



The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ OCTOBER, 2020
MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community Family and Friends,

This coming Sunday, October 25th, marks the final Sunday of the month. I will be out of town, spending some precious time with family in Northwest Missouri. The Reverend Jody Clegg will once again be preaching and leading worship. I am grateful for his presence and the support from each of you.

When I return to the pulpit, we will begin a new sermon series: The Good News about Death.

At the core of the Christian faith is a word about death and life beyond this earth. And yet, many times we are so afraid to speak openly about death. But if we speak openly about what we fear, the fear will no longer hold the power that it once possessed.

For this series, I am also giving a homework assignment. Don't worry, it's not a call to write your own obituary. Instead, it's an invitation to listen to a song by the Avett Brothers entitled, "No Hard Feelings." This is a song about death, or the imagined moments leading up to death. The lyrics are powerful (Matt Mohr, the chair of our Core Leadership Team, performed it for us last spring during Lent). And the second verse goes like this...

*When the sun hangs low in the west
And the light in my chest
Won't be kept
Held at bay any longer
When the jealousy fades away
And it's ash and dust
For cash and lust
And it's just hallelujah
And love in thoughts, and love in the words
Love in the songs they sing in the church
And no hard feelings*

Over and over, as the song concludes, the Avett Brothers sing, "I have no enemies." The final hallelujah if you will, is one of forgiveness. For me, this is an important message to hear not only for the upcoming sermon series, but also as we move into the November 3rd elections. No matter what the polls declare, we are called, as Jesus commands, to love one another. Such commands are a blessing, for both life and death.

I look forward to seeing you soon.

Blessings,

Jacob

MISSION TEAM UPDATES



CIRCLE OF CONCERN GIVING TREE

The results are.....

A check in the amount of \$1,415 was sent to Circle of Concern earlier this month to support their Holiday Adoption program. Your generosity has helped to make Christmas special for many families in our area.

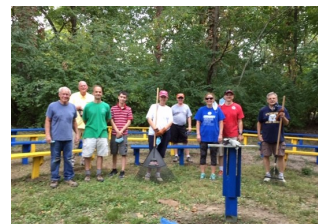
Thank you for the support you gave to our Giving Tree in 2020.

OUTDOOR SERVICE PROJECT FOR HANNA WOODS

On Sunday, September 27, twelve folks from CCC gathered at Hanna Woods Elementary School to do a little work. The project, headed up by the Mission First Team, involved cleaning and painting the outdoor classroom located in the hilly woods in back of the school. We had done some work there before, but that was two years ago and no maintenance had been done since then. Clearly there was a need to bring the area back to a safe and usable condition.

Special thanks and commendations for their efforts go to: Karl Doup, Doug Hoover, Beckie Jacobsmeyer, Connie Watkins, Dick Bernard, David Hosler, Matt and Wendy Finch, Evan Hosler, Marlan Graham, Libby Boleach and Ted Herman.

Because of their work the school has a nice outdoor place for teachers and students to hold classes.



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on November 16th at 1:30 p.m. in the CCC Narthex for a conversation about the book *Alternate Side* by Anna Quinlen. Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group. Social distancing and mask wearing will be in place for this meeting.

PRISCILLA LADIES GROUP MONTHLY MEETINGS

Priscilla Ladies Group will continue meeting using Zoom on the 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7 p.m. All women are welcome for a time of study, prayer, service and fellowship. November study materials are available in the CCC Library. Please contact Betty Quicksall by phone/text/email for more information. 636-484-0791 or bettyquic@sbcglobal.net. In November, the group will be collecting Size 3-6 diapers and 4T and 5T Pull-Ups to be donated to Circle of Concern. You may place your donation in the green tub by the front door of the church or in the marked basket across from the CCC library.

Hope you will join us.

CCC WELCOMES CM KINNEY & ASSOCIATES, LLC

Effective September 1, Cheryl Kinney opened a counseling office at CCC. Cheryl is a licensed clinical social worker with over 30 years' experience in the field of geriatric and medical social work. She has worked for a large voluntary health organization, an aging service provider, as a hospital discharge planner and an admissions coordinator for a long-term care community. She teaches University level aging-related courses and has provided in-service trainings and workshops at local and national conferences.



COPING WITH LIFE'S CHALLENGES

When we are faced with uncertainty and we feel isolated and alone, our faith is a source of strength and support. However, sometimes it helps to talk to a counselor to process our feelings and receive guidance on ways to cope. CCC member Cheryl Kinney is a licensed clinical social worker specializing in working with older adults and caregivers of older adults. She sees clients virtually or in person at a private office at the church. Call Cheryl at 314-266-9131 to learn how counseling may help you. www.cmkinney.com

VIRTUAL GROUP FOR MILD TO MODERATE MEMORY LOSS

Memory Keepers is a fun and engaging program for people with early memory loss providing meaningful activities that build on strengths and abilities. Participation in *Memory Keepers* helps reduce depression, stabilize cognitive function and increase coping skills. Openings are now available for a new weekly program offered virtually starting in November. Call Cheryl at 314-266-9131 for more information or go to www.memorykeepers.org

PANDEMIC STABLE SALES

We, the regular Monday/Thursday Stable Crew, have been working at this for years and had the process down to a science. Then . . . Covid hit and everything changed! In March we quit working and wondered if we would have enough goodies for our sale. Then we discovered that everyone who was at home decided to clean – closets, kitchens, decorations, etc! When we started working again, it wasn't "will we have enough goodies" it was "what do we do with all the goodies!" Working with a skeleton crew, we were able to sort, clean and repair the items!

By the time we were able to hold a sale at the end of August, we were ready! But everything else was different and unsure:

Would we have enough workers? Well, our regular sale workers, new workers from the CLT, and friends of friends came through and we had plenty of workers!

How would we manage with the new County guidelines? This was our first sale where it was necessary to make an appointment to attend, where masks were required, where 6-foot distances were required and marked on the floor and sidewalk, where people could not try on clothes and on and on!

Would people be willing to bring food for workers? We should have realized that getting food in our church is NEVER a problem!

But Covid also created some great selling opportunities! We have never sold so many DVDs, puzzles, games, books, desks and chairs as virtual school and more together time became the norm!

We made it through August so we were now "Covid pros" when the October sale came! Luckily since there was no basketball in WFLC, we were able to leave the tables up and just change merchandise for the October sale and that was wonderful! (Continued on next page)

PANDEMIC STABLE SALES (from previous page)

And another problem came up – how do we do our hand out to Circle of Concern after the October sale? We were determined to find a way! And we did! We served Circle families as we had done in the past, with just a few variations! All were extremely pleased and thankful for their treasures.

Hopefully the lessons we learned about doing a Stable Sale this year won't ever have to be used again!

We thank you all for whatever you did to help - be it in a small way or a big way. This is an all-church project and it couldn't be accomplished without everyone's help! God bless and stay safe!

GO TO THE POLLS, COME TO THE TABLE

Community Christian Church, Good Shepherd Lutheran Church, and Manchester United Methodist Church are partnering to offer a special Drive-Thru Communion on Election Day.

This ecumenical experience is open to everyone in the community, regardless of denomination, faith, or politics. It signifies that despite our differences, we are one people in Jesus Christ.



No reservations are needed; please come as you are. For safety reasons, remain in your vehicle. Officiating clergy will wear masks, use hand sanitizer, and practice physical distancing.

As each vehicle arrives, a clergy person will welcome and pray with the occupants. They will then provide each passenger (who desires to participate) an individual pre-sealed disposable container that includes both a wafer and juice. Gluten-free elements will be available upon request. Once you've received communion, follow the signage to exit the lot.

This event will be held between 3:30 p.m. and 7:30 p.m. on November 3rd at Manchester United Methodist Church, 129 Woods Mill Road, (West Entrance) and Manchester Athletic Association Parking Lot (14380 Manchester Road - please enter from Manchester Road).

NOTARY SERVICE AVAILABLE

As election day nears, please remember that notarization of ballots is available by contacting the church office.



Thank you

A black and gold pen is positioned below the "Thank you" text, with the tip of the pen pointing towards the end of the word "you".

To CCC Friends,

I want to say a Big Thank You for your expressions of concern and well wishes, and prayers, during my time in the hospital recently and recovery at home, from Covid 19. I am doing great now, fully recovered and back to playing golf, and enjoying this beautiful weather.

Your prayers and thoughts were very helpful and encouraging.

Blessings to you all.

David Hyatt

FINANCIAL UPDATE

	YTD Actual as of 9/30/20	YTD Budget as of 9/30/20	
Offering	\$251,522	\$249,663	Timing of donations has put us ahead of budget.
WFLC Rental, other income	12,921	28,912	Decreased rental income for gym and building due to Covid-19.
Total Income	\$264,443	\$278,575	
Children/Youth/Adult	1,082	5,765	Less spending than anticipated due to Covid-19.
Worship/Core Ministries	8,595	11,970	Less spending than anticipated due to Covid-19.
Outreach/Mission	22,751	23,365	No Mission Day activities
Property	65,760	75,519	Fewer building repairs needed and lower cleaning fees.
Office/Administration	9,518	11,916	Less spending than anticipated due to Covid-19.
Wages/Expenses/ Benefits	148,439	151,049	Lower Senior Pastor expenses and office manager wages.
Total Operating Expenses	\$256,143	\$279,585	
Surplus (Deficit)	\$8,300	(\$1,010)	

Your generous financial support during this continuing pandemic, along with lower than expected expenses, has generated a surplus of \$8,300 as of September 30th.

As of September 6th, outside groups have been renting DeWitt Hall for weekly meetings and basketball groups returned to practices in the Wunderlich Family Life Center on October 18th.

We have filed a claim with our insurance company due to hail damage to our roof early in 2020 and we are hopeful that the roof replacement will take place before the end of the year. In addition, we have some tree removal to be done in the coming month.

As a reminder, your financial contributions to CCC can be by check and mailed to the church office or by using online giving options. Please contact the church office if you need more information about how to give electronically.

A SIMPLE STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN FOR 2021

Years ago when I was in seminary, a professor asked: If a padlock and chains were put on the front doors of your church for six months, would the church survive? Those who were idealistic said, "Yes, of course. We don't need a building to be the church." Others, more reserved, noted, "Without a weekly gathering of the community the finances, ministry and missions would plummet." The ensuing classroom conversation was purely theoretical and academic in nature.

And yet, this past year we have faced the reality of being a church with closed doors (now slowly reopening). It has not been easy. We have had to pivot quickly in order to remain connected. But within the challenges and changes, we have so much to celebrate!

Each week, fresh produce from our garden has been shared with family, friends, and neighbors of Community Christian Church. We are able to provide sustenance to families who face food scarcity.

Our Stable Sale is connected with the needs of the community (through both sales and donations), giving significant financial support to dozens of ministries throughout the greater St. Louis area.

A new sign adorns the entrance to the church and our new website is welcoming and friendly to navigate. Our worship service is now offered both in-person and through streaming.

We have sponsored three successful blood drives to help the American Red Cross.

Our 2020 budget is right on track.

Our congregational giving has provided financial support to Circle of Concern, Alliance Q, The Bethany Fellowship, The Disciples Mission Fund, The Christian Church of Mid-America, The National Benevolent Association, Isaiah 58 Ministries, Global Ministries, Hanna Woods, Memorial Boulevard Food Pantry, UrbanReachSTL, and many more.

Community Christian Church has not closed or slowed down, but is thriving. And now, as we move into the financial planning for a new year, we are excited about the ways in which we will continue to adapt to change. We recognize that our online presence is outpacing our in-person attendance. We recognize that our building is being used more and more to host and equip individuals for ministry and mission as opposed to simply gathering for worship on Sunday mornings. And we recognize that in order to meet the needs of our community, we can only do this through your continuous generosity and gifts.

So this year, in a very simple financial campaign, designed to not overwhelm or overburden with numbers and statistics, we are simply asking you to consider your financial gift for Community Christian Church in 2021.

Your giving is an investment in changing lives and sharing Good News. From the meals that are brought to those who are grieving and ill, to the first time a person connects with us online, you make a difference.

Blessings,

Jacob

MY/OUR FINANCIAL SUPPORT OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

How do you wish to make your 2021 support?

\$_____ every _____ for Operating Budget and/or \$_____ every _____ for Building Enhancement Fund

CCC FALL CELEBRATION



We had a great time painting and carving pumpkins and participating in a 1 mile walk to support the Alzheimer's Association on October 18th. Special thanks to Lori/Doug Hoover, and Susan McGehee for their planning to make the event a success.

Some of the pumpkins, (pictured above) were taken to Big Bend Woods Skilled Care Facility for their residents to enjoy.

Ed Bean and Steve Staicoff provided live music during the festivities, including a special song, *Calendar Tallies*, about Alzheimer's disease written by Ed. You can listen to the song [here](#).

If you'd like to make a donation to the Alzheimer's Association to help find a cure for this disease, feel free to mail a check to CCC with ALZ in the memo line and we will send your contribution to them. Or donate directly [here](#).



NEWS FROM MID-AMERICA REGION - www.Mid-AmericaDisciples.org

Mid-America Men & Friends Reach out to Prospective, New, or Young Dads

Mid-America Men & Friends, our regional chapter of Disciples Men, is partnering with experienced fathers from across the nation to help prospective, new, or young dads in our region prepare for the great journey that awaits. The project is called "A Father for Gen Alpha."

Sharing of wisdom and hearing from the new dads will take place for one hour in the evening per week for seven weeks over Zoom in small discussion circles. Groups will start in November. Please watch the [video](#) for more information and a sampling of topics and resources covered.

Please let **Regional Minister Paul Koch** at paul.ccma@sbcgglobal.net know if you have someone to recommend for A Father for Gen Alpha, or encourage him to reach out to Paul directly for [more information](#) or to enroll.



Connecting with You

Percolating Disciple connection in 3-minute servings

Dear Mid-America Disciples,

We are very excited about starting a new video series today and **Connecting with You!**

Each week from now until the end of the year, we will be sharing a short video from one of our Regional staff members. They will include just a brief story, maybe a meditation, some scripture, a word of encouragement, or just a check-in with what they're up to and thinking about. This week Rev. Dr. Christine K. Chenoweth brings us a message reminding everyone that **we thank God for you!** Watch her video [here](#).

As our recent Regional Assembly emphasized, we are indeed BETTER TOGETHER and we want to make sure that we stay connected, supporting one another in our collective ministry.

Blessings to each of you,

Your Regional Ministers and staff

CCC

623 Meramec Station Road
Manchester, MO 63021

Rev. Jacob Thorne, Senior Minister

Beth Bean, Office Manager

636.394.2772

office@disciplesforchrist.org

www.disciplesforchrist.org