THECORNERSTONE

"Mobilizing Disciples to fulfill God's passion to save and transform lives"

January 2021 Volume 17 Issue 1

www.centralparkcc.org

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YEAR-END GIFTS

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Your Gift Makes a Difference!

In a fast moving, ever-changing world, God's word never changes.
In a broken and bitter world, Jesus provides hope.
In a world moving further from the truth, a gift to Central Park
Christian Church will ensure our neighbors hear the gospel,
our congregation is ministered to and many will come
to know our Lord and Savior!

Will you make an investment in eternal life?

Your secure, tax-deductible donation can be mailed, dropped off to the church or made via our website: www.centralparkcc.org/give

Thank you for your generosity and support. Questions? Please contact Lynda Buchanan at 785-234-5963 ext. 2

Gifts given between now and January 15th will be applied to your 2020 giving for tax purposes.



a message from OUR SENTOR PASTOR



Derek Slack

Beyond the Gifts

You ever see the joy of Christmas quickly turn into anxiety as the New Year begins knocking at the door? Why is that? Maybe it's because we did such a good job of anchoring ourselves to a few weeks of garland, trees, dinners, snacks and gift giving that we forgot to deeply connect ourselves to Christ Himself during that time. Sure, we invited Him into the process and welcomed Him in, but how much of that was according to our terms? How many of us continued covering our daily burdens with all the activity, yet were too afraid to cast our cares and anxieties on Him? Then here comes January 1st again and all our lives, responsibilities, decisions and reality kicks back into full gear.

I believe the reason so many of us feel the insecurities and anxiousness around this time of the year is because we have distracted ourselves enough with all those gifts and festivities that were meant to bring us closer to God, and found a false hope, strength and purpose that Only God Himself can give.

There is so much that I could share from my own walk to try and tie this all together, but I believe that King David did a beautiful job of summing up what we should do as we move forward this year. When David found himself with a dry spirit and an anxious soul He knew exactly where he needed to go. At his lowest moments in life, where life was bleak and shaky, and the future carried more questions and anxiety than it did answers and joy, David did not turn to a new gym membership, or goal-setting. He found himself dragging himself to the only well that ever satisfied his quenching soul.

Psalm 143:3-6

- 3 For the enemy has pursued my soul; he has crushed my life to the ground; he has made me sit in darkness like those long dead.
- 4 Therefore my spirit faints within me; my heart within me is appalled.
- 5 I remember the days of old; I meditate on all that you have done; I ponder the work of your hands.
- 6 I stretch out my hands to you; my soul thirsts for you like a parched land. Selah
- 7 Answer me quickly, O Lord!

 My spirit fails!

 Hide not your face from me,
 lest I be like those who go down to the pit.

 8 Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast lov
- 8 Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust.

 Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.

continued on page 3

a message from OUR SENIOR PASTOR continued

Beyond the Gifts...continued from page 2

If you find yourself in a place filled with fear, or anxiety about the future, and in need of your soul to be quenched, let these things lead you to God. I promise He will provide you with all the grace you need in the new year. Note I did not say "what we think we need", but what God sees we need. David cries that very thought out in this Psalm. God will give us strength, but it is not our own. He will pour out hope, but there may be a cost. He will bring us clarity, but not control, and glory, but not for ourselves but for Himself.

Today we measure strength out of meals we eat, sleep we get or health of our earthly body. I believe no strength is more important than spiritual power, the ability to persevere through the trials around us and the resolve to battle through temptation and sin. Here David shows us that when we run out of own resources, we should be humble enough to stretch out our hands to the One Who has always battled for us and cared for us so many times before.

David faced many difficult decisions as a king, but here in this Psalm he is on the run. He needed wisdom and discernment consistently in his life, but even more so in this dangerous time of his life. While we are not kings, we are a people living in a difficult time. The clarity we need these days will involve some planning and budgeting for sure. The most important piece of seeking clarity as we move forward this year should center around lifting our eyes up to God, knowing Him and His word intimately, and waiting on Him in prayer; when we do this well, we will deepen our joy in Him.

Joy can be so elusive when we try and make it just about us. Our deepest happiness and joy should be seen and felt in being liberated by God and in living in that truth. It's not about us. It is always about God. David figured that out, too. He ended Psalm 143 like this:

11 For your name's sake, O Lord, preserve my life!
In your righteousness bring my soul out of trouble!
12 And in your steadfast love you will cut off my enemies, and you will destroy all the adversaries of my soul, for I am your servant.

In other words, "Show the world how merciful and generous and powerful You can be. Make Your name great through me!" Even when David pleads for deliverance and safety, he wants God, not David, to be glorified. This time of year is a great time for all of us to remember why we exist. When we do, we can refocus any part of our lives that is not living around that purpose. If your soul thirsts, reach out to the living water that will satisfy you this year.

Swimming in the deep end, Derek

a message from

OUR ASSOCIATE PASTOR



Randy Lesseski

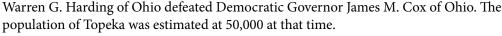
Then and Now

As I mentioned in one of the past newsletters, the idea of a new building known as Central Park Christian Church was birthed in the midst of a world pandemic.

The year was 1920. The entire world was in upheaval. everyone was dealing with the affects of the

Spanish flu epidemic. It is estimated that about 500 million people or one-third of the world's population became infected with this virus. The number of deaths are estimated to be at least 50 million worldwide with about 675,000 occurring in the United States.

On Tuesday, November 2, 1920, in the first election held after the end of World War I and the first election after the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment, Republican Senator



It is during this time that the leaders of CPCC came together and decided to put pen to paper and build the new building that is now the current building that we reside in here at 1535 SW Clay St. I might note that the estimated average weekly earnings were somewhere in the neighborhood of \$33.00 per week.

They listened to God's leading. They invested in not only the present, but the future of God's Kingdom and in 1922 CPCC opened the doors to this building. The results just 11 years later are illustrated in the pictures shown above which are dated in 1931.

There are approximately 95 men in the top picture and more than 250 men, women and children in the bottom picture.

Without the planners, dreamers and investors in 1920 we could not see the big picture in 1931.

People, it isn't over! It's just a new beginning for a new body of believers. Please continue to dream, plan and invest. This building is surrounded daily by people who are lost, hurting, broken and dying - not just a physical death but an eternal death. The cure is not in property, people or programs. The cure is in the PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST. Please let your neighbor know why you have hope and with WHOM you have hope. Let's begin to plan, dream and invest in creating the next picture for my office wall.

Grace, Randy





a message from

OUR WORSHIP LEADER



dayme Green

A Beacon of Hope

I'm sure most of you have heard this joke by now but it makes me laugh every time I hear it and it fits well with my article this month, so I'll share.

It's December 31st, 2019 and God is getting his year-end projects all lined out. He calls the Archangel Gabriel and asks, "did you get all the major historical events for the twenty-twenties on the calendar and finalized?

Gabriel answers, "sure did, I got them all....wait, what did you just ask me?"

"I asked if you got all the major, world-changing events for the twenty-twenties scheduled," the Lord answers.

Gabriel asks again with a quiver in his voice, "I'm sorry, Father....did you say twenty-twent-ies?"

"Yes," God says, "....um, hold on.... Are you telling me you put a decade's worth of historical happenings into ONE YEAR????"

While that's a fairly amusing little story, sometimes part of me wonders if that conversation didn't actually occur in some form. Two Thousand Twenty was a wild ride, wasn't it? A global pandemic, nationwide unrest, racial strife, civil war around the world, an embittered election, murder hornets... the list goes on. As the year draws to a close, I can't help but be hopeful that the story I started with has a little bit of a shred of truth to it. I hope that twenty-twenty-one, and the eight years after for that matter, are a little calmer. The problem is, they may not be, and at least the upcoming year doesn't seem like it's going to get any better, at least right away. Covid is still a shadow over everything, that election I talked about is still (at least a little bit) in the air but nonetheless a source of conflict, and who knows what else this broken world we live in is going to throw at us.

The more I think and pray about it, though, I am comforted. As Christians, God instructs us to not worry about the future. In Matthew 6 the Word tells us to not be anxious but to trust in His provision. Proverbs 3 tells us not to "lean on our own understanding." And the verse that I have kept in my proverbial pocket all year, Jeremiah 29:11, assures us that God has plans for our future and our hope. But then again, this last year was a doozy and I think God, in His all-knowing ways, understood the state we'd be in right about now. He knew we'd need something to get us in the right frame of mind to tackle this coming year. So He sent us a little light of hope.

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STUDENT MINISTRY



Miranda Bohlender

Kid's T.N.T.

Kids Pre-K to 5th grade are invited to join us on Thursday nights for Kid's Thursday Night Teaching (T.N.T.) from 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m. Dinner is served at 6:00 p.m.

> Contact Miranda at 785-250-2707 with questions.

Peace, Joy & Gratefulness

The month of December is my absolute favorite month of the year. For the obvious reason...it is Christmas! Christmas just brings me so much joy and remarkable peace. While others tend to get stressed out during the holidays, for the most part, I usually do not. Unfortunately...this year has been a little different.

I have to admit this season has been very stressful. I would not expect any different from the year 2020, so I am not really all that surprised. Yet, even in the most stressful Christmas season I have ever experienced, I have tried very hard to find some peace and joy in the reason for the season. How have I done that? Well, it has NOT been easy. I've had to be very intentional about spending time worshipping the Lord. I'm not going to lie, recently it has been very difficult, extremely uncomfortable and just straight out painful to worship Him. But I'll also admit, I feel so refreshed when I finally let go and focus on God.

This season I have found myself sitting for over 30 minutes trying to work up the courage to worship Him. I'd allow my mind to race and stress to take over. The thing is, as I look back to those moments, when I felt too overwhelmed to praise Him, nothing else was more important! Nothing else could give me that sense of peace. I can't stop surrendering to the Lord even when it's easier not to.

Quite frankly it would have been a lot easier for Jesus to make the pain He suffered on the cross go away as well. Yet what did He do? He endured it for me and for you. He said I can't give up and I can't walk away from My children. That is why we have to surrender those stresses, our frustrations and everything else to the Lord. I encourage you to practice surrendering...clear your mind and focus on the AMAZINGNESS of our God. I bet when you do, you'll find that minutes can turn into hours and you'll be overcome with tremendous peace and joy!

THANK YOU to everyone who donated a blanket for our children's Christmas Party. Every year the kids are so grateful, and extremely excited, to receive their new blankets. Such simple joy! With sincere gratitude, from the children and myself, thank you! Please check out the Christmas Celebration pictures on page 7 - I'll think you'll agree, their smiles are priceless!

~ Miranda

STODENT MINISTRY









Children's Christmas Celebration 2020



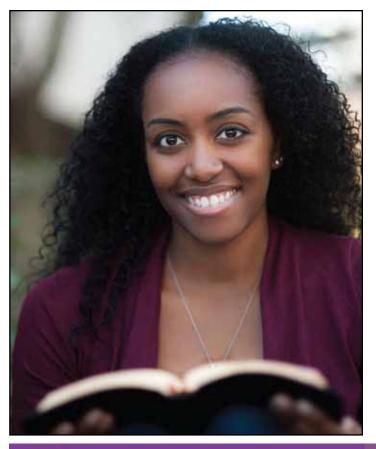








WOMEN'S MINISTRY





Ladies Bible Studies

Wednesdays 6:45 to 8:00 p.m.

The Book of James
by Kay Arthur
Led by Barb Gray
Group meets in the CPCC Parlor.

Thursdays 1:00 to 3:00 p.m.

The Book of James

Group meets at the home of Allison Crow. To ensure proper social distancing, please notify Allison if you are new to the group and would like to join!





With prayerful consideration to this season of COVID-19, Manhattan Christian College has made the decision to modify the 2021 Woman's World conference into one night of online worship on Friday, February 26 at 7:00 p.m. The event is FREE. Register here to receive all of the details as they come together: mccks.edu/womans-world-2021-virtual

Deaconess Meeting

The next Deaconess meeting is **Saturday**, **January 9th**

from 9:30 to 11 a.m. at the church.

Prayer Shawl Meeting



Due to COVID, Prayer Shawl is not meeting at this time.

Monthly Bible Verse

5 For his anger lasts only a moment, but his favor lasts a lifetime; weeping may stay for the night, but rejoicing comes in the morning. ~ Psalm 30:5 New International Version

NEWS AND NOTES

JANUARY **CROSS GUARD**

Sunday School 9:00 a.m. - 10:45 a.m.

> January 3rd Ray DeMoss

January 10th Nick Ward

January 17th Charles McWilliams

January 24th Lynden Landholn

January 31st Mike Swickard

Sunday Worship 10:30 a.m. - Noon

> January 3rd Gary Burks Randy Spilker

January 10th Tim Cunningham Dan Force

January 17th Steve Horton Randy Smith

January 24th Tyler Crow Brian Stovall

January 31st Wesley Lewis David Johnson

"Under This Roof" Campaign



Under this roof we love God and we love people. We worship and celebrate our faith together. We are inspired through scripture, sermons, music, communion and one another.

Right now our roof is in critical need. To prevent damage to our building's interior and to our stained glass skylight, the roof needs to be replaced.

Construction will start mid-January. Unfortunately, with COVID, giving is down significantly so this \$34,000 expense comes at a difficult time. Will you prayerfully consider donating to our "Under This Roof" campaign? Your gifts are greatly appreciated and needed.



The year 2020 was challenging for many! We feel very blessed with volunteers who were comfortable helping the staff provide services and sort donations. We also feel very blessed and supported by our donors, and the community as a whole, who kept our shelves stocked and who continued giving, which kept our doors open and allowed services to be provided. We will start 2021 operating the same way we have been in 2020, with phone intakes for services and appointments for the clothing room.

We appreciate everyone who sent monetary donations to provide gift cards and those who donated blankets, towels and hygiene items for Christmas Adoptions.

There will be no Operation Soup Line this year as we could not figure out a Covid-safe way to carry out the event. We have asked sponsors to donate the funds to Doorstep instead of the event this year. We will proceed with SouperBowl Sunday on Sunday, February 7th with the collection of soup and crackers to help stock our pantry! Please collect these items within your congregation for Doorstep.

We cannot stress enough how thankful we feel to be so supported during this difficult time as we continue to help our neighbors in need.

Congratulations to Braeden Coffman who was baptized on Sunday, November 22nd.



"For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ." ~ Galatians 3:27

The next Cornerstone newsletter will print Wednesday, January 27th. Please have all items to the office by 5 p.m. Wednesday, January 20th.

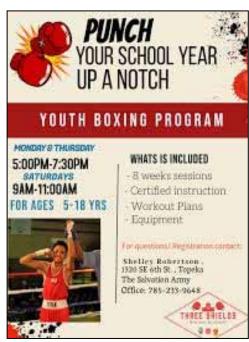


"Therefore go and make disciples..

MINISTRY SPOTLIGHT: The Salvation Army

The Salvation Army of Topeka (TSA) has a rich history in the Topeka Community. Our stellar reputation dates back to 1886 when the first recorded address was 409 E. 3rd Street. In 1897, the Topeka police wanted to assist with the many sick people in the town, and the TSA obtained permission to rent a few rooms at a hospital. In 1919, plans were created for a campaign to erect a three-story building for a citadel, as a memorial to the ex-service men of World War I. The building was finished at a cost of \$65,000, to house all departments of the Army's work at 5th and Quincy (66608). In 2001 we had a capital campaign to build the facility we are housed in today at 1320 SE 6th Street.

Recently we established the 3-Shields Boxing Academy Program. This program serves as a platform to teach participants self-control, management of emotions and aggression, the importance of physical fitness, and then the basic skills of boxing. We offer six, 8-week sessions. We ask students to commit to the eight-week session and attend as many as possible so they can see improvement of their skills and physical stamina. The 3-Shields Boxing Academy Program hours are Monday and Thursdays 5:00 p.m. to 7:30 p.m. and Saturdays 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. This program can serve as an entryway into the amateur boxing realm if desired. All boxing lessons will begin with prayer said by an officer or soldier with the Salvation Army. There is no charge and the program is



open to any and all youth from all schools.

Boxing has a multitude of benefits for people from all walks of life regardless of age, generation and physical ability. At the 3-Shields Boxing Academy Program we would like to leverage our boxing program in many different ways not only for the elite athlete, but also for the mother of two who needs a stress reliever or the senior citizen with Parkinson's. We can eventually include the veterans with PTSD and collaborate with our Supportive Services for Vets program.

Interested in our boxing program? Contact Shelley Robertson at 785.233.9648.

CPCC

Supports several missionaries and many ministries in Topeka and around the world.

SPOTLICHT

gives these people and organizations the opportunity to share what they are doing and how our financial gifts help them reach their goals.

OUR WORSHIP LEADER continued

A Beacon of Hope...continued from page 5

On December 21st, the planets Jupiter and Saturn aligned in a way that they hadn't in roughly eight hundred years. The media (in a surprisingly positive turn for once) dubbed this conjunction the "2020 Christmas Star." I'm not sure any of those involved with hanging that particular name on this astronomical event really understood how fitting and necessary it would be.



God sent the original Star of Bethlehem to light the way for those who sought the newborn Savior two thousand years ago. It wasn't only a signal, it was also a beacon of hope, a symbol of promise. That star shone bright to tell the world that it didn't have to live in darkness anymore. The promised Messiah had come to save us all. There are a lot of people who believe that the Lord may have used a planetary conjunction just like this one to create that actual, historical Christmas Star. Of course there's no way to know for sure until God tells us Himself, but I'd say it's a fairly strong possibility.

I'd like to think that the "Star" we just had is a similar message from our loving Creator. I think it really was a beacon of hope, a symbol of promise, a light in the sky to remind us that for over two thousand years, we haven't had to live in darkness... and we still don't. The Jesus that was born under that original star is still very much alive today and no matter what twenty-twenty-one throws at us, that will never change.

~ Photo by Steve Bowersox

In Our Prayers

Pray for the Persecuted

EGYPT: Dura's Story

When Dura was born, her father abandoned the family because he did not want another daughter. Later, her mother blamed her for the family's troubles and left Dura in the care of her grandmother while she worked abroad. One night, Dura had a dream about a white building with a cross on top. When she began drawing pictures of the cross, her grandmother, a devout Muslim, sent her to a mosque for "treatment".

Tragically, she was abused by an imam at the mosque, she was only 13. The abuse continued when her grandmother died and her mother returned to care for her. Still, Dura was drawn to Christ and eventually placed her faith in Him through the witness of a Coptic priest.

At age 21, Dura's mother arranged for her to marry a Muslim man. Dura's husband also abused her and later divorced her, refusing to let her see their son; a court ruled that she had no parental right because she was a Christian.

Dura's church family has brought her great comfort and encouragement. Her church has provided housing for her. VOM has helped provide for her medical needs and has also furnished an apartment for her. Because of the support Dura has received, her mother has realized that God is taking care of her. She moved in with Dura when she got sick, but Dura has been unable to find a job because of her own health issues and Christian faith. Dura continues to pray for the salvation of her family.

Please pray for Dura, and pray that her mother and family will come to faith in Jesus Christ.

~ Reprinted from VOM Magazine





Robert & Agnes Cox

Currently living with their daughter, Juanita.

Darlene McCarter

McCrite Plaza Nursing Home Resident

Jim & Shirley Wolf

Atria Hearthstone Resident

Sandy Darnell

Ruble Ranch Assisted Living Resident

Operation Rolling Thunder

Please take some time on

Saturday, January 2nd

and commit to prayer regarding: church, education, military, government, entertainment, health, family and business.

Sunday Morning Prayer Meeting

Join others at 8:30 a.m. Sunday mornings, in the middle classroom off the Fellowship Hall for 30 minutes to spend time praising the Lord, praying for His leading and blessing, and asking Him to move powerfully in our classes and worship time.

Monday Prayer Meeting

All are invited to join the Elders on Monday evenings, at 5:30 at the church, as they pray for our church, our city, our state and the nation. The prayer meetings are also available via Zoom. zoom.us/j/2029856144



Monthly Events at CPCC...

JANUARY 2021

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					Office Closed New Year's Day	Operation Rolling Thunder 8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	1:00 PM Women's Bible Study at Allison Crow's 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)	8	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church 9:30 AM Deaconess Meeting
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	1:00 PM Women's Bible Study at Allison Crow's 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)	15	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church
8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group	ML King Day 5:30 PM Prayer Meeting at the church & via Zoom	6:30 PM A.R.R.O.W.	6:00 PM Middle School Youth Group 6:30 PM Men's Bible Study-3rd Floor South Classroom 6:45 PM Women's Bible Study-Parlor	1:00 PM Women's Bible Study at Allison Crow's 6:00 - 7:30 PM Kid's T.N.T. (Dinner served)	22	8:00 AM Men's Bible Study Group meets at the church
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8:30 AM Group Prayer 9:15 AM Sunday School 10:45 AM Worship Service No SIAFU 12:30 PM High School Youth Group						

CPCC Pastoral & Support Team



Randy Lesseski Associate Pastor randy@centralparkcc.org



Miranda Bohlender Student Ministry Pastor miranda@centralparkcc.org



Lynda Buchanan Administrative Assistant Ibuchanan@centralparkcc.org



Linda Bohlender Media Specialist Ibohlender@centralparkcc.org



Derek Slack Senior Pastor derek@centralparkcc.org



Jeff Martens Student Ministry Pastor jeff@centralparkcc.org

Office Hours

Monday - Friday 8:30 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. 1535 SW Clay St. Topeka, KS 66604 Phone: (785) 234-5963 Fax: (785) 234-0538

www.centralparkcc.org



Jayme Green Worship Leader jayme@centralparkcc.org



Prayer Time - Sundays at 8:30 a.m.

Sunday School - Sundays at 9:15 a.m.

Worship Service & K-motion - Sundays at 10:45 a.m.

SIAFU - No SIAFU in January

High School Youth Group - Sundays 12:30 - 2:30 p.m.

Prayer Time - Mondays at 5:30 p.m.

A.R.R.O.W. - Tuesdays at 6:30 p.m.

Middle School Youth Group - Wednesdays at 6:00 p.m.

Kid's T.N.T. - Thursdays at 6:00 p.m.