**CLEARWATER UNITED METHODIST CHURCH NEWSLETTER – November 2023**

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**WORSHIP SERVICE:**

Sundays at 9:30 AM

Come and join us in worship – our attendance is down – we would love to have your presence.

Plan to stay for coffee after in the fellowship hall. Feel free to bring some treats to share!

**WEEKLY BIBLE STUDY:**

Mondays at 10:30 AM

**MONTHLY: United Methodist Women in Faith –UMWIF**

1st Tuesday of every month at 2:00 pm - November 7.

**ANNUAL HOLIDAY BAZAAR, BRUNCH AND BAKE SALE – SATURDAY, NOVEMBER 11**

Please start collecting craft items, art, household decorations, holiday decorations, toys and all miscellaneous kitchen and household items to sell for the church. No clothing, please.

Also please bring your favorite baked items to sell for the church.

**MONTHLY MOVIE NIGHT:**

First Saturday of each month – November 4 - at 6:00 p.m. Bring a snack to share during the movie or just come. Invite your friends and family.

**PRAISE GOD!**

For the wonderful rain, finally. Too late for crops but wonderful for the trees and shrubs, lakes and streams and all of wildlife. Hopefully all came in the form of rain instead of snow later!

**FOOD BANK DRIVE:**

Thank you for the donations of food for the Clearwater-Clear Lake Food Shelf. We will be delivering to the foodshelf on October 31.

**TRICK OR TREAT NIGHT:**

We will be giving out candy at the church on October 31. Please come and join us and bring some candy!

**OUR CHURCH WEBSITE:** [www.clearwaterumcmn.org](http://www.clearwaterumcmn.org) – Please remember to log in and check it out.

**BUDGET OVERVIEW**

Our projected budget for 2023 shows $600 more per month of expenses than our projected income. Our utilities and insurance have increased and our giving is down – not a good combination. Please pray about this problem. We do have $ in the bank because in 2021 we did receive the 2 PPP Grants of about $7,800 each plus a small grant from the county. We do need more giving dollars to cover our expenses though.

**NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS:**

Margaret Heinks – Nov 14

Carolyn Rinkenberger – Nov 28

Jan Propsma – Nov 30

If we are missing your birthday, please call, text or e-mail Carol and we will add.

**RECIPES**

**Pumpkin Lentil Shepherd's Pie**

**For the lentil layer:**

* 1 tablespoon olive oil
* 1 yellow onion, chopped
* 2 carrots, peeled and chopped
* 4 cloves garlic, minced
* 8 oz button mushrooms sliced
* 2 19oz cans lentils (or 4 cups cooked) drained and rinsed
* 1 cup vegetable broth
* ½ cup sun-dried tomatoes, roughly chopped
* 2 teaspoons dried thyme leaves
* 1 teaspoon chili powder
* ½ teaspoon salt
* ¼ teaspoon pepper

**For the pumpkin layer:**

* 3 tablespoons vegan butter
* 3 cloves garlic
* 1 796ml canned pumpkin purée (not pumpkin pie filling)
* 3 tablespoons maple syrup
* ½ teaspoon salt
* 2 tablespoons toasted pumpkin seeds (also called Pepitas)

**Instructions**

* Preheat your oven to 425F (220C).
* **To make the Lentil Layer: i**n a large pan, heat the olive oil over medium-high heat. Add the onions, carrots, and garlic and sauté until the onions turn translucent and begin to brown, about 5 minutes. Add the mushrooms and continue to cook until the mushrooms decrease in size, about 5 minutes. Stir in the lentils, vegetable broth, sun-dried tomatoes and all the spices. Heat through until everything is hot and bubbling, about another 5 minutes.
* **To make the Pumpkin Layer:** melt the vegan butter in a medium saucepan over medium-high heat. Add the garlic and sauté for a minute until soft and fragrant. Add the pumpkin, maple syrup and salt, stir to combine and health through.
* **To assemble the Shepherd's Pie:** Spread the lentil mixture on the bottom of an oven-safe casserole dish. Pour over the pumpkin mixture on top and spread evenly. Bake for 15 - 20 minutes until the Shepherd's pie is heated through. Garnish with the toasted pumpkin seeds before serving.

**FROM PASTOR ALISON HENDLEY**

November is the month we celebrate Thanksgiving here in the US.  And it can be a month when we choose to focus on what we are grateful for, even outside of just that one Thursday when we gather with family or friends.  Some people post on social media every day listing three things they are grateful for that day, others make a gratitude pumpkin where each member of the family writes a gratitude on the pumpkin at dinner every evening until the pumpkin is bursting with gratitude.   And at this time of year, before winter sets in, there is a lot to be grateful for…. Even when the news shows pictures of war and destruction and hatred….. or maybe especially then.  If we can find things to give thanks to God for, then some of these horrors can begin to be a little balanced out in our hearts.  It doesn’t make them go away, but we can be reminded that God is good in the midst of suffering and pain.

When you look for your gratitudes, do you count the church?  I know I do.  With small numbers we still do wonderful things.  The little free library outside the church has very quickly become self sustaining, meaning for as many books are borrowed people in the community are bringing other books to fill it.  Our October food drive for the food bank was successful with our altar overflowing with items to fill hungry bellies.  Our Fall sale is coming right up, a way for us to pass on some of the things we don’t need and find a new home for them.  We will be getting details about our family we help for Christmas any day now.  And each week people show up for Sunday worship with a welcome on their hearts and an eagerness to be together giving thanks to and praising our God.

Often in churches Fall is a season of stewardship campaigns and pledges being collected.  And while we don’t do this at Clearwater, I think it’s a good time to reflect on how you show gratitude through your giving.  Traditionally in the Bible, the first fruits are given as an offering.  The first fruits of the harvest, the first 10% of what is expected to be gathered in.  But, in addition to this, farmers are instructed to leave some crops in their fields for the poor to gather.  So really they give both the first and the last fruits.  Some as an offering at the temple and some to help those in need.

As you think about what you give to the church as your offering, whether you give weekly or monthly or annually, do you give with a generous heart that first 10%?  Do you share from what is left…. Like in your giving to the food drive or offering to buy a gift for our family at Christmas?  Is God inviting you to increase your giving in some way?  Is the church, for example, included in your will?  Or is God inviting you to make a year end gift to help close the financial shortfall we are experiencing?

1 Chronicles 29:12-14 says, “Wealth and honor come from You; You are the ruler of all things. In Your hands are strength and power to exalt and give strength to all. Now, our God, we give You thanks, and praise Your glorious name. But who am I, and who are my people, that we should be able to give as generously as this? Everything comes from You, and we have given You only what comes from your hand.”

We are a group of dedicated and hard working and faithful people.  Let us ask how we can show our gratitude for all that God has done for us so we can continue to be a loving presence for many years to come!