



The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JANUARY 2023

MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community,

A hot topic among clergy and theological journals these days are the words “quietly quitting.” For many churches a rebound from Covid has never taken place—church attendance has lagged and worshipers have not returned to the pews. But for us, this is not the case.

So far, January has been a month of robust attendance here at Community. This past Sunday we even ran out of bulletins, a wonderful problem to encounter. And I wonder: Why is this so?

I am convinced that we have one of the best mid-sized Disciples of Christ congregations here in the greater St. Louis area. We represent a variety of ages, political spectrums, sexual orientations, and mission opportunities. When we worship on Sunday morning it is a joy, not a rote requirement of faith. We leave the services renewed and refilled for the week.

Instead of “quietly quitting” we are welcoming new faces and new beginnings. And with such growth, there comes responsibility and action.

Over the next few months if you see a new face, please take the time to introduce yourselves and learn the names of others. If a visitor returns for a second time and is greeted by name, it will make a huge difference. Additionally, if you encounter a friend or family member who might be looking for a new church home, please invite them to worship or even something less threatening like the chili cook-off taking place on the 29th.

Most importantly, know that I am thankful to each of you for all of your tremendous support, engagement and personal attendance. Without each of you, none of this would be possible at all.

Thanks be to God for the New Year and exciting energy here at Community.

Blessings,

Jacob



Chili Cook Off

January 29 @ 5:30 pm in the Wunderlich

The elders are sponsoring the cook-off on January 29, 2023 @ 5:30 in the Wunderlich. We will also have a silent auction. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex if you would like to donate an item for auction or sign up to make your signature Chili. You can also sign up on the back of the Connections Card or contact the office. Individual tickets are \$5 and family tickets are \$10.

**All Proceeds of the Chili-Cook off and Auction will benefit
Urban Reach STL and Central Visual and Performing Arts High School.**

UPDATED New Communion Method January 2023

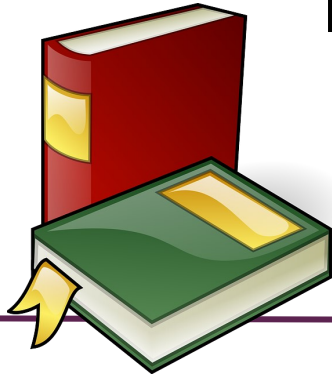
We appreciate your patience and welcome your feedback.

Please be flexible and open to new ideas!!

Overview:

- ◆ The deacons will once again walk up to the front of the sanctuary to receive the trays from Jacob and the serving Elder, and then will stand up front with juice and bread at the bottom of the stairs.
- ◆ We ask the congregation to come forward to receive the bread and juice as able – if you are not able, a deacon will serve you from the back – please raise your hand during communion and we will serve you
- ◆ You will come forward down the middle (starting at the front), two at a time, two on each side
- ◆ You will take “one cup” – it is stacked with a cup of juice on top, and a cup with bread on the bottom.
- ◆ If you are comfortably able, we encourage you to take the stacked cups back to your seat, where you can separate the bread and juice and eat/drink at your own pace. Or, if you prefer, you can eat/drink and throw the empty cups away before returning to your seat down the outside of the pews, by the windows.
- ◆ FYI, for your safety, the bread has been placed in the cups by gloved hands.
- ◆ Also, the bread in the center circle of cups is gluten-free





BOOK DISCUSSION GROUP

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on February 20th at 1:30pm in the Narthex for a conversation about the book *A Woman of No Importance* by Sonia Purnell.

Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group.

BLOOD DRIVE

Our next blood drive will be **February 28, 2023** and is open for appointments.

RedCrossBlood.org and enter: CommChristianCh.



Another "mission" from the Stable Mission

It is called "Love Packages". This not-for-profit works out of a huge warehouse in Butler, IL (population 93) accepting Bibles and Christian literature. Their Volunteers sort every piece, pack and load into shipping containers destined for English-speaking third-world countries all over the globe. During the year the Stable Book Room, Leader (Laurie Clifton) sets aside those types of materials. Molly Duncan and Brenda Richardson drive them to Butler and a good time is had by all. Especially, if Jubelt's Restaurant and Bakery in Litchfield, IL is open.

Ask either of us if you would like more information on "Love Packages".

Week of Compassion

It will soon be time for our annual special offering for Week of Compassion.

This year's theme is "Rise Up Anew."

As the relief, refugee, and development mission fund of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ), Week of Compassion works with partners to alleviate suffering in the U.S. and throughout the world.

One of the primary purposes of the church is to reach out and help others who are hurting. Please give generously to our Week of Compassion special offering on Feb. 17, and 26, 2023



Laurie Clifton

Onion and Leek Seedlings for the 2023 Bremer Garden



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