

From Pastor Moira's Desk...

I've been thinking a lot about hope lately. You've probably noticed that there's a LOT going on in the world. War continues to slog on in Ukraine, Haiti is a mess with gangs in control of much of the capitol, Sudan and Ethiopia are struggling, and that's before we come to Palestine and Israel where we desperately need an unconditional ceasefire, and here at home where we're dealing with more gun violence and the long slog through this year's presidential election cycle. And that's before we get to things closer to home, our personal, and family, and community concerns. All of it can be overwhelming, and it can be tempting to give in to despair, to pull the covers over our heads, lock the doors, and give up on hope entirely.

The world around us would definitely support the idea of giving up on hope. We're told that hope is silly, or naïve, or foolish. Hope is something little kids or people who aren't paying attention have. It's not for serious grown-ups who understand how the world works. Cynicism, bitterness, and despair ~ that's how mature adults are supposed to live.

But ... but we are people whose lives are formed and guided by a story that is stronger than even the powers of violence and death. We are shaped by the birth, life, ministry, death, and resurrection of Jesus. The gospel, Jesus' biography, is a story about a hope rooted in the deepest truth of our faith, that Emmanuel is true, that God is with us, always has been, is now, and always will be. Our lives are rooted in a God who knows what our lives are like, who faced the challenges of being human, who met all those challenges with love and grace, and who showed us that life and love will always have the final word.

Our hope is anything but naïve or foolish. It's a messy hope that sees the pain and heartbreak, the injustice and cruelty of the world and refuses to give in. It sees all those things and works to end them with words, and actions, and prayers. It offers love and patience and kindness, a moment to pause in the middle of the chaos, a quiet word instead of screaming, an open hand and heart instead of a clenched fist. Our hope trusts in things we cannot see; in the truth that after winter, spring will always come; in remembering we are deeply connected and dependent on God and one another; in acknowledging the strength we gain from all our glorious diversity; in remembering that it is God's place, and God's alone, to judge and that our work comes in offering love, and more love, and even more love.

As we journey through Lent and gather to celebrate the good news of the empty tomb at the end of the month, I pray we might dig deep into our faith, into the life of Jesus, and hold on to hope, to that maybe small and fragile seed of hope, knowing that it can grow and blossom into the biggest flower or the mightiest tree because our hope comes from the One who knows us, calls us each by name, the One who came to love us into life, and the One whom not even the power of death could take from us. May that hope fill us, encourage us, inspire us, unsettle us, comfort us, nurture us, and lead us in all we do that we might share the good news of God's love with our words, our actions, and our very beings.

In peace and grace, and hope, Pastor Moira

Parish Celebrations

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

March Birthdays

3rd	...	Tim Arnold Kody Holz
5th	...	Kelly Stevens
10th	...	Haydan Schmidt
12th	...	Vi Brown-Luebke
13th	...	Jack Holz Ember Waterstradt
15th	...	Sammi Bohn
16th	...	Bob Menning John Wheeler
17th	...	Saxton Werner
21st	...	Wyatt Samson
23rd	...	Brent Boettcher
25th	...	Darwin Ethington Carla Menning Corbin Rohloff
27th	...	Ryan Schomisch, Sr. Averie Werner
30th	...	Donna Stucki Wes Biese

March Anniversaries

March 14th
Gary & Bonnie Vander Linden

March 25th
Randy & Kris Vande Corput
Chad & Heather Lison

March 30th
Paul & Taycie Schmidt

SCRIP CORNER

SCRIP is a wonderful way to help you with your regular expenses like gas, groceries, dining out & entertainment. Plus you get to support the church with a percentage of the value of the cards you purchase (generally 2-10%).

We order on the first Sunday of the month and when we have enough other orders to offset shipping costs!

Look for the SCRIP station in the Gathering Room.

Questions?

Talk with Brandi or Pat Schomisch

Let's Talk About Death

On February 21st we had a good conversation with Pete Stevens from Muehl-Boettcher Funeral Home about making our final wishes known.

Copies of two forms ~ a booklet about planning for your final arrangements and a form for the state of Wisconsin about final disposition (who has the right to make your funeral arrangements) are available at church or by email.

Future conversations will involve legal documents for end of life and hospice care information.

Please be in touch with Pastor Moira with questions.

Readers & Greeters Schedule

If you are unable to make your date, please talk with Pastor Moira & Connie Wheeler.

On communion Sunday, greeters help serve communion.

Sunday March 3, 2024 ~ Communion

Reader Sue Biese
Greeters Mike & Connie Rohloff
Lisa Waterstradt
Kelly Stevens

Sunday March 10, 2024

Reader As Schmidt
Greeters Jan Rohloff
Darwin Ethington

Sunday March 17, 2024

Reader Audrina Bohn
Greeters Steve & Pat Schomisch

Sunday March 24, 2024 ~ Palm Sunday

Children's choir sings
Reader Sally Dickinson
Greeters Ryan & Stephanie Julius

Sunday March 31, 2024 ~ EASTER

Communion
Adult choir sings
Reader Bob Menning
Greeters Gary Vander Linden
Keith Kruse
Bob & Carla Menning

Sunday April 7, 2024 ~ Communion

Reader As Schmidt
Greeters Mark Hooyman
Steve Hanson
Mike & Sally Dickinson

Sunday April 14, 2024

Adult choir sings
Reader Bob Menning
Greeters Bob & Carla Menning

Sunday April 21, 2024

Children's choir sings
Reader Devin Schmidt
Greeters Gene & Audrey Blake

Sunday April 28, 2024

Break The Silence Sunday
Reader Sue Biese
Greeters Joe & Sue Biese

Sunday May 5, 2024 ~ Communion

Confirmation Sunday
Reader Robin Schmidt
Greeters Pat & Steve Schomisch
Robin Schmidt
Jan Rohloff

Sunday May 12, 2024 ~ Mother's Day

Childrens choir sings
Reader Nate Seefeldt
Greeters Steve & Lindsay Seefeldt

Sunday May 19, 2024

Celebration Sunday ~ farm & garden theme
Adult choir sings
Reader Jan Rohloff
Greeters Mike & Connie Rohloff

St. John's UCC Black Creek Council ~ Minutes ~ February 13, 2024

- Present were Lisa Waterstradt, Lizzie Tesch, Trevor Rohloff, Sally Dickinson, Connie Rohloff, Brian Holz, Pastor Moira Finley, and guests Steve & Barb Sassman
- Treasurer Lisa Waterstradt called the meeting to order
- Steve and Barb Sassman presented the Council with a memorial gift in honor of Steve's parents, Ralph & Helen Sassman, and the Council discussed the new furniture for the sanctuary that will be purchased the memorial money; we are grateful for their generosity
- The Council then organized itself with the following officers: president ~ Sally Dickinson; vice-president ~ Trevor Rohloff; treasurer ~ Lisa Waterstradt; financial Secretary ~ Lizzie Tesch; members ~ Connie Rohloff & Brian Holz; motion by Lisa, second by Lizzie; motion passed; Pastor Moira will prepare a letter for the bank to change signatures on the church accounts
- Minutes of the January 2024 meeting were reviewed; motion to approve by Lisa, second by Lizzie, motion passed
- The January 2024 financial secretary and treasurer's reports were reviewed;
- There was discussion about what to do with the money remaining in the stained glass fund (\$228); motion to move it to the plastering fund by Trevor, second by Brian, motion passed
- Motion to approve the financial reports by Trevor, second by Connie, motion passed
- Pastor Moira reviewed her report including the last portion of her sabbatical, upcoming events, and Student Pastor Mark's ordination process
- Committee Reports
 - Christian Education ~ confirmation continues with three students being confirmed on May 5th; fundraising competition has begun for help for Hawai'i and the weekend backpack meals; next meeting March 19th
 - Worship & Music ~ discussion about where and how to find a new musician; need to schedule a next meeting
 - Building & Grounds ~ have had Lee Manufacturing (Oak Creek, WI) up to investigate possibly mechanizing the clock winding, waiting on the plastering in the bell tower, thanks to Trevor & friend Cory for fixing the wiring for the elevator phone which is now working again, working on pads for the bottom of tables & chairs in the fellowship hall so the new floor isn't damaged, and more cleaning & organizing of cupboards
 - Cemetery ~ nothing to report
 - Endowment ~ nothing to report

- Stewardship ~ February's focus is fire & rescue and there has been some discussion of where those funds should go as not everyone in our church lives in Black Creek, the Council will continue to discuss about sharing that money between Black Creek, Seymour, and Shiocton; March offering is for One Great Hour of Sharing (a UCC national offering) and the food pantry focus is toilet paper
- Women's Guild ~ February gathering is the second conversation about end of life planning on February 21st, next meeting is March 6th
- Garden Project ~ starting to think about spring and planting
- SCRIP ~ need to work on publicity
- Parish Relations ~ will meet in May
- New Business ~ Delegates for Annual Meeting; we have one for association meeting and there was discussion about delegates for conference meeting; Pastor Moira will contact folks
- New Business ~ Lawn Mowing; the cemetery committee has one proposal for mowing there (there was also considerable discussion about how the cemetery funds work, and how we might clarify people's understanding); we will have a sign up sheet for mowing at church beginning in May
- New Business ~ Easter Breakfast; after locating notes from last year, there was discussion and decisions were made on what to put on the sign up sheets; the offering will go to the Good Shepherd Bus Fund
- New Business ~ Dartball Trophy Case; the beginning of a discussion about moving the trophies to a case so they don't have to be moved for rummage sale, and to keep them less dusty;
- There was discussion about meeting dates and given the current members of the council, the dates will need to be flexible. The following meeting dates are set (all at 6:30pm): Monday March 11th, Monday April 8th, no May meeting, but reports will be circulated by email and shared in the newsletter;
- Prayers were shared and there was a motion to adjourn by Trevor, second by Lizzie, motion passed
- The meeting closed with the Lord's Prayer
- Respectfully submitted, Pastor Moira Finley

2024 Church Council Members

Sally Dickinson ~ President, 920-525-2137
 Trevor Rohloff ~ Vice-President, 920-228-0950
 Lizzie Tesch - financial secretary, 920-370-8692
 Lisa Waterstradt - treasurer, 920-422-0933

Connie Rohloff ~ 920-228-0940
 Brian Holz ~ 920-585-0078
 Pastor Moira ~ 715-851-3080

St. John's United Church of Christ Financial Secretary's Report ~ JANUARY 2024

	1/7/2024	1/14/2024	1/21/2024	1/28/2024	Direct Deposit	TOTAL
Checking deposit	1,567.00	734.00	2,537.00	3,093.00	300.00	8,231.00
General Fund	1,557.00	437.00	2,325.00	2,972.00	300.00	7,888.00
Operating Funds						
Building Fund	10.00		202.00	81.00		293.00
Endowment						0.00
Total Operating Funds	10.00	0.00	202.00	81.00	0.00	293.00
Special Funds						
Food Pantry				20.00		20.00
Menstrual & Hygiene			10.00	20.00		30.00
TOTAL SPECIAL FUNDS	0.00	0.00	10.00	40.00	0.00	50.00
TOTAL MEMBERSHIP GIVING	1,567.00	734.00	2,537.00	3,093.00	300.00	8,231.00
Other Income						
TOTAL OTHER INCOME	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
TOTAL CHECKING DEPOSIT	1,567.00	734.00	2,537.00	3,093.00	300.00	8,231.00

St. John's United Church of Christ Treasurer's Report ~ JANUARY 2024

Building Fund	Beginning Balance	\$21,660.27
	Deposits	\$293.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	\$0.00
	Ending Balance	\$21,953.27
Memorial Fund	Beginning Balance	\$10,390.47
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	\$0.00
	Ending Balance	\$10,390.47
Organ Fund	Beginning Balance	\$4,455.00
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	\$0.00
	Ending Balance	\$4,455.00
General Fund	Beginning Balance	\$27,348.26
	Interest	\$0.56
	Deposits	\$7,938.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	(\$8,345.84)
	Ending Balance	\$26,940.98
Boiler/Furnace Fund	Beginning Balance	\$1,800.00
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	\$0.00
	Ending Balance	\$1,800.00
Plastering Fund	Beginning Balance	\$6,923.72
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	\$0.00
	Ending Balance	\$6,923.72
Gardening Project	Beginning Balance	\$4,728.71
	Deposits	\$0.00
	<u>Disbursements</u>	(\$0.00)
	Ending Balance	\$4,728.71

**We appreciate your continuing
to send contributions by mail
as you are able:
St. John's UCC
PO Box 264
Black Creek, WI 54106
If you have questions,
please be in touch with
a member of the Council**

YTD Membership Giving	\$8,181.00
YTD Expenses	(\$8,345.28)
Net Amount*	(\$168.28)
* excludes contributions and disbursements for special offerings	

FUND TOTALS	
Beginning Balance	\$77,306.43
Deposits	\$8,231.00
Interest	\$0.56
<u>Disbursements</u>	(\$8,345.84)
Ending Balance	\$77,192.15

Scripture Readings

Sunday March 3, 2024

Third Sunday of Lent

Psalm 19 and John 2.13-22

Sermon ~ What's The Church For?

Sunday March 10, 2024

Fourth Sunday of Lent

Psalm 107.1-9 and John 3.1-21

Sermon ~ Questions In The Night

Sunday March 17, 2024

Fifth Sunday of Lent

Psalm 119.1-16 and John 12.20-26

Sermon ~ Gain And Loss

Sunday March 24, 2024

Palm & Passion Sunday

Mark 11.1-11 and Mark 14.32-50

Sermon ~ From Palms To The Garden

Thursday March 28, 2024

Maundy Thursday

1 Corinthians 11.23-26

John 13.1-20, 31-35

Sermon ~ Commanded To Love

Friday March 29, 2024

Holy Friday

Mark 14.1-15.47

Sunday March 31, 2024

Easter Sunday

Acts 10.34-43

Mark 16.1-8

Sermon ~ Early On The First Day

Coming Soon

Sunday April 23rd

Break The Silence Sunday

This service will include several prayers to stand in support of and solidarity with survivors of rape and sexual violence.

Please talk with Pastor Moira if you have questions or concerns.

Sunday May 5th

Confirmation Sunday

Join us as Ryan Schomisch, Jr, Audrina Bohn, and Ethan Bohn affirm their faith.

Sunday May 12th

Celebrating The Christian Family Home & Mother's Day

Join us as we celebrate the Christian family home and all the kinds of families that nurture & support us.

There will be games & snacks for children of all ages (yes, we mean YOU) at 9am and then the children will also be singing during worship at 10:15am

Sunday May 26th

Celebration Sunday

We have a FARM & GARDEN theme this year so get out those overalls and straw hats and get ready to celebrate everyone who makes our parish so amazing. The Adult Choir will be singing.

Women's Guild News

In February, the Guild hosted our second community conversation "Let's Talk About Death". Pete Stevens from Muehl-Boettcher Funeral Home joined us to talk about plans you can make for end of life funeral and memorial services. More than 30 people came to learn about this important topic. Our next meeting will take place on Wednesday March 6th at 1:30pm with program and snacks provided by Roberta Lorenz.

March Focus Of Giving One Great Hour Of Sharing (OGHS)

One of the special offerings 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 and disaster preparedness at home and abroad.

We work with Church World Service and several other Christian denominations to widen the reach of our offering. Sixty-two percent of the UCC's offering supports international development including 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.

Stock The Pantry Shelves

"When I was hungry, you fed me."

Matthew 25.35

March Focus Item - Toilet Paper

Everyone needs it!

Help our pantry families & stock the shelves.



Remember, it never needs to be name brand & you can always send a monetary contribution as well with "food pantry" in the memo.

Church Camp Scholarships

Remember that camp isn't just for kids!

Our Wisconsin UCC camps have tons of programs for people of all ages and scholarships are available for members of UCC churches, and financial assistance is also available through the church.

You can check out all the offerings at the UCCI website: ucci.org

If you have questions, please talk with Pastor Moira or Gary Vander Linden

March 2024

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

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

Sunday Schedule: Trinity ~ 8:45am Worship
Black Creek ~ Sunday School 9am & Worship 10:15am
Cecil ~ 4pm Worship

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
Wednesday Lenten Worship <i>downstairs at Black Creek</i> 5:15pm ~ dinner ready 6:15pm ~ worship (1/2 hour) 7pm ~ choir practice			February 28 Wednesday Lent Worship <i>(see box)</i>	February 29 Happy Leap Day	1	2
3 Communion SCRIP Confirmation, 11:30-1:30pm	4	5	6 1:30pm BC Guild Wednesday Lent Worship <i>(see box)</i>	7	8	9 Daylight Savings Time Ends ... set clocks AHEAD one hour
10	11 6:30pm BC Council	12 9am ALC Pantry board 2pm T Circle	13 Wednesday Lent Worship <i>(see box)</i>	14 6:30pm T Tri-Jo Council	15	16
17 Confirmation 11:30-2:30pm	18	19 6:30pm BC Christian Ed	20 Wednesday Lent Worship <i>(see box)</i> 4-6pm ALC Pantry	21 9am C Closet work day	22	23 9-11am ALC Pantry
24 Palm/Passion Sunday BC Kids sing Flower deadline	25	26 Noon-3pm C Closet	27 Wednesday Lent Worship <i>(see box)</i>	28 Maundy Thursday Worship at Black Creek 7pm	29 Holy Friday Worship at Cecil 6pm	30
31 Easter Sunday Tri-Jo at Trinity Worship 8:30am Breakfast after Black Creek Breakfast 9am Worship 10:15	April 1	April 2	April 3 1:30pm BC Guild 6:30pm BC Choir	April 4 <div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px; width: fit-content;"> Key to locations: BC = St. John's Black Creek T = Trinity C = St. John's Cecil ALC = Ascension Lutheran </div>	April 5	April 6 <i>Tomorrow... Communion SCRIP Confirmation</i>

Easter Flowers For The Sanctuary

To celebrate Jesus' resurrection we would like to beautify our sanctuary on Easter Sunday, March 31st. Kailhofer's in Seymour (920-833-2321) will deliver to church, but you should call early for the best selection. *You are also welcome to bring your own plants or flowers.*

Dedications must be received by Sunday March 24th to be included in the Easter worship bulletin.

Everything **MUST** be at church by Friday March 29th
Questions? Talk with Karen Arnold or Pastor Moira



2024 Easter Flower Dedication Form

Please PRINT clearly

Your name:

How you would like your dedication to read:

Return to Pastor Moira by Sunday March 24th

Holy Week & Easter Schedule

Palm & Passion Sunday ~ March 24

Worship at all three parish churches at the usual time as we remember Jesus' entry into Jerusalem & the last week of his earthly life.

Maundy Thursday ~ March 28

Remembering the last meal Jesus shared with his disciples ~ Black Creek at 7pm

Holy Friday ~ March 29

Remembering Jesus' arrest, trial & crucifixion ~ Cecil at 6pm

Easter Sunday ~ March 31

Celebrating the good news of the resurrection

Breakfast sign-ups are at all three churches!

**Tri-Jo AT Trinity ~ Worship at 8:30am with breakfast after
Black Creek ~ Breakfast at 9am and worship at 10:15am**



March
2024

"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
101 South Clark Street (PO Box 264)
Black Creek, Wisconsin 54106

Church Phone 920-984-3845
Office email stjcreek@gmail.com
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



The Cross, The Grave, The Skies

Art & Music of the Crucifixion & Resurrection

Join us on Wednesdays at Black Creek for our Lenten series. We'll be looking at art & music to help us think about Jesus' life, crucifixion, death, and resurrection.

We'll gather downstairs in the fellowship hall for a simple supper, and then have about 35 minutes of discussion & prayer time. We'll be done in time for choir practice. Come for one week, or all of them.

Come and feed your body & your spirit.

Wednesdays February 28th through March 27th.

5:15pm ~ Supper ready

6:15pm ~ conversation & prayer

7pm ~ choir practice

US Mass Shootings

1/1 - 2/22/2024

55

*According to the
Gun Violence
Archive*