Happy Thanksgiving Eve. I'm going to keep this short because there's really really important stuff below in this newsbulletin and I want to make sure you read about all that our justice and mercy ministries are doing and how you can help in this season of holydays. In these days of thanks-giving and gratitude, I'm mindful of my deep deep thanks that I get to do ministry alongside you. I say "alongside" because our tradition has a long focus on the priesthood of all believers. I am just one clergy person alongside many ministers. You are all ministers in your own way - living out the work of the gospel in your daily lives. And this year, in the year we were to spend a sabbatical summer exploring more fully shared leadership, we've lived it out in real time. Sometimes at a moment's notice. Always with deep trust and honesty. And, of course, from a place of prayer.

And, so I'm overwhelmed with gratitude for our lay leadership. For our incredible moderator team led by Aaron Blackburn whose deep and abiding faith keeps us always focused on our task of being people of prayer; our outgoing moderator, Ingrid Busch, who has kept us focused on the restoration of our light shining out of this dark year (we are oh so close to ordering the new lamps!); for Scott Duschen whose quiet wisdom I depend on and look to in almost every meeting. For our treasurer, Lydia Butler, who keeps us focused on the long game of our future. For our secretary, Judy Robinette, whose attention to detail and faithfulness reassures me. For Sondra Bowers and Trent Jones who are such valuable voices on behalf of our congregation on the executive committee, as the leaders of our elders and deacons. For all of our administrative council who continue to pivot and encourage and say "yes" to trying it all again next year. For all our members who have allowed your staff to figure this out as we go. For the ways you have been patient as we learned this new way of being church. For the ways you have offered forgiveness when we haven't quite hit the mark. For the ways you have continued to show up and speak out. For the ways you continue to be generous. For all the ways you are faithful to the work of the Gospel. Thank you.

I'm pretty sure I can speak for our entire staff in saying, “Thank you.” And speaking of our staff, these are some of the finest ministers I know. And I don't just mean Ryan and Suzanne Motter. Levon and Kara do ministry every day. Kevin and Will. Jonathon and John and Tim and Grace. Jennifer and Amy. Ministers, each and every one. I know a lot of ministers and a lot of church staffs. None are perfect and certainly not ours (especially that lady at the top). But I will tell you that I am honored to do life with these humans (many of whom are pictured above at our 2019 Community Thanksgiving Dinner). I'm grateful for...
their commitment to the Gospel, to one another, and to you. I'm grateful for their creativity and compassion. I'm grateful they put up with me!

"Be more grateful" was my mantra last year and it has carried me through this crazy time as well. It always does my spirit good to write down a list of gratitudes. This little list is just a small bit of it. So this weekend, write yours too. I pray it brings a smile to your face and a lift to your spirit as this one did to mine. And if it inspires a tear, that's okay too.

Be gentle with yourself and with others these days, dear ones.
Be more grateful. And as always, wear your dang mask.

Rev. Shanna

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**Congregational Meeting Vote**

Thank you to all of our members who made your voices heard through our virtual congregational meeting vote. We reached our threshold of 100 votes that is required to meet quorum. All votes were affirmative with two abstentions. Here are the links to the [slate of officers](#) and the [budget](#) if you would like to review what was passed. If you have questions, please feel free to reach out Aaron Blackburn or any of this year's officers.

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**Finance Policy Change**

In order to balance the budget for 2021, the Finance Committee recommended a policy change to the way earnings from the Legacy Fund are distributed. Per our policy, all changes must be approved at two consecutive meetings of the Administrative Council. The Admin. Council will vote to change this policy at its December and January meetings. Pending this approval, Legacy Fund earnings for 2021 will be distributed as follows:

- General Property 50% (current policy has 50% designated to Major Improvements)
- Operating Fund 40%
- Justice & Mercy 10%

Any questions can be directed to Treasurer, Lydia Butler or Business Administrator, Levon Weaver.

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**Justice and Mercy Is At Work!**

During such a time as this in our world, our Justice and Mercy Team is hard at work to help the congregation support many different needs that have arisen.

Our Food Pantry continues to receive more traffic than usual, and just completed our annual turkey and chicken giveaway. Whereas we usually serve 130-140 families a month, we served that many in just one week, and 180 families total in November! The pantry also recently purchased a brand new freezer thanks to the many financial gifts we have received over the last year. The pantry continues to be in need of volunteers to help share the load. Volunteers at the pantry carefully observe safety protocols and have socially distanced contact with clients. Our food pantry will be open again on December 15, 17, and 22 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. If you would like to volunteer to serve, please reach out to Norma Abernathy (normakayabernathy@gmail.com or 816-585-8780) or email Rev. Ryan (revryan@community-christian.org).

Our Wish Upon A Star Program is nearing our first drop-off date of December 5, and we have plenty of kids left who need someone to buy Christmas presents for them! If you would like to adopt a kiddo for Christmas, please visit this link and sign-up today: [https://bit.ly/C3Wish](https://bit.ly/C3Wish). Gifts can be dropped off, unwrapped, on Saturday, December 5 at the church between 9 a.m. and 12 p.m. through the 46th Street doors.

We're also thrilled to announce that Community will be collecting a special Christmas Eve offering to benefit Artists Helping the Homeless (AHH). Community has had a long relationship with AHH, helping to feed meals to homeless folks in Mill Creek Park and
allowing usage of our building for various gatherings. During COVID, AHH has stepped up considerably to help with the city’s homelessness crisis by providing shelter, nursing care, and peer support and monitoring in a local hotel. They need financial support as they do this work and as they continue to feed KC’s poor. Look for more information to come out about that as we get closer to Christmas Eve, but this is a great way to make a donation that will have a direct impact on the fight against COVID-19 and its many deleterious effects.

Micah Ministry, one of our ministry partners, which serves a weekly meal to the poor and working poor in Kansas City’s northeast neighborhood, also let us know that they’re in need of warm weather gloves and hats. Justice and Mercy has set aside a gift from Community to purchase these and we’ll deliver them within the next month. In addition, we’ll be purchasing 125 pairs of gloves and 125 hats to give away at our Food Pantry in January.

And one final note for some Christmas joy: many of our members delighted in the gifts of Bawi and Khin Hrin Pan’s “farmers choice” produce bags over the Summer. Khin and Bawi are Burmese refugees who participate in New Roots for Refugees, one of our favorite partnerships. Justice and Mercy set aside $500 to support that program in case we didn’t have enough folks sign-up, but we were thrilled when the program had more than enough support. Just as we were last year with our farmer Than Myint, Justice and Mercy is thrilled that we were able to gift that $500 as a “Christmas bonus” to Bawi, Khin, and their three kiddos this year.

Thank you all for continuing to support the good work of Justice and Mercy through your time, your presence, and your financial gifts.

Lura Cayton and Rev. Ryan Motter

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**Wish Upon A Star Christmas Sponsors Needed**

We still have 31 children in foster care who are in need of sponsors to make their Christmas wishes come true, and there’s still time to sign up! Every year as a Community we sponsor 100 children through Cornerstones of Care’s Wish Upon A Start program. This year especially we want to reach that goal to bring some Christmas joy to 100 children.

There are still 10 days left to go shopping before the first gift return date! All gifts should be delivered unwrapped with gift tags attached that list the child’s name and ID number. This year you have the option of returning gifts to our church building on Saturday, December 5 from 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. through the 46th Street entrance, or gifts can be delivered directly to Cornerstones' Holiday Hub (9038 Metcalf Ave, Overland Park, KS 66212) on Thursday, December 10 from 4 to 7 p.m. or Saturday, December 12 from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

If you want to sponsor a child and need assistance shopping, please let Rev. Ryan or Liz McCullough know and we’ll be happy to coordinate a way to help you out! You can learn more about the Wish Upon A Star program and partnership in the video from Liz McCullough below. Thanks to everyone who’s already signed up. More wishes can still be made by signing up here: [https://bit.ly/C3Wish](https://bit.ly/C3Wish).
Advent Devotional

During this Advent season we will encourage you to follow along with our devotional "Imagining a New World" written by Terri Hord Owens, General Minister and President of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). These daily five-minute devotions and prayers, "call us to imagine a new world, one free from fear, not one based on a 'return to normal'... to reflect on God's vision for our world and how we might find the courage to imagine, permission to change, and freedom to fear no more.” You can purchase them digitally or through Chalice Press for $3.99.

Family Advent devotionals will also be available to download or we can print one off for you. Rev. Suzanne will continue to be in contact with our families about more exciting Christmas activities coming up, so stay tuned for more info in the coming weeks!

Thinking about Becoming a Member? Come Discover Community!

Come join Rev. Ryan virtually on Sunday, December 6, at 9 a.m. for Discover Community, a casual informational and get-to-know-one-another time for folks who have been visiting Community. We will gather together, share our names and how we came to find Community, and then Rev. Ryan and some of Community’s congregational leaders will share more information about our church. We’ll share the expectations that you can have for us as a church, and then open up the time for any questions you might have.

Folks who participate in the session will be invited to consider becoming a member here at Community during our worship service on Sunday, December 23. If you are interested in becoming a member and don’t want to participate in the Discover Community group (or already have), please contact Rev. Ryan (revryan@community-christian.org).

Everyone who participates will get a special care package gift delivered in the days ahead of our time together, so let Rev. Ryan know you’ll be there and he’ll add you to the mailing list! If you’re interested in Discovering Community, send Rev. Ryan an email at revryan@community-christian.org and he’ll share the Zoom Link for our time together.

Psalms of Our Soul

The final week of our daily prayers and Psalms of Our Soul can be found here. We conclude this devotional tomorrow, on Thanksgiving, with Psalm 150. We hope you’ll join us for one last daily Psalm and prayer for this season.

Save the Date: Blue Christmas

This year's Blue Christmas service will be livestreamed on Facebook on Wednesday, December 9, at 6:30 p.m. This will be a short service to acknowledge the ways many of us enter this Christmas season with grief and heavy hearts. It’s a safe space for tears and hope and vulnerability.

This Sunday at Community

This Sunday, November 29, we continue our season of Advent in Isaiah 64. We’re happy to welcome our section leaders back to worship again to help lead us in hymns and provide special music (all while wearing masks and remaining a safe distance apart).

Online Giving

If you’d like to give offering donations to the church during this time, you can mail donations to the church. Mail is still being checked daily and your gifts are gratefully received. If you’d like to give online, you may do so in one of two ways:

- Visit bit.ly/c4kcgive
- Text the word "Give" to 816-484-3433 and follow the instructions that are sent to
The first time you text to give you'll have to set up an account, but from there on out your information will be stored so you can easily text to give.

There will also be a QR code shown during livestreamed worship that will take you directly to the website listed above to donate. Links can also be found in the livestreamed worship comments and on our website.

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**Connect with us online throughout the week!**

**Sunday**
- 9 a.m. Sunday School for all ages on Zoom
- 10 a.m. Piano prelude with Jonathon Antle on Facebook and YouTube
- 10:30 a.m. Worship on Facebook and YouTube

**Thursday**
- Newsletter email sent

**Saturday**
- 8 a.m. Saturday Sit with Shanna on Zoom

Sign up times are available to walk the labyrinth and spend private or family time in the chapel almost every day. Click [here](http://www.community-christian.org) to sign up or call 816-718-7327 to check availability for same day sign ups.

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**Prayers of Sorrow and Thanksgiving**

Please hold the following members of our Community in your prayers:

- **Family of Community’s dear friend, Molly Hammer**, who died on November 24, 2020;
- **Family of Henry Leonard**, son of longtime Community member, Martha Belle Leonard;
- **Family of longtime Community member Edna Harrom**, who passed away last week;
- **Marce Ireland**;
- **Virgil Freeman**, cousin of Kevin Freeman;
- **Katie Freeman**, aunt of Kevin Freeman;
- **Lyn Yzaguirre**, sister of Lura Cayton;
- **Marilyn and Milton Gray**;
- **David Anderson**;
- **Peter Voss**, great-nephew of Donna and Scott Duschen;
- **Carol Dollar**

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**Kara Strickler**  
*Communications Coordinator | Community Christian Church*

[kara@community-christian.org](mailto:kara@community-christian.org) | [www.community-christian.org](http://www.community-christian.org)  
4601 Main Street, KCMO 64112 | (816) 561 - 6531