

COVENANT CONNECTION

The Newsletter of the North County Churches Uniting for Racial Harmony and Justice

Covenant Churches

Fall, 2018

Bellefontaine United Methodist
Bethel Providence Christian
Black Jack Baptist
Christ Ministries@The Community Church
Christ Our Redeemer AME
Church of the Master UCC
Florissant Presbyterian
Immanuel UCC
John Knox Presbyterian
Lutheran Church of the Atonement
Lutheran Church of the Living Christ
Most Holy Name of Jesus Catholic
Most Sacred Heart Catholic
New Creation in Christ
Olivet Missionary Baptist
Our Lady of Guadalupe Catholic
Our Lady of the Rosary Catholic
St. Andrew United Methodist
St. Barnabas Episcopal
St. Ferdinand Roman Catholic
St. Mark's United Methodist
St. Norbert Catholic
St. Rose Philippine Duchesne Catholic
Third Presbyterian
Trinity Church of the Nazarine

Dear NCCU members,

It has been a long time since I have communicated with some of you. It is a pleasure to greet you again. We are blessed and grateful that JoAnn Ott, a member of our newest Church, Lutheran Church of the Living Christ, has agreed to restart our newsletter. Our thanks are also due to our former editors, Cindy Vantine, and our Vice President Barbara Thompson for all they did to help keep members informed.

I hope all of you are doing well. We have had a change in Pastors at some of our Churches, and I have met some of you. I look forward to meeting all of you in the near future. It will be a pleasure to get to know you.

Just a reminder, North County Churches began in 1998 at John Knox Presbyterian Church when 19 Churches of various denominations came together in an attempt to deal with concerns about the future of North County. In order to help deal with the increasing diversity within the County, we developed a Covenant Statement binding us together as a community of believers to promote racial understanding and social justice. We set out to bring the races together around some positive activities to help avoid the fear and misunderstanding of one another. We have done this through numerous activities and have had some impact helping to stabilize this situation.

Thirty churches joined us by signing our Covenant, but some have merged and others have closed. We now have 25 member churches, and we are still working on various issues to overcome misunderstandings, promote social justice and bring the races together. For example, after the Michael Brown killing and riots in Ferguson, we established a "Discussion and Solutions Committee," consisting of four police departments and the St. Louis County Police Department working with four pastors and three other leaders to improve the relations between the police and the community.

I look forward to hearing from you and working with you to continue stabilizing our North County Community

May God bless us all,

Rance

Youth Computer Summer Academy Graduation

This year's completion of computer camp was celebrated with a Brunch and Graduation held at John Knox Presbyterian Church on July 7. 24 students from 15 different families completed the Computer course by building their own computers and Raspberry PI 3/Digital Power Strips. After completion of the program, students were given either the Computer or Raspberry to keep. Guest Speakers included Dr. Bonita Jamison, Executive Director integrated Support & Accelerated Learning, Ferguson/Florissant School District and Don M. Holt, President of Computer Village. This summer's computer camp began on June 22. The instructional camps have been held since 2011. If you wish to find out more about the camps, contact Dr. Rance Thomas at 314-921-7364

Little bit Foundation

At the July board meeting, Lakricia Cox and Michael Morgan presented information about The little bit Foundation which provides "wrap around" services, serving the whole child. The Foundation works with School Districts, especially Riverview Gardens, and provides services to students in need at schools with at least 90 per cent students on free or reduced cost lunches.

They are actively looking for more volunteers to do all kinds of tasks including at schools, but also in many other ways, such as in the warehouse, making deliveries, etc. They are also seeking donations including cash, books, clothing, etc., and, unlike most charities, they accept gently used stuffed animals. They have a cleaning company who will clean them.

Services provided include emergency clothing and everyday needs including **socks and underwear**, clothes, coats, gloves, hats, and uniforms. They also provide new shoes, books, and food bags. They have both free book fairs and a Book and Buddy program that gives a book and stuffed animal to students in K-2. They have already given away 70,000 books.

In order to aid the whole child, they also provide health and wellness services including wellness exams, eye and hearing exams, eye glasses, and dental services.

In addition they have a mobile market that brings food to three schools on a regular basis.

For more information or to donate or volunteer, contact Michael Morgan at 314-761-7005 or go to michael@thelittlebitfoundation.org

NCCU Welcomes New Member Congregation

On June 24, 2018, in a ceremony held at Lutheran Church of the Living Christ, Dr. Mary Drew invited members to come forward and sign NCCU's Covenant, committing them to work with NCCU to promote racial understanding and social justice. Following the service, Dr. Thomas was invited to speak to the Adult Forum and hold a question and answer session. Two members of the congregation offered to work with NCCU. Randy Henning will serve on the Board and JoAnn Ott will edit the Newsletter. Dr. Thomas stated that the event was very successful and that he continues to work with other congregations, always trying to spread the NCCU's major theme, "If God loves each person unconditionally, how can we not do the same"

AWARDS DINNER

On Sunday, October 7th, we will hold the NCCU Annual Awards Dinner at Christian Hospital in the Atrium of the Paul Dietrick Building at 4:00 p.m. Awards will be presented to:

Mayor Thomas Schneider of Florissant
St. Louis County Prosecutor elect Wesley Bell
Sr. Karl Mary Winkelman, retired President of Trinity Catholic High
St. Rose Philippine Duchesne Catholic Church
Dr. Nettie Collins Hart Superintendent Hazelwood School District
Dr. Joseph Davis Superintendent Ferguson/Florissant School District
Metropolitan Congregation United
North County Chamber of Commerce

Guest speaker will be Michael McMillian President and CEO St. Louis Metropolitan Urban League
Master of Ceremonies will be Rev. Cedric Portis Pastor of Third Presbyterian Church
Prayer will be given by Rev, John Higgins Pastor of John Knox Presbyterian Church

OTHER COMING EVENTS

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., Oratory Contest for youth, adults, and seniors will be held the middle of December.

Annual General Covenant Renewal Ceremony for all churches willing to participate. Our new Churches will be presented with membership Plaques.

Discussion and Solutions Committee which consists of four police departments, the St. Louis County Police Department, four pastors, the superintendent, and three others will continue to meet to explore ways in which the police may improve their relationships with the community and how the churches can help this process.

As members of **North County Chamber of Commerce**, we continue working together on improving conditions in North County.