

November
2019

The Vital Spark

NEWSLETTER OF COMMUNITY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

MESSAGE FROM OUR SENIOR MINISTER

Soon, we will move into a new church year. December 1st marks the start of Advent.

The season of Advent, and perhaps on a deeper level time itself, is both cyclical and broken.

Traditions are repeated each year: the decorating of the Christmas tree, the stories of treasured ornaments, the special meal, trips made to relatives, scriptures proclaiming the birth of Christ, and candlelight services sending us forth into the night. These same comforting patterns are enacted, from one Christmas to the next.

Time is never completely cyclical, though. A family member is absent from the Christmas dinner table. A chair sits empty for the first time. New family members are seated in the high-chair next to the proud grandparents. Fresh rituals are created. And stories previously unheard are suddenly shared.

But within the circle of both brokenness and continuation there is one constant that always remains. The constant of the Christian faith, particularly during the season of Advent, which is this: God is always moving us forward, leading us from where we once were to where we are yet to be. God is calling us to the future, to a new beginning.

The future of God is rooted in both the old and the new. We build upon the traditions and ministries we already have, both as individuals and as a community. And at the same time, we look forward knowing that what God has promised us may not yet even be revealed.

I look forward to celebrating the season of Advent with you.

Blessings,

Jacob

The Annual Congregational Meeting will be on December 15th immediately following worship.

Senior Citizen's Lunch

On December 5th we will have a Christmas program and lunch.

All seniors are invited to join in the fun. And Bingo following lunch.

Please contact Beth Bean or Lori Hoover with questions or if you need a ride!

Ladies Groups Meetings and Service

The ladies of the Priscilla Ladies Group will meet at 6:30 p.m. on December 10th at the home of Betty Quicksall for a potluck dinner and Christmas celebration. Rebecca Ladies Group will have their Christmas meeting on December 17th at 9:30 a.m. in the CCC library. Both groups have a time of fellowship, study, service and prayer at each meeting. In December they will collect an offering for the Pastor's Discretionary Fund for their service project. Please contact the church office to learn more about either of these groups. All women are invited to attend the monthly meetings.

Trivia Night Success at CCC

The 1st Annual CCC Trivia Night was a huge success and raised over \$2,000 to help with the debt retirement on the Wunderlich Family Live Center. Thank you to all of the committee members for a great evening of fun and all of the attendees for your generous support.

December Blood Drive

Many of you know first hand how critical it is that there be blood products available when needed. Our CCC ongoing service project having the American Red Cross here to collect blood donations is a perfect way to participate and help someone in need. Please support our blood drive ministry and make a donation at our blood drive happening December 15th from 8:00 a.m. until 12:00 p.m. in the WFLC gym.

Questions? Contact Liz Dupuis or the church office.

All blood donors who give blood before December 18th will receive a \$5 Amazon Gift Card* via email, sponsored by Suburban Propane. Donors must provide the American Red Cross with a working e-mail to receive this electronic promo code from Amazon.



Bell Ringing for Salvation Army



In 1947 the St. Louis Division of the Salvation Army started the Tree of Lights Campaign collecting for those in need in the St. Louis area. This Campaign has since spread to hundreds of communities across the nation.

Every December for over 35 years, Community Christian Church has participated in the Campaign by ringing the bell. This year we are once again scheduled to “man the kettle” **at the Dierbergs located in the Lafayette Center** from Thursday, December 12th through Saturday, December 21st.

This is your chance to become part of a wonderful old Christmas tradition. You can personally have a part in feeding thousands of homeless people, providing toys to children, and/or restoring heat in the home of a neighbor whose social security check doesn't stretch far enough.

Don't miss your opportunity to stand and ring bells at the Salvation Army kettle. Sign-up will begin this Sunday in the Narthex. If you have any questions, please contact Ted Herman.

Circle of Concern Giving Tree

THANK YOU!

A just want to thank you and your family for adopting my family at Christmas. I am currently unemployed and your gifts were greatly appreciated. I think the kids liked their shoes & art supplies the most. I love my new purse and wallet! Again, thank you so much! People (families) like yours make the world a happier place. Thank you!



This note is one of several we received after Christmas last year from an adopted family.

It's once again time to help a family served by Circle of Concern by purchasing Christmas gifts for their family. Beginning Sunday, November 24th, please take a tag from the tree in the Narthex, follow the instructions on the back of the tag, and return the gift to church by 10:00 a.m. on December 8th. If you have any questions, contact Cindy Herman.



THANKS FOR MAKING A FAMILY'S
CHRISTMAS BRIGHTER

Christmas Party for Adults



Ding Dong!! The Christmas Spirit for adults of CCC will be celebrated at Karl and Joyce Doup's home on December 7th starting at 5:30 p.m. For those whose name ends A-M bring a festive dessert, adults ending in N-Z, a favorite appetizer. Joan Tichacek and the fellowship committee are challenging us to fun holiday games. Each person attending should bring a wrapped white elephant gift. A prize will be awarded to the most unique gift. Carpools will leave from CCC at 5 p.m.

A sign up sheet for this event is in the Narthex.

God's Kids Choir Musical



Please mark your calendar for this year's Christmas musical which will be shared with us by the God's Kids Choir on Sunday, December 8th at 4:00 p.m. in the CCC Sanctuary. The show, *Camel Lot*, is sure to fill us with Christmas spirit. There will be a reception in the Narthex following the performance. Please sign up on the back of this week's connection Card if you would like to donate 2 dozen cookies for the post show reception.

Men's Quarterly Breakfast

All men and women are invited to the quarterly Men's Breakfast on December 7th. Coffee and fellowship at 8, breakfast at 8:30 and program at 9:00. Featured speaker, Don Brohm, will share with us a program called "Railroad to Mandalay."

Sign ups will be available in the Narthex on Sunday.

Caroling at Big Bend Woods

Get your singing voices ready because we will be going to Big Bend Woods Care Center in December 15th following worship to share Christmas songs with the residents.

A sign up sheet will be in the Narthex if you'd like to attend.

Come join us and share the Christmas spirit through beautiful Christmas music!

Please contact Laurie Clifton or the church office if you have questions.



Youth Sunday School

All youth are invited to participate in Youth Sunday School class beginning December 1st. Class will begin after the Children's Moment segment of our Sunday worship service and will end just before communion. Please contact Susan McGehee if you would like to learn more.

Thank you

Dear Friends at CCC-

WOW!! You all have been amazing to UrbanReachSTL! Thank you for showing up and loving well at the Trunk-or-Treat! You all went above and beyond and I hope you got a taste of the sweet families in the area that so desperately need to know Jesus. Keep praying for us and join us again if the Lord calls you!

Love,

Tina

Retirement Announcement from Regional Minister Rev. Dr. Penny Ross-Corona

Dear Mid-America Disciples,

It is with mixed emotions that I share with you my plans to retire at the end of this year—sadness, because I will truly miss our ministry together, but also excitement as God unfolds possibilities for the next chapter of my life. Our Region's personnel policies require a 60 day notice, and I gave my notice to our Regional Board on October 31.

This past August I turned 66, which means I am already eligible for full retirement benefits. While I could certainly continue to serve for several more months, I have chosen to give my notice now in light of this Saturday's Regional Board meeting. At that time, discussions will begin concerning our Region's structure and staffing. Please know that I heartily encourage periodic self-evaluations of our Region and its structure. I also think it is critically important for the Board to have as much of a complete picture as possible, rather than making any important decisions with only partial information.

My plan is to continue to be helpful to the Region through the end of 2019. Not only will I keep working during this time, I will also intentionally share "institutional memory" and any other information I have with the other Regional Minister Team members, our office managers, and the Regional Board. Also, do know that I will be using the remainder of my 2019 vacation time.

It has been a wonderful gift for me to have had the privilege of serving in the Mid-America Region these past 16 years—first as Area Minister for SEGA and more recently as part of the Regional Minister Team. I have a deep love for our Region and want to be as helpful as I can during this upcoming transition. Please know that I wish you all the very best.

With warmest regards,

Penny Ross-Corona

Please help us show our appreciation to **Penny** as she prepares for her retirement. **Send a greeting card or note** to: CCMA/Card Shower, 475 E. Lockwood Ave., St. Louis, MO 63119 to arrive by December 12th when she starts her vacation through year end.

WUNDERLICH FAMILY LIFE CENTER DEBT RETIREMENT PARTY

On December 8th, we will have a catered lunch in the Wunderlich Center following worship to celebrate the retirement of all debt on the Wunderlich Family Life Center. This accomplishment has been made possible by the generous donations of CCC members, friends and the Stable Ministry. Please mark your calendar and plan to be a part of this special celebration in the life of CCC. RSVP's can be made on the back of your connection card starting this Sunday—or contact the church office.



Thanksgiving Feast Dinner

This Sunday's dinner will begin at 5:00 p.m. in the WFLC gym. We are looking forward to this exciting tradition of gathering with our guest family members and church family for a wonderful meal and time of fellowship.

As we have done in past years, all attendees are encouraged to bring food/household items which will be donated to Circle of Concern. A special basket will be in the entry of the WFLC for your donations. Items most needed right now by Circle are: canned pasta, snacks, dry pasta, pasta sauce, jelly, ramen noodles, bar soap and hand soap, body wash, laundry detergent, Size 6 diapers.



Please contact Ted or Cindy Herman if you would like to participate in this program for UrbanReachSTL families.

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