



# COUNTRY CLUB CHRISTIAN CHURCH

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COUNTRY CLUB CHRISTIAN CHURCH NEWSLETTER

## From the Senior Minister Window into God



Rev. Carla Aday

**D**uring December some of us struggle to balance the extra demands on our time with a longing to remain spiritually centered.

How do we embrace the busyness, fun, and festivities that honor the arrival of the sacred while also carving out a still small moment to reflect and ponder the meaning of this beautiful season? I love the story about the church that often used a doll for the baby Jesus. One year they decided to make it better by using a real baby. But just as the children's choir sang "no crying he makes" the infant screamed a horrific cry. And the baby's big sister shouted at him to shut up. Sometimes Christmas doesn't feel very holy.

In his book, *The Universal Christ*, Richard Rohr writes, "The full Christian leap of faith is trusting that Jesus together with Christ gave us one human but fully accurate window into the Eternal Now that we call God." I love the reminder that the one born in a manger was a fully accurate window into God. When you think about that "fully accurate window" what do you picture? The way he touched a leper who could have given him a horrific disease, the way



This family event is Sat., Dec. 14, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m. and includes music, a visit with Santa, family photos, crafts, and holiday refreshments. We will also fill Christmas stockings for our friends at Micah Ministry, which serves individuals experiencing hunger and homelessness in Northeast Kansas City.



## Christmas Eve Schedule

5:30 p.m. – Children and families service. Children will be invited to dress as angels or shepherds and will join the Holy family during the service.

8:00 p.m. – The magic of Christmas comes alive in candlelight and song during this traditional service featuring the Kansas City Brass.

11:00 p.m. – The Kansas City Brass, communion and carols lead us to the lighting of the Christmas candles at midnight.

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## From the Senior Minister

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he shared the trout in his picnic basket with the neighbor on food stamps, the moments he refused to return insults with insults and embraced his enemy with tender compassion.

Rohr goes on to say, “Frankly, Jesus came to show us how to be human much more than how to be spiritual...” And so as we think about how to navigate the stress of the holidays and the challenges of life in general, we have a model. Jesus showed us how to be human. He forgave those who hurt him. He took time alone to pray and sit with God in silence. He welcomed children. He broke the rules of society that shut out women and foreigners and invited all to God’s banquet table.

As we look back on the sweetness of the manger, we remember that the straw was smelly. It may not have been idyllic. But the real sweetness of that night is that the one born amidst the muck grew up and became a window into God. 🍷

Grace and peace,

*Carla*

## Caring for Creation: Composting Initiative



The children call it in our Parents’ Day Out program call it “making good dirt.” Most adults call it composting. No matter what you call it, it is good.

We composted the food waste from both the Thanksgiving dinner and Advent in Advance, two green events in less than a week. Thank you to all the volunteers and attendees who bussed dishes. We served 177 meals at Thanksgiving and 125 at Advent in Advance.

In total we diverted 74 pounds of food waste from the landfill. Not only does composting return nutrients to the earth, it also avoids the production of methane. According to the EPA, methane warms the earth 80 times greater than carbon dioxide. After our events, the compost is picked up by Compost Collective KC. They work with their partners, MO organics and some local farmers, and turn our waste into nutrient rich soil. Since it is commercial composting, the compost reaches much higher temperature than a home composter so meat and dairy can be included. We do pay a small fee for this service for our large events but not for the weekly program. We appreciate your support and look forward to more opportunities to “make good dirt.” 🍷

## Caring for Creation: Coffee Cups

Did you know that disposable coffee cups and lids are not recyclable nor compostable? Although the cups are made of paper, they are also lined with plastic to prevent leakage. The lids fall into the wheels of the recycling sorter and bind up the line. Like many to-go containers, they should not be put in the recycling bins.



Country Club Christian Church purchases disposal cups that are sustainably sourced but the best source is a cup you can reuse. We spend approximately \$2,500 a year on paper goods. We invite you to bring your favorite to-go cup or use one of the reusable cups in the parlor. Just drop it off in the bin and we will do the dishes.

This is one small step that helps us be better stewards of our resources and leaves only coffee rings.

## Bible and Art Tour of Italy

Calling all lovers of art and Scripture (as well as pasta, wine, and gelato). In the late spring of 2021 (May 24-June 3, 2021), we will venture to Rome and Florence for an unforgettable tour of museums, cathedrals, Renaissance architecture, and the Tuscan countryside. Donna Houtteman, a docent at the Nelson-Atkins Museum, along with Rev. Carla Aday and Dr. Mike Graves, will lead this inspirational journey. In addition to guided tours, there will be free days for leisure and day trips to choose from.

The cost of the trip will be approximately \$4,000 per person, which include roundtrip airfare, lodging in four-star hotels, breakfasts, and guided tours of museums and other sites. A non-refundable deposit will be due February 20. Between now and January 31, we are taking names of church members who wish to go. After that, we will take names of non-members. If you are interested, email Mike Graves ([mikeg@cccckc.org](mailto:mikeg@cccckc.org)) to put your name on the list.



## reflections

### Joyful Communion

By Dr. Mike Graves, Scholar in Residence and Minister of Spiritual Formation



If you look up the word communion in the dictionary, the first entry simply reads “sharing,” whereas other entries have the usual religious overtones. Turns out, sharing is precisely what the Greek word means as well, only with definite religious overtones. When we eat the bread and drink the cup, we are sharing in a meal with God. But there is also a horizontal dimension, sharing with one another, a sharing of food as well as our lives.

Historically, the meal pattern of Jesus and his followers was influenced by Greco-Roman banqueting, even the so-called Last Supper. These banquets lasted the better part of an evening, and included a full meal, not just bread and wine. Sharing life together was an integral part. The one Greek word used to describe that kind of social sharing is best translated “festive joy,” which seems redundant. Isn’t joy always festive, and festive always joyful? And yet that’s the term used to describe what we now call Communion, festive joy.

Change is hard of course. For many of us, Communion is a time for prayer and silent reflection, which would have made no sense to our ancestors in the faith who gathered in the spirit of a dinner party. Times change, but thankfully in all of our services we have time not just for greeting one another but also silent moments for prayer and reflection because this is a cherished tradition for many of us.

Since this is the 300th anniversary of the carol “Joy to the World,” we adopted that as our theme for Advent this year. And with joy in the title, it seemed that joyful Communion made sense. If you have never experienced it, joyful Communion happens best not with the passing of trays but with stations where worshipers take a piece of bread and dip it in the cup. That’s because instead of worshipers silently passing trays (which doesn’t exactly promote sharing in the fullest sense of the word), people make their way forward and back to their seats, talking with one another as they do. Some people call that “fellowship,” which by the way, is another translation for the Greek word called sharing. In other words, for these few Sundays of Advent, we are sharing bread and cup together, but also our lives. 🍷



### Join us for worship!

#### Sunday Service Times

9:01, 10:00 and 11:00 a.m

#### December 8

Joy to the World! Part 2  
Repeat the Sounding Joy  
*Isaiah 35:1-10*  
Rev. Carla Aday Preaching

#### December 15

Joy to the World! Part 3  
And Wonders of His Love  
*Matthew 2:7-12*  
Rev. Carla Aday Preaching

### Guest Gathering

Whether you’re a new visitor, or you’ve been attending for a while, we invite you to join us for pastry and coffee on Dec. 15 at 10:00 a.m. in the Library. RSVP to Barbara George, 816-381-9251.

### Do You Follow Us?



## *Adult Classes and Group Fellowship Opportunities*

### **Kansas City Guitar Society Guest Artist Concert**

Featuring Celil Refik Kaya. Fri., Dec. 13, 7:30-9:00 p.m., Chapel. General admission is \$20.

### **Country Club Singers Christmas Concert**

A presentation of Christmas favorites, featuring the Jubilee Ringers. Sun., Dec. 15, 10:00 a.m., Sanctuary

### **KC Brass Holiday Concert**

In a long-held tradition, we welcome back the Kansas City Brass for a fun evening of sacred and secular favorites, interspersed with the good-natured humor of the Brass musicians. Tues., Dec. 17, 7:30 p.m., Sanctuary

### **Roots**

This new ministry is for individuals ages mid-20s to mid-30s, in the “in-between” stages of finding your way through the early and important adulthood years. Weekly gatherings at 10:00 a.m. Rm. 207. Contact Corey Meyer for details at [coreym@cccckc.org](mailto:coreym@cccckc.org).



### **Pick-up Choir**

The music of the Advent season prepares our hearts for the joy of Christmas. Have you always wanted to sing with the Chancel Choir during this season, but can't commit to weekly rehearsals? Here's your opportunity. A Pick-up Choir will meet on Sun., Dec. 8 at 10:00 a.m. in the choir room to prepare an anthem to sing during the 11:00 a.m. service that day. All are invited!



Ed and Carol Pasley and Tom and Cindy Thornton delivered 73 pumpkin pies to Micah Ministry. Thank you to everyone who supported this endeavor.

## **Mission Partnerships**

### **Micah Ministry**

Serve dinner at Micah Ministry from 5:30 to 7:00 p.m., on Mon., Dec. 9. Meet in the chapel lot at 4:30 p.m. to carpool to Independence Boulevard Christian Church. Return to church at 7:30 p.m. Questions? Contact Jackie Cunningham at 816-246-6202.

### **Christmas Stockings for Micah Ministry**

Make Christmas brighter for our friends at Independence Boulevard Christian Church's Micah Ministry. Purchase socks in the Parlor for \$1/pair or \$12 for 12. Fill with supplies (small sized toiletries, lotion, lip balm, washcloth, etc.; please, no candy or food items.) Tie the tops with a ribbon and bring to the Parlor no later than Sun., Dec. 22.

## **Service Learning Trips**

### **Ecuador Mission Trip Rescheduled**

The fall 2019 Ecuador service/learning trip was rescheduled from October 2019 to January 17 – 24, 2020, and a few spaces remain open for this trip. For details contact Nancy Lear at [nancylear@gmail.com](mailto:nancylear@gmail.com) or Corey Meyer at [coreym@cccckc.org](mailto:coreym@cccckc.org).

### **Puerto Rico** May 28-June 1, 2020

Visiting our international partner ICDCPR – the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in Puerto Rico to be present in the community and continue efforts to rebuild homes and lives following the disaster of Hurricane Irma in 2017. This year's trip will focus on “young adult” members for a long-weekend trip, however, all are welcome! Deadline: Feb. 1. Cost TBD (approx. \$1,000)



## *a message from staff*

### **In Memory**

By Lara Schopp, Director of Communication



**M**y father-in-law was a man of few words. He worked hard and had high expectations for the people in his life. He was fiercely private and kept his circle small. He was a cowboy and a lifelong horseman, spending hours tending to his last three geldings, Blue, Hondo, and

Catcher, at a ranch in Washington, Mo.

He was set in his ways, stubborn some might say. He preferred the quiet of his home, the familiar space he shared with the family he loved. When I appeared on the scene, I confounded him with a wildly different worldview that he eventually came to respect. He radiated an intensity that masked his soft side, but an old softie he was. He always ate the last cookie in the middle of the night when no one was watching. And when a raven-haired, dark-eyed baby girl made him a grandfather, she immediately wrapped him around her finger.

Even toward the end, when late-stage Parkinson's disease robbed him of his dignity and his pride, he was quick with a one-liner that made us laugh. And when the fog of dementia set in, he still longed for home, the familiar place where he felt peace.

As I write today, a few days removed from his memorial service, I'm also working on a funeral bulletin for the mother of a member of our church family. All told, in nearly 13 years of working for the church, I've helped to prepare more than 2,000 different bulletins for Sunday services, Christmas Eve, funerals and other events. The work can be tedious and antiseptic, copying and pasting hundreds of words, ensuring font sizes are the same and hymn numbers are correct. I agonize over typos that make it to Sunday, my perfectionism and ego haunting me and ruining my worship experience. It can feel very mundane and unimportant, putting words on a screen; then sending that screen to a printer resulting in the paper you hold in your hands on Sunday, on Christmas Eve...at a memorial service.

But as I held the program for my father-in-law's service, I was deeply grateful to my husband who had designed it with great love and care. I was moved to see the names of the hymns my daughter and I had so lovingly chosen printed in black and white on the page. I was comforted by the photo of him taken at my wedding, one of the only times in his life he wore a tuxedo.

Sometimes a job is more than a job; it's a ministry. Sometimes a program is more than paper, it's a memory, a tribute, a life in black and white. 🕯

## **Our Church Family**

### *In Sympathy*

Our prayers and condolences are with the families and friends of

**Faeza Alhindawi**

**Gary R. Burr**

**Melinda Grable**

### *Memorials and Tributes*

Memorial gifts and gifts honoring loved ones are placed into the Church's Endowment Funds, which are used to support the church now and into the future. The Endowment Trustees disperse the funds according to the Declaration of Trust approved by the official Congregational Board.

#### **Paul Faucher**

Antoinette Abboud

Stephen Cutelli

Suzanne McWilliams

Joanna Papalios

Denise Peery

#### **Stuart McConaughy**

Greg and Nancy Lear

#### **Carol Nichols**

Bonnie Blythe and Doug Dee

Courtney Earnest

Greg and Nancy Lear

Charles and Betty Lynn

#### **Gwen Miller**

Carol Chipman

#### **Jarene Stanford**

Annie Brabson

Bonnie Blythe and Doug Dee

Courtney Earnest

Greg and Nancy Lear

Charles and Betty Lynn

## Youth Ministries

### Pastors' Class Information Session

Sun., Dec. 8, 10:00 a.m., Youth Center. Open to 6th grade youth and parents. Contact Tyler Heston for more information at [tylerh@cccckc.org](mailto:tylerh@cccckc.org).

### Connect Socials for 7th and 8th Graders

Every second Tuesday through April. Join us for dinner and cookie decorating on Tues., Dec. 10, 6:30 -8:30 p.m.. RSVP to [tylerh@cccckc.org](mailto:tylerh@cccckc.org).

### Youth Christmas Party

Join us for the 2019 youth Christmas party on Sun., Dec. 15, 4:15 to 7:30 p.m. (Note the change from Dec. 22 as originally planned). Meet at church to carpool to Crown Center for dinner, ice skating, white elephant gift exchange, and hot chocolate. Please bring \$5 for skating and money for dinner in the Crown Center food court. RSVP to [aprilb@cccckc.org](mailto:aprilb@cccckc.org).

### Middle School Lock In

Middle schoolers are invited to join us for the January lock-in on Fri., Jan. 24, at 7:00 p.m. Join us for a night of fun and games before a big sleepover in the church. Eat dinner before arriving, and bring \$5 to help with snacks and supplies. RSVP now!



For the first Sunday of Advent, the high schoolers and middle schoolers spent some of the Sunday school hour decorating the Youth Center for Christmas.

### Want to volunteer with Youth Ministries?

Contact Tyler Heston, Minister to Youth, at [tylerh@cccckc.org](mailto:tylerh@cccckc.org).

### Sunday School for 6th-12th Graders

meets every Sunday at 10:00 a.m. in Room 205.

## Children and Families



On Sun., Dec. 1, a group of families and Club Kids gathered to ring in the holiday season by caroling at residential care centers where church members live. Festive accessories along with bright smiles and beautiful singing made for a special event.

### Footsteps of Faith — 1st-5th Graders

Advent Workshop Series: Joy to the World

December will focus on the story of the birth of Christ. We will explore how in the season of Advent we prepare for the mystery of Christmas morning.

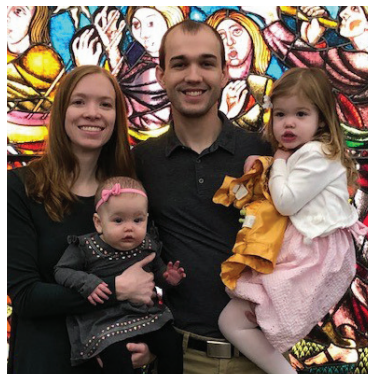
### Worship & Wonder: The Way to Bethlehem

Pre-school and kindergartners will hear the story of the birth of Christ told in a Montessori style presentation. Learning of the holy family, shepherds and wise ones that are a part of the biblical story.

### Club Kids for 3rd - 5th graders

Our last gatherings for 2019 will be Sundays, Dec. 8 and 15 from 5:00 - 7:00 p.m. Join us for a light dinner followed by games and seasonal activities.

## Infant Dedication



Reagan Charlotte Jamour, daughter of Kristin and Justin Jamour, was dedicated on Dec. 1. Pictured with sister Audrey.



## Thanksgiving Dinner



Our annual Thanksgiving Dinner had a record turnout with over 175 attendees, including new members and some of our small groups. Former Mayor Sly James spoke on Building Cities for Our Children. Donations of food items supplied our partners at Cross-Lines Community Outreach enough food to feed about 50 families affected by poverty.

## Advent in Advance



125 people gathered for our annual make-and-take craft event, Advent in Advance. Children and families prepared for Advent by creating ornaments, cards, wreaths and more. A lot of fun was had by all. Thanks to all those who helped make it possible.

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Return Service Requested

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Scholar in Residence

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Minister to Youth

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## SAVE THE DATES



### Christmas Festival

Sat., Dec. 14, 2:30 - 4:30 p.m.

This festive family event includes Christmas music, a visit with Santa, family photos, crafts, a service project, and holiday refreshments.

### Christmas Eve

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

8:00 p.m. – Traditional service with the KC Brass.

11:00 p.m. – The Kansas City Brass, communion and carols lead us to the lighting of the Christmas candles at midnight.

### Post-Christmas Schedule

The church offices will be closed on Wed., Dec. 25 and Thurs., Dec. 26. On Sun., Dec. 29, one service only at 10:30 a.m. No Sunday School; child care will be available.

For the full church calendar, visit our website at

**CCCCKC.org**

Follow us!

