



The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JULY, 2022

MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community:

The recent images taken by the James Webb Space Telescope—capable of looking back almost to the beginning of time—are simultaneously dizzying, disorienting, and devastatingly beautiful. One of the lead scientists on the project, Eric Smith, said, “A lot of people sometimes see pictures of space, and it makes them feel small...[but] when I see these pictures, they make me feel powerful...[provoking] pride in humanity—that when we want to, we can do that.”

We can only guess at what scientific discoveries the telescope will lead to. Surely we will learn more about the vastness of the universe, its origination, and, perhaps, if any form of physical life lives somewhere else? But we do know that such learnings will be the result of global communication and collegiality. The telescope is a product of nations and researchers working together and the scientific data will be available for researchers around the world.

As a pastor and person of faith, I see such pictures of the "Cosmic Cliffs" of the Carina Nebula confirming what the psalmist knew thousands of years ago: The Heavens declare the vastness and glory of God's Creation. I also see the pictures as a reminder, a call, for humanity to continue to work together, not in isolation, but in community. And as a microcosm of what can take place within community, I think of our own community at Community Christian Church.

This summer has been a hot summer. And yet, the ministry and missions of our church are flourishing—only because we have found ways to work with one another. Our community garden has shared an abundance of fresh food and vegetables to those facing food scarcity. Our commitment to UrbanReachSTL has provided several lunches and dinner to our friends living in the Columbus Square neighborhood. Our church building continues to be a beacon hope for groups who use our facility. And our Stable ministry works tirelessly all year long. Why do we do all of this? Because we believe in a God who is both beyond our comprehension, and, at the same time, personally present.

Thank you for all of your ministry and participation in community this summer.

I look forward to seeing you Sunday!

Blessings,

Jacob

NEW POST OFFICE BOX

We have experienced an ongoing problem with missing mail and mailbox tampering. To prevent this we now have a PO Box address. Please utilize the PO Box for your mail in donations. **The new mailing address is P.O. Box 969, Manchester MO 63011.**



BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on August 15th at 1:30 p.m. in the CCC Narthex for a conversation about the book *Arcadia* by Lauren Goff. Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group.

THANK YOU

Dear CCC Family,

Thank you so much for celebrating Carter's baptism with us last weekend! It was so special to have him baptized in the same church we were married in. I am so grateful for the church community that has always loved and supported my family. Thank you so much for your continued support as we strive to raise Carter in a home full of God's love!

Love,

Amy, Kenny and Carter Reagan



Dear CCC Friends,

What fun I've had these past couple of weeks enjoying the beautiful cards, thoughtful notes and a variety of special gifts. You all went above and beyond to help me celebrate my transition to "semi-retirement." It has been a blessing to be part of the church staff since 2015. I'm looking forward to having more time for new volunteer activities, along with gardening, golfing, hiking, traveling and maybe more cooking as well.

Sincerely,

Beth



WELCOME RECEPTION FOR OUR OFFICE MANAGER

This Sunday we will have a reception to provide everyone with an opportunity to meet Becky Sternitzky, our new office manager. We are very excited to have her as a staff member. Please join us after worship for refreshments and to introduce yourself to Becky.

UPDATE FROM MISSION TEAM

The Mission Team has been busy planning events and choosing organizations that would benefit from our monetary gifts. We recently gave gifts to Cool Down St. Louis for summer cooling needs and Isaiah 58 ministries to help with the renovation of their food pantry.

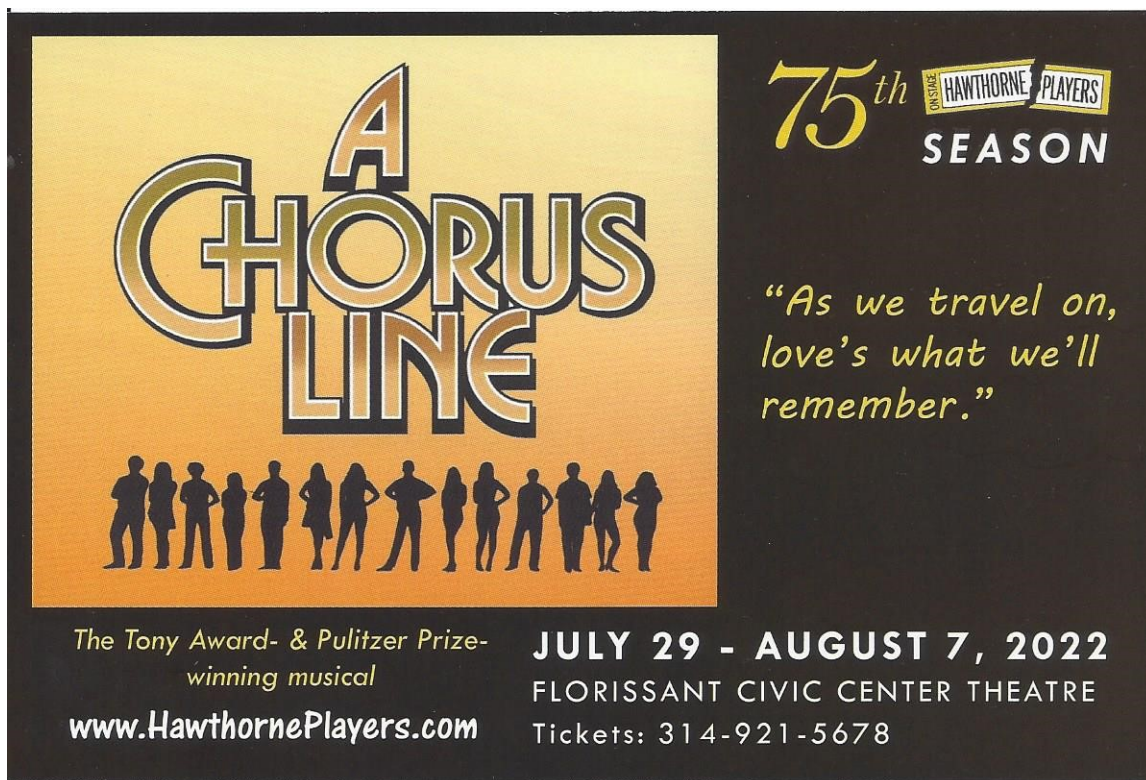
We would like to highlight two activities that are coming up. First, we are planning for a group from CCC to attend the Feed My Starving Children Mobile Food Pack. This is an event where food is packed to send to hungry people in parts of Africa, Asia, and Central and South America. It is being held at the Kennedy Recreation Center in South County, on Saturday, September 10th, from 9:30a.m.-11:30a.m. A sign-up list will be coming soon.

We also will be having a Mission Day on Sunday, October 23rd after church. We will have different projects offered, at church and elsewhere. Please save the date and plan on helping with this all-church activity.

Laurie Clifton, Mission Team Chair

A FUN EVENING OF ENTERTAINMENT AWAITS

Our director of Voices4Hymn, Scott Degitz-Fries, will be a part of the cast of *A Chorus Line* starting later this month. Ticket and show information is below.



The poster features the title "A CHORUS LINE" in large, stylized, gold-outlined letters. Below the title is a silhouette of a chorus line of performers. To the right, it says "75th ON STAGE HAWTHORNE PLAYERS SEASON". A quote in gold script reads: "As we travel on, love's what we'll remember." At the bottom, it lists the show as "The Tony Award- & Pulitzer Prize-winning musical", provides the website "www.HawthornePlayers.com", and states the dates "JULY 29 - AUGUST 7, 2022", the venue "FLORISSANT CIVIC CENTER THEATRE", and the ticket phone number "Tickets: 314-921-5678".

75th ON STAGE HAWTHORNE PLAYERS SEASON

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CCC OPERATING RESULTS FOR QUARTER ENDED JUNE 30, 2022

	6/30/22 YTD Actual	6/30/22 YTD Budget	Comments
Offering	\$169,611	\$177,670	Timing of donations differed from expectation
WFLC Rental/Other Income	\$35,661	\$35,883	
Total Income	\$205,272	\$213,553	
Children/Youth/Adult Ministries	915	2,875	Limited activities for children and youth
Worship/Fellowship	5,007	6,520	Less special musicians and misc expenses than expected
Outreach/Mission	14,693	15,353	
Property	60,409	68,059	No winter tree service as budgeted and no major unexpected repairs
Office/Administration	9,111	8,394	
Wages/Expenses/Benefits	106,048	109,345	
Total Operating Expenses	\$196,183	\$210,546	
Surplus	\$9,089	\$3,007	

The finances of CCC as of the 2nd quarter of 2022 are doing pretty well. We continue to have regular giving as part of Sunday morning in person worship and by online giving. Our operating expenses have been less than anticipated, primarily because costly property expenses have not been needed and fewer needs for children and youth ministry.

Outreach giving during the quarter went to Pastor's Discretionary Fund, Alliance Q, Global Ministries, Circle of Concern, Caring Solutions, Christian Church of Mid-America and Disciples Mission Fund.

Your continued support of CCC and its ministries is appreciated.

SUMMER MEALS FOR URBAN REACH STL

We had a great time packing and delivering box lunches two times this month for the children attending the Urban Reach Bible club. This past week we took down 60 lunches, funded by an Anti-Racism/Pro Reconciliation Justice Ministry grant.

On July 10, we served hamburgers, hot dogs, salad, watermelon, grapes, collard greens (from our garden), chips, dessert and juice boxes to the kids and families from the Columbus Square neighborhood.

We are looking forward to our next dinner on August 10th, where we will serve chicken strips and some of the potatoes from our CCC garden. We would love additional volunteers to help serve the meal and/or play games with the kids after they eat.

Please sign up in the Narthex or contact the church office if you'd like to participate.



JUNE BLOOD DRIVE REPORT

Thank you to all who came out to donate blood at this week's blood drive. The American Red Cross collected 30 units from 23 donors, seven who qualified to donate "Power Red" units. Many individuals will benefit from your precious gifts.

Our next church blood drive is scheduled for September 6th.

In appreciation for your support,

Liz Dupuis, Blood Program Leader

GARDEN UPDATES

We've picked green beans, dug potatoes, pulled garlic and more over the past month. Our total produce donated has jumped to almost 175 pounds so far this year. We are hoping to see some tomatoes very soon to quickly add to that total.

Due to the heat, we have been working on Monday mornings at 7:45 a.m. for the past couple of weeks. We would love to have you join us!



REGIONAL ASSEMBLY REGISTRATION IS OPEN

The Mid-America Regional Assembly will be held from October 6th to October 8th at Lake Ozark Christian Church. There is even a virtual registration option if you can't attend in person.

There are flyers in the Narthex with more information about the event.

Registration forms are online at: www.mid-americadisciples.org



Registration Link

CCC
623 Meramec Station Road
Manchester, MO 63021

Rev. Jacob Thorne, Senior Minister
Becky Sternitzky, Office Manager
Beth Bean, Ministry Associate
636.394.2772
office@disciplesforchrist.org
www.disciplesforchrist.org