



## Vital Spark October, 2016



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### A Message from Jacob

In today's church, there are far and wide-ranging expectations of what the pastor should be—from both members and non-members. Some days, the pastor is understood as the extrovert who creates new relationships with individuals in the surrounding community; some days the pastor is understood as the introvert who spends hours in his/her study crafting the sermon for Sunday morning; some days the pastor represents the voice of social justice, some days the pastor represents the voice of fiscal conservatism; some days the pastor is the social entrepreneur; some days the pastor is the therapist and counselor; and some days the pastor is all of these at once, or none of these at all, or somewhere in between. But at the heart of a pastor, at least as I understand it, is the embodiment of sacred conversation—sacred conversation between the pastor and the parish, sacred conversation between the pastor and the parishioner, and sacred

conversation, always, between God and the people.

I cherish the conversations I have had, and continue to have, with each of you. I am thankful that as we move through our current sermon series, "How to Have a Conversation," we are able to address such topics as: our relationships to guns, health care, immigration, and even politics. One of the defining trademarks of Community Christian Church is the ability, and willingness, to engage in conversation from opposite spectrums without having to convince the other that there is only one understanding and correct choice. We celebrate the diversity that defines who we are.

I am also aware that these last few months have been a season of transition. I have written before regarding new staff coming, former staff departing to serve elsewhere, new members participating, and former members moving back home to be closer with family. The church, just as the state of our lives, is never static. We are constantly moving. But the question becomes, which way?

Next month, we will begin our annual stewardship campaign. For three Sundays, we will address, in a manner that is engaging and fruitful, what it means to be the church "In Such a Time as This." It is my hope and prayer that together we will recognize the ways in which God is moving us forward. One method of determining whether we are indeed moving forward is to evaluate our own individual commitment to our vision: Boldly Changing Lives.

Over the next several weeks, I challenge each of us, including me, to name two specific ways we are going to be bold in the calendar year 2017. There is no right or wrong answer. But there is a commitment required in order to propel not only our own lives, but also the greater life of the church, in the right direction.

And in the midst of the discernment to this question, I invite you to please consider having conversations with me about what you are considering. I am always available to chat in all of its various forms-lunch, coffee, email, text, Facebook, even Twitter if you so choose.

Only through our continued conversations with God and one another will we be able to work together to succeed in the vision that God calls us to be-a church that is "Boldly Changing Lives."

Let's make the commitment to bring change to our lives with one another.  
See you Sunday if not before!

### Another Year Comes To An End . . .

The 2016 Stable Sales have come to an end. We want to thank everyone who supported the sales with their time, energy, donations, and FOOD! Everything we accomplish would not be possible without your support!

At the end of this sale, clients of Circle of Concern came and selected items they could use. This ministry served 80 families with 307 people! They were thrilled to be able to select anything they wanted from clothing to Christmas decorations! After the sale was over, items left were donated to Isaiah 58, St. Cronin Parish, Pilgrim Church, Memorial Blvd, and The Suit Project.

Thanks for making our 2016 sales so successful! Now it's on to 2017!

### CCC Financial Update Through September:

CCC operated with a surplus of \$6,818 through the first nine months of 2016 as compared to a budgeted deficit of \$2,328.

The better operating performance mainly relates to lower personnel costs and lower spending by the ministry teams. CCC did incur some large property expenditures, including replacing an air conditioner, new safety doors in lower DeWitt and tree trimming.

The Facilities and Finance Committee wishes to thank the congregation for their financial contributions during the first nine months of 2016. Thank you!!!!

2016 (through Sept.)	Actual	Budget	Better/(Worse)
Income	\$ 319,578	\$ 317,039	\$ 2,539
Expenses	\$ 312,760	\$ 319,367	\$ 6,607
SURPLUS/(SHORTAGE)	\$ 6,818	\$ (2,328)	\$ 9,146

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### **Vital Spark Finance Committee Article**

Dear CCC Family and Friends,

I'm sure it comes as no surprise to you at Community Christian that we will soon be entering into our annual stewardship campaign. We do this every year—analyze the state of our finances, try to predict what our financial needs will be in the coming year, and appeal to you to help as much as you can to make sure we meet those needs. This year is no different. We have managed to stay within our current budget through your individual generosity and that of the various groups in which you participate here at CCC. We also had some unexpected property expenses this year, including a new air conditioner, new safety doors in lower DeWitt, and new locks on the church doors to increase security for our members. We're extremely thankful that this money was available, but it was a one-time use.

It's really no different for the church than it is for your own family, your business, or you individually. There are bills to pay: expenses we anticipate and, unfortunately but predictably, some we don't anticipate. We on the Facilities and Finance committee are striving to plan ahead for 2017 carefully, realistically, and with a healthy amount of caution.

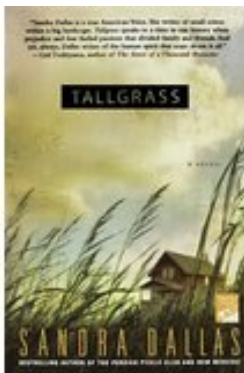
In 2017 we are facing a host of costly property maintenance issues, including addressing the extent of and repair or replacement of roof damage

over the narthex and office portions of the main building; painting the interior of the WFLC; removal or trimming of more trees; and resurfacing the parking lot, which is becoming hazardous for many of our seniors due to the many cracks and uneven surfaces. And always, there is the need to continue paying down the Wunderlich mortgage loan.

With your generous support this pledge season, and your ongoing financial support throughout the coming year, we have every hope of ending next year with a balanced budget. Please consider your pledge this year prayerfully and with a giving heart. Your gifts provide blessings in more ways than you can know.

Thank you!

John Houghton (for the Facilities and Finance Committee)



### CCC Book Club

**Join us Monday, November 21st  
CCC Library at 1:30pm  
We will discuss Tallgrass by Sandra  
Dallas**

**For questions call Brenda at  
636-386-5279!**

### **A message from Amy O'Brien-Director of Children, Youth & Family Ministry**

#### **What is Amy's guiding vision for ministry?**

Central to the Lord's Prayer is bringing the Kingdom of God to Earth. Jesus taught his disciples by praying, "Our Father who art in heaven, Hallowed be thy name, Thy kingdom come, Thy will be done, On earth, As it is in heaven." Jesus used parables to paint a picture of how that Kingdom should look; and he lived, ministered, taught, and healed as he went about bringing the Kingdom of God to Earth. Life together at Community Christian should foster an environment where our children and youth experience the love of God through this community and equip people of faith to go out and serve the world.

#### **Why should families partner with CCC through the teen years?**

Being a teen or raising a teen in this world is challenging and we are not in it

alone! God is with us and we have each other. This is the Good News! We want a community of faith that engages our youth with a vibrant faith. It is our desire to offer programs that assist families in forming the spirit of their children, in developing a faith in God, and in following the ways of Jesus Christ as they live their life.

With that groundwork laid through your home life, Sunday School, and worship, then fellowship groups for Chi Rho and CYF offer opportunities for youth to socialize with each other and put into practice the knowledge they have gained and the spiritual disciplines they are cultivating.

It is our deep desire as a community of faith, to assist families in the spiritual development of young people, so that by the time they graduate from high school we are sending young people into the world, faithfully equipped to live life.

## **Caring Solutions Halloween Party**

Come to hang out or volunteer on Friday, October 28th from 5:30pm to 8:00pm at the WFLC with the staff and clients of Caring Solutions.



For more info. or to RSVP call Sally  
at 314-954-2582.

**Articles for the November Vital Spark will be due by November 15th.**



**Thanksgiving Feast  
Sunday, November 20, 2016  
5:00 pm - 7:30 pm  
Wunderlich Family Life Center**

As the temperature outside drops and the leaves begin to drop as well, it's time for us to start preparations for our largest annual church family gathering, the Thanksgiving Feast. This has become an exciting tradition where we can all gather together with our

guest family members and church family.

The Feast will be catered. Because we want everyone to be able to share this Fellowship time together, funds from the Fellowship budget will be used to partially subsidize the cost of the meal for everyone. Additionally, we're happy to say that there are funds set aside to be supervised by Rev. Thorne for confidential financial assistance for those guests who can't afford the whole cost for their family.

And, please note that all food, including the gravy will be gluten free except the rolls, dressing and dessert! If you would like to bring gluten free rolls, dressing or dessert, we will gladly hold those items in the kitchen for you to serve yourself when going through the food line. Also, all food is garlic free.

Tickets will be as follows:

Adults and children 12 years and older, \$8.50; children 5 - 11 years old, \$5; children ages 4 and under, no charge. Again, we hope our whole church family will join in fellowship at this time and give thanks to God together for our many blessings as individuals, as families, and as Community Christian Church.

We will do our customary assigned seating so our form will ask for names and ages of all attendees. We will sell tickets before and after services on October 23, 30, November 6, and 13 and will accept checks or cash. November 13 will be the deadline as we need to give the caterer an accurate count.

As we have for the past seven years, the Fellowship Team invites you to share from your bounty by bringing canned goods for the Circle of Concern Food Pantry when you come to the Thanksgiving Feast. We will have the Circle of Concern grocery cart in the WFLC foyer to receive your gifts.

Additionally this year, our Mission Team will be inviting clients of Caring Solutions and their staff members to join us. They will be seated throughout the room so that you will have an opportunity to get to know some of the people personally that we help to support through our gifts to Caring Solutions.

We hope to see everyone there!

The Fellowship Team

### **PHOTOS - Hear ye, hear ye!**

Have you got some fun photos of our church family at worship, work or play? We'd like to add them to our Power Point presentation of this past year's CCC events and people to be shown at the Thanksgiving Feast. Please get your photos (hard copy or digital) to Wanda Morgenthaler by Sunday, November 6. They can be emailed, snail mailed or left in the Fellowship mailbox in the church office. Please address any questions to Wanda Morgenthaler at 636-458-9638. November 6 is only THREE Sundays away so please hurry!

## Disciples Men's Ministry Quarterly Breakfast & Meeting

Gentlemen, it is time for our fourth quarter DMM breakfast and meeting. This time, we are going to do something that we have not done for a couple of years, and that is include the special ladies in your life. So, don't just bring yourself but also invite your spouse/significant other with you for fun, food, and fellowship.

Breakfast will be on Saturday, November 5, in the WFLC. As usual, coffee and conversation will begin at 8:00 a.m. with food to be served at 8:30. And, our very own Amy O'Brien, new Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministries, will be our featured speaker. The topic is a secret, so I cannot tell.

If you need a ride to the breakfast, feel free to reach out to Rich Dupuis. And, contact Tim Vincent if you have any questions. We look forward to seeing everyone on November 5.

## Traditional Adult Progressive Dinner

Mark your calendars for Saturday, December 3rd at 5:30pm.  
Sign-ups will begin on November 6th in the Narthex.



### God's Kids Choir

Practice dates in November:

November 6th

November 13th

November 20th

November 27th

Practice times are 4pm to 5pm

### November Events

Nov. 6th-Youth Group 4:00pm

Topic "Money, Money, Money!"

Nov. 13th-Youth Group 4:00pm

**YOUTH GROUP**

Baking & Games

Nov. 20th-Youth Group 4:00pm

Help at the Thanksgiving Feast!

Nov. 27th-Youth Group 4:00pm

Gingerbread House Party



"Thanks to everyone for all the prayers, well wishes, cards, and love you have shown both Hannah and I during our surgeries and while we healed."

-Sandy Schleusner and Hannah Donsky

**Community Christian Church**