

Covenant Connection

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

Covenant Churches

Summer 2019

Bellefontaine United Methodist

Dear Friends;

Black Jack Baptist

It is that time again to update you on the work and status of NCCU. We have been very busy in an attempt to make a difference in North County. We held a Brunch on June 17th in the hope that all of you would participate. I know you are all very busy as we all are. It seems that there is always something more that needs to be done. In any case, we wanted to introduce you to a new Program that we are implementing, "Be the Change for Your Community." This is a program for middle school students to help them be successful in school and to learn work ethics so they will graduate from high school and become productive citizens within our community. The statistics indicate that 75% of crimes committed in the United States are committed by school dropouts. We believe that teaching them what they need to know will increase their chances of graduating from high school, and they will be able to find productive work. If they drop out of school, they have very little chance of finding work that pays enough to take care of themselves so staying in school would reduce their chances of turning to crime as a means of survival.

Christ Ministries at the
Community Church

Christ Our Redeemer AME
Church of the Master UCC

Florissant Presbyterian

Greater Grace Church

Immanuel UCC

John Knox Presbyterian

Lutheran Church of the
Atonement

Lutheran Church of the Living
Christ

Most Holy Name of Jesus Catholic

As mentioned in the Newsletter, the St. Louis Zoo is now in North County on a plot of land of 425 acres near Spanish Lake. This is almost five times larger than the Zoo in the City of St. Louis. I was invited to meet with leaders at the Zoo and was asked to identify individuals and organizations that might become involved with the building up of the Zoo and its programs. They intend to have a number of educational programs for youth as well as some for adults. Of course, they will have various animals there also, but will add other programs.

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

We had our Discussion and Solutions Committee meeting on May 15th at the Opportunity Center in the Hazelwood School District, and we had over 20 participants including the Police Chief of Alton, IL and a Lt. from the Clayton Police Department. It went well and the Departments shared what they are doing to promote better relations between their departments and the community. They are truly trying to make a difference. We had the Superintendent of the school district and several administrators from Ferguson-Florissant School District. In August, we will have been meeting for five years since the Michael Brown shooting and the riots in the City of Ferguson. I am really grateful for the continuation of this Committee and the support of many individuals in the community.

St. Barnabas Episcopal

St. Ferdinand Catholic

St. Mark's United Methodist

St. Martin de Porres Catholic

A Curator, Gwen Moore, of the Missouri Historical Society stated that she is going to Archive some of NCCU work on race and racial justice in North St. Louis County at the Historical Society. This is quite an honor for our Organization and work to be recognized and be included in the Missouri Historical Society archives...

St. Norbert Catholic

We need the support of all of you to have the most impact on promoting racial understanding and social justice. We really appreciate those of you who are involved with us in our work.

St. Rose Philippine Duchesne
Catholic

Well, this is all for now. I hope all of you had a wonderful 4th of July.

Third Presbyterian

May God Bless,

Trinity Church of the Nazarene

RANCE

NCCU Seeks participation of Member Churches in New Program

NCCU is planning to launch a new program next summer for Middle School Children. Help will be needed.

What Is the Need?

Crime and violence is increasing by leaps and bounds in our cities. Murder, random shooting into cars and homes, vandalism and violent acting out are becoming “normal.” Statistics tell us that over 75% of these crimes are committed by school drop outs. And, in fact, over 75% of inmates in our prisons also did not graduate from high school. Beyond the push for more policing, it seems obvious that our community should be involved in trying to keep students in school in order to help the drop-out rate decline. The time is now to try something positive. We need to follow the advice of Gandhi who said,

“Be the change you wish to see in the world.”

What Is the Plan?

Using recommendation from local schools, identify 20 middle-school students who may be at risk of dropping out of school before graduation. Offer them a 6 week summer program that helps them to learn work ethics, skills, and values that will help them succeed in school and in life. They will be doing “hands-on” work in the community in businesses and volunteer organizations four days a week and on the fifth day of each week, they will be rewarded with fun activities and sometime cash, provided they have fulfilled their responsibilities for the week. They will learn the importance of being present and being on time. And they will learn that they are capable of contributing and worthy of rewards. Friday rewards will include field trips to fun locations that many students have never visited such as 6 Flags.

What Can We Do

You can see that this is a very ambitious undertaking and that it will take many helpers from the community as well as financial support.

There are many ways to volunteer. The leader/teacher will be a paid position. Volunteer churches and church members will be needed to provide things such as bus or van transportation, food for lunches, volunteer assistants for classes and especially for field trips, contributions to cover project costs, materials, a place for the director to live for 6 weeks, etc. Among our many church members there are a wide variety of equipment and skills. No one church could handle this project on their own, but together we are strong. Together we can make a start and find the resources to make a difference at least for a few kids.

If you are not sure yet about the program, you can invite a speaker with a video presentation to come to your church at a time of your choice. To make arrangements, call Amy Vaughn at 573-231-1775 or visit her at Amy@bethechangeformyourcommunity.com

Members Invited to Support “Feed My Starving Children Food Pack

Preparation of food packs for distribution overseas will take place on Saturday, July 13th at Atonement Lutheran Church on New Halls Ferry Road near Lindberg. Individuals can participate by helping with the packing of food or by participating in fund raising activities. Funds are needed to pay for the food items which are provided by “Feed My Starving Children.”

If you are interested in more information or to volunteer, Contact Randy Henning (Living Christ Church) at 314-839-3455 or by email at randy.henning@att.net.

St. Louis Zoo Seeks Input

At the April Board Meeting, STL Zoo personnel presented information on the Zoo’s new venture in North County. They have acquired 425 acres on the former Pipefitters property. Tentative plans call for 250 acres for conservation and animal science center, 100 acres for safari experiences and 70 acres for wildlife adventure experiences. They are interested in input from the community on their needs and desires for the area. Individuals are invited to visit stlzoo.org/county residents to take a 10 minute survey. The site will be accepting surveys until July 15, 2019.

“God Hates Abuse

A Workshop on the abuse of Women

New Creation in Christ Church is supporting a Workshop. “God Hates Abuse” on Saturday, July 13 from 10am to 2pm at Christian Church, 202 N. Elizabeth Ave., Ferguson, MO. The event will include “Testimonies,” Practical Help for Victims, Discussion Groups and prayer time. Snacks will be served and a Love Offering collected. Please RSVP to Lina Doxtator, PhD, LPC, LCPC at 636-399-7537

National Conference,

“Ending Violence in America”

You are invite to attend a Conference planned by The Joshua Partnership. The conference will consider the theme, “Civil Rights and Violence,” with the aim of helping to reduce violence in our communities. The event will be help August 9-10 at The Beloved Community UMC located at 3115 Park Ave., St. Louis. For more information and to register go to Joshuapartnership.com

Joshua Partnership is a faith-based model for neighborhood churches to organize for the prevention of violence. It offers classes, tent crusades, prayer walks, block parties, gospel concerts and more.

Clergy Brunch Introduced New Program

A delicious Brunch, including several kinds of Quiche, fresh fruit and muffins was held at John Knox Presbyterian Church on Monday, June 17th, at 10:00 am. All member churches were invited to send a representative to learn about the proposed new NCCU program, “Be the Change.” Details of the program can be found on a previous page. The meeting included presentations by three speakers

Amy Vaughn, creator of the program, explained the needs that convinced her to create the program, outlined the program, and how it would begin to meet those needs, and the kind of support needed from our member congregations in order for the program to succeed.

Christine McDonald, an internationally acclaimed author and speaker, spoke movingly of her experiences being a victim of sex traffickers. Although blind, Ms. McDonald has completed her education and become a successful author and speaker. Information about her books and life experiences can be found on her website.

Lakeisha Griffith, from UMSL, spoke about the community resource “*Neighborhood Leadership Academy*.” This program provides hands-on leadership training for residents who wish to be actively involved in their communities. Individuals can learn principles and strategies for organizational

and personal leadership skills. If you are interested in learning more details of the program, go to <http://cwc.umsl.edu/nla>. If you wish to register for a program which will be held on Monday evenings, 6pm to 9:30 pm, September 9 to November 18, contact Claire Rippel at 314-516-6392 or wolffca@missouri.edu.

Upcoming Events

Saturday, July 13th

Feed My Starving Children Food Pack at Atonement Lutheran Church

“God Hates Abuse” Workshop

Friday and Saturday, August 9-10

Conference “Ending Violence in America”

Dates to be announced:

Annual Awards Dinner,

Rededication Ceremony

Dr. Martin Luther King Oratory Contest