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THE NEWSLETTER

UP

Are we ready for fall worship? You will notice that the sanctuary is not back to the same old, same old. Lots of folks liked the way the seats have been, so we are doing a modified version for the time being.

Welcome back to the choir and the praise team!

Even though they are back, we want to welcome folks to share their music during worship throughout the year. If you would like to sing or play an instrument, just let Lynn or I know a week ahead of time, so we can arrange the other music around you. Also, if you have an inspirational Christian song on a CD that really brings you closer to God, bring it in, and we may use it for an offertory piece.

I got one offer to help plan a Christmas Eve service, and would still like people to help plan and carry out Advent/Christmas worship. Let me know soon, if you are feel led to be involved. I would like to work on this in October.

Thanks to Diane and her crew for serving as Deaconate in August. Phyllis Hurst is captain for September.

Nancy Steuart, UP chair

IN and OUT

The Contemporary Christian Studies small group would like to share some information we have learned about some of the many outreach organizations that work to help the poor and oppressed in other parts of our country and world-wide.

1. Matthew25 Ministries is based in Blue Ash and works with companies nation-wide to provide clothing, health, and food supplies to disaster areas both nationally and globally. Companies are encouraged to donate items that might otherwise be thrown away because they were overstock or had a minor defect. Volunteers work to sort, fix, and pack these items to be shipped to wherever there is a need. Matthew 25 works with organizations already in the affected areas to provide distribution. It is easy to volunteer at Matthew 25. Basically, show up whenever they are open (9:00-4:00 M-F, Sat 9-2), fill out a very brief form (your first time only) or sign in, and you will be led to a station and given instructions on

what to do. Work as long as you like and leave whenever you need to. Saturdays are the only exceptions to just walking in, because they get many more people and groups on Saturdays than during the week. You might need to wait a little.

For more information, visit their website, <http://m25m.org> or talk to Dean Schmidt or Kathy Baughman.

2. Microfinancing is a term most of our group had not heard of before. Poor people in third world countries only need relatively small amounts of money to be able to better themselves - things like buying a cow, or putting a roof on a home, or buying supplies to start a small business. But the amounts are too small to be attractive to most banks and loan companies, and the poor are often victimized by those who would loan them the money, but at outrageous interest rates. Microfinancing organizations find ways to provide those small loans and also provide help in setting up business plans and other kinds of support. Microfinancing groups want these people to succeed.

Jill and Terry White have personal experience with one of these organizations, Kiva (<http://kiva.org>). For as little as \$25/person, they, and others like them have pooled their money to fund many such loans. As their money is repaid, they are given the opportunity to reinvest that money or it can be returned to them. They can pick the person they wish to help (Kiva provides info on all people looking for loans) or let Kiva invest for them. It is a small donation that reaps great results for the poor throughout the world.

3. Finally we were reminded that Disciples of Christ already works with Week of Compassion (<http://weekofcompassion.org>) to provide relief aid nationally and globally. We talk about Week of Compassion once a year in church, but it has year-round needs. If you go to the website, you will see that they have provided tornado and flood relief throughout the US and are even now a presence in Virginia because of the earthquake. Hurricane relief is surely coming in the next days. They have a presence in Haiti and East Africa and many, many other places in the world. You can write a check to Disciples Christian Church, designate it for Week of Compassion, put it in the offering plate, and it will be sent.

Wherever you invest your time and money, remember those in need. God wants us to be his hands in this world. -- *KathyBaughman*

As we watch people continually struggle because of recent hurricanes, tropical storms, earthquakes, and fires, we are sometimes overwhelmed. We feel that our efforts are just not enough. I remember the story of the child throwing seashells back into the water one at a time so that they wouldn't perish. An older gentleman approached him and told him he was wasting his time, that he can't save all of them, that it won't make a difference. The boy simply said, as he threw one, it will make a difference for that one.

When we work together as a church, we can save one life at a time and do our part. And when churches work together, we can make differences in the world in carrying out God's work. But remember, it's not about the church; it's about the individuals' efforts to bless. The church is the vehicle through which God is able to bless many as each of us takes on the role of servant.

The following is an excerpt from the book "Velvet Elvis: Repainting the Christian Faith," by Rob Bell

God blesses everybody. People who don't believe in God. People who are opposed to God. People who do violent, evil things. God's intentions are to bless everybody. Jesus continues this idea in many of his teachings. In the book of Luke he says, "I am among you as one who serves." He not only refers to himself as a servant, sent to serve others, but he teaches his disciples that the greatest in his kingdom are the ones who serve. For Jesus, everything is upside down. The best and greatest and most important are the ones who humble themselves, set their needs and desires aside, and selflessly serve others. So what is a group of people living this way called? That's the church. The church doesn't exist for itself; it exists to serve the world. It is not ultimately about the church; it's about all the people God wants to bless through the church. When the church loses sight of this, it loses its heart. This is especially true today in the world we live in where so many people are hostile to the church, many for good reason. We reclaim the church as a blessing machine not only because that is what Jesus intended from the beginning but also because serving people is the only way their perceptions of church are ever going to change.

Let us at Disciples Christian Church reclaim the church as a blessing machine as each of us personally considers what role we play as servants as we reach out to spread God's blessings.
David Moxley

MISC. NEWS

The trustees would like to thank all who helped with the church clean-up. We had 26 people working here. There was so much accomplished inside and outside. There are a few more things to be done in the near future.

Adra from St. Raphael's was here helping and also teaching us how to strip and wax floors. We are so appreciative for all he did for us.

Thanks to all.

JOHN'S JOTS

I am a regular reader of the website, Missional Church Network (www.missionalchurchnetwork). The following quotes were share not long ago from Alan Hirsch and Lance Ford's book, Right Here, Right Now: Everyday Mission For Everyday People. I found these most thought provoking.

If we are truly committed to bringing Jesus as the center of our lives among others and to see the church renewed in the mission of God, we will lead it toward a greater respect for the unbeliever, a greater grace for those who, though they don't attend church services, are nonetheless marked by God's image. It will lead to a greater respect for people in general. – Alan Hirsch

Jesus didn't say, "Come and *study* me." He said, "Come and *follow* me." It is through practicing what we study from the Bible in the laboratory of daily life that transformation happens in our own lives and we become a blessing to others. Bible study is not only important, it is absolutely vital and essential, and neither Alan nor I minimize its place in the daily rhythm of following Jesus.

But the point here is that it is only the first step in feasting with the Lord on a daily basis, and just because we've studied something from the Bible doesn't mean the lesson is learned or complete. It has just begun. – Lance Ford

The heart of discipleship is unfettered adherence to Christ, his message, and his values. He makes absolute claim to our loyalty and allegiance. When we become entangled in addictive consumption, we are complicit in many of the unjust ways and means of production of the very commodities we absorb. Jesus disturbed the status quo and rallied against injustice and lack of mercy. He was both an advocate and an answer for the marginalized and oppressed. If Jesus, the great deliver, lives in us, how can we be anything but charged with the same concern and vigor? – Alan Hirsch

Labeled by some as *catacombs of consumption*, there are currently over 52,000 self-storage locations in the United States with revenue of over 23 billion dollars. With the fastest rate of growth in commercial real estate, it is an industry more profitable than Hollywood. One in ten American families rents self-storage units. Storage units have become the "spare tire" around the waistline of American consumption. Just imagine the needs that could be met with the disbursement of our stored stuff and the money saved on storage rental if we would abandon our addiction to stuff and adapt the practices of God's kingdom economics. – Lance Ford

Shalom,

Pastor John

THE WAY I SEE IT

By Fredrick R. Mouse

Interruptions. Life is a series of interruptions.

One Saturday morning, it was quiet around here. It was a "tad" warm, but it was August and that's what happens on August. It was a nice morning to take a bit of a nap. I was just about to doze off when that unmistakable sound came shattering the silence. It was the sound of keys opening the church door. Quickly I was awake and scrambling to my feet (all 4 of them). Before I know it there were lots of folks in and out of the building. I checked my calendar, thinking that I had slept through Saturday and it was Sunday morning. But then I began to see the look in their eyes. It was a look a steel-eyed determination. These were folks on a mission! Don't get in their way! Watch out for that mop! What's that buzzing machine? Before long I could see my reflection in the floor!!

I decided to go outside, thinking it would be safe out there. But no! There were folks hitting the dirt with these metal things and dumping sticks (I heard them call it, mulch.) out of plastic bags. It wasn't a safe place for a mouse. I decided to lay low for a spell. When they were finished a

a transformation had occurred both inside and outside. And the amazing thing to me was, they all looked like they were having fun. Well, all except your human pastor who looked like he was going to pass out!



Until next month, Freddy

PRAYER REQUESTS: Lois Johnson, Chosen, Troops, Kim Vangan, Ron Hurst, Don Gross, Ray Scheffler, Linda Ashbrook, The Thomas Family

SEPTEMBER BIRTHDAYS:

Don Gross	7
Mary Longard	9
Gabby Smith	11
Jana Mullins	13
John Williams	13
Brian Druley	18
Leland Houchell	18
Logan Brown	26

SERVING THIS MONTH:

Phyllis Hurst
Dave Adamson
Emily Williams
Andrew Williams
Jan Richardson
Jill White

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