

## Pastor's Message

Once again I write this message after another tragedy. In Christchurch, New Zealand 49 people were killed while worshipping at a mosque. An 87-page manifesto filled with anti-immigrant, anti-Muslim ideas was found. As one member said after worship, "How is it that they (meaning the killers) came to so hate immigrants and Muslims? How indeed? No one is born hating others. Were they taught hate at home? Did they learn it as they grew up? Did they pick it up from their "friends"? We may never know - or understand.

Even though New Zealand is many miles away - the mosque in Bloomington has also experienced hate. 2 years ago a bomb was thrown inside the mosque one early morning and those coming to prayer have experienced harassment from their neighbors. For the past few Friday's - several of us have gathered with signs of welcome and love so that the Muslims coming for worship might know that they are welcome here.

I'm left with wondering how hate begins - hate for the "other" - hate for difference. Perhaps it is human nature to fear or at minimum - view others who come from another land or who speak another language or who are "different" with suspicion. Yet I believe that Jesus taught that we are to love one another - regardless of what our first impulse may be. This isn't always easy

As we pray for those in New Zealand - let us especially commit to extending a hand of friendship to those in our own community who often times daily experience harassment for being an immigrant or being Muslim. While we may not be able to make a difference in New Zealand - we can make a difference here.

May it be so,

Jennifer

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## What's Happening

### MN Conference Annual Meeting

This year the annual meeting will be a bit different. Rather than Friday through Sunday - the Annual Meeting will be held only Friday and Saturday. It will begin Friday June 7th at 10:30 am and conclude Saturday June 8th with a banquet. The theme of the gathering is "Created for Connection: One Body, Many Members". There are two golden tickets available to attend with Pastor Jennifer. Lodging and meals are all provided. The food is great - the company even better and it is a wonderful opportunity to meet and worship with others from all over Minnesota. The President of the UCC will be the keynote speaker. Please see Pastor Jennifer if interested.

### Volunteer Opportunity

Methodist Hospital Hospice will be providing training sessions in May for new volunteers. Our volunteers give respite care to caregivers who are caring for terminally ill loved ones in their own private homes, or visit terminally ill patients to provide comfort and support. We would like veteran volunteers in addition to visit our patients who are also veterans. Commitment is a maximum of 4 hours per week, can be less, and training is 4 sessions. If interested please call Libby Swanson at 952-993-5381. Thank you.

## Hospice 101

Presentation and Conversation on the End of Life Care.

This is an event led by our own Rev. Shuji Moriichi, chaplain for Park Nicollet

Hospice Team. Invite friends and family that want to know about more the differences between Hospice care, Palliative care and Comfort care as well as other issues related to these. It will be held April 13 from 1- 2 pm at St. Mark's. Free and open to the public (Refreshments will be provided).

### Doing some Spring Cleaning?

For several years there have been marked plastic bins located under the coat closet to donate gently used clothing. These items are donated to the

Bloomington Covenant Church's "Closet of Hope" (102nd and Xerxes). Closet of Hope is a free clothing store that is available for anyone in need who lives in Bloomington and Richfield (ID required). The shelves and racks are filled with clothing for all ages, footwear, coats, bedding and towels. They are open to guests one Saturday each month from 9:00-10:30 am. Donations of gently used bedding, towels, shoes, coats and clothing for all ages are always needed. We will continue to collect items at St. Mark's and they will be delivered to the Closet of Hope or if you want to drop them off yourself – donations are received on Tuesday and; Wednesday from 9-11 am, or on Sunday mornings from 9:30 -11:30 am. Please use the SE entrance of the church.

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## Holy Week Worship

### Palm Sunday is April 14th

The day which marks the beginning of Holy Week. We will begin the service by joining the crowds in welcoming Jesus into Jerusalem and conclude the service with a litany of Jesus' last days.

well as special music. Invite your neighbors and friends to celebrate the good news!

**Easter Breakfast: 8:15- 9:15 a.m.**

**Choir Rehearsal: 9:00 a.m.**

**Worship with Holy Communion: 10:00 am.**

### Maundy Thursday is April 18

We will gather together again on Maundy Thursday (April 18) as we remember Jesus' last meal with his disciples and hear once again the events of Jesus' life ending in his crucifixion upon a cross.

### Easter Flower Potluck

Please bring your plants (flowering or green foliage) by Saturday April 23rd for our beautiful flower garden for Easter! All plants will be returned to their owners after the service.

### Easter Sunday is April 24

Join us as we celebrate Jesus' resurrection – where life triumphs over death and love triumphs over hate. There will be a time for children/youth as

“April ... hath put a spirit of youth in everything.”

—William Shakespeare

## People to Keep in Our Prayers

**Laura Vande Waa**, as she adjusts to Assisted Living.  
**Glen Paulsen**, recovering from a fall on the ice.

**Pastor Jennifer**, as she continues to heal from a viral infection.

**Jack Vande Waa**, Laura's son regaining strength at home.

**Matt Brokl**, a brain tumor was removed Jan 9<sup>th</sup>. Undergoing chemotherapy and radiation treatment.

**Jacquie Clemens**, being cared for at home.

**Joanne Olson and her family**, as they care for Joanne living with dementia.

**Marilyn Leaf**, friend of Brokl's, dealing with cancer as well as other health issues.

**Dick Pappin**, uncle of Deb Barger, dealing with pain after back surgery. Prayers for healing of nerves so he can walk again. Also prayers for his wife,

Bonnie, as she cares for him – separated due to hospitalizations and long term care.

**Johnny**, Laura Vande Waa's neighbor, as he receives chemotherapy for recurring cancer.

**Steven Gamm**, friend of Drew Brokl, receiving chemotherapy for bladder cancer.

**Scott Mayforth**, close friend of the Jaimez family living with the effects of a serious stroke.

**Andy Krohn**, nephew of Mary Ann and Russ Dunne, two-time kidney transplant patient now diagnosed with a malignant melanoma.

**Doug Settle and family**, Jim Settle's nephew, affected with a serious illness.

**Tiger (Edwin) Wing**, nephew of Helen Wing, suffering with many illnesses.

**Linda Settle Mitchner**, niece of Jim Settle, with serious health concerns.

**All those suffering with chronic health issues.**

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## March 12, 2019 Council Meeting Highlights

### Reports of the Ministry Team Leaders

**Spiritual Development Ministry:** Not Present

**Care and Nurture:** Nothing to report.

**Outreach to Local and World Community:**

\* Made a delivery to the two Bloomington High Schools. 13 bus passes, 2 quilts and misc. hygiene products.

Building and Grounds: Not Present

**Pastor's Report:**

\* Met with Pastor Stuart of LCA.

\* Tom Tester will replace the faucet in the accessible restroom.

\* Leaving for Arizona following service on March 24, 2019.

\* Shuji Moriichi is going to offer a Hospice Care event (open to the public) on April 13, 2019 from 1 to 2 pm.

\* Continuing visitations as needed.

\* Pilgrim Point suffered damage to its kitchen due to fire. As a result, the conference plans to sell the property. Luthercrest will be used to temporarily host future events.

### Financial Report

**Financial Secretary's Report:** We reviewed the information for the month. Council approved going to biannual statements.

**Treasurer's Report:** We reviewed the information for the month.

	February	YTD
Total Receipts:	7,450.10	13,558.60
Total Disbursements:	<u>9,191.27</u>	<u>18,957.68</u>
Difference:	(1741.17)	(5,399.08)

## Unfinished Business

**Facebook Report:** Nothing to report.

**Crossroads:** The team has held two monthly meetings and one Collaborative meeting. They are currently reviewing demographic reports.

**UCC Pension Boards:** Clayton is monitoring some billing issues.

**Community Garden :** Jeff email Jayne about taking on the duties of Community Garden Coordinator. She is very excited to do this. She will begin upon her return from Hawaii (sometime in April). Jennifer will contact the Coordinator from last year to express our thanks and explain we will not need their services in 2019.

## New Business

**Spring Cleanup :** May 4, 2019 has been chosen for this years' Spring cleanup date. Pastor Stuart wishes to be notified so he can arrange for some of the LCA members can be present to help.

**UCF Annual Report :** A copy of the UCF Annual Report will be file with the Council Minutes.

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## Gifts of the Heart

Thank you to all who donated items or money to February's Outreach: Gifts of the Heart! We collected 20 bars of soap, 9 tubes of toothpaste, 1 tube of hand lotion, 32 sticks of deodorant, 9 bottles of shampoo, 9 bottles of conditioner, 2 quilts and 13 bus passes. The items were divided between the Kennedy Pantry and the Jaguar Den for students in need. Both schools were very grateful to receive the donations.

Thank you,  
Dorelle

- 3 "Spring is the time of year when it is summer in the sun and winter in the shade." (Charles Dickens)
- 4 "The world is mud-luscious and puddle wonderful." (e.e. cummings)
- 5 "In the spring, at the end of the day, you should smell like dirt." (Margaret Atwood)

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## Bible Quiz

After Jesus raises Lazarus from death, what does his family do to thank Jesus?

- A. They host a dinner for him.
- B. Martha serves the meal.
- C. Mary anoints Jesus' feet with an extravagant amount of expensive perfume.
- D. All of the above.



Answer: D (See John 12:1-3.)

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## Let Laughter 'Spring' Forth!

- 1 "Spring is when you feel like whistling, even with a shoe full of slush." (Doug Larson)
- 2 "Easter is the only time when it's perfectly safe to put all of your eggs in one basket." (Evan Esar)

# MN Conference News

Pilgrim Point - a place so many of us love - experienced a fire last year that destroyed the dining hall. Many conversations were held regarding Pilgrim Point and its future. Ultimately two decisions were recommended to the board: 1) make a major capital investment of an estimated 3 million to convert the property to a year-round, adult retreat center or 2) sell Pilgrim Point and develop a new model for outdoor ministries in the Conference. After much discussion and prayer, the Board voted to sell the Pilgrim Point property and use the proceeds of the sale to support a new model of outdoor ministries and other missional priorities and core values of the conference. This was a difficult decision that was not made lightly.

This summer there is an opportunity to spend time at Pilgrim Point one last time. The Pilgrim Point Camp Committee and staff are excited to host two opportunities for individuals, families, and faith communities to gather on the shores of beautiful Lake Ida to play, picnic, reconnect, and remember.

Enjoy spending time with old friends and meeting new folks while enjoying picnic lunch, waterfront activities, group games and crafts, or simply being together in the welcoming space of Pilgrim Point.

The day will end with a Service of Blessing and Farewell at Vespers Point. The service will provide a space to remember and bless the ministry at Pilgrim Point that has nurtured and enriched the lives of generations of children, youth, families, and faith communities within the Minnesota Conference. The service will also include a formal litany of decommissioning.

The two days are either **Saturday, June 29, or Saturday, July 20**. Camp will be open 10 a.m. to 10 p.m. on each of these days. They are not able to provide overnight lodging at Pilgrim Point. . It would be wonderful if several of us from St. Mark's were able to go together. Stay tuned for more information to sign up.

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## **Global Ministries Mission Moment: (a ministry of the Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ): To Embrace and Love by Niko Sopepa**

Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him. Matthew 4:11

As we prepare for Easter, we cannot celebrate life in Jesus without acknowledging the pain and suffering around us. We cannot be prostrate at the foot of the cross without looking up to see the nails that tore through our Savior's flesh. How then can we worship God freely and truly when vicious human desire tears through humanity as a whole?

Fiji prides itself in being a Christian country and yet we fail to live up to the simplest Christian command to love your neighbor. Although this tiny island nation is thousands of miles away from the

nations that control the world's economy, we are sadly no different in our response to those who need a space to live – the refugees of our time.

Jesus, after going through an intense degree of fasting and being tested by the devil, was attended by angels. Matthew 4:11 says, "Then the devil left him, and angels came and attended him." The word angels in Greek also means messenger. The word attended or ministered in Greek also hints at helping from one's own means. The angels in Matthew were probably supernatural beings, or they could have been humans who attended to Jesus' needs out of love instead of deceiving him.



 God so loved the world

Remember God's special gift of Jesus by making this craft.

**What you need:**

- Large piece of blue paper
- Large bowl
- Pencil
- Scissors
- Paint (green and red)
- Paintbrush
- Wet wipes
- 3 wooden craft sticks
- Craft glue
- Black marker
- Bible



**What you do:**

1. On the paper, trace around the bowl. Cut out the circle.
2. Paint your palms green, one at a time, and press them in the circle side by side. (Clean your hands with wet wipes.)
3. Dip a finger in red paint and make a dot on the center of each handprint.
4. Between the handprints, glue two sticks end to end vertically. Glue the third stick horizontally to make a cross.
5. In marker, write the words of John 3:16 around the blue circle.



# Jesus gives us *life*

Through his death and resurrection, Jesus offers the free gift of eternal life.

*Directions: Match each clue from Holy Week with the correct image. If you get stuck, look up the Bible verses.*

People spread these on the road for Jesus. (Matthew 21:8)



Mary pours this on Jesus' feet. (John 12:3)



Jesus shares this with his disciples. (Matthew 26:26)



This is placed on Jesus' head. (John 19:2)



Soldiers may have used these to compete for Jesus' coat. (John 19:23-24)



Jesus carries this himself for a while. (John 19:17)



Marks caused by these help Thomas identify Jesus. (John 20:25)



While on the cross, Jesus is thirsty and is given this. (John 19:28-29)



This is rolled away from Jesus' tomb. (John 20:1)



These are used to prepare Jesus' body for burial. (Luke 23:55-56)



These remain in the tomb after Jesus rises. (John 20:6-7)



Judas betrays Jesus for this. (Matthew 26:14-15)



Answer: palm branches, perfume, bread, crown of thorns, dice, cross, nails, vinegar on a sponge, stone, spices, linens, silver coins

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Church of Christ*

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First Class

*The Messenger*  
*April 2019*

**St. Mark's United Church of Christ Mission Statement**

St. Mark's is a welcoming Christian community whose mission is to worship God, to proclaim the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to serve all humankind in the spirit of love.