



The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JANUARY, 2022
MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community,

I discovered a new show this week on HGTV, "Bargain Block."

The premise of Bargain Block is simple. Keith and Evan, a youngish gay couple, rehab run down houses in the city of Detroit. The initial costs of the homes they purchase are around \$1,000. Then, while living in the house, Keith and Evan make renovations and repairs. They try to purchase homes that no one else believes in. In a recent interview, reflecting on their work and his own life, Keith, who was disowned by his family when he shared that he was gay, said, "I kind of personify the houses. I was down and beat up and even my family didn't want me after I came out, but someone believed in me and I'm in such a better place now. The houses are the same. They just need someone to believe in them again."

While Keith is talking about a house, the same could be said for the church. Fixing, restoring, building, and renovating, that is what the gospel of Jesus and Community Christian Church are all about. Keith says that when they move into a house, selling them later at a reasonable cost for first time home buyers, "We...treat the houses like our children or a friend, and it gives them life. You walk through and find out all their ailments and get to work fixing them kind of like a doctor."

This year, we are working our way through the Gospel of Luke. Luke, according to tradition, was a doctor. It would be incredible to know the exact details of how Luke combined his life as a physician with his life as an author that told the stories of Jesus. My guess is that the two careers merged together naturally into one. While caring for the ill and offering medicine for the sick, I can picture Luke also sharing words of hope that he learned from Jesus: Do not be afraid; Your sins are forgiven; Weep no more; Stand up and walk.

All of us live in a body, a soul, a house, and a world, that needs repairs. And I'm grateful that CCC, and the teachings of Jesus, help us fix what is broken and mend what needs to be repaired.

Blessings,

Jacob

BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on February 21st at 1:30 p.m. in the CCC Narthex for a conversation about the book *The Art Forger* by B. A. Shapiro. Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group.

COLVIN GLOBAL MINISTRY VISIT ON JANUARY 30

We are looking forward to having Debbie and Larry Colvin, former missionaries in Ghana through [Global Ministries](#), visit with us this Sunday. They will share some of their overseas experiences with us at 9am in the CCC library, including a question and answer time. Larry will also be sharing the morning message during worship. Hope you can join us!



To learn more about Debbie, Larry and Ghana before Sunday, please click on the links below.

[Debbie Colvin Bio](#)

[Larry Colvin Bio](#)

[Ghana Culturegram](#)

CONGRATULATIONS TO THE NEW GRANDPARENTS

Several grandchildren have been welcomed into the families of CCC members in recent months.

Andrew "Drew" James Bube was born in November to Brice and Nicki Bube. Proud grandparents are Jim and Anne Bube and great grandma, Carol Dumont.



Jace James Powell was born in October to Megan and Austin Powell. Proud grandparents are Karen Branstetter and Bob Branstetter.

We have met the grandson of Doug and Lori Hoover, Carter John Reagan, in person already. His parents are Amy and Kenny Reagan and great grandparents are Betty and Jerry Hoover.

Beth and Marty Eckelkamp also welcomed a new granddaughter in October.

BLOOD DRIVE NEWS

Thank you to all who donated blood at our December church blood drive. The Red Cross collected 25 units, which helped this area's critical blood shortage during the holiday season.

As you may know, the Red Cross blood supply is dangerously low. If you are able, please consider signing up at <https://www.redcrossblood.org/give.html/donation-time> to make a blood donation at our next church blood drive which is scheduled for Tuesday, February 22nd.

Liz Dupuis

Blood Program Leader

THANK YOU

To CCC,

CCC is such a caring group of people. Jim and I received dozens of cards, letters and phone calls throughout his long period of declining health. They made us feel loved and remembered. The large turnout at the funeral service was also evidence of your loving care. CCC has shown God's love to our family in many ways. Our family feels blessed to be a part of CCC.

Sincerely,

Cindy Burchfield and family

CCC family,

Your support for me and my family was such a blessing after Tom's passing. The cards and calls have provided much comfort to us during this difficult time.

Warmly,

Ann McKelly and family

Thank you so much for your support! You are making a difference in the lives of children, senior citizens, families and low income individuals. We are blessed to have CCC as our friend.

Jacki, Executive Director of Loaves and Fishes

Dear CCC family,

On behalf of my family, I want to thank you for all of the cards, hugs, and prayers upon the death of my father, Nip Mohler. In true CCC fashion, you embraced my dad and made him feel at home when he moved back to St. Louis and began visiting this church. He was welcomed as a Stable volunteer, an Inquirer's Sunday School class attendee and participant in Men's group breakfasts and Senior lunches. Thank you to each of you who regularly asked about him, prayed for him, and provided transportation, phone calls, friendly visits, and communion over the last two years of his life.

Sincerely,

Cheryl Mohler Kinney

To my fellow Community Christian Community,

I wanted to say "Thank You" for the support you have provided Liz and I since my accident. I think I am over the hump after the surgery and a few minor complications. The first week was pretty rough, but the love, prayers, meals, support and medical equipment provided by all of you sped up my healing. Having my own "Private Duty Nurse" has been a blessing too. (Thanks, Liz). Once again, thank you. You are living proof of God's love.

Rich Dupuis

On behalf the Disciples Men's Ministry we would like to thank all those who attended the Fellowship Breakfast on Saturday, November 6th in the WFLC. The food was plentiful and tasty. The comradeship was a most welcome change from the isolation of the past 18 months, and the entertainment most uplifting and enjoyable. Thank you to Jerry and Doug Hoover, and their friends who provided a "Sassy, Brassy, Jazzy, Dixie Land Wake Up and Enjoy the World" musical feast. Thanks also to the cooks, set up and take down crews who made it possible.

Rich Dupuis on behalf of DMM

Isaiah 58 Ministries wants to thank Community Christian Church for the donations of corn muffin mixes, food, hygiene products and baking supplies in recent months. The generosity of your church helps Isaiah 58 Ministries in serving those in need. Thank you so very much!

CCC OPERATING RESULTS FOR YEAR ENDED DECEMBER 31, 2021

	12/31/21 YTD Actual	12/31/21 YTD Budget	Comments
Offering	\$352,202	\$334,721	Higher than expected donations
WFLC Rental, other income	62,794	39,050	Increased use of gym by basketball groups
Total Income	\$414,996	\$373,771	
Children/Youth/Adult Ministries	1,948	5,075	Limited activities due to Covid
Worship/Core Ministries	10,071	17,290	Less special service, choir and misc expenses than expected
Outreach/Mission	33,218	30,702	Achieved 8% annual giving
Property	85,300	113,596	Less lawn, snow removal, cleaning and building repairs than anticipated, change in timing of insurance payment
Office/Administration	13,346	15,551	
Wages/Expenses/Benefits	210,771	209,769	
Total Operating Expenses	\$354,654	\$391,983	
Surplus/(Deficit)	\$60,342	(\$18,212)	

In the midst of a pandemic filled year, we have been blessed by the offering and support of our CCC family. Your donations have helped us with ministry in a variety of ways.

We also had major property improvements, including a new roof for the main church building and new vinyl siding.

The gym in the Wunderlich Family Life Center is used almost everyday by outside basketball groups and AA and AlAnon groups use DeWitt Hall Sunday through Saturday as well.

We are looking forward to ministry together in 2022!

2021 OUTREACH SUMMARY

We are thankful for your generosity during the various special offerings collected in 2021. The donations received were: Week of Compassion - \$1,226; Reconciliation Ministry - \$185; Pentecost - \$365; Easter - \$487; Thanksgiving - \$330, Christmas - \$230 and Christmas Eve - \$1,368.

Outreach from the 2021 budget in the amount of \$29,900 supported Pastor's Discretionary Fund, Caring Solutions, Circle of Concern, Alliance Q, Bethany Fellowship, Disciples Mission Fund, Christian Church of Mid America, National Benevolent Association, Isaiah 58 Ministries, Loaves and Fishes, Heifer International, The Salvation Army, 100 Neediest Cases, Memorial Boulevard CC Food Pantry, Week of Compassion and Global Ministries.

Permanent outreach funds of \$240 per quarter were sent to Heat Up St. Louis, (\$240), Cool Down St. Louis (\$240) and Centennial Christian Church Food Pantry (\$480).

Other outreach receipts totaling over \$5,700 supported Circle of Concern Holiday Adoption, Hanna Woods Elementary School, Isaiah 58 Ministries, The Salvation Army, and UrbanReachSTL. In addition we received many gift cards, toy donations, candy, clothing and food donations and more throughout the year to support some of these organizations.

Priscilla Circle service projects supported Isaiah 58 Ministries, Family Village Farm Sponsor Child, Circle of Concern and gift cards for CCC college students.

Stable Ministry outreach of \$7,700 was sent to HELM, Caring Solutions, Isaiah 58 Ministries, Memorial Blvd. CC Food Pantry, High School Senior Scholarships, Global Ministries, Circle of Concern, UrbanReachSTL, Mid America Ministries, Bremer Memorial Garden and Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

Disciples Men Ministry supported High School Senior Scholarships of \$250.

We also are grateful for financial and volunteer support for the Bremer Community Garden. With your help we were able to share a variety of fresh produce with Circle of Concern, Caring Solutions, families of Hanna Woods Elementary School, CCC neighbors and our CCC church family.

THANK YOU!
thank you!

PRISCILLA WOMEN'S GROUP

Priscilla Women's Group will meet in person on February 8th at 7 p.m. in the CCC Library. All women are welcome for a time of study, prayer, service and fellowship. Study materials are available in the CCC Library. In February, the group will be collecting \$15 gift cards to be sent to CCC college students. You may turn in gift cards to the church office or Laurie Clifton. Please contact Betty Quicksall for more information.

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

Back by popular demand!

VIRTUAL WINE & SPIRITS TASTING FROM GRAPEVINE WINES FOR CARING SOLUTIONS



Thursday, February 24, 2022 6-7:30 p.m. (via virtual link)

Relax in the comfort of your home and enjoy learning about and tasting five different wines and one spirit, plus charcuterie items of meat, cheese, etc.

It's a great deal for only \$99 per kit (serves 2) Limited delivery available in the Greater St. Louis Area.

Go to caringsolutions.org for details and to register*

THE REGGIE THORPE MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT for Caring Solutions
The Legends Country Club Monday, May 23, 2022

Sponsorships and Team/Individual Registrations Available

Go to caringsolutions.org for details and to register*

**Call Tish or Sally at 314-942-7350 for more info or assistance with registering for either of these events.*



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