

# CONGO COMMENTS

The Congregational Church of Detroit Lakes, Minnesota, United Church of Christ

April, 2019

## APRIL HAPPENINGS!

### MEN'S BREAKFAST

Saturday, April 6<sup>th</sup>, at  
8:00 a.m. at the Holiday Inn.

### WOMEN'S BREAKFAST

Saturday, April 13<sup>th</sup>, at  
9:00 a.m. at the Holiday Inn.

*More happenings on page 5*

*Happy Easter!*

**He is not here,  
For he has risen!**

*Luke 24:6*



900 Lake Avenue • P.O. Box 642  
Detroit Lakes, MN 56502  
218-847-4609

[www.detroitlakesucc.org](http://www.detroitlakesucc.org)

[dlcongo@msn.com](mailto:dlcongo@msn.com)



## REMARKS

I write this column on the first day of spring. 12 hours of daylight. And a beautiful blue sky, too. Awesome! Maybe it's because we live in Northern Minnesota, but every year our bodies and spirits greet this season with a significant measure of astonishment. Could winter finally be over? Apparently we've not yet learned to trust the rhythm of nature. Maybe a tiny seed of suspicion is tucked into the deep recesses of our souls: Will this be the year Mother Nature passes us by? *Oh ye of little faith*, Jesus scolded his disciples when they forgot to trust. Yes, spring is here. The snow piles will melt, and winter will pass.

This transition of seasons reminds me, and perhaps you, too, that our world is desperately in need of a transition. My heart continues to ache following the massacre of worshipers in Christchurch, New Zealand. What can we say? What can we do? Among other things, we can pray. If prayer can promote healing in us individually, why not in our troubled world? Our thoughts immediately turn to wondering what we can possibly pray in the wake of such atrocities. I came across the following prayer, written by Rabbi Harold S. Kushner, author of When Bad Things Happen to Good People. Perhaps it will provide some guidance, in spring and every season of the year, and of life.

### ***A Prayer for the World***

*Let the rain come and wash away ancient grudges,  
the bitter hatreds held and nurtured by generations.*

*Let the rain wash away the memory of hurt, the neglect.*

*Then let the sun come out and fill the sky with rainbows.*

*Let the warmth of the sun heal us wherever we are broken.*

*Let it burn away the fog so that we can see each other clearly,  
so that we can see beyond labels, beyond accents, gender or skin color.*

*Let the warmth and brightness of the sun melt our selfishness,  
so that we can share the joys and feel the sorrows of our neighbors.*

*And let the light of the sun be so strong that we will see all peoples  
as our neighbors.*

*Let the earth, nourished by rain, bring forth flowers to surround  
us with beauty.*

*And let the mountains teach our hearts to reach upward to heaven.  
Amen.*

Grace and Peace,

*Rev. Mark*

## APRIL GREETERS

07 – Mary & Walt Kulberg  
14 – Shar & Paul Legenhausen  
21 – Shar & Paul Legenhausen  
28 – Cyndie Blaha & Kay Hartness

## APRIL USHERS

07 – Collene & Bill Bares  
14 – Carol Moore & Diane Pederson  
21 – Carol Moore & Diane Pederson  
28 – Fran & Phil Johnson

## APRIL FRIENDSHIP TIME

07 – Shawna Vareberg & Sherlene Williams  
14 – JoAnn Knapp & Sue Dahring  
21 – Ed Gehrke & Rikki Given  
28 – Pete Johnson & Patti Kay VonWillard

## APRIL ALTAR FLOWERS

07 – Lent  
14 – Palm Sunday  
21 – Easter  
28 – Open

## COURTESY GROUPS

Leaders for April, May and June:

**Bob & Linda Brockmann  
and Sherlene Williams**

### Guidelines for Courtesy Group members

1. Every local church member and family is assigned to a Courtesy Group.
2. Your Group serves Friendship Time three consecutive months of the year and you will be asked to take a turn serving Sunday Friendship Time. Assignments will be sent to you prior to the month you serve.
3. Your Group Leaders may contact you to provide food or service in case of a funeral or special event, if your Group comes up in rotation.



### CHURCH OFFICE HOURS:

9:00 to 12:00 noon on Mon., Tues.,  
Wed. Call ahead if you need to enter the  
church at another time.

### CHURCH OFFICE: 218-847-4609

David Moen, Moderator  
Lynn Anderson, Vice Moderator  
Karen Rosby, Clerk  
Gini Kleingartner, Financial Administrator

Renee Holm, Music Director  
Joy Herbst, Custodian  
Carlene Hisgun, Administrative Assistant  
Rev. Mark Kuether, Minister

### SUNDAY SCHEDULE

10:00 a.m. Worship  
11:00 a.m. Friendship Time

## ONE GREAT HOUR OF SHARING

We will receive this year's One Great Hour of Sharing offering on **Sunday, March 31**. Because of responses from UCC congregations, in 2018 we provided disaster relief in various places around the world: Hurricanes in Puerto Rico, the US Virgin Islands, North Carolina, Texas and Florida; Fires in California; Earthquakes in Mexico, Indonesia and Haiti; Flooding in El Salvador, Hawaii and South India; and Volcanoes in Guatemala, just to name a few. We also helped people who were displaced from their homes due to conflict and violence. The positive impact of the OGHS offering is **more than we can imagine**. Together, we do a lot of good in this world. Thank you for supporting OGHS in the past. You are warmly encouraged to prayerfully consider making a gift on March 31. Interested in learning more? Go to [ucc.org/oghs](http://ucc.org/oghs).

## APRIL BIRTHDAYS

|    |                        |
|----|------------------------|
| 01 | Bill Bares             |
| 02 | Aubreanna Christensen  |
| 03 | Sharon Sinclair        |
| 05 | James Sinclair         |
| 06 | Christian Tigges       |
| 07 | McKenna Ruchti-Westrum |
| 08 | Carol Moore            |
| 08 | Sue Dahring            |
| 09 | Dustin Johnson         |
| 12 | Cooper Moore           |
| 16 | Loren Nelson           |
| 18 | Alan Swedberg          |
| 19 | Rachel Nustad          |
| 22 | Teresa Kuether         |

## FACEBOOK



We are still looking for one more person to help be an administrator for our page. Contact Carlene if you are interested.

Search for ***Congregational Church of Detroit Lakes*** or use @uccdl to tag or search for us. Please feel free to like, share and comment on any photos and posts we share.

## SPRING FEVER

IT'S SPRING FEVER. THAT IS  
WHAT THE NAME OF IT IS. AND  
WHEN YOU'VE GOT IT, YOU WANT  
-- OH, YOU DON'T QUITE KNOW  
WHAT IT IS YOU DO WANT, BUT IT  
JUST FAIRLY MAKES YOUR HEART  
ACHE, YOU WANT IT SO!

~ MARK TWAIN

## IN CASE OF AN EMERGENCY

If you are a member of the congregation and do not have family in the area, we'd like to help. The church is compiling a list of contact information of who should be informed in the event of an emergency. Please contact Carlene in the church office, or leave a note on her desk with your name, contact name(s), phone number and email address.

## BECKER COUNTY FOOD PANTRY

We are collecting **bar soap** during the month of April. Please keep this in mind as you are shopping.

Thank you for your generosity!

~ Sue and Mark Geihl

## QUESTION FOR YOU

The Diaconate has a question for you, the Congregation. Are you interested in helping to minister to those members who have experienced grief, illness, health issues and those that are unable to attend church services?

Pastors want to provide ongoing care to everyone who needs it, and a team of lay caregivers can make that a reality. Equipping lay people to minister to hurting people is highly effective and a biblical way to ensure that those in need of Christ centered care receive it. Perhaps some of you have heard of Stephen Ministries.

Please share your thoughts on this with a Diaconate member: Lynn Anderson, Niki Strom, Sherlene Williams, Patti Kay VonWillard, and Rev Mark.

If there is enough interest to participate in this venture, we will get more information and move forward with setting up a Stephen Ministries Program.

## VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We are looking for volunteers to pick up and/or take home members that are unable to drive themselves to church or church functions. If you are able to do so please contact Lynn Anderson at 218-847-9114.

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## WHAT'S THE FINANCIAL TEMPERATURE?

|                       | February, 2019     | YTD                |
|-----------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| GENERAL OFFERING      | \$5,333.00         | \$18,529.00        |
| LOOSE OFFERING        | \$30.00            | \$85.00            |
| OTHER CONTRIBUTIONS   | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| WE CARE               | \$0.00             | \$0.00             |
| MNKOTA RECYCLING      | \$0.00             | \$18.14            |
| BUILDING USE REVENUE  | \$25.00            | \$50.00            |
| INTEREST INCOME       | \$0.16             | \$0.42             |
| <b>TOTAL REVENUE</b>  | <b>\$5,413.16</b>  | <b>\$18,681.56</b> |
| <b>TOTAL EXPENSES</b> | <b>\$13,728.58</b> | <b>\$27,831.28</b> |

### Commentary:

There are certain signs that the bitterness of winter has left us. Robins returned, swans are arriving, and suddenly a not so pleasant smell of a skunk has appeared, a sure sign!! If we can assume that winter is for the most part behind us, then it is time to refresh and re-energize. While doing so, we need to remain on task about our obligations. The above suggests that the winter took its toll. We can do better, and we will.

### **"What Shall We Bring?" STEWARDSHIP, 2019**

Marv Enslin, Board for Stewardship

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## COLD AND WIND AND SNOW, OH MY!

The decision to cancel worship because of the weather is a tough one. We did so on February 24. Then we did so again on March 10. Predicting road conditions and safety is at least as difficult as predicting the weather. Conditions in town are sometimes quite different from conditions outside of town. When the decision to cancel worship is made, the information is shared via an email blast to all members for whom we have email addresses, WDAY television, DL-online and KDLM radio. We also post it on our Facebook page as quickly as we're able to do so. To state what I hope is obvious: If you look out your window on a Sunday morning and see harsh weather, and are questioning whether it's a safe/wise decision to leave the comfort of your home to come to church, it's probably a good idea to stay home. Now you also have a few places to check to see if worship has been cancelled.

One more thing: As you're able to guess, the increased need for snow removal here at church has placed some added pressure on our budget. We're all hopeful we're about done with the season of snow for the year, but I recall a snow day from school on April 23 a few years back. But I don't want to talk about that...

~ Rev. Mark



# Holy Week

Please join us as we observe **Palm/Passion Sunday** on April 14.  
We'll celebrate with our annual *Procession of Palms*.

*The Congo Brass* will help lead us in worship.

Our **Holy Thursday** observance will be in our Sanctuary at 7:00 p.m. on April 18.  
Our focus will be the *The Lord's Supper -- Holy Communion*.

We'll contemplate DaVinci's painting *The Last Supper*. Among other questions,  
we'll ask, *Who's missing from that beautiful painting?*

We will host this year's Tri-Church **Good Friday** worship event. A *Tenebrae* service  
will be held in our Sanctuary on April 19 beginning at 7:30 p.m. The *Tri-Church  
Choir* will add a meaningful dimension to this powerful worship event.

Our **Easter Morning** celebration will be April 21.

The best way to bring Lent to a close, after the many and varied events of the previous  
40 days, including Holy Week, is with a joyous celebration.  
This is our plan for Easter Morning: to celebrate the resurrection.

You're warmly invited to join your church family as we observe and  
celebrate Holy Week and Easter.

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## ***Reminder from Diaconate***

Order your Easter flowers now. Deadline is **April 6<sup>th</sup>**.

*Classic White Lilies 6" - \$10.00 • Triple Classic White 10" - \$45.00 • Asiatic Lilies Pastel Colors 6' - \$13.00*

Signup sheet is in the Narthex.

## THANK YOU

Thank you to all my Church Family for the loving Valentine. It really warmed my heart! I truly hope this bitter, cold, winter weather eases into a nice warm spring before long and I'm sure you do too. I've been in semi-hibernation long enough.

With love and God's blessings to all,

Mary Ault

## SHORT STORIES BY JESUS

Biblically speaking, Jesus told 46 parables. That's according to one scholar, anyway. If you enjoy/are intrigued by/are troubled by/are not sure what to make of some of Jesus' more familiar stories, this year's Lenten series is for you. We gather on Wednesday evenings at 5:30. We start with a wonderful meal while enjoying some great conversation around our tables in Fellowship Hall. At around 6:15 we watch a 10-12 minute video segment about one of Jesus' parables. The six-part series is called *Short Stories by Jesus*. Amy-Jill Levine, Professor of New Testament Studies at Vanderbilt Divinity School, is our guide, and she's terrific. On [March 27](#) we'll consider [The Mustard Seed](#); on [April 3](#) [The Laborers in the Vineyard](#); and on [April 10](#) [The Widow and the Judge](#). How are we to read Jesus' provocative parables? How might original audiences have understood these stories? How might we today? These are very interesting conversations. Each night is a stand-alone study, so even if you missed out on the first three, I hope you'll join us.

~ Rev. Mark

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### *A Prayer in Celebration of Spring*

*We celebrate spring's returning and rejuvenation of the natural world.*

*Let us be moved by this vast and gentle insistence that goodness shall return,*

*that warmth and life shall succeed,*

*and help us understand our place within this miracle.*

*Let us see as a bird builds its nest, bravely,  
with bits and pieces,*

*so must we build human faith.*

*It is our simple duty; it is the highest art;*

*it is our natural and vital role within the miracle of spring:  
the creation of faith.*

*Amen.*

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If you have something you would like to share in the Congo Comments, you can drop it off in the office or email it to [dlcongo@msn.com](mailto:dlcongo@msn.com).

Information for May's issue must be received by Sunday, April 28<sup>th</sup>.

## APRIL HIGHLIGHTS

**April 2 –**

Bible Study Noon

**April 3 –**

Supper 5:30, Worship 6:15,

Choir 7:00

**April 6 –**

Men's Breakfast 8:00

**April 10 –**

Boards 4:30, Supper 5:30

Worship 6:15, Choir 7:00

**April 13 –**

Women's Breakfast 9:00

**April 16 –**

Bible Study Noon

**April 17 –**

Council 5:30, Choir 6:30

**April 18 – Holy Thursday**

Worship 7:00

**April 19 – Good Friday**

Worship 7:30

**April 21 – Easter Sunday**

Worship 10:00

**April 23 –**

Bible Study Noon

**April 24 –**

Choir 6:30

**April 30 –**

Bible Study Noon