

2021

HAPPY NEW YEAR

January Lamplighter

Sing to the Lord

A Note from the Pastor

As a pastor and before as an everyday missionary, I have turned to the Bible for wisdom in all seasons of life. The Bible offers a steadying force in our walk no matter the winds which blow. Past becomes prologue as we see what was in what will be. It's why we followers of Jesus saturate ourselves in the stories, poetry, and cries from millenia ago. 1 Chronicles, possibly the last scroll to be included in the Old Testament offers such a vision. Celebration. Jubilation. Music playing, people dancing, and the whole assembly feasting...and all without masks. Israel was celebrating not the lifting of pandemic restrictions but the Philistine presence. After elaborate preparations to finally bring the ark of the covenant to Jerusalem, we find in 1 Chronicles 16 David's song:

*Give praise to the Lord, proclaim his name;
known among the nations what he has done.
Sing to him, sing praise to him;
tell of all his wonderful acts.
Glory in his holy name;
let the hearts of those who seek the Lord rejoice.*

The ark carried the presence of God. The only possible response was worship and sharing with others what has happened (or teaching, here in the form of song). Good news had arrived and good news is to be shared. I believe we find ourselves in a similar season as we say good bye to 2020. We are mere months away from a possible vaccine laden, herd immunity from the coronavirus. Central will be leading the way with community celebrations, music and gatherings for all (please contact if you want to be on the party planning committee). But this is not just because we can draw near, face to face - rather it is because we still have good news to share!

Jesus offers a way to change the way we live, build character, and reconcile relationships which are not possible apart from a discipleship community. Central has been this community and we will again be about building up this community in 2021. Following Jesus yearly, weekly, daily transforms all people – and we are evidence of this. We will continue to seek this transformation within and offer it freely to those in our lives. We too will make known what God has done in our homes and our gatherings, and pass along this transformational faith for generations to come. Each of us can answer the call to lead at least one person in following Jesus this year. Can you imagine? Our membership doubling as God works through you to bless the person you are called to love. I believe we too will sing out David's song:

*Sing to the Lord, all the earth;
proclaim his salvation day after day.
Declare his glory among the nations,
his marvelous deeds among all peoples.*

God is indeed doing a mighty work here in Richmond and I am so excited to see the many ways we will come alongside this year. Your church will come alongside you as you take up your calling. We will further offer tools such as the Real Discipleship Survey to better frame where our walk with Jesus is. Confirmation will again be starting up followed by a New Member class. We will be offering Alpha as an online space for those who may have never set foot inside a church, not sure what to believe or are asking tough questions. We will again have Financial Peace University in the coming months as well as various other discipleship classes and small groups. Our Monday Fireside Chats at 1:30pm will be practicing the way of Jesus by doing the commands of Jesus each week. Conversations around neighborhood ministries and benevolence will hopefully soon yield new opportunities to serve our community. And more resources will be offered for you to journey with your family in your homes.

January is but the beginning of the rest of the story for Central and God's powerful presence here in Richmond, New Paris and beyond. God's glory will be declared. So glad I will get to live through it with you.

In Christ,
Pastor Joseph



Epiphany

We celebrate Epiphany, when the Wise Men made it to Jesus with their gifts in tow, on January 6th. A practice that I learned about in recent years is "Star Gifts". A few years back I shared star gifts with the staff and congregation at Central. The staff kept their star gifts in front of them throughout the year. They were paper stars with a word written on them. They were randomly given and then we used them as a focus for the year. When we prayed and mediated on them, we thought about what God was trying to say to us through them. We thought about how the word pertained to our lives and how we lived into those words. This year although many of us will not gather in person for Epiphany, I still wanted to provide you with the opportunity to have a star word given to you this year. You can go to this website and a star word will be generated for you. Don't feel guilty if you click through until you get a word you're happy with or that you trust, but keep track of those words you clicked through and when you reflect on them later in the year, you might see how God was speaking to you through them! <http://www.wordoftheyear.me/index.php>
May you be blessed in this New Year, in ways that you can't even fathom!

Peace,
Pastor Jen





Boys & Girls Club Christmas Shop 2020

The Boys & Girls Club Christmas Shop of 2020 was re-styled in Covid 19 fashion. We were able to set up, guide the children through the shop and send them home with boxed and wrapped gifts while maintaining social distancing. In fact, the process went so smoothly we are planning to streamline the operation in a similar manner in the future. We appreciate all the donations that are given to us throughout the year by church families. Thank you to the members of Central who voluntarily gave their time to set up and organize the gifts: Pat Heiny, Dana Mollenkopf, Alisa Clapp-Itnyre and Sara Wright. A special thank you to the committee of 7 women who worked the entire 9 days. They included Ann Herrman and 6 members of Central United Methodist: Cindy Hayworth, Sharon Enright, Aileen Githens, Nettie Cates, Susie Auman, and Carla Stidham. Well done ladies!



Alpha is a time where you can explore life's biggest questions in an intimate, relational atmosphere. It features a series of sessions exploring the Christian faith, run over eleven weeks. Each session features a talk exploring different questions around faith, and a time for small group discussion.

During the conversation, you'll have the chance to share thoughts and ideas on the topic and hear from others. There's no obligation to say anything. And there's nothing you can't say. It's an opportunity to hear from others and contribute your own perspective in an honest, friendly and open environment.

Alpha has been run all around the globe and is designed to be a place where everyone is welcome. You don't have to come with all the questions because it is really about exploring. The adventurer and TV personality, Bear Grylls said, "Alpha was the best thing I ever did. It helped answer some huge questions and to find a simple empowering faith in my life."

- Dates: January 12 – March 30 (11 weeks)
- Meeting Time - Tuesday nights @ 7:30pm-9:00pm
- Meeting Location - Zoom
- Cost - \$0
- Leader: Joseph Seger

Central UMC Organ Turns 50!

By Madeleine Demetriades, Minister of Music

Central's mighty pipe organ turns 50 years old this year. Installation was completed in August of 1970 with official dedication taking place on Sunday, September 27th, 1970. The organist at the time, Don Ryno, designed the impressive instrument in collaboration with the M. P. Moller organ company after the previous instrument suddenly died during a service in the early 1960's. The process to raise funds for the new organ was long and tenuous, but ultimately successful. The instrument was custom built for our sanctuary and includes 4 manuals (keyboards), 52 stops (individual sounds/instruments) and 47 ranks, or rows of pipes, encompassing the entire sanctuary. There are over 6,000 pipes in total. Primary organists who have played the instrument include the aforementioned Don Ryno, Ed Edy, Ron Matson, and Madeleine Demetriades. Others include Ralph Burkhardt, Chris Rogan, and Frederick Chatfield.

Let's take a stroll down memory lane, shall we?



Photo of newly built Central sanctuary, circa 1958. No big organ yet!



Organ is nearly completed. Note the nifty wooden reredos screens. Photo taken March 21st, 1970



Central's sanctuary in all its modern splendor. Photo taken July 19th, 2020

Thanks to Doris Miller, Sally Sayre, Jan Hibner, and Shanron Rider for helping with details of this story.

Special Thanks to the Sounds of the Season Concert Participants:

Central Chancel Choir, Cantus Youth Choir, Wesley Ringers Handbell Choir, Central Youth Group, Amy McKee, Sam Seger, Frederick Chatfield, Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, and Annetta Itnyre

Special Thanks to the “Behind the Scenes” folks:

Alexander and Madeleine Demetriades, audio and video mastering/editing; Ann Cashner, and Dr. Paul Rider, photography, and Nicole Demetriades, digital artist

Special Thanks to all who contributed to Special Music for December:

Central Chancel Choir, Wesley Ringers Handbell Choir, Central Flute Trio (Sandi Cox, Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, and Joy Swonder), Alisa Clapp-Itnyre, and Amy McKee

Reminders/Announcements:

- Tuesdays at 10:00AM: Experience a time of weekly worship and virtual fellowship from Madeleine’s home in Brookville, Ohio! We pray, read Scripture, sing hymns, and hear meditative piano music. Streams live from Central’s Facebook page.
- Wednesdays at 12:15pm: Weekly Musical Meditations from Central’s beautiful sanctuary. Reflective music played on pipe organ or piano. Streams live from Central’s Facebook page!



“He makes all things new!”

I am so grateful for this knowledge every new year! I also love knowing that He can create new in me every day, if I will but allow Him to transform the old darkness that continues to try and creep in. My church(es) family certainly reminds me of God’s love year round, but especially during the holiday season. The surprise gifts that I found on my desk, in my mailbox, or handed to me by a friend are always a surprise and a BLESSING. Thanks for the love you continue to show to me, despite my unworthiness!

Continue to pray for our students as they navigate education in multiple formats and attempt to grow in friendships despite the obstacles of this pandemic season. Many of them welcomed the Christmas Break as the stress had become difficult for them. We, too, pray for all of you on Sunday nights when we gather!

Misson Trip 2021

Plans for a local middle school experience and a Native American reservation high school experience are under way. Obviously, fundraising last year was completely derailed. We will have some work to do this Spring, and with covid restrictions still in place, most of our fundraising will be virtual. We are planning on;

VIRTUAL BINGO via FB Live (Early March)

VIRTUAL 5K-relatives from all over can participate! (April)

And more!

Stay tuned for how you might support this year’s experiences for our students!

In Loving Memory of Tom Hill

Tom Hill was a pillar in our community and our church. His humble demeanor and strong leadership combined with his Christian faith and desire to form the next generation, bringing many blessings here at Central and throughout the community. His commitment to our mission to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world will now be continued for years to come in the form of an endowment gift on his behalf.

We would like to thank Tina Hill for her memorial gift to Central's Endowment ministry. We are humbled by the family's desire to see more lives transformed by Jesus through the work of Central for years to come.

Sincerely,
Central's Endowment Committee



Central has been blessed by various Endowments to ensure the perpetuity of Christ's work for generations to come. We currently have endowments to come alongside missions, youth, camping, and more. If you feel led to offer a gift, form a new endowment or are interested in participating in this multi-generational ministry, please contact the Endowment Committee Chair – Jan Passmore at jpassmorej@aol.com.

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