

# THE VITAL SPARK



Publication of Community Christian Church

November 2017

## A Message from our Senior Pastor

Dear CCC Family,

This Sunday marks the start of year number five in our relationship as pastor and congregation. It is hard for me to believe how fast time flies. For the many blessings each of you bring to me and my family, thank you. I look forward to our continued ministry with one another.

This Sunday is also the first Sunday of Advent—a time of new expectations and new beginnings.

Our theme for this year's Advent is "Angels Among Us." Zechariah, Mary, Joseph, and the shepherds each received a message from heavenly angels. We'll reflect not only on what this message meant to each of them, but also on what the message means to us today. Together, we will explore the themes of: #morehope, #morepeace, #morejoy, and #morelove.



In addition to worship, there are a number of other ways to become more intentionally focused during the season of Christmas in your relationship with God and Jesus. Opportunities, all listed in this newsletter, abound for bell ringing, service projects, and fellowship. We will also have an advent devotional, created by CCC Elders and members, available this Sunday. And, I want to be sure to invite each of you, if you are searching for a Sunday School class, to join me in the library over the next four Sunday mornings where, with the use of Dr. Brene Brown's videos as a guide, we will address how to live more fully into hope, peace, joy, and love through the practice of vulnerability.

Finally, as also listed in this newsletter, I want to make sure that everyone is aware of the schedule for Christmas Eve. Christmas Eve occurs on a Sunday this year. We will have our normal service of worship on December 24<sup>th</sup>, at 10:00 a.m. Then, we will have a family-friendly Christmas Eve service at 3:30 p.m. And a more traditional Christmas Eve service at 7:00 p.m. Both services will offer communion and conclude with the singing of "Silent Night," by candlelight.

These next four weeks, for all of us, will be a whirlwind of activities and busyness. But within the chaos of the holidays, be sure to take time to simply breathe, become aware, and bask in the goodness of God that is freely offered to all.

For this journey that we are on with one another, I give thanks to God.

Blessings,

Jacob

Visit our website at [www.disciplesforchrist.org](http://www.disciplesforchrist.org) to see an Advent Series Video Trailer

## Adult Progressive Dinner

There is a sign up board for this year's dinner in the CCC Narthex . Festivities will start at the home of the Herman's at 5:30 p.m. this Saturday for appetizers. It will progress to CCC's DeWitt Hall around 7:00 p.m. for soups and salads, then continue on to the home of the Quicksall's around 8:30 p.m. for desserts and singing. Please contact Karen Kelly if you would like to attend this fun gathering to start the Christmas season.

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## December Blood Drive

Please contact Liz Dupuis or the church office if you would like to donate blood at the upcoming church blood drive this Sunday between 8:00 a.m. and 11:45 a.m. There is always a great need for blood products during the holiday season. What better gift can you make than the gift of life!

Here's what a couple of CCC members have to say about why they give blood :

"I started giving blood many years ago and have tried to remain a loyal blood donor throughout the years. I feel giving blood is a community responsibility and it is an easy way for me to help someone that is in need."

Bob Branstetter

"I started donating blood when my sister required a blood transfusion after the birth of my oldest niece. Since then I donate regularly, I have recently started donating platelets as well. It's a small something that I can do that may make a difference for another person."

Cherie Ledbetter



Bob Branstetter  
pictured above giving  
blood in 2002.

## Senior Citizen Luncheon

We are looking forward to the next Senior Citizen's lunch to be held on Tuesday, December 5th at 11:30 a.m. in the CCC Narthex. Mary Suputo, a local Emmy award winning voice talent, will share a presentation called *"A Hollywood Classic Christmas."* Come enjoy the program and then share a meal with one another to celebrate the Christmas season. Please contact Beth Bean in the church office if you have any questions.

## Christian Adult Fellowship Movie Night

December is without a doubt the busiest month of the year. Our calendars have quickly filled with holiday parties and activities. It has been decided that this year we need to take a break and relax. Instead of a party, we're going to have a Movie Night on Friday, December 15th at 6:00 p.m. at CCC. We will pick a movie that ties in to our Advent Theme, "Angels Among Us."

The price of admission is a "toy for a tot" and a can or two of food for Circle of Concern Food Pantry. Bring an appetizer or dessert to share. We will have sandwiches and drinks provided by a small love offering collected the night of the movie. Please sign up in the Narthex if you plan to attend.



## Save the Date for Church Dedication

Lynneville Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) will have a celebration and dedication service for its new house of worship on Sunday, February 18, 2018 at 2:00 p.m.



Many CCC members and youth  
have travelled to Lynneville, IL  
to help with their new  
church construction.

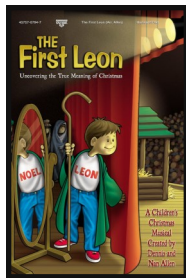
## Mission First Team Update

CCC held its third Mission Sunday on October 22nd. Approximately 60 members of all ages participated in a variety of service projects at church and in the surrounding community. Breakfast was prepared and served for families staying at the West County location of the Ronald McDonald house. Folks helped assemble meal kits at the Feed My Starving Children project. One group helped with cleaning projects at Lafayette Industries in Manchester. Several church members visited some local laundromats to treat customers to free laundry service as well as snacks and conversation. And here at church, members did the prep work for a butterfly garden that will be planted in the spring, made cookies and cards for church members that are not able to leave home often, and assembled hygiene kits for Church World Services. Sunday evening everyone was welcome to come back to church for a delicious meal prepared by one of the Sunday school classes. It was a great time of fellowship and sharing about the day's events. If you participated in Mission Sunday, the Mission First team would love your feedback and suggestions for future projects; email Tracey Hammack at [t.hammack@sbcglobal.net](mailto:t.hammack@sbcglobal.net).

See additional information later in this issue about additional ways we are helping those in need at Hanna Woods Elementary School and Columbia Elementary School.

## God's Kids Choir Christmas Musical

Please mark your calendar for this year's Christmas musical which will be shared with us by the God's Kids Choir this Sunday at 4:00 p.m. in the CCC Sanctuary. The show, *The First Leon*, is about a young boy who feels called to tell the whole world about the true meaning of Christmas. There will be a cookie reception in the Narthex following the performance.

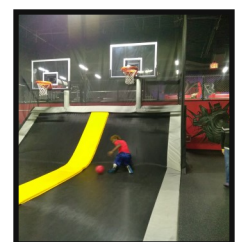
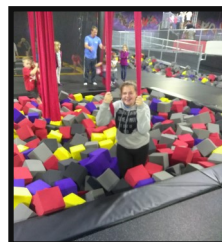
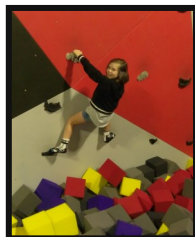
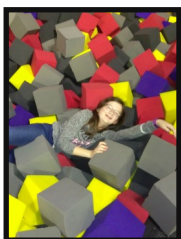


## A few pictures from God's Kids Fall Party



Face painting and snacks were popular at the recent Fall Party hosted for GKC members by the CCC youth.

## Youth and Family Outing



Several youth and adults made a trip to Flying Spider Extreme Air Sports at the conclusion of their Dream Team sessions.

## Thank you notes

Sending our sincere gratitude for everyone's help during our recent and past family, and personal crisis. Everyone's inquiries, moral support, hugs, prayers, gifts, donations, and physical labor let us know how much you all care. These events though hard, have been made easier because of everyone's love and support. Everyone knows our church family is the best because we sing your praise all the time.

Thank you to each and every one of you for always being there for us.

Love and Blessings,  
Kevin and Cherie Ledbetter

All the cards, calls, emails and especially prayers during Mother's illness and death, sustained us. We were blessed to have her for 96 years. Thank you for our church family love.

Dick and Diane Hall

We wanted to let you know, on behalf of Lafayette Industries, how much your service project means to us. What a wonderful, hard working group! Our employees noticed the extra shine right away.

Thank you again!  
Judi Nellman



Our personalized  
thank you card from  
Lafayette Industries  
employees.

## Thanksgiving Feast a Success

Nearly 300 CCC members and family members gathered on November 19th for the Annual Thanksgiving Feast. We appreciate the hours of planning and work that went into making this event a success. Thanks to Wanda Morgenthaler for coordinating and to help from the Fellowship Team and others for selling tickets, helping with set up and clean up, making name tags and personalized place cards, drink coasters and more.

We are also grateful to Tim Vincent for putting together the slide show of CCC at work and play throughout the past year.



The Wunderlich Family Life Center provides  
the perfect space for CCC gatherings.

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## Stewardship Campaign

We introduced our stewardship campaign last Sunday during worship. Pledge cards for 2018 can be downloaded from the CCC website and placed in the offering plate this Sunday, mail it to CCC or email it to the church office ([beth@disciplesforchrist.org](mailto:beth@disciplesforchrist.org)). Your assistance will help us prepare the annual church budget for 2018.

If you would like to set up online giving for next year you can go to the CCC website and click on the "Contribute" tab to get signed up. If you need assistance or have other questions, please contact the office and we will help you get started.



## Helping Others for Christmas

We have many opportunities to help those in our community this Christmas.

### Circle of Concern Giving Tree

It's once again time to help a family served by Circle of Concern by purchasing Christmas gifts for their family. There are still more than 30 tags hanging on the tree in the Narthex. Please consider taking a tag this Sunday, follow the instructions on the tag related to the gift requested and return the gift to church by 10:00 a.m. on December 10th. If you have any questions, call Cindy Herman at 314-494-2630. Thanks for making a family's Christmas brighter.



### Columbia Elementary School Christmas Party

As you may know, a group of CCC members have been volunteering at Columbia Elementary school in the city. The Mission team has decided to partner with the school for Christmas and provide some small gift items to the 200 students there. We have three ways that members of the congregation can help out:

1. Donating any of the following items: books, character books, activity/sticker books, journals/diaries, cards, small game, toy, baseball cards, little jewelry, puzzles, something for their age. Bring these to the church unwrapped with tag for the age/grade (Kindergarten-5<sup>th</sup> grade).
2. Purchase a \$10 Walmart gift card to donate to one of the 14 families that have been identified as having a need for some extra help.
3. Volunteer to help wrap gifts on December 17th and/or attend the Christmas party from 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. on December 20th! Call or email Diane Hall for details.

All gifts and gift cards need to be dropped off in the collection box in the Narthex by December 17th.

## Hanna Woods Giving Project

We are continuing our support of several families every other month from the Hanna Woods Elementary School that are in need of food assistance over the weekends. If you would like to make a food donation, for the month of December, please use the SignUpGenius link below to see specific dates and items needed. If you prefer someone else do the shopping, you may make an online donation via the Contributions tab on our church website or place cash/check in the offering tray designated with "Hanna Woods" in the memo line. Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

<http://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090448a8ad2da7fe3-summer>

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## Ring the Bell for the Salvation Army



Every December for over 30 years, Community Christian Church has participated in the Salvation Army Tree of Lights Campaign by ringing the bell. This year we are once again scheduled to "man the kettle" **at the Dierbergs in Lafayette**

**Center** (at the corner of Manchester and Baxter Roads) from Friday, December 15th through Saturday, December 23rd, excluding Sunday and Monday, December 17th and 18th. Currently, there are over 20 remaining slots to fill.

This is your chance to become part of a wonderful old Christmas tradition. You can personally have a part in feeding thousands of homeless people, providing toys to children, and/or restoring heat in the home of a neighbor whose social security check doesn't stretch far enough.

Don't miss your opportunity to stand and ring bells at the Salvation Army kettle. There is a sign-up board in the CCC Narthex. If you have any questions, please call Ted Herman at 314-609-0883 or contact the church office.

## Women's Fellowship

Priscilla Ladies Group - will meet on December 12th in the home of Betty Quicksall at 6:00 p.m. for a potluck, study and fellowship. Questions may be directed to Mitzie Bryant.

Rebecca Ladies Group - will meet on December 12th in the home of Cindy Herman at 9:30 a.m. for a Christmas brunch, study and fellowship. Contact Linda Newton with questions.

Both groups will collect a special offering for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for their monthly service project.

## Women's Lunch Outing

On Friday, December 8th, all women are invited to join one another for lunch and shopping at Josephine's Tea Room and Gifts in Godfrey, IL. To carpool, please be at the church by 9:45 a.m. The lunch reservation is at 11:00 a.m. Please sign up this Sunday in the Narthex or RSVP to Debbie Gray at 636-391-5989 by December 6th.

**Community Christian Church**  
623 Meramec Station Road  
Manchester, MO 63021

PLACE  
STAMP  
HERE

(636) 394-2772  
office@disciplesforchrist.org

Rev. Jacob Thorne, Sr. Pastor  
Rev. LaVetta Hall, Director of  
Children and Youth Ministry

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