



The Vital Spark

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

Dear Community,

Soon, the season of Advent will begin. According to the church calendar, Advent is a new year and a new beginning—a welcome relief for many.

The first Sunday of Advent also marks the date of my anniversary as pastor at Community Christian Church. We have been together now—as pastor and congregation—for seven full years. And as we launch into year number eight, I continue to give thanks and feel a sense of awe at how quickly time passes and how deeply relationships can develop. It is an honor and privilege to be your pastor.

Our theme for this Advent is “Those Who Dream.” Each Sunday, for the four weeks of Advent, we will examine how “Those Who Dream...” keep awake, prepare the way, sow joy, and are not alone. Then, we conclude on Christmas Eve with the observation that we are “Those Who Dream.”

At this time, we are planning to have all of the services both live-streamed and in-person. We want each of you to make the choice that is best for you and your family. For Christmas Eve the tentative plan is to have one service at 4:00—this too will be live-streamed. However, as the date gets closer we also intend to send out a survey and see how many are planning to attend. If the number looks significantly larger than fifty (the number we are allowed under the current health regulations for St. Louis County) we will have more than one service.

And finally, I want to close with an invitation. Accompanying our theme this season is an Advent devotional for each day of Advent. This devotional (available as both a hard copy at the office or by email) is meant to be for all of us who dream—dreams of a deeper connection with God and dreams of a better world. Each Tuesday at noon, beginning December 1st, I invite you to join me for a Zoom conversation reflecting on the devotional and the ways in which you sense the Spirit of God working in your life.

I look forward to connecting with each of you.

Blessings,

Jacob

MISSION TEAM UPDATES

DONATIONS FOR URBAN REACH STL



The mission team is very appreciative for the donations already made for a toy drive to benefit the children who are part of the Columbus Square, St. Louis area served by UrbanReachSTL. Donations will continue to be received through November 29th. Please bring an unwrapped toy with a value between \$20 and \$25 for a boy or girl that is between 4 and 16 years old. There is a designated area in the Narthex for your donations or you can put them in the green tub outside the front door of the church.

GIFT CARDS FOR COLUMBIA ELEMENTARY SCHOOL FAMILIES

Due to COVID we haven't had the opportunity for in person volunteering at Columbia Elementary school, located in the city of St. Louis. However, we have an opportunity to help some of their financially insecure families this Christmas by purchasing \$10 gift cards to Walgreens or Schnucks. If you'd like to help, please drop the gift cards by the church office before December 9th. If you prefer, you can write a check to CCC and put Columbia in the memo line and we will purchase the gift cards for you.

SUPPORT FOR 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 at an area grocery store. As with many other things, in person bell ringing has become a virtual event in 2020. To learn more about how donations are used and/or to make a donation, please use the following link:

<https://donate.stlsalvationarmy.org/team/329931>



OUTDOOR SERVICE PROJECT FOR HANNA WOODS



The students and teachers of Hanna Woods Elementary School took advantage of the fall weather to enjoy the upgrades to the school's outdoor classroom a couple of weeks ago. Thank you CCC Mission Team for coordinating this project.

DECEMBER BLOOD DRIVE

Thank you Community Christian Church!!!

Your blood donations in March, May, June, and September yielded a total of 104 pints of blood which helped up to 312 people in need. With that being said, we are ready to schedule our December drive. The Red Cross needs your help to ensure enough blood is on the shelves for patients in need this upcoming holiday season. If you're healthy and well, join us Sunday, December 20th from 7:30 a.m.-11:30 a.m. in the CCC gym. Sign up now at: rcblood.org/appt

A Note from the Red Cross:

As an organization we are dedicated to helping others, we are fortunate to be able help during this pandemic by offering COVID-19 antibody testing to all our blood donors as a service at local blood drives.

The picture on the right shows the many COVID precautions taken to keep clients safe.

Thank you very much for your ongoing dedication to the American Red Cross. Every day, I am deeply moved by the kindness and generosity of spirit you bring to our vital mission. But it's times like these – times of great uncertainty – that I am truly in awe of your unwavering commitment.

As thousands of blood drives around the nation were cancelled due to the impact of COVID-19, please know that your drive protected the health and well-being of the most vulnerable among us – including accident victims, cancer patients, those suffering from chronic illnesses and many others.

From the bottom of my heart, thank you for stepping up to help collect and donate lifesaving blood, even as the circumstances of the coronavirus outbreak often made it difficult to do so.

SHARE YOUR HEALTH

As coronavirus concerns continue, we need healthy blood donors more than ever.

Is it safe to give right now?

Each Red Cross blood drive and donation center follows high standards of safety and infection control. We are taking precautions to help ensure the safety of our employees, volunteers and donors.

Safety at Blood Drives

Red Cross employees implemented added precautions to ensure blood drives and donation centers are safe for donors and staff.

- Requiring face coverings or masks
- Spacing Beds 6 Feet Apart
- Having Hand Sanitizer Available
- Donor and Staff Temperature Checks Before Entering Drives
- Wiping Down Donor-Touched Areas

What if a donor becomes sick after donating?

We provide a call back number donors should call if they become sick with any illnesses days after their donation.

If you're healthy and well, we're urging you to make a donation appointment.

Visit www.RedCrossBlood.org.

American Red Cross

On behalf of those we serve, thank you once again for your tremendous efforts to strengthen and advance our Red Cross mission during this uniquely challenging time. We look forward to better times ahead, and to our continued partnership to save lives.

Sincerely,

Gail McGovern
President and CEO

THANKSGIVING SPECIAL OFFERING

Higher education has been an important focus for Disciples since the very beginning of the movement. Throughout our history, Disciples have founded institutions of higher learning to educate students and form leaders to make a difference in the world. The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is still committed to higher education.

You will have an opportunity to participate in the offering this Sunday. You can also [give online](#) (please choose "Thanksgiving Special Offering" on the Designation Dropdown List). Your gift to the Thanksgiv-

ing Offering helps support the education of thousands of students at our [fifteen colleges and universities](#) as well as our [seven seminaries and divinity houses](#). In addition, it helps continue the ongoing collaborative work of church and higher education that is such a foundational part of the heritage of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Please give generously to this offering. Your gift makes a difference in the lives of our students and it makes a difference in the world.



Higher Education & Leadership Ministries
of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)

Colleges & Universities

Seminaries & Divinity Houses

2020 Thanksgiving Offering
REJOICE
A special day offering of Disciples Mission Fund

THANK YOU...

To my friends at CCC,

A great big thank you to so many of my friends there who have been so good to visit, bring food, make phone calls, send cards, give me rides to church and to doctors and remember me in your prayers.

I have many special memories of you. Probably the most special is attending the very first worship service in the new sanctuary in 1967 or so and the many years thereafter.

God Bless!

Love,

Katherine Prescott

To Members of Community Christian Church,

Thanks to each of you for the thoughts, prayers and CARDS you have sent following my broken hip. I know your prayers have been the reason I have recovered so well and started walking without any assistance before two weeks following surgery. We are blessed to continue to have a faith community in St. Louis.

Diane and Dick Hall

POINSETTIAS FOR OUR SACTUARY

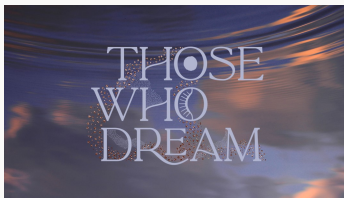
Even with uncertainty related to in person worship for the coming weeks, we are planning to have poinsettias as a colorful part of our sanctuary decorations during Advent. Each plant will have 5-6 blooms in a 6 ½” pot wrapped in gold foil. Click [here](#) for more details of colors available and pricing information. The flowers will be available for you to take home after our December 24th Christmas Eve service.



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. December study materials will soon be available in the CCC Library. Please contact Betty Quicksall by phone/text/email for more information. 636-484-0791 or bettyquic@sbcglobal.net. In December, the group will be collecting donations for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for their service project. Hope you will join us.

ADVENT DEVOTIONAL BOOKLETS AVAILABLE



Our Advent booklets are currently available in the Narthex and in the green tub by the front door to the church. Please stop by to pick one up when you're in the neighborhood.

DONATIONS FOR CIRCLE OF CONCERN

The shelves of the Circle of Concern pantry are unusually low, with many food drives by schools and businesses suspended due to the pandemic. Items of great need are peanut butter and jelly and cereal. As always, there is a basket in the Narthex for donations or they can be placed in the green tub by the front doors of the church. If you'd like to donate from Circle's Amazon Wish List the link is:

https://www.amazon.com/hz/wishlist/ls/2VVNMVF6EMQQX?ref_=wl_share

ARE YOU NEEDING A HAM FOR CHRISTMAS?

Rotary Club of West St. Louis County is conducting a fundraiser by selling hams for the Christmas Holidays. The proceeds from this fundraiser will benefit Caring Solutions, Circle of Concern and other local charities.

I have been a member of The Rotary Club of West County for over 15 years and have been so amazed at all the charitable work our club does and especially how the club has consistently supported Caring Solutions during this time. Several individuals in the club are also personal supporters of Caring Solutions and members Greg Beasley and Mike Mertens are also board members for Caring Solutions. We are lucky to have this long term partnership and support.

By buying one – or several - hams you will support Caring Solutions and local charities and also get an excellent ham at lower price. Ordering details can be found [here](#).

Thanks so much for your support.

Madi Hawn

Caring Solutions

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