



DISCIPLES
OF CHRIST

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COUNTRY CLUB

CHRISTIAN

Strength for the Journey. Grace for the Soul.

INSIDE

The Heart
of Christmas
by Dr. Glen Miles
~ ~ ~
page 3

Christianity Is
a Path
by
Rev. Carla Aday
~ ~ ~
page 5

The Secret
by
Rev. Catherine
Stark-Corn
~ ~ ~
page 7

*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.*

Outreach Council Announces 2008 Christmas Offering Beneficiaries

The Outreach Council has chosen two organizations as recipients of this year's special Christmas Offering: Shepherd's Center Caregiver Supportline and Global Ministries' Tilda Nursing School.

This season's theme, *Caring for the Caregivers*, describes the core missions of the organizations that have been selected to receive support through this offering. Gifts collected through this offering will support both organizations' efforts to improve the quality of life of the individuals in the populations they serve.



Shepherd's Center, along with its partner organizations, enables mid-life and older adults to share their talents, skills and wisdom for the good of their peers and the community. Shepherd's Center helps older people care for each other through learning opportunities, a focus on wellness, and services to help people remain in their homes. Our Outreach grant will help Shepherd's Center implement a Caregiver Supportline which will connect caregivers of older adults with specific programs and services which will meet their individual needs.

Global Ministries' partner, the Tilda Nursing School at the Tilda Evangelical Mission Hospital



Students at the Tilda Nursing School in India.

in Chhattisgar, India, trains nurses for all the Church of North India hospitals in that region. The approach employed by the school is a holistic one wherein nurses are trained to serve those who are suffering by promoting physical health through medical services and promoting spiritual health through sharing the love of Jesus Christ in a society where the great majority of the population is neglected and marginalized. Our Outreach grant will help support the expansion of the facilities to accommodate an increase in female students in the nurse's training program.

Our annual Christmas Offering is a way for our church to extend its reach to organizations which promote care for humanity through services or programs.

If you would like to help Country Club Christian Church support these two organizations, please consider a gift to the 2008 Christmas Offering. Mark your gift "Christmas Offering" and mail it to the church office, or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday.



Celebrate With Us During Advent!

Advent Sermon Series: There's a Song in the Air

The poetic language of the familiar Christmas hymns might be lost on us after a lifetime of sentimental repetition. The music of Christmas offers more than heart-warming melodies. The verses offer a new perspective on an old story that can open our minds to the power of hope.

Nov. 30 – *Shadows Put to Flight*

“O Come, O Come,
Emmanuel”

Dec. 7 – *Beneath Life's Crushing Load*

“It Came Upon the
Midnight Clear”

Dec. 14 – *A Child for Us Sinners*

“O Come, All Ye Faithful”

Dec. 21 – *Repeat the Sounding Joy*

“Joy to the World”

Breakfast with Santa – Dec. 6

Featuring a pancake breakfast, professional photo of your child with Santa, crafts and FUN! 10:00 a.m.-12:30 p.m., Social Hall. See page 6.

Christmas at Country Club – Dec. 7

Get into the spirit of the Advent season with this special service featuring celebration and song. Join our choirs, youth, children, and instruments as they lead us into the season with anthems and carols. A reception will follow. 6:00 p.m., Sanctuary.



Chancel Choir Cantata – Dec. 14

The Chancel Choir and instruments will present their annual Christmas cantata at the 11:00 a.m. service, Sanctuary.

Country Club Singers Music of the Season Concert – Dec. 21

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

Christmas Music for Organ and Brass featuring the Kansas City Brass – Dec. 22

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

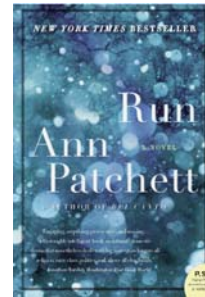
Christmas Eve Worship Services

This holy evening begins with worship for children and families, followed by two traditional candlelight services. Wed., Dec. 24. Dr. Miles presents the meditation *Angels We Have Heard*.

5:30 p.m. – Children and families service

8:00 and 11:00 p.m. – Candlelight services

BUILDING COMMUNITY BOOK by BOOK



What: Join us this winter in reading *The New York Times'* bestseller *Run*, by Ann Patchett.

Where: In January, attend a one-time home or coffee shop discussion group. More information forthcoming.

When: Meet Ann Patchett and hear her discuss the book on Thurs., Feb. 5, 2009.

How: Purchase your copy of *Run* in The Well for \$12. Proceeds benefit disaster relief through Week of Compassion.

Holiday Shopping at The Well

Shop Amazon.com Via cccckc.org through The Well

Have you visited The Well Gift and Book store recently? If not, you're missing out on lots of unique gift items perfect for the holidays! Purchases at The Well directly benefit Week of Compassion, which provides emergency disaster relief to individuals around the world. Use The Well's page on the church's web site, www.cccckc.org under the Stay Informed

tab, to do your shopping at amazon.com and a percentage of the purchase price is directed to our Outreach projects. The Well is located on the

ground floor of the church and is open 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.

New Staff Representative for Metro Mission

Lauren Weinhold, Director of Church Growth, has been named the staff representative to the Metro Mission Council. Metro Mission is the central information point for the many local service and ministry opportunities available through the church. Contact Lauren at laurenw@cccckc.org for more information.



amazon.com



The Heart of Christmas

by Dr. R. Glen Miles



December 25, was officially sanctioned as Christmas Day by Bishop Liberius of Rome in 354 AD. However, the roots of the way we celebrate Christmas are relatively new when placed on a historical continuum. Most of what we would call traditional celebrations can be traced to Charles Dickens' *A Christmas Carol*; Clement Clark Moore's *An Account of a Visit from St. Nicholas*, which tells of a chubby character who flies from housetop to housetop in a tiny sled pulled by eight reindeer; and Washington Irving's *The Sketchbook of Geoffrey Crayon*, a

series of stories about the celebration of Christmas in an English manor house. Some believe that Irving invented these "traditions" as a way of promoting a less raucous celebration of the holiday. Hmm, that might be an idea worth reconsidering!

Our culture seems to have taken Christmas and turned it into something that neither the good Bishop nor any of the authors above would recognize. I was in a grocery store on Oct. 30. My wife had called and asked me to pick up some Halloween candy on the way home. I asked a store clerk, "Where is the Halloween candy?" She said, "Right next to the Baby Jesus on aisle 13." Sure enough there was the Baby Jesus, Joseph and Mary and eight tiny reindeer all seemingly waiting for the chance to dig into a pile of M&Ms and Snickers. I guess the new holiday slogan in America is "Happy Merry Thanksgivoween!"¹

Before we let the culture take it all away from us, it is interesting to note that the one theme that seems to come up over and over again in both the biblical accounts and the traditional stories of Christmas, is an overwhelming concern for the poor. Read through the prophets of the Old Testament like Amos, Hosea, Jeremiah and Isaiah and you'll find a similar concern. Turn to Ezekiel for example and ask him, "Why was Sodom destroyed?" You might expect a titillating story full of wild behavior. Instead, Ezekiel will tell you, "They had excess of food and prosperous ease but they did not aid the poor and needy and the widows."

You know something? If we ever learn to put that teaching into practice and share with God's children all over the world, angels might appear again and sing, "Glory to God in the highest. Peace on earth to all."

Grace and Peace to you,

¹ Someone else coined this phrase but I cannot find the reference!

Receive the Christian by Email

Do we have a current email address for you on file? If we don't, or you're not sure, contact Jane Fletcher with the correct information at janef@cccckc.org. You'll receive the newsletter early and in full color! If you prefer to receive your Christian via the U.S. Postal Service, we are requesting a "subscription" donation of \$20 a year to support printing and mailing costs, effective Jan. 1, 2009.

Worship with us!

**Services at 8:00, 9:00,
10:00 and 11:00 a.m.**

Dec. 7

Dr. R. Glen Miles
Beneath Life's Crushing Load
"It Came Upon the Midnight
Clear"

Rev. Catherine Stark-Corn
preaching at 8:00 a.m.

Dec. 14

Dr. R. Glen Miles
A Child For Us Sinners
"O Come, All Ye Faithful"

Rev. Carla Aday
preaching at 8:00 a.m.

Adult Ministries at Country Club Christian Church

Pathways to Learning



Nicaragua Mission Trip Report –

See the photos and hear the stories from the summer 2008 Nicaragua mission trip. Join us Sun., Dec. 7 from 9:55 to 10:55 a.m. in the Social Hall.



Families in Nicaragua wait to see the medical team during the summer 2008 trip.

Coming in January –

Pathways to Learning presents *Healthy People, Healthy Nation*. This series will include a current look at Alzheimer's, the rising costs of healthcare and heart health.

Crossroads

For adults ages 35-50. We each face many different crossroads in our lives. This class offers spiritual guidance, educational insights and the support of fellow travelers on the journey. Meets every Sunday in the Pine Room (Rm. 10) from 9:55 to 10:55 a.m.

Dec. 7 – Nicaraguan Mission Team Report, Pathways to Learning.

Grief Support Group to Meet in January

A grief support group called "New Beginnings" will begin Sat., Jan. 3 and continue each Saturday through January. It will be held in the church library from 10:30 to 11:30 a.m. The group will be facilitated by Good Shepherd Hospice. For more information or to sign up, call Mary Linda McDonnell at 816-822-2292.

Dr. Miles' Winter Bible Study starts in January

Revelation: Not Left Behind

Join Dr. Glen Miles this winter for a serious study of Revelation, the Bible's most controversial and confusing book. The group will meet at 7:00 p.m. Mondays, Jan. 12, 19, 26 and Feb. 2 and 9. Sign up now by contacting Mary Margaret at marymargareta@cccckc.org.



One-ders

A diverse group of singles ages 35-60-ish, where everyone is always welcome. Focusing on developing spirituality, service to others, and providing opportunities for growth through fellowship.

Sunday School during December – One-ders has begun studying "A Course in Miracles," led by Keith Washburn. Join us at 9:55 a.m. in Rm. 302.

Holiday Fellowship – Join us for a light supper (soup and snacks) before the Kansas City Brass Holiday Concert on Mon., Dec. 22 at 6:30 p.m. in Rm. 203. Contact Suzy Spencer for details at 913-262-0088.

YaWhose

Young Adults [age 22-35] Welcoming Hearts Open to Spiritual Exploration

Join YaWhose on Sunday morning from 9:55 to 10:55 a.m., Rm. 304 for a presentation and discussion of faith issues in our everyday lives. On the first Sunday of the month, Crossroads and YaWhose meet together for a lesson in the Pine Room (Rm. 10).

Dec. 2 at 6:30 p.m. – Monthly evening gathering. Meet at Marillac, 8000 W. 127th Street, Overland Park to do a Christmas craft project with young children living at Marillac, then have dinner together at Planet Sub.

Dec. 7 – Nicaraguan Mission Team Report, Pathways to Learning.



Christianity Is a Path

by Rev. Carla Aday, Senior Associate Minister



Father Thomas Keating was the leader of a Catholic monastery in Massachusetts for 20 years. During his tenure, the Catholic retreat center down the street was closed and sold to a Buddhist group. The facility reopened as an Insight Meditation Center. Suddenly Father Keating noticed that more and more people, mostly young people, were stopping by the monastery to ask for directions to the Insight Meditation Center. Intrigued and dismayed, Father Keating asked these young seekers what they were looking for at the Buddhist meditation center. They answered with the 1960'

s vernacular "a path man, we are seeking a path." Realizing that most of these young folks had been raised Christian, Father Keating would reply, "So why don't you search for a path within your own tradition?" To which they responded, "You mean Christianity has a path?" (Adapted from *Centering Prayer and Inner Awakening* by Cynthia Bourgeault)

During December, many of us are tempted again to see Christianity as a "destination" instead of a "path." We are tempted to replace the messy manger scene with a Norman Rockwell Christmas painting. As we endure long lines at the mall or the airport, we forget that the shepherds and wisemen traveled many miles with only the light of the stars to guide them. As much as we would like to "arrive" at the truth, both Paul and Jesus remind us that our faith is a "way." Such a way beckons you and I to keep thinking, praying, meditating, studying, listening, seeking, worshiping, forgiving, serving, and learning new ways to encounter the holy one.

The month of December will unfold with unexpected events. Pain and grief will envelop some of us as a spouse becomes seriously ill or a parent's death leaves an empty space at the Christmas dinner table. Joy and delight will surprise some of us as a new friendship blossoms or a new baby sits in Santa's lap for the first time. But both the sad and the elated will discover that Christmas remains empty if it is only a day that we work towards. Christmas, like Christianity, is a path. On such a path, the shepherds heard angels singing in the night, a young mother named Mary pondered in her heart, and some kings traveled the world to deliver extravagant gifts.

Carla

Food Drive Named in Honor of Virginia Reed

Next collection date is Sun., Dec. 14

The Metro Mission Council is pleased to announce that the monthly Food Drive has been renamed in honor of Virginia Reed, longtime champion of the drive.

December's **Virginia Reed Food Drive** is on **Sun., Dec. 14**. Vans will be in the parking lots to collect your nonperishable food items to be donated to area food pantries. We also purchase food in case lots for the pantries, so cash donations are welcome. Please mark your donation "Food Drive."

December Collection Connection

In December we are collecting items to create home health kits for the January Nicaragua mission trip. Items must have an expiration date at least one year from now.

We need adult, prenatal and children's vitamins (no gummy vitamins), adult and children's acetaminophen (Tylenol) and ibuprofen (Advil), antacids (Tums), cough drops, toothbrushes—children and adult, and antibiotic ointment (Neosporin). Please place your items in the collection bin in the parlor. Cash donations also accepted.

Healing and Wholeness Prayer Service

Tues., Dec. 2 at 7:30 p.m.

Join us for a peaceful time of song and prayer at 7:30 p.m. on Tues., Dec. 2 in Combs Chapel. This service offers an opportunity to share prayerful concerns and blessings.

Circle 3 December Meeting

Circle 3 will meet on Mon., Dec. 8 at noon in the Youth Center for a Christmas social and service opportunity. We will be filling stockings for Micah Ministry and assembling dresses for children in Haiti. The hostesses are Rosemary Kidd and Lucille Lambert. Contact Linda Schooling-Kekina at 816-523-8921 for more information.

Breakfast with Santa

Sat., Dec. 6 –
10:00 a.m.-
12:30 p.m.

You are invited to Breakfast with Santa in the Social Hall on Sat., Dec. 6. From 10:00 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Children will have an opportunity to have their photo taken with Santa by Salt Photography, enjoy pancakes by Chris Cakes and make Christmas crafts. Breakfast is served until 11:30 a.m.

Cost is \$7 for adults and for children 2 and older. Tickets are available Sunday mornings in the Parlor, at the reception desk or preschool office.



Interim Youth Director Announced

Dr. Glen Miles announces that Laine Riley, Associate Director of Music, has been named as Interim Director of Youth. Laine will work with Justin Zeigler, Youth Intern, in planning and overseeing Sunday evening youth group activities and other aspects of the Youth Ministry program. Laine has been with Country Club Christian Church since



Laine Riley

September 2006. As Associate Director of Music, she directs the Fellowship Singers, the choir for 6th through 12th graders, as well as the Children's choir for 1st through 5th graders and the Cherubim choir for children ages 4 1/2 through 1st grade. She also directs the Celebration Singers adult choir, and the Women's Ensemble.

Rev. Carla Aday, Senior Associate Minister, will continue to provide guidance and coordination for the Chi Rho (grades 6-8) and CYF (grades 9-12) Sunday School classes. Rev. Catherine Stark-Corn, Minister to Children and Families, will coordinate and plan the 2009 Pastors' Class.

Chi Rho and CYF Upcoming Events and Activities

Caroling and Christmas Parties

Sun., Dec. 14 – 3:30-6:30 p.m.

Chi Rho and CYF youth and their families are invited to join families with children 5th grade and under as we spread holiday cheer by lifting our voices! We will carol in groups to area residential care centers and to some of our homebound members. We will gather at church at 3:30 p.m. and ride buses to carol, returning by 5:30 p.m.

Following the caroling, Chi Rho and CYF youth will enjoy their annual Christmas party and gift exchange. Youth should bring a snack to share and a unisex gift of \$10 value or less for the gift exchange. More details coming soon.

CYF Winter Retreat

CYF Mid-Winter Retreat Jan. 2-4, 2009. Don't miss one of the BIGGEST Christian Youth Fellowship events of the year! Join youth from all over the Kansas City region for the Mid-Winter Retreat at Tall Oaks Conference Center from 7:00 p.m. Fri., Jan. 2 through 11:00 a.m. Sun., Jan. 4.

Fill out a registration form available from www.talloaks.org or Chris Trout in the church office and return it to Chris with \$85 by Dec. 16. Contact Chris at 816-333-4917 or christ@cccckc.org for more information. Scholarships are available. Please note that there will be NO registrations accepted after Dec. 16. Dinner will NOT be served on Friday night. Participants will need to bring their own bedding, toiletries, etc.

Fellowship Singers Rehearsals for Christmas at Country Club Program

- Wed., Dec. 3, 7:00-8:30 p.m., Pine Room (Rm. 10) with Children's Choir
- Sat., Dec. 6, 11:00-12:30 p.m., Sanctuary
- Sun., Dec. 7, meet in Rm. 100 at 5:00 p.m. to put on robes before program at 6:00 p.m.

No Sunday School Dec. 28

On Sun., Dec. 28, there will be no Sunday school for children and youth.



The Secret

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



The past three summers have given members of our congregation the opportunity to serve in community for a week on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation in South Dakota. I welcome the time we have with the Lakota community and yet am often quite overwhelmed by it all. I find on mission trips there are so many experiences that I cannot take them all in and fully process the encounters within the context of the trip—I carry them tucked in my heart and mind and find these moving experiences emerge throughout the year.

One element that has run through all three summers of experiences on the family mission trip is the profound and deep sincerity of thankfulness the Lakota elders emanate in each encounter. Examining the living conditions and the daily situations of the tribe members makes it even more moving. So many components of our daily lives—having adequate transportation, decent housing and means to thrive—are not taken for granted within this Native American community. And yet at the core of their being is an appreciation and gratitude of life that many of us rarely, if ever experience. It is not that they are detached from the luxuries or pleasures of American life but it appears they live knowing there is so much more. Perhaps this intense focus emerges in knowing the very survival of their way of life and future generations is always tenuous. Or maybe with such a history of hardships there is a learned tempering of expectations. But I think it is more than that...

I have always had trouble putting into words what I learn from the Lakota way until I recently came across a wonderful children's book, *The Secret of Saying Thanks* by Douglas Wood. It takes children through a range of experiences within daily life, exploring what secrets we might know and where we might encounter those secrets. The book builds to the conclusion of the secret the author wants to share:

*The heart that gives thanks is a happy one,
for we cannot feel thankful and unhappy at the same time
The more we say thanks, the more we find to be thankful for
And the more we find to be thankful for, the happier we become.
We don't give thanks because we are happy.
We are happy because we give thanks.*

As we have just celebrated the American version of Thanksgiving these words about thankfulness and happiness which have been brought to life for me by the Lakota people of the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation are living in my heart. May we all seek to discover how happiness and thankfulness are intertwined in our lives.

Catherine

Children and Families

A Caroling We Will Go!

Sun., Dec. 14 – 3:30–6:30 p.m.

Families with children 5th grade and younger are invited to join us for our annual Family Caroling Party on Sun., Dec. 14 from 3:30-6:30 p.m. We will gather at church and travel by bus to area residential care centers and homebound members' residences to share holiday cheer through caroling. Afterward we'll return to church for a chili and soup dinner in the Social Hall. Childcare for children 3 and under available. Make plans for your family to join us for this festive time of fellowship and service. Sixth through 12th grade youth will carol as well.

Fountains of Faith Rotation

December Schedule for 1st – 5th graders

We look forward to seeing everyone during the Sundays in December for the following:

Dec. 7 - Combined 1st – 5th graders view *The Nativity Story* (choir members have special rehearsal).

Dec. 14 and 21 - Combined 1st – 5th grades in Social Hall with special storytellers and activities.

Dec. 28 – No Sunday School.

Club Kids Work Appreciated

Thanks to the 3rd – 5th graders that donated toys and/or gathered Sun., Nov. 16 to sort and prepare donations to the local non-profit, GiveWhatYouGot. This organization collects gently used toys for birthday gifts for children living in foster care. Kelly, one of the founders, indicated we gathered and prepared enough toys to help over 100 children celebrate their birthdays! Many thanks for everyone's work!

Club Kids December

Dec. 7 – Christmas at Country Club program. Come with your family.

Dec. 14 – Family Caroling Party.

Dec. 21 and 28 –No gathering.

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PROGRAM STAFF

Dr. R. Glen Miles
Senior Minister

Rev. Carla Aday
Senior Associate Minister

Rev. David Diebold
Minister of Music

Rev. Cynthia Heller
Minister of
Parish Visitation

Rev. Catherine Stark-Corn
Minister to Children
and Families

Dr. Charles Rolan
Interim Minister of
Congregational Care

Mr. Brian Campbell
Associate Organist

Ms. Sandy Eisenman
Director of
Financial Services

Ms. Lisa McCleish
Director of Early
Childhood Programs

Ms. Laine Riley
Associate Director
of Music/Interim Youth
Director

Ms. Lara Schopp
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Extra Special S.P.I.C.E.!

Mary Margaret's Merry Christmas

Wed., Dec. 17, 11:00 a.m.



Back by popular demand, in December S.P.I.C.E. (the Society for the Preservation of Interesting and Creative Eldership) presents "Mary Margaret's Merry Christmas" featuring Mary Margaret House performing popular and favorite Christmas songs with Scott McDonald at the piano. The Sassy Sisters Trio will also

be featured, as will a surprise guest artist. The program begins at 11:00 a.m., followed by a delicious catered Christmas feast at noon.

Cost for lunch is \$7.00 per person. There is no charge for attending just the performance.

This is a performance like no other S.P.I.C.E. program. You will not want to miss it! Please make your reservations by Mon., Dec. 15. Contact Mary Margaret at marymargareta@cccckc.org 816-333-4917.

Memorials

JESSE L. CHILDERS

Holly & R.B. Miller III

John & Erma Hess

MARILYNN "LYNN"

ROWAN

John & Erma Hess

Tri C's Sunday School Class

Randy & Cindy Irey

UMATILLA M. ARNOLD

Patricia Thompson

Ruth Stromberg

James & Maria Drummond

Ron & Barbara Comer

Don & Mary Dibble

Tri C's Sunday School Class

Richard & Carole Stephens

Ronald & Ann McCrary

Judy Snook

Patricia Dolliver

Sandy & Frank Terrell

ELIZABETH SCHMIDT

JENKINS

Tri C's Sunday School Class

Permanent Missionary Fund

BROWN F. JENKINS

John & Erma Hess

Tri C's Sunday School Class

Shick Tube-Veyor Corp

George Gordon

Congregational Care Fund

MILDRED BROWN

TAYLOR

Mary Breed Brink