



December Lamplighter



'Tis THE Season

The first snow has fallen, indulgent naps have occurred, and the excess turkey now rests in the freezer. Yet, already another season arrives with another on its heels. Thanksgiving. Advent. Christmas. New Year.

So many wonderful days behind and ahead with family and our Central family. I am especially excited to be at the UMW's All-Church Christmas luncheon with everyone on the 8th after worship and then join with our broader community at 6 for the Sounds of the Season. Then there is a special service for the Longest Night on the 21st, many opportunities to serve our community, and my first Christmas Eve with Central at two services at 5 and 8. So much to look forward to, to prepare for, and still, what a confusing time of year this can be.

Thanksgiving can fall anywhere between the 22nd-28th, Advent can be between 22-28 days, yet at the grocery store 'Advent calendars' are 25 days starting on the first of the month. Advent is seen historically as a time of preparation, yet we often find ourselves buried in busyness and engagements leaving us feeling unprepared and stressed. The Christmas season once meant 12 days of celebration until the Epiphany but now is marked by after-Christmas sales on the 26th. What is going on?

All used to seem normal to me until I learned in seminary that Advent is a season dedicated to waiting and preparation for the 'second coming' of Christ. I was surprised. How did I get that far into life and never know this? I wondered then if many found mixing images from Revelation with cultural expressions of Christmas too daunting. How else could a season looking at the 'end' or 'fulfillment' be all about a past coming? My questions continued. Clarification came through looking through the changes in church history. Over time, many in

church came to believe the best way to relate to this ultimate expectation was through the stories of Jesus' first coming. Liturgically the Christmas story does not 'come' until Christmas Eve, but the story is so powerful and transcendent, it often overtakes more.

I find myself thinking about Advent in a different way today, a way beyond waiting for squares of chocolate and wrapped gifts. We are still in the 'already but not yet' world waiting for the return of Christ our King. However, another thought has brought a new perspective. Christ will come and announce the final words over the world. Christ has already come – living out and announcing good words which we cherish today in the Gospels. And there, we find in John's gospel, Christ IS the Word of God through which and by which all of creation has come into existence. In between this beginning and this final coming, there are many other words inspired by God, recorded for our consumption, edification, and formation. Our Bibles give us a good word from God for today from yesterday about a tomorrow we await. Or as the Lord God said, "I am the Alpha and the Omega, who is, and who was, and who is to come, the Almighty."

Indeed, Advent is a time of remembering these words to bear meaning and direction on our current expectation. And Christmas is still a magical time even if we do not participate fully in 12 days of celebration. A great seminary word about our liturgical seasons is anamnesis. As opposed to amnesia, the loss of memory, anamnesis means 'the drawing near of memory.' Our liturgical worship is meant to bring about anamnesis. This re-remembering is what we do each Sunday. This is what we do every time we read the Bible. We bring to mind for today the stories and truths written down in days gone by.

Only, if we are honest, many of us have not been taught how to read the Bible well. I for one in my first few readings had no idea how beautifully complex, culturally embedded, and yet simply wonderful it was. I like many, never 'really' read my Bible or learned habits to do so. For some of us this means never having been taught how to set aside daily time to encounter the good word God has for us all. For others, the daily repetition becomes a box to check or can feel like a lonely isolated pursuit and our resolve can wane. It's a hard thing to be a people of a book we have no memory of. This is why we are proposing 2020 to be the year Central journeys together through the whole Bible.

Cont...

Beginning January 1st, 2020 we will embark through God's word alongside one another. There will be sign-ups for those who wish to commit to this so your names can be prayed over and periodic encouragement offered. For those with devices, there is a program called Read Scripture (available in most app stores or via hard copy in the church office) which offers overviews, daily reminders and a simplified approach. If you need accountability partners, we will walk with you.

Let us prepare ourselves at Central this Advent season so we are ready to receive Christ on the 25th and be a people full of memory of God's Good Word in the New Year.

In Christ,


Open House at the Parsonage

Welcome to December and Advent! It truly is (one of) the most wonderful times of the year! It's likely while you are reading this I (Jen Seger) am at Disneyworld with the family, but I am anticipating all the fun that is to come.

When I was growing up, Christmas Day was spent at Grandma's. I can still picture her standing at the counter making rolls, peeling potatoes, checking the ham and turkey. She spent days preparing for her family of 50 who was about to descend on the family homestead - the same house both my father and grandfather grew up in. Pies, cookies, veggies, green bean casserole, chocolate pudding torte and

more deliciousness than you could imagine would be added as all the families arrived. And the tree would be so full of gifts by the time the cars were empty, half the room would be covered in brightly covered boxes.

My cousins and I all grew up and got married, and my grandma has now gone on to spend Christmas with the birthday boy Jesus. My family will still gather, but not until the week after. The week of Christmas sometimes makes me a little blue - I long to sit on the sunporch and laugh with my cousins, or wake up in my childhood home with my sisters on Christmas morning, and I just can't wait to head to Wisconsin and hug everyone so tight until we cannot breathe. We have found over the years that the time we share together may take place on a day that isn't December 25th, but as long as the family is together it's Christmas.

One thing that is abundantly clear to us already is that Central is family. And as family, Joseph and I thought it would be fun to have a family gathering. Join us **Sunday, December 22** from **1:30-4:00 at the parsonage (3245 Glen Hills Drive)** for cookies and treats, coffee and punch. Maybe Sam will play something for you on the Piano, and you can check out the new treehouse. Come and share your stories of your family Christmas gatherings, laughter and maybe (like my uncle Jerry did every year after dinner) take a snooze on the couch while watching football.

THE FAMILY CIRCUS®



Creative Hands

Creative Hands will meet on December 12th from 9am thru lunch. Come join us for crafts, laughs, and fellowship. If you have any questions or creative ideas, contact Shanron Rider.

Friendship Circle

The Friendship Circle will meet at 10:00am in the Parlor on Thursday, December 19th. Please join us.

Opportunities to Serve!

December 14th we have the opportunity to serve two different schools in our area as we build relationships with families and teachers during their breakfast events! Vaile is having a breakfast that we will be able to cook for at our church, help serve, and clean up for at the school, and Starr is having Breakfast with Father Christmas where we will be able to help set up, serve at different stations, and help clean up. Sign up at this link or contact Pastor Jen: <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/9040D49A8A722A1FC1-dec>

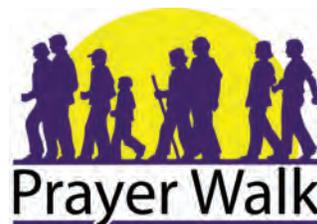
From the AGAPE Adult Sunday School Class

On December 8, we begin an 11 week study on the book of MARK, using video teachings from Francis Chan. This eleven-part Bible study walks through both the text of Mark's gospel and the actual locations where Jesus journeyed. For each session, we'll find goals for each week—things we want to walk away knowing, feeling, and doing differently as a result of the teaching. In addition, we'll encounter questions designed to help our group discuss and apply the video teaching.



Annual All Church Christmas Luncheon

Sunday, December 8th at 11:30 a.m. in Fellowship Hall. Everyone is invited. Food provided by Central's United Methodist Women. Christmas music provided by Madeleine Demetriades. We will be accepting donations of socks and underwear for distribution to Communities in Schools and the Genesis Shelter.



Prayer Walks

Prayer connects us daily to a loving God moving in our midst. In his 3 rules for Methodists, John Wesley calls us to both private and public prayer. On the first Monday of every month at noon, we will have a prayer walk through our neighborhood. We will divide into small groups at the entrance of the church and proceed in different directions. Along the way, we will pause to pick up trash and renew our streets and sidewalks. Please contact Pastor Joseph with any questions. For those who cannot participate in this way, contact pastor Jen for alternative options.

Mission Giving – How your United Methodist Women dollars are being used.

Every year Central's United Methodist Women strive to meet needs in our community and world. This year we will be giving a portion of the proceeds from the Pop-Ups to the following local non-profits, individual and group projects:

Birth to Five, Communities in Schools, Community Laundry Project, CUMC Preschool Program, CUMC Tribe (for their mission trip), Every Child Can Read Program, Genesis, Girl's Inc., Refuge of Hope Homeless Shelter, Sheri Koyles (for mission trip to Henderson Settlement).



Red Cross Blood Drive

The need for a robust blood supply becomes more crucial during the holiday seasons. With that in mind, Central United Methodist Church will be hosting a Red Cross blood drive on Thursday, December 19th between the hours of 1pm - 6pm in the Fellowship Hall. All blood types are needed. To register for this drive, go to redcrossblood.org and use the code CUMCRICH, If you have any questions, contact Dana Mollenkopf - 765-277-0287.



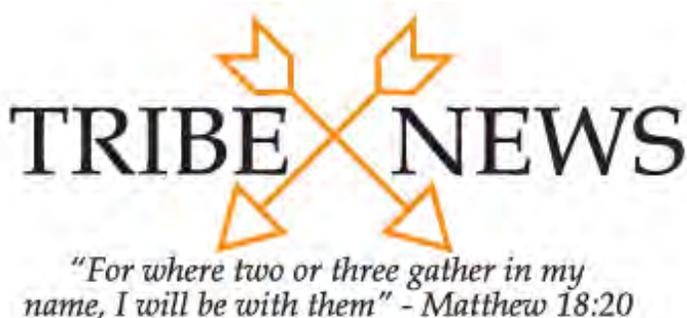
United
Methodist
Women

Membership in United Methodist Women

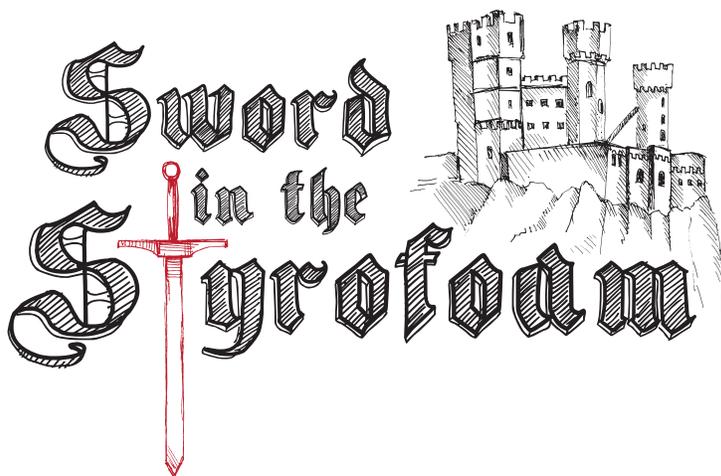
Share your time and talents...let your voice be heard... Membership is open to any woman who indicates her desire to belong and to participate in the global mission of the church through United Methodist Women. If you want to become a member or have any questions, please contact one.

Did you know...?

The first secular Christmas song "Up on the Housetop" was written by Benjamin Hanby in New Paris Ohio in 1864. Mr. Hanby was a young minister in the Church of the United Brethren in Christ but decided he would rather teach music to children. He eventually opened a children's singing school in New Paris. One song he was noted for was Darling Nelly Gray written during pre-Civil War days. Mr. Hanby and his father, who was a bishop in the United Brethren church, were active in the Underground Railroad movement hiding many slaves in their Ohio homes. Benjamin's father also helped establish Otterbein college in Westerville Ohio. Although the Hanbys were not around when the Brethren Church merged with the Methodist Church, I think we would have been proud to call both of them "one of us".



TRIBE has spent the Fall learning about what it means to really allow Christ to transform your life. Moving from living for the temporary to the eternal and remembering that Jesus changes everything. We have 2 new small group leaders from Central but would love to have adults from the other congregations. The more adults loving on these students, the better! Please contact Sheri if you are interested in God using you to change the life of a student for Him!



PLAY FUNDRAISER POSTPONED

NEW DATE: JANUARY 18, 2020

THE SWORD IN THE STYROFOAM

(An Audience participation melodrama)

****Final rehearsal on Friday night the 17th****

Please join us as we find out whether or not the Princess gets rescued from the gloomy King, marries the Prince or lives alone! Discover how the peasants impact the Kingdom and the audience!

Tickets: \$10 includes chili, cornbread, brownie, and beverage

****DONATIONS TAKEN AS VOTES FOR YOUR FAVORITE CHILI****

ALL PROCEEDS BENEFIT YOUTH MISSIONS TO HENDERSON SETTLEMENT IN 2020



This Christmas, TRIBE will be adopting a family from the Boys and Girls Club. TRIBE members will be purchasing, wrapping, and delivering gifts to the family. If you would like to be a part of this project, you may donate grocery gift cards for the family to purchase a Christmas meal. (all gifts are needed by December 15)

Boys and Girls family gift wrapping and cookie baking: December 15 (STILL HAVING DRAMA PRACTICE)

TRIBE CHRISTMAS PARTY—Sunday, December 22 (watch email for details)

NO TRIBE—Enjoy your Christmas Break!

December 29

January 5

SOUNDS of the SEASON

You are invited to a time of sharing music, poetry, and refreshments for the enjoyment of those who gather.

December 8th • 6:00pm
Central United Methodist Church
1425 East Main Street
Richmond, IN



We will be collecting canned goods for the community food pantry and unwrapped gifts for those in foster care.

Central Preschool News



Thank you class
volunteers for
November!

Pastor Jen Huff
Madeleine
Demetriades
Doris Miller
Donna Jurgens

Interested in volunteering?
Please contact Nicole
(nicosix@gmail.com ; 937-564-0103).
You'll need to fill out a background check
for the church if you haven't already.
**Help needed Mondays and
Wednesdays (9.30am-12.30pm);
also special events/projects.**

Classroom Visitors

Not only do we have church volunteers who assist Miss Nicole on Mondays and Wednesdays, but we also have visitors that come and lead our class in special lessons just for us!

Pastor Jen comes once a month to lead us in a lesson time that centers around our Word of the Month. We hear a story, learn a Bible verse and do an activity.



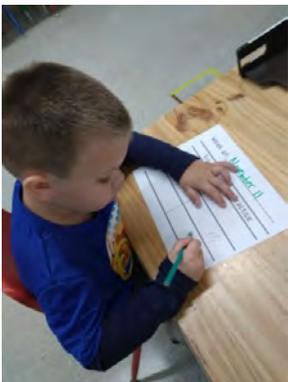
Thanks to a grant received by Cope Environmental Center,

Stephanie comes once a month to lead us in their Toddler Time program. Since the program is for ages 2-5, we invite the 2's & 3's Childcare classes to join us.



Sign-in

Every morning, after putting coats, backpacks and lunch boxes in cubbies the preschoolers sign-in. Each child has their own sheet with either 2 or 3 lines, depending on how many days they attend class. Depending on age, in the left hand column they trace or color their name and in the right hand column they practice writing their name on their own or draw cool lines.



Sounds of the Season

The Preschoolers have begun practicing their Christmas songs and are excited to be a part of Central's program!

Christmas

Word Search

M E H E L H T E B U G H D S
Y C E O U R W J O S E P H A
S B D E A W M A R Y K Q I X
D F A T L B C K S U S E J Y
O C S B W T O P A T W T T E
N Q S D D R T R Z T Z I W U
K S S T E R T A V W V S Z D
E R W G N Y E N C I H G A O
Y I N G F E X H T D S M N S
Y A V F Y C S A P J V H G E
M G S L C S N E M E K E E V
S P I B I X G W R U H K L L
X X N X O U B W T P I S C C
U R H L E L B A T S Q I R F

Angel
Baby
Bethlehem
Cattle
Donkey
Jesus
Joseph

Manger
Mary
Nativity
Presents
Shepherd
Stable
Star

December Calendar

12/2	Prayer Walk	12:00pm
12/2	Parlor Conversations	1:30pm
12/4	Wisdom Study	10:00am
12/4	Meet Ad Council	11:30am
12/8	UMW Luncheon	11:00am
12/8	Sounds of the Season	6:00pm
12/9	Monday Morning Connection	9:00am
12/9	Medical Monday	1:00pm
12/11	Wisdom Study	10:00am
12/11	Lunch Bunch	11:30am
12/12	Creative Hands	9:00am
12/12	Soup Kitchen	9:00am
12/12	Ad Council	6:00pm
12/17	Bread Basket	4:30pm
12/17	Trustees Meeting	6:30pm
12/18	Wisdom Study	10:00am
12/19	Red Cross Blood Drive	8:00am
12/19	Friendship Circle	10:00am
12/21	Longest Night Service	6:00pm
12/24	Christmas Eve Family Service	5:00pm
12/24	Christmas Eve Candlelight Service	8:00am
12/25	MERRY CHRISTMAS! (Closed)	
12/26	MERRY CHRISTMAS! (Closed)	

Thank you for serving!

Acolytes

12/1	Julie Maxeiner, Mary Alice Bolser
12/8	Sheri Koyles, one youth
12/15	Duane and Sandy Hodgin
12/22	Steve and Sharon Enright
12/29	Jamie and Dylan Puckett

Sunday Greeters

TBD

Sunday Ushers

12/1	Lowell Robinson, Sam Willman, Jim Puckett, Jamie Puckett, Dylan Puckett
12/8	Electa Berk, Larry Parker, Linda Witter, Jim Robinson, Lester Robinson
12/15	Electa Berk, Larry Parker, Linda Witter, Jim Robinson, Lester Robinson
12/22	Rick Eyer, Phil Scott, Jackie Scott, Beryl Wesler
12/29	Rick Eyer, Phil Scott, Jackie Scott, Beryl Wesler

Sunday Scripture Readers

12/1	Elaine Mollenkopf
12/8	Ann Cashner
12/15	Jim Puckett
12/22	TBD
12/29	TBD

December Altar Guild

Ann Cashner



Longest Night Service

December 21st at 6pm

Christmas Eve Family Service

December 24th at 5pm

Christmas Candlelight Service

December 24th at 8pm