

THE VITAL SPARK

Publication of Community Christian Church

April 2017

A Message from our Senior Pastor

Dear CCC Family,

Right now we are living, according to the church calendar, in the in-between times—the fifty days that mark the time between Easter and Pentecost. These in-between times are full of promises and hopes while also containing choices and challenges, both individually and communally.

We have much to be thankful for.

Our new Maundy Thursday service was powerful. Several individuals shared with me that it was the best Maundy Thursday service they had ever witnessed. For hours afterwards, I kept replaying the singing of the special music in my mind: Were you there...

Our Easter morning services were equally energizing and engaging. The music in both services spoke to the heart and soul of who we are as a congregation and people of God. I give thanks in prayer for everyone—from staff to the many, many volunteers—who helped make such worship possible.

And now, as we move into the fifty days of waiting until Pentecost, we move closer and closer to God (the theme of our next sermon series).

One of the ways we move closer to God is through serving others. **Please remember that this Sunday we will have ONE service that meets at 9:00.** Following this, we will have different mission opportunities for all ages and abilities (if you haven't signed up yet, please see the details of how to do so in this issue of the Vital Spark). We will also share a meal with one another at the end of the day.

These next fifty days, both liturgically and locally at CCC, are all about new life and new beginnings.

As you know, we are making new changes in the life of CCC. Some of these changes require new ways of governance, structure, visioning, mission, and even staff. But none of these proposed changes will be effective, or even take place, without each of us working together, side-by-side, to celebrate the sense of renewal that God gives to each of us and one another. As we embrace the new, I am reminded of how the teachings of the New Testament encourage us not to “think more highly of ourselves than others,” and offer our lives—the entirety of who we are—to God's mission and God's will.

Over these next fifty days, let's try to be intentional about how we, together, as one body of Christ, can live out the calling that God has given us knowing that God will be faithful until the good works of God have been completed.

Let us journey closer and closer to God with one another.

Blessings,

Jacob

Coming up at CCC ...

Dinner for Eight (or more)

April 22nd (this Saturday) is the next Dinner for Eight (or more)! We will be gathering for dinner at C.J. Mugg's, 101 West Lockwood in Webster Groves at 6:30pm. Please contact Linda Medlock if you would like to attend.

CCC Book Group for May

The book group will meet at 1:30 p.m. on May 15th in the CCC library. Discussion will be on "Small Steps: The Year I Got Polio" by Peg Kehret. Please contact Brenda Richardson at 636-851-7155 if you would like more information.

Disciples Women Meetings

Priscilla Circle will meet on May 9th at 7:00 p.m. in the CCC library and Rebecca Circle will meet at 9:30 a.m. in the CCC library on May 16th. We will collect personal care items to be donated to Circle of Concern as our outreach project. All women are welcome to attend.

Senior Citizen Luncheon

The monthly luncheon held in the Narthex of CCC will be on Tuesday, May 9th at 11:30 a.m. We will have a short program about the Charles Lindbergh Transatlantic Flight that took place 90 years ago, May 20-21, 1927. If you have any questions please contact the church office.

Stable Sale Help and Food Donations Needed

Thought For the Day: "if you cannot do great things, do small things in a great way!" Good slogan for volunteering to help the Stable, as we prepare for the first sale of 2017. We begin on Tuesday, April 25th with Box Day. Unpacking boxes, setting up displays, pricing and more will continue throughout the week. Sale dates are May 2nd to May 6th. We'd love to have your help at any time during set up and sale weeks.

A sign up sheet is in the Narthex if you'd like to volunteer for a time to help or if you'd like to donate a food item for the workers.

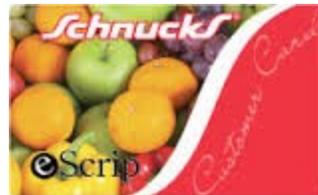
Thank you for your support!

Margaret Pereira, Stable Ministry

Shopping to benefit CCC ...

Schnuck's e-Scrip Cards help CCC

Did you know you can help CCC earn money (which we used to help with the monthly mortgage payment) by shopping at Schnucks? That's right, we earn a small percent for money spent at Schnucks (for purchases up to \$999 per month).



To get started, pick up a red eScrip card from the welcome center in the Narthex. The card has activation instructions written on it. Once activated, all you need to do is show your card to the cashier every time you go through the check-out lane at Schnucks. Currently we receive about \$30 per month from this program. You can help us increase that amount by participating in this program.

Outreach Update from Disciples Women ...

Disciples Women remembered "The Girls" (a name used for a special group of young ladies living in a safe house due to abuse and/or unplanned pregnancies) at Easter. Each of the 18 girls living in the house received something special this Easter! They each received a wrapped Easter basket loaded with candy and special treats. In addition, members of Disciple Women made aprons for each of the girls. In the pockets we placed special items (cookie cutters, spatulas, handmade dish cloths, etc.) along with a note of encouragement. "The Girls" break into three teams each week (shopping/cooking, laundry and cleaning) so this will be a welcome gift! "The Girls really appreciate anything that is handmade as they have stated "no one ever cared enough to make us something special." We continue to pray for "The Girls" throughout the year.



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Facilities Improvements ...

We have installed new LED lighting in the church library and added occupancy sensor light switches to the men's and women's bathrooms across the hall from the church office. With the new sensors, the lights automatically will turn off after fifteen minutes. We hope to add more sensors to bathrooms in Upper Packwood and also in the Wunderlich Family Life Center very soon.

Update from the Core Leadership Team ...

In addition to its regular bi-monthly meetings, the CLT met for an all-day planning retreat on April 8th.

The purpose of the retreat was to review the “health assessment report” from Agile Church, to identify key objectives and initiatives going forth, and to clarify what our next steps will be. The plan is to continue working with Agile Church over the next two years, develop an established timeline with dates and goals (to be shared with the congregation once completed), be as transparent as possible, and include (through listening sessions, updates in worship, and enhanced communication) all CCC members and friends in the conversations. We also celebrated the good news of receiving a \$7,500 grant to help cover the forthcoming consultant expenses.

During the regularly scheduled meetings, the CLT discussed and reviewed proposed timelines. Immediate initiatives include: 1) updating our constitution and bylaws to reflect our new form of governance and structure (these updates will be done in a timely manner, allowing ample time for congregational feedback, listening sessions, and multiple conversations; 2) enhancing the ways in which we communicate with one another; 3) assimilating an action plan for follow-up with first time visitors and guests; and 4) moving forth in relationship with Agile Church.

As always, the CLT welcomes any and all feedback, conversations, affirmations, and/or questions.

Core Leadership Team

(Glenna Allen, Amy O'Brien, Linda Helm, Ron Hollon, Doug Hoover, Laura McDurmont, Matt Mohr, Michael Richardson, Janet Staicoff, and Jacob Thorne)

Update from Facilities and Finance ...

CCC operated with a surplus of \$15,035 through the first three months of 2017 as compared to a budgeted deficit of \$4,223.

The better operating performance mainly relates to lower expenses, such as the amount and timing of the initial consultant fees, lower snow removal costs, lower personnel costs and lower spending by the ministry teams.

The Facilities and Finance Committee wishes to thank the congregation for their financial contributions during the first three months of 2017. Thank you!!!!

2017 (through March)	Actual	Budget	Better/(Worse)
Income	\$ 110,510	\$ 107,140	\$ 3,370
Expenses	\$ 95,475	\$ 111,363	\$ 15,888
SURPLUS/ (SHORTAGE)	\$ 15,035	\$ (4,223)	\$ 19,258

Service Sunday Information ...

This Sunday is our congregational Service Sunday. The morning will start with a brief 9:00 a.m. worship service here at CCC and then those participating will go into the community to help with a variety of service projects. Those projects include clean up at Exceptional Equestrian, food preparation for all church dinner on Sunday evening, preparation and serving breakfast at the Ronald McDonald House of West County, beautification projects with the City of Manchester and Intergenerational activities to distribute cookies and seed packets throughout the neighborhood and pack snack bags for a local elementary school.

It's not too late to sign up for an event—you may do so by contacting the church office or by coming prepared to help on Sunday morning. Those doing outside clean up work should wear appropriate clothes and shoes, and bring your own work gloves.

Those who will deliver cookies in the neighborhood should wear comfortable walking shoes.

Donation of cookies (homemade or store bought) would be appreciated, along with store bought snacks packaged in individual bags. You may bring those with you when you come to church on Sunday.

We are also collecting shoes for the Shoes of Hope organization. Now would be a perfect time to get those old, worn out shoes or shoes you don't use any more out of your closet and into the hands of an organization that can repurpose them.

Summer Worship Information ...

Summer Worship begins Memorial Day Weekend, May 28th. We will have one service at 10:00, Sunday School starts at 9:00. And in the summer, one way we celebrate community at Community is through the sharing of food and drinks in the Narthex following worship. The Elders are planning to host some of these Sundays, but would love your help.

If you, or a group of friends, are willing to be the “coffee hour” hosts following worship, please let the office know. Whatever you would like to provide is perfect. Some will go all out with themes and decorations, while others will keep it more simple. What's most important is your presence and participation. We look forward to worshipping as one this summer!



Thank You ...

Disciples Women

Thank you so much for the food survival kit. I am so appreciative and grateful for such an amazing and loving church to send me that. You all do not know how much that meant receiving it. All the food was so good as well!

Thanks again,
Molly Finch

Thank you very much for the care package I received a couple weeks back. I really enjoyed all of the treats! Thanks for thinking of me.

Matt Seymour

I received a college care package a few weeks ago and I wanted to reach out and let you know I appreciated it. It was a great surprise for my day. Loved the cookies!

Thanks,
Katey Fairchild

CCC Family

A heartfelt thank you for the many cards, calls, expressions of concern, visits, and prayers during my hospitalization and illness. Your generosity of time, spirit and friendship is a gift and a blessing. I'm very blessed to be part of a supportive and caring congregation. Hugs to you all!

Love,

Carol Cook

Dear Community Christian Church,

Thank you so much for your contribution to Kindness for Colton in honor of Ron and Jane Newton. CCC members have been so loving and supportive to my family and our organization. We truly appreciate your generosity.

Much love and blessings,

Alyson and Josh Voelkerding and Kindness for Colton

Disciples Men

Thank you for the invitation this morning. We very much appreciated the wonderful Easter morning meal. Have a great day and God Bless!

Eric C. Heimos
Battalion Chief, "B" Shift
West County EMS and
Fire Protection District



Thank you to the men who volunteered their time on Easter morning to prepare and serve breakfast for CCC friends and families.

Youth and Children's Ministry News...

Parent Input and Discussion

Topic: The future direction of Children and Youth Ministries

Calling any and all parents of Children and Youth who would be willing to have a conversation with Amy O'Brien about the future of Children and Youth Ministries of CCC. Join Amy O'Brien in the Library on April 30th at 4 p.m. in order to gather together in person about possibilities for 2017-2018. Please RSVP so that Amy can plan for the discussion. Email: amy@disciplesforchrist.org or cell 520-991-6770

The youth have asked for a night of just hanging out and choosing in the moment what they will do. Some kids want to play games in the gym, others want to hang out and talk, and others want to be outside if the weather permits. Vickie Minden and Heather Monroe will be around and supervising, while parents are gathering in the library.

High School Senior Scholarships

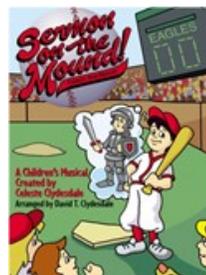
Applications are in the mail for the scholarships for our graduating seniors. Please return applications by May 7th to the church office. Scholarships will be given to the youth on May 21st in both services. Congrats to all of our seniors!



God's Kids Choir Musical Performance

Come support the children of CCC by attending the spring musical, "Sermon on the Mound" on May 7th in the CCC Sanctuary at 4 p.m. (participants arrive at 2:30 for rehearsal). Dress rehearsal and cast party on May 6th, starting at 8:30 a.m.

Hope you will join us!



Vacation Bible School from July 17—July 21

Our VBS 2017 Leadership Team (Emily Owen, Emma McDurmont, and Katey Fairchild) have already been meeting. Mark your calendars. On-line registration through the CCC website will open soon. Look for volunteer sign-ups after Mission Sunday. Material and packets will be available on May 7th at the God's Kids Choir production of the "Sermon on the Mound."



Youth Summer Trip to General Assembly (6th-12th)

Vickie Minden and Amy O'Brien are taking 2 cars (or a van) of kids to General Assembly in Indianapolis from July 8th to July 12th. If your 6th-12th grade child has not signed up, there is still time! Cost is \$400 and scholarships are available.

We will join other youth from across the country for games, scavenger hunts, food, and fellowship. We will take part in sections of the larger General Assembly gathering. We'll stay at one of the conference hotels where other youth groups are staying. It should be a great time to see what happens with the national church, as well as having fun with other youth. Join us!

Summer Camp Opportunities ...

Summer Camps for Children, Youth and Families

“Does your summer calendar have space carved out for your children and/or yourself to explore God’s creation in the fellowship of other people?”

The Disciples of Christ offers a variety of summer programs and camps to facilitate the love and appreciation of God’s creation. There are camps for the whole family. There are “Try-It” camps for parents or grandparents to accompany their younger children. There are camps for kids who have completed K—12th grades. The DOC has arranged programs throughout the state.

Explore the link below to see your options.

<http://www.mid-america-disciples.org/summer/>

*CCC offers 50% scholarships towards any of your children and youth who would like to attend. **Submit your registration to the church office by April 26th** with your portion of the camp fee and we will mail the registration with the church scholarship.

*Talk to Amy O’Brien for further information.

*FYI for CYF’ers, Allyson M will be attending the CYF camp at Jo-Ota from June 4-9 if others would like to join her.

Community Christian Church

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STAMP
HERE

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Rev. Jacob Thorne, Sr. Pastor

Amy O’Brien, Director of Children
and Youth Ministry

Visit us on the web at
www.disciplesforchrist.org

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The next Vital Spark deadline is May 19, 2017.