



February  
Lamplighter



## The Holy Days of February

February has long been the runt of the month family. Several days shorter than its 30+ day siblings and overlooked as our shivering hearts look to Spring approaching. But there are many moments and memories to behold. Birthdays, anniversaries, events, and more. Some try to point to the hallmark holiday of Valentine's Day, but I prefer the other side. The feast day of St. Valentine who died disobeying the decrees of the government in the belief love comes from God - to the point where he left a note about God's love to the jailer's daughter when he went to be executed. God's love seems to always drive us to our own cross to bear.

For me growing up, the best 'holiday' was Groundhogs Day. So delightfully quirky and strange. Punxatawny Phil lives on a magical elixir and speaks in groundhogs about how his shadow controls the weather. The weather that once was can be repeated again and again - not just because of a certain eponymous 90's movie. I was captivated by it to the point of going out on February 2nd and wondering whether a vision of my shadow would mean we could play baseball earlier that year.

However, the truth is sometimes stranger than fiction and once again Groundhogs Day might again be appropriate for the time. 2020 was such a strange reality to behold. It's as though we collectively thought a turn of the calendar would solve our ills. Not many were ready for the shadow awaiting us in January. Yet, as the people of God, we should have been ready. Ecclesiastes tells us, "What has been will be again, that has been done will be done again; there is nothing new under the sun." The march of time; the pursuits of pleasure, wealth, & advancement; angling for posterity - they all circle round again to the beginning within a few generations. The passage of time creates the illusion of progress when often it masks the eroding of the foundations. "Hevel, hevel, says the Teacher, everything is hevel (meaningless, vapor, smoke)." And it can be easy to be crushed by the enormity of it all, unless...

Unless we remember the final call of the author, "here is the conclusion of the matter: Fear God and keep his commandments, for this is the whole duty of humanity." This call was clarified in Christ offering new commandments and again in 1 John 5:3, "This is love for God: to obey his commands. And his commands are not burdensome." The pandemic, the images of the capitol, the incendiary rhetoric - none of this is new to God. Evil and sin have tried to reign with death since the Fall, yet grace has reigned in righteousness through Jesus Christ our Lord since the resurrection. We are called as renewed people to love one another.

These commands call us to repeat again what we have been about. We are reminded the ancient ways of following Jesus are again the new ways we must tread to stand against the same old powers and principalities using new identities and new tactics. We must repent of any way we have stood idly by when God has called us to confront evil. We will have an opportunity to do this together corporately as we gather together for a community Zoom worship service on February 17th. We must again confront the evils in the wilderness of our journeys as we return to the word of God and the means of grace. We must continue in our connection with one another though the coronavirus distances us. Well grounded in scripture, connected in prayer, and well disciplined in

our love of neighbor; we can again remember what to expect in the days ahead and walk through faith with joy and thanksgiving whatever the shadow may reveal.

Though we may not like seeing our shadow here in 2021, I am glad to be a part of the loving community of Central. Together, in God's presence we can make each of these days holy as we walk faithfully through our next steps as we did our first steps.

Yours in Christ,  
Pastor Joseph



## Greetings from Madeleine, your Minister of Music!

I pray that February is bringing you a time of peace and spiritual reflection as we quickly approach Ash Wednesday, the season of Lent, and Holy Week. I pray that you all are practicing good self-care as we continue to endure the COVID-19 pandemic. This month, check out a post on our church blog about one of my favorite musical artists: John Coltrane. Coltrane was a deeply spiritual man who overcame addiction and felt compelled to use his life to help others. Go to <https://www.richmondcumc.com/blog/> to learn more. I will leave you now with this brief prayer: Dear Lord, May we feel the grace of You during this time of darkness and uncertainty. We know You are here, that You love us, and that Your son died for us. Through You, all is possible. Thank you, Lord. Amen.

### **Some reminders and announcements:**

- Tuesdays at 10:00am: Weekly home worship service/virtual fellowship opportunity from Madeleine's home in Brookville, Ohio. Streams live on 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 on Central's Facebook page.

**Special Musicians Needed:** Central is very blessed to have wonderful new cameras and recording equipment in the sanctuary. We are in need of more special music for upcoming worship services. This could involve singing, playing a musical instrument or something else entirely (poetry, dancing, etc!). If you have interest in coming in to record some music, please email me at: [Madeleine@richmondcumc.com](mailto:Madeleine@richmondcumc.com).

**Wesley Ringers Bell Choir and Chancel Choir Members:** Watch for incoming email messages about upcoming zoom fellowship gatherings.

## Dear CUMC Congregation,

First off, I would like to introduce myself as the new Early Childhood Coordinator for Central Childcare and Preschool! My name is Samantha Reed, and I am so excited to start in this role at the center and be a part of your church building's staff. A little bit about me and my testimony, I am a new resident of Richmond. I grew up on the east side of Michigan, then relocated to the west side to pursue my Bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development from Western Michigan University. I have been working as a preschool teacher in Big Rapids, Michigan, until now. I have various experiences working with school-age children, youth, and families from my previous background with non-profit organizations.

I come from a family very involved in the church from a young age. However, since coming into adulthood, ingrained church belief has evolved into a love and devotion of my faith and the Lord I serve. As a believer and an advocate for children, families and serving the needs of a community, I firmly believe in the idea that every child and individual that enters the center deserves compassion, empathy, and support. Every day we are given the gift to minister to those around us and be an example of God's love working in us by loving others. It has been inspiring for me to see how planting the seed of faith in children of all ages and struggling families can promote strength, resilience, and peace. I hope that I can be an encouragement in the families' journeys here at the center. I am so honored to be a part of this fantastic staff and learn all I can from Pastor Jen, the team, and all of you!

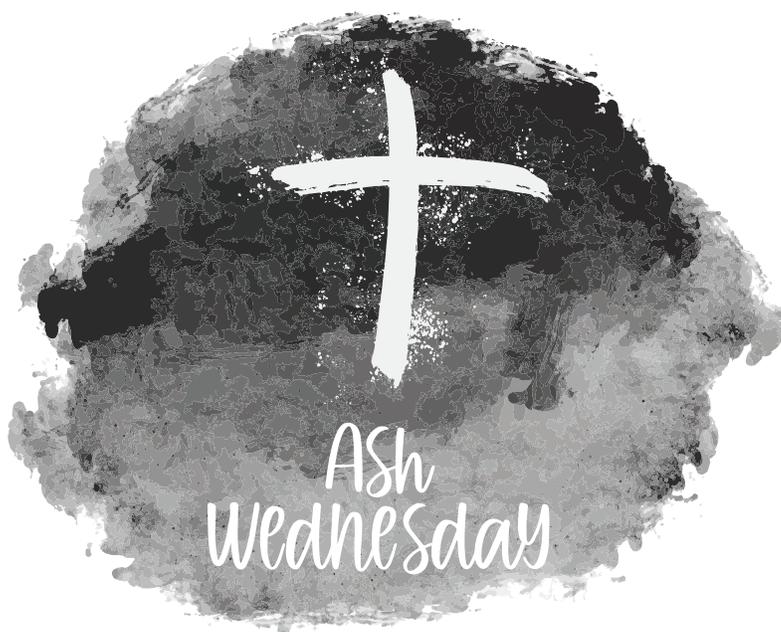
Warmest Regards,

Samantha Reed

Early Childhood Center Coordinator

Central Childcare and Preschool

cumcchildcare@richmondcumc.com



## Ash Wednesday Service

Join us on Wednesday, February 17th at 7pm  
on zoom for our Ash Wednesday Service

You can join us either by phone call at

**1-312-626-6799**

**Meeting ID: 893 7844 5987**

or virtually! Be sure to keep an eye out for  
the zoom link on our Central News Page on  
our website in the coming weeks.

# Central United Methodist Church Human Interest Stories: Barb Harper By: Madeleine Demetriades, Minister of Music



I spoke to Barb Harper all about her life growing up in Richmond. Here is what she had to say:

Barb was born, raised and has spent her entire life in Richmond, Indiana. She met her first husband while they both attended Richmond High School. They were in the same grade. Barb has been married to her second husband, Jim, for about twelve years now.

All throughout high school, Barb worked at Steven's Confectionary which was on East Main Street, located right near Central United Methodist

Church. Steven's Confectionary offered many sweet treats including homemade ice cream sundaes, sodas, soup, and BBQ sandwiches. She earned \$0.65 an hour. While in high school she took many secretarial courses which included typing. She had to use a manual typewriter to complete coursework for History, Civics, and English. The machine was quite difficult to use. It would apparently take Barb three to four hours to complete just one paper!

After finishing high school, she lived at home for one year while working at the Richmond Glove Factory as secretary to the president. She worked at the glove factory for three years but stopped when her and her husband had their first child. They ended up having three children throughout their 40-year-long marriage. After the children were older, Barb returned to the workforce, ultimately becoming the director of accounting and payroll for Richmond High School. She worked there for 30 years until her retirement. She says they offered excellent benefits, and that she was very happy there. Currently Barb serves as Central's librarian, taking care of our extensive book collection.

I asked her about her childhood. She was one of three girls. Her father was a milkman for Wayne Dairy for over forty years. She remembers when he delivered milk on a horse and buggy. During the summertime, her father would take her and her sisters along on the milk routes, allowing them to put the fresh milk on porches and pick up the empty bottles. She remembers these times with great fondness. Her mother worked after her children were older as a seamstress. At home, Barb's mother made all of her daughter's clothing – dresses, pajamas, play clothes, etc. She remembers her mother laundering them, hanging them up to dry, and meticulously ironing everything. Barb was not too concerned about fashion as a teenager. She remembers wanting store-bought clothing, which she would only receive on special occasions like Christmas and Easter. She wore shiny patent-leather shoes on Sunday mornings, which she shined with lard.

As a teenager, since Barb worked at the previously mentioned Steven's Confectionary, she

didn't have too much free time. She remembers playing in the street near Glenn Miller Park. Her and her friends around the neighborhood would ride bikes, play kickball, hide and seek, jacks, jump rope and hopscotch. Her parents were somewhat strict: they always wanted her home before dark and had to know where she was at all times. Since there were no cell phones she wouldn't be able to call from locations unless there was a pay phone or house phone nearby. Barb's mother had strict rules about dating – Barb was not to date anyone too older or younger. There was a young man who was 19 years old and interested in a 15-year-old Barb. Her mother told him he was absolutely not to date her daughter. He respected her mother's wishes and left. Barb's parents also had rules about borrowing the family car. There was only one for all five family members so they had to share and be diligent in taking care of the vehicle.

Her family weren't big movie-goers. She does recall their weekly family tradition of driving down to Main Street and watching all of the people who were shopping, dining and hanging out. In 1968, Barb remembers when a double explosion occurred in downtown Richmond. The blast killed 41 people and injured more than 150. The explosion was ultimately caused by a natural gas leak under a sporting goods store. After the explosion, the city renovated the downtown area, adding a walkable promenade with lots of outdoor sitting areas. Barb remembers enjoying the promenade. She says many people were always around there, shopping and hanging out. She has always enjoyed numbers and typing, and began piano lessons at the age of five. She has played piano all her life and served as Choir Director at a local church before coming to Central approximately ten years ago.

It was a real delight to sit down with Barb and learn about her life, and what the town of Richmond was like, back in the day. This community has such a rich history! If you have interest in being the next subject of Central's Human Interest Stories Series, please contact Madeleine at the following email address: [madeleine@richmondcumc.com](mailto:madeleine@richmondcumc.com)



## Financial Peace University

70% of Americans were living paycheck to paycheck – then the pandemic hit. That's why we're going to be offering Dave Ramsey's Financial Peace University class virtually online starting Thursday, February 5th at 6:30pm. It's timely wisdom, practical, and a fun way to learn about money. Each weekly session starts with teaching on video and is followed by a powerful small group discussion. You'll see that you are DEFINITELY not alone if you're struggling in this area. And even if you're one of the few who isn't struggling, you'll still benefit from this powerful material. It teaches you how to apply biblical principles to the way you handle money and how to start truly managing all of the resources God has given you. This class breaks the process down into easy steps that will help no matter where you are. You've just got to take it! If you want to get some more information now, just ask Carla - [carla@richmondcumc.com](mailto:carla@richmondcumc.com). Can't wait to see you all there!

## **UMW Meeting**

Women of the church, UMW will have our monthly unit meeting on Thursday, Feb. 11, in a socially distanced Fellowship Hall. Creative Hands (all are welcome to join us) will meet from 9:00- 12:00. Lunch will be served at noon. Reservations needed. Please contact Ann Cashner or Shanron Rider. Our UMW meeting will follow at 1:00, with a short business meeting and a guest speaker. LOVE will be our theme. February Mission Offering: If you are able, please bring a package of new children's underwear or socks, or a small monetary donation. Please join us!

## **Creative Hands**

Creative hands will begin to meet again in February! We will see you for our first meeting on Thursday, February 11th at 9am!

## **Garage Sale Update**

Many of you have asked if we will be having a garage sale this year. Plans are still in the works. While we appreciate your contributions, please hold on to your items until further notice.

## **Fireside Conversations**

2021 brings not just a new year, but also a renewed opportunity to gather. Starting every Monday at 1:30 we will be gathering by the fireplace and on Zoom to share and discuss whatever may be on your heart or mind. Feel free to drop in here and there or attend weekly or invite someone new. There is no topic off limits as we conspire about what Jesus is about. For 2021, any remaining time in the hour will be focused on Practicing the Way of Jesus. We will go through every command of Jesus and wrestle with how we can obey them here and now. For more questions, contact Pastor Joseph ([joseph@richmondcumc.com](mailto:joseph@richmondcumc.com)).

Zoom meeting link – <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81236087134>  
meeting ID – 812 3608 7134



## **Real Discipleship Survey**

The Real Discipleship Survey is an instrument designed to support the development of maturing disciples at both the personal and congregational levels. It measures the level of maturity in each of six dimensions of discipleship: Worship, Hospitality, Open to Jesus, Obeying Jesus, Service, and Generosity. The Indiana Conference has purchased a conference-wide license which makes the survey free for all INUMC churches and congregants! You can find the links to the Real Discipleship Survey and the Instructions on our website at [richmondcumc.com/exploring/](http://richmondcumc.com/exploring/)

## **Helping without Hurting**

Have you ever thought about how poverty can be alleviated? What are possible long term solutions? How can we support lasting change in the lives of others? Join us for a few weeks during Lent to work through the book "Helping without Hurting in Church Benevolence" by Steve Corbett and Brian Fikkert. Books are available in the church office. We will have a call out meeting to gather those interested and then set up meeting times from there. We look forward to continuing to work through how Central can continue to tangibly demonstrate the love of Christ not only in the church, but in the community around us. Contact the office or one of the pastors to be added to the list!

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