

Blessed NOCC Community I was shoveling snow from my driveway earlier this week as were many of you. It was wet and heavy snow. It did not take long for me to decide that shoveling my drive would suffice as my daily workout...every shovel-ful a weighty load to lift and toss aside...my heart pounding. It was fairly early in the morning, the neighborhood quieted by 3 inches of the white stuff. I was alone with rambling thoughts until I came to this one: Here I am feeling the weight of each shovel-full of snow----maybe 15 or 20 pounds each. I began to wonder how many snowflakes I was lifting in each scoop. A billion? 5 billion? I am sure it's possible to do the math. But the thought that came to me was-----each snowflake is almost as light as air, and oh so delicate and fragile. Yet collectively they take on significant weight right? So it is with prayers, I then realized. Each prayer I pray is light as a snowflake. But combined with a billion others, prayer becomes a force, an energy, of significance. I have on occasion been gifted by the focused intercessions of many (far less than a billion) others for me...sometimes we are all in the same room together, sometimes we have been separated by miles. I have experienced these combined prayers as a physical warmth in my chest, stunning and humbling. Every prayer we pray, friends, adds to the weight, the heft of grace in the world.

ASH WEDNESDAY-----SEEKING HELPERS Our annual Ash Wednesday Observance with our neighbors at Holy Family Parish is on March 6 7PM. It's my year to give the homily-----always an honor. As usual, some of our choir folks will join the HF choir and Jeff Nunn will assist with accompaniment. I am seeking the help of 5 additional NOCC folks to participate.; We need a lay reader to read a passage of Scripture. We need two greeters to help pass out worship materials and songbooks, and we need two volunteers to assist in distribution of the ashes--- --placing ashes on the foreheads of all who come forward to receive this striking symbol of graced humility. Contact me to volunteer!

CELEBRATING FAVORITE HYMN TEXTS Do you have a favorite hymn text? Maybe more than one? I'm talking about the words here more than the music but of course they both tend to enhance the other. For our Lenten Soup Suppers this year I am wondering if 10-15 people (2-3 per week) would be willing to take a few minutes to share their favorite hymn texts---the words, and to share how and why the words of a particular text are meaningful. I'm not sure why, but in recent months I've been paying closer attention to the texts of the hymns Jeff selects for Sunday and wow-----lots of beauty and eloquence and rich theology/spirituality there! If you were wanting to share a favorite hymn text be assured you would NOT be expected to lead us in singing it. The emphasis would be on the words and their significance to you. It MAY be that we do some singing, but this is not part of the assignment I am giving here. Our Soup Suppers begin Wednesday March 13. Then March 20, 27, April 3 and 10. SO PONDER THIS AND LET ME KNOW WHICH DATE YOU PREFER!

WELCOMING THE STRANGER is an event being offered to NOCC youth on Sunday March 3 3-6PM at Community Christian Church. It will feature a fabulous look at ministries in Greater Kansas City which are working with refugees. Contact Sara for details.

REGIONAL DISCIPLES SUMMER CHURCH CAMP DATES are listed on the Tall Oaks Web site.

REGIONAL DISCIPLES WOMEN'S SPRING RETREAT is planned for March 8-9 at Tall Oaks. "Tell Me A Story" is the theme to be explored with Dr. Marti Steussy, Professor of Biblical Interpretation at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Earlybird Registration deadline is February 8. Final registration deadline is February 22. Contact Debbie Herrick for more information. <https://www.talloaks.org/gkc-dwm-retreat-2019>

WEEK OF COMPASSION OFFERING IN FEBRUARY You are invited to consider a special gift to the Disciples Annual Week of Compassion Special Offering which is heavily promoted each February but which receives gifts year round. The Week of Compassion is our Disciples Disaster Relief Ministry which works effectively with various global relief agencies in all those places where people are suffering due to natural disasters such as floods/earthquake and famines. Make your check out to NOCC designated WOC.

DISCIPLES GENERAL ASSEMBLY IN DES MOINES---ROAD TRIP? The General Assembly of the Christian Church happens every 2 years in various cities from coast to coast. IT WILL NOT BE THIS CLOSE TO KC FOR AWHILE. So-----Rob is planning to attend a portion of the event July 22-23 and is happy to have company. Costs would include registration for the event, hotel room, food, etc. Be in touch with Rob if interested.

CHERITH BROOK WISH LIST As you can imagine, our friends at Cherith Brook are dealing with cold weather issues and needs related to feeding the homeless folks who stop in for a bite to eat and a shower. So shower supplies always needed, along with personal hygiene items. Cold weather items such as chap stick, cold meds, sleeping bags, blankets, socks are always welcome. **BELTS OF ANY SIZE AND MEN'S AND WOMEN'S UNDERGARMENTS ARE ESPECIALLY NEEDED.** Items for the house/kitchen include rice, salt/pepper, sugar, creamer (Roasterie donates coffee) dish soap, and energy saving light-bulbs.

THE WEEK AHEAD

Saturday 9AM Willow Farms Homes Association

Saturday 1130AM Pack 900 Banquet.

Sunday 9AM Groups for all ages

Monday 6PM Troop 900

Tuesday 945AM Men's Bible group

Tuesday 6PM pack 900

Wednesday 7PM Music Ministry

Saturday 745AM Men's Breakfast

Saturday 9AM Centering Prayer

SAVE THE DATES

ASH WEDNESDAY OBSERVANCE WITH HOLY FAMILY PARISH MARCH 6 7PM

NOCC LENTEN SOUP SUPPERS BEGIN WEDNESDAY MARCH 13 6PM

REZOUND BELL CHOIR IN CONCERT AT NOCC PALM SUNDAY APRIL 14 3PM

NOCC Eastertide Weekend Retreat at Marillac Center in Leavenworth KS April 26-28

YOU, ME AND THE ENNEAGRAM Led by Lori Hall May 11 930AM May 16 630PM May 23 630PM

Faith is stepping out into the unknown with nothing to guide us but a hand just beyond our grasp.

Frederick Buechner

With you in ministry

Rob