



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 Christmas Eve Worship

This holy evening begins with worship for children and families, followed by two traditional candlelight services. Dr. Glen Miles presents the meditation *A Weary World Rejoices*.

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

8:00 p.m. – Candlelight service. An organ prelude featuring Kansas City Brass precedes the service.

11:00 p.m. – Candlelight service with communion. An organ prelude featuring the Kansas City Brass precedes the service.

One Worship Service Only on Sun., Dec. 27

There will be only one worship service on Sun., Dec. 27, at 10:30 a.m. in the Sanctuary. Dr. Meredith Holladay preaching. No Sunday School classes will meet. Child care is available.

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) Mary Margaret House, Lindsay Howes, Meredith Holladay, William “Fish” Terrill,
Second row, (l-r) Monica Lewis, Jason Ashley, Glen Miles, Diana Black, Paul Cutelli, Sally Huggins, Joe Walker, Lara Schopp

Not pictured: Carla Aday, Rachel Clement, Michael Patch, Lisa McCleish, Dina Pannabecker Evans, Paul Tucker, Elizabeth Pfalzgraf



Congregational Board Members Sign Refugee Welcome Statement

At its meeting on Tues., Dec. 8, 2015, all members of the Congregational Board and clergy present signed a statement of welcome to refugees. (The full statement can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/refugee-statement>.) This statement was developed by the church's Outreach and Mission Coordinating Team after the Board asked it to consider ways in which the church, as an institution of faith in a nation of immigrants, could respond to the Syrian refugee issue. The Team's work was focused in four areas: public advocacy, monetary assistance, education, and hands-on outreach.

In addition to advocacy through this statement, the church's annual Christmas Offering will go to the Syrian Refugee Crisis through Week of Compassion (weekofcompassion.org). The church will continue its work with Della Lamb Community Services' refugee resettlement project, and we will seek additional ways to educate its members and the public about the crisis.

On Sun., Dec. 13, nearly 100 members of the congregation also signed the statement during worship. If you would like to add your signature, you may do so this Sunday, Dec. 20, in the Parlor.

Grand Re-opening of The Well



The ribbon was cut Dec. 13 on The Well, our gift and book store, in its new space on the main floor. Participating were Dan Jensen, Kathy Buckley, Tammy Meinhardt and Dr. Glen Miles. Kathy donated the funds for the renovation in memory of her parents, Lee and Betty Major. The Well is open on Sunday mornings from 8:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. All purchases at The Well benefit Week of Compassion, which provides emergency disaster relief to peoples around the world.



An Advent Reflection

By Phil Love, Chair of the Congregational Board

If we describe someone as having an “active imagination,” we might be hinting that he tells “tall tales,” or “makes things up.” And if we say that something is the “product of one’s imagination,” we might be thinking that it isn’t real, but simply imaginary. Over the past couple of years, I have come to think of these expressions in a very different way.

I like to think that each of us (as well as our institutions even and all creation), is a product of God’s creative imagination. To this way of thinking, God’s active imagination is the source of countless possibilities for good, and God’s Spirit is the living energy to actualize them. Moreover, God’s creative imagination for us, whether individually or collectively, never “runs out” of possibilities, or “wears out” from fatigue. Even as I write these words, God is actively and creatively imagining possibilities and creating opportunities for us.

When we participate in God’s creative imagination (another way of saying “God’s will”), we discover why we’re here, and feel that we are living the life we were born to live. Sometimes, our perception is blurred by all kinds of distractions, competing priorities, or even our own resistance, especially at such a busy time of year. That makes it more difficult for us to see and believe that God is imagining possibilities for us even now.

My fervent Advent hope and prayer is that each one of us, each of our families, and that we as a community of faith, might live into God’s active and creative imagination for us all this coming year.



The Finest Gifts

Dr. R. Glen Miles



On Dec. 24, 2003, my wife, Julie, was busy finalizing plans for our very first Kansas City Christmas celebration when there was an unexpected knock at the door. It was our next door neighbor. The neighbor was holding a beautiful Christmas basket full of homemade goodies and treats.

What surprised Julie was the fact that our neighbor is Muslim. She said, as she handed Julie the cookies and candies, “We know this is a special time of year for Christians and we wanted to honor your celebration by giving you something sweet. My children and I baked these for your family. Merry

Christmas!”

Julie was deeply moved by her gesture. Julie invited our neighbor in for a cup of tea. They discovered they had much in common. Like us, they were very active in their faith community. They hosted regular monthly Koran study groups in their home on Sunday evenings. They were big baseball fans with mixed loyalties between the Atlanta Braves and the Royals. Their two children, a boy and a girl, were not the same age as our sons but close enough that she and Julie were able to commiserate over the challenges of raising kids in an ever-changing environment.

By the end of the tea and the conversation, they embraced before walking to the door. Without thinking Julie said, “Merry Christmas!” As soon as she said that she asked, “Oh, wait, I probably should not say that to you should I?” Our neighbor smiled and graciously replied, “It’s fine! We know that your celebration focuses on the gift of peace for the world. All of us need to work together in order for peace to become real.”

A year or so later our neighbors moved to New York. We’ve lost track of them since they relocated but we’ve never forgotten their kindness. Lately, I’ve thought a lot about her and that basket of gifts she delivered on Christmas Eve. I’ve wondered how many folks who are angrily attacking Muslims right now know a Muslim by name. How many have taken the time to learn all they can about this beautiful religion, one that shares its roots with Jews and Christians?

Maybe I’m too idealistic but I believe the path to peace begins with the simplest acts of kindness. Little things like shaking hands and sharing cookies can open doors previously closed. This year perhaps the finest gifts we can bring to the Christ child are an open mind, an open heart and open hands.

“Pray for peace, people everywhere,”

All Things New

A sermon series focused on helping you renew your heart, soul and mind for the new year.

Jan. 10 – Finding Your Way to a New You, Revelations 21:1-5

Jan. 17 – Developing Faith Under Pressure, James 1: 2-18

Jan. 24 – Here is Your Life, Colossians 3: 12-17

Worship with us!

**Service Times: 9:00, 10:00
and 11:00 a.m.**

**Advent Sermon Series:
Breath of Heaven
Dec. 20**

Part 4: Another Road Home – Magi
Matthew 2:1-12

Dec. 27 – 10:30 a.m. only
Star Force: Renew Hope
Dr. Meredith Holladay preaching

Jan. 3, 2016
9:00, 10:00, 11:00 a.m.
Light It Up!
John 1:1-9
Rev. Joe Walker preaching

Adult Ministries at Country Club Christian Church

New Faithbook Session Begins in January

Women explore the scriptures and share in friendship and the spirit does the rest! If you don't have time for homework between your work, your family and your volunteering, then this is the class for you. Led by Rev. Carla Aday. The group meets Tuesday evening OR Wednesday morning. Pick the time frame that fits your schedule.

- Tues., 7:00-8:00 p.m., Jan. 19-Apr. 26.
- Wed., 9:00-10:00 a.m., Jan. 20-Apr. 27.
- Apr. 26/27 - Closing Parties

Topics:

The Book of Revelation. Making all things new instead of making life seem scary!

Tuesdays – Jan. 19, 26, Feb. 2, 9, 16, 23

Wednesdays – Jan. 20, 27, Feb. 3, 10, 17, 24

Why the Cross? When faith evokes something deeper from us.

Tuesdays – Mar. 1, 8, 15, 22

Wednesdays - Mar. 2, 9, 16, 23

Spiritual Practices. Prayer, meditation and other ways to open up to the Holy.

Tuesdays – Mar. 29, Apr. 5, 12, 19

Wednesdays – Mar. 30, Apr. 6, 13, 20

New Members

Joined Dec. 13



Don Robertson and Norm Arbo
New Member Host: Linda Kekina



Alex Muninger
New Member Hosts: Kurt Zschietzschmann

Not pictured:

Ryan & Jessica Felton

New Member Hosts: Lindsay and Phil Howes

Prudence Irwin-Brennan

New Member Host: Beverly Snyder



Chelsie Gree
New Member Host: Kathy McDandel



Michael Wade Smith
New Member Hosts: Gabe and Amanda Kranz



Your Gifts Matter

By Rachel Clement, Director of Finance



Thank you ...

I am blessed to receive your annual giving pledges but also to see your gifts at work. Each time I write a check to pay a bill I am reminded that your contributions make so many things possible.

As a mother to two young girls, I love to see the many programs and activities you offer the children of this church. This is the time of year when we get to see the magic in the eyes of the children. I see the funds that go out to make events like Advent in Advance happen. Or the new Christmas Festival! I am amazed every time I receive a check from one of you who is participating in a mission trip. The generosity of your gifts should be celebrated. Did you know we have a huge freezer in the kitchen? Or that it broke recently? Your gifts repaired that freezer that stores food for Micah and Cross-Lines. One small repair, with a large repair bill, will help so many hungry people in this city.

I ask you to consider an over and above year-end gift to Country Club Christian Church.

Last year we received a few generous year-end gifts. One of those gifts remodeled The Well. Have you seen it? It is a wonderful space! So many great gifts and books are available for purchase. And all the proceeds benefit the Week of Compassion so not only are you, the members, touched by this gift but so are the Week of Compassion partner organizations that respond to humanitarian needs throughout the world. We also now have a beautiful new bride's room. This will be one more reason a bride from outside the church chooses this church for her wedding.

There are so many ways to make a gift to the church. You can give through our online giving with your credit card or automatic deduction from your checking account. New this year you can even text in your gift! (See instructions on the right.) I have already received many calls from members donating stock to the church. And of course we always accept checks and cash!

I know you have many options when you consider your year-end giving but I hope that you remember that gifts to Country Club Christian Church touch lives in so many ways, both inside our congregation and in the world at large.

Thank you for your thoughtful and generous support of Country Club Christian Church and its ministries at this time of year and all year long.

Rachel

Text your Gift!

Make a contribution to the Christmas Offering or a year-end gift to the church via text from your phone:

1. Text the word CHRISTMAS or the word CHURCH to 816-839-9410 and include the amount you'd like to contribute. Example:
Christmas \$100
OR
Church \$100
2. You will receive a reply text. Click on the link.
3. Fill in your name, email, address and your credit or debit card.

It's fast and easy. You will receive an email receipt and your gift will be applied to your giving record at the church. You must complete your transaction within 15 minutes.

Year-End Giving

Please remember to bring your annual pledge up to date with a gift to the church. Complete your gift today and you will receive the tax benefits as well as the satisfaction of supporting your church. All gifts to be credited for the 2015 tax year must be in the church office by Dec. 31 or postmarked by Dec. 31 if mailing to the church.

Holiday Office Hours

The church offices will be closed on Dec. 25. There will be one worship service on Sun., Dec. 27, at 10:30 a.m. The offices will close at 3:00 p.m. on Thur., Dec. 31 and will be closed for the day on Fri., Jan. 1. If you need to speak to a pastor in the event of a death or hospitalization, please call 816-853-5875.

Student Ministries News

Yoga 4U

All high school students (9th-12th grade) are invited to enjoy food, juice bar and relaxation. Sun., Jan. 10, 12:00-3:00 p.m., Youth Center (Rm. 205).

Middle School Dodgeball Tournament

Sun., Jan. 24, 12:00-2:00 p.m. For more information and to RSVP contact Elizabeth Pfalzgraf at youth@cccckc.org.

Improv Workshop for Students Grades 6-12

Get your funny on! Save the date – Sun., Feb. 21, 6:30-9:00 p.m.

Middle School Mission Trip

June 17-19, 2016. Middle School students will engage in mission in Northeast Kansas City in cooperation with Country Club Christian Church's PartNer-ship. This will be an opportunity to learn about the needs of our own city, build memories and lasting relationships with other students, and invest in our community. They will learn about the Northeast's rich cultural diversity, share meals at small area restaurants, and finish up the nights enjoying fellowship in our church building. For more information, contact Monica Lewis at monical@cccckc.org.

The Sights at A Christmas Festival



Children, students, young and older folks, musicians joined for an evening of fun and inspiration at A Christmas Festival on Sun., Dec. 13. Carols and caroling, Mr. and Mrs. Santa, crafts and food made for a full evening of fellowship.



Infant Dedications



Callen Kate Hains. Parents are Chris and Jaclyn Hains.



Levi Ryan Moeder. Parents are Matt and Valerie Moeder.



Arianna Mary Kribbs. Parents are Samuel and Katherine Kribbs.



Precious Child, Precious Children

by Rev. Joe Walker, Minister of Congregational Care



The other day our granddaughter, Lucina, went for her 2-year-old checkup at the doctor. The physician said Lucina was healthy and doing just great – for which, of course, we are grateful. From the way Lucina races around our house laughing and squealing, my unprofessional guess would have been that she was probably in pretty good shape.

Every time I think of Lucina – *and acknowledge all the advantages and resources available to her* – I pause to pray that those opportunities might be available for all the little girls and boys in our world. In my mind I see

the little ones I played with on missions in Haiti and Mexico. I am reminded of some of the kids from inner city churches I have served. So many others. So bright and beautiful and joyous. So much that they need to be able to grow up happy and healthy and creative.

And then I recommit myself to finding ways to love and care for all those children near and far who are just as precious as Lucina.

One way that we can all love and care for children is by supporting our two upcoming missions to Nicaragua. Our Collection Connection is accepting cash donations to fund our health care efforts during our February (adult) and June (high school) missions.

With our gifts we will buy medications and supplies to share and use in our clinic. Betsy Wilson, who will once again help lead our adult mission, explained to me that our donations can provide “a child with a fluoride treatment or a family with a home health kit of vitamins, soap, Band-Aids, and toothbrushes.” This year we are also blessed to be able to work alongside a Nicaraguan doctor to strengthen their local health care system.

Join me in showing our love and care for the children of Nicaragua with a gift today. Cash and check donations may be placed in our offertory marked “Nicaragua.” To learn more about our adult and high school missions and ways you can participate, call or email me joew@cccckc.org.

Joe



Two little girls at our clinic in Nicaragua.

Children and Families

MOPs Group

Mothers of Preschoolers (birth-K) meets the second Wednesday of each month from 9:00-11:00 a.m. in the Social Hall. The next meeting is Jan. 13. For more information on MOPs, check out www.mops.org.

Preschool and Parents' Day Out Open House

Jan. 26-28, 9:00 a.m. to 11:30 p.m.

Prospective families can visit the program while currently enrolled families can see the room their child will go to next year. Parent Board members will be giving tours.

Registration for currently enrolled families for preschool, transition and PDO siblings will be Mon., Feb. 1, at 9:00 a.m. in the Social Hall. PDO families will enroll Tues., Feb. 2, 9:00 a.m. in the Social Hall.

Registration will be open to the general public for preschool, transition and PDO on Thurs., Feb. 4, at 9:00 a.m. in the Social Hall.

Family Worship Night

Sun., Jan. 31, 4:30-6:00 p.m. in the Social Hall. Singing, praying, worshipping, doing mission – all with your entire family. Dinner provided!

Club Kids (3rd-5th Grade)

Upcoming dates: Feb. 7, Mar. 6, Apr. 3, May 1.

Deep Blue

Deep Blue is inspired by the verse, “In the depths of who I am, I rejoice in God my Savior”. (Luke 1:47 CEB). The children will discover what it means to be a disciple of Christ today through science experiments, art and crafts, animated videos and active games; making the Bible stories, characters and verses part of their lives. Parents, please check out the site, www.deepbluekids.com.

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Get Connected: InFellowship

Country Club Christian Church recently transitioned to a new membership database program that will be more efficient for members and staff alike. As we complete the transition process, we invite you to get connected so that you can benefit from the new tools the system offers.

Why?

- Print your giving record at any time.
- Update your email, address, phone, family information.
- Confirm family birthdates so that you will receive appropriate invitations, and a birthday card at a certain age!
- Register for church events (coming soon!).
- Give access to have your name listed on small group/class rosters.
- Set up electronic giving, one time or recurring.
- ALL who register prior to Dec. 24 will be eligible for a drawing for a reserved parking space on Christmas Eve!

How?

- Go to <https://cccckc.infellowship.com>.
- Click "Sign Up."
- Fill out the requested information.
- Check your email for a message with your verification.
- Complete the form from the link in the verification email.
- Login with your information and see what InFellowship has to offer!

Sign up for Christian Community Camp

The 2016 camp will be July 30-Aug. 6. For many years, families and individuals from our congregation have gathered for a week of hiking, horseback riding, fishing, crafting, relaxing and fun at the YMCA of the Rockies in Estes Park, Colorado. A registration form and a \$250 non-refundable deposit will hold your place. Cost is \$1,700 for a private room; \$375 for the women's bunk room. Food and activity fee of \$85 per person. For more information, contact Rev. Monica Lewis at monical@cccckc.org or 816-333-4917.