

## **Church Hall Report - October 23, 2016**

### **Children and Youth**

**CUMC Mission:** “Inviting all to become disciples of Jesus Christ serving Carlisle and beyond.”

This mission isn't just for adults. It's for children and youth as well and, through our children and youth ministries and the Little Lights Learning Center, we are introducing Jesus to children, youth and families and, through our programs, they are growing in faith and serving others in the Carlisle Community and beyond.

#### **Youth**

##### **High School/ Middle School Split:**

The Youth Group has split into two groups and two meeting nights because of increasing numbers and more effective ministry. Many attend because they were invited by a friend. This past year some of the youth joined the church.

##### **Fall Retreats – Growing in Faith:**

The Middle School retreat is Nov 4-6. Five adult leaders and 3 student leaders (high school students who are helping to lead in Middle School) will accompany 21 middle schoolers.

The High School retreat is Nov 18-20. Five adult leaders and 20 high schoolers are registered to attend.

##### **Students Serving Sunday Mornings and beyond:**

This year we are expanding ways for students to serve Sunday mornings in kids ministry: they serve at children's church, Sunday school, and carpet time. Also on Sundays they are ushering and greeting. We are also planning on serving at My Brother's Table this month and at Project SHARE. Youth participated in mission trips to Kentucky and Virginia and an international mission trip to the Bahamas.

##### **God Moments:**

God has been working in the lives of our youth. Many youth have been praying for and inviting new friends to youth group. In the past month we have had 12 new visitors. Others are taking even bigger steps to live out their faith at their school. One student took it upon themselves to start a team prayer for the team they are on before every varsity game this fall. They also led this prayer before every game. This is just one example of a student growing as a disciple.

#### **Children**

##### **S.E.E.K. Summer Series Vacation Bible School – Kids Discovering Jesus by Walking in His Footsteps**

Overall, the S.E.E.K. program went extremely well. The results of our volunteer/parent questionnaire were very positive. We were able to reach out to over 75 children from CUMC and the community. We will meet in early January 2017 to discuss changes and plans for Summer 2017.

##### **Children's Community Outreach events**

We now have 4 community outreach events each year (counting S.E.E.K.). The Easter Egg Hunt was a huge success with over 300 children and their families participating. Over 300 people visited our location in the Children's Alley during the “Harvest of the Arts” and shared in the games, prizes and fun and we got to talk with them about what we do at CUMC for children. Breakfast at Bethlehem will be a community event this year. We seek to reach families in our community about the real meaning of Christmas in a fun way.

##### **Changes in Mini Youth Group**

By adding another Mini Youth Group each month, we have provided consistency. We average around 10 3<sup>rd</sup>-5<sup>th</sup> Graders. The group is comprised of kids who attend CUMC Sunday morning and friends, whom the

kids invite. We continue to enjoy “Destinations Unknown”. It is a great way for children in this age group to grow in faith.

### **Kids Discovery Zone**

The creation of a designated, safe and exciting environment for our kids was the culmination of a year of work at CUMC. In September, the majority of the 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor in the Education Wing was christened the “Kids Discovery Zone” and we can already see a difference in the children and their families. It will serve our children well over the next 3 years as we plan for the new shared space in a new building.

### **Infants/Toddlers**

#### **Connecting Little Lights Families with CUMC:**

There has been a number of Little Lights families attending worship at CUMC. With events like Children's Sabbath, the combined CUMC/Little Lights summer pool party and distribution of books for Christmas/Easter inviting families to worship at CUMC, the families have an increased awareness of what CUMC is all about. The CUMC/Little Lights Learning Center picnic was a success despite the stormy weather for the first hour. The families really enjoyed it and we are looking forward to having another one next year.

#### **Offering Childcare So Parents Can Grow in Their Faith:**

CUMC offers childcare on Sunday and Tuesday nights and classes for parents who sign up. The childcare staff still expresses as much love for the job and the children now as they did a year ago.

#### **Community Outreach:**

At the spring CUMC Easter Egg Hunt Event at Mt. Asbury, the egg hunt for crawling infants and toddlers was a HUGE success, we had over 30 infant/toddlers join us!

### **Little Lights Learning Center**

- Little Lights was once again awarded Star 4 status as a high quality early learning program.
- Little Lights has partnered with the United Way to offer scholarships for Little Lights families. This year 9 families are receiving scholarships that will cover 50% of their tuition cost for the year. These scholarships are provided through donations by local businesses (some of the business owners are CUMC members). Little Lights must be designated as the recipient of the tax credit for businesses.
- Little Lights was voted as “runner up” in the Daycare category of Best of Cumberland County 2016.
- Little Lights is the recipient of a Community Innovation Zone Grant and will be partnering with South Middleton Township School District to help ensure that the preschool to Grade 3 continuum in the school district is appropriately supporting children and their families. As a component of this grant program, Little Lights will be offering to the community “parent cafes” at CUMC.

### **Where you (the congregation) can help**

- Volunteers are needed to teach and assist with Sunday school, children’s church, and family events. Volunteers can commit to one Sunday a month, one service a month ...whatever your schedule allows. Volunteers will need to get all of the necessary clearances though before they can help. **Our adult and youth volunteers are terrific in every way.** Their love for and commitment to our children is amazing.
- Support our fundraisers.
- Give a financial gift.
- Pray for our children and youth AND our staff and volunteer leaders