



Christus Victor Lutheran Church

"Fearlessly trusting God, we accept all others, ourselves, and our calling to give comfort."

The VENTURE *Since 1968*

NOVEMBER 2023



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Pastor's Article: pgs. 2-3

Fall at CVLC!: pgs. 4-6

Announcements: pgs. 7-8

Why do we use the word THANKS?: pg. 9

Quilter's Corner: pg. 10

2024 Generosity Appeal: pg. 11

Martin Luther article: pg. 12

WELCA/Outreach Team Announcement: pg. 13

The Living Nativity 2023: pg. 14

Birthdays/Anniversaries/Council Corner: pg. 15

November Calendar/Christian Coffee Chat: pg. 16

Ministry Leaders: pg. 17

Slowing Your Heart Rate Down



Here's a shout out to the biggest Diamondbacks fan at CVLC, and the biggest Diamondbacks fan I know: Suellen Kennedy.

As I'm writing this, it's the 3rd inning of game 4 and the Rangers are already beating the Diamondbacks 10-0 and Jonah just walked into our living room (after eating too much Halloween candy) and started pulling dirty laundry out of his hamper one by one and throwing them into the middle of the room. Yep, that's my life.

But, I want to talk about sports leadership and its connection to church leadership.

Don Yaeger, part of the Maxwell Leadership team highlights the Arizona Diamondbacks in short video on leadership. He says these young players consistently say in post-game interviews that a big part of their success is that they are able to slow down their heart rate. (see link for video at the end of this article)

Think about it. If your heart is racing and you are tense, you won't be able to react quickly on defense to get to the ball, nor will you be able to react offensively to a pitch. Slowing down your heart rate is key to success on the ball field.

This is also key to church leadership in several ways.

First, spiritually. You cannot prayerfully meditate when your heart is racing. You might be able to pray a quick prayer when your heart is racing. But, those prayers are usually cries for help. A deep relational prayer where you grow closer to God by feeling closer to the presence of the divine takes a different type of prayer ... a prayer that requires you to slow down your heart rate. This is most certainly a challenge today where there is so much to do, so much stress, kids throwing dirty laundry into your living room while you are simultaneously writing a Venture article and watching the world series ... it's hard to slow down and focus on the presence of the divine.

Like every Reformation Sunday, this past Sunday we read Psalm 46 where God orders us to "Be still and know that I Am God." Slowing down your heart rate is a key spiritual discipline if we are to know God deeply.

Second, pastorally. Pastor here means care-giver (as opposed to priest). Anyone can be a care giver. When someone comes to you in need, and they are all over the place, and their heart is going 200 beats per minute, you can't calm them down if you cannot calm yourself down. To give them the care they need, you need to be able to slow down your heart rate. If you get all wound up with them, you probably won't help them calm down, relax, and help them remember that God is still in control.

Third, administratively. Most ministry happens in community at Christus Victor. Whether it's a group working together on a quilt or people sitting in a meeting, it's not unusual for things to get heated. At some point someone will say something that will get a reaction out of others (sometimes this is good, but not always). Leaders often ask the question "are you a thermometer that follows the temperature in the room or a thermostat that can change the temperature of the room?" In order to make an unnecessarily hot situation cool down, you need to lower your heart rate. In seminary, they call this being a "non-anxious presence." When someone goes off the rails, don't go off the rails with them. Lower our heart rate and be a non-anxious presence. Easier said than done.

Earlier this year, in August, the Arizona Diamondbacks were on the skids. They lost 9 games in a row from August 1st to August 11th. How did they turn it around to make the World Series just 2 months later? I bet they were able to lower their heart rate.

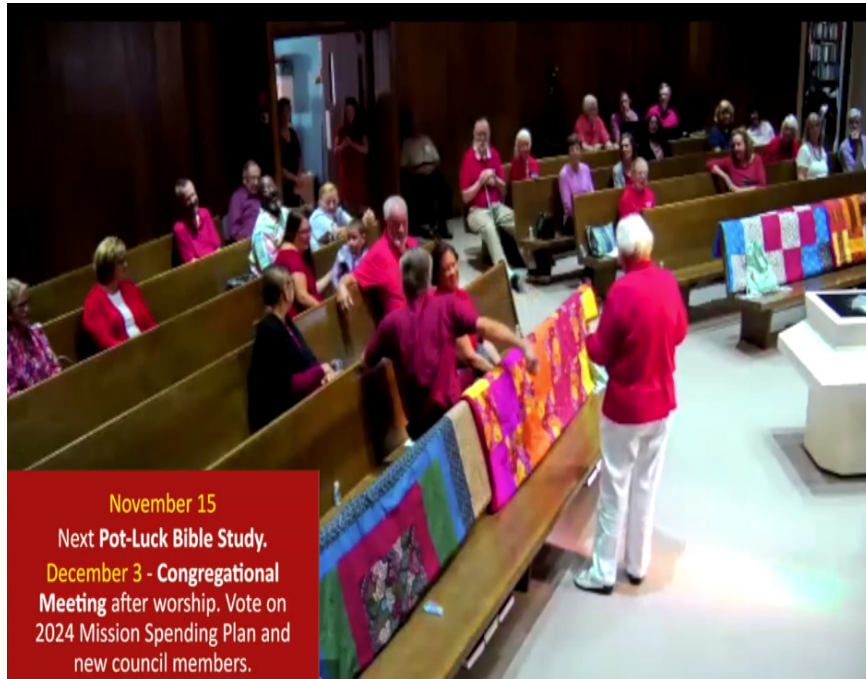
It's now 10-1. Go Diamondbacks! (That one's for you, Suellen!)

Pastor Ben Krey

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g2Fu00eELjs>



Fall 2023 has hit Christus Victor Lutheran Church (CVLC) like a whirlwind, and the action is far from slowing down. It's not your typical quiet season of reflection; at CVLC, it's a season of adventure, generosity, and joy!



But the last week of October is where things really got exciting. Picture this: Reformation Sunday Meets Generosity and Quilts Galore! Reformation Sunday joined forces with Generosity Sunday, and to top it all off, the Quilt blessing. A trifecta of epic proportions! But that's not all; the CVLC quilters packed up and shipped a whopping 134 quilts! Yes, you read that correctly. Remember when Frieda Summers was over the

moon about hitting the 100 quilt mark just a few years ago?

November's Got a Full Lineup of Fun!

The fun doesn't stop with October; it's just the beginning. November is shaping up to be a hoot!

All Saints Sunday and Generosity Celebration (November 5th): A day to remember the Saints and celebrate CVLC's spirit of generosity.

Making a Real Difference

But CVLC isn't just any ordinary church; it's a hub of community activity, a place where neighbors gather, and love and joy are generously shared. If you ever wonder who'd miss CVLC if it were to vanish, the answer is: many! From the Parktown Food Hub to playground enthusiasts, Music Camp attendees, Trunk or Treat fanatics, and Lowes Grove Middle School's PTA, the impact of CVLC is felt far and wide.

So, kudos to CVLC for making a real difference in this world and turning the autumn season into a whirlwind of joy, fellowship, and community engagement. You go, church!

Trunk or Treat – A Halloween Extravaganza!



Then, there was the 4th annual Trunk or Treat ! With an astonishing 250 kids, this event was a Halloween wonderland.



Not to be outdone, Barb Trapp-Moen and Elizabeth Webster decided to add a touch of enchantment by dressing up as butterflies. This choice inspired quite a few kids to follow suit, creating a fluttering spectacle. As for Pastor Ben, dressed as John the Baptist, he was sweating so much that children hesitated to take his glowsticks – almost. Nothing stops a kid from candy or glowsticks!

HOT DOG HEAVEN

Who knew hot dogs were such a hit at Halloween events? Apparently, CVLC did! They handed out approximately 185 hot dogs, because nothing screams Halloween quite like a hot dog in hand. You've got to fuel up for all that candy hunting, right?





Playground Pandemonium:

And let's not forget the playground – it was practically bursting at the seams with joyful children, all in their Halloween finery. If you're ever looking for where the fun is, just follow the laughter to the playground!

In the spirit of the season, the church verbally invited dozens of people to worship and handed out hundreds (yes, hundreds!) of orange Halloween "tickets." These tickets weren't for any earthly amusement park but came with a heavenly message: "There is no trick with Jesus, only a treat." Reminding everyone that Jesus loves them and protects them from evil, even during the spookiest Halloween times.



A Day to Remember:

In the end, it was a day filled with laughter, joy, and a little bit of sweat, thanks to the sweltering 85-degree weather. But when you're surrounded by good company, incredible costumes, and the warmth of a welcoming community, a little sweat is a small price to pay for such a memorable Halloween celebration. Kudos to Christus Victor Lutheran Church for throwing a trunk or treat bash for the books!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Trumpet Concert for the Playground They're blowing trumpets not for the king but for the playground. Pastor Ben's parents celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary with family from all over North America with a trumpet concert by the Christian evangelist and trumpet player Chiz Rider. Join the Krey family and the community. The free will offering will go to the community playground. **Friday, November 10th at 7:00 PM.**

FRIENDS WITH WISDOM-

At the October 18th gathering, Deb & JD Godbolt treated us to boneless pork chops, melt-in-your-mouth mashed potatoes, and delicious gravy. Thanks so much, Deb, for sharing your cooking talents.

Carla and Jay supplemented the above entree with a tasty corn casserole and a large green salad. Others brought a variety of dishes so again we had a feast to enjoy. Our time was spent discussing a variety of current issues.

We will meet **this month on the 15th at noon** in the Fellowship Hall. Joleen volunteered to arrange for boxed lunches. The choices are: Roast beef, crispy chicken, Chicken salad. Don't forget to RSVP to Sarah in the church office so we will know the number of lunches needed. We would appreciate your ideas about presentations or games you would enjoy playing. Just let Joleen know your suggestions.

POT-LUCK BIBLE STUDY Where Faith Meets Food and Fellowship! **Wednesday, November 15 @ 6 PM** Can you ever have enough potluck and Bible study in your life? CVLC doesn't think so!

57TH ANNIVERSARY CELEBRATION OF CVLC-- please bring finger foods on this day -- **Sunday, November 19th** It's a party like no other as CVLC celebrates its 57th year of making a positive impact in the community.

Harvest Feast at Parkwood United Methodist Church on Sunday, November 26 from 5-7 PM. (SIGN-UP STILL PENDING) CVLC joins hands with their Methodist friends at Parkwood and All Saints for a feast and a fantastic time of fellowship. A true celebration of community bonds.

CONGREGATIONAL MEETING, SUNDAY DEC. 3RD.

Thanksgiving Baskets

We continue to collect items for the Family Thanksgiving Baskets. Last year we were able to provide 105 families with a full Thanksgiving meal. This year our goal is 135.

So far we have the tote bags to put them in. We have made arrangements (at a discount) for the dinner rolls and gravy packets; and the turkey's are ordered. Barbara & I have those taken care of.

What we need to collect by **November 18th**:

- ~~270 cans of corn~~ **STILL NEED 68 CANS**
- ~~270 cans of green beans~~ **STILL NEED 142 CANS**
- ~~135 large cans of yams~~ **STILL NEED 122 LARGE CANS**
- ~~270 boxes of Mac & Cheese~~ **STILL NEED 75 BOXES**
- ~~270 boxes of stuffing~~ **STILL NEED 60 BOXES**
- ~~135 large boxes of instant mashed potatoes~~ **STILL NEED ONE 13 OZ BOX**
- ~~135 cans of cranberries.~~

We plan on putting the bags together with everything except the turkey's on **Sunday November 19th after church**. On **Monday November 20th** we can pick up the turkey's, add them to the totes and deliver them to Lowes Grove Middle School and to some church members.

We certainly can use volunteers for both days. This is our largest giving comfort opportunity so far.

HERE IS THE SIGN UP SHEET:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1M7fznTRD_lktUo4Mi6zM5e77WX5pTBv8esUgQbC-Ta4Y/edit#gid=0

Thank you to all who can help package the totes and thank you to all that can donate to help us provide comfort to those who need it.

God Bless, Mike Green (see below photo from Thanksgiving Basket outreach day, 2022)



WHY DO WE USE THE WORD “THANKS”?

We say the word “thanks” a lot in a day. We thank our spouse or partner for filling our coffee cup, we end emails with the word “thanks”, and we thank people for holding the door for us. As parents, we teach our children to say thank you when someone gives them a cookie, compliments their new outfit, or shares a toy with them. Giving thanks is actually a common occurrence in our daily lives.

So when we think about thanking God, the word “thanks” seems too much small. After all, He gives us everything. He gives us our bodies and everything we need for daily life. He keeps us safe. He gave His Only Son on the cross to die for our sins so we could have forgiveness and eternal life with Him. He gives us the Holy Spirit to work faith in our hearts through His Word and Sacraments. And He continues to provide for us in mind, body, and spirit the length of our lives on earth. It seems too little to just say, “Thank you, God!”

In this season of gratitude, it can be easy to see “giving thanks” as the world sees it — as merely recognizing the good things in your life, appreciating your family, and muttering a quick “Thanks, God” before enjoying a feast of Thanksgiving food. But Christian Thanksgiving is different. Believers throughout the Bible give us examples to follow as we learn about thanking God. Consider how these two well-known believers thanked the Lord and how you can do the same or something similar.

DAVID

King David had a lot to be thankful for: God made him king of Israel, God helped him win victories over Israel’s enemies, and God forgave him his sins. We can learn a lot about giving thanks by reading David’s psalms. The first lesson is that thanking God often takes the form of singing and playing instruments. In Psalm 7:17, David wrote, “I will give to the Lord the thanks due to His righteousness, and I will sing praise to the name of the Lord, the Most High.” Another lesson from David is that we are called to thank God in front of others. He wrote in Psalm 57:9, “I will give thanks to You, O Lord, among the peoples; I will sing to You among the nations.”

PAUL

Paul’s letters are filled with verses of thanks to God. He constantly thanks God for Christ’s victory over sin, death, and the devil. He thanks God for protecting him, and for giving him his brothers and sisters in Christ. As you read these verses, it’s easy to forget that Paul wrote many of his letters while he was in prison, while he was being persecuted, or while he was on dangerous missionary journeys.

It’s easier to thank God in peaceful moments, such as in a church service or when we are around a big table of food with our loved ones. But it’s much harder to thank God in those everyday moments when we feel bored, overwhelmed, lonely, or hopeless. Yet Paul reminds us in 1 Thesalonians 5:18, “Give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.”

I encourage you to begin being aware of your thanking God on a daily basis starting today. That will mean that by Thanksgiving Day, you will be in the habit. You will personally benefit and God will be pleased.

~ writing of Emily Hatesohi on October 2, 2023

Monday, Oct. 30 was the day to box up and send the 134 quilts and 20 school kits made at Christus Victor to send to Lutheran World Relief! What a blessing! What a great looking group!!!! Your handiwork of love will comfort many around the globe!



2024 GENEROSITY APPEAL

In October 2023, the eagerly anticipated Generosity Appeal took center stage, revealing a tapestry of heartwarming narratives. Chloe Merritt shared her captivating temple talk interview, taking us on a journey through her fun and faithful week at Camp Agape this summer. Joleen Propst offered a deeply personal account of the significance of CVLC and its new ministry, Friends With Wisdom, in her life. And Conrad Lentz's testimony resonated profoundly, underscoring the generous spirit that flows through CVLC and his family, as he exemplified God's mission to offer personal comfort during his care for his wife, Sandy. The event also featured enlightening bulletin inserts, shedding light on mission trips, new staff hires to bolster community events, and the exciting fellowship events introduced by CVLC in 2023.



Stewardship Report as of 10-29-23

2nd Corinthians 8:7 reads: “Excel at the grace of giving.”

Today we have received 27 completed commitments for a total of \$122,417. 00. Of that total, 16 increased their giving. If your Intent Giving form has not reached the office, please return it by this Friday, the 3rd, so we can celebrate at our celebration spaghetti meal on Sunday, the 5th.

Thank you so much for sharing your generosity in supporting the work of the Lord. God is using you and me as His conduit to benefit His work in this community and especially in South Durham. Anyone who has participated in one of our ministries will testify to the personal joy, happiness, and satisfaction of the seeing the results and the building of relationships.

TOGETHER we, as a church family, are moving forward. Thanks be to God for all the ways He has blessed CVLC richly over the years and we look forward to what He has waiting for us in the future.

~ The Generosity Appeal Team

ANOTHER WAY MARTIN LUTHER SHARED GOD'S MESSAGE

Much information about Martin Luther has been shared in the last weeks but here is something else to add to your treasury of knowledge:

Martin Luther was an enthusiastic singer, capable lute player, and prolific hymn writer who composed “sermons in sound.” This church reformer and cultural influencer hosted choral parties at his house and filled every church service with song, even urging illiterate congregants to join in with the choir.

Singing had its subversive uses too. Since the fateful day the young monk posted his inflammatory Ninety-Five Theses on the Wittenberg church door and then refused to recant his radical disputations, the church outlawed him as a heretic and banned his writings. But where books could not go, songs readily could. Martin Luther combined familiar German tunes with catchy theological lyrics to broadcast the Reformation message of God's liberating grace. Regardless of listener's ability to read, their social standing, or even their physical location, the songs spread quickly. It is reported that literally everyone was “gladly singing” Luther's infectious songs — collapsing the old divides between secular and the sacred, the domestic and the public, the here and now and the eternal.

Think about what words quickly come to mind when you hear the first musical notes of one of the songs we sing in church. What message are you hearing?

*~ Daily Grace message from Karen Wright Marsh in July/August 2023
“Gather” magazine*

WOMEN OF THE CHURCH

The Bible Study on October 11th was a continuation of the Book of Jonah. One of the questions we discussed was: Why did Jonah continue to be angry with God who asked him to go to Nineveh and tell the citizens to repent of their sins. Jonah had many reasons/excuses and sometimes the reasons/excuses sound like the ones we give to God when He directs us to do something and we don't want to do it.

Come join this month's Bible Study on Wednesday, November 8th, at 10 AM in the Fellowship Hall. Faye will make the coffee and there are a variety of Bibles on the bookcase shelves. You just need to bring yourself. Come join us for fellowship and the discussion.

NEWS FROM THE OUTREACH TEAM:

*1. There are quite a few students at NC State who lack appropriate clothing for the cold and do not have the money to buy it. The faculty has organized a collection of coats, jackets, hats, gloves and scarves. Some people in our congregation have knitted hats over the last few months and we will be delivering them soon. If there are people who have coats, jackets, etc. appropriate for a college student (in adult sizes and in good condition), they can deliver these things to the church until **Monday, November 13**. Linda Puente's daughter Molly works at NCSU and will be taking things to the collection point on **Tuesday, Nov 14**.*

*2. Our congregation used to collect hygiene items for distribution through Urban Ministries. The Outreach mission team has decided that it is time to renew this mission to provide comfort by making the **last Sunday of each month** collection day for this purpose. Those who travel can bring in the sample sizes of shampoo, soap, lotion, etc. We can all bring in the toothbrushes, toothpaste and floss that we get at each dental appointment. Sunday, Nov 26, will be our first collection day. A fitting way to give thanks for the bounty that God has bestowed on us!*

Hi All!

It is time to start preparing for the Living Nativity on December 9, 2023. We have changed the time this year to 5-7 pm instead of 6-9 pm.

Here is the sign-up sheet:

https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1T_OS-eFVR1ds6iDT_ZiuUNofei7Abke-c0i6AeEZa7Q/edit?usp=drive_link

This year we are starting with filling the positions in the Manger scene and adding additions scenes if we have the people.

If we get 22 people to sign up, we will have the manger scene with support inside.

If we get 24 people, we will add 2 Innkeepers in the Inn next to the Manger.

If we get 28 people, we will add the Angel and Mary scene, which will be moved closer to the Manger Scene.

We only had 33 people last year and we need a minimum of 49 people for all six scenes plus cookie station. Previous Living Nativities have had 56-60 people.

We are planning on having music playing at the Manger scene this year.

Set up will be Saturday, December 9, from 10- 12,

Thank you for your past and future participation!

~Joan Wilson



November Birthdays

2 Cristen Chappell
3 John Redick
6 Brooklyn Justice
8 Victoria Hernandez
13 Meaghan Morgan
22 Beth Miller
26 Leigh Gilbert
27 Ellie Klein

November Anniversaries

18 Al & Suse Bradshaw

Don't see your date? Contact Sarah in the church office. If your child has moved or if you know of any names that should be removed from our list, please let the church office know.

December Birthdays

4 Joan Wilson
5 Steve Fredrick
5 JD Godbolt
21 Anthony Trantas
27 Henry Miller
31 Diana Hicks

December Anniversaries

5 George & Irene Delic (1970)
8 Jack & Debbie Weidman (1973)
19 Steve & Faye Fredrick (1970)
28 Revs. Ben & Marissa Krey (2009)



COUNCIL CORNER:

- Nominations for Council Members : Neil Frank, Faye Fredrick ,and Evelyn Martin. leaving council. 3 year term, and 1 year term for Larry Santeramo, retirement letter.
- Motion approved by council to remove from membership the following: Suse Bradshaw, Lori Burger (Parkwood UMC, Michael and Shannon Green (New Hope), Richard and Kathy LeSesne (moved to Beaufort)
- Congregational Meeting set for December 3,2023, after service to elect new council members, and approve 2024 Mission Spending plan.

November

2023

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Office Open 9AM-12PM	2	3 Office Open 9AM-12PM	4
5 CHRISTIAN COFFEE CHAT 9 AM WORSHIP 10 AM GENEROSITY APPEAL Spaghetti Lunch Party	6 Office Open 9AM-12PM	7	8 Office Open 9AM-12PM	9	10 Office Open 9AM-12PM CONCERT 7 PM	11
12 CHRISTIAN COFFEE CHAT 9 AM WORSHIP 10 AM	13 Office Open 9AM-12PM	14	15 Office Open 9AM-12PM FWW 12 PM POT-LUCK BIBLE STUDY 6 PM	16	17 Office Open 9AM-12PM	18
19 CHRISTIAN COFFEE CHAT 9 AM WORSHIP 10 AM CVLC's 57 th Anniversary Celebrated Thanksgiving Basket Volunteers	20 Office Open 9AM-12PM Thanksgiving Basket Volunteers	21	22 Office Open 9AM-12PM	23 HAPPY THANKSGIVING!	24 Office Open 9AM-12PM	25
26 CHRISTIAN COFFEE CHAT 9 AM WORSHIP 10 AM Harvest Feast & Fellowship 5-7 PM @ PUMC	27 Office Open 9AM-12PM	28	29 Office Open 9AM-12PM	30		

With Daylight Savings Time ending, it will be easier to get up earlier and join the Coffee Chat on Sunday at 9 am!

This past week our discussion migrated from the helplessness we feel regarding the tragedies in the Middle East to making a difference more locally. The following suggestions were made:

1. NC State has a program in which they provide for the students from low income families. As the weather gets colder they conduct a drive to collect cold weather items such as hats, gloves, scarves, jackets. As we get out our winter clothing, perhaps we will find items we could share?
2. Several positive comments were made in reference to Urban Ministries here in Durham. We have had a representative speak to CVLC some time ago, but perhaps we could have a refresher as to the services they provide and how we could assist. With the loss of Joyce Visconti we no longer have delivered individual items that were collected from hotel/motel stays, extra toothbrushes from dentist visits, etc.
3. Ronald McDonald houses were another group for which CVLC has offered services to provide comfort in past years.

Rather than being pulled down with the tragedies around us and in the world, perhaps there are opportunities that we could pick up again?

~ Kathy Hopson

MINISTRY LEADERS

Pastor	Rev. Ben Krey	215-738-5739
Director of Music	Simon Zaleski	919-717-8900
Office Administrator	Sarah Rodríguez	919-544-7195
President	Larry Santeramo	919-418-7477
Vice President	Neil Frank	513-476-0079
Treasurer	Corky Camin	919-341-8048
Secretary	Faye Fredrick	734-306-5972
Quilters	Joleen Propst	919-596-7534
Community Garden	Barb Trapp-Moen	919-949-9970
Property Ministry Team	Jim Goodwin	978-664-5866
Worship Ministry Team	Cristen Chappell	919-724-8528
Outreach Ministry Team		
Cong. Life Ministry Team	Judy Camin	919-341-5692
Women's Group	Faye Fredrick	734-306-5972
Men's Group	Jeff Scott	984-219-7039
Youth Group	Mike Green	919-740-6872
Resource Ministry Team	Barbara Sappenfield	919-627-3952
Christ. Ed Ministry Team	Carla Stolzenthaler	919-694-5533
Website	John Moen	919-949-6910



Congregational Council

Larry Santeramo (President)919-418-7477
 Neil Frank (V President)..... 513-476-0079
 Corky Camin (Treasurer)..... 919-341-8048
 Faye Fredrick (Secretary)..... 734-306-5972

Renee Carroll (Liaison Outreach Ministry)
 919-384-5494

Corky Camin (Liaison Resource Ministry)
 919-341-8048

Ken Hopson (Liaison Congregational Life)
 919-971-2884

Evelyn Martin (Liaison Christian Education)
 919-645-7188

Barb Trapp-Moen (Liaison Worship Ministry)
 919-949-9970

Nancy Griffin (Liaison Property Ministry)
 919-619-1165

Bookkeeper:

Corky Camin 919-341-8048

Jay Stolzenthaler (Financial Secretary)
 919-694-5533



Community Group

Troop & Pack 486

Missio Church

Ministerio Alcance y Reconciliacion

CVLC Contacts

John Moen

Jim Goodwin

Luis & Nora Olivieri