



# The BELL TOWER

A Newsletter of The Church at Litchfield Park

Autumn 2020

## Count Your Blessings

November is a time of year we typically focus on counting our blessings, especially when it comes to Thanksgiving. Johnson Oatman knew a little something about counting his blessings. His dad was a local merchant and just happened to be the best singer in town. Young Johnson wanted to make musical contributions of his own, but could not sing as well as his father. After giving up on opportunities to work in the family business, he began studying for ministry. Johnson ministered in Methodist Episcopal churches for a while but continued to hope that life held other plans for him. At 36, he realized without a question that he did have musical talent after all, and he wrote songs for others to sing. He wrote about 200 songs every year, eventually writing 5,000 songs, and was so happy that, through his compositions, he found a way to share the Gospel. "Count Your Blessings," written in 1897 is perhaps one of his most well-known. This year, our Thanksgiving Eve service is going to focus on counting our blessings.

**Therefore, beginning Sunday, November 1 through Wednesday, November 25 you are encouraged to write down at least one blessing (or more) each day.** When we gather for our Thanksgiving Eve service on Wednesday, November 25 at 6:30 p.m. we will count (share) our blessings together in worship.



God bless you,

*Pastor Lynne*

## Table Talk About Mission Miracles: The Gift That Keeps Giving

*The 2020 Christmas Mission Project Begins Sunday, November 29 through December 25*

This mission project is designed to bring families and our church community closer together, help us think about exchanging consumerism for compassion, while also learning more about the organizations we support locally, nationally and internationally. Beginning Sunday, Nov. 22, devotional booklets and containers will be available in the Sanctuary, Souers Hall and Church Office. Each day of Advent we will have the opportunity to learn more about a specific organization The Church at Litchfield Park supports, how our support has made a difference in the lives of others, how it relates to scripture, and have at least one question to talk about with others. Each reflection is an opportunity to consider how God might be calling us to respond to the needs of others by exchanging

consumerism for compassion by putting money in our containers. Throughout Advent, our containers will serve as a visible reminder of the difference a few coins or dollars can make as we fill them. We invite everyone to bring their filled containers back to the Sanctuary, Souers Hall or the church office anytime between Sunday, December 27-Sunday, January 3. All of the monies collected will be divided equally between Agua Fria Food Bank, Feed My Starving Children, Homeless Youth Connection, Homeward Bound, Mission of Mercy, New Life Center, Open Arms, St. Mary's Food Bank, and World Vision. The gift of Jesus was personal and his gift was costly, which is at the heart of the Christmas story. Together, we are greater than we are apart!

## Children's Virtual Mission Camp

On June 13-17 our 4th and 5th graders participated in our Virtual Mission Camp. A large box of supplies was picked up by each child prior to the event so they would have everything they needed to complete their projects. The plan was to have an at-home mission project for the kids to do each day. The day would start with a video explaining the project and a bible verse to focus on for the day. Mission projects included:

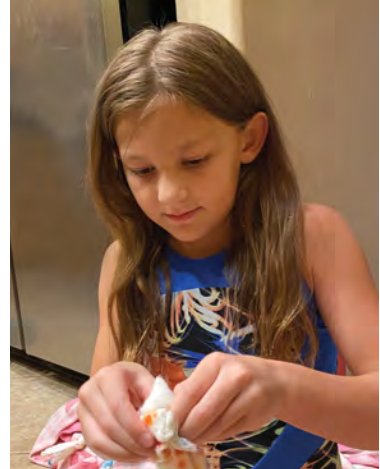
**MONDAY | Sole Hope:** Cutting out pieces for shoes for kids in Africa.

**TUESDAY | Card for a Congregant:** We lead the kids through an art activity to make cards for some of our congregants who are stuck at home and could use some cheering up.

**WEDNESDAY | Saving Paws AZ:** The children made fleece dog toys to be donated to the animal shelter.

**THURSDAY | New Life Center:** We partnered with WCSF and the kids made towel wraps with hygiene supplies to be given to women as they arrive at New Life Center, a local domestic violence shelter.

**FRIDAY | Family Meal:** We guided the children through how to make a spaghetti dinner to share with their family. They finished each project by reflecting in a journal about how they were the hands and feet of Jesus Christ. All of the projects were returned to church at the end of the week and distributed to those in need.



## Face Mask Project

**Thank you to everyone who assisted with making facial masks!** So far, approximately 1,000 masks have been made to be donated as follows: 326 to local assisted living facilities including The Groves, Hacienda Del Rey, La Loma and the Pathways; 200 to Banner Estrella; 80 to Phoenix Children's Hospital; 25 to a doctor's office; 20 to the Physical Therapy Department at Abrazo Hospital; 60 to The New Life Center (*they have a constant need for them*); 100 to Western Sky Middle School; 100 to Litchfield Park Elementary School; 84 on hand to be delivered.

We have many more kits ready. The need for facial masks in medical facilities, schools, care centers, food banks, and other organizations in our community is still great. Because the masks must meet certain specifications and be of certain material, we ask that if anyone is willing to do some sewing of facial masks to please contact Nancy Montgomery at [prayershawl@clp.church](mailto:prayershawl@clp.church) or call the church office (623) 935-3411.



## Deacon's Report

Since May, Deacons have made 162 phone calls, 194 prayer emails, 56 monthly calls for a total of 412 calls/emails to our church family. This outreach was a bright, positive light during these difficult times. Many of those who responded to the emails were so touched that we thought of them and commented how beautiful the prayer was. We were often thanked for reaching out and showing the care of our church.

Also, 15 Deacons attended training for the new way of offering in-person Sunday services.

## Associate Pastor Search Update



The Associate Pastor search is closely linked to the Revision process, which was significantly impacted by COVID-19. A number of the goals associated with the revision process shifted and needed to be revisited, since some included the possibility

of additional ministry staffing. Needless to say, it all impacts the Associate Pastor job description. The revision team will be picking up steam again, especially when we meet with our coach in October. Over the next couple of months, we also hope to gain a better understanding of COVID-19's impact on the CLP community and our future needs. Our hope is to resume the Associate Pastor search process soon, but with even more clarity. In the meantime, Marge Kinney has been hired to serve as our part-time interim Director of Adult Education.

Marge and her husband Bill have been married for 42 years, have three daughters and sons-in-law, and three grandsons. Her primary responsibilities are overseeing our adult education ministries, including participating in and providing support for our Life Group (small group) ministry team. She will be a blessing to the church in this capacity, a tremendous help to Pastor Lynne and give us the time we need to ensure a positive ending to our search for a new Associate Pastor.

"I have served as Pastoral Associate in NJ for two separate parishes over the course of 12+ years. I retired after I moved to Missouri for a year and God called me again back to ministry. I was asked by the pastor to help him since he was asked to minister to two parishes. Both very rural—I ministered with him at both churches! Then I came to Arizona to retire for a second time but once more God has other plans for me!" Marge shared.

"I am looking forward to bringing my love of God's word and His presence in my life to the wonderful people of CLP and to give them many opportunities to grow, love and shine as a bright light for all to see!"

WOMEN'S VIRTUAL RETREAT

The graphic features a background of autumn leaves in shades of orange, red, and yellow. A tree trunk is visible on the left side. The text "Women's Retreat Renew, Restore, Refresh" is written in a white, elegant serif font. Below the title, the dates "OCTOBER 19-24" are displayed in white text on a dark orange rectangular background. At the bottom, the words "WOMEN'S VIRTUAL RETREAT" are written in white, all-caps, sans-serif font on a solid orange background.

*We welcome you to participate in the Women's Virtual Retreat the week of October 19-24.*

The book we will study is RENEW, RESTORE, REFRESH. Participants will pick up a retreat bag from the church office during the week of October 13-16. There are five short lessons with question/answer sections after each story. Then, on Saturday, October 24 we will Zoom together and discuss the material. If you do not have the capability of Zoom, you can still be part of the retreat. Read and enjoy the book, write your reflection of lessons during this week and share with a family member or friend. If you would like to participate in this retreat, please call the church office by October 13. There will be no cost to participants.

## MEN'S CHRISTIAN SERVICE Fellowship

Men's Fellowship is taking things one month at a time, waiting to meet until it is safe to do so. Our first in-person gathering is scheduled for Tuesday, October 13 at 7pm at Fireside North, with simultaneous Zoom connection for those of us still social distancing at home. We plan to continue Chapter 4 of Francis Chan's discussion of the Holy Spirit, "Remembering the Forgotten God." The Chapter title is "Why do you want Him?"

WELCOME  
New Members!

The text "WELCOME" is written in large, colorful, block letters. Each letter is a different color: W (purple), E (green), L (pink), C (purple), O (green), M (blue), E (purple). Below it, "New Members!" is written in a green, sans-serif font.

Ken & Frances Grillo

David Knight



# Fellowship SAVE THESE DATES!



## Movie Night in Palm Court: "A Mile in His Shoes"

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 16 | 6pm

Bring a blanket and plan to social distance. Masks are required as you enter and exit the event. Hot dogs, chips and drinks will be served. Please go online to register and also pre-order your meal. If you need assistance, call the office at 623-935-3411.



SATURDAY, OCTOBER 31 | 5-7pm

Church Parking Lots | This will be a drive-thru only event.

## Church Decorating

NOVEMBER 28 | 9am

Help is needed to transform the church grounds for the Christmas season! Watch for sign up details.



## Drive-Thru Christmas Pageant

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 20



UPCOMING 2021

**Bingo Night** | JANUARY

**All Church Picnic** | APRIL 24