

Christ Community Church Matters

Calendar

Sunday, December 21

- 9:00 a.m. Awakenings
- 10:00 a.m. Gathering
- 11:15 a.m. House Crisis Task Force
- 11:30 a.m. Christmas Eve program rehearsal

Monday, December 22

- 1:30 p.m. Staff meeting
- 2:30 p.m. Service planning meeting
- 7:00 p.m. C³/CCC men's group

Tuesday, December 23

- 9:00 a.m. Quilters
- 7:00 p.m. C³/CCC men's group

Wednesday December 24

- 7:00 p.m. The 'More' of Christmas Family Service
- 9:00 p.m. Christmas Eve Carol Sing
- 9:30 p.m. Christmas Eve Gathering Vivaldi Gloria

Thursday, December 25

Offices closed for Christmas holiday.

Sunday, December 28

- 9:00 a.m. Awakenings
- 10:00 a.m. Gathering
- 11:15 a.m. Housing Crisis Task Force

Important financial update

As you are likely aware, 2008 has been a difficult time for non-profit organizations. Even prior to the financial market collapse, the slow economy was increasing needs and affecting the ability of donors to respond. C³/CCC is no exception. Despite the evident spirit and enthusiasm within our community, our finances have been adversely impacted. The chart below compares our financial highlights from the full year 2007 with our results through November 2008. The magnitude of our year-to-date deficit (\$159,000) is primarily a result of a donation decline. C³/CCC has consistently benefited by year-end generosity. This year our needs are significant and we have limited financial reserves. Please include C³/CCC in your year-end giving plans.

	2007 (full year)	Year To Date (thru Nov 08)	Difference (07 to 08)
total revenue	\$883,000	\$634,000	\$249,000
contributions	\$595,000	\$474,000	\$121,000
net loss	\$9,000	\$159,000	\$150,000

Make a Year-End Gift Today!

Your donation of any amount is greatly appreciated at this time. For your convenience we accept donations of cash, check, credit card, or automatic bank withdrawal. Envelopes for your donations and credit card donation forms are available this morning. You may call the church office, 616-842-1985, and speak to Andrea if you have any questions or would like to make a donation that way. Thank you for your generosity and support!

Incredible Christmas Eve gatherings

7:00 p.m. Family Program

You will not want to miss our incredible Christmas Eve gathering The 'More' of Christmas. This program, perfect for families, features the story of *How the Grinch Stole Christmas*, the story of the Birth of Jesus, and even a special appearance from Santa Claus. Please invite your friends to attend.

9:00 p.m. Carol Sing

Do you just love to sing Christmas carols? Join us for a 30-minute carol sing-along this Christmas Eve.

9:30 p.m. Gathering with Vivaldi Gloria

This year our beautiful Christmas Eve gathering will feature readings, carols, candles, Eucharist, and a choral treat, Vivaldi Gloria. The Gloria has origins in Luke's account of Christ's birth, that the angels sang to the shepherds. Between 1713 and 1719, Vivaldi kept the Ospedale della Pietà well supplied with sacred music, and this setting of the Gloria, one of two which he composed in D major, is probably among the earliest of these works. It is divided into twelve relatively brief movements contrasting in mood, musical texture, and instrumental and vocal color, yet still coherent in overall musical structure. All are welcome to join us for this incredible musical performance, progressive readings, and Christmas carols.



www.christ-community.net

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Are you *Birdlike and Barnless*?

Ready for a humble, hard-working Christian religion that is progressive, pro-justice, and pro-peace? Ready for faith that takes the Bible seriously because it doesn't take it literally? Ready for a soulful expression of this kind of Christianity in meditative prose, poetry, ritual, and song? Ready to empty the barn of dusty dogma, and take wing with soulful celebration?

Jim Burklo, author of *Open Christianity* still used as a text by study groups around the world as an introduction to progressive faith, has produced a jewel of a new book and will be here to share it with us on Sunday, January 4. *Birdlike and Barnless: Meditation, Prayers, and Songs for Progressive Christians* is a rich devotional resource for individuals, and a treasure-trove of fresh material for churches to use in worship and programming.

Burklo's personal reflections lead the reader on a spiritual path from the contemplative to the comic, from tender moments to prophetic exhortations, from analysis to inspiration. His new lyrics to old hymns offer poetic antidotes to outdated theology. His prayers move readers, both Christian and non-Christian, beyond supernaturalism and into the heart of mystical experience. His liturgies bust out of the barn of stodgy worship. They buzz with the word that the listeners heard when Jesus pointed at the birds in his Sermon on the Mount.

Purchase your tickets THIS MORNING to participate in the incredible brunch with Jim Adams on January 4, following our 10:00 a.m. gathering. Tickets are \$12.

What a world-changing community

Thank you for your participation in last week's Alternative Christmas Market. Over \$7500 was raised to go toward life-changing gifts for the world. Thank you for helping to empower people and projects nationally and internationally through your holiday giving.

Looking for the perfect children's gift?

A folktale from long ago about a boy who chooses to live in the forest rather than go to war, *The Forest Boy* reveals a message of hope and peace for our times.

The collaboration of Margaret Willey and Jane Leonard, along with the production assistance offered by Lynne Deur and Annie Wassmann, and the support and enthusiasm of Don and Cindy Anderson, have made this project possible.

Your purchase of this incredible children's book will serve to promote events and projects that encourage and celebrate peace. **All proceeds from the sale of this book benefit Christ Community Church.** *Forest Boy* is \$10 and can be purchased this morning.

C3 Book Club: *The English Major*

Join us on Wednesday, January 21, at 7:00 p.m. for our discussion of Michigan native, Jim Harrison's acclaimed book, *The English Major*. Follow one man's journey into and out of himself with reflection and wicked wit.

C3 Youth Homelessness Day Trip

Saturday, February 28

Christmas will be over but the work of Christmas will just be started. Join us for a day trip to Grand Rapids to take an "Urban Plunge." C3 Youth Middle School Students will explore the Heartside neighborhood and serve a meal to homeless and hungry folks. Bring your friends for a day of fun, learning and service.

We will leave the church parking lot on Saturday, February 28, at 8:00 a.m. and return at about 4:00 p.m..

Parent volunteers are needed to chaperon. Interested? Contact Chad Beyer by calling 616-459-3432 or e-mail chadbeyer@christ-community.net.

Staying connected

We invite you to stay up-to-date on all that is happening with this community using your choice of online social networks and resources.

Follow Ian Lawton's recent musings at his blog:

www.ianwlawton.blogspot.com

Connect to other progressives and get update on events and programs with our **Facebook Group**.

Follow us on Twitter: www.twitter.com/ChristCommunity



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