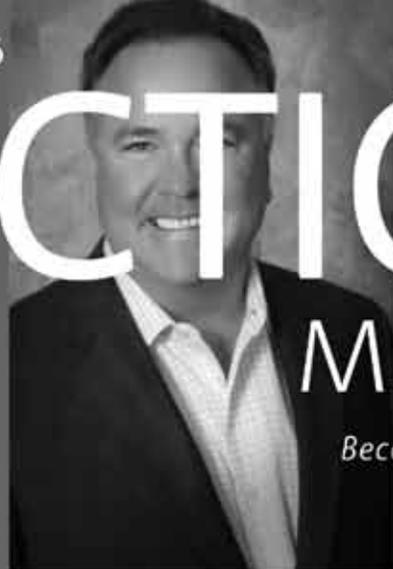


REFLECTIONS

MAGAZINE

*Becoming living proof of God's love,
one person at a time.*





PASTOR'S MESSAGE

Dr. George Strunk, Senior Pastor

As the adult child of an alcoholic, I know firsthand the disease of addiction. I grew up trying to be perfect in every way I could in order to make my broken family system look good to everyone on the outside, while inside my home and myself, things were falling apart. Our pastor was a wonderful shepherd, and a personal mentor, but even he did not know anything about the pain that we were going through as a family until decades later when, as an adult colleague, I told him the truth about our painful story. It wasn't his fault; we were very good at keeping secrets.

Growing up in a home where alcohol is abused, you learn by experience not to feel anything and not to trust anyone. After all, those closest to you disappoint you daily by their embarrassing behaviors and their emotional absence, and so you believe everyone else will too. In order to survive, your defense systems take over and you subconsciously learn: don't trust, don't feel, put on the mask and pretend everything is fine. Sadly, it becomes normal for you even if it is not because you don't know any other way to be.

Years later I have grown to understand that my parents did the very best they could to love me and I really don't blame them anymore. We are all flawed people. We are all broken vessels of God's grace. I am, too. Sometimes our best efforts to love end up being enabling behaviors we wish we could change in ourselves and others. We cannot give what we do not have. It's just the way things are, but it's not the way things have to remain.

As an adult, I have seen how the sins of the fathers are visited on the next generations and I have been on a journey of recovery from my own brokenness for quite a while. I began to see in my sons the same patterns of trying to be perfect, trying to live up to some unreachable standard of behavior, and the sickening feeling that nothing that you do is ever going to be good enough. Needless to say, it broke my heart and it still does. St. Paul says we are to work out our salvation in fear and trembling, and so through hours of counseling, and pages of journal writing, and the prayers of those who journey with me, I have tried to learn to change my patterns of thinking and behaving so that the people I love can be healthier themselves. I am still a work in progress, but thanks be to God for the small measure of growth that He has begun in me.

It is a mistake to say that this problem of addiction is a moral failure instead of naming it as a disease. To do so stigmatizes people, makes them strap on their masks a little bit tighter to hide the resulting shame and embarrassment, and tragically prevents us from taking any steps on a journey of healing. Moreover, the disease of addiction to alcohol is a family disease. You can't really identify the patient as the only broken person in the system. We all need help: the addict who feels helpless and hopeless, the family member who enables the addict in order to keep the secret, the church that stigmatizes a precious child of God, the community that has other more important priorities, the society that perpetuates the myths and the idols that drive these destructive behaviors. We all need grace and hope and healing. How do we find it? Where can we find it?

When someone is diagnosed with cancer, I watch with pride as little communities in our church gather around that person and his or her family to offer love and support. We know what to do in these cases. We bring food, we send cards, we go to visit, we make phone calls, we inquire how they are feeling and then we listen without judgment. We know better than to ignore that person or their loved ones. We know better than to judge them for having a disease that is not their fault and that they certainly did not want and would never choose. We put ourselves in their place and we do unto others as we would have them do unto us. Need I say also that we pray without ceasing? In January, we are going to try to learn how to be a community that has open minds, open hearts and open doors for anyone who suffers from the disease of addiction to alcohol and narcotics. Finding hope. Bringing hope. I pray that we can become the Body of Christ that lives out the mission *becoming living proof of God's love, one person at a time.*

George

@george_strunk

drgeorgestrunk.wordpress.com

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BRIEFLY STATED

The church building will be closed Friday-Saturday, December 25-26; Monday, December 28 and Friday, January 1 in holiday observance.

Get Social

Be a part of demonstrating God's love through social media.

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@ChristChurchKY

@ChristChurchKY

Christ Church United Methodist

REFLECTIONS Magazine

Thank you to all of our contributors. Have you seen a group or individual *becoming living proof of God's love*? Have a story idea for *Reflections*? Contact communications@ccum.net.

On the cover: These faces from our congregation have been impacted by addiction to drugs or alcohol... either their own, or a family member's.



FINDING HOPE BRINGING HOPE

By Rev. Melissa Head, Associate Pastor

So many times, we are in the pew beside someone who is hurting. When I was in high school, I was one of those folks. My father was an alcoholic, and my older sister had a drug addiction. I was hurting and people didn't know. As an active participant in youth group, youth choir, and Sunday school, it wasn't evident on the outside how much I ached from my family life.

The person seated next to you at church could be dealing with private pain. A spouse could be aching with how to handle the situation at home. A child could be worried about a parent. A parent could be longing to figure out how to "fix" a child. And a struggling person could be trying to discern if his/her problem is out of control. Looks can be so deceiving, and our masks can be incredibly convincing.

Recently, this story came across my path, and I am thankful for her willingness to allow me to share it.

"Every time my husband gets home from a business trip and I open his suitcase to wash his dirty clothes, I check the lining of the bag for needles. I think to myself, "Wow. How pathetic you are. Is this what your marriage has come to? You just dropped your children off at their private school and you live in this nice house and here you are looking for needles in your husband's luggage?" The needles aren't for shooting up heroin or anything like that. They're for pricking himself and adding blood to his urine when he's peeing at the doctor's office. He adds blood to his urine so he can fail urine tests and tell doctors he has a kidney stone or something and needs pain medication.

My husband has been addicted to prescription drugs for, I don't know how long, probably years or longer than I know. I first began to suspect it when he was caught stealing prescription pain killers from my dying grandfather's bedside. Then I started to find separate money accounts and bills coming from doctor's offices all from different states. The more high stakes his job gets, the more he seems to complain about "pain." The more

stress he has at work or the larger the deals get, the more he seems to come home in a complete fog. Every time I confront him about it or threaten to leave, things seem to get worse.

I am the child of a divorced home and I don't want that for my sons, but I am sick of them seeing us fight about his problem. I want them to know the man I fell in love with. Now I know he's on the pain medicine, something to help him focus at work and now prescriptions to help him sleep. When I offer to see a counselor together, he says he doesn't think it's a problem. He's afraid that his work will find out and then make him go into rehab and we will lose everything. Then he says he doesn't even need rehab because he only uses them when things get really stressful at work.

Every time a business trip comes up, I cringe. This is not the man I married. I worry about my boys driving in a car with him. I agreed to share this story because I think there are many others out there struggling with the misuse of prescription drugs and I want them to see how it can escalate and tear families apart. Behind our seemingly beautiful, perfect life is this killer. It is easy to hide and easy to get. I guess I just want others to know that they aren't alone."

When I heard this mother's story, my heart broke. How many more are sitting in the pews on Sunday mornings hiding behind the masks of their "Sunday Best?" I pray for God's hope to shine light into our lives on these dark places that hold us captive.

My father started drinking when he was 14 years old and died when he was 55 due to the alcohol which made his heart muscles atrophy. My sister started using drugs when she was 15 years old and died when she was 39 from a lung condition brought on by her drug use.

After their deaths, I started in counseling and recovery myself. I went to Al Anon and ACOA meetings and began to be honest with others about my family of origin. I also began working on my own issues and found healing through God's work in my life. It wasn't easy to admit I needed others to help me. I had always been so independent. I thought I could handle things and keep myself separated from "it." But I discovered that addiction effects the whole family.

It was many years later before I was able to lift the mask in church. Even as a seminary student I felt the need to protect my family's secrets. Finally, I realized that God was calling me to let go of the shame and offer my experience as encouragement and hope for others.

This January, we have planned a church wide series called, "Finding Hope. Bringing Hope."

Christ Church is a place where people can find hope in Christ through a loving congregation who shares with one another our brokenness and encourages one another in healing and recovery.

As we help by taking off our masks, admitting our addictions, surrendering to a power greater than ourselves, and turning to one another for support, we can find hope and bring hope to others. Join us in January to learn more for yourself, for your friends and family, or for congregation members around you.

See Events page 17 for January series information.

Al Anon Family Group Meeting

Coming January, 2016, Saturdays at 8 pm

 findinghopebringinghope.wordpress.com

HEALING PARENTS

reflections from a father By a husband and father

I'm the father of an addict.

The first time I saw signs that my son had some issues was when he was just eight years old. We lived in our dream home in the east end of Louisville and our family of four was "normal" and happy. One day, my son got mad at his sister, who had locked him outside, and his response was to kick in the leaded glass door. Funny what goes on inside our dream homes...the world looks in and sees perfection or success. But those dreams can so often turn into nightmares.

We began seeking counseling for my son's behavioral issues and received diagnoses of ADD, ADHD and other behavioral issues. We sent him to a private school, hoping his issues would be resolved, but by the time he was 14, he was experimenting with alcohol and marijuana. His anger issues continued...along with drugs and alcohol and his first DUI immediately after he turned 16. At 17, we enrolled him in a wilderness program, but at age 18, he refused to stay. All this time, we kept asking ourselves the question, "Where did we go wrong?" We had a daughter that was well-behaved and well-adjusted in life...and yet our son's life was in shambles.

Our son did finish high school and left for college. During college he continued to have problems with alcohol and anger, however the real drug issues took hold when he returned to Louisville around age 25, when he progressed from pills to heroin.

More detox, involvement in individual counseling, family counseling, we did everything we could. It became a series of getting better then relapsing and the cycle would repeat.

Suicide threats sent him to an inpatient program away from home, followed by a half-way house. But the roller coaster of addiction, recovery and relapse continued. Our son is now 30, and has moved out on his own in a sober living facility. He seems to be doing well and trying to stay in recovery.

Three years ago, we were introduced to "Families Anonymous." Families Anonymous is a national 12 Step fellowship for the families and friends who have known a feeling of desperation concerning the destructive behavior of someone very near to them, whether caused by drugs, alcohol, or related behavioral problems. We went to our first meeting hoping for answers to our son's problems. We wanted him to be "fixed."

It took us a long time, but we began to understand that Families Anonymous didn't exist to fix our loved one; it existed to help us become healthier and find a way to experience peace in the midst of the chaos of addiction. This group has offered us extraordinary support from others who understand our issues and problems. We have learned a great deal about addiction as a disease, rather than just seeing it as a behavior. Because the program is based on the 12 steps of recovery, we

are continually being reminded that we must "Let Go, and Let God."

One of the greatest gifts that we have received from Families Anonymous is being introduced to the 3 C's: "You didn't CAUSE it; you can't CONTROL it and you can't CURE it." We have stopped blaming ourselves for our son's addiction and while we love and support him, we are no longer trying to control him or find a magic cure for his disease. Remembering the 3 C's allows us to respond to his behavior by taking care of ourselves rather than reacting to him based on our resentment and anxiety.

Some days we still feel like we are living in the dream. Some days we still feel like we are living in the nightmare. But we've discovered a way to cope. Families Anonymous makes every day a little easier. We are learning. We are changing. And through it all—we are learning to care for one another as we each try to navigate these dreams and nightmares together.

The road of addiction and recovery is challenging and each author in this issue finds themselves at a different place on that road.

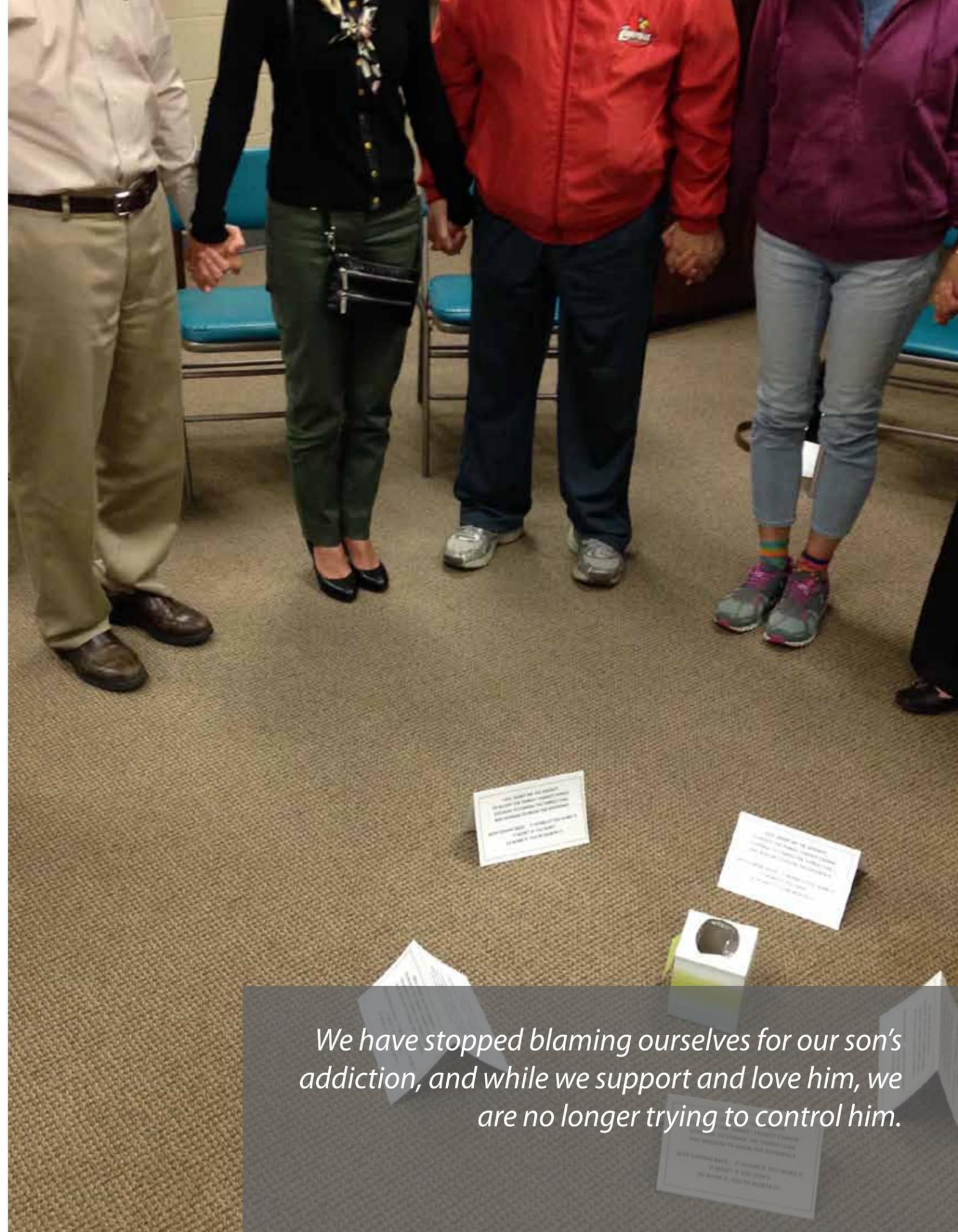
We are grateful to the anonymous authors who challenged themselves to put their story on paper and we respect that they prefer to remain anonymous at this time.

-Jane Myers and Rev. Melissa Head

Families Anonymous

Families Anonymous is a 12-step fellowship for the family and friends of those individuals with drug, alcohol, or other related behavioral issues.

Mondays, 6 to 7 pm in Room 156



We have stopped blaming ourselves for our son's addiction, and while we support and love him, we are no longer trying to control him.



MY DETOUR

reflections from a mother

By Beverly Arnett - a wife, mother and Christ Church Member

I was the mother of an addict. The dictionary defines the word detour as a “long or roundabout route to avoid something or visit somewhere along the way”—an alternate route. My mind ponders this meaning as I look at the large, orange sign propped up on my deck. My son Sean somehow came to possess this sign before his death in 2013 from a heroin overdose. Like many others, I hoped to get to my destination the easiest, most direct path. No wasted time, no diversions, just “easy sailing.”

Life was to be a straight path, with few bumps and curvy roads—certainly no valleys. Sean’s tragic death has taken me into some pretty deep valleys. Sean’s detour all began with his addictions. It took him to places that he didn’t want to go and among people that he normally would not have been with. It all began with the pursuit of fun, but led him to death. Sean died in the back of his car while the other people with him took his

money and bought food at a drive through. By the time they had gone into their house to eat and come out to check on him, his skin had a gray hue. Sean was already brain dead by the time the EMS came. My deepest fear came to pass that evening.

I have been looking for a way to reach out to the drug seller and young woman my son was with when he died. I know that they, like Sean, have been ensnared by addiction. I wish I could do something, say something to help them get away from addiction. However, I don’t want to put my family or myself in danger, so I have instead been praying for them. Too often, we forget that prayer is a very powerful tool, one of the most powerful tools we have. God wants to give us every good thing in life when we pray and act according to His will. We can break free from whatever ensnares us, even addiction. Ephesians 2:7,10 says that “for we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God

hath before ordained that we should walk in them.”

The word detour is French in origin. One of the meanings is “a change of direction.” May I faithfully walk on this path and call others to take a detour from their path of addiction to the one the Lord has ordained for them, all with the help of prayer and the power of Jesus.



Michael, Beverly and Celeste

REFLECTIONS from a sibling

By Celeste Arnett - a high school student and Christ Church Member

I was the sibling of an addict.

He had told me the night that he died that he loved me and was sorry for how he treated our family these last five years. He said he was going to try and be the brother and son we deserved and that he was going to go back to school in the fall. Those were his last words to me. The question of why that night haunts me repeatedly. My best guess is that after his first time using heroin, it had affected his brain so much that he was not able to ignore the cravings. On top of that, it was the birthday of the girl that Sean was in love with and she hung out with the drug dealer. She probably wanted Sean to use with her and he agreed, hoping to win her favor. This was the second time he had ever used, according to many of his friends. The second time he had used and it killed him.

Growing up, I would never have thought I would be the girl whose brother died of heroin. I never thought that our family would be asked if our story could be used in an address to the Kentucky lawmakers when introducing a new bill concerning heroin. In the last two years, I have learned more about addiction that I would ever have imagined. Addiction takes over your whole life, not only yours but your family’s too.

Sean wasn’t a long term addict to heroin and it definitely didn’t just start with heroin. No, it was a long journey ending with heroin. I believe it all began when he started to smoke cigarettes. He put himself in with this bad crowd in high school and when they started to smoke weed, he did too. Maybe if Sean had paid attention to the Bible when it says “Bad company corrupts good character,” he would

still be here. Soon, weed wasn’t enough, and he and his high school buddies would look elsewhere. Within three years, Sean had been introduced by these people to the people who would leave him for dead and then steal his car to wipe down any evidence. Sean became friends with these horrible people and while many of his high school friends began to straighten out, it was too late for Sean.

He would try and try to get back on the right path but the drugs had already altered his brain. He was now dependent upon them and couldn’t stay away. He would be gone for weeks and we wouldn’t know if he was dead or alive, then he would come home and try to get sober but would end up falling into the same pattern again. However, in the last year of his life he was doing a lot better. He was clean for, some say, almost a year. Then my mother got very, very sick. She spent a month in the hospital, and had two surgeries. With all this stress, he most likely used again. It was, in my opinion, around this time that he probably first used heroin.

We all know that addiction is a very dangerous thing. It spirals out of control so quickly. Who would have ever thought that my brother, an Eagle Scout and someone who attended the Speed School of Engineering would die at such a young age to such a terrible drug as heroin? You most likely have heard that one time is all it takes with these types of drugs, and I assure you it is true.

It took one use and Sean was addicted. It was the second use that killed him. In a way, he was more fortunate than those who have suffered through a lifetime addiction with heroin, never



Celeste and Sean, Thanksgiving 2007

being able to fully shake the addiction as it completely changes your brain. Or even more fortunate than those who are killed by this drug the first time they use it. But in many ways, he was not.

I believe that with hard work and faith, you can break free from addiction.

Even addiction to heroin, God promises us not more than we can take because he is walking alongside us, ready to carry us when we fall. God was sitting next to Sean in the car that night that he died. Through places such as The Healing Place, people can work towards a drug-free life with the help of those around them but, most of all, with the help of God.



THE BOTTOM OF MY GLASS

a recovering alcoholic

By - a husband, father
and Christ Church member

I'm a recovering alcoholic.

I thought I had it all: good upbringing in an affluent family in a good part of town, religion, education, training, great job and, subsequently, a family of my own. I had arrived, I thought. Something, however, was missing: I had a hole in my soul, inner pain, isolation, insecurity, and self-doubt. How would I get control of this?

I became friends with cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol. Not all at once, but over time. They were brought to me by well-intentioned individuals. I was ready to escape my woes. The cigarettes tamed my anxiety, but not completely. Drugs came easily: my parents and siblings had easy access to stimulants, mood enhancers, all forms

of medicines to take me up or take me down. Early on, alcohol was in the picture, but in moderation through most of my drinking years. I used all of these "solutions." When I did, I felt confident, life of the party, interesting, had little problem "fitting in," and had many good time friends. All of these: tobacco, drugs and alcohol were my solutions—solutions to mask my pain, and overlook that hole in my soul. Early on, all of this worked, or so I thought. Problem was, even with psychotherapy, I wasn't at all honest with myself, family or others.

The pain got worse, I needed more solution, so I smoked more, drugged more, drank more, but over time, these weren't working like they had. I had professional relationships but no real friends; religion but no real spirituality.

My emptiness and isolation worsened. So I drank more and more, argued with my wife and children, and was perturbed that none of it was working for me: no one was listening to me nor doing what my ego demanded: control. Something had to give and I realized I was losing my family.

A Power came to "nudge" me. It was intermittent but this Power would ask me, "Do you think you're an alcoholic?" to which I would respond, "Hey! I have this under control. I'm okay."

Next came a New Year's Eve police check-point. I admitted to the officer that earlier, at dinner, I had a glass of champagne. He gave me a Breathalyzer test and I passed it, but as I drove on, I began to wonder, "What if I

hadn't passed it?" I pictured what that might look like for me, my family, my friends, and my job. Again, I felt in control and moved on. The next few nights, I drank and argued with my wife and children. Things were bad, but I figured I would fix it the next day, only to repeat again the slurred tongue, self-defeating, insane behavior and thoughts.

Then it happened. We were drinking a lot and I was in the midst of yet another argument and felt terrible. How much more could I stand? Suddenly I was at a late night meeting of recovery. The stunning part was that I had no recollection that I had decided to go, where the meeting was, nor how I got there—none of it! I remember parts of the meeting: people happy I was there, wanting to hear my story and asking me to, "Keep coming back!" as well as, "Let us love you until you can love yourself."

I had several profound thoughts/ observations: somehow I knew I was done drinking, instantly understanding that a Power greater than myself had delivered me with His guiding spiritual hand to attend my first meeting. God was doing for me what I could not do for myself. I surrendered in the face of profound ego deflation, understood that I was powerless over alcohol and many other things. I was aware there was a God and it wasn't me. I found Spirituality—a conscious contact with Him. A new journey had begun! A simple program that was hard to

do required commitment, action, continuity and showed me how to lead a better, more fulfilling life just by doing what others in the meetings and the program suggested, including working the 12 steps of recovery. I learned the power of reaching out and being there for others which is key for maintenance of my sobriety.

I'm happier today, now with about two years of sobriety, than I had ever been before this program. There are still some bad days, but I have learned better ways to respond to these. God has relieved me of the obsession to drink and has provided me a simple kit of spiritual tools that I can use in good as well as bad times.

God had a plan for me and I am profoundly grateful to Him and humbled by Him. Life is good with my spiritual contact with Him and the solutions of life I now have as a result of these 12 steps. The steps help me daily and allow me to turn my thoughts to others.

*It's progress, not
perfection and its one
day at a time.*

*Thy will, not my will
be done!*

*The road of addiction and recovery
is challenging and each author in this
issue finds themselves at a different
place on that road.*

*We are grateful to the anonymous
authors who challenged themselves
to put their story on paper and we
respect that they prefer to remain
anonymous at this time.*

-Jane Myers and Rev. Melissa Head

This issue affects
many of us.

In our congregational
survey, 65% of you said
that your family and/
or friends have been
adversely affected by
substance overuse and
abuse.

Alcoholics Anonymous

Alcoholics Anonymous is an international fellowship of men and women who have had a drinking problem.

Tuesdays, 6 to 7 pm in Room 156 (Self Will Run Riot)
Closed discussion group for Alcoholics only

Wednesdays, 6 to 7 pm, Room 154 (Brownsboro Lost and Found)
Open discussion group

Saturdays, 8:30 to 9:45 am, Room 250 (Meditation Group)
Open group

Saturdays, 9:30 to 11 am, Room 252 (Friends of Bill W.)
Open group



ACORNS and ADDICTION

sharing hope and healing, one jewel at a time

By Paula Matthews, Christ Church Member

We want to bring hope to those struggling with addiction.

The Healing Place is a facility in Louisville that offers rehabilitation and recovery for those struggling with addiction. The Jewels of Grace is a group who up-cycles jewelry and other items to donate to ministries in need. Our group has loved ones impacted by the reality of addiction. We felt drawn to The Healing Place and the women there who needed hope. Our initial goal was to use our creativity and handmade gifts to show God’s love to the women, but after our initial visit and seeing over 240 women and the needs, we had to ask, “What do you need? How can we help?”

She said, “We need Big Books.” Big Books are a necessity in helping the women through the 12 steps to recovery. She showed us a tattered book that was being shared by a few women. We found a source for the Big Books and with financial donations from church individuals, we have supplied the Big Books for the past eight months. These books tell them to seek a higher power and often, the women at The Healing Place tell us about their faith in God. We listen to their amazing stories and our faith is strengthened and energized.

Our real treasure and joy comes from making HOPE necklaces for each woman. It features a real acorn cap. It is packaged with a card that states,

“Within every acorn is the HOPE of a mighty oak.”

I will never forget the day we walked into their classroom and saw 100 women sitting in a large circle. We gave each of them a HOPE necklace and they were surprised that we had taken the time to make this gift, just for them. They read the back of the card: *You are not alone, a group of women from Louisville is praying for you and sending our love and hope to you by making this pendant. The real acorn cap once protected and nurtured the acorn seed until it was ready to emerge and grow. May this be the symbol of hope and protection for you as you continue your journey.*

Recently we received an email from a Healing Place staff member telling us this beautiful story:

“Our staff met on Thursday for the weekly staff meeting and one of the women who was petitioning to leave the program (something each woman has to do before leaving recovery to prove she’s ready) to begin her transition into her next step, was wearing her HOPE necklace. As she nervously told the staff her story and why she felt it was time for her to move on, she held her necklace and said it gave her hope! She said that the ladies who made that necklace are praying for her and she almost cried. Thank you for making a difference”

Thanks to the help of many, we have given over 400 HOPE necklaces, 170 Big Books and notebooks, plus blankets, shoes and clothing. The beauty of personally giving a gift without anything expected in return is it’s a powerful way to bring humans together. The women of The Healing Place surprised us in April with a “thank you lunch” that they prepared, and we sat with them as friends. It was an emotional day as we realized how much we all meant to each other. They

led us to the classroom where we first met them just three months earlier, and one wall was covered with 100 handmade thank you notes to us! It was beautiful and we were speechless.

The small acorn HOPE necklace is much more than a piece of jewelry. It is an effective symbol communicating hope and love from one person to the other. Now we are known as the Acorn Ladies! Recently, we gave another batch of 100 necklaces to the new class of residents, but this time it was much different than the first. The word is out, they know us, they accept us with hugs, and love is shared *one person at a time.*



HOPE necklace pendants

www.ccum.net/serve

Patty Groot
Director of Servant Ministries
patty@ccum.net or 893-2201 x251

ADVENTURES IN GOD'S CREATION

By Mark Ray,
Christ Church Member

Early one morning in August, while most of his peers back in Louisville were deep asleep, Christ Church member, Worden Barr, roused his fellow Boy Scouts from their tents high in the Sangre de Cristo Mountains of northern New Mexico. The members of Troop 317 wanted to catch the 6:10 am sunrise over Philmont Scout Ranch's Tooth of Time, and that meant waking up at 3 am.

The Scouts made it to the Tooth with time to spare, along with half a dozen other crews from around the country. Once the sun came up, Steve Heifner, an assistant Scoutmaster with Troop 317, asked all the Scouts present to make the Scout sign and recite the Scout Oath. "I wanted to get our boys—all the boys that were up there—to relate to how Scouting bring us all together," he said. "To me, Scouting is so much about understanding what brings us together rather than what separates us."

It's also about understanding what it means to lead—and what it means to follow. Worden, who is 16 years old, served as the crew's elected leader, shepherding his group of Scouts and adults through an 80-mile trek that took them from base camp (elevation

6,550 feet) to Mount Baldy (elevation 12,441 feet) and back. "It was taxing some days, but it was a very great experience," he said. "I believe I grew a lot more as a leader."

Philmont is about far more than just hiking and leading, however. Every couple of days, crews visit camps where they can participate in adventure sports, learn about the ranch's history, or enjoy an old-fashioned western campfire. Worden's crew had the chance to visit a restored frontier homestead, enjoy rock climbing, and try their hands at blacksmithing. What Worden remembers most, however, is the ascent of Mount Baldy, a four-mile, 2,000-foot climb. From Baldy's rocky, windswept peak, the Scouts could look out at "a seemingly endless amount of sky and land all around us," he said.

Not surprisingly, trips like this don't come cheap. Heifner said the Philmont trip cost about \$1,500 per person, including transportation. While that's a bargain compared to 12 days at Walt Disney World, it can still be a challenge for some families to cover.

Which brings us back to Christ Church. Every November, a virtual

forest pops up in the Christ Church parking lot. From Thanksgiving weekend until mid-December, Boy Scout Troop 317 sells Christmas trees, along with wreaths, garlands, and other holiday greenery, to church members and neighbors. While some of the profits from the tree stand pay for badges, equipment, and leader training, the tree stand primarily supports outdoor adventures—from weekends at Camp Crooked Creek in Bullitt County to summer excursions at places like Philmont.

Worden said he enjoys the long hours spent at the tree stand. "It's always fun, especially on those cold days when a customer comes in and everyone rushes out of the cabin to go help them get a tree," he said.

What's more, he knows it is more than just a small stand in the back of a church parking lot. Each of those sales takes him and his fellow Scouts closer to another great adventure in God's creation.

TROOP 317 TREE STAND

Opens Friday, November 27, 12 - 4 pm

Normal Hours:
Weekdays 5 - 8 pm
Saturdays 10 am - 8 pm
Sundays 12 - 8 pm



My freshman year of college was a struggle for me. I was four hours away from home. I've always been a family person, and being four hours away was really difficult. Christmas had always been one of my favorite holidays, but this year it meant something more. Being able to finally come home for Christmas season that year was so special. I felt like I could just breathe.

When I walked into church that year to attend all the Christmas Concerts, I felt rejuvenated. It was...magical. I even snuck into the balcony during one of the chancel choir rehearsals before one of the concerts started and just soaked everything in by myself for a while.

It was like everything I needed to feel and hear...that everything that I had been missing about home...was wrapped up into those few hours. I wanted to capture it in a jar and open it anytime I needed it while I was away.

That was a hard year. But that was a Christmas I'll never forget because I saw the value of my home. Spending the month with my family and not being stressed about school for a little while. Seeing all my friends

who had gone to different schools. I think that was one of my favorite Christmases.

I've grown up at Christ Church. I was baptized here and just recently completed a college internship here; but of all the times I've walked through the doors of this church, that was when I felt most at home. I had been away and struggling and that Christmas I was reminded that I always have a home here.



Check out what's happening for college students this winter:

www.ccum.net/college

Rusty Crimm
Intern for College Ministry
rusty@ccum.net

 ccumstudybreak.wordpress.com

CHURCH EVENTS

For a complete list of Christ Church events, visit www.ccum.net/calendar.

Christmas Concerts

Sunday, December 13 at 5 pm

Wednesday, December 16 at 7:30 pm

Sunday, December 20, 9 and 11:15 am

Chancel Choir will join with Handbell Ringers and instrumentalists to present, "Eternal Light." In addition to works of Mendelssohn, Rene Clausen, Ralph Vaughan Williams and Moses Hogan, the program will include a Traditional Nigerian selection. The singing of carols by the congregation and choir with orchestra is always a high point of this annual celebration. Off-site parking with shuttle service will be available at the Summit Office Park (corner of Brownsboro Road and Hubbards Lane).



Blue Christmas

Sunday, December 20 at 5 pm

Blue Christmas is a service designed as a gift to those who may have experienced suffering or loss over the course of the past year.



Holiday Hope Caroling Event

Monday, December 21 at 6:15 pm

Meet at Christ Church in Room 005 for this fun tradition of bringing holiday cheer to those in need.



Christmas Eve Services

Thursday, December 24

3, 5, 8 and 10:45 pm

These communion and candlelight services help us celebrate the birth of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. The 3 pm service has elements designed for young children. Off-site parking with shuttle service will be available at the Summit Office Park (corner of Brownsboro Road and Hubbards Lane) for the 3 and 5 pm services. Childcare is available at all services except 10:45 pm.



CHURCH EVENTS

The church building will be closed Friday-Saturday, December 25-26; Monday, December 28 and Friday, January 1 in holiday observance.

January 2016: Finding Hope. Bringing Hope.

A four-part series offering speakers and table discussion on multiple aspects of alcohol and drug overuse/abuse.

WHEN/WHERE

Sundays, January 10, 17, 24 and 31 – 6:15 to 8 pm

Fellowship Hall

WHO

Perhaps you have no problems with substances and can offer your strength and support to others. Perhaps you've overcome addiction and can offer your experience and hope. Perhaps substance abuse is a painful fact of life for you or a family member, and you are looking for help. Whatever your situation, this series is for you.

TOPICS

January 10 – Hear from Christ Church members who have suffered from the pain caused by substance abuse. Table discussion.

January 17 – Hear from doctors and health professionals who have studied and worked with substance abusers and families. Q&A

January 24 – An alcoholic and his family who are in recovery share their experience and hope. Table discussion.

January 31 – An evening of hope as we hear from groups, programs and facilities and organizations.

REGISTRATION

Registration is suggested. You are welcome to come to all or some sessions. Childcare is available by registration.

www.ccum.net/events/HOPE

Youth Missions Fundraiser

Sunday, February 7, 12:30 to 2:30 pm

Support youth missions by donating a cake and attending this fun, annual event. Contact Andrea Ragsdale, Director of Youth Service and Outreach, at 893-2201 x266 or andrea@ccum.net for donation information.



FROM THE STAFF

If you are not receiving our weekly eNews e-mail, visit www.ccum.net to sign-up.



Bettina Cameron Joins Staff as Assistant to Youth and Children's Ministries!

Bettina Cameron joined Christ Church on September 30. After many years as a Corporate Event Manager, Bettina intentionally chose a new path to enable her to merge her personal mission of impacting others with the gospel of Jesus Christ and Christ Church's mission of sharing God's love, one person at a time. In her spare time, Bettina fulfills her passion of encouraging others through her "SpeakLifeToday" blog.

CAMPAIGN UPDATE

Expanding our Impact... *Together*



Total Pledged	\$4,360,888
Received	\$4,233,520
Principal Payments	\$2,869,900
Loan Principal Balance	\$0

Exactly two-and-a-half years after we asked for your support of the Expanding Our Impact...Together campaign, we are thrilled to let you know that we have nearly completed what we set out to do.

As the remaining \$280,000 in pledges are fulfilled, below we outline how those dollars will be allocated:

- \$31,000 to reserves which were drawn upon to repair our aging HVAC
- \$48,000 to final parking expenses (operating funds were initially used to complete the project)
- Remainder in designated reserve for future capital projects

You may recall that we had other capital needs that were not provided for with the pledges received, including renovation of the Chapel and school entrance replacement of the HVAC for that building and renovation of the Youth Center. Thanks to a couple of generous bequests, the Youth Center renovation will begin early next year. The fulfillment of pledges to this campaign will give us a great head start on our next capital project!

Thanks be to God from whom all blessings flow and thank you for your faithful commitment to Christ Church and its ministries! If you have any questions regarding your contributions, you may contact Jim Stewart, Controller at 893-2201 x223.

LEAVING YOUR LEGACY

So many of us enjoy the good fortune of material wealth. We are fortunate that we live in a country that allows us to worship God in the open. God's grace, mercy and love is freely given to each of us. We give back to God through our tithes and offerings. While lifetime gifting is very rewarding, future legacy giving creates a permanent memorial for you and your family.

Legacy giving refers to gifts that are made after your death. These can be made through bequests, beneficiary designations, charitable giving trusts, and any number of other options. What they all have in common is that the support of your church can continue, and that support can encourage others to do the same. You will be hearing more soon about some exciting projects under way at the church that were made possible by legacy gifts.

A member of the Stewardship Committee will be happy to confidentially discuss your options with you. Contact Jim Stewart, Controller, at 893-2201 x223 for more information on leaving your legacy.



MISCELLANEOUS



Christ Church Golf Group 2015 Season Ends

The Christ Church Golf Group ended their season Wednesday, September 16 at Hunting Creek Country Club. It was an exciting night and players were recognized for their achievements during the year. Fifty two players and spouses attended and enjoyed the evening.

The group had fourteen outings this year. The outings are more about fellowship and it is all about fun and having a good time while playing the great game of golf. Most of the players are Christ Church members but there are several non-members, allowing us to reach out to the community.

While not about competition the group did have two awards. Jack Yusk won both the "Big Fore" Trophy for having the low net score at four special events and the Roger Burke "Low Net" Award for the low net player of the year.

Mike Simpson and Allen Snively are retiring from leadership of the group and Chet Cooper and Fred McWhorter will lead the group next year. More information will be available in the spring.

www.ccum.net/ministries/adults

OUR CHURCH FAMILY

Christian Sympathy

Family and friends of Grace Riley who died September 14

Cara Jarrell on the death of her father, Galen Paul Hess, Sr., who died September 16

Barbara Clark on the death of her brother, Albert R. "Raleigh" Sally, who died October 4

Family and friends of Peggy Mack who died October 10

Susan Basinger on the death of her husband, David Basinger, who died October 13

Cheryl Shipman on the death of her husband Jack Shipman who died October 14

Bobbie Tarter on the death of her husband Jerry Tarter who died October 19

Darren and Anna Bodart and family on the death of Darren's father Frank Bodart who died October 19

Jean Swenck on the death of her sister Jacqueline Miller who died October 20

Jean Watson on the death of her husband Paul who died October 22

Katie Cauley on the death of her father Cliff Miller, who died October 26

Larry and Carolyn Alt on the death of Larry's sister Laura Alt Gipe who died October 28

Judy Lawhorn on the death of her father, Rev. Alton Lawhorn, who died November 2

Adam and Kori Andrews on the death of Adam's grandmother, Rose Petty, who died November 4

New Members

Pam Burke Kevin and Jennifer Goselin

Byron and Heidi Johnston Ethan Kik

Jessie Gordon

Weddings

Nancy Whitton and Eric Spence were married in our Sanctuary on September 19 by Dr. George Strunk. Nancy is the daughter of Rita and Roger Whitton.

Philip Renaud and Jordan Drury were married on October 10 by Dr. George Strunk. Philip is the son of Diane Renaud and Bobby Renaud.

Erin Williams and Josh Cornett were married November 7 in our Sanctuary by Rev. Loletuth Kalz. Erin is the daughter of Melanie Williams-Sublett.

Morgan Fleece and Tommy Edwards were married in our Sanctuary November 14 by Dr. George Strunk. Morgan is the daughter of Bev and Steve Fleece.

David Heyburn and Ashley Berger were married October 24. David is the son of Ginny and John Heyburn.

Serving our Country

1st Lt. Addison W. Bohannon, US Army
(Great-nephew of Colleen Berry)

Cmdr. Derek Brady, US Navy
(Son of Marilyn Sangiuliano)

Maj. James E. Chapman, Jr., US Army
(Son of Janice and Jim Chapman, brother of Jana Ladd)

Capt. Douglas Cummings,
US Army Chaplain
(Son of Sally and Jack Cummings)

2nd Lt. Danielle L. Cummings, US Army
(Granddaughter of Sally and Jack Cummings)

2nd Lt. Bailey Hawkins, US Army
(Granddaughter of Marie and Richard Johnson)

Lt. Zachary T. Huff, US Navy
(Grandson of Allys and Bill Huff)

David Farc, Kentucky Air National Guard

Capt. Travis Johnson, US Army
(Grandson of Marie and Richard Johnson)

Sgt. Jacob Longest, US Air Force
(Grandson of Ruth Murray)

Michael Kluever, US Air Force
(Son of Rev. Karen Kluever)

2nd Lt. Trevor Pruitt, US Army
(Nephew of Marilyn Sangiuliano)

Lt. Grant Parker Roberts, US Army
(Son of Bill and Laurie Anne Roberts)

Lt. Cameron Kelley Roberts, US Army
(Son of Bill and Laurie Anne Roberts)

Capt. Jordan Shontz, US Army
(Grandson of Jane Shontz)

Ens. Jonathan Shontz, US Navy
(Grandson of Jane Shontz)

Madeline Smith
NROTC program at Tulane University
Midshipman 3rd class

Lt. Todd Smyth, US Navy
(Grandson of Lorraine Allen)

Capt. Noah J. Snyder, US Army
(Grandson of Kathleen and John Snyder)

Capt. Christopher Wardlaw, US Army
(Nephew of Russ Wardlaw)

Capt. Aaron Wellman, USMC
(Son of Wayne and Carol Wellman)

Lt. Shelley Worth, Canadian Forces
(Granddaughter of Colleen Berry)

Baptisms

Luke Patrick Best (4/24/2015), son of Lyndsey and Bart Best, was baptized on September 27 by Dr. George Strunk. Lilli is Luke's big sister.

Tyler William Patrick (6/14/2010) and Finnegan Landers Patrick (2/10/2012), sons of Erin and Todd Patrick, were baptized on September 27 by Dr. George Strunk.

Charli Rose Holtzmann (3/11/2015), daughter of Lauren and Ron Holtzmann, was baptized on September 27 by Dr. George Strunk. Charlie joins sister Hannah and brothers Robert and Jonah in the Holtzmann household. Grandparents are Ray and Lynn Ihlenberg.

Isla Claire Chism (5/29/2015), daughter of Laura and Adam Chism, was baptized on October 11 by Dr. George Strunk. Jeff and Laura Jones are Isla's grandparents.

Molly Johnston (1/24/2010), Carter Johnston (3/17/2011) and Autumn Johnston (7/14/2014), children of Heidi and Byron Johnson, were baptized on October 18 by Rev. Loletuth Kalz and Rev. Melissa Head.

Ethan William Kik, son of MJ and Peter Kik, was baptized on November 15 by Dr. George Strunk.

Morgan Elise Goselin (10/24/2014), daughter of Jennifer and Kevin Goselin, was baptized on November 15 by Dr. George Strunk.

Carter Lowell Cline (1/21/2015), son of Sarah and Eric Cline, was baptized on November 15 by Dr. George Strunk.



For more information contact
Leigh Ray, Assistant to the Pastors,
893-2201 x222 or lray@ccum.net

SENIOR ADULTS

For more information on Senior Adult Ministries visit www.ccum.net/SAM.
To reserve your spot at any of the events, call the SAM reservation line at 893-2201 x328 or visit www.ccum.net/SAM.



REFLECTIONS on Homebound Communion

It is inspiring; it is encouraging, it is moving. It is homebound communion. Twice a year the Senior Adult Ministry holds two communion services for folks who cannot typically attend church. Usually one service is held in the fall during "World Wide Communion Week" and the second in the spring during Holy Week. Invitations are sent to those in area nursing homes and those who, for various reasons, find it very difficult to leave their own homes. Generally, each individual is accompanied by a caretaker or family member. After inspiring music and a short message, all receive communion followed by a lunch prepared by SAM members.

As Sarah Kelly, a long-time member of SAM puts it, "The Homebound Communion...gives all of us a chance to raise our voices in song, to hear words of inspiration and to share in taking the communion elements. It is a tie that binds."

In the words of Lin Edwards, Chair of the SAM Team, "Those attending...all give the promise of the hope of the Holy Spirit being present to us no matter what age has done to our physical body and our mind."

All the guests are so very appreciative of the chance to once again worship in our beautiful Sanctuary and to actively participate in our church community. They model that through their faith. They depend on God's strength. Although the intention is for SAM to show God's love one person at a time, *they* demonstrate God's love to everyone.

December Events

Joyous Singers Christmas Sing-A-Long Luncheon Monday, December 14

Join us for this annual Christmas sing-a-long that is sure to get you in the Christmas spirit.

Cost: \$10 for lunch, program is free.

When: 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall.

Reservations by December 10.

Derby Dinner Playhouse Outing Thursday, December 17

Join us for this fun outing to see "White Christmas."

Cost: \$33 (lunch included)

When: Leave Christ Church at 11:15 am.

Reservations by December 10.

January Events

One Voice Brunch Saturday, January 23

Join us for a fun luncheon shared with Christ Church youth and high school choir.

Cost: Free

When: 11 am in Fellowship Hall.

Reservations by January 18.

February Events

Speed Art Museum Luncheon Monday, February 8

Ann Taylor will speak about the re-opening of the Speed Museum.

Cost: \$10 for lunch, program is free.

When: 11:30 am in Fellowship Hall.

Reservations by February 3.

Louisville Water Tower Outing Wednesday, February 17

Join us for a tour of what's new at the Louisville Water Tower.

Cost: \$8 for tour. Lunch at Captain's Quarters paid on your own.

When: Leave Christ Church at 10:15 am, return at 2:30 pm.

Reservations by February 14.



UNDERSTANDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE

by Jane Myers, Pastoral Counselor

This issue of *Reflections* has been focused on addressing the pain of addiction and substance abuse because it impacts so many people...both those who are abusing a substance and those who love them. We know that alcohol and drug abuse have a multitude of negative effects on relationships, such as marriage and families as well as our relationship with God.

As a part of our witness to God's love, we are seeking to unveil the secrecy and eliminate the shame of these issues in order to offer Light, hope, recovery, healing and reconciliation. In the process of preparing for this emphasis on substance abuse at Christ Church, I thought back on some of the places where I learned about the pain of addiction and substance abuse. Early in my career, I worked at 7th and Market at the Family Assessment Center where we worked with clients to provide emergency assistance for rent and utilities. As I was still in school and on a tight budget, I usually parked on 10th Street (free parking) and walked to work. So every morning I passed the Mission House, or Frank's, as the guys on the street called it. Mission House provided shelter for homeless men who were unable to stay in regular shelters due to drug and alcohol issues. It consisted of two run down buildings on either side of the street. Men who were sober got to stay on the "good side." From the outside, I really could not tell the difference. Many of these men were regulars at the Family Assessment Center as we also had a unit that helped with disability applications. Contrary to stereotypes, most of these men were polite and friendly as my coworkers and I passed, and I actually felt safer on my walk to my car in the evenings knowing they were out and around on the sidewalks.

Fast forward almost 30 years later, I went on a visit to the women's facility at The Healing Place with a few Christ Church members and staff and learned that the roots of The Healing Place were at Frank's place. Such a difference. We were attending an immersion type tour of their beautiful building and learned about the exceptional program there. These women were not sitting against a building on the street with a brown bag covering a bottle of whiskey. They were busy attending classes, cooking, doing laundry and other tasks, and yet, not one of them was too busy to stop and talk with us about the program, and many were eager to tell their story of recovery. They shared stories of their addiction, incarceration, and pain, but they also talked about recovery, and most, about how God has been working in their lives. Finally, they were in a place where they were treated with respect and encouragement and they showed that same respect and encouragement to one another.

So here I am almost 30 years after my daily walk past Frank's Mission House and I still frequently pass people living in the throes of addiction or caught up in patterns of abuse and overuse of substances. There is a big difference though. Now I pass them in the halls on the way to church services or to a group or Bible Study. They come to my office in emotional pain and often with significant relationship issues. They are often ashamed of their problems and how their substance usage impacts them and their families. They are embarrassed for people they see in church to know of their struggle, whether it is alcohol, prescription drugs or some other substance. They feel as though they will be rejected if their secret is known. I also see many individuals struggling to manage relationships with a substance abusing family member, or grieving the loss of the life of one they loved.

Substance related issues often carry a heavy stigma. How does one share such pain with fellow strugglers in an affluent, East End congregation? It is my hope that as we work to destroy the stigma of addiction and substance abuse here that we open our hearts and arms to those who carry such pain right here in this congregation and eventually carry that acceptance to those outside these walls.

Addiction is a physical and spiritual disease. There are many factors that may jump-start the disease, but once in motion it is a force of its own. The addiction becomes the primary focus of a person's life. These individuals do not choose to have the disease, but with our help and support, they may be able to face the challenge of managing it. I hope you will join us in January as we begin a series of understanding substance abuse and bringing hope to all who are impacted by it.

Too often we seem to believe that shame and guilt will cure the disease of addiction. It will not.

Jane Myers, LMFT, LCSW
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findinghopebringinghope.wordpress.com
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