

Calendar of Events

SEPTEMBER

Sabbatical Celebration Reception - September 03
Annual Fundraiser - September 23
Fall Bible Study begins - September 27
Heartland Conference Annual Gathering - September 29-30

OCTOBER

World Communion Sunday - October 1
Holy Land: Part 1 - Israel - October 1
Holy Land: Part 2 - Palestine - October 8
Mobile Mammogram - October 13
Stewardship Campaign Kickoff - October 15
The Book of Exodus & the Black Church - October 29

NOVEMBER

All Saints' Sunday - November 5
50-year Member Recognition - November 5
Laity Sunday - November 12
Fall Congregational Meeting - November 12
Consecration Sunday - November 12
Community Cupboard Turkey Giveaway - November 18
Living Water Association Annual Meeting - November 18
Women's Retreat - November 18-19
Rise Against Hunger Meal Packing - November 19
Interfaith Thanksgiving Worship - November 21
Advent Study @ CUMC begins - November 29

DECEMBER

Visit with Santa Coffee Hour - December 03
Christmas Pageant - December 10
MOPS Christmas Store - December 9, 16
The Gospel of Mark Storytelling Event - December 17
Longest Night @ CUMC - December 21
Christmas Eve Candlelight Worship - December 24

JANUARY 2024

Pastor Jason Sabbatical Return - January 2
Ephiphany - January 7
Sabbatical Celebration Worship & Meal - January 7
3rd Sunday: Pastor Jason's Sabbatical Presentation - January 21

The Good News

Quarterly Newsletter of West Park United Church of Christ

2023
SABBATICAL
SPECIAL



**WEST PARK UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST**

An Open and Affirming Congregation

3909 Rocky River Drive
Cleveland, Ohio 44111
www.westparkucc.org

Following Christ, Caring for All, Growing Together



IN MY HEAD: thoughts from Pastor Jason

Dear Friends,

Over the last eighteen months, we have talked a lot about sabbatical. I have worked closely with Church Council and our Sabbatical Planning Team creating a plan that I truly believe will serve our church well.

Our Sabbatical Team has hired two part-time Sabbatical Pastors to oversee worship and administration. The Rev. Charlotte Noble will serve from September 10 - November 7 and December 10 - January 2. The Rev. Paul Barbins will serve from November 8 - December 9. Our staff will continue to provide our church with meaningful worship and faith-focused learning. I am fully confident that our Moderator Clarence Chavers and Vice Moderator Mandi Salvino are well equipped to lead you while I am away.

Pray that this time will be refreshing and invigorating. My prayer is that I would come back after this sabbatical spiritually rejuvenated, having received fresh insight from God and vision for the future of our church. Pray that my time will give me new learning and perspective. Pray that I can rest. I pray that I not only benefit from my sabbatical time, but my family will benefit as well. Pray that I can make the best use of my time in furthering my relationship with Christ.

Finally, pray for Pastor Jim, Pastor Charlotte and Pastor Paul. Please pray for all our lay leaders who will serve and lead our congregation. Offer your constructive help. Strengthen them in ministry. The Apostle Paul reminds us, "Therefore encourage one another and build up each other, as indeed you are doing" (1 Thessalonians 5:11).

I especially want to acknowledge the work of our Sabbatical Team. They have been diligently at work for many long hours preparing for this upcoming season in the life of our church. I ask you to join me in prayer for each of them as they continue their work: Erin Armstrong, Clarence Chavers, Pastor Jim Furry, Robin Jessen, Peter Makari, Dan Moreland, Margaret Owens and Mandi Salvino.

I know by the end of the year I will be longing to be back with you. But I'm also anticipating connection with God in perhaps the deepest measure I have ever known.

May God continue to light our path together.

Pastor Jason

2023 Advent Study

Our joint four-week study with Christ United Methodist Church will take place on each Wednesday night during Advent (November 29, December 6, 13, 20). Each evening will begin with a soup supper from 6-6:30pm followed by our book study from 6:30-7:30pm. This year's study guide will be *An Unlikely Advent: Extraordinary People of the Christmas Story*, by Rachel Billups. Materials will be available for purchase at a discounted price in mid-November from Robin Jessen or the church office. This study will take place at Christ UMC (3625 West 138th Street).

Called to Care Team

For pastoral care emergencies, we will have a new system in place beginning in September. You may call 216.210.5936 and one of the members of our Called to Care Team will be on hand to assist you.

Questions about sabbatical?

WestParkUCC.org/sabbatical

A Night of Movie Magic

WEST PARK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Congregation

PRESENTS

A NIGHT OF MOVIE MAGIC

SEPTEMBER 23, 2023 | 5:30 - 9PM
BARTER HALL

TICKETS
ADULTS: \$20; 12-18: \$10
CHILDREN UNDER 12: \$5
CHILDREN UNDER 5: FREE

WEST PARK UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
An Open and Affirming Congregation

MOVIE-THEMED MENU

"JULIE & JULIA": BEEF BOURGUIGNON
"LADY AND THE TRAMP": SPAGHETTI AND MEATBALLS
"MYSTIC PIZZA": ASSORTED PIZZAS
"LORD OF THE RINGS": MASHED POTATOES
"FORREST GUMP": SHRIMP SALAD
"WHEN HARRY MET SALLY": APPLE PIE

VEGAN FOOD OPTIONS AVAILABLE!

Community Cupboard



September Volunteer Opportunities

Wednesday, September 6: 12:30pm - Truck Day
Friday, September 8: 3:00pm - Prep Day
Saturday, September 9: 9:00am - Pantry Day
Friday, September 15: 3:00pm - Prep Day
Saturday, September 16: 9:00am - Pantry Day

October Volunteer Opportunities

Wednesday, October 11: 12:30pm - Truck Day
Friday, October 13: 3:00pm - Prep Day
Saturday, October 14: 9:00am - Pantry Day
Friday, October 20: 3:00pm - Prep Day
Saturday, October 21: 9:00am - Pantry Day

November Volunteer Opportunities

Wednesday, November 8: 12:30pm - Truck Day
Friday, November 10: 3:00pm - Prep Day
Saturday, November 11: 9:00am - Pantry Day
Friday, November 17: 3:00pm - Prep Day
Saturday, November 18: 9:00am - Pantry Day

Special Mission Offerings: Pink Envelope

Each month, our church supports a special offering to benefit other organizations' missions to serve God and neighbor.

September 2023: MEMBERS IN NEED. When our members need financial assistance during a crisis, we invite them to turn to the church for help. We all need someone to lean on from time to time, and we do our best to help. All of the monies collected are used to assist church members.

October 2023: NEIGHBORS IN NEED (NIN), one of the five special offerings of the UCC. These funds support ministries of justice and compassion in the United States. In 2023, the Neighbors in Need "BEHOLD!" offering focuses on environmental justice.

November 2023: RISE AGAINST HUNGER is an international hunger relief non-profit organization that coordinates the packaging and distribution of food and other aid to people in developing nations. They are working to eradicate hunger through the implementation of community development projects and meal packing events.

Sabbatical Leadership



Pastor Charlotte was born and raised in the Low Country of South Carolina, a daughter of a landscaper and a bank teller. She graduated from the University of South Carolina with a major in Religious Studies (1978), earned a Master of Divinity from Yale (1982), and a MBA from Case Western (2003). Charlotte and her husband Rip are grandparents to four grandsons. Charlotte and Rip are also looking forward to visiting the Holy Land and Greece in November 2023.



Pastor Paul is completing his 25th year of ministry with the American Latvian Baptist Association. He is also a formed Spiritual Director through the Ignatian Spirituality Institute. Paul is married to Bishop Laura Barbins, Northeastern Ohio Synod of the ELCA. Over the last several years, Paul has had the blessed opportunity to journey spiritually with others, individually, in groups and faith communities, in various settings and across a variety of Christian faith backgrounds. Paul and Laura are the very proud parents of four lovely daughters.

Sabbatical Covenant

On behalf of our congregation, Church Council entered into covenant with Pastor Jason for our sabbatical months.

The Church pledges...

- To pray for Pastor Jason regularly and wholeheartedly.
- To care for each other and our church with kindness and love.
- To empower designated Boards, Teams, and Sabbatical Pastors to fulfill Pastor Jason's duties.
- To continue to provide customary salary and benefits to Pastor Jason.
- To not embark on any major (non-emergency) church projects until Pastor Jason returns.
- To refrain from all contact including email, phone calls and social media.
- To seek the council of the Association General Minister Nayiri Karjian should the need arise.

Pastor Jason pledges...

- To pray for our church regularly and wholeheartedly.
- To return to regular full-time employment as Senior Pastor for a minimum of twelve months at the completion of sabbatical.
- To attend to my personal and spiritual well being.
- To refrain from all contact with church members including email, phone calls, and social media.
- To check in with pastoral leaders each month during sabbatical leave.
- To fully share what I learned and experienced when I return.

Understanding the Holy Land: Through the Eyes of an American Rabbi



RABBI ENID LADER

Sunday October 1

10am Worship | 11:30am Reception | 12:30-1:30pm Presentation

3909 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland, Ohio 44111

Join us as we embark on a thought-provoking journey through the Holy Land with the esteemed Rabbi Enid Lader. This event marks the first of a two-part series that delves into the complex and profound relationship between the Holy Land and the nation state of Israel.

During this captivating session, Rabbi Lader will share her unique perspective as an American Rabbi, offering insights and reflections on the Holy Land.

Drawing upon her vast knowledge and personal experiences, she will provide an illuminating exploration of the historical, cultural, and religious significance of the region.

10am Worship | 11:30am Reception | 12:30-1:30pm Presentation

Understanding the Holy Land: Through the Eyes of a Palestinian Christian



REV. KHADER KHALILA

Sunday October 8

10am Worship | 11:30am Reception | 12:30-1:30pm Presentation

3909 Rocky River Drive, Cleveland, Ohio 44111

Join us for a captivating and enlightening event as we continue our two-part series. In this second installment, we are honored to host The Rev. Khader Khalilia, a prominent figure in the Arab and Middle Eastern Ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, and the Pastor of Redeemer - St. John's Lutheran Church in Brooklyn, NY.

During this special event, Rev. Khalilia will share his deeply personal stories and experiences, providing invaluable insights into the history, traditions, and struggles of Palestinian Christians. Through his compelling narrative, attendees will gain a deeper understanding of the cultural, social, and religious dynamics that shape life in this remarkable region.

10am Worship | 11:30am Reception | 12:30-1:30pm Presentation

THE GOSPEL STORYTELLING OF MARK

PERFORMED BY

Special Guest
REV. DR. TRACY RADOSEVIC

DEC
17

10AM WORSHIP
2-4:30PM PRESENTATION

CHILDCARE NOT PROVIDED

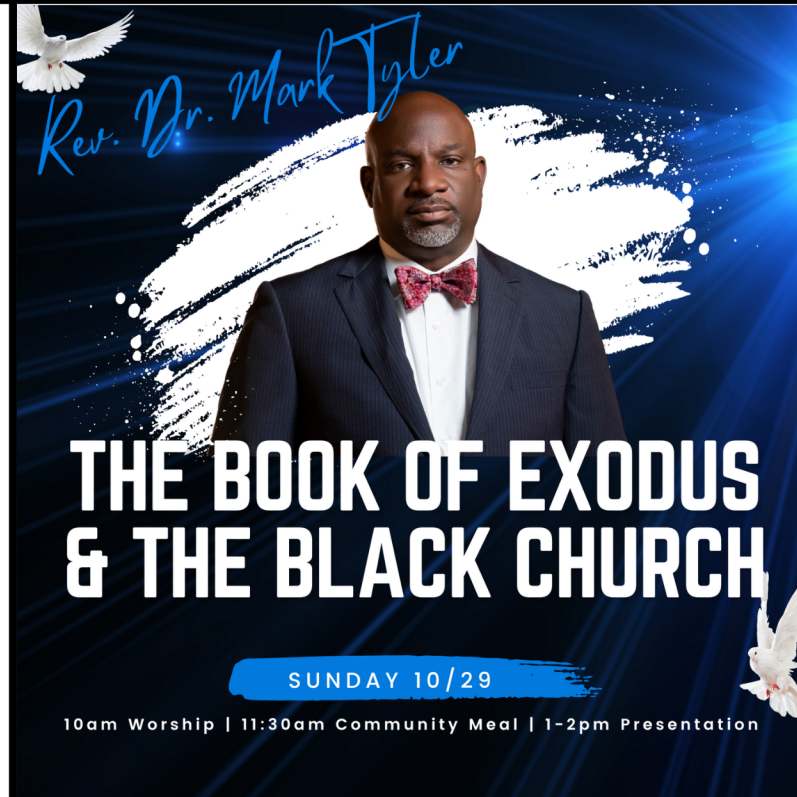


This unique and mesmerizing performance features United Methodist Pastor and Dean of the Academy for Biblical Storytelling: The Rev. Dr. Tracy Radosevic. She will transport us through time and space, delving deep into the compelling narratives of the Gospel of Mark. With her masterful storytelling prowess, she brings to life the ancient scriptural passages, painting vivid pictures of the life, teachings, and miracles of Jesus Christ.

With a special brand of humor, insight, and unwavering faith, she will infuse every moment with a sense of wonder and enlightenment. This experience is bound to resonate with audiences of all ages and denominations, fostering a shared sense of spiritual connection and understanding.

10am Worship | 2-4:30pm Storytelling Event

Livestream available at westparkucc.org/livestream



THE BOOK OF EXODUS & THE BLACK CHURCH

SUNDAY 10/29

10am Worship | 11:30am Community Meal | 1-2pm Presentation

The Rev. Dr. Mark Kelly Tyler is an ordained itinerant elder in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, currently serving as the 52nd pastor of Mother Bethel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Philadelphia, PA. He is a respected documentary filmmaker and an active advocate for criminal justice reform. Dr. Tyler is also a radio host and an esteemed member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc.

Rev. Tyler will take us on a journey through the Exodus narrative and highlight the importance of this story on Liberation Theology. From bondage to freedom to modern day struggles, The Book of Exodus carries profound implications for those who continue to work for racial equality in the Church and the world.

10am Worship | 11:30 Community Meal | 1-2pm Presentation

Livestream available at westparkucc.org/livestream