



DISCIPLES
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COUNTRY CLUB

CHRISTIAN

Strength for the Journey. Grace for the Soul.

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*We joyfully
welcome
and nurture
all people
by providing
a vibrant
Christ-centered
community
of faith,
dedicated to
spiritual growth
through
worship, study
and service.*

Celebrate with Us This Advent Season!

This is a great time of year to invite your friends and family to celebrate with you. Bring a friend and join us on the journey to Christmas!

Advent Sermon Series: like a child

Advent invites us to bring a child-like spirit as we reconnect with the joy, peace and hope of the season. Dr. R. Glen Miles' sermon series continues Dec. 13 and 20.

Chancel Choir Cantata – Dec. 13

The Chancel Choir will be joined by orchestra and soloists to present Johann Sebastian Bach's magnificent Christmas work *Cantata No. 191: Gloria in excelsis Deo*. 11:00 a.m. service, Sanctuary.

Country Club Singers Music of the Season

Concert – Dec. 20

Join us for a program of Christmas music from around the world. 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary.



Christmas Music for Organ and Brass

– Dec. 21

David Diebold and the Kansas City Brass present a traditional concert featuring seasonal favorites at 7:30 p.m. in the Sanctuary.

Christmas Eve Worship Services

This holy evening begins with worship for children and families, followed by two traditional candlelight services. Thur., Dec. 24
5:30 p.m. – Children and families service
8:00 and 11:00 p.m. – Candlelight services.

Outreach Ministry Makes more than \$380,000 Difference!

By Leeann Blundell

As Chair of the Outreach Council, I want to take a minute to thank you for committing your time and money to the outreach ministry of Country Club Christian Church. It may surprise you to know that we conservatively estimate that members of this congregation provide more than \$380,000 per year for the church's outreach efforts! And, if we include volunteer hours donated by our members, which can be estimated at a \$20/hr value, the total value per year for the church's outreach efforts goes up by \$204,000 to a total of more than half a million dollars.

Funding comes in several different ways. A portion of the annual pledge receipts are allocated to the outreach ministry from the operating budget. Also, members make gifts to the endowment, which in turn provides funding for the outreach ministry. At Christmas, Easter and other times of the year, our members contribute special offerings that fund specific outreach needs in the community and around the world. Members who participate in the church's mission trips pay their own expenses in traveling to places like South Africa, Nicaragua, New Orleans, and Eagle Butte, SD. Last but not least, members volunteer their time and make in-kind contributions of food, clothing, and other items for those in need.

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Your Voice in the Vision: Sacred Conversations to Begin in 2010

What's your vision for Country Club Christian Church? During the 2010 Lenten season, you will have an opportunity to share your voice in the visioning process through a series of Sacred Conversations, the spiritual process through which the church's Visioning Team is inviting the congregation's participation. This collaborative process is designed to evoke a church-wide discussion of who God calls us to be as a church.

Choose a Sacred Conversation group which fits your schedule, and plan to meet weekly during Lent. Watch for more information about other opportunities to join the church on a spiritual journey through Lent in 2010. Sign up begins in January.

Groups will begin Feb. 15 and conclude by Apr. 2.

South Johnson County Group – Wed., 7:00 p.m., Randy and Cindy Ireys' home

South Johnson County Group – Day and time TBA; Pat Martin, leader

Mom's Group – Every other Monday; Sally Murguía, leader (See Catherine Stark-Corn for details)

New Members (those who have joined the church in the last three

years) – Mon., 6:30-8:00 p.m. at church; Barbara George and Lauren Weinhold, leaders

Parents' Group (parents of 3rd – 12th graders) – Sun., 5:30-7:00 p.m., leader TBA

10:00 worship service attendees – Sun., 5:00-6:30 p.m. at church; Scott Glasrud and Glen Miles, leaders

Wednesday Morning Bible Study – Lee and Jarene Stanford and Chuck

Rolen, leaders (See Chuck Rolen for details)

Senior Citizens Wisdom (for those 65 and older) – Tues., 10:00 a.m. at church; Jeff Zimmerman and Glen Miles, leaders

Chancel Choir Group – See Lynn Cockle for details.

YaWhose – See Carla Aday for details

Wednesday Evening Group – Wed., 6:30-8:00 p.m. at the church, leaders TBA.

New Members Welcomed Dec. 6



Tracy Adams
New Member Host:
Cheryl Commerford



Dave, Vonda and Zoey Jensen
New Member Hosts: John and Julia Bartlett



Brian Legg and Jaclyn Allred
New Member Hosts: Amy and Patrick Edwards



Sarah Reeves and husband, Blake Reeves
New Member Host: Amy Rose



James Cronin, with fiancée Katie Lamb
New Member Host: Jared Rose



Crying in Church

by Dr. R. Glen Miles



Have you ever noticed how easy it is to cry in church? During the infant dedications last Sunday I noticed tears in the eyes of many of the people in the pews. The moms and dads are usually a little teary eyed and I've seen tough old grandpas get weepy during the dedication, but why do folks who do not know the families of the children being dedicated cry? I suppose there are many answers but I suspect that central to all of them is the vision of new life and hope that can be seen in the presence of every tiny infant.

A church member confirmed this for me not too long ago. She said, "I love the infant dedications because they remind us children are already a part of the kingdom of God. When I see a child in your arms and I hear that God invites me to come like a little child to the presence of the spirit I am filled with hope."

During worship, especially during the season of Advent, we are reminded again and again that God invites us to come home. When we sing, "O Come, O Come Emmanuel," we hear again the promise that God will "ransom captive Israel" and "bind all peoples in one heart and mind." The tears come at the promise, not the prediction, *the promise*, that God will finally come and fill the whole world with heaven's peace.

Every now and then I get a glimpse of the promise. My mom was in town for Thanksgiving. One cold night, when all of us were home together, we played the board game, **Balderdash**. It is a goofy game designed to help the best liar win! At some point my mom unintentionally said something so hilarious that we were falling down on the floor with laughter. We laughed so hard we cried.

Out of nowhere, heaven's peace had arrived and we found our way to that magical place called home. Frederick Buechner calls this a vision of wholeness. He goes on, "To be really at home is to be really at peace, and our lives are so intrinsically interwoven that there can be no peace for any of us until there is real peace for all of us."

The old prophet Jeremiah promised 2,700 years ago, "The days are surely coming, says the Lord, when I will fulfill the promise I made..." May those days begin today in us, our homes, and our church.

Grace and peace to you,

Christmas at The Well

This year, The Well has wonderful holiday items perfect for gifts, stocking stuffers or decorations for your own home. There are whimsical ornaments, wreaths and trees, cute Santas and snowpeople, books for all ages, and chocolate and coffee from countries where Fair Trade practices and sustainable production are emphasized. Folk art from many nations includes nativities, lanterns, coin purses and ceramics.

Proceeds from sales in The Well go to Week of Compassion, the disaster relief agency of our denomination. Purchases made in The Well make a difference in the lives of people around the world. Come shop on Sunday mornings from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. and Wednesdays from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. and find a special gift this holiday season.

Worship with us!

**Services at 9:00, 10:00
and 11:00 a.m.**

**Advent Sermon Series
"like a child"**

Dec. 13

Like A Child to Show Us the Way

Luke 1: 26-38

Dr. R. Glen Miles preaching

Dec. 20

Like A Child We Believe

Luke 1: 39-45

Dr. R. Glen Miles preaching

Dec. 27

One worship service only

10:30 a.m.

Adult Ministries at Country Club Christian Church

New Personal Growth Opportunities Coming in 2010

Spiritual Practices for a New Year

Thur., Jan. 7-Feb. 11, 9:30-11:00 a.m. OR

6:30-8:00 p.m.

This six-week group will read, discuss and try out the spiritual practices in Barbara Brown Taylor's new book *An Altar in The World*. In the introduction of the book, Taylor writes, "I have no idea what you will see when you look at your life—but if you are tired of arguing about religion, tired of reading about spirituality, tired of talk-talk-talking about things that matter without doing a single thing that matters to yourself, then the pages that follow are dedicated to you. My hope is that reading them will help you recognize . . . some of the altars in this world." Purchase a copy in *The Well* and read the introduction and first two chapters prior to the first session on Jan. 7. Sign up for the group by calling the church office at 816-333-4917 or email marymargareth@cccckc.org.

Soul Mates for Engaged and Newlyweds

If you are recently engaged or recently married, we invite you to participate in Soul Mates, a class designed specifically for you. Soul Mates will meet one Sunday a month during the Sunday School hour from January through December. There is no required text for this class, however resource books are available for those who are interested. Each class will be led by experienced facilitators and will focus on cultivating your relationship and discussing topics that are relevant to you. Join us on Sun., Jan. 10 from 9:55-10:55 a.m. for an open house where you will have the chance to meet other class participants and facilitators. Class will formally begin in February. For more information or to reserve a spot, contact Rev. Carla Aday or Lauren Weinhold at 816-333-4917.

Spiritual Life Retreat: Staying Alive Spiritually

Rev. Holly Whitcomb will lead the all church spiritual life retreat on Feb. 19-20 at Tall Oaks Conference Center on the theme "Staying Alive Spiritually." In the midst of all the roles we play and the responsibilities we carry, how do we make room for God? Are you thriving spiritually – or merely surviving? Come learn how you can deepen your relationship with God as you make your life more purposeful and more peaceful.



Rev. Whitcomb, a pastor and clergywoman in the United Church of Christ, has served churches in Connecticut, Iowa, and Wisconsin. She is a graduate of the program for spiritual directors at the Shalem Institute for Spiritual Formation. She is a spiritual director and writer who has published dozens of articles and books on spirituality.

Cost for the retreat is \$65 per person triple occupancy, \$75 double occupancy, and \$40 for those who do not plan to spend the night. All prices include three meals: Friday dinner, Saturday breakfast and lunch. Contact Mary Margaret House at 816-333-4917 or marymargareth@cccckc.org to register.

ABC, A Basic Christianity Begins Jan. 19

Whether you are just beginning your faith journey or have been navigating your path for a while, we invite you to this series on Tuesdays, Jan. 19-Feb. 16, from 6:30-8:00 p.m. in the Solarium (Rm. 309). Designed for the questioning Christian, the class focuses on basic topics related to faith and spirituality. Led by the church's clergy using the book *To Begin at the Beginning* by Anthony Robinson, which is available for purchase in *The Well* or to borrow in the church

Sign Up Now for Excursion to Leavenworth, KS, on Dec. 16

S.P.I.C.E. and the Wednesday Morning Bible Study group will travel to Leavenworth, KS, on Wed., Dec. 16 to visit the Merritt Hitt Insley historic residence and have lunch in Leavenworth. The Insley home, built in the 1850s, will be decorated for the holidays. The home is on the National Register of Historic Places. After touring the home, the group will select a place for lunch, with cost the responsibility of each person. The van will leave the church at 9:00 a.m. and return early afternoon. Please RSVP to Mary Margaret at marymargareth@cccckc.org or 816-333-4917. All members and friends are invited.



Share Christmas

by Lauren Weinhold, Director of Church Growth



A few weeks ago, Scott and I went to the Kansas City Rep to see *A Christmas Story: The Musical*. The movie version is one of my favorites and watching it is a holiday tradition in our house. (We even have a leg lamp ornament on our tree!) So I was anxious to see how the musical compared. It was darling. What I enjoyed even more than the performance, however, was the exchange between the people who were sitting next to and behind us. We arrived only a few minutes before the show was scheduled to begin, but it was obvious that the patrons sitting around us had been

there a while. The two different groups did not know each other before this encounter, but when I sat down, I overheard:

"Oh, you'll love this show. It's the second time we've seen it in a week."

"Really? Wow. You must really like going to the theatre."

"We do, especially at Christmas. The Nutcracker is next week."

"Well if you like music and theatre, you should come to this Christmas program my church is putting on."

With that, the woman pulled a brochure out of her purse and handed it to the other patron. The recipient accepted the brochure and said:

"Thanks a lot. Looks pretty interesting. We may just have to work that in to our schedule."

"We'd love to have you," the other woman concluded.

As the lights went down, and the curtain went up, I caught myself smiling. At an event where I expected to enjoy songs about Ovaltine and kids getting their tongues stuck to flag poles, I experienced church.

The woman with the brochure has stuck with me. Would I have taken advantage of the same opportunity? I would hope so. (I can tell you as a result of that experience, I now have a small supply of Advent brochures in my purse!) Would you have taken advantage of this same opportunity? I hope so. There is so much here to be excited about, from Glen's sermon series to choir concerts, to the brass concert, to Christmas Eve services. Who will you share it with?

Merry Christmas,

New Christmas Decorations

We are enjoying added holiday cheer this year with beautiful new Christmas decorations throughout the church and chapel. This is the first time we have had new decorations in nearly a decade.



The creative concept of the new pieces came from Judi Knight, Chuck Matney and other members of the Design Committee. Some new decorations were added with a grant from the Endowment, while almost all the old pieces were refurbished and reused. Many thanks to Judi Knight for spending countless hours during November and December creating all the lovely new garlands, wreaths and trees.

Marilyn Wimer, Judi Knight and Lesley Holt, decorate the church for Advent.

Stephen Ministry Christmas Party

Stephen Ministers are invited to a Christmas gathering on Thur., Dec. 17, at 7:00 p.m. in the Social Hall. Both current and past Stephen



Ministers are invited to this evening of celebration. For information, please contact Dr. Charles Rolen, Interim Minister of Congregational Care, at 816-333-4917 or chuckr@cccckc.org.

Women's Ministries

Looking for a unique gift for the holidays, showers or birthdays? Circle 12 has gold hangers for sale: \$12 for a set of six. Contact Marilyn Waller at 913-642-2518 for more information. Delivery available.

Outreach Ministry, *continued from page 1*

For last year (2008-2009) the impact of our outreach ministry was:

■ Operating Budget	\$141,000
■ Mission Trip Team Member Contributions	\$ 90,000
■ Endowment	\$ 72,000
■ Special Offerings	\$ 68,000
■ Connection Collections	\$ 10,000
■ Volunteerism (\$20/hr value)	<u>\$204,000</u>
	\$585,000

The Outreach Council is entrusted to review both domestic and international grant proposals that will positively impact the lives of the givers and receivers. Your annual pledge offerings and endowment gifts provide over \$200,000 annually to support non-profit organizations that care for humanity through their services and programs.

■ Disciples Mission Fund	\$80,000
■ Global Ministries/World Outreach	\$31,000
■ Women/Youth/Children	\$25,000
■ Health/Human Services	\$25,000
■ Mission Trips	\$24,000
■ Food Ministries	\$18,000
■ Miscellaneous Needs	<u>\$10,000</u>
	\$213,000

Equally as important as monetary gifts, is the gift of time that members generously provide each year when they set aside their normal lives to volunteer their time in community service opportunities. Opportunities through the Metro Mission Council have included food ministries – Argentine Food Kitchen; Cross-Lines Community Outreach Breakfast; Micah Ministry and monthly food drive; Grace At Work annual all-church volunteer day; mission trips; More²;

tutoring, prison ministry, knitters and sewers, and more. Through your personal commitment to outreach, you are making a real difference in the lives of people in Kansas City and around the world.

Infants Dedicated on December 6

Four infants were welcomed into our congregation on Sun., Dec. 6. The next infant dedication is Sun., Feb. 14. Contact Chris Trout at 816-333-4917 or christ@cccckc.org for more information.



Luke Michael Cannon with parents Michael and Julie Cannon



Reed Houser Howard with parents Chris and Brook Howard and big brother Porter.



Frederick Charles Buckley IV (Charlie) with parents Trey and Nicci Buckley.

Upcoming Youth Events

Study Break on December 20

CYF will not meet on Sun., Dec. 20, while everyone studies for finals. But if you want a break from your studies, Brandon will be at TCBY in the Prairie Village Shops, 71st and Mission Road, from 6:00-8:00 p.m. He's buying!

Chi Rho will not have its normal meeting on Dec. 20. Instead, we will meet in the youth center for games and time together between 6:00 and 8:00 p.m.

CYF New Year's Eve Lock-in

Come join Country Club Christian Church Youth in 9th-12th grade as we ring in the new year together! The event will start at 8:00 p.m. on Dec. 31 and will go until 7:00 a.m. the following morning (Jan. 1). There will be worship and lots of food, games, other activities, and some surprises all night long. Don't miss this great time of fellowship and fun.

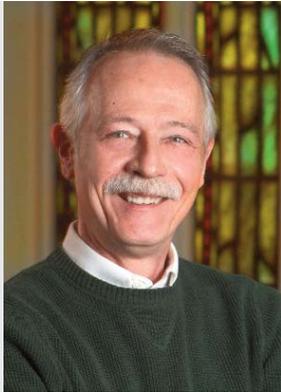
Winter Retreat

CYF and Chi Rho Youth Winter Retreat is set for Feb. 12-14, 2010 at Tall Oaks Conference Center. CYF and Chi Rho youth will gather for joint and separate study, worship, and fun. Save the date!



Consonance & Dissonance

by Rev. David Diebold, Minister of Music



Each Monday prior to our weekly meeting, the Program staff gathers in the Sanctuary for meditation time. Monday when we entered the balcony our organ technician was tuning the organ.

As we all sat and became quiet, the only sound in the room was that of the gentle tapping of the tuning slides and the sound of two pipes, each out of tune with the other, moving from dissonance to consonance, eventually clicking into tune. The sound was not pleasant, until, when perfect tuning was achieved, there was a resolution to the

dissonance.

People are not unlike the organ, especially at this time of year. Some of us are experiencing the holidays with a joyful consonance while others endure this time of year with the constant beat of dissonance. They feel as if they are out of tune with life.

We all know those people for whom the baked goods seem to literally fall out of their ovens, gift wrapped and ready to deliver. The constant array of party invitations invigorates them. It is a happy time for them. But for many, the holidays can mean endless darkness. There are so many causes for this dissonance in their lives. It might be the recent loss of a loved one, a job change, or estrangement from a loved one. It could simply be that the holidays never contained the magical excitement many of us felt as children. Whatever the reasons, for these folks their life reflects a significant dissonance.

Sometimes we reach out to those experiencing difficulty, hoping they might experience the joy of this season. At other times we might actually avoid them, fearing that even a general “bah humbug” from them will dampen our own festive mood. But, as the Body we call the Church, we are called to reach out. That act can be as simple as a gentle “how are you?” It could be a pat on the back, or a softly-spoken “I am thinking about you.” Whatever the gesture, that gentle reassurance is what means the most, I suspect.

My holiday wish for each of you is that you might find the peace that was promised on that first Christmas and experience it throughout the whole year.

David

Children and Families

Fountains of Faith Sunday School

Witness to the Presence of God:

The Incarnation

During the month of December, 1st-5th graders will be exploring God’s gift to us in Jesus. As we prepare to celebrate the birth of the Holy One on Christmas morning, we will focus on the gifts of the season through art work, storytelling and a movie, “Jacob’s Gift.” Join us for Sunday School from 9:55-10:55 a.m. on the second floor.

Family Mission Trip

June 16-22, 2010

Families with elementary-age children are invited to explore participating in the Family Mission Trip this coming summer. We will be returning for our fifth year to the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation to work with the community in Red Scaffold, SD. Come and learn about the trip at an open house on Sun., Feb. 28 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in the Last Supper sculpture room off the parlor.

Thanks to our Shepherds

Each Sunday morning a special group of adults takes time to support the 1st-5th grade Sunday School classes. We are grateful for the gift of their time and talents!

Thanks to our Shepherds:

1st Grade – Ginger Cline-Nix; Phil and Lindsay Howe

2nd Grade – Bill and Laurel Mace, Amy Narmeyer, Jennie and Craig Doty

3rd Grade – Angie DeBok, Fred Kircher, Sandra and Tim Reddin

4th Grade – Marie Hunter, Ruth Lockhart, Michael Niewald

5th Grade – Kris Brummit, Rod and Michelle Schlatter, Deanne Stedem

Club Kids

The next meeting of Club Kids will be Sun., Jan. 3.

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PROGRAM STAFF

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Senior Minister

Rev. Carla Aday
Senior Associate Minister

Rev. David Diebold
Minister of Music

Rev. Catherine Stark-Corn
Minister to Children,
Youth and Families

Dr. Charles Rolen
Interim Minister of
Congregational Care

Dr. Brian Campbell
Associate Organist

Ms. Sandy Eisenman
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Virginia Reed Food Drive on Dec. 13

On Sun., Dec. 13, please bring your nonperishable food items for our collection for local food pantries that serve the homeless and hungry. Vans will be in the parking lot to receive your food or it can be placed in the barrels located at the east and north doors. We also purchase food in case lots for the pantries, so cash donations are welcome. Please mark your donation "Food Drive."

Our Church Family

Sympathy

HARRY CLAXTON MCCRAY, JR., passed away Nov. 28. He is survived by his wife, Tinka. Graveside services were Dec. 2, Dr. Glen Miles officiating.

ELIZABETH "BETTY" NICKEY passed away Nov. 25. She is survived by a son, Douglas R. Nickey, and a daughter, Patricia E. Perritt. Services were Dec. 1 at D.W. Newcomers.

ARCHIE L. JOBE passed away Nov. 27. Private interment was Dec. 1 at Mt. Olivet Cemetery.

Congratulations

Congratulations to ANNETTE DUNCAN and MICHAEL CORONA who were married Nov. 14 in the Sanctuary.

Congratulations to KAMILLE ZIEGENHORN and MATT MERZ who were married on Nov. 28, Dr. Glen Miles officiating.