

2013 Staff Parish Report

2013 has proven to be a year of significant change in the life of the CUMC staff.

After 7+ faithful years leading the Christ United flock, Pastor Don Tabler announced his retirement. Much of the first part of the year was spent preparing for Pastor Don's departure and ensuring a smooth transition from one leader to the next. The Staff Parish committee with the support and guidance of Pastor Don and Reverend Rambach, prayerfully completed the due diligence to ensure a successful placement and transition. The congregation had the opportunity to celebrate the leadership and service of Pastor Don in a fun, albeit sad, farewell in June.

In July, Christ United joyfully welcomed Pastor Frances Preston as our new leader. Pastor Francie brings to us her global perspective, having served a diverse congregation in Holland. We are excited about her passion for worship and teaching as well as her experience working with various ministries that are closely aligned to those at CUMC i.e., Stephen Ministry, Shepherd's Shelves, etc. Pastor Francie has jumped fully into transition activities including holding regular staff meetings, connected one on one with members of the congregation and participating in small group gatherings at parishioner's homes to understand the pulse of the church. We have enjoyed the thoughtful, relevant and oftentimes humorous point of view that Pastor Francie brings to the pulpit and look forward to many years of her serving this congregation and community.

While a change in leadership can be challenging for a church, the staff of CUMC has remained steadfast in their responsibilities and service.

The Music Ministry, under the leadership of Dr. Lynne Stallworth continues to thrive. Lynne encourages all, those who are gifted musicians as well as those who have a spirit for praise to be a part of the worship experience. Each week, the various choirs continue to reflect the diversity of our congregation. Lynne's leadership is clearly reflected in the masterful Cantatas as well as with the youth who participate in Faith Weaver Friends, Music Arts and Drama and Vacation Bible School. This May, Lynne along with other members of the congregation spearheaded our first annual Music Fest. Several talented praise and worship bands performed and it was very well received. Lynne along with Frieda Jones, Gospel choir director and organist Dennis Dell bring an intense energy to their work and it shows up in the artistry and joyful noise that can be heard in and around Christ United.

Another vital element to our music ministry are the bell choirs which continue to be led by Suzanne Conklin. The growth and musical excellence of both the adult and youth Jubilee Ringers is a testament to Suzanne's dedication and talent. Suzanne also continues to lead as co-chair of the United Methodist Women at Christ United.

Judy Hopkins, as Director of Program and Lay Ministries, continues to drive our congregation's spiritual development by encouraging the delivery of Christian educational opportunities such as Disciple Study. This year, Judy led the intensive Disciple IV study. We are grateful for her unending dedication to supporting and encouraging our youth to remain active members of the congregation and faithful servants for Christ. Participation in Mid Winter Advance, Soles for Souls and Vacation Bible School are just some of the efforts where Judy has been at the forefront. We also appreciate her support of the worship service each week ensuring that the congregation is knowledgeable about the life of the church. Finally, she also demonstrated her talents as host and mistress of ceremonies at Pastor Don's retirement dinner.

As our church grows in service and ministry, the administrative functions require strong support and leadership. Nancy Drake continues to effectively and efficiently hold her post and ensure that daily operations of CUMC run with as little interruption as possible. This year was especially challenging as Nancy dealt with family health issues however, to her credit, there was never a lapse in service or coverage. Nancy showed thoughtful concern for the presence of our church in the community, always wanting to ensure that our doors were open. She consistently kept both the Pastor and Staff Parish current on her availability. It is hard to overstate the impact that Nancy has on our congregation - she is often the linchpin for our church - the person that holds it all together. We appreciate her service not only as our Director of Administrative Ministry but also other areas where she has chosen to serve including Stephen Ministry.

Sexton, Ray Scott continues to serve with dedication. We've been able to reset expectations this year and are prayerful that we will see an improvement in the level of cleanliness in our church. We thank Ray for his willingness to receive feedback and his ongoing contributions.

It is an exciting time to be a part of Christ United Methodist Church. Staff Parish is dedicated to working with the Pastor and the rest of the staff to set goals that will take our church to the next level in making disciples for Christ.

Respectfully Submitted,

Sherry Peterson, SPR Chair