



# The Vital Spark

A NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH ~ JANUARY 2024

MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER, REV. JACOB THORNE

Dear Community,

This past week, with the death of my mother, I was reminded once again of a fact that I already knew: The words of scripture are never more true than when standing at the graveside of a loved one. Death, promises God, will never have the final word.

First, I want to thank each and every one of you for all of the prayers, cards, kind words, and support. I do not know how an individual could go through this process of grieving without having a church community for support. It has been so comforting knowing that my family has been held in prayer.

Second, I want to thank Don Miller and Penny Ross-Corona for preaching on such short notice. Between having COVID and being present for my mom's death, I have been absent from the pulpit more than I would have liked (I really missed being there for Christmas Eve). But, and I think this speaks such huge volumes about the strength of our church, the ministry, mission, and business of the church has carried on without any flaws. Watching online, I was struck by the stellar worship, preaching and music. And I am extremely grateful for the tireless efforts of Beth and Katie. Because of our office staff, we are starting the New Year in a good position. I have always believed that a healthy church should be able to function well with the unplanned absence of a minister and this has certainly been the case.

Third, and finally, I want to share with you that I know now what the death of a parent feels like. I have done dozens of funerals for those who have lost a parent. And now, having experienced it myself, I have a much better understanding of the role of grief, the role of a pastor, and the role of a church. All three, for the pastor, work, I pray, to provide a time of both mourning and a celebration of life. Please know that I will always be there for you, just as you have been there for me.

I look forward to seeing each of you this Sunday and being back at church!

Blessings,

Jacob

## February “Fun Bunch” Senior Luncheon

New year, new name! This is our Senior Citizen lunch group and we have decided on a new name. Our next lunch, a “Celebration of Chocolate” will be on February 6th at 11:30am in the church Narthex. A sign-up sheet is on the table in the Narthex for those who would like to make/bring an item for lunch. Hope to see you there!

## Men’s Breakfast

The Men’s Breakfast group meets at Uncle Bill’s on Manchester Road. We meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday of each month at 9am. Come join us anytime you are able.

## Priscilla Women’s Group

Priscilla Women’s Group will meet Tuesday, February 13 at 6:30pm in the library. We will be collecting laundry detergent for Circle of Concern. If you would like more information about this group please contact Betty Quicksall.

## Book Discussion Group

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on Monday, February 19th in the Narthex for a conversation about the book, *The Social Graces* by Renee Rosen. Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group. Listed below are the books we will be reading for the first half of 2024.

March: <i>The History of Loneliness</i>	John Boyne
April: <i>The Wind Knows My Name</i>	Isabel Allende
May: <i>The Marriage Portrait</i>	Maggie O'Farrell
June: <i>The Hiding Place</i>	Corrie Ten Boom



## Volunteer Opportunity—Ronald McDonald House

On Saturday, February 17th, we will be making breakfast for the Ronald McDonald House. A sign up sheet will be posted in the Narthex soon. The Ronald McDonald House provides a place to stay and resources to families of sick children receiving treatment at a hospital far from home.



## Red Cross Blood Drive: February 27

Our next blood drive on February 27 is open for scheduling if you want to sign up early. You can also go to [RedCrossBlood.org](https://RedCrossBlood.org) and enter CommChristianCh to schedule an appointment time.

## 2024 Chili Cook-off

The elders are sponsoring the Chili Cook-off on February 4th at 5:30 in the Wunderlich Family Life Center. Join us for an evening of fun, food and fellowship! We will also be offering a silent auction. A sign-up sheet is in the Narthex if you would like to donate an item for the silent auction or sign up to make your signature Chili. You may also sign up on the back of the Connection Card in your Sunday bulletin, or contact the office at 636-394-2772.

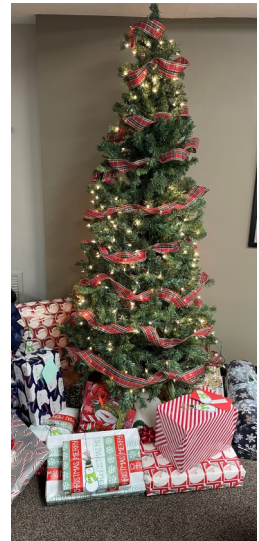
Individual tickets for the cook-off will be \$5 and family tickets will be \$10. Ticket sales will be held before and after the church service in the Narthex on January 21 and 28th.

Soup and hot dogs will also be served for those who do not care for chili.

## Mission Team—Thank you!

The Mission Team, with all of your help, was busy this November and December providing assistance to many groups that need help during the holidays. In addition to collecting cornbread mix for Isaiah 58, wrapped gifts for families at the Salvation Army, and gifts for Urban Reach, we also donated monetary gifts to other organizations. We supported Holiday Wishes - A program that provides gifts to children affected through foster care, Heifer Project International, Centennial Christian Church Food Pantry, and 100 Neediest Cases— a holiday program sponsored by The United Way of Greater St. Louis and the St. Louis Post Dispatch.

We appreciate all our members and friends that help us to support these agencies.



## 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



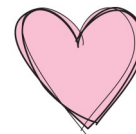
## List of Upcoming Events

January 20—Blanket Making in WFLC

January 21— Congregational Meeting following Sunday service



January 23—Men's Breakfast at Uncle Bill's



February 4—Chili Cook-off in WFLC

February 6—Fun Bunch Luncheon (Sr. Citizen Luncheon Group)

February 13—Men's Breakfast at Uncle Bill's



February 13—Priscilla Women's Group

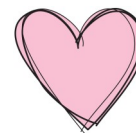


February 14—Ash Wednesday

February 17—Volunteering at Ronald McDonald House



February 19—Book Discussion Group



February 27—Men's Breakfast at Uncle Bill's



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