



# GATHER

August Lamplighter



# EKKLESIA

Ekklesia. That is what we are. Or rather that is what we are when we gather together. The word historically described gatherings of Roman and Greek citizens who had a particular shared belief or legislative cause. First used in the Torah, (at least the Septuagint versions of Exodus 19 and Deuteronomy 4) we sometimes use it today as a catch-all for everything Jesus-y. Ekklesia translates to Church.

How did such gatherings become church? *Ekklesia* literally means the ‘called out gathering/assembly.’ The call offers an explicit named purpose bringing people together, but that is not *ekklesia*. *Ekklesia* is the gathered together people. Searching the vocabulary of their day, Jesus and the gospel writers found that this term best described the gatherings of those people who felt led to follow Jesus.

*Ekklesia* was used in Jesus’ day and in the centuries preceding to describe an assembly of citizens which gathered to tend to particular matters of the polis. The polis – roughly translated city – from which we get metropolis, Indianapolis, etc. – was the basic level of government in Greece. Several centuries before Christ, Aristotle, wrote a definitive work on how the different *ekklesias* brought about life together for all within the polis, it was a philosophy of human affairs – it was called Politics. And the early followers of Jesus adapted the basic component of this to name their gathering – the church.

Being a part of a church is about living in community. Living in community is about being political. But it does not have to be partisan.

In our current moment, there is so much being shared (or blasted from social media) about different perspectives of how we ought to live together. Hearing such diatribe continuously raises stress and can rob us of our peace. But we must remember, this is not how the church of Jesus is to be. Be of good cheer and let your heart not be troubled.

Living in Christian *ekklesia*, we gather to follow Jesus by the power of the Holy Spirit for the glory of God. We do not worry about forcing others to believe our viewpoint, but rather think of others more than ourselves as we follow the way of Christ’s love. We gather with others seeking the same, leaning into God’s grace and forgiveness rather than partisan messaging. We desire proximity as our lives are lived leaning on one another, sharing burdens and joys. We care deeply about the humans around us and their affairs. This community gives us new life and forms us in loving our neighbors together. This is why Scripture calls us to gather regularly:

*“Let us hold unswervingly to the hope we profess, for he who promised is faithful. And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching” – Hebrews 10:23-25*

As we return from summer vacations, let us hold to this hope. We have great purpose to gather

around in the name of Jesus. August's lamplighter holds several ways for you to again gather together. Our regular time on the Lord's day offers more opportunities and the weekly bulletin will share even more. Class Meetings and other small groups are continually forming. Later this month, we will share about opportunities to gather at Fall Family Camp.

Life goes on and it is better when we live it together. Glad to be in Jesus' *ekklesia* with you. See you next Sunday if not before.

In Christ's love,  
Pastor Joseph 

# Gather

Humans, by nature, are social beings. We can trace our need for gathering all the way back to the creation story. God noted that it was not good for man to be alone, so he created the rest of the beasts, the birds, and livestock, but still, there was no suitable partner for Adam; so, God gathered material from man himself to create woman. In this, we find that even from the foundation

of our existence, God has instilled a need to be together. God, in His infinite creativity and wisdom, created people to be in community with each other in a way that reflects the Trinity. Jesus commands us to be one with each other just as He and the Father are one. So where does this oneness start? Gathering together is the basic building block for oneness; again, Jesus's promise resounds in my heart that where two or more are gathered in His name, He is present.

God has created us with an inclination to gather, but why? In the past, the only way for one to receive scripture was by flocking together to hear it spoken aloud. This is a powerful truth and an insightful clue; in gathering, we can speak truth to each other, and further, it is only in gathering that we can live out the love, passion, and grace displayed by Christ. In absolute isolation, we face the trials of this world without support. In gathering, we are able to encourage one another with the truth of the Word and endure trials by living out our love for one another. It is a privilege and a fulfillment of God's plan to gather with each other.

Much of our lives are structured around gatherings, from eating dinner to going to work or school, to attending church, to meeting with a friend. My prayer for the church is that we would become more aware of the gatherings around which we center our lives and that we would see gatherings differently. May we take them as opportunities to serve and pour into others. May our gatherings foster love, unity, and oneness with each other and God.



Blessings, Michael Richmond

# SUMMER MUSIC CAMP!

From Monday, July 18th to Wednesday, July 20th, we had a great time gathering at Central's first ever Children's Summer Music Camp! We taught the children about general music concepts such as note names, rhythm, expression and meter. We primarily studied children's handbells and mountain dulcimer. Carla Stidham and Kathy Robinson graciously donated their time to teach the latter, while Nicole Andreas, Patty Kelley and Madeleine Demetriades helped teach the former. The other adult volunteers were Debbie Jenkins and Renee Colaj, who helped with student room transitions, crafts and snacks. Pastor Joseph Seger assisted in teaching a daily Bible lesson to the students. Ann Cashner and Shanron Rider prepared the snacks. Nicole Andreas also helped with opening and closing each camp day. I couldn't have asked for a better group of volunteers!



## Upcoming Dates/Events:

- Wednesday, September 7th: CHOIRS RESUME (Bells at 5:30pm, Choir at 6:30pm)
- Thursday, September 8th: Joysingers Children's Choir resumes (4:00pm)
- Wednesday, August 31st at 7:00pm: Richmond Community Singers Choir Concert (St. Paul's Episcopal Church, Richmond) (This is the summer community choir Madeleine Demetriades helped lead with area music directors)

## New Members Class

As our community returns to school in August, we will be offering a New Members Class on Sunday Mornings in the Memorial Room. Whether this is your first Sunday or if you have been attending Central for years, this is for all called to commit prayers, presence, gifts, service, and witness to Jesus here at Central. Paul tells us, "For as in one body we have many members, and the members do not all have the same function, so we, though many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another." Please contact Pastor Joseph if you are interested in attending or would like more information.

## Back to School Bash - Free School Supplies!

Saturday, August 6th from 11am - 1pm at 10th Street Park. This is an outreach of Christ United in partnership with several other churches, businesses, and community organizations. For more information please call 765-962-7738

## 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. Contact Pastor Joseph with questions.



The death of someone loved changes people's lives forever. And the movement or journey from "before" to "after" is almost always long and painful. If one is to heal, we cannot skirt the outside edges of our grief. Instead, we must journey through it.

To aid in that journey, a community Grief Share support group jointly hosted by the First Presbyterian and the First English Lutheran Churches of Richmond will be available starting on Thursday, August 18, 2022, at the First English Lutheran Church in Richmond and continuing through November 17. The group will meet each Thursday morning from 10:00am until 11:30am for a 13-week program plus a special 1-week session on "Surviving the Holidays." Neither childcare nor transportation will be provided.

Grief Share is a Christian based program with direction and purpose. With Grief Share one will learn how to walk the journey of grief and be supported on the way. It is a place where grieving people find healing and hope. Grief Share features nationally recognized experts on grief recovery topics in a video format. The seminar sessions are then combined with support group discussions of the materials presented during the video. The group of facilitators have each lost a close loved-one and experienced the beneficial results of the Grief Share program.

The goal of the local Grief Share sessions is not to get people to come to either the Presbyterian or Lutheran churches or to contribute money or to be sold anything. The facilitators understand how deeply grief and loss hurt people and families, and they simply want to make available a community grief recovery support group. It is a place where many Richmond and Wayne County residents have found that they can begin putting their lives back together again.

If one would like more information, please feel free to contact Becky Harper or First English Lutheran Church at 765-962-5773. Additionally, pre-registration is encouraged through the same contact.

### Central Listens

The administrative Council will be hosting a LISTENING SESSION for members of the congregation to share their thoughts regarding the direction of Central related to the upcoming General Conference 2024 and the decision related to human sexuality/LGBTQ+ issue. This event is being planned prayerfully and with the intent of furthering communication. Please come and share your thoughts with us. The event will be held in fellowship Hall following service on Sunday, August 14th. Pizza and Drinks will be provided. We hope you will join us. - The Administrative Council



## Low Vision Support Group coming in September!

Get to know others who are dealing with vision issues and find out about available resources. We will meet in the first Thursday of every month from 10:30am - 12pm at Central United Methodist Church. We will meet in the Parlor. Our first meeting will be September 1st. Support people are welcome. For more information, please call Toni Reinke at 765-969-6631



## TRIBE NEWS

*"For where two or three gather in my name, I will be with them" - Matthew 18:20*

### Welcome back TRIBE!

Please join us for a night of fellowship and fun as we enjoy food, games, planning, and growing. After a fun summer, we will get to kick off a new year of fun and spiritual growth with free food, devotional, brainstorming ideas for TRIBE this year, and getting to know, and catch up with each other. This event

will take place at the Lindahl's home, located at 3818 State Road 227 South, Richmond, Indiana on August 7th from 5:30 pm to 8:00 pm. If you have any questions, please contact Michael Richmond. We are so excited to start digging into God's Word and developing lasting relationships!

## Prayer for the New School Year

August also brings the re-gathering of our students and teachers to the 2022-2023 school year. Here is a prayer for the coming year:

*Dear Lord, we give you thanks for the wisdom and knowledge poured out to us all through creation and your Word. We confess your Son Jesus as our great teacher even when we are far from the path of discipleship. Please bless our community as school returns. May Richmond, New Paris, and our many communities thrive in learning wisdom and truth.*

- *Be with the parents as they shepherd their children daily to, through, and beyond school. Give them strength to disciple in their homes as their children learn in our schools.*
- *Be with the students, grant them curious minds which seek understanding.*
- *Be with the teachers, give them strength to faithfully walk with their many students day-to-day.*
- *Be with the staff, fill them with joy as they do the unseen unheralded work for others.*
- *Be with the administrators, settle them with peace as they navigate the public sphere*
- *Be with the coaches, may they form not just great athletes but the whole child.*
- *Be with the volunteers, without whom this whole system would collapse.*

*May we all remember what it is like to be a child who comes to you Lord.*

*In the name of Jesus, Amen.*



# AUGUST 2022

	1 Prayer Walk 12pm	2	3	4 Family Dinner Church 6pm	5	6
7 TRIBE Back to School Bash 5pm	8 Mon. Morning Connect 9am	9	10	11 Creative Hands 9am	12	13
14 Central Listens 11:30am	15	16 Shalom Session 12:05pm	17 Lunch Bunch 11:30am	18 Family Dinner Church 6pm	19	20
21	22	23	24	25 Creative Hands 9am  Ad Council 6:30pm	26	27
28	29	30	31 Lamplighter Assembly 10am	Sundays Sunday School 9am · Worship 10am TRIBE 5pm		

## Weekday Gatherings

### Mondays

Women's Prayer 12pm  
Fireside Conversation 1:30pm  
Brianna's Hope 6:45pm

### Tuesdays

Benevolence Team 1pm

### Wednesdays

Wisdom Study 10am  
Men's Prayer 12pm



**Central United Methodist Church**

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