

## Pastor's Message

Along with many others all over the world, I watched as a massive fire destroyed large parts of Notre Dame Cathedral in Paris, France . It was a sad day. And while many religious artifacts were saved - much was also lost. Grief was expressed by so many.

I was struck by the almost immediate response of the generous giving of money to rebuild Notre Dame. Millions and millions poured in - given to restore the church. The President of France promised the people of France -that Notre Dame would rise again.

A columnist at the Washington Post suggested that the fire was an “apt metaphor for the devastation of Christianity across Europe — and a warning for us in the United States”. He cited statistics that only 5% of Parisians attend church regularly. This is down from times past. The

same can be said for our nation as well. Church attendance is down over all - and mainline Protestant churches have seen the most decline.

This is not news. We can see the difference from days of old. But I don't believe that means that the church is dead. We often think of churches as buildings and as much as we might love our “churches” - the church is really “the people”. The church is where ever two or three are gathered in Jesus' name.

I am thankful for all churches - from the splendor of Notre Dame to our own beloved St. Mark's. I am even more thankful for “the church” - meaning all of you and all those who seek to walk in Jesus' ways.

Blessings,  
Jennifer

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## What's Happening

### **All Church Spring Clean Up Day May 4th**

Come join us as we care for our church. There are many tasks that need attention. Remember what your Grandma always said: Many hands make work light! Come join us from 9-12 noon. Light refreshments will be provided!

### **Blanket Sunday May 12th**

Last year, over 174,000 Church World Service Blankets and Kits were distributed throughout the world. This Mother's Day - we will once again offer an opportunity to donate to CWS. The

money you give will provide blankets for families fleeing their homes, recovering from disaster and more. This Mother's Day - let us “Blanket the World in Love!”

### **Community Garden**

Jayne Kainulainen is once again our community garden coordinator. Already she has been busy in the gardens preparing for another season. If you are interested in a garden plot - please contact her as soon as possible. As in the past - there will be a garden plot for growing vegetables for VEAP. This is another way in which we reach out to those in need by sharing of our bounty in the garden.

## 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.

## Presbyterian Homes Joint Choral Worship Service

May 19th at 3:00 pm – Dan Edgren and the St. Mark's Choir will join Nancy Boecher and her choir for a joint program at Presbyterian Homes. In case you didn't know – Dan and Nancy are siblings. This will be a wonderful service filled with music. You are all invited (even if you came to church that morning!). Presbyterian Homes is located on Penn Ave S and 99th.

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## April 9, 2019 Council Meeting Highlights

### Reports of the Ministry Team Leaders

**Spiritual Development Ministry:** Clarification of ages for the nursery during church service was discussed and it was concluded that the ages for children to attend should be 0-4 years old. Pastor Jennifer is also looking into holding confirmation sessions with some of our neighboring churches.

**Care and Nurture:** A church member is looking for transportation to and from the doctor's office for eye surgery.

**Outreach to Local and World Community:** Blanket Sunday will be held on Mother's Day.

**Building and Grounds:** May 4th will be the church clean-up day.

**Pastor's Report:** Pastor Jennifer has been working and planning Holy Week and planning for Palm Sunday. She is also planning for Holy Humor Sunday which is the

Sunday after Easter.

She also shared that the summer series will be coming up soon.

### Financial Reports

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

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

	March	YTD
Total Receipts:	7,266.00	20,771.00
Total Disbursement:	<u>9,207.66</u>	<u>28,165.34</u>
Difference:	(1,994.66)	(7,393.74)

### Unfinished Business

**Facebook Page:** Cindy has been working on the Facebook page and shared printed copies with the council of the Facebook page.

**Crossroads Update:** Jennifer shared that the Crossroads group has a meeting coming up after church on Sunday.

**Church Cleanup Day:** Cleanup day will be held on May 4. The council brainstormed several items that need to be done. There will be a list of items that need to be addressed during the cleanup that will take place from 9-noon.

## New Business

**Easter Breakfast:** The men are planning the Easter Breakfast.

**Easter Sunday Garden:** Plants are to be dropped off at church Saturday morning and

Cindy will help with the plant arrangements and hanging the banner up.

**Mary Linker Piano Lessons:** Mary Linker contacted Pastor Jennifer to inquire about the possibilities of using our church to provide private piano lessons that she is no longer able to provide at Washburn Elementary. The lessons would not interfere with other activities taking place at St. Mark's. The council agreed to have her lessons held at St. Mark's church.

**U.C.C. Conference:** We have two open spots for representatives from our church to attend the U.C.C. Conference on Wednesday and Thursday, June 7 and June 8. If you are interested in attending, please speak with Pastor Jennifer.

## People to Keep in Our Prayers

**Lavonne Olson,** at home recovering from viral pneumonia.

**Jack Vande Waa,** at home recovering from a blood clot.

**Laura Vande Waa,** as she adjusts to Assisted Living.

**Glen Paulsen,** recovering from a fall on the ice.

**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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## Mixed Blessing

Graduation day is tough for adults. They go to the ceremony as parents. They come home as contemporaries. After 22 years of child-raising, they are unemployed.

—Erma Bombeck



# Global Ministries Mission Moment:

## (a ministry of the Disciples of Christ and the United Church of Christ)

### “U Sabi Dance O” by NIA SULLIVAN

*You have turned my mourning into dancing; you have taken off my sackcloth and clothed me with joy, so that my soul may praise you and not be silent. O Lord my God, I will give thanks to you forever.*  
*Psalm 30:11-12*

Sierra Leonean music makes up the majority of what I listen to. Most mornings, if I sleep through the Islamic Azan at 5:00 am, the unique layering of percussion and rhythms of Salone music awaken me shortly after. Regardless of the genre, hearing music in the streets causes everyone to dance. Wherever there is music in Sierra Leone, dance surely accompanies it. Music and dance together play a significant role in how people interact, celebrate, mourn, tell stories, and worship.

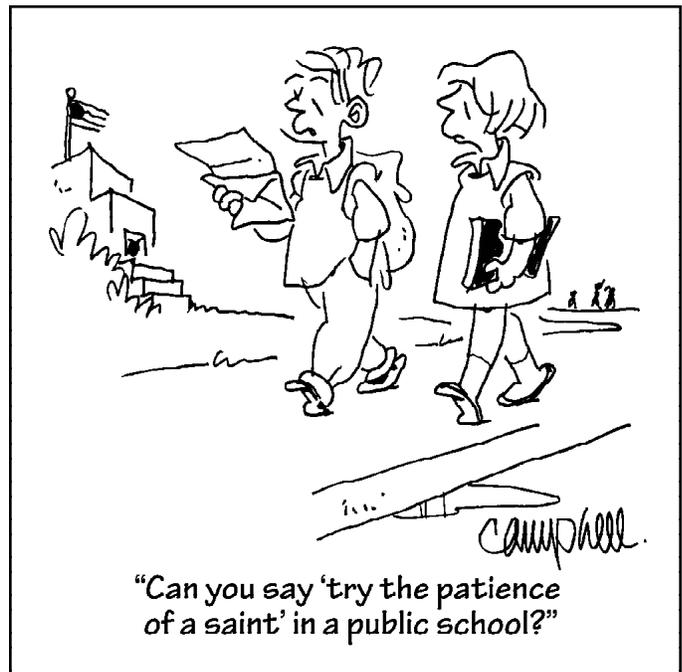
Every Sunday morning at my church in Makeni, we meet in the courtyard of a local primary school. When I arrive, a joyful atmosphere greets me. The scene is vibrant with walls decorated with colors from the national flag, children running and dancing, and congregants dressed in traditional fabrics. Loud worship music is heard from tall speakers and people sing along. The music has a tropical sound and is sung in different languages including Krio, Limba, Temne, and English. I’m greeted by my worship family with a hand squeeze or a hug, then prompted to join in the dancing. Dance, for some churches in Sierra Leone, is how people praise God and pray.

On my first Sunday at church, people assumed that I was from Sierra Leone because of my appearance, but my American accent and my poor Krio language skills revealed that I was an opoto (foreigner). Young children approached me with smiles and laughter, naming me the “black opoto.” While introducing themselves, people also started to instruct me on different dance moves. As we danced together holding hands and smiling, women yelled, “U sabi dance Oo! U na Salone titi now.”(You sabi dance! You are Sierra Leonian girl now!)

4 *The Messenger*

There are several ways to say thank you in the area I live in. The most common phrases are plenti t?nki, momo, and inwale. Each expression of gratitude applies directly to me, for I am thankful to God for my time in Sierra Leone.

*Nia Sullivan serves with the Council of Churches, Sierra Leone, Girls Access to Education Program (GATE).*



### Bible Quiz

In Matthew’s genealogy of Jesus, to what two women is Boaz connected?

- A. Rahab and Ruth
- B. Tamar and Rahab
- C. Ruth and Bathsheba
- D. Bathsheba and Mary



Answer: A (See Matthew 1:5.)



# HEART-SHAPED breakfast



Treat Mom with this yummy, beautiful yogurt parfait.

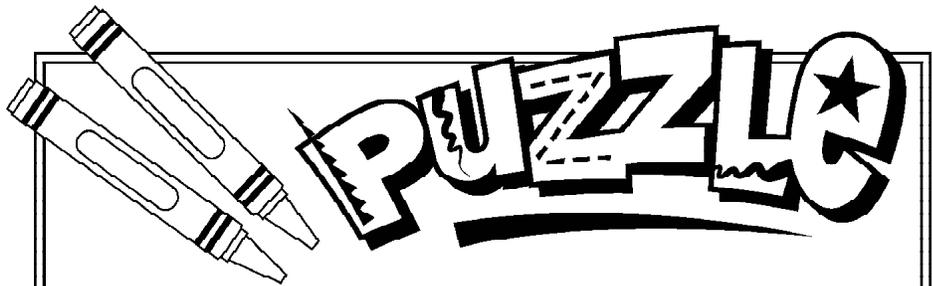


### What you need:

- Large heart-shaped cookie cutter
- Greek yogurt (any flavor)
- Toppings (mini chocolate chips, granola, shredded coconut, chia seeds, oats, slivered almonds, blueberries, sliced strawberries, raspberries, bananas)
- 2 teaspoons maple syrup

### What you do:

1. Place cookie cutter on a plate. Spoon in yogurt, spreading it to the edges of the cookie cutter.
2. Add toppings, making a nice design. Remove cookie cutter.
3. Drizzle syrup around the edge of the plate.
4. Serve to your mom on Mother's Day!



## A blessed woman

The last chapter of Proverbs describes a woman who loves God and strives to be a good wife and mother.

*Directions: Use the picture clues to complete Proverbs 31:15, 28.*

She gets \_\_\_\_\_ while it is still \_\_\_\_\_ ;



she provides \_\_\_\_\_ for her \_\_\_\_\_ ....



Her \_\_\_\_\_ rise \_\_\_\_\_ and



\_\_\_\_\_ her blessed.



PROVERBS 31:15, 28 (NIV)

Answer: up, night, food, family, children, up, call

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First Class

A stylized, grey graphic of a church steeple with a cross on top, positioned behind the title text.

*The Messenger*  
*May 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.