



Christ
The Way, the Truth,
and the Life.
January 2024

Dear church family,

As we begin a New Year, we continue to look at the leadership and organizational structure of our church, and come to one of our newest groups—the “Ministry and Mission Team.” The work of this group, however, is not new by any means; rather it is the unifying of the previous committees of Worship and Music (W&M), Christian Education (CE), and Mission and Evangelism (M&E) into one cohesive team. This is a good area to kick off 2024, because this shift can help explain our trajectory as a church into the future.

There are a few realities and observations that I have made over the past five years, and one of them is probably obvious—as it is for many churches, we have gotten smaller in number. Much of our church’s committee structure was formed for an organization that was much larger -- twice, if not several times bigger than the current size of our congregation. The point is less about whether that is good or bad, as much as it is to name our current reality. When the size of an organization is reduced, the structure that makes it hum needs to be adjusted proportionally to serve it well.

We are blessed to have many talented, inspired, Godly servants doing many great things in our church and beyond. But another observation I have is that these individuals and small groups often are not on the same page as one another. I recall several evenings of committee meetings where one group would plan an event for the same date and time as another, not realizing it until after the fact! While that may sound like a simple miscommunication, it highlights my first point—smaller churches need to focus their efforts on the effectiveness of programs and events, rather than strive for a larger quantity of them.

The crossover between these three committees is also a huge reason for consolidation. Is the children and youth Christmas musical a CE-sponsored event or W&M? Is the annual Christmas float an outreach of M&E, or a CE program? When a missionary presents in Sunday school, is that organized by CE or M&E? By teaming up as one, we do not have to differentiate between them. There are still certainly people who serve on the team because their passions and gifts are related to these original areas, but now all those hearts and minds are together in the same room.

Can or should a church of our size just have one team, committee, or board that does everything? Of course not. But the more we can be together on the same page, working together in ministry and mission, the more effective our efforts will be. We have already begun to see great synergy in this newly molded group this past year. If you feel God is calling you to lead a ministry, program, small group, service project, or anything else—come join us! The session may be the spiritual and administrative leaders of our church, but the ministry and mission team is the heart and soul of our life together. As I close, be reminded of our calling to unity by the apostle Paul in **Ephesians 4:1-6:**

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.”

I pray that we would continue to be one by the Lord’s leading, as we seek to worship and serve together in 2024 and beyond!

-Michael

UPCOMING
Events

| | | | |
|-----------------|--|--------------------------------------|--|
| Tuesday, Jan. 2 | Ministry & Mission Team mtg. 6:00pm Building & Grounds mtg. 7:00pm | Sunday, Jan. 21 | Sunday School at 9:30am Worship at 10:30am “The Story” Chapter 17, <i>The Kingdoms’ Fall, 2 Chronicles, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Lamentations</i> |
| Sunday, Jan. 7 | Sunday School at 9:30am Worship with communion at 10:30am Ordination & Installation of Elders and Deacons “The Story” Chapter 15 <i>“God’s Messengers, 1 Kings 17-19, 2 Kings 2-6, Amos 1-5, 9, Hosea 4-9, 14</i> Take down Christmas decorations. | Friday, Jan. 26 | Committee Reports are due for annual mtg. on February 11th. |
| Tuesday, Jan. 9 | S&F mtg. 5:45pm Session mtg. 7:00pm | Sunday, Jan. 28 | Sunday School at 9:30am Worship at 10:30am “The Story” Chapter 18, <i>Daniel in Exile, Daniel 1-6, Jeremiah 29-31</i> Randy & Meghan Veccia (CRU) will be visiting & Randy will be preaching. |
| Sunday, Jan. 14 | Sunday School at 9:30am Worship at 10:30am “The Story” Chapter 16, <i>The Beginning of the End, 2 Kings 17-19, Isaiah 3, 6, 13, 14, 49, 53</i> | Sunday, Feb. 11th | Annual Congregational mtg. after worship. |
| | | Friday, Feb. 23 Saturday, Feb. 24 | Women’s IF Gathering Women’s IF Gathering |

*Happy
New Year*

THE DEADLINE FOR FEBRUARY IS JANUARY 25TH.

Mission Spotlight
January — CRU

For several years now, Clen-Moore has supported Randel and Megan Veccia, a husband and wife ministry team who work together through Cru to serve and evangelize college students at Slippery Rock University and other colleges in Western Pennsylvania.


The Veccia's have been very appreciative of our support over the years and would appreciate our continued prayers for their family and their ministry.

The Veccia's will be visiting on Sunday, January 28th and Randy will be preaching.

dates to Remember

Women's IF Gathering



Friday, February 23, 2024
&
Saturday, February 24, 2024
****More details to come****






A NOTE FROM THE OFFICE:

Annual committee reports are due to the church office no later than **January 26, 2024**.
Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated!

We will be taking down Christmas decorations on **Sunday, January 7th**, following worship services, and are in need of volunteers to help. There will be light refreshments provided.



A New Year's Blessing

May God make your year a happy one.
Not by shielding you from all sorrow and pain,
But by strengthening you to bear it, as it comes';
Not by making your path easy,
But by making you sturdy to travel any path;
Not by taking hardships from you,
But by taking fear from your heart;
Not by granting you unbroken sunshine,
But by keeping your face bright, even in the shadows;
Not by making your life always pleasant,
But by showing you when people and their causes
need you most,
And by making you anxious to be there to help.

**Gods love, peace, hope and joy to you
for the new year ahead!**




Health Ministry
January—2024



Date to Remember: Health Ministry Deacons meeting on January 14, 2024 following the worship service.
(As part of the general Deacons meeting)

"When we are sick, preparing and eating a proper meal (or anything at all) can seem very unappealing. But we must try, because just as a wholesome diet can prevent us from becoming ill, it also can help us heal and recover. "Whole foods contain a variety of health-promoting nutrients that work together to protect your body from infection and boost your immune system function. And research suggests that getting these nutrients from food is generally better than doing so via a supplement," says Tamar Samuels, RDN, cofounder of Culinary Health.

We know about Vitamin C, but it is also wise to take in foods with Vitamins A and D (inflammation zappers) zinc, probiotics and antioxidants. Enjoy more of these immunity strengtheners to help yourself stay healthy this winter!

(Prevention magazine, December, 2023)

Scripture: "Beloved, I pray that you may prosper in all things, and be in health, just as your soul prospers." (3rd John: 2)

Communion will be served on:

January 7, 2024
February 4, 2024
March 3, 2024
March 28, 2024
(Maundy Thursday)
May 5, 2024




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