

Foresight

Looking to the Future

Christian Church of Villa Park
1336 S. Villa Avenue
Villa Park, IL 60181

Phone: (630) 833-7262

E-mail: ccvp1336@yahoo.com

Pastor: Rev. Laura Jennison Reed



Tuesday, July 13, 2021



As I was thinking about what I should write this month, I began thinking about what Josh and I hope to do with the gardens at our new home. Right now, they're a bit unkempt. At some point thought was put into planting, safe traditional plants that you see everywhere. I'm sure it looked lovely. But, not much care was taken of them and so now some things are overgrown and others aren't doing well. There are large plants that no one intended to plant but never did the hard work of removing once they'd cropped up. In other words, some change is needed.

Part of the reason the gardens we started with aren't thriving is that they require a lot of attention and time. They need to be maintained because most of the plants are in situations they're not really suited for. It takes a lot of work to keep the gardens going so they falter if time and energy go to anything else. I will admit, I'm not much of a gardener. I'm not gifted and only enjoy it in very short stints. If the work were mine alone, the gardens would continue in their blah state due to benign neglect. Fortunately, the work is not mine alone.

As Josh and I think about our plans, we're thinking about our gifts and time as well as the gifts of the place we are. What will grow and thrive with a little tending? What do the gifts of the environment around us suggest? We're planning to focus much of the gardens on native plants because that is where the gifts around us come together. Because it is better for everything if plants that are native to the area are allowed to grow. The soil is healthier, animals and insects thrive, when these plants are present. These are plants that have adapted to the soil and weather, that work together and thrive together, that local fauna enjoy and depend on. As humans, we often come in thinking that new things or things that worked for us elsewhere are the best or only way to do things. So we tear out what was there and replace it with things that aren't really suited.

The church can be like this too. We add programs and develop things without always thinking about the ecosystems we are in and whether they're suited to what we want to do. Or without noticing how things have changed and no longer support what used to thrive. So, how do we return to the strength of the native plants of our faith? (I don't mean how we did it in the "good old days" whenever those were.) How do we seed and nurture faith that's not just about what we want but about what our communities need and God calls us to? What are the roots that have long nurtured people of faith and how do we grow new plants from them? Plants that work together to create and then nurture communities within and around them? Plants that require attention but will also thrive as a living community?

As Josh and I look to transition our gardens we know that it will take a lot of attention and work for a few years as we get rid of all the webs of roots and hidden seeds of the things that aren't working in the space any more. We will plant new seeds and need to give them extra love and care. Some will easily establish and others won't at all. But, all that work will eventually lead to something that grows and flourishes with less leadership from us. The plants will support each other and the creatures will help them grow even as they are fed. We will all be part of a beautiful community.

Laura

Worship

Worship will continue on Facebook Live each Sunday at 10am. You are welcome in the new sanctuary at 10am if you have read the guidelines posted on the church's website and are comfortable in coming.

A video of each worship service is also available on the church's website on the worship page.

Worship will begin at 10:30 am starting on Sunday, September 5, 2021.

Thursday Gatherings

On Thursdays at 7:30pm you can join others from CCVP online or by phone through Zoom meetings to chat and/or pray. Call 1-312-626-6799. The meeting ID is 347 464 975 with password 186082. The Zoom computer link is in the weekly email announcements.

Stewardship Council Report

Stewardship Council Updates COVID-19 Safety Guidelines:

The new worship space is substantially completed. We invite you to come for in-person Sunday worship in the new space if you haven't already done so.

At the last meeting of the Council, we updated our COVID-19 safety guidelines. Masks must still be worn before, during and after in-person worship, regardless of whether you are vaccinated (except those leading the service can remove masks for their portions of the service). This requirement is being imposed so that we are respectful and welcoming to all (including for the protection of our children who are not eligible for vaccines), and since social distancing is not a viable option due to the size and configuration of our worship space. As always, you should stay home if you are not feeling well or have been exposed to COVID-19 or have tested positive for COVID-19.

We will continue to follow these procedures during worship for the safety of all:

- Bulletins will not be used.
- There will be no passing of the peace.
- There will be no singing during worship.
- Individual communion packets are provided.
- Collection plates will not be passed but available at the door.

Small group church meetings (i.e., Stewardship Council, Elders, Worship Committee) may happen electronically via Zoom or telephone conference, or in-person with the consensus of those involved. The group attendees can determine whether it is necessary for masks to be worn for the protection of all. New Life Bible Chapel as building owner sets any policy or guidelines for the building. Be aware of any signs or directions as you enter the building. They have advised that they are currently following state and CDC guidelines.

June 30, 2021 Financial Summary

	June	Year-to-date
Income for budget items:	\$ 3,195.80	\$ 55,875.18
Budgeted expenses:	\$ 10,013.40	\$ 60,482.73

Thank you for your faithful giving! If you are able, please continue to give to the work of the church by mailing a check to the church or by giving online.

Love Your Neighbor Day 2021 Will Be Held on September 18, 2021



LOVE YOUR NEIGHBOR DAY 2021 WILL BE HELD ON SEPTEMBER 18, 2021 – VOLUNTEERS ARE NEEDED

The Christian Church of Villa Park and other area churches will be working together again this year to hold the 7th annual Love Your Neighbor Day on Saturday, September 18, 2021 (rain date September 25, 2021). This is an important ministry of CCVP which only continues with the support from our members, family and friends through volunteering. On Love Your Neighbor Day 2020 over 90 volunteers provided assistance to 21 homeowners.

We know that God calls us to love our neighbors. LYND is an opportunity to put our love into action and show God's love by showing up at a neighbor's home and providing much needed assistance. Some of the people who have contacted us for help this year include an elderly couple who both had COVID-19 (the husband was in the hospital for 6 weeks and then sent to a rehab facility) and are still recovering, a woman who has financial struggles and learned about us when getting food at a local food pantry, an elderly woman whose son can't help because he lives out of state and his sister who cares for his mother is dealing with mental health challenges, and a man whose MS prevents him from being able to maintain his yard.

You can help these neighbors in need by filling out a volunteer sign-up sheet and agreeing to volunteer on September 18, 2021 (rain date September 25, 2021). All work will again be outside this year. It would be very helpful to the LYND Planning Team to receive your volunteer commitments as soon as possible so that they can let some of our applicants know that there will be enough volunteers that their applications can be accepted. You can obtain volunteer sign-up sheets at church (copies are available in our worship space), on the church website, by e-mailing loveyourneighbor15@yahoo.com. Contact Doris Carter if you have any questions. We hope you can volunteer and encourage family and friends to join you.



The Disciples Virtual Gathering on Saturday, August 7, 2021, is an opportunity for Disciples to connect, learn, worship, and imagine new ways of gathering as church.

Our day together will focus on the covenant we share as Disciples and the promise of Romans 8:38-39 that nothing can separate us from the love of God. The program will consist of bible lectures, educational workshops, and worship service, with invited speakers and presenters focusing on our theme.

Registration is now open! <https://disciplesconnect2021.vfairs.com>

Disciples Food Pantry

June Stats:

109 Households served

445 People served

The Pantry is open every
Wednesday 9:30-11:30am.

Clients enter from Villa Avenue and
receive food by the parking lot door.

CROP HUNGER WALK

ENDING HUNGER ONE STEP AT A TIME

Great Prairie Trail CROP Hunger Walk, Sunday, October 3, 2021, 1-3pm

Last year, despite having a virtual walk the Great Prairie Trail CROP Hunger Walk raised \$23,000 to support five local food pantries and Church World Service with hunger relief efforts locally and around the world. This was more than we had raised annually in the past ten years and a testament to the increased need for food assistance caused by the pandemic and the generosity of our sponsors and walkers.

This year, pending any changes in pandemic restrictions, we plan to walk together in person Sunday, October 3. As our traditional location of Lombard Common is not available, First Church of Lombard has graciously agreed to let us use their parking lot at 220 S. Main Street as our starting and finishing point and make their fellowship hall and bathrooms available. The 3-mile route will remain similar to previous years along the Prairie Path and returning on the Great Western Trail. We will stagger start times for each team between 1 and 1:30pm to avoid too many people in one spot. And we will encourage anyone that wishes to do their own walk in their neighborhood.

75% of funds raised will benefit Church World Service programs in the Dominican Republic, providing animals and resources to enable families to start a small business and work towards becoming self-sufficient.

25% of funds raised will benefit the following local food pantries with access to food through Northern Illinois Food Bank:

- Lombard/Villa Park Food Pantry
- Disciples Food Pantry, Villa Park
- Addison Township Food Pantry
- ICNA Relief Food Pantry, Glendale Heights
- The Outreach House / Community Table, Lombard

The Christian Church of Villa Park already has our page setup on the Great Prairie Trail CROP Hunger Walk website. We need walkers! Here is the link to register as a walker and/or make a donation:

<https://events.crophungerwalk.org/2021/team/christian-church-of-villa-park>

Questions? Contact Betty Prorak.

We Find Joy and Give Thanks...



- Ken Newton is doing well after surgery.
- Betty & Steve Prorak have enjoyed nature on the Lake Michigan, Lake Huron, and Lake Superior shorelines. Lots of amazing pictures!
- Heidi & family give thanks on their 1 year anniversary of having their home & all the wonderful memories they have already made.

Please Pray for...



- Tina Amodeo and her ongoing health concerns
- Support for Laura as she carries out her work as our pastor

Fund-raising with Amazon, Gift Cards



Do you shop at Amazon.com? If you do, a portion of your purchase price for qualifying items can come to the Christian Church of Villa Park by choosing the church as your recipient in their AmazonSmile program. It doesn't cost you anything extra to participate; it just shares the profit with a charity of your choice. If you have any questions, ask Betty Prorak.

The next order for Jewel gift cards will be placed at the beginning of August. Please let Betty Prorak know what card(s) you would like to order by August 4 for them to be delivered by August 11. The church receives 5% of the cost of any cards we order as a group.

The next Great Lakes Scrip gift card order will be due on September 5. There are many different gift cards available, each giving the church a portion of your purchase price. If this will be your first order from www.shopwithscrip.com, please contact Betty Prorak (BLProrak@yahoo.com) for the church's enrollment code. [Yes, Betty insisted that it was easier for her to take care of these fundraisers during her sabbatical than to have someone else deal with the security issues with each account.]



Food for Thought...

August Celebrations



17 Debra Studniarz



18 Joanna & Eric Hays

I am giving you these commands so that you may love one another. – John 15:7

Gestures in good faith do not end oppression; it is risk and ruthless radical love that will see us through. – Aja Monet, *My Mother Was a Freedom Fighter* (2017)

We pray that, wherever your image is still disfigured by poverty, sickness, selfishness, war, and greed, the new creation in Jesus Christ may appear in justice, love, and peace, to the glory of your name.

- From Revised Common Lectionary Prayer

Thoughts from Jane Reid

I think this is an inspiring story for anyone looking for a new job after losing one due to COVID. My granddaughter's husband, Paul is a chef by profession. He tired of this after working in several different restaurants over the years and so he took a job managing a restaurant in an office building in Dallas a few years ago. Due to COVID, there were not enough customers to pay his salary, and he was let go. Instead of depending on the government for aid, he looked around and saw an ad for a waiter in a small Italian restaurant and decided to try for it! A chef and former manager of a busy restaurant, willing to begin at the bottom. This reminds me of the great depression when people were willing to do anything for a few dollars. The owners had not considered someone like Paul for such a job but decided to hire him anyway. After all, he had a lot of training in nutrition and cooking, and loves talking to people (he is Italian!). He gave so much of himself to his customers, that they love him. As a result, his wages from the owners and the tips he makes is giving him more money that he formerly made managing a city restaurant! Once in a while a story like this comes along to remind us that sometimes starting all over can lead to better things.