



DISCIPLES
OF CHRIST

VOLUME 82 · NUMBER 25

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.*

Join Us for Worship on Christmas Eve and Special Christmas Concerts

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. Dr. Glen 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
An organ prelude featuring the Kansas City

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year!

Wishing you all the warmth and love that is the Christmas season! –*The staff of Country Club Christian Church*

Front row, (l-r) Rev. Carla Aday, Mary Margaret House, Lisa McCleish, Jane Fletcher, Vicki Miller, Lori Hodges, Dr. Charles Rolen. Second row, (l-r) Lara Schopp, Laine Riley, Chuck Drake, Diana Black, Lauren Weinhold, Dr. Glen Miles. Back row, (l-r) Chuck Lusso, Sally Huggins, Brian Campbell, Marilyn Wimer, Rev. David Diebold, Rev. Cynthia Heller, Rev. Catherine Stark-Corn. Not pictured: William “Fish” Terrell, Michelle Schlatter, Chris Trout, Sandy Eisenman.



Special Christmas Offering Helps Care for the Caregivers

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

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

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.

Our Outreach grant will help Shepherd's Center implement a Caregiver Supportline which will connect caregivers of older adults with programs and services.

Global Ministries' partner, the Tilda Nursing School at the Tilda Evangelical Mission Hospital in Chhattisgar, India, trains nurses for all the Church of North India hospitals in that region. Our Outreach grant will help support the expansion of the facilities to accommodate an increase in female students.

Please mark your gift "Christmas Offering" and mail it to the church office, or drop it in the offering plate on Sunday.

Infant Dedications

We recently welcomed three new babies into the life of our church.



John, with mother Lynde Price.



Isabella Marianna, with parents John and Linda Migliazzo and brother Patrick.

Not pictured: David, son of Bill and Susan Bell.

New Members Welcomed

We joyfully welcomed six new members into the church family on Nov. 23 and Dec. 7. When you see these new faces around the church, please stop to welcome them and introduce yourself.

If you are interested in becoming a part of the Country Club Christian Church family, join us for the next Visitor Information Seminar, on Sat., Jan. 10 from 8:45 a.m. to noon, Youth Center (Rm. 205). Learn more about our denomination and this church. Our ministers will be on hand to talk about the church's ministries and how you can get involved. Ask questions, enjoy breakfast and lunch and meet the church's lay leaders. Contact Lauren Weinhold, Director of Church Growth, for more information at laurenw@cccckc.org or 816-333-4917.



Eric and Kathryn Holtze
New Member Hosts:
Shirley Mills and Ken Roberts



Rick Lytton
New Member Host:
Sue Icenogle



Dr. Charles and Linda Rolan
New Member Host:
Shirley Hansell



Ingrid Larson
New Member Host:
Jenny Doty



Stable Moments

by Dr. R. Glen Miles



I hope you are expecting a mess for Christmas. I doubt you've put that on your gift list but I am pretty sure that all of us, in one way or another, will get a mess this year. This time of year is always chaotic. The malls are crowded with shoppers. Folks may not spend as much as usual but I suspect we'll all be working overtime to find the right gift at the lowest price.

The roads will be crazy, too. As I write this column there is a weather report calling for a 100 percent chance of snow tonight. Gary Lezak, my

favorite Kansas City meteorologist, predicts, "The roads will be a mess."

Kitchens city-wide will be distressed, too. My wife is a marvelous cook, a wonderful baker, and an amazing chef. However, she literally destroys the kitchen every year at Christmas. Well, not literally but as the primary clean-up person I can tell you it is very messy!

I want to be very clear about something here: I am not complaining about ANY of this! I love the clutter of Christmas. I enjoy shopping with the crowds and the bargain hunters. The commute home in the snow will not be easy but it will feel adventurous. Our Christmas dinner will be wonderful and I'll feel like I was involved because I cleaned (and cleaned and cleaned and...) and helped along the way.

The real gift of Christmas comes in the middle of it all. I know that when things get too crazy, too overwhelming, we may begin to feel like God has abandoned us. When we are rushing to one more meeting, writing one more proposal, making one more sales call, worrying over the economy, trying to finish one more project, we may wonder, "Where is God?"

Virginia Hoch calls this question a "stable moment." What appear to be chaotic and congested times are really opportunities for God's presence to be made real in our lives. Hoch invites us to look inside the stable where Jesus is born. What do you see? A feeding trough, a collection of smelly animals and a new born child. Your coffee table manger scene may not present a big mess but if you have ever been present for the birth of a baby you know that it is a wild and crazy event. When we look at that ancient "stable moment" we will see that God was at work. The God moments in our lives come when we discover that however unpredictable, unmanageable and unimaginable our lives may be, God is actively at work in the world and in us.

This is the message of Christmas: there is no place, there is no situation, there is no pain that God cannot work within. In fact, in that place we may actually sense and feel God's presence most clearly.

Grace and Peace to you,

Finding our Way

January-February Sermon Series

In this sermon series, we will consider the life and teachings of Jesus as we seek to travel with him along the way of life. We will explore the ancient yet contemporary topics of faith, belief, forgiveness, hope, truth and wisdom. Join us in worship on Jan. 11, 18, 25, Feb. 8, 15, and 22.

Winter Bible Study

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. Watch for more details.

Worship with us!

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

Dec. 21

Dr. R. Glen Miles
Repeat the Sounding Joy
"Joy to the World"

Dr. Charles Rolen
preaching at 8:00 a.m.

Dec. 28

Rev. Carla Aday preaching
Two worship services only:
9:00 and 11:00 a.m.

Adult Ministries at Country Club Christian Church

Pathways to Learning



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.

Jan. 18 – “The Heart Truth,” Dr. Tracy Stevens, cardiologist.

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.

Two Worship Services on Sun., Dec. 28

We will have worship at 9:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. in the Sanctuary on Sun., Dec. 28. We will not have Sunday School but childcare will be available for both services. The regular schedule resumes on Sun., Jan. 4.



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.

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.

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.

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 coffeshop 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.



Behind the Scenes

by Marilyn Wimer, Director of Administrative Services



On the first Friday in December, the Social Hall was set for Breakfast with Santa, the sewing room was ready to receive an order of more than 170 poinsettias, and the church and chapel were completely decorated for the holidays. That included small wreaths on every exterior door and huge ones for the front of the Sanctuary. Decking the Sanctuary also included looping over 100 feet of garland across the front of the balcony, arranging candles and greenery in every window, and placing the Advent wreath up front. All the boxes of branches and ornaments for the Chrismon tree

were ready in the Sanctuary, too.

Immediately following Breakfast with Santa on Saturday, which was enjoyed by its largest crowd to date, the Social Hall was reset for the Pathways Sunday School class. As soon as Sunday School was over, the room was turned around yet again for the reception following the Christmas at Country Club program. The Sanctuary also needed cleaning and rearranging for that evening.

This is just a quick look at part of the work done by our excellent maintenance staff at the beginning of our busiest season. The pace will continue throughout the month to keep all areas of the church ready for programs, events and worship services during Advent. If you haven't met them, I'd like to introduce our staff to you here. Supervisor Chuck Lusso takes care of building repairs and maintenance, inside and out, and staff members Lori Hodges, Vicki Miller and William "Fish" Terrell keep our buildings clean. Everyone works on room set-ups. Chuck and Lori are here during the weekdays, Vicki works evenings and weekends, and Fish is here Friday through Monday.

We are so fortunate to have such a fine and dedicated staff. Between them, they have nearly 25 years of combined service at our church.

Another familiar face is Ed Lopez, our security guard on the south corner every Sunday morning and at many evening events. (We've had several good people on our north corner, too, but none has been here as long as Ed.) He greets everyone, stops traffic when needed and is a presence of safety and reliability. Both members and non-members recognize Ed as a fixture at Country Club Christian Church and, in addition to fine security service, he gives an excellent first impression of our church to many visitors.

I'd like to wish a special Merry Christmas to Chuck, Lori, Vicki, Fish and Ed. We are fortunate and blessed to have you with us.

Spiritual Care

Country Club Christian Church provides two ministries devoted to the spiritual discipline of prayer. The first is our weekly Prayer Ministry. On Friday mornings, a group of volunteers gathers and prays for persons and circumstances that have been submitted on "Prayer Request" cards. Anyone who feels called to this type of ministry is invited to participate. Prayer Request cards are located next to the hymnal racks in both the sanctuary and chapel.

The second ministry is our Healing and Wholeness Service which is held on the first Tuesday evening of every month. This is a meditative, contemplative service wherein persons are invited to offer individual, silent prayers or to receive prayers by a group of caring, committed Christians. Please feel free to request prayers, attend the Healing and Wholeness Service, or volunteer to be part of these ministries. Please contact Dr. Chuck Rolen, Interim Minister of Congregational Care.

2009 State of the Church Dinner

Join Dr. Glen Miles as we assess where we have been as a congregation and prepare for our journey into the future. Mark your calendar for Thurs., Jan. 22 to hear Dr. Miles report, *Becoming God's Church: Notes from the Journey*.

Sunday Audio Volunteers Needed

We are in need of individuals willing to staff the audio console in the Sanctuary for either 9:00 or 11:00 a.m. worship. Interested people will be placed on a rotating schedule so that they usually serve one Sunday per month at their scheduled worship service. If you have interest, please contact Stephen Shaffer at 913-901-8376 or elesolutions@kc.rr.com.

Visions of Advent at Country Club Christian Church



Christmas at Country Club

The sounds of Christmas resonated on Dec. 7 when the voices of the Cherubim Choir, Children's Choir and the Fellowship Singers filled the sanctuary. The Chrismon Tree and poinsettias decorated the altar area.



Breakfast with Santa

More than 250 adults and children enjoyed a pancake breakfast, crafts and a visit with Santa and Mrs. Claus in the Social Hall on Dec. 6.

Left: Alex and Zach Wirken visit with Santa.

Right: Jake, Julia, John and Jack Bartlett arrived for the festivities.



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.



Walking in the Darkness

by Rev. David Diebold, Minister of Music



As you read this column, we are almost half way through Advent. Christmas is coming and we are in the midst one of the happiest times of the year. But mental health professionals will tell us this is also a season when more people suffer from depression or stress-related maladies than almost any other. I know quite a number of people experiencing some crisis right now. Whether it is the illness or death of a loved one, anxiety of a work or personal situation, loneliness, depression, or even the stress of an over-extended schedule, many people are feeling low this year.

This does not even take into consideration the stress of our world political situation, the world financial crisis, or the constant change imposed by the world around us. We are, in one sense, a people walking in darkness.

I can't help but think how our world today is not that different from the one into which Jesus was born. If we look beyond the surface story of Jesus' birth as told by the writer of Luke, we realize that just as the shepherds (the lowliest of the poor) were the first to learn of the birth, the spirit of Jesus can be born anew each year to people like us, those who in some ways are the modern poor. Even though we are by and large a privileged people, we are poor in that we are unable to savor the true joy of the life that Jesus came to share.

And yet, in spite of all of the burdens people face right now, the words of the writer of Isaiah ring out... "the people that walk in darkness have seen a great light." I love the metaphor of light, especially Thomas Troeger's phrase in one of his hymn texts: "O Light no darkness rims." It reminds me that regardless of our personal situations the Light shines for each of us. It is a light that is so luminous and bright that every corner of our lives is awash with it.

It is my sincerest wish for each of you that as this holy season progresses you may have peace and experience the joy of knowing that despite the rough places that life throws your way, the Light shines on you and through you.

Merry Christmas!

Children and Families

Fountains of Faith Sunday School

Sun., Dec. 21

We will have a combined session in the Social Hall as we explore how the Wise Ones (or Three Kings) were Messengers of the Covenant. Join us for a special story presentation and activities from 9:55 to 10:55 a.m.

Sun., Dec. 28

Please note we will NOT have children's Sunday School on Sun., Dec. 28. Childcare will be available during both worship services, at 9:00 and 11:00 a.m. No 8:00 or 10:00 a.m. worship that day.

Sun., Jan. 4, 2009

We begin a new rotation on the first Sunday in January. The focus is on *Kingdom Parables: The Great Feast*. Through interactive storytelling, a wood-based art project, cooking and more, children will learn how Jesus used the parables to reveal a new vision about how we should all live together and with God. This rotation will run through Feb. 1.

Moms Group: Growing in Faith

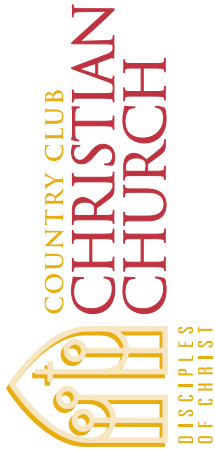
Beginning in January 2009, the Moms group will begin meeting on the second and fourth MONDAY for fellowship and service. Childcare for preschool children and younger is available while we meet. Make plans to join us on Mon., Jan. 11. Watch for more details.

Family Mission Trip Information Meeting

Sun., Jan. 25, Noon – 1:00 p.m.

Each summer families are invited to experience an opportunity for service and fellowship on the Cheyenne River Indian Reservation in South Dakota. The 2009 dates are June 17-23. Join us on Sun., Jan. 25 for an information session to learn more about the trip.

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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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Ms. Lauren Weinhold
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Church Growth

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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.

Our Church Family

Sympathy

GORDON L. SCHAFER, father of Sherle Schafer, passed away in Glen Mills, PA, on Nov. 11. Services were held in Wilmington, DE on Nov. 14.

ROBERT THOMPSON passed away Nov. 25. Services were in Elmhurst, IL.

In the Hospital

As of Dec. 11, we are calling on the following individuals: Bob See at St. Luke's Hospital, Andy Crimmins at St. Joseph Medical Center, Mary Ann Hess at St. John's Hospital in Leavenworth, Helen Ruth Williams at Manor Care, and Mary Ann Cooper at Claridge Court Health Center.

Memorials

UMATILLA M. ARNOLD
Jean Helmers
Lee & Jarene Stanford
Whitney & Deborah Kerr
Nancy Dillingham
The Sticker Club
ELIZABETH SCHMIDT
JENKINS
Lee & Jarene Stanford
Chuck & Janet Roberts
John & Kirby Gould

ROBERT THOMPSON
Donald & Marilyn Hail
Permanent Missionary Fund
BROWN F. JENKINS
Milburn & Evalyn Hobson
John & Kirby Gould