

September  
2019

# The Vital Spark

NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

## MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER

The front page of yesterday's *St. Louis Post* included this headline: Life expectancy drops in state as overdoses, suicides, rise.

There were over 1,000,000 attempted suicides in the United States last year. More than 47,000 of these suicides were successful. The numbers are both staggering and sickening. Most of us know someone who has suicidal thoughts, tried suicide or committed suicide.

The number of overdoses is no less unsettling. The death rate for Missouri residents in the age group of fifteen-to-forty-four years of age has increased thirty percent since 2012. A significant amount of this increase is due to opioid related deaths.

As a pastor, I have officiated services for those who have died of both suicide and overdoses. It is not easy. As a pastor, it also troubles me that the resources we have to prevent such deaths are often tucked away in the basement, out of sight. This is true for most other churches as well.

When people are hurting and struggling, the church is a place where groups can meet on a weekly basis. But somehow, we need, as a community, to help make the transition from the basement to the sanctuary. We need to find a way to let people know that it's okay to hurt and when you are experiencing feelings of depression, church is a safe and welcoming place to be.

So how do we do this?

Just a couple of quick thoughts: 1) Love people where they are and be vulnerable. It is okay to share what you're feeling at church; 2) Let's consider having some Sunday School classes with professionals that deal with mental health; and 3) Someday I would love for us to give rent-free office space to a local therapist in exchange for reduced charges for our friends/members who would like to see a therapist (a good practice for everyone at all times in life).

Let's continue to find innovative ways to be a community to our community.

Many blessings,

Jacob

## Senior Citizen Lunches

Our remaining lunches for 2019 will be on November 7th and December 5th. A sign up genius has been created for anyone who would like to donate a food item for the meal. Please use the following link to sign up: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/4090448A8AD2DA7FE3-food2>

This is a great time of monthly fellowship for all seniors. Ministry coordinators, Beth Bean and Lori Hoover, hope you will learn something new from the short program that is shared before the meal and during the conversation shared while we are eating. And plan to stay for Bingo following lunch—there are great prizes!!

## Ladies Group Meetings and Service

The ladies of the Priscilla Ladies Group will meet at 7 p.m. on October 15th in CCC library and Rebecca Ladies Group will also meet on the 15th at 9:30 a.m. Both groups have a time of fellowship, study, service and prayer at each meeting. This month they are collecting personal hygiene products for women as their service project. Donations may be placed in the marked basket across from the CCC Library. Please contact the church office to learn more about either of these groups. All women are invited to attend the monthly meetings.

## Trivia Night at CCC

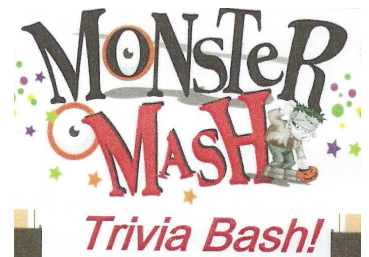
On November 2, 2019, join us for the inaugural CCC Monster Mash Trivia Bash!! This year, all proceeds will go to the Clearly Seeing 20/20 Capital Campaign. Doors of the WFLC open at 6:00, with trivia starting at 7:00pm! There will be water, soda, beer and popcorn for your love offering. Tables of 8 can be purchased for \$100 or individual tickets for \$15 each. This is a family friendly event and there will be babysitters in the church building for the littlest of the littles. The event will feature mixed trivia rounds, games in between the rounds, 50/50, and a wine pull.

Get your crew together, dust off your trivial knowledge, dress up or decorate your table in a Halloween theme and get ready for a good time!

We already have 7 tables sold! We would love to see your non-CCC friends too!

We will be selling spots before and after service again next week. See any of the committee members to reserve your spot!!

Committee members are: Laura McDurmont, Chris Fairchild, Mel Fairchild, Jill Chaney-Lipe, Julie Swaney, Stacey Rawls, and Keith Boyce



# Stable News...

## Come Stand and Be Counted

Apostle John in Revelations saw a multitude of folk of every depiction stand before the Lord. Our Stable is having its last sale of the 2019 year. CCC, this is Your sale so please come and Stand with them to carry on God's mission. This event is to count down the WFLC mortgage, as well as bring some heaven to the charities we help during the year.

- Where do you start? This Sunday after church.... teens and up. Diverse jobs are available Monday Sept. 30th, starting at 9am and continue each day thru Sat, even in the evening! Can't figure this in to your schedule... then advertise our coming sale Oct 8-12 on your Facebook, invite your various neighbors to shop, come get an early Christmas gift for a friend, bring your child to get a Halloween costume.
- Come volunteer and be counted.... Help turn our wonderful gym into a culture shock of excitement/picturesque adventure. When the Lord created us, He said, "This is Good!" Come praise

## Stable at work in our community ...

The Stable is serving the community all year long. Monthly we provide clothing to homeless in the city; we provide help to families going through disasters such as floods and fires; and we are always here to help our community. The following note is just an example of the thanks we recently received from one of our beneficiaries, Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, 826 Union Boulevard, St. Louis:

*On behalf of Pilgrim Congregational United Church of Christ, I thank you for your continued support of our Wednesday Ministries Food Program. Your donations of clothing help us provide our guests with much needed apparel. Just today I heard from a man who was able to look professional for a job interview because of items that your church donated. He also was selected for the position and will start his position next week. He was so grateful that he was able to go into the interview with the appropriate clothing.*

*We could not provide this service without your generosity and for that we are extremely grateful.*

*Peace in Christ,*

*Diane Yanczer*

*Coordinator of Wednesday Ministries*

## Blood Drive Report...

Thank you to all who donated blood at our blood drive this past Sunday. The Red Cross was able to collect 22 pints of blood which will help up to 66 people in need. These life-saving gifts are much appreciated. In case you missed our blood drive, please consider donating blood in the next month by going to: [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org) to find a nearby drive location. Our next church blood drive will be in 3 months on Sunday December 15th.

Thanks again for your support.

Liz Dupuis

## Youth Events

- October 6th—CROP Walk;

Depart from CCC at 4 p.m. and drive to Webster Groves via carpool.

Holy Crepe Food Truck will be on the Eden Campus from 4:15 until 7:00 p. m.

Participate in walk at 5 p.m.

CROP Concert at 7:00 p. m. in the Wehrli Chapel on the Eden Campus.

- October 13th—BBQ and Kickball

All CCC families are invited to share a picnic lunch together and enjoy a game of kickball.

More details to be provided soon!

## God's Kids Choir

Starting this Sunday, September 29th, God's Kids Choir will have their weekly practices immediately following worship. Start time will be at 11:30 a.m. in the CCC choir room.

We all can look forward to hearing the kids sing during worship on October 6th.

The Christmas musical will be on Sunday, December 8th at 4 p.m. in the CCC Sanctuary.

## Sunday Morning Mission Partner Updates

On Sunday, September 29<sup>th</sup>, we will have the opportunity to learn more about Caring Solutions, a local organization that provides services to individuals with developmental disabilities. Caring Solutions staff members, Madi Hawn and Sally Boyd, are looking forward to this time together.

On October 6th, Tina Turnbough Squires will be with us to share the experiences and opportunities of UrbanReachSTL, Inc. This non-profit organization serves the Columbus Square neighborhood in downtown St. Louis.

Both of these sessions will be in the CCC Library at 9 a.m.

## Book Discussion Group

The CCC Book Discussion Group will be meeting on October 21st at 1:30 p.m. in the CCC Library for conversation about the book *The Lady of the Lakes* by Josie S. Kilpack. Please contact Brenda Richardson for additional information about the group or Lynn Richter if you need a copy of the book.

## Open and Affirming...

Community Christian Church will be recognizing the one year anniversary of becoming an open and affirming congregation on Sunday, November 10. We would like to host a story-telling session during the Sunday School hour. This was a very moving experience last fall. If you would be willing to share your personal story of your struggle with inclusion (for any reason) or diversity issues, please contact Loyalty Miller by October 11. If you have a story you would like to share but would prefer not to speak, please let Loyalty know as well - we would like to publish a booklet if there is enough interest.

## Service Sunday on October 20th ...

The Mission First Team has many great projects suitable for all ages—sign up sheets will be in the Narthex on Sunday.

**Caring Solutions House Project:** Caring Solutions Family Support Program specifically serves those who in addition to developmental disabilities also have significant behavioral challenges. We will be doing some maintenance or painting in one of the group homes in South County that houses three individuals. Wear painting clothes! Led by Marty Eckelkamp. Seeking 7-10 volunteers

**Clean Up/Spruce Up Manchester Park:** A family friendly, inter-generational activity in our own community. The title says just what we will do, and it will help the park be ready for the spring and summer activities. Bring work gloves and no open-toed shoes, and be ready to pick up, rake up and generally clean up. No tools needed. Seeking 10-15 volunteers. Led by Ted Herman.

**Big Bend Woods Nursing Home Crafts:** Help us create cheerful decorations to brighten up the residents' tables at Big Bend Woods and paint rocks for a memorial garden. We will work on the projects in the WFLC and deliver them to Big Bend Woods during the sing-along. Good for all ages and abilities. Seeking 10+ volunteers. Led by Diane Hall and Laurie Clifton.

**Big Bend Woods Sing-along with Residents:** Join a 'pop up' singing group as we bring some cheer to the residents of Big Bend Nursing Home in Valley Park. Large print lyric sheets of easy to sing, popular songs from the 40's- 60's will be available. We will have a short practice with our guitarist prior to traveling as a group to the nursing home. We will spend time singing and visiting with the residents. Good for all ages and abilities. Seeking 10+ volunteers. Led by Steve Staicoff and Laurie Clifton.

**Ronald McDonald House breakfast:** Help prepare breakfast for families staying at the Ronald McDonald house, West County location, while their loved ones are hospitalized. Seeking 4-6 volunteers. Led by Molly Duncan.

**Feed My Starving Children:** Assist in hand-packing nutritious MannaPack™ meals (designed to assist in reversing and preventing undernutrition) at a West County location. Open to volunteers of all ages above 5 years of age – children under 12 must be accompanied by parent or guardian. This event takes place from 12:30pm – 2:45pm and volunteers are invited to meet at CCC at noon and carpool together. Volunteers should wear comfortable clothes, closed toed shoes, and may not wear jewelry. Hairnets will be provided. Seeking 20 volunteers. Led by Janet Staicoff.

**Mission Day Celebration Dinner:** Assist in preparing and serving dinner to volunteers and families on the evening of Mission Sunday. Led by Marty Eckelkamp.

And remember our food donation baskets in the Narthex for Hanna Woods (items such as peanut butter, canned fruit and vegetables, granola bars and juice boxes) and for Circle of Concern (items such as canned pasta, jelly, Size 6 diapers, pasta sauce, dry pasta, bean/potato/rice mixes).



The CCC Walk Team, Disciples 4 Hope, will once again be participating in the local "Walk to End Alzheimer's" on October 27<sup>th</sup>. Please use the following link to register for the walk (or to make a financial donation to support the walkers and benefit Alzheimer's research):

[https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2019/MO-GreaterMissouri?eam\\_id=585040&pg=team&fr\\_id=12689](https://act.alz.org/site/TR/Walk2019/MO-GreaterMissouri?eam_id=585040&pg=team&fr_id=12689)



We will continue to celebrate the

**Light a Candle for Children Vigil**

on a weekly basis during worship for a couple more weeks.

There are still openings for children/youth to participate in each week's worship service.

Please contact Susan McGehee or the church office if interested.

And thank you for donating \$151.29 in "noisy offering" this past Sunday.

These funds will be donated to the Hanna Woods Food project.



**Minister Appreciation Sunday**

October 13 immediately following worship

There will be a basket in the Narthex for cards to show our appreciation of Rev. Thorne's ministry to CCC.

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