

## Country Club United Methodist Church

# Connection

January 2026



### Special Events at CCUMC

Wed., Dec. 31-Jan. 2	Church office closed
Sat., Jan. 10	6 pm Disciple's Class Epiphany Party at Claridge Court. Contact Errett Schmid for reservations.
Fri., Jan. 16	10:30 am-12 Bee Creative women. Church library.
Fri., Jan. 16	5-7 pm Della Lamb Refugee Birthday Party
Sun., Jan. 11-Feb. 15	Souper Bowl canned food drive
Mon., Jan. 19	Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Church office closed
Wed., Feb. 18	Ash Wednesday
Sun., Feb. 22	First Sunday in Lent

## Sermon Series – Sundays 10:45 am

Sun., Jan. 4 Around the Manger: “Six words from the Magi” Matt. 2:1-12



Sun., Jan. 11	Learn the House Rules	Lam. 3:22-24; Prov. 24:15-16
Sun., Jan. 18	Roll Again	Luke 18:1-8
Sun., Jan. 25	Start with the Edge Pieces	Gal. 6:9-10
Sun., Feb. 1	Choose Multiplayer	Romans 15:5-6
Sun., Feb. 8	Build in Breaks	Exodus 20:8-11
Sun., Feb. 15	Adjust at the Goal Line	2 Corinth. 4:16-18



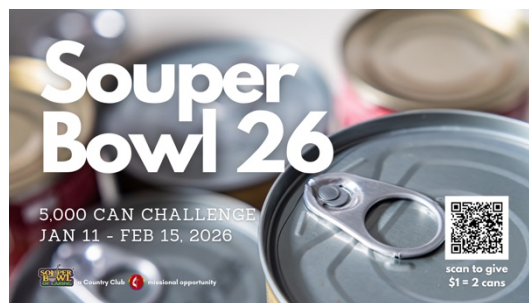
For many refugees, when they arrive to the US, they do not have birth certificates or know their birthdate, so they are assigned Jan. 1 as their birthdate.

**On Fri., Jan. 16, Della Lamb is hosting a Refugee Birthday Party from 5-7 pm.** We have an opportunity to help celebrate many of our newest neighbors by setting up for

the event, welcoming guests, sitting with guests, serving food, supporting vendor activities, cleaning up and most of all, celebrating birthdays with our newest neighbors. Email Stephanie Mutert, [stephanie.mutert@countryclubumc.org](mailto:stephanie.mutert@countryclubumc.org), as soon as you can to let her know if you can help.

## It's time for Souper Bowl Again!

Help HARVESTERS feed those who have food insecurity. (Thirteen percent of individuals in Kansas and Missouri go to bed hungry or cannot feed their children.) You can help solve this problem. Bring cans of soup (chicken, vegetable or tomato are preferred) now until Feb. 15. Please consider buying cans with “pop tops” so the soup can be enjoyed by those without access to can openers.



EVEN BETTER, If you prefer to donate money, make your check to CCUMC and note: Souper Bowl. Or go to Subsplash to contribute online. Food banks like Harvesters, which can buy food wholesale in bulk, estimate \$1 is the equivalent of two cans of soup.

Could you host a drive at work or in your neighborhood? Invite others to collect cans with you. Whatever you can do to help, we – and Harvesters’ clients – thank you. Contact: Toni Brown, Church Office Administrator, [Office@countryclubumc.org](mailto:Office@countryclubumc.org), or call 816-444-1616.



## Thanks Be to God for Music!

Each week, our Worship Director and pianist, Drew Crane (photo left) organizes the music for Sunday mornings and special events. We are so grateful for the meaningful preludes, variety of hymns, and beautiful interludes led by Drew and an ensemble of volunteers and paid professionals. Pictured here are cellist Eliza Cockrell and singers, Cassie McClellan and Nina Cherry. Not pictured: cellist Laura Hoesly; singers Ada Sadlier, DJ Tucker and Patrick Smith. *Ann Vernon*





Thank You for your  
Generosity this winter!

**Winter Coats for children and youth:**

Two carloads of parkas, jackets and heavy-duty car coats were delivered to Della Lamb in early December. At last count, 79 items were contributed by CCUMC for immigrants and low-income families to The Lamb.



**Aldi food cards for Della Lamb clients:**

Nineteen Aldi gift cards, valued at \$25 each, were donated just before Christmas 2025 along with assorted personal hygiene products. Over \$600 was also given to buy more Aldi cards.

**Christmas Eve offering** for the Keystone UMC food pantry and Della Lamb Community Services totaled more than \$2200, which will be split equally with the two organizations.



*K.C. Chorale Filled Our Church  
with Song*

Friday evening, Dec. 12, the Kansas City Chorale performed a musical version of Charles Dickens' "A Christmas Carol." This professional chorus was directed by Charles Duffy. The sanctuary was packed with guests who marveled at the wonderful acoustics and the beautiful décor. After the concert, some stayed to take "selfies" in front of our gorgeous Christmas tree. We are grateful we can share our church with the whole community. *Photo courtesy of Sydney Elmore.*



CCUMC Men celebrated the holidays at the Kansas City Country Club on Dec. 17. Throughout the year, our guys meet monthly for socializing and Bible study and often participate in events with St. James UMC. For more information, contact [terry.kilroy@lathropgpm.com](mailto:terry.kilroy@lathropgpm.com)





## A Faithful (Next) Step

by Pastor Shawn Franssens

**According to the CliftonStrengths assessment, my top strength is “Strategic.”**

People with this strength have “the ability to quickly spot patterns, evaluate possible paths, and choose the most effective way forward when faced with complexity or uncertainty.”

Practically, that means I’m wired to live in constant evaluation mode. The Working Genius assessment backs this up—naming my geniuses as “**Wonder**” and “**Invention**.” I’m someone who’s often dreaming about possibilities and exploring ways to bring those dreams to life.

In short, I think about stuff... a lot.

But there is a shadow side. Sometimes I want to **have it all figured out** before I act.

I’ve been slowly learning that’s not how faith works.

Faith doesn’t wait around for the perfect plan or a guaranteed outcome. It is movement born of trust. It’s stepping out before the path is clear, simply because we believe God is already out ahead of us.

That’s the kind of movement I see taking shape at Country Club.

I see it in new faces showing up ... in small group leaders trying new formats. ... in volunteers learning new tech ... in quiet conversations after worship where real life is being shared—and grace is being received.

None of it is polished. None of it is perfect. And that’s what excites me most about the year ahead. We don’t need a flawless plan. We just need to take a faithful next step.

Because the good news of the Gospel is not “Figure it all out.” It’s “*Follow me.*”

So if you’ve been waiting for a sign—to try something new, to deepen community, to reimagine your life with God—**this is it.**

Let’s keep going. Let’s see where God leads next. Let’s take a next step together.

With you on the journey,  
**Pastor Shawn**



...and now the work of Christmas begins!

When the song of the angels is stilled  
when the star in the sky is gone,  
when the kings and princes are home,  
when the shepherds are back with their flocks,  
the work of Christmas begins:  
to find the lost,  
to heal the broken,  
to feed the hungry,  
to release the prisoner,  
to rebuild the nations,  
to bring peace among the people,  
to make music in the heart.

*The poem "The Work of Christmas" is from Howard Thurman's The Mood of Christmas and Other Celebrations and is used by permission of Friends United Press. All rights reserved.*

*Angel photo detail from our sanctuary's stained-glass is courtesy of Marianne Kilroy.*



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