



The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ OCTOBER 2023

MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community:

At the end of this month, on October 29th, two days before Halloween, we will celebrate All Saints' Day. The word Halloween comes from the term "All Hallows Eve," which marks October 31st as the eve of All Saints' Day.

All Saints' Day, which takes place on the first of November, was originally created by the Roman Catholics as a way to honor all of the saints who have gone before and, especially, those saints who do not have a designated feast day during the calendar year. As Protestants, we have adopted this tradition, marking the day as a time when we affirm that, with the grace of God, we can all be saints in the making.

When I think of saints in the making, I can't help but think of the many fine folks here at Community Christian Church who have gone before us and led the way. There are so many ways that the people of our community have taught us how to serve one another: offering meals for those who are sick, providing transportation to the doctor, mowing the grounds of our church to keep it beautiful and sacred, serving the community through our Stable sale, praying for one another, singing in celebration, and celebrating both life and death, to name just a few.

The nineteenth century pastor, poet, and song-writer, Phillips Brooks, who happened to write the hymn, "O Little Town of Bethlehem," was once asked: "Why are you a Christian?" Brooks pondered the question for a few moments, and then replied with utmost seriousness, "I am a Christian because of my Aunt Tillie, who lives in Teaneck, New Jersey."

I never met the Aunt Tillie that Brooks refers to. But I have met many "Aunt Tillie's" here at Community and I know that you have, too.

Beginning this week, we invite you to place on the newest cross in the narthex, made by our own Kevin Ledbetter, the names of saints in your life. Our goal is to cover the cross with the names of the saints that have influenced you in your life. And then, on October 29th, we will move the cross into the sanctuary and pray over the names.

May we all strive to be the Aunt Tillie's of the world.

I look forward to seeing you in worship this Sunday.

Blessings,

Jacob

Family Ministry Fall Festival

The Family Ministry Fall Festival is this Sunday, October 22nd immediately following worship, until 1:30 pm. We will be having pumpkin decorating, bingo, lawn games, hot dogs and s'mores.

Please join us for some fun and fellowship.



Priscilla Women's Group

Priscilla Women's Group will meet on Tuesday, November 14 at 6:30 in the library. We will look at John 16 16-22. The study is on pp 15-17 in *Just Women*. Why are rituals or bereavement events so important in helping us cope with grief and loss? Our service project will be a collection of pet food for Circle of Concern. Pet food is seldom donated and clients often mention how important and comforting their dog or cat is when they are struggling. Join us for a time of service, study, prayer and fellowship.



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.

Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group.

Joyful Notes Performing at November Senior Luncheon

Join us November 1st at 11 am for a "Salute to Broadway" performance from the Joyful Notes who practice in our building on Wednesday mornings throughout the school year. Lunch and time for fellowship will follow the performance. Please call the church office or sign up on the sheet in the Narthex to RSVP.

Poinsettias 2023

Advent season will be the time to order poinsettias that will be a colorful part of our sanctuary decorations. Each plant has 5 blooms in a 6 ½" pot wrapped in gold foil. You can also add your special message by filling out the form that will be available starting October 29. You will be able to place your order form and cash or check (made payable to Community Christian Church) in the offering plate or return it to the church office by between October 29 and November 12th.



Isaiah 58 Ministries

The Mission Team is looking forward to supporting Isaiah 58 Ministries fulfill their goal to provide holiday food bags for families in the community. They anticipate serving 300 families at Thanksgiving and would like our assistance in collecting food for these special bags. The item CCC will be donating to the Thanksgiving bags this year is 400 boxes of Jiffy cornbread mix.



We will have a basket in the Narthex from October 15th to November 5th for your donations.

Thank you in advance for your participation.

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.

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 a Rice Chex or Cheerios
- Peanut Butter
- Jelly
- Nutri-Grain Fruit Bars

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.

They 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.





Daylight Savings Time ends November 5th!
Don't forget to turn back your clocks Saturday night
November 4th!

Thanksgiving Feast

SAVE THE DATE! Sunday, November 19, 5:00-7:30 p.m. in the Wunderlich Family Life Center. Join together with your church family and members of your own family for a joyful and thankful evening of fellowship.

Tickets will be on sale in the Narthex before and after church on Oct 22, Oct 29, Nov 5 and Nov 12. Adults (10 and over) \$13, Children (5-9 yrs old) \$6, and Children (4yrs old and younger) FREE. Financial assistance is available by contacting Rev. Thorne.

Remember, the deadline for tickets is **Sunday, November 12**, so that the assigned seating chart and caterer can be prepared for the big day.

Thanksgiving Feast—Volunteer Opportunity

Wondering how you can help make this highlight event happen?

Email photos of church events from 2023 to Katie@disciplesforchrist.org

Saturday, November 18

8-9:30 am Set-up of tables and chairs.

9:30 –11:30am Transform WFLC into a banquet hall through decorations.

Monday, November 20

8-9 am Put away decorations under Jean Ann's organized direction.

9-11 am Put away tables and chairs.

Please sign up on the back of your Sunday attendance tab.



**CCC OPERATING RESULTS FOR THE
PERIOD ENDED SEPTEMBER 30, 2023**

	9/30/23 YTD Actual	9/30/23 YTD Budget	Comments
Offering	\$245,298	\$237,358	Timing of donations varied from budget
WFLC Rental and Other Income	45,500	50,897	Use of gym off slightly from what was expected
Total Income	\$290,798	\$288,255	
Family and Adult Ministries	1,119	2,560	Less children and youth activities
Worship/Fellowship Ministries	7,066	11,395	Less special items needed for Sunday worship
Outreach/Mission	21,656	21,559	
Property	88,463	92,823	Snow removal and grounds maintenance less than expected
Office/Administration	13,148	11,936	Increased copier use, office manager search and computer equipment needs
Wages/Expenses/Benefits	165,788	171,019	AV and childcare were less than expected
Total Operating Expenses	\$297,240	\$311,292	
(Deficit)	(\$6,442)	(\$23,037)	

Our offering donations for the first nine months of the year continue to be slightly ahead of the budget. With expenses being under budget, our overall deficit at September 30 is less than anticipated.

This past quarter we replaced over 75% of the church parking lot with funds from Stable Ministry and Building Enhancement and Capital Funds. It is wonderful to have the many holes and cracks in the surface of the asphalt repaired and looking nice.

The mission team has made donations to Caring Solutions, Circle of Concern, Bethany Fellowship, Disciples Mission Fund, Mid America, National Benevolent Association, Isaiah 58 Ministries, Global Ministries, St. Louis Crop Walk, Week of Compassion for Maui wildfires, and Cool Down St. Louis in the 3rd quarter.

Priscilla Circle has made cash donations to Heat Up St. Louis, Festival of Sharing Prison Project, Himalayan Cataract Project and Family Village Farm in 2023.

Thank you for your contributions to Community and its ministry goals.



COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH STEWARDSHIP CAMPAIGN
January, 2024 to December, 2024

"Sing to God a new song, for God has done marvelous things.
Let the floods clap their hands, let the hills sing together for joy."
Psalm 98

You are invited to bring the pledge card we sent out earlier this month to worship on October 22 for Pledge Sunday. The pledges we receive will help us budget effectively for the coming 2024 fiscal year that begins on January 1.

Extra pledge cards are available in the Narthex.

We look forward to all we can accomplish by being TOGETHER FOR JOY!

In faith,

Your Finance and Facilities Team



Fall in the Garden



For everything there is a season.

Ecclesiastes 1:1

THANK YOU!

*Community Christian Church Family,
Thank you for the prayers, thoughts,
condolences and cards during this time
of my father's death.*

*I appreciate your words of comfort as I
navigate this uncharted road.*

Anne Bube

*Community Christian Church Family,
Thank you so much for your hospitality
and also your generous donation for the
St Louis Metro Area Crop Walk! Per-
haps next year you can send a team
from your church!*

Clint McCann & Don Harter

Thank you from the Stable Sale Ministries

The story of Noah and his Ark is really about working hard, being prepared and answering God's call. That is exactly what the Stable Ministry team does on Monday and Thursday during the year and during the 2 week set up and 1 week sale each May and October.

The sales would not be successful without the volunteers and all who help with food donations, the kitchen helpers, those who donate items to be sold, office help and more.

As part of the Stable mission to help others, Circle of Concern families were able to shop after the October sale at no cost for all items costing less than \$20. In addition, many items are donated to Loaves and Fishes, Peace by Piece and St. Cronin Parish Mission during the year and after each sale.

Total proceeds from sales in 2023 were \$58,000. A portion of these proceeds help support the following outreach entities: HELM (Higher Education and Leadership Ministry), Caring Solutions, Isaiah 58 Ministries, Memorial Boulevard Christian Church Food Pantry, CCC High School Senior Scholarships, Week of Compassion, Global Ministries (Ukraine crisis), Circle of Concern, UrbanReachSTL, Mid America Ministries, CCC Bremer Garden.

Thanks to all who had a willing heart and hand in support of the Stable Ministry.



List of Upcoming Events

October 22 – Family Fall Festival

October 24—Men’s Breakfast

October 29 – All Saints Day during regular worship service

November 1—Senior Citizens Group Event with Joyful Notes

November 4—End of Daylight Savings Time

November 5—Jiffy Cornbread due for Isaiah 58

November 14—Men’s Breakfast at Uncle Bill’s

November 14 —Priscilla Group

November 19—Thanksgiving Feast

November 21– Book Discussion Group

November 26– Decorate Church for Christmas after service

November 28—Men’s Breakfast at Uncle Bill’s

December 3—Pastor Appreciation Sunday

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