

February  
2019

# The Vital Spark

NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER

Dear Community,

In church last Sunday, I mentioned that it is rare these days to know someone who made a lifelong spiritual journey with one church or one denomination. Yet this past Tuesday, as I had the honor and privilege to officiate and celebrate the life of Richard Ragland, a beloved saint of our church, and whose family, as he once said, is etched into the mortars of the sanctuary, I listened as his niece, Jennie, shared that Richard was indeed a “cradle to grave” Disciples of Christ.

For many, the journey of discipleship is peripatetic—we start and stop, moving one way and then another. But for Richard, it was a straight shot—he knew who he was and to whom he belonged. And though he dined with governors, stood side by side with generals, and held numerous awards and recognitions, what I will remember most about Richard Ragland is his faithfulness and devotion to God. Each time that I visited his apartment, I would see Richard’s Bible close by—every day, for Richard, started with God and scripture.

And so in a time when we wait eagerly for spring, and a thawing of winter, I share with you today a prayer that I read at Richard’s funeral. It’s actually a prayer written by Richard, from his days as an Elder, at Community Christian Church. The elegance of the words and the depths of the conviction, fill me with hope and courage on this journey of life. I pray the same is true for you:

*O God our Father, you dwell in light unapproachable, and, as the heavens are high above the earth, so are your ways higher than our ways and your thoughts than our thoughts.*

*Yet you have breathed your Spirit into our lives, you have formed our minds to seek you and inclined our hearts to love you. You have made us restless for the rest that is only in you, and have planted within us a hunger and thirst that makes us dissatisfied with the things of earth.*

*We thank you, O Lord, for that knocking at our hearts’ door which tells us of your waiting presence. We bless you for your hand upon our lives, and for the sure knowledge that, however we may falter and fail, underneath are the everlasting arms.*

*Father, give us grace today to recognize the stirrings of your Spirit within our souls and to listen most attentively to all that you have to say to us. Let not the noises of the world ever so confuse us that we cannot hear you speak. May we never deceive ourselves as to the meaning of your commands, and so let us all in all things obey your will.*

*You know the inmost need of each one of us, Father. Hear then the silent prayer of each one, and in your mercy and wisdom answer them in accordance with your holy will. Be with those of our church family who are ill or infirm, those older ones whose mind and memory have fled, those who are bearing difficult burdens alone, those who sorrow and all family circles broken by death. Be in every sore heart, in every stricken home, by every bed of pain, giving to all the consolation of your peace and sustaining them with the hope and courage that comes from trust in your promises. Strengthen our faith.*

*Forgive us Lord, if in the past week we have done or said anything to increase the pain of the world. In your great mercy, blot out our sins from the book of your remembrance, and restore us to fellowship with you.*

*To your care, O father, we commend our souls and the souls of all whom we love. We pray through Jesus Christ, our Lord, who taught us when we pray to say...*

*Our Father, who art in heaven, hallowed by thy name, thy kingdom come, thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven, give us this day our daily bread, and forgive us our debts as we forgive our debtors, and lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory forever and ever. Amen.*

Blessings,

Jacob

# Ash Wednesday Service

Please plan to join us on Wednesday, March 6th at 7pm for our Ash Wednesday Service.



## Lent Devotional Booklets

The CCC Elder's have been hard at work writing short devotionals for the Lenten season. Please be sure to get your copy on Sunday, March 3.

## Thank You

This last year was a year of health challenges for us. As we continue to meet these challenges, you, our church family, have been our saving grace. For your cards, your calls, your prayers, we are so thankful. So we send you this thank you wrapped in appreciation, gratitude and love. May God continue to bless each and every one of you.

June and Scott Douglass

Dear Friends at Community Christian Church,

Thank you for your cards, calls, prayers and concern for Wilber and myself. We miss attending church with you, but it just isn't possible. The Lutheran Service here is available and we have communion every Sunday.

I appreciate the church news and hearing about the Outreach programs you are doing as you follow Christ's commands.

God Bless You

Jane Gearhart

Thank you to all who sent get well cards. I continue to make progress and appreciate all the well wishes.

Phillip Helm

To the CCC Church Family,

Thank you for all the prayers, cards and kind words about Clark. His last days were spent at home, as he wished, surrounded by his family and dog.

Special thanks to Don and Loyalty Miller who visited Clark and brought him communion on his last Sunday. The visit with prayers was so appreciated. Also to Margaret Pereira for delivering (and help with moving!) a couch from the Stable. She also visited with Clark remembering and sharing stories from the past. He really enjoyed the visit.

Thank you from the entire Compton Family.

Rob, Megan, Keith and Darby

# Outreach

## Columbia Elementary



Over 2 recent Sunday's, our congregation made around 265 valentines for Columbia Elementary and gave generous donations of toothpaste, toothbrushes, and dental floss to be included with the valentine gift bags. There were many very happy children when the valentine's were delivered. We at Community Christian are richly blessed and it is wonderful to be a church that truly cares about sharing with others.

## Circle of Concern Donations

Urgent needs for Circle of Concern include pasta sauce, cereal, peanut butter, tomato products (such as diced tomatoes and tomato sauce). There is a grocery cart every week in the CCC Narthex for your donations.

## Blankets for Project Linus

On Saturday, January 26th, we had 16 women meet in DeWitt Hall to tie fleece blankets. Thirty six blankets were donated to the Project Linus St. Louis/St. Charles Chapter and will be given to area children who are facing challenges where a warm, cozy blanket will give them comfort. Thank you to Lisa Belue and Connie Watkins for providing us with delicious snacks while we "tied it on" together. It was a wonderful morning for fellowship so thank you to all who participated.

The CCC women (Priscilla and Rebecca Ladies Groups) have a service project every month. For February we are collecting \$10 Walmart Gift cards to send to each of our CCC college students. It is a special way to let them know they are being thought of by their church family. Anyone in the church can participate in this service project, as we have many college students.



# Elder's Chili Cook-Off and Auction

## The Votes are in and ---

**Joyce Doup** is CCC's new Elder's Chili Cook-off Champ (and this is her first time to even enter!). **Angela Perkins** was awarded the runner-up trophy for her recipe (not her first time as she won first in 2014 and second in 2010!). Way to go Joyce and Angela!

And a big Thank You to the 174 people who bought tickets, came and supported this fun evening of food and fellowship. Our thanks also go to the other contestants: **Olivia Mendez-Alm, David Hosler, Cheryl Kinney, Floss Haniford, Lindsay Mohr** and **Kurt Eliffs**. Besides chili, folks also sampled delicious soups made by **Molly Duncan, Rich and Liz Dupuis, Beth Eckelkamp, Jess Newton** and **Betty Rega**. And we can't forget to thank our **baked goods makers** and our extremely talented **craft auction folks!** Thanks to all who helped make this a very special evening.

The admission tickets and the auction grossed \$1,368. After expenses are paid, \$1,173 will be donated to the Community Garden.

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

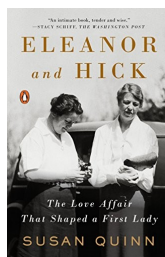


## Senior Citizen's Lunch

Mark your calendar for our next lunch on Thursday, March 7th at 11:30 a.m. in the CCC Narthex. Our program will focus on favorite prayers and bible verses.

Hope you will join us! Contact the church office if you have any questions or if you'd like to help with a food donation.

## CCC Book Group



The CCC book group will meet on March 18th at 1:30pm in the CCC library to discuss *Eleanor and Hick* by Susan Quinn. Please contact Brenda Richardson to learn more.



Early Bird Registration  
Available until March 31  
2019 General Assembly, July 20-24  
Des Moines, Iowa

Learn more at <https://ga.disciples.org>

## Spring Blood Drive

We need your help!

This year we have a goal to average 25 or more donors at each of our 4 blood drives.

Please consider making a donation to help save a life!

Wunderlich Family Life Center Gym

**Sunday, March 17, 2019**

**8:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

Please call 1-800-RED CROSS (1-800-733-2767)

Or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) and enter:

CommChristianCh to schedule an appointment.

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