine (and ours) to do right now, that God is calling us to do?

Create More ~ the novelist Maxine Hong Kingston wrote, "In a time of destruction, create something: a poem, a parade, a community, a school, a vow, a moral principle; one peaceful moment." These are challenging times, times when lots of things we used to know and understand seem to have been destroyed. So, I'm resolving to create more, to see if I can make art, or poetry, or conversations, or relationships, or something, to nurture existing things into even more growth, and to bring new things into being.

Seek Out Kindness ~ if you watch the news you could easily be convinced there isn't any kindness in the world. They cover the worst humanity does to itself, the bitterness, hatred, and division. But I know, deep in my soul I know, that there is so much goodness and kindness in the world. People are out there reaching out, helping, supporting, and encouraging each other. I'm resolving to look for it, to open my eyes and my heart to find the ways in which kindness is alive and at work in the world. I'm going to seek out kindness and talk about it, making my own reports of goodness, and generosity, and hope in the world. It might just counteract some of the negativity, at least in my own heart.

Love Even More ~ I know that 2022 will bring us challenges, and heartbreak, and struggle, and we're still going to be dealing with covid, and then I'm sure the next election cycle will be upon us, and friends will get sick, and some will walk on to eternal life, and ... well, even thinking about it is a little exhausting and disheartening. There's an antidote. It's love. We've got to pour all the love we can find into the world. Tell your friends you love them, a lot. Let it be weird. Show people you love and care about them, a lot. Let that be weird too. I want to dump buckets of love into every situation, with words and actions. I want to open my heart so wide I think it will burst and then let love flood in only to discover that you can't love too much, you can't open your heart too far. All that will happen, I hope and pray, is that I'll find more and more room for love, find love in all kinds of new ways and places, and eventually love won't be something I do, but who I am.

So, those are my resolutions looking towards whatever 2022 will bring. My promise to you is that whatever comes, we will meet it together ~ you, me, and God ~ and there is nothing we can't do, united and supporting one another.

In peace and grace, Pastor Moira

Church Council "Preliminary" Minutes ~ December 14, 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 Todd St. John and seconded by Dallas Waterstradt 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 Virtual and in Person Worship Services
- Conducted 2 funerals
- Attended church meetings, administrative meetings, and confirmation classes

Committee Reports

- **Membership:** Nothing at this time
- **Christian Ed:** No December meeting due to weather. Christmas Program December 19 during the worship service at 10:15 am. Connie Wheeler will put the candy bags together.
- **Worship/Music:** Met on November 7th. We will try Wednesday lent services in 2022. Pastor Moira is looking into new ideas for Baptism gifts. The banners in the storage room need to have the rods raised so they don't get crumbled on the bottom.
- **House:** The sidewalk next to the church has been fixed.
- **Stewardship:** For the month of January we will be collecting diapers and hygiene items.

Old Business:

- There are two members that are interested in the council and will be on the ballot for election in January at the annual meeting.
- We discussed the 2022 budget. A motion was made by Todd St. John and seconded by Connie Wheeler to accept the Budget. Motion passed.

New Business:

- There was an area of old books and VHS tapes that will be donated. These are all items that are out of date.
- A suggestion was made to have a sheet where you can put maintenance requests so Duane can check them off as they are done, and so that Duane isn't told multiple times about needed repairs. Bob will talk with him about this.
- Pastor Moira requested Break The Silence Sunday (BTSS) to be a ministry of St. John's and we approved the request.

Prayers and Thank You's:

- Bob's cousin, Don and family and Connie's neighbor, Dave and family
- Thank you to all that decorated the church so beautifully!
- Thank you to all that helped with the Church Christmas party and the Sunday School Christmas program.

A motion was made by Gary Vander Linden and seconded by Todd St. John to adjourn the meeting. Motion passed.

Next Council Meeting will be Tuesday, January 11, 2022 at 6:30 pm.

The meeting ended with the Lord's Prayer.

Women's Guild News

The All Church Christmas Party was held on Thursday December 2, 2021 at 6:30pm. There were about 35 people in attendance. Jan Boman entertained us with beautiful songs before the program and dinner. Jan Rohloff gave a welcome and a dinner prayer before we ate the delicious meal of meatballs, mac & cheese, salads, and desserts prepared by Pastor Moira and the attendees. Loved it all. After we ate the delicious meal, we were entertained with a reading of the snowflake by Vi Brown-Luebke. Cailey Wheeler entertained us with playing the piano and singing "Winter Wonderland". Great job. Our second reading "Fruit Cake" was done by Connie Wheeler. That cake was really hard. The offering was taken with a prayer, "Jesus is the Light Of the World" by Connie Rohloff and Jan Boman playing "Silent Night". Jan Boman played Christmas songs "Rudolph The Red Nosed Reindeer", "Jingle Bells", and "Frosty The Snowman" and we all tried to remember the words. Good job to all. Jan informed us that Tom sang these songs at three years old at a nursing home. It was very well done and loved by all. A skit, "Just Us Two" was done by Pastor Moira and Robin Schmidt. They did a great job which we loved. Thanking everyone for coming and enjoying themselves and then "The Special Feelings Of Christmas" was shared by Connie Wheeler. We closed with prayer and a safe drive home. The Guild does not meet in January so our next meeting will be **Wednesday February 2nd, 2022** at 1:30pm with Pastor Moira doing devotions and serving.

Congregational Annual Meeting Sunday January 23, 2022 ~ after worship

Join us after worship for our congregational meeting to review 2021 and look forward to 2022 including approving our congregational budget.

**If you have a report to submit for the annual reports booklet,
please do so as soon as possible.**

Report booklets will prayerfully be available by Sunday January 9th.

Please plan on attending to help us have a quorum.

If you have any questions, please talk with members of the Council.

Parish Celebrations

*If your special day is incorrect,
please let Pastor Moira know.*

January Birthdays

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

2nd ...	Laurene Ferge Tiffany Biese
3rd ...	Vicki Helser Steven Pingel Rylen Wernet
4th ...	Gregory Volkman Roman Halvorson
7th ...	Nikki Berndt
10th ...	Karsyn Berndt Ali Holz
11th ...	Kelcie Hooyman
12th ...	Duane Pingel
14th ...	Aron Rasmussen
16th ...	Helen Hanson
17th ...	Ruth Hanson
24th ...	Samantha Holz Arabella Marcks
27th ...	Cody Halvorson

Scripture Readings

Sunday January 2, 2022

Second Sunday of Christmas

Isaiah 60.1-5

Matthew 2.1-15

Sunday January 9, 2022

Baptism of Jesus

Isaiah 43.1-7

Luke 3.15-22

Sunday January 16, 2022

Second Sunday of Epiphany

1 Corinthians 12.1-13

John 2.1-11

Sunday January 23, 2022

Third Sunday of Epiphany

1 Corinthians 12.12-31

Luke 4.14-21

Sunday January 30, 2022

Fourth Sunday of Epiphany

1 Corinthians 13.1-13

Luke 4.21-30

Covid-19 Procedures for Worship & Gatherings

- ♥ **Face Coverings** ~ masks or face shields are requested (for everyone over age 5) who is not fully vaccinated;
- ♥ **Distancing** ~ keep social distance as best as possible;
- ♥ **Offering** - there are plates at the sanctuary doors;
- ♥ **Respect** ~ respect others in our community by wearing a face covering and keeping distance when talking with folks you don't live with

Reader & Greeter Schedule

If you are not able to make it on your assigned day, please let Connie Wheeler & Pastor Moira know. Greeters also help serve communion.

Sunday January 2, 2022 ~ Communion

Reader Sue Biese
Greeters Joe Biese
Sue Biese

February 20, 2022

Reader Robin Schmidt
Greeters Robin Schmidt
Carol Schmidt

Sunday January 9, 2022

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

February 27, 2022

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

Sunday January 16, 2022

Reader Connie Wheeler
Greeters Connie Wheeler
Marian Goodwin

March 6, 2022 ~ Communion

Reader Connie Wheeler
Greeters Connie Wheeler
Cailey Wheeler

Sunday January 23, 2022 ~ Annual Meeting

Reader Roberta Lorenz
Greeters Roberta Lorenz
Kim Marcks

March 13, 2022

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

Sunday January 30, 2022

Reader Bob Menning
Greeters Bob Menning
Carla Menning

March 20, 2022

Reader Sue Biese
Greeters Mike Rohloff
Connie Rohloff

February 6, 2022 ~ Communion

Reader Randy Miller
Greeters Steve Schomisch
Pat Schomisch

March 27, 2022

Reader Roberta Lorenz
Greeters Mike Dickinson
Sally Dickinson

February 13, 2022

Reader Jan Rohloff
Greeters Jan Rohloff
Trevor Rohloff

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

	11/7/2021	11/14/2021	11/21/2021	11/28/2021		Direct Deposit	Total
Checking deposit	9861.00	2183.00	9920.50	1480.00		300.00	23744.50

Member Giving Towards Budget

	11/7/2021	11/14/2021	11/21/2021	11/28/2021		Direct Deposit	Total
General Fund	2121.00	1833.00	3030.50	1180.00		300.00	8464.50
Fuel Fund	30.00	100.00					130.00
Total Member Contributions	2151.00	1933.00	3030.50	1180.00		300.00	8594.50

Other Income (in & out funds and income for designated purposes)

	11/7/2021	11/14/2021	11/21/2021	11/28/2021		Direct Deposit	Total
Building Fund	40.00		535.00				575.00
Neighbors in Need	30.00	50.00	105.00				185.00
Stained Glass Window Fund	7000.00		5380.00	50.00			12430.00
Memorial Fund (Michelle Arnold)	500.00						500.00
Turkey Fund	140.00	200.00	505.00	30.00			875.00
Auction for Turkey Fund			365.00	220.00			585.00
Total Other Income	7710.00	250.00	6890.00	300.00			15150.00

Total Checking Deposit	9861.00	2183.00	9920.50	1480.00		300.00	23744.50
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St. John's United Church of Christ Treasurer's Report ~ NOVEMBER 2021

Building Fund	Deposits	\$575.00
	Interest	\$1.33
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Memorial Fund	Deposits	\$500.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Organ Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	Disbursements	\$0.00
General Fund	Deposits	\$10,239.56
	From Parsonage	\$119,257.00
	Disbursements	(\$11,464.33)
Parsonage Proceeds	Deposits	\$0.00
	To General Fund	(\$119,257.00)★
	To Stained Glass	(\$17,500.00)
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Boiler/Furnace Fund	Deposits	\$0.00
	To Stained Glass	(\$1,900.00)
	Disbursements	\$0.00
Stained Glass Fund	Deposits	\$12,430.00
	Transfer from Boiler	\$1,900.00
	From Parsonage	\$17,500.00

Totals	Beginning Balance	\$195,053.74
	Deposits	\$23,744.56
	Interest	\$1.33
	Disbursements	(\$11,464.33)
	Ending Balance	\$207,335.30

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

General Fund	\$135,409.05
Building Fund	\$18,185.78
Memorial Fund	\$14,005.47**
Organ Fund	\$4,455.00
Stained Glass Fund	\$33,480.00
Boiler/Furnace Fund	\$1,800.00
TOTAL	\$207,335.30

YTD Membership Giving*	\$87,605.31
YTD Expenses*	(\$87,534.80)
Net Amount*	\$70.51

** of which \$4,580 is designated for building projects

* excludes contributes and disbursements for special offerings

★ to be paid to Endowment Fund

January 2021

How to reach Pastor Moira: phone 715-851-3080
email pastormoira73@gmail.com

Pastor's Office Hours
Tuesdays, Wednesdays & Thursdays
Please call/text to make sure

Sunday Schedule: Trinity ~ 8:45am Worship
Black Creek ~ 9:00am Education Hour & 10:15 am Worship
Cecil ~ 7:00pm Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Key to locations: BC = St. John's Black Creek T = Trinity C = St. John's Cecil ALC = Ascension Lutheran Church Navarino						1 <i>Happy New Year</i>
2 T & C SCRIP Communion	3	4	5 6:30pm BC Choir	6	7	8
9 11:30am BC Confirmation C Consistory	10	11 6:30pm BC Council	12 6:30pm BC Choir	13 5:30pm T Council	14	15
Pastor Moira on study leave 1/12 to 1/21						
16	17 <i>Martin Luther King Jr Day</i>	18	19 5-7pm ALC Food Pantry 6:30pm BC Choir	20 9am C Closet work day	21	22 9-11am ALC Food Pantry
Pastor Moira on study leave 1/12 to 1/21						
23 Black Creek Annual Meeting 11:30am BC Confirmation	24	25 Noon-3pm C Closet	26 6:30pm BC Choir	27	28	29 BC Fellowship hall reserved
30 Cecil Annual Meeting	31	February 1	February 2 1:30pm BC Guild 6:30pm BC Choir	February 3	February 4	February 5 Tomorrow... Trinity Annual Meeting & Confirmation

January
2022

"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

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Wisconsin Conference UCC
www.wiucc.org

United Church of Christ
www.ucc.org



Year of Giving ~ Diapers & Hygiene Items

In this new year we will be collecting diapers & hygiene items for the Black Creek Salvation Army, the Loaves & Fishes Food Pantry, and Harbor House Shelter in Appleton. You can bring items to the tables at the front of the sanctuary, or look for the special envelopes to make a monetary donation. If you want to mail in a contribution, please send it to church with "Diapers & Hygiene" in the memo line. The following are the most needed items:

Diapers (in all sizes) & baby wipes

Shampoo & conditioner (the 2 in 1 are great)

Body Wash

Liquid hand soap

Deodorant

Disposable razors & shaving cream

Menstrual products

Toothpaste & Toothbrushes