



The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ NOVEMBER 2023

MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community,

As the leaves begin to lose their vibrant hues and fall to the ground with the crisp fall air, we once again approach the season of Thanksgiving. This time of year is not just about the bountiful feasts or the festive gatherings; it's a profound reminder of the power of gratitude in our lives.

In the scriptures for this Sunday, gratitude is a recurring theme. Psalm 107 reminds us, "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good; his love endures forever." This simple yet profound verse encapsulates the essence of Thanksgiving. It's a time to reflect on the goodness of God and the countless blessings God bestows upon us.

Our church community has witnessed many examples of God's grace this year. Last week our newest member, Ashley, joined our community. This week, on Sunday, we will celebrate the baptisms of Gabe and Sarah. Throughout the year, we have greeted strangers in both the Stable Sales and the numerous support groups that use our building each week. We have worked hand-in-hand with UrbanReachSTL and shared with so many the bounties of our garden and fresh produce. We have worshipped, prayed, and celebrated life and death with one another. Each moment has been a testament to the love and fellowship we share in Christ.

As we gather around our tables this Sunday for our Thanksgiving Feast, share a meal, and watch the pictures of the past year, let us remember with gratitude the goodness of God. And let us also be mindful of those facing challenges. Let's extend our hands and hearts to those in need, whether through a shared meal, a kind word, or a prayer. In doing so, we embody the love and generosity that Jesus taught us.

Thank you for this season of Thanksgiving, you have taught me this year, once again, what the meaning of gratitude and gratefulness is all about.

Many blessings,

Jacob



Book Discussion Group

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on Monday, November 21st in the Narthex for a conversation about the book, *Firefly Lane* by Kristin Hanna. This will also be the meeting where we choose our books for 2024. There will not be a December meeting. Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group.

Men's December Breakfast

December 2nd we will be having fellowship and breakfast in the WFLC. Coffee will be available starting at 8am, breakfast will be at 8:30am followed by a program about the St. Louis Zoo by Victor Alm. Join us for a morning of food, learning and fellowship.

Pastor Appreciation Sunday

Generally we celebrate Pastor Appreciation Sunday in October, but this year we postponed it until December 3rd. Why the change? Because that Sunday will mark the beginning of Jacob's 11th year as our Senior Minister. We hope you will be able to join us for worship and for fellowship after church to celebrate his ministry at Community over these past 10 years. A basket will be in the Narthex for pastor appreciation cards and notes.



Red Cross Blood Drive: December 5

Our next blood drive on December 5 is open for scheduling if you want to sign up early. You can also go to RedCrossBlood.org and enter CommChristianCh to schedule an appointment time.

December Senior Luncheon

Come celebrate Christmas with your friends at CCC on December 6th at 11:30am. We will have lunch and also learn amazing facts about some of your favorite Christmas Traditions. Sign up on the sheet in the Narthex to let us know you are coming. Please call the church office or sign up on the sheet in the Narthex to RSVP.

Priscilla Women's Group

Priscilla Women's Group will meet for lunch on MONDAY, December 11 at 11:15 at Rosalita's in Des Peres. In December we are providing toys for the children served by Urban Reach STL. Our service project in January will be donations to Heat Up St. Louis. This non-profit helps low-income seniors and disabled folks pay their heating bills

Save the Date for A Fleece Blanket Tying Event!

The Mission Team is hosting a blanket tying event and we would like to invite all of you to join us on Saturday, January 20th from 9am-12pm in the WFLC. CCC will partner with Project Linus and Festival of Sharing to provide handmade blankets to children ages 0-18 who are in need of comfort.

Volunteers Needed for Church Activities

November and December are busy months at the church. Below are opportunities for you to be more active before, during and after Sunday worship.

November 26th—Pick up choir during service

December 3rd—Lighting Advent Candle

November 26th—Decorate church for Christmas

December 10th—Lighting Advent Candles

December 13th—Volunteer with Urban Reach STL at their Night of Hope event.

December 17th—Lighting Advent Candles

December 24th (10am or 5pm)—Lighting Advent Candles

Want to do more in 2024? We are still looking for a few people to be Deacons starting in 2024.

Please contact the church office if you are interested in any of these opportunities.

Salvation Army Angel Christmas Tree

We hope many of you noticed the Christmas tree in the narthex. We have chosen to help provide Christmas gifts for two families from the Salvation Army's Angel Tree program.

One of the families has three children with both parents working full time. Their home was flooded last year and they lost nearly everything.

The other family consists of a single mother with four children, all of which have autism. She was able to end an abusive relationship with the father of her children.

If you would like to help these families, take a gift tag off the tree, bring the wrapped gift they requested, with the tag attached to the outside, and put it under the tree in the narthex by Dec. 3rd.

Thank you for answering someone else's prayers.

The Mission Team

Urban Reach— Toy Drive for Night of Hope

Gifts should be valued at \$25-\$30. No battery operated toys, please.

Also, if you purchase a doll, please choose an African American doll.

Gifts need to be at church by December 3th.

We truly appreciate all the items you have donated to these projects. Your generosity brings a lot of happiness to others.



Helping Families at Hanna Woods

This school year CCC is going to support thirteen food insecure families from Hanna Woods Elementary on a weekly basis. We have baskets in the Narthex that you can put your donations in.



We are currently in need of:

Applesauce Cups

Cereal, such as Rice Chex or Cheerios

Peanut Butter or Jelly

Nutri-Grain Fruit Bars



List of Upcoming Events

- November 19—Thanksgiving Feast
- November 21— Book Discussion Group
- November 26— Decorate Church for Christmas after service
- December 2—Men’s Breakfast at WFLC
- December 3—Pastor Appreciation Sunday
- December 5—Red Cross Blood Drive
- December 6—Senior Luncheon
- December 12—Priscilla Women's Group
- December 24—Sunday Service 10am
- December 24—Christmas Eve Service 5pm
- December 31—Sunday Service 10am
- January 7—Take down decorations after service



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