

THE VITAL SPARK



Publication of Community Christian Church

February 2018

A Message from our Senior Pastor

Dear CCC Family and Friends,

Crisp. Clean. Fresh. These are the words that my sister used to describe the Narthex as Paulette (along with Annabelle and Clara) hosted a baby shower for her at church this past weekend. These are also the words, the descriptors, that we want people to note when visiting Community for the first time. Each of you, the people who make Community a community, work hard to create a welcoming, warm, and inviting space. Thank you.

In terms of the church calendar, we are moving through the season of Lent. If you haven't picked up a devotional yet, please do so. I have found the writings/reflections to be moving and instructive.

In terms of prayer I have been, and will be, praying for each of you, and your family, during the season of Lent. If you have any specific prayer requests, please let me know. Lent is a time for us to look within, being mindful of the ways that we need to make space for the presence of the Holy Spirit in our lives.

In terms of Regional Ministry, I invite you to consider attending the next Regional Assembly—April 20th-21st, in Hannibal, Missouri. On Friday night, the General Minister and President of the Christian Church (DOC), The Rev. Teresa Hord Owens, will preach at the evening worship, while we cruise up and down the Mississippi on the riverboat.

In terms of major movements within Community, we are continuing the process to discern if God is calling us to be an Open and Affirming Congregation. Please be sure to read the article by the Open and Affirming Team in this newsletter. We also continue to work with Agile, planning for the future and continued ministry of CCC. And, of course, the Stable is hard at work preparing for the upcoming spring sale.

I feel that church is running well. There never seems to be a "down time." Yet, the constant work and ministry is refreshing and renewing. I'm proud of the role Community plays in our community.

See you Sunday!

Blessings,
Jacob

The Elder's Chili Cook-off Votes are in and ...

The **Eckelkamp's** are CCC's new Elder's Chili Cook-off Champs. Congratulations guys! **Laura McDurmont** was awarded the runner-up trophy for her recipe. Way to go Laura!

And a big **Thank You** to the 124 attendees who came and supported this fun evening of food and fellowship on January 28th in the WFLC. Our thanks also go to the other contestants: **Deb Shabel, Sandy Schleusner, Kevin Ledbetter, Janet Staicoff, Molly Duncan, Pam Welker and Roger Boone**. Besides chili, folks also sampled delicious soups made by **Cindy Herman, Don Miller, Rich Dupuis and Laura McDurmont**. And we can't forget to thank our **baked goods makers!**

Thanks to all who helped make this a very special evening.

The admission tickets and the auction net proceeds of \$582 will go to Backstoppers and the Pastor's Discretionary Fund.

The Elders want to thank everyone for their participation and support!



Chili Cook-off winners with their trophies!

New Flooring Brings Updated Look To Our Nursery And Library

If you haven't checked out the Nursery and attached kid's area recently, take a look at the beautiful new flooring. Then wander on over to the Library and look at the new carpet. These purchases were made thanks to a donation from the Stable Sale. They are working hard preparing for the May sale and helping those in the community who have been impacted by hard times. A big thank you to the Stable Crew for the wonderful flooring and for always being there for our community!



Beautiful new carpet in the CCC Library



New flooring in the children's preschool area

Updates From Core Leadership Team

Volunteer Development Officer: Leon Whitney distributed his proposal for a legacy endowment fund to cultivate members' giving from wills, estates, life insurance proceeds, and other sources to start an endowment plan to assure long term viability of CCC. The proposal will go to the finance team meeting in February.

Congregational meeting: The actions taken January 14th did not include all of the congregational officers. A second meeting has been called for Sunday, February 4th to approve the names of nominees and members of Core Leadership Team.

2018 Goals: Jacob Thorne presented his written goals for the congregation and Core Leadership Team

Mission and Vision: On January 20th, the Core Leadership Team, along with the dream team members, youth leaders, and CCC staff, met with Coy James, consultant from Agile Church to the Core Leadership Team, to brainstorm mission and service ideas, and to prioritize CCC goals and ministries going forth. Next steps include forming a 'vision and mission' team, developing the mission statement, and determining if our current statement, Bolding Changing Lives, needs revising. Later this year, the proposed mission and vision will be presented to the congregation, seeking their approval.

Meetings of CLT: The Team decided that regular meetings will be on the first Monday of each month.

Church Intruder Training: Susan McGehee presented a good summary of plans every congregation should have, to deal with any unwanted or threatening intruder, on Sundays or any day of week. The Team will discuss again in a future meeting.

2017 Year End Financial Update

CCC ended 2017 with a surplus of \$34,000, thanks to your many generous financial contributions throughout the year. There were some non-routine updates throughout the year, including fresh paint in the WFLC gym, entry and kitchen, along with the routine ministry support and property maintenance expenses. Many organizations were recipients of funds from outreach giving,

	<u>2017 Actual</u>	<u>2017 Budget</u>
General Offering	\$396,354	\$382,050
Other Income	<u>23,582</u>	<u>21,416</u>
Total Income	<u>\$419,936</u>	<u>403,466</u>
Expenses	<u>385,936</u>	<u>419,362</u>
Net Income (loss)	<u>\$34,000</u>	<u>(\$15,896)</u>

Thank you from Facilities and Finance for your continued financial support of CCC.

THANK YOU NOTES

Thank you very much for all of the beautiful cards, prayers and words of support following the sudden passing of my dad. It truly meant a lot to me, my mom and our entire family.

Lisa Belue

Words cannot truly convey our appreciation for all your cards, calls, and most especially prayers that have sustained and encouraged Kristina and me during my most recent surgery. We are so blessed to be part of such a caring and supportive church family. Thank you so very much!

John Houghton

I extend my heartfelt thanks for all of you who fed me, drove me to appointments, stayed with me, visited, called and prayed during my recent recovery from shoulder surgery. I remain humbled by your care. To be on the receiving end of Christian love is indeed a healing in and of itself.

Grace and Peace to all,

Brenda Richardson

GIVE BLOOD - SAVE LIVES

CCC has a Red Cross Blood Drive scheduled for March 4, 2018 in the Wunderlich Family Life Center. This is a wonderful opportunity to do what Jesus would do. I give blood regularly because I know that it saves lives. I have had three near death health issues in my lifetime and was blessed in each case by God who rescued me using gifts from caring people. We are all God incarnate, and all we have to do is let His will guide us. Giving blood is so simple, but so important! Your pint of blood can help up to three different patients. It might even save a life.

In His Service,

Carl Quicksall

The current need for blood donors is critical due to the high incidence of flu in the area. Please help if you are healthy! Questions? Call Liz Dupuis.

MEN'S BATHROOM REMODELING IS COMPLETE

You men may have already noticed that the men's restroom across from the church office has just been remodeled, thanks to the generous contribution of Cindy and Ted Herman. The new clean look showcases Ted's handiwork, which is always top notch, including the beautiful wall hanging and mirror over the sink. Thank you Ted and Cindy for all of the planning, shopping and time that was required for this project.



Ted was very happy when the caution tape could be removed for the official debut of the restroom.

YOUTH SUNDAY IS COMING SOON

Questioning!

Questioning our faith can be frightening. Questioning God or the presence of God in the face of tragedy, suffering and evil is both debilitating and liberating.

The youth of Community Christian Church are bravely tackling the challenge and power of Questioning our Beliefs, our Faith and God in light of recent tragedies that have sent shock waves throughout our community, our country and the world.



Join the youth on Sunday March 4th as they lead us in worship sharing their thoughts with us on Questioning the presence of God. They will inspire us to look for God, to find God and experience God in unexpected places.

WIDENING OUR WELCOME

Open and Affirming Group Task Force Update

The Open and Affirming Group (OAG) Task Force of CCC has been meeting quarterly since last summer. The OAG is a task force at CCC made up of persons in our congregation who have a heart & passion for the full inclusion of our LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, and Questioning) children, teens & adults into the life of our congregation.

As a part of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) the denomination encourages a congregation to engage in a process of dialogue, prayer, study and reflection in order to discern if this is where God is leading our congregation. The OAG is currently shepherding this process, utilizing an ecumenical resource entitled "Building an Inclusive Church" <http://www.welcomingresources.org/communityorg.htm>

During the months of January-March the individual task force members will be contacting those of you who call CCC home to have a One on One Conversation with the intent of having everyone in the congregation actively participating and contributing in the welcoming process.

In the future, the task force will also be offering Bible study and/or educational opportunities to learn more about what it means to widen our welcome.

If you have questions, please contact one of the task force members. Task force members are: Jeff Clifton, Chris Fairchild, Brian Degitz-Fries, Cindy Herman, Ted Herman, Ron Hollon, Laura McDurmont, Don Miller, Loyalty Miller, Matt Mohr, Norm Pereira, Betty Quicksall, Cathy Schlueter, Janet Staicoff and Steve Staicoff.

LADIES SMALL GROUPS

In February, the ladies of Priscilla and Rebecca Small Groups collected a special offering to be used to by CCC college students. This tradition of supporting our college students, formerly with cookies, but now with gift cards, was started by Katherine Prescott a number of years ago. The ladies hope a special note and gift card will brighten each student's day and remind them of our support as they pursue career opportunities.

In March, they will be collecting Kid Friendly Food as their service project. All items collected will be donated to Circle of Concern. Their hope is that this food will fill a need of families during Spring Break when kids are not at school. Donations may be placed in the marked basket in the hallway by the church office.



Pictured above are the ladies who attended the Rebecca Circle Small Group on February 20.

Priscilla Group meets on the 2nd Tuesday of the month in the CCC Library at 7:00 p.m.

Rebecca Group also meets in the library at 9:30 a.m. on the third Tuesday of the month.

If you'd like more information about either group, please contact Mitzie Bryant or Linda Newton.

DISCIPLES MEN BREAKFAST

All men, please mark your calendar for the first Men's Breakfast of 2018, to be held on March 3rd in the WFLC. Coffee will be brewed by 8:00 a.m. and breakfast will begin at 8:30 a.m.

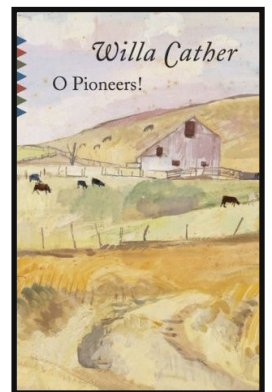
Rev. Thorne will be our featured speaker.

We hope you will attend.



CCC BOOK GROUP

Discussion of the book *O Pioneers!* by Willa Cather will take place on Monday, March 19th at 1:30 p.m. in the CCC library. Please contact Brenda Richardson if you would like more information.



ALL CHURCH MISSION DAY

SUNDAY, APRIL 22, 2018 - SAVE THE DATE

On April 22 the Mission First Team invites you to be a part of our Spring All Church Mission Day.

After a short 9:00 a.m. worship at CCC, there will be a variety of opportunities (suitable for all ages and all abilities) to be the hands and feet of Christ and serve our community.

Here's how you may get involved:

- If you are aware of an organization with whom we might partner, share your idea with anyone on the Mission First Team
- Help plan/organize the Spring Mission Day by joining us on Thursday, March 1, 2018 at 6:30 for a brief planning meeting (with snacks!)

Look for more information and sign ups beginning mid-March in the Narthex. Any questions please call Martin Eckelkamp at 314-941-3037.

The Mission First Team

Beth Eckelkamp (CLT Liaison), Ted Herman, Tracey Hammack, Molly Duncan, Martin Eckelkamp (Co-chair)
Diane Hall, Janet Staicoff (Co-Chair), Laurie Clifton and Jeff Clifton

A NEW LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND

FOR COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

The Core Leadership Team has asked Leon Whitney to contact CCC members about making gifts, or setting up planned gifts through our wills, trusts, insurance policies, etc. - - - to create a new LEGACY ENDOWMENT FUND.

You will be receiving more information on this next week. Together, let's make a difference for the ministries of this Church!

CANDY FOR EASTER EGG HUNT

Children's Ministry will be hosting an Easter Egg hunt on Easter morning during the Children's Sunday School time. They are in need of candy to fill the plastic eggs. Your donation can be dropped off in the basket marked "Easter Candy" in the hallway by the office



Mid-America Regional Assembly

To learn more about the coming Regional Assembly, you can use the following link to access the Mid-America website and the online registration form. Registration forms are also available in the CCC Narthex.

<http://www.mid-america-disciples.org/regional-assembly-2018/>

Summer Outdoor Ministries

Information is now available for all of the Mid-America Summer Ministries camp opportunities.

Please use the following link to learn what camp would be a good fit for your family or for your child/youth.

<http://www.mid-america-disciples.org/summer/>



Look for the Week of Compassion Special Offering envelopes in this week's bulletin.

To give online, click on the donate tab using the following link: <http://www.weekofcompassion.org/special-offering/> or by going to the contribute tab on the CCC website.

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PLACE
STAMP
HERE

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Rev. Jacob Thorne, Sr. Pastor
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