

THE ADVANCE

THE NEWSLETTER
OF CHRIST CHURCH

Maplewood, Missouri

august

*An Open and Affirming Congregation
of the United Church of Christ*

2016

Deadline for *The Advance-September* article submission is Friday, August 19, 9:00 AM

*God pushes us
from a strong past
into the future
to serve
the neighborhood
as a place of refuge
and service,
to practice
open-mindedness,
social justice and
personal
spiritual growth.
We believe
that all people
are made
in the image of God
and all are welcome
into the full life
of the church.*

Blessings

Note from the Pastor

Act of Blessing

I can't help but wonder what the world would be like if everyone in it was blessing everyone else, everywhere, all the time? Instead of cursing, what if we were blessing each other instead? What if we were sending blessings instead of bombs and missiles? Instead of lining our politicians' pockets with money, what if blessings were the currency that made the world go around?

I know that sounds really farfetched and completely beyond reason, and I readily acknowledge that it is. But that's actually my point. While blessings won't feed the hungry or end wars or assuage greed, they can serve as a balm to help make connections beyond what separates us. As the late John O'Donohue writes in his wonderful book, To Bless The Spaces Between Us, offering a blessing opens the heart and extends our generosity. It reconnects us to what is common among all humans, regardless of our differences.

Beyond the caloric intake necessary to sustain life, what people are really hungry for has more to do with feeding the heart and the soul than it does with feeding the stomach. I'm not suggesting that offering blessings is the answer to all the world's problems. But maybe at the heart of our fear and depression, at the heart of what drives humanity to inhumane actions against each other and the very planet on which we live, is the loss of something far more essential to life than having the biggest bank accounts, the most toys or the fastest cars.

If we are to make a leap in consciousness as a species, we need to learn how to bridge the gap between us. Even small gestures can start the process. What does it cost you to send a blessing? A few moments of your time? A bit of mental energy on your part?

-Dr. Judith Rich

Looking Ahead:

Come be a part of our August worship series: A Sunday Full of Blessings

Sunday, August 7

Communion Sunday

Hebrews 11.1-3, 8-16

"Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen"

Sermon: The Celtic Veil

Sunday, August 14

Back to School Sunday! Backpack Blessing!

Hebrews 11.29-12.2

"Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses..."

Sermon: The Act of Blessing

Sunday, August 21

Service of Healing & Wholeness

Psalm 71 & Psalm 103

"Bless the Lord O my soul!"

Hymn Sing-Come sing your favorite hymns!

Sunday, August 28

Goodbye to Summer

Luke 14.1, 7-14

"When you give a feast...."

Sermon: The Banqueting Table

Additional Calendar Items of Christ Church, UCC-Maplewood

Tuesday, August 2	All day – Election site, Fellowship Hall
Wednesday, August 3	9:30-11:30 am – Anointed Hands Ministries Food Pantry (twice monthly)
Tuesday, August 9	4:30 pm – Personnel Meeting
Thursday, August 11	7:00 pm – Council meeting
Monday, August 15	9:30-11:30 am – Anointed Hands Ministries Commodities distribution (monthly)
Tuesday, August 16	9:30-11:30 am – Anointed Hands Ministries Food Pantry (twice monthly)
Thursday, August 18	5:45 pm – Racial Justice Reading Group
Saturday, August 20	9:00-noon – Work Day, meet in Fellowship Hall.
Monday, September 5	Labor Day – Church office closed
Sunday, September 11	Rally Day – Combined Worship Service



YOU CAN HELP WITH ELECTRIC USAGE

When you are the last to leave a room or area, turn off the lights, including the hallway lights.

When you enter a room that needs to be cooler, adjust the temperature down. The switch should always stay on "auto." That includes the A/C unit in the sanctuary, which is on a daily programmed timer.

If you are the last to leave a room, turn off the air conditioner.

John 1:5 says, "The light shines in the darkness, and the darkness did not overcome it." The Festival of Sharing is an interfaith, state-wide gathering event held in October each year. *The FoS has been sharing the light of hope and love for 35 years.* There are already 30 denominations, including the United Church of Christ, involved in Festival 2016. Christ Church participated for a number of years in this worthy endeavor.



The FoS suggests a variety of ideas for packets to collect. This year we would like to collect "Missouri Personal Hygiene Kits." For the past two years, the FoS agency have used the hygiene kits as extra "gifts" for the home-bound individuals they serve. These items cannot be purchased with food stamp benefits. For many of them, the kit is the only "present" they receive at the holidays.

Here is what we need to collect:

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1 fluoride toothpaste (6 oz. or more) | 1 toothbrush (in package) |
| 1 bath-size bar of soap (in package) | 1 bottle skin lotion (11-14 oz.) |
| 1 bottle shampoo (11-14 oz.) | 1 deodorant |
| 2 disposable razors | 1 comb or brush |
| 1 hand towel | 1 washcloth |

If you are able to make donations, a whole kit would be ideal. If you can only do a partial kit, others can fill in the missing items. **In order to have time to put the kits together, we need everything dropped off at the church by Sunday, September 4.** Thank you for your continued support. If you have questions, contact Sara Bryant or Christy Chassere.

Submitted by Christy Chassere

Christ Church Office Hours

Office hours – Secretary [Verna] is available by phone **314-644-3033** or email office@maplewooducc.org – **Monday through Friday, 9 a.m. to noon.**

Pastor's office hours –

Tuesday and Thursday, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Wednesday is a "flex" day. Pastor Ann may be in the church office or working from her home office, where **she will be available 9:00-2:00 by phone or email, pastor@maplewooducc.org.**



August Celebrations

Birthdays

Sarah Bishop	August 8
Christopher Czarnecki	August 10
Wes Robb	August 11
Lois Leahy	August 13
Linda White	August 15
Doris Finklang	August 18
Rebecca Gamache	August 19
Gwen Robb	August 27
Brandt Elam	August 29

Anniversaries

Rena & Steve Mueller	August 11
Lois & Frank Leahy	August 25





Tuesday, August 2 Election Site – Fellowship Hall
 Tuesdays, Aug 2 & 16 9:30-11:30 am – Anointed Hands Ministries Food Pantry (twice monthly)
 Tuesday, August 9 4:30 pm – Personnel meeting
 Thursday, August 11 7:00 pm – Council meeting
 Monday, August 15 9:30-11:30 am – Anointed Hands Commodity Supplement Food Program distribution (once monthly)
 Thursday, August 18 5:45 pm – Racial Justice Reading Group
 Saturday, August 20 9:00-noon – Work Day, meet in Fellowship Hall.
 Thursday, August 25 11:30 am – 4th Thursday Lunch, Location TBA
 Monday, Sept 5 Labor Day – church office closed

Council Coffee Hosts for July

Christy Chassere	August 7
Jan Pryibil	August 14
James O’Neal	August 21
Judy Merkel	August 28

Even if you don't indulge in a donut during coffee hour, contributions for coffee are greatly appreciated.

Fourth Thursday Lunch - 11:30 am August 25 - Location TBA

SOCC's Meetings will resume in September. Enjoy your Summer!

Heritage Sale is tentatively set for October 23rd.
 Apple butter, marmalade and baked goods will be offered.

SOCCs will be giving future dates of events when the kitchen is fully operational. Good things will be coming!

Thanks to All Who Give!

When making a check to the church: Make checks Payable to Christ Church UCC.

- Memo – If you wish to earmark funds, such as to Food Pantry, etc., please indicate this in Memo section. Funds from checks without notation will be deposited into Operating Fund.
- Don't forget to sign the check!

As Christ Church's operating expenses continue at the normal rate, your 2016 Offering Envelope Packet for May has an envelope for an extra collection for Building & Maintenance which may be used for kitchen updates, HVAC maintenance/repair, or general building repairs."

Shirley Keller and Ted West

BUILDING AND GROUNDS

Dishwasher Update: Repair guy visited us and found that our unit has a bad motor. Would be about \$1200 for new motor plus installation cost. He recommended trading a newer, good one, that he has, for the three used ones that we have. Installation may be included. We will need to move our three machines to his business location and pick up the good unit. He will then install it.

City of Maplewood has determined that we do not fit under the current zoning regulations in order for them to approve our commissary request. There has never been a commissary in Maplewood and this type of activity would not fit under current code. There is an appeal process that goes through Planning and Zoning, and then the City Council. The cost of doing that appeal is \$430. Because of the potential income source as a commissary, Council voted to move forward with that appeal, which we have now submitted. There is a Planning and Zoning meeting on August 1, at which that committee will determine if they approve our appeal to send to the City Council for review, or if they reject it. All of our members who live in Maplewood are encouraged to come to that meeting if they can. Please contact Ron Gaus if you would like to attend. Our appeal to the city is for them to amend the current zoning to allow a conditional use under the existing zoning, for the activities of commissaries and caterers, but without direct servicing of consumers from those activities on our property. We would ask for approval of overnight parking of Food Trucks on our property as an option, but would also request that would be an area only of negotiation in the request, not as a required part of the zoning change. Our conditional use request would be based upon our church being relatively buffered in our location by streets, our building, and our ownership of most of the bordering property. This is important in establishing an argument for not bothering the adjacent neighbors.

The mailbox in the Bellevue door has been revised by Steve Mueller so that it can now accept most mail with ease. A lightweight hanging waste receptacle has been put on the inside of the door for removal, as necessary, in carrying the mail to the office for review. Council thanked Steve.

The one ice cream machine is beyond repair, but our other existing machine will be moved to replace it, with Council approval. No cost to the church to do that. Council approved to move big machine to corner and scrap existing broken machine.

Repairs have been made to the Dining Hall AC unit as described as they would be done in last month's update.

Still looking for someone to volunteer to do updates to our sign out front. Still asking for help each month in Advance. Pastor Ann will make her Sermon titles known on Tuesdays to post on sign. Kara will try to get different folks to agree to do once a month.

Camera system is still waiting for final bid from Philibert Security. The other bidder decided he could not do it himself and requested a bid from his electrician. That bid was \$6000 for labor. Since the camera system was only \$500, this cost is about four times (\$6000 vs \$1500) the amount it really should be. Hoping that Philibert provides a better price. If not, we will use the electrician that put in our dishwasher power to complete the security camera labor.

The Sanctuary lighting problem has now been repaired. A new dimmer switch was installed to replace the old one that had resulted in a melted wire, which was blowing fuses. The electrician also replaced our old screw-in type of fuse box with a new 120 amp breaker box in the balcony. The total cost for the troubleshooting, repair of the wiring, running new wiring, and replacing both a dimmer switch and fuse box was \$924.

Council approved the purchase of 23 used, but heavy duty, chairs for the old Faith Aloud room. This room will be used as a classroom by the NAMI folks for a ten week period and they will pay \$200 for the use of that room. We have existing tables that can be used for that classroom. The chairs cost \$5 each, so the income from the NAMI folks will offset the purchase and leave some extra income as well.

Council also approved the purchase of a Koala Kare Baby Changing Station that will be installed in the Women's Restroom downstairs. The cost, including installation, will be \$119. This equipment would normally cost \$259.49, including installation. Council felt the need for this equipment would be of sufficient benefit to purchase for both our members and visitors. The unit should be installed by August 1. A sign will be posted in the Dining Hall that this equipment now exists for anyone who would need to use it.

Ron Gaus, Building and Grounds

Food Garden Report

The Food Garden continues to produce harvests for local Food Pantries. Harvest totals now exceed 120 pounds, as we produce Kale, Collards, Turnip Greens, Tomatoes and Cucumbers from our five raised gardens.

- Peace and Justice Garden Team

RACIAL JUSTICE READING GROUP

This group met in July after a two month break, and there were six folks in attendance. Good to get back together. The current book being read is Jim Wallis's book, America's Original Sin, a faith based book addressing the racial justice topic. All interested folks are invited to the August 18 meeting from 5:45 PM to 7:00 PM.

- Peace and Justice Team

DIY TASSEL NECKLACE

The Community Craft Studio

Saturday, August 13th

Open Studio: 9:00 a.m. to Noon

Class: 9:15 a.m.

Class Fee: \$15.00*

(you must preregister for this



(Photo taken from www.commonthread.us)



*Many thanks
for all the cards,
meals, and love
during this very
hard time.*

*Jan Roddy and
Julie Sutfin*



Providing transitional housing for abused women and their children while working in faith to end domestic violence.

Spiritual Support: The chaplain at Lydia's House is available to offer spiritual support to the women and children. This may take place through individual conversations with the residents or through the spiritual support circles offered for women and teens. Spiritual support focuses on healing and nurture of the human spirit, making sense of life experience, and how we connect with our own selves and other humans. Spiritual support may or may not directly connect with organized religion depending on the individual views of each woman and child.

More at website <http://lydiashouse.org/>

Make Money for Christ Church by Shopping and Eating!

(It doesn't get any easier than this...)

Using eScrip cards or Schnucks Cards at Schnucks Grocery Stores

Many of you are loyal users of the eScrip program we started a few years ago, where Christ Church can receive a portion of the money you spend with local businesses. The easiest of these is Schnucks. By simply showing your Schnucks Card or eScrip card at Schnucks when you buy groceries, you can give Christ Church as much as 3% of your grocery purchase. In 2015, use of these eScrip cards earned Christ Church \$98 from Schnucks purchases alone. So keep it up.

Like to shop online? There are three different ways to earn **FREE MONEY** for the church while you're shopping online: GoodShop, AmazonSmile, or eScrip.

eScrip You can shop online using your eScrip card. Once you are registered with eScrip, just start by going online to <https://shopping.escrrip.com> and click on "Find Shops". A long list of online shopping is available here, and donations amount vary. In this case, for example, you can earn 1.2% at Amazon.com, 2.4% at Kohls.com, 0.3% at OfficeDepot.com, or 2.4% at Walgreens.

GoodShop To use GoodShop, you go through a one-time registration process at: <http://www.goodsearch.com/choosecause>. When you go to this website, just select "Christ Church United Church of Christ – UCC" as your favorite cause. Then start shopping! Once you have registered, just go to <http://www.goodsearch.com/goodshop> any time you want to shop at one of your favorite online stores. Different stores will give the church different percentages of your purchase – but some examples are: 1.5% of your purchase at Amazon.com; 2% of online purchases at Kohl's; 1% at Office Depot.com; and up to 4% on selected purchases at Walgreens.com. Once you are signed up, the process is easy. Just give it a try.

AmazonSmile Another option for online shopping is a program called AmazonSmile. If you're planning to shop online at Amazon, be sure to log in through either GoodShop (discussed above) or AmazonSmile (<https://smile.amazon.com>). When you go to AmazonSmile for the first time, it will ask you to select the charity of your choice. Just select "Christ Church UCC, Maplewood" and you'll be ready to go. As long as you log in through AmazonSmile, Christ Church will always receive 0.5% of your purchase amount. (Notice that this is significantly less than you can donate by using GoodShop instead!)

Eating Out This is another easy one through the eScrip program. Getting set up is a little bit more work, but once again, you end up with FREE MONEY for Christ Church. So it's worth your time. First, go to <http://www.escrrip.com> to register the credit card(s) you like to use when eating out. Then eat at any of 11,000 registered restaurants and pay with your registered credit card.

You can find the list of participating restaurants at <http://escrrip.rewardsnetwork.com>. As a member, you will earn 2.5% of your dining cost as a donation to Christ Church, and you can earn an additional 2.5% by writing a review of your meal.

If you compare the percentages above, you can see that they vary a lot, and some sites are better with some stores than others. So whichever program you use, take a minute to think about Christ Church when you shop or eat out. It's an easy way to make a difference!

Submitted by Donna Ratkowski