

# Community Press

A PUBLICATION OF COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH  
ROCHESTER, MN



## It's about the children: Sermon Series September 5-October 3

Children in the bible are both desired and prized. In the Old Testament, descendants meant immortality; they were a sign of God's favor. "Sons are indeed a heritage from the Lord, the fruit of the womb a reward," the psalmist affirms (Psalm 127:3). Despite some gender bias toward boy babies, girls, too, are gifts of God.

Jesus, as we sang in Sunday School, "loves the little children." The Gospels abound in stories of his care for them, He never failed to heal those whose parents begged him to restore them. They are precious as individuals and, as a whole, held up as a model of right relationship to God in their innocence, trust, and purity.

If Jesus walked today through the refugee camps and detention centers of our world, through neighborhoods where water runs toxic and bullets hit small, unintended victims, what would he feel? What would he say and do? How would he have us respond?

Through the month of September, we'll follow Mark's stories of Jesus and families and children, and let the light of his words and actions illuminate our world as well.

The book discussion group selections for 2021-2022 are listed below. The September selection will be *Rebecca* by Daphne du Maurier. Carol Jones will lead the discussion on September 26 after worship.

Sept 26	<i>Rebecca</i>
Oct 24	<i>Conversations with Ruth Bader Ginsburg</i>
Nov/Dec 5	<i>The Book Woman of Troublesome Creek</i>
Jan 23/30	<i>The Soul of America</i>
Feb 27	<i>We're Better Than This</i>
Mar 27	<i>Hitler's Forgotten Children</i>
Apr 24	<i>Grandma Gatewood's Walk</i>
May 22	<i>Women in White Coats</i>



Judy Berg, long time and now former member of CPC, has been diagnosed with throat cancer and will soon begin chemotherapy and radiation treatments. Denise Swinbank is forming a care team for Judy and her husband George to help them over the next few months. If you are interested in being part of the care team, please contact Denise Swinbank, [denise.swinbank@gmail.com](mailto:denise.swinbank@gmail.com). Right now, prayers, meals and rides are the primary needs.

## BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP



Daphne Du Maurier  
Jeffrey Rosen  
Kim Michele Richardson  
Jon Meacham  
Elijah Cummings  
Ingrid von Oelhafen & Tim Tate  
Ben Montgomery  
Olivia Campbell

SEPTEMBER 2021

# COMMUNITY PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH LEADERSHIP

## Session

The Session is the governing board of the church. It consists of six ruling elders, elected for three years. Much of the business of the church is conducted through committees. Each ruling elder chairs one of the committees. The Pastor, who is a teaching elder and moderator of Session, is an ex-officio member of every committee.

<u>Class of 2021</u>	Ronda Marshall Dave Copeland	Mission Personnel
<u>Class of 2022</u>	Gene Kopecky Sue Chipman	Building and Grounds Christian Education
<u>Class of 2023</u>	Ivy Pillers Kim Nickander	Worship and Music Finance and Stewardship
<u>Officers:</u>	Mary Meyer Mark Pillers Joanne Powell	Clerk (Non-voting) Financial Secretary Treasurer

## 2021 Nominating Committee

Dave Copeland, Mark Neville, Sue Chipman, Mary Alice Richardson, Bruce Felger

Membership (a sub committee of Christian Education) Chairperson: Amanda Ross

## Deacons

The Board of Deacons is responsible for ministering to all those who are in need, to the sick, to the friendless, and to all those who may be in distress. Deacons provide meals and transportation, among other requested needs. They maintain the Prayer Chain. Deacons are elected in classes of two and serve a three year term.

<u>Class of 2021</u>	<u>Class of 2022</u>	<u>Class of 2023</u>
Jeanette Hallbeck Jennifer Hall	Kari Streff Ron Murray	Margie Petersen Sherrie Wilson

## Staff

Pastor/ Head of Staff	Rev. Jan Wiersma
Choir Director	Meg Cain
Pianist	Glenna Muir
Bell Choir Director	Judy Kereakos
Custodian	Nancy Sanford
Office Manager	Stephanie Pasch

**Ministers to the world**

**Congregation Members**

### *Who's worth it?*

Some years ago, I was intimately involved in Sister Parish, Inc., a ground-breaking initiative linking communities of faith in Central America and North America. With my congregation in Indiana, I visited Guatemala multiple times and also served on the organization's board of directors.



What was unique about Sister Parish at that time was their emphasis on building relationships, not churches or schools. This “accompaniment” model has since been adopted by many US Christians as their primary mission focus. One of our Central American partners described the difference in words something like this: *“You came as teachers, and we thought we must be ignorant. You came as engineers to build things, and we thought we must be incompetent. You came as doctors, and we thought we must be sick. But then you came as friends, and we thought we must be worth it.”*

This week, I received a letter from another organization I admire and support, the Nonviolent Peaceforce. Their strategy is similar in that they partner with local leaders and grassroots community groups to promote Unarmed Civilian Protection (UCP) in places of internal strife like Myanmar and South Sudan. Their best practices, too, have become the model for 40+ similar organizations internationally. The letter quoted Dr. Lilla Watson, a Murri (Australian aboriginal) artist and activist, saying, *“If you have come here to help me, you are wasting your time. But if you have come because your liberation is bound up with mine, then let us work together.”*

When I interned as pastor in Cabrini Green, I oversaw a volunteer project that brought suburban Christians to the projects to rehab derelict apartments. The work they did was important and made them feel good about themselves, but the true value of the connection lay in showing people who lived in mortal fear of the inner city the strength, dignity, faith, and resilience of its inhabitants. The volunteers gained so much more than they gave.

A number of us who have had time and energy have been volunteering at Gage East events, gradually getting to recognize and know some of the tenants who have come out of homelessness and are forging stable, productive lives there. We witness the close, trusting relationships among residents and staff, founded on mutual respect and integrity. We learn a lot.

Does anyone see a pattern emerging here?

This year, several CPC members will be participating in the second iteration of the Presbytery's Anti-Racism Spiritual Pilgrimage. I can promise it will be an eye-opening and often humbling journey that will leave them more spiritually grounded, more deeply connected to God, to our BIPOC brothers and sisters in Minnesota, and to themselves. Ultimately, it's a satisfying process and one I trust will enrich all of us at CPC.

This makes me happy - because we're worth it, too!

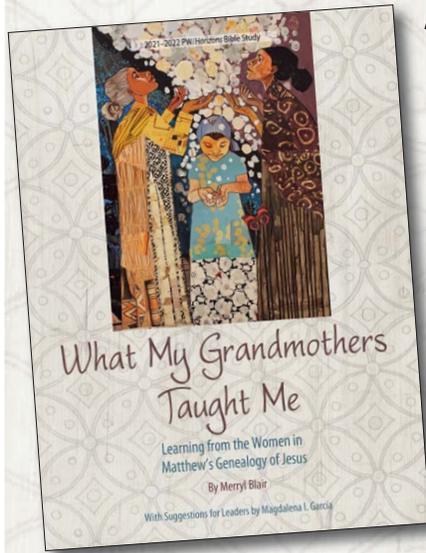
# PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN



PRESBYTERIAN  
WOMEN

*CPC PW will meet  
the 2nd and 4th  
Tuesdays at 10:00  
am beginning Sep-  
tember 14.*

## Introducing the 2021–2022 PW/*Horizons* Bible study



The first chapter of the Gospel of Matthew invites us into the family stories that helped shape Jesus and shape us too. The women in Jesus' family tree have backstories that are exactly the kind of story you can imagine hearing while sitting spellbound as a grandmother reminisces about her early life.

Matthew chose to mention a handful of women: Tamar, Rahab, Ruth, Bathsheba, and Mary.

What can they teach us? Matthew has named these women for a reason. Their stories will lead us into the Gospel, the Good News about Jesus Christ. Having explored their stories together, we will have a richer idea about what the good news is.

### About the authors



God has gently nudged author **Merryl Blair** in interesting directions throughout her working life (nurse, youth minister, Old Testament lecturer—perhaps not the normal career path). For 25 years she has served as senior lecturer in Old Testament at Stirling Theological College (part of the University of Divinity, Melbourne, Australia). She and her late husband, Graeme, also taught, during sabbaticals, at Northrise University, in northern Zambia.

Merryl has represented Churches of Christ in Australia on ecumenical councils at state, national, and international levels. In "retirement" she continues to present Bible studies at women's conferences. She met PW executive director, Susan Jackson Dowd, at one three years ago!



**Rev. Magdalena I. Garcia**, writer of the Suggestions for Leaders, is pastor of Ravenswood Presbyterian Church, in Chicago, Illinois. Formerly, she served as hospice chaplain for Vitas Healthcare. She is a graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary (MDiv, 1989) and a recipient of the 2008 Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) Women of Faith Award.

She writes and translates for Presbyterian publications and publishes liturgies under her personal blog: [justleros.blogspot.com](http://justleros.blogspot.com). A native of Cuba, Magdalena has lived in Chicago since 1971.



LESSON ONE  
Family Trees



LESSON TWO  
Tamar



LESSON THREE  
Rahab



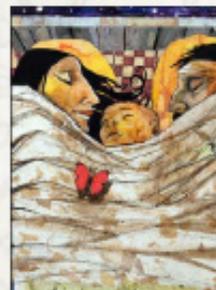
LESSON FOUR  
Ruth and  
Loyal Love



LESSON FIVE  
Ruth and  
Redemption



LESSON SIX  
Bathsheba



LESSON SEVEN  
Mary



LESSON EIGHT  
Mary in the Faith and  
Tradition of the Church



LESSON NINE  
What Are These Women  
Doing in a Place Like This?

# MISSION CONNECTIONS

Six representatives of Community Presbyterian joined the Gage East Back to School Event on August 19, serving (and also enjoying) an amazing meal from the Canadian Honker: mac'n'cheese, hamburgers and hot dogs with all the trimmings, and the Honker's signature coconut cake. All residents were welcome to partake of the feast.

While CPC managed the food, staffers Kayla, Shannon, and Chloe supervised the distribution of a mountain of school supplies, all of which had been donated by CPC folks. They, along with site coordinator Wes Brandenburger, expressed enthusiastic thanks both for the supplies and the hands-on assistance, as it allowed them time and space to interact personally with tenants.

Volunteers also got to greet kids encountered at previous events, and learn a little bit about some parents' lives. One young woman reported that she is pregnant with twins, due at the end of September. She had begun her stay at Gage East in the youth wing of the building, but has since relocated to an apartment with her partner (and their dog) in the family section. She said, "I feel so grateful to be bringing my babies back to a safe home with two parents who want them! Not every child has that."

Another young woman tentatively asked for extra cake to celebrate with her family; she was scheduled to bring her own baby home from the NICU that night. CPCers were delighted to oblige (leftovers were abundant) and to rejoice with her on the happy occasion.

Wes Brandenburger has promised to keep us filled in on future events where volunteers might wish to help out.



CPC members had a great time helping out!

Gage East staffers: Chloe, Kayla, and Shannon

## ***PDA Response to Earthquake in Haiti***

***Presbyterian Disaster Assistance has had long-standing partnerships in Haiti for decades. These meaningful relationships enable us to come alongside communities affected by disaster in the immediate aftermath, as well as support communities planning multi-year, long-term recovery projects.***

***Most recently, PDA is responding to the devastating 7.2 magnitude that struck Haiti the morning of August 14, 2021 that has resulted in the loss of more than 1,200 lives. Working closely with Presbyterian World Mission, our traditional partners on the ground and ACT Alliance, PDA is responding to emergency needs such as WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene), emergency power generators, shelter, food, first aid and more. We remain committed to the long-term recovery.***

***To support this response, designate gifts to OG100000-Haiti***

***GIVE NOW: <https://pma.pcusa.org/donate/make-a-gift/gift-info/OG100000/>***

## MEMBER SPOTLIGHT BY PEGGY MCCARTY

### Welcome Sherrie Wilson!

A big welcome to one of our newest members, Sherrie. Yes, I know she has been with us for around two years, but things have intervened since then. She was born and grew up in Harmony Minnesota. After graduation, she went to college at Northwestern College in Iowa in Journalism. She was a full time journalist for 12 years, then returned to college for a Masters degree at Iowa State University and then a PhD from the University of Minnesota in Mass Communication. She taught at the University of Nebraska in Omaha for 23 years and has retired. She decided to move back to Minnesota to be closer to her family. She has three sisters and a brother (he passed away just five years ago), and a multitude of nieces, nephews and grand nieces and nephews. She is passionate about the Minnesota Twins, college basketball and many other sports.



Sherrie is currently a Deacon, is on the Personnel Committee, and has often served as Liturgist.

Sherrie and I met in the PW Bible study on line as well as in person at church. We are excited about starting a new study this Fall. She is curious, knowledgeable, and interested in participating in activities. She is also a fellow cat lover!

Why Community Presbyterian? She likes the people, the Mission and our participation in many community events. We are delighted to have her join us in work and worship.

## CELEBRATIONS AND A MEMBER ABOUT TOWN

BIRTHDAY WISHES

*Birthdays and Anniversaries are in the print edition of the newsletter. Pick one up at church!*

HAPPY ANNIVERSARY



*Stephanie went to watch her niece play softball in August. Surprise, surprise, CPC member, Katherine stepped up to the plate! Have fun playing, Katherine!*

# Community Presbyterian's Calendar

September 2021

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
29 9:30am Online and Onsite Worship	30	31 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due	1 6:30am Prayer Group	2	3	4
5 9:30am Online and Onsite Worship with Communion	6 Labor Day - office closed	7 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 6:00pm Brain Injury Support Group 7:00pm Christian Education Committee meeting	8 6:30am Prayer Group	9	10	11
12 9:30am Online and Outdoor, In-Person Worship (bring your lawn chair!)	13	14 10:00am PW Bible Study 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 6:30pm Building and Grounds Meeting	15 6:30am Prayer Group	16	17	18
19 9:30am Online and Onsite Worship	20 12:00pm Newsletter articles due	21 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 5:30pm Finance & Stewardship Meeting	22 6:30am Prayer Group	23	24	25
26 9:30am Online and In-Person Worship 10:30am Book Discussion Group	27	28 10:00am PW Bible Study 12:00pm Online Conference Call 12:00pm Bulletin info due 6:30pm Session Meeting	29 6:30am Prayer Group	30	1	2

Community Presbyterian Church  
3705 Fairway Place NW  
Rochester, MN 55901

If you would prefer to receive a paper copy of the newsletter, you can either pick one up in the church narthex or you can have Stephanie mail you one each month. Just let Stephanie know if you want one mailed!

*Newsletter*



**CPC worships at 9:30 each Sunday  
both onsite and online!**

**On the 3rd Sunday (usually) of the month,  
worship is outdoors. This month it's September 12!  
Sunday School at 10:45 each Sunday  
(September-May). Watch for details.**

**Online Worship, Sundays 9:30 am  
<https://meet.google.com/vao-wjef-cbe>  
+1 575-305-4527 PIN: 652 821 468 #  
Bulletins for worship can be found  
on the homepage of our website.  
[www.cpcrochester.org](http://www.cpcrochester.org)**

**Tuesday's Conference Call - 12:00 noon  
<https://meet.google.com/kee-rcys-sdh>  
+1 413-889-2244 PIN: 433 818 991#**