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# MINISTRY REPORTS FOR MINISTRY GATHERING

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March 15, 2020

Pastor: Laura Jennison Reed

Since our last gathering, we have moved through Advent and Christmas as well as a worship series addressing our questions. I feel they all these seasons of worship went well and invited us into faith in new ways. I'm excited as we begin Lent to dive deeper into our understanding and practices of prayer.

Worship is the most visible part of the work we do and the most visible part of our congregation's life together and I have noticed a steady, low attendance in worship over the winter months. While this has many reasons, it can lead our worship services to have a somewhat anemic feel. Without robust participation in this piece of our lives together we don't see one another and much of the energy we produce together is lessened.

I have also spent time reaching out to members of our congregation who have needed care and support. I appreciate the ways our congregation supports one another and the time I have to sit and talk with people.

Beyond the day to day needs of the church, we need to be looking forward to what God is calling us to become. Yet, I am struggling to lead that as I find it difficult to step back from the daily details of church life. I am working on setting aside time to deliberately spend in retreat and openness to God's call.

CCVP 20/20: written by John Martin

The CCVP 2020 team, consisting of Laura, Heidi, Raja, and John, meets every four to six weeks. Currently, it has two major functions: (1) looking at possible roles for CCVP in the future and making sure that the congregation has the tools to meet those roles and (2) serving as the monitor of the present and how the congregation is living into its Design.

It has met with all major functional groups to help them see their role within the Design and how to more fully integrate its mission with the Design. It has also served as the manager of the periodic Mission Gatherings. At its recent meetings, it has been studying how the church more fully makes itself welcoming to all components of its community.

## Disciples Food Pantry: Joan Fuller

My community is largely my town, family, and friends. I serve a large group of people through the food pantry but also work with volunteers and local folk that involve themselves in the pantry.

My community is also my family. I try to help them by being a back-up parent and care giver to my sister.

My ministry builds connections with my community by meeting their hunger needs, saving them money to pay other bills, or make their lives easier by being able to save money.

The food pantry connects other houses of worship and they are able to donate and be a help to people in their community. Many organizations contribute to the pantry in our area.

## Deacons: written by Heidi Gomez

*Who is your community?* Based on input from some of the deacons. Our community can be defined anywhere from our close family members, church family, to anyone in need.

*How does your ministry build connections with people within your community?* As deacons we are often reaching out to others, whether they are members of our church or not. We begin building connections by welcoming everyone that comes in. We interact with everyone and maintain a relationship, sometimes without even knowing/thinking that we are doing it. I feel like deacons have been building connections with the community simply by interacting and caring.

## Elders: written by Raja Philip

The Elders ministry continues in its role to provide spiritual leadership and encouragement to our congregation. We meet every month to talk about and discern how we can improve what we as Elders are doing at the table and caring for those who cannot attend church.

During these meetings Laura provides leadership and suggestions on how we can truly convey the meaning and significance of the sharing of the elements at the table. We are continuously trying to tailor our meditations and prayers so that the 'messaging' is focused on the table and the act of Holy Communion.

One challenge continues to be scheduling visits and ministering to those who are not able to attend church. We do pray for these individuals by name, but we know that visits in person would be much appreciated. We are working on getting better at regularly visiting these folks. These visits do not include those that Laura is doing on her own.

All of us Elders will be attending a Disciples of Christ book study with other churches in the area. This powerful and thought-provoking book is about how a moral movement is overcoming the politics of division and fear. The schedule for the study has not been finalized and it will be on one Saturday per month for three months. We encourage all our members to attend the book study.

We believe that our community includes each member of our congregation as well as all those that we meet while carrying out the other ministries of CCVP (Food Pantry, LYND, Terra Vista Worship Service, space sharing with New Life Bible Chapel and others).

For our congregation, we hope that our prayers and meditations at the table are delivered at a personal level so that our members can find something in common that they can relate to and thus build and strengthen relationships and connections with each other. For the larger community, the Elders have to work to find ways to build and strengthen relationships.

Even though we do not have an 'official' leader, the Elders ministry is thriving and looking to the future with excitement and hope, Each of us is committed to carrying out our roles as Elders as best we can and are constantly looking for ways in which we can improve ourselves as spiritual leaders.

## Love Your Neighbor Day: Doris Carter

Our 5<sup>th</sup> annual Love Your Neighbor Day was held on September 28, 2019. We helped a total of 26 area homeowners with the help of 93 volunteers from other area churches and the public. CCVP was again well represented. 17 of our members volunteered for LYND 2019. In addition, most of the LYND Planning Team is made up of CCVP members. We continue to have strong representation from our sponsoring partner St. John's Lutheran in Lombard, and had a couple of new churches participate this year. The total cost for materials and supplies to help

our homeowners was approximately \$2,000. These expenses were covered by a \$2,000 grant from the Village of Villa Park, and other funds donated. Over \$1,000 in contributions were obtained for providing food and beverages for our volunteers and homeowners. This is a thriving ministry.

## Stewardship Council: Doris Carter

In addition to the usual responsibilities of the council in managing the building and financial matters, the Council continues to work on the task of determining how to proceed following last year's discernment process that concluded that continued ownership of the church building is not necessary. The Council has looked at a variety of options and, at this point, is proceeding on the basis that the best option for our church is that we do not remain the owner of the building. To that end, we are now focusing on discussions with New Life regarding their purchase of the building. We believe this is our best option at this point since New Life has a high degree of interest in purchasing the building, have said that they would like us to remain in the building as a space sharing partner, and have said that they would allow the food pantry to continue to operate in the building, although some changes may have to be made in terms of space usage. They have made it clear that if they own the building, they will be using the sanctuary for worship during our current worship time.

We have made an offer to them, which included a sale price, plus terms for us being able to remain in the building as a space sharing partner for at least several years. New Life has not yet responded to the specifics of our offer. They had a building inspection done March 4 to help them decide what they would be willing to pay for the purchase of the building. We expect to hear back from them soon and that there would be some negotiation of our offered terms. No sale contract will be signed without congregational approval.

If a sale to New Life does go through, this will allow for us to have a transition time for determining where our congregation should be located in the future. We expect that space sharing and no longer being a building owner will be challenging for us. We will also have to worship in some place other than the sanctuary in order to have worship at the same time we currently worship (because the other options would be to worship at 8:30 am or later in the afternoon). We are discussing how to make other space in the building a viable worship space.

If agreement cannot be reached with New Life, we will have to reassess and look at finding another buyer that may or may not permit us and the food pantry to remain in the building. We continue to pray for guidance as we lead the congregation during this time of transition and seek your prayers for this process and for the Council.