



The Good News

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Christmas lasted until January 5, 2017

PHCC is a Hillcrest community church affiliated with the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). It has been at the corner of Spruce and Hillcrest since 1927. Our email is lrphcc@gmail.com.

2016-2017 Board:

Moderator, Sam Ellis (sam.ellis@pobox.com)
Secretary, Greg Pendleton(CapitolView@aol.com)
Treasurer, Angela Frazier (afraz17@yahoo.com)
At-large: Dr. John W. Graves (johnwgrav@aol.com)
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Minister: Susan G. Miller

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Happy Birthday, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. King's birthday falls on a Sunday this year so we will celebrate his birthday in worship on the 15th by lifting up the themes of justice, peace, and equality to which his life gave witness.

This country and the world will forever be grateful for the courage he showed in his unwavering commitment to the power of love and his dedication to overcoming oppression through non-violent resistance. He would be the first to say that many contributed to the victories of the civil rights movement; but he stands as a beacon who reflected the light of Christ in powerful ways.



As you can tell, I have a deep admiration for Dr. King for his courage in the face of numerous threats on his life, his gift of proclaiming God's word with power, and his strong leadership in the face of violent opposition. I believe he was a modern-day prophet and a leader who arose "for such a time as this".

We have come a long way since Jim Crow but we still have a long way to go. Further than I realized just a few short years ago. The divisive political climate has fanned the flames of smoldering pockets of racial hatred and resentment. I have had a taste of my own naiveté regarding the power of racism in our country—a naiveté that I feel my brothers and sisters of color might remind me is a direct result of living in a sheltered world of white privilege.

The Southern Poverty Law Center estimates that there are 190 active KKK groups with between 5,000

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and 8,000 Klan members in the U.S. though they add that the numbers of individuals involved is a conservative estimate as it is hard to accurately determine the membership of a secret society. As I shared in a sermon, when I was at the Regional Assembly in Mississippi friends of mine saw posters in a gas station convenience store advertising a Klan rally.

Dr. King was not a perfect man but he was one who dedicated his life to following the ways of his Savior, Jesus, our Christ. I've collected a few of his sayings below with an eye to choosing some that may be new to you. See if you don't recognize the teachings of our Lord in his words.



"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

"Ten thousand fools proclaim themselves into obscurity, while one wise man forgets himself into immortality."

"Everybody can be great ... because anybody can serve. You don't have to have a college degree to serve. You don't have to make your subject and verb agree to serve. You only need a heart full of grace. A soul generated by love."

"We must live together as brothers (and sisters)* or perish together as fools."

"Let no man pull you so low as to hate him."

"Darkness cannot drive out darkness: Only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: Only love can do that"

"Faith is taking the first step even when you can't see the whole staircase."

Let me close by thanking God for prophets such as Dr. King. May God continue to raise up such servants, and may we see ourselves as servants who can make a difference as well.

Peace,

Susan

*(and sisters) was added
King Memorial photo from International Business Times
King drawing from Graphic Design & Publishing Center

We gave out 152 blankets!



We gathered 116 blankets and the on the day we served we got a phone call from Holy Souls, our partners in this ministry, saying that they had gathered 36! We had just the right amount of big warm blankets and light smaller blankets that are easy to carry. There were a few blankets left over and we sent those to "The Van" ministry. They minister to the homeless on the streets and were very appreciative of the extra blankets.

The blankets came just in time for the cold weather. The crowd at dinner was the biggest one we have had yet and it was a beautiful, marvelous chaotic time filled with Christmas spirit.



Next up: Socks. Our members have provided 360 pairs of socks and plan on giving each person a 3 pack of socks. Evidently socks are the number one requested item in homeless shelters. It's not a glamorous gift but a much needed one!



For February, we will be gathering tooth brushes, tooth paste and lip balm. We can order these together in bulk on-line or people can purchase them separately and bring to the church. Dollar Tree on line and in stores has toothpaste for \$1.00 for a 5 oz tube. Looking toward March, bar soap, hand sanitizer, bandages and a washcloth. Dollar Tree has a 3 pack of soap for \$1.00 and a 3 pack of hand sanitizer for \$1.00.

Thank you to each and every member for your contribution to our ministry to the homeless.

New Year's greetings from Sharon Watkins

January 2017

Dearest Friends in Christ –

“Hope is a star that shines in the night, leading us on till the morning is bright.” [1]

From the Advent promise of *Emmanuel: God with us*; to the Epiphany revelation: *God-with-us-now*, we hope.

And yet, I confess, as 2017 begins, my heart is bruised by the pain and division the United States and Canada have experienced which have filtered into our communities and congregations. Antagonistic elections in the United States have upended civil discourse. Repeated public incidents of both individual and institutional racism have fractured relationships in communities. And beyond our borders, civil wars in places like South Sudan and Syria, as well as natural disasters in long-suffering Haiti, only increase the need for healing of all kinds.

Still, along with “all of creation” in Romans 8:18, we wait expectantly “for the children of God to be revealed.” In fact, we hope to be among them. We are Disciples of Christ, a movement for wholeness in a fragmented world. We know God to be a God of abundance who provides enough for all and makes room enough for all.

This is the time for Disciples to shine! We have long found ways to live together in unity for the sake of God’s mission. Our ability to respect (and engage!) a diversity of faithful opinions is needed now more than ever. Our emphasis on healing the rifts of racism with pro-reconciling work is foundational to moving forward in our part of the world and globally. Our shared sense of service that came through loud and clear in our Mission Gatherings of 2016 gives us some of the connections we need to start living into the wholeness God so ardently wishes for us.

Our deep hope in God’s healing presence leads us to action.

Mission First!

Disciples are on the move toward new ways of being God’s hands and feet in the world through our work on Mission First! The **Mission Council met late last year** to identify common themes arising from the mission gatherings. We found many Disciples are hearing a call to mission with and for children, youth and young adults through efforts at inclusion, speaking up for the vulnerable and addressing racism. The Council affirmed welcome and accompaniment as hallmarks of our participation in God’s mission. At some of the gatherings – in the MidAmerica Region, for example – people found others who share their missional passions and formed connections to work together immediately. The Administrative Committee is preparing a proposal on how we might implement what we learned from the governance portion of the Mission First! pilot effort.

New starts

In 2017, we look forward to new beginnings with our next General Minister and President to be elected in July at the **General Assembly**, along with our new moderator team. We anticipate gathering once again at the Lord’s Table to be united as ONE, celebrating Jesus’ prayer on our behalf that the world may believe.

Called to Live in Hope

After nearly 12 years, serving as your general minister and president, I still believe we are a church whose time has come. We are a gifted people, called for such a time as this. Refining our missional focus across the life of the Church, renewing our commitment to racial justice, catching the Spirit in new ways to further our part in God’s work of healing and wholeness – we enter 2017 ready ***to be and to share the good news of Jesus Christ, witnessing, loving, and serving, from our doorsteps to the ends of the earth.***

With hope in Christ undimmed, I greet you in this New Year. May we all resolve to live right now in “the assurance of things hoped for!” (Hebrews 11:1)

Sharon E. Watkins

Rev. Dr. Sharon E. Watkins
General Minister and President
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada

[1] Brian Wren. Chalice Hymnal. Chalice Press. #132.

February 2017 at PHCC

March 2017 at PHCC

Events in February 2017

– Birthdays in February 3 – Betty Adams; 5 – Shayla Copas; 26 – Stephen Cross.

– Events of note

8 - 6:00 pm scheduled Board Meeting

14 – Valentine’s Day 2017

19 – Sign March birthday cards.

20 – Third Monday Meal is served; 1101 W. Markham St.

– Sunday School

Feb. 5, 12, 19, 26

Please Continue Prayers for:

Shannon P., Betty A., Ron C., Jean H., Julia Faye C., Kim P., Trip R., Lynda C., Keith R.; those rebuilding in West Virginia & Tennessee; those struggling with fear and loss all around the earth; our Church; the homeless of Little Rock; the children of Khayelihle Children's Village in Zimbabwe; the Mission First initiative of the DoC; those struggling to do God’s will; those worldwide being persecuted for being ‘different’; the voters of the U.S.A., and others God leads you to know of.

December 2016 Stewardship Report

Due to timing of financials, this Report will appear in the February 2017 issue.

There are cycles in everything. The liturgical year moves from Advent, through Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, Easter and Pentecost into Ordinary Time. Yet in any liturgical season we know the next will come.

We trust in that as a fact.



The same is true of the seasons of the year. In January we trust that the azaleas will return in the Spring. We have come to believe that as a fact. We see it happen again and again. In the same way we develop trust in God’s Grace, and God’s faith in us. We see evidence of these again and again, and come to trust in them as facts.

Events in March 2017

– Birthdays in March 14 – Phillip Bayne, 24 – Carolyn Martin; 25 – Jean Hampton; 26 – Shannon Perry VC3; 31 – Tom Ryan.

– Events of note

8 - 6:00 pm scheduled Board Meeting

19 – Sign April birthday cards.

20 – Third Monday Meal is served; 1101 W. Markham St.

– Sunday School

Mar. 5, 12, 19, 26

Faith is the light of the next step
Illuminating a way ahead,
Without revealing the direction.
Faith will sustain, and comfort
Through our darkest hours.
Faith upholds the unseen hope,
It is the seasoning that endures,
the pain of life whilst revealing
that misery can be optional.
Faith is a light in the darkness,
Surrounded, yet not consumed.
In the storms of our lives
Faith is the stillness, seated at
The rear of our boat.

Adrian Wait

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Rev. Susan G. Miller, Minister
Music Ministry ~ Stephen & Jeannie Cross
Musician ~ Betty Jo Thibault
Office Assistant ~ Tom Ryan