

# JULY/AUGUST 2020

## FROM THE PASTOR

*"And let us consider each other carefully for the purpose of sparking love and good deeds."*  
-Hebrews 10:24

Peace and blessings to you! I hope this newsletter finds you well and in relatively good spirits as we continue to make our way through this pandemic. It's been a challenging and long tough road some days.

The first six months of this year have been quite a year so far, especially these past few months. Starting out the year was great as we started our long awaited construction project. The work to repair the truss was completed last week with the carpet installs, so the only thing left to do is the cleanup. The "pause" mode in March for building usage due to COVID19 surely was not on our radar.

As I said the building project is near completion. Basically, what is left is the clean-up and then returning things to their proper homes after being stored away. This can be challenging as we continue to social distance ourselves. Thank you to all those who continue to social distance and for wearing mask.

The session and I have been watching closely and evaluating the building reopening with great anticipation. We all want the building to reopen soon, but we want to do it in the safest way possible. Supplies, such as hand sanitizer stations, bottles of sanitizers and hand wipes are slowly trickling in from our orders.

There are still concerns with opening the building as the number of cases in COVID are on the rise in Wayne County. Last week 21 new cases of COVID19 were report for the time period of June 23-June 28<sup>th</sup>. *As of Monday, July 29<sup>th</sup> there were 157 total case of COVID19 in Wayne County, so the 21 new cases represent over a 14% increase in less than one week.* Yesterday there were an additional 6 new cases, taking the total count to 163. The total number of deaths is 4. The numbers seem to be going in the wrong direction. We are paying close attention to these details as we discuss our reopening plans.

*(Continued on page 4)*



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# July Birthdays

## CHURCH Family Life News

5

Lynn Blodgett  
Lucy Humphrey

7

Lindsay Lotz

9

Marge Cseplo

15

Quinlan Cole

18

Lee Lang

20

Kris Bald

26

Paul Cole

27

Autumn Cole  
Russ Watson

Hello Church Friends,

Last month, Rev. Christopher and our team hosted our second ice cream social, using Zoom. Unfortunately, we chose the date, prior to learning that the Newark 2020 graduates would be caravanning through town. Naturally, some of our congregants wanted to cheer and congratulate the students, so our numbers were fewer. Since the session has agreed that our church shall remain closed for the time being, our team has decided to invite you to another Zoom gathering on Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup>, at 6:30. While we know that this way of connecting is not possible for some, we hope that it is a help to those of you who can, or to other attendees that may be feeling isolated.

In that vein, I'm suggesting that each of us look through the church directory and phone someone from church in the upcoming weeks, who might appreciate a call, a card, or a kindness. I know that some of you already have a practice of doing this. Our deacons do a fine job of visiting some of our members, but now all of us have been affected by this period of isolation. I spoke with Sue Bouwens on Sunday and learned that her husband, Jake, has now returned home from the hospital and is recovering from a nasty fall that required over 40 stitches in his arm. His stitches are now removed, but he still needs to heal. He is receiving PT and has a visiting nurse come three times a week. Sue said she would welcome hearing from us. Anne Rogers also mentioned that she believes that Marge Cseplo and Thelma Vermeulen might appreciate being contacted. Now, anyone, healthy or not, might like to hear a friendly voice. As our favorite song kind of goes, let's make the light of God, shine on SOMEONE today, and every day!

Upcoming Events:

**Virtual Zoom Ice Cream Social on Friday, July 10<sup>th</sup> at 6:30:** Look for the Zoom link to join us with your own treat to connect with others. We welcome your friends and pets!

Cheryl Lotz  
Church Family Life Team Leader



# Mission Minute

Natalie and I took socks to ABCD in Williamson. Our church family and friends donated 302 pairs of socks for members of migrant farmworker families. The children of the workers attend this nursery and preschool. The Mission Team thanks everyone for participating.

Park Church has been a mission partner with Laurel House, since the beginning. Laurel House is a comfort care home in Newark, providing care free of charge, in a warm and compassionate environment. Loved ones are able to visit the residents, with restrictions at this time.

The House closed temporarily due to COVID restrictions and has just reopened. There have been three residents there during June. Volunteers include Natalie Lemmon and Sandi Marcano. Currently, there is a Virtual 5k fundraiser planned for early July.

A pulled pork dinner is taking place Sunday, July 12, at the parking lot at the corner of East Ave. and East Union. Serving will be 11 to 1.

The Legacy Garden Project is a county-wide effort to create a paved patio at the Laurel House. Benches are being donated by the Boy Scouts, to complement the personalized paving bricks. For information on the Legacy Garden Project, email [cindalisanto@gmail.com](mailto:cindalisanto@gmail.com)

Anyone wishing to volunteer may contact Laci Graham at 315.573.7028.

*Sandi Marcano*  
*Mission Elder*

# Our Condolences

It has come to our attention that longtime Park Church member Gerry Reed passed away in early May.

Gerry was a fixture in the church and worked as the groundskeeper for many years. He is survived by his daughter and numerous grand and great-grandchildren. He will be sorely missed.

## August Birthdays

**2**

Eli Coleman

**4**

Marian Maxwell  
Anne Rogers

**7**

Esther Hylkema

**10**

ET Trunick

**20**

Don Hanagan

**22**

Laura Ehle

**23**

Jessica Burgess  
Ed Lotz

**24**

Roxanne Shay

**26**

Laurie Seely

**27**

Thelma Vermeulen

**30**

Jamie Harris  
David Scott

**31**

Thurlow Hammond

*(Continued from page 1, From the Pastor)*

What does this mean for the church?

## 2020 Session MEMBERS

**Pastor:**

Christopher Mergener

**Clerk of Session:**

Cari Taylor

Cindy Best

Paul Salisbury

Sandi Marciano

Dale Groover

Scott Blondell

Cheryl Lotz

Karen Cameron

The session will continue to monitor the situation to make informed, intelligent and smart decisions. I know everyone wants to know an exact date that we will reopen and at this time that is still unknown. We'd like to give you an opening date soon and hopefully that will come sooner rather than later. **We hear your concerns and recognize your strong emotions, both for the opening of the church and for waiting to reopen. There is a very broad spectrum which covers both sides (to open verses remain closed) and we ask that you respect each-others views.** As a session we have to take all accounts into action as we make the decision. *Park Church's decision will not be driven by what others are doing but by what the session at Park Church feels is right.* What we don't want to do is open the church and then have to close the church due to continued growth of the virus in the community or worse yet having our members become infected. COVID19 is a very serious problem and continues to be a problem. I think it is important to recognize that a vast majority of our population is in the high-risk group and that plays into our decision. It is a tough decision to make and *we are relying on God's guidance in this process.* When the church re-opens we will be practicing social distancing, so there will not be gatherings before or after the service for fellowship.

Personally, I have noticed when I make grocery runs and errands that many in the community (including some Park Church members) have relaxed their social distance practices. Gatherings have started to take place without the use of mask and maintaining the 6-foot rule. This concerns me with the spread of the virus. We all need to continue wearing mask and to practice social distancing for the virus to be brought under control. Hopefully last week's county wide growth period was isolated to just that week. Only time will tell.

What can we do in the meantime?

We plan to continue our on-line Facebook services. We realize that not all can participate and that we need to reach out to those who cannot participate. Calls, cards and facetimeing with those who cannot attend, as Cheryl Lotz suggested in her Family Life Article are good ways to continue to include those who cannot attend the live feeds. The Zoom Coffee hours usually average about 12 people. Why not join in if you are not already? Going forward, we will offer them from 11:00am-11:30am. If you haven't participated and miss the fellowship this is the next best thing to live in-person contact. Maybe we can organize a car parade to go around to people's houses who can't participate to remind them that they are not forgotten? We are always open for fun and creative ways to include all , so please bring your ideas forward to the Church Family Life team!

*(Continued on page 5)*

## 2020 Deacons

Gil Burgess

Holly Burgess

Steve Mitchell

Sue Rowe

Deb McCrossen

Natalie Lemmon

Ellie Foote

Carol Thurston

Judy Leone

*(Continued from page 4, From the Pastor)*

We will continue to update you in writing as more information becomes available on the church's reopening. As Paul said in his letter to the Romans, "*Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, and faithful in prayer*" (Romans 12:12). Please be patient, loving and kind to each other as we continue work our way through this pandemic.

*Peace in Christ-  
Rev. Christopher*

## PROPERTY Team

As I write this update the new flooring adhesive is literally curing in two upstairs classrooms, the lounge, the kitchenette and the east and south entrances. The flooring work was completed by Spectrum Flooring on Friday, June 26, wrapping up the major repairs/replacements brought about by the failed roof truss. What began as "an uncharted journey in rough waters" in February 2019 has ended with our ship still upright and anchored in safe harbor. Phew!

Many thanks to all who've had a part in this process. From the structural and design staff at HSE Engineering, Frank J. Marianacci General Contracting, our legal representative Allan Reeve, insurance estimators, Jeanne and Paul Salisbury, ET, Property Team, Pastor Christopher, Kris Bald for her financial expertise, Park congregants and especially Rick Bald for managing and guiding the project through to its successful completion. THANK YOU. THANK YOU.

There are still some details to take care of to get everything into a ready-to-go, throw open the doors state – mostly cleaning and sanitizing, resettling furniture, paint touch-ups and some light housekeeping. It's been a journey.

Now, on to another journey in more uncharted waters. There seems to be a pattern here...

Currently, the church building is closed due to state mandates brought on by COVID-19 risks, with no definitive date set for reopening. That'll be addressed in another part of the newsletter.

In the meantime we're putting together a plan for the eventual reopening of Park Church, looking at all aspects of how we worship in the sanctuary, utilize spaces and move about the building. It's a large task, and one we're taking very seriously. We want you to know that every detail is being looked at with the end goal of making the church as safe as possible for all to attend in-person worship and activities.

*Scott Blondell, Elder  
Property Team chair*

## How to CONTACT Pastor CHRISTOPHER

[pastornppc@gmail.com](mailto:pastornppc@gmail.com)  
EMAIL ADDRESS

315-664-2573  
CELL PHONE NUMBER

Facebook Messenger  
(PLEASE ADD HIM!)

## Online Giving

We are currently in the final phases of setting up our online giving program which will be managed by The Presbytery Foundation. Our church will be able to easily accept secure online donations through the Foundation's online giving system. The program will allow for easy, simple and safe transactions for giving, via our website, by electronic funds transfers, and debit or credit card transactions. Watch for details coming soon!

# Presbyterian Women

The Presbyterian Women's Coordinating Team met via video conferencing and conference calls June 26.

Planned PW events for the rest of 2020 have been postponed or cancelled:

- PW Luncheons—will not gather in person, but may plan online meetings on our regularly scheduled luncheon dates—the second Mondays of the month, starting in September.
- Rummage Sale—on hold.
- Christmas Bazaar—postponed until 2021.
- Women's Fall Community Tea—postponed until 2021.

We look forward to the new PW Bible Study starting this fall, with Christine Stephens leading "Into the Light: Finding Hope Through Prayers of Lament". Let Christine know if you'll be joining the study (most likely meeting virtually) and if you need a study guide—she will place a group order for guides soon.

To follow our PW creed of "working for justice and peace", the Coordinating Team encourages all PW to add the book, "How to be an AntiRacist", by Ibram X. Kendi to your reading list. "Kendi dissects why in a society where so few people consider themselves to be racist the divisions and inequalities of racism remain so prevalent. How to Be an Antiracist punctures the myths of a post-racial America, examining what racism really is—and what we should do about it." (Review from Time.) Hardcover books are in stock from Amazon and Barnes & Noble; the title is also available for E-readers and as an audiobook. Pastor Christopher will be leading a Zoom book study, on Thursdays at noon—July 9th, 16th, 23rd. Please contact the office (331-2255) for more information and to sign up for this important and timely book study.

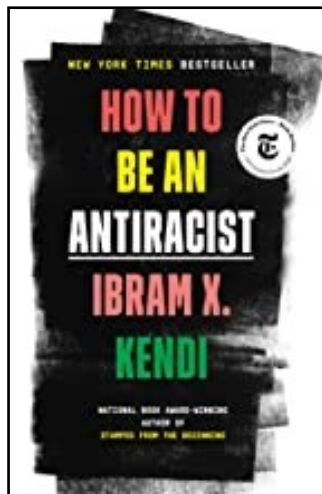
The next Coordinating Team meeting is tentatively scheduled for noon, Monday, September 14, via GoToMeeting video conferencing/conference phone call, hosted by Mary Cree. Let Mary know if you are available to meet with us.

Thank you for your support of Presbyterian Women and our purpose to nurture our faith, support the mission of the church worldwide, work for justice and peace, and build an inclusive, caring community of women that strengthens the PC(USA) and witnesses to the promise of God's kingdom.

Stay healthy & safe, everyone!

Deb Compher & Mary Cree  
Your PW Co-Moderators

# BOOK STUDY/*Discussions*



“What’s the problem with being “not racist”? It is a claim that signifies neutrality: ‘I am not a racist, but neither am I aggressively against racism.’ But there is no neutrality in the racism struggle. The opposite of “racist” isn’t “not racist.” It is “antiracist.” What’s the difference? One endorses either the idea of a racial hierarchy as a racist, or racial equality as an antiracist. One either believes problems are rooted in groups of people, as a racist, or locates the roots of the problems in power and policies, as an antiracist.”

Ibram X Kendi states in his book “How To Be An Anti-Racist”

This book study/discussion group will begin on July 9<sup>th</sup> at 12:00 pm. It will be a 3-week commitment. This book came onto my radar as several of my pastor friends recommended it as a way of educating people on what we each can do in the aftermath of the unfortunate and tragic George Floyd incident.

I knew instantly that this was a book that should be shared broadly, with as many concerned folks as possible, who have been left with a flurry of “thoughts and prayers” and wondering what to do next. We must begin the dialog on now how we can be impactful in a positive way to correct this continued and growing problem in our society.

Please consider reading this book and joining in the discussion. Books can be ordered through Amazon in print or kindle form. If you need help obtaining the book, please contact the office via email or phone and we will be glad to assist you in getting you a copy of the book.

# JULY 2020

SUNDAY

MONDAY


TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

SATURDAY

			1	2	3	4 Independence Day 
5 Lynn Blodgett Lucy Humphrey	6	7 Lindsay Lotz	8	9 Marge Cseplo	10	11
12	13	14	15 Quinlan Cole	16	17	18 Lee Lang
19	20 Kris Bald	21	22	23	24	25
26 Paul Cole	27 Autumn Cole Russ Watson	28	29	30	31	



# August 2020

SUNDAY

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

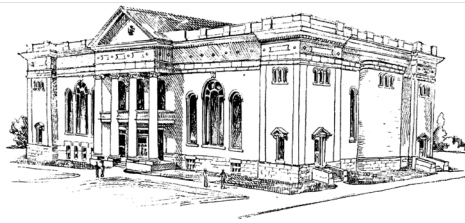
SATURDAY

						1
2 Eli Coleman	3	4 Marian Maxwell Anne Rogers	5	6	7 Ester Hylkema	8
9	10 ET Trunick	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 Don Hanagan	21	22 Laura Ehle
23 Jessica Burgess Ed Lotz	24 Roxanne Shay	25	26 Laurie Seely	27 Thelma Vermeulen	28	29
30 Jamie Harris David Scott	31 Thurlow Hammond					

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***“We will make Christ visible  
by believing, living and  
sharing the word of God.”***



Be sure to check out our social media sites for a way to see the Sunday Services.

Facebook is at: [www.facebook.com/parkchurch110/](https://www.facebook.com/parkchurch110/)

(Be sure to like and follow to get notifications when we go live.)

Find us on YouTube by searching for Newark Park Presbyterian.

(Subscribe and click the notification bell to find out when we post new videos.)

