

Happy
New
Year

A festive graphic featuring the text "Happy New Year" in a blue, cursive script font. The text is centered and surrounded by a circular burst of blue lines and dots, creating a starburst effect. The background is white with a subtle pattern of small blue dots.



Another new year is upon us. And for me, that is a time for introspection and reflection. What do I need to focus on? What do I need to pay attention to? What do I need to do better? After all, it is the season of New Year's resolutions!

And as I was thinking, it struck me ... what I need to focus on is something that seems to be desperately needed about everywhere I look and most all the time. We human beings need to treat each other better - much better. And that needs to change now ... and it needs to start with me.

I talked with Pastor Ashley and she concurred with me. And to help us in this venture, we are crafting a six week sermon series starting in January entitled "Treat Each Other Well".

This series is intended to focus on how we can relate and behave better - not only with each other in the church but also with all others outside the church as well (work, neighborhood, community, etc.).

The sermons will be Biblically grounded and very practical, with each sermon focusing on one of the following important topics. Those sermon topics will include humility (the core for my behavior and relationships); kindness (love in action for others); respect (seeing others as children of God and acting accordingly); serving (helping and supporting others); forgiving (extending grace and asking for grace); and listening (seeking to understand the other person before seeking to be understood).

These are the practices I need to become better at all the time so that I can consistently treat all others well. I want to live my faith in Jesus well in a way that is best demonstrated by how I relate to and treat others. Pastor Ashley and I hope that you will join us in this journey of loving all of our neighbors the way Jesus calls us to. I believe this will make a tremendous difference for God - and this is my prayer of hope for the new year.

Peace,
Pastor Doug

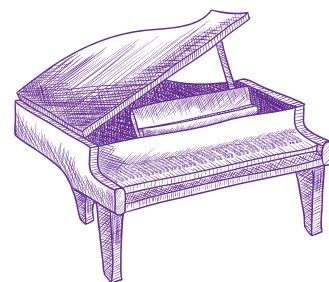
Wesley
COVENANT
PRAYER

Let us commit to pray together in 2024:

"I am no longer my own, but thine.
Put me to what thou wilt, rank me with whom thou wilt.
Put me to doing, put me to suffering.
Let me be employed by thee or laid aside for thee,
exalted for thee or brought low for thee.
Let me be full, let me be empty.
Let me have all things, let me have nothing.
I freely and heartily yield all things
to thy pleasure and disposal.
And now, O glorious and blessed God,
Father, Son, and Holy Spirit,
thou art mine, and I am thine. So be it.
And the covenant which I have made on earth,
let it be ratified in heaven. Amen."

NEW YEAR REFLECTION - PAST AND FUTURE:

Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue on the Theme B-A-C-H



Happy New Year, friends! I hope 2024 brings you happiness, love, and laughter. I want to share with you the exciting music of Franz Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue on the Theme B-A-C-H which I think is fitting for this joyous occasion.

Prelude and fugue, or fantasy and fugue, is a compositional form with a long history in Western classical music. The first composer to write a prelude and fugue set was Johann Caspar Ferdinand Fischer whose 1702 collection *Ariadne musica* includes 20 preludes and fugues in different keys as the first of its two parts, but the one who made the prelude and fugue famous and influenced generations of composers who continued to write in this format was, of course, Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach wrote two books of preludes and fugues, *The Well-Tempered Clavier*, each book containing 24 sets of preludes and fugues in every possible major and minor key.

Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue on the Theme B-A-C-H was originally written for organ. He composed this piece in 1855 for the organ and later revised it in 1870 and arranged both versions for the piano. We can see a direct connection to Bach in this piece because Liszt used Bach's name theme, the famous B-A-C-H motif (Fig. 1), as the main musical theme or motif. The piece opens with a four-note motif, B flat (named B in German music nomenclature) - A - C - B natural (notated as H in German music terminology), which will be continuously repeated in different keys, voices, and registers. This motif may appear to be a simple four-note chromatic cluster, but Liszt was able to transform it during the course of the music to create different and profound meanings.



Fig. 1: The B-A-C-H motif

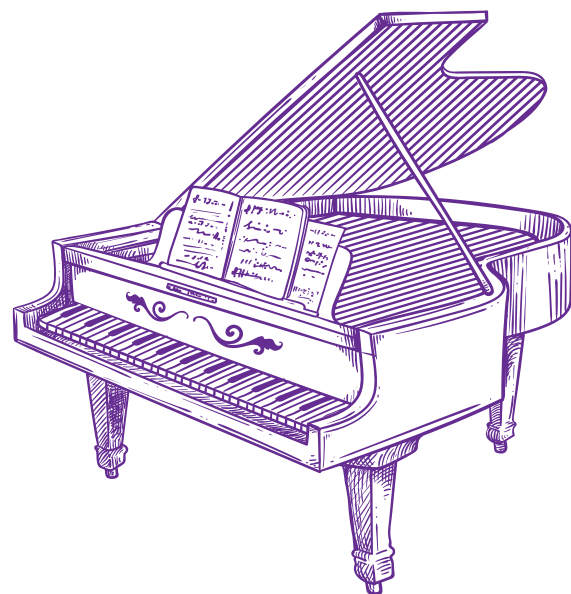
Preludes and fugues are not religious in nature, and Bach's WTC was not written for religious purposes either, but I believe that for Bach, who was a faithful Lutheran, the expression of religion was innate and native in his musical language. Do we hear this type of religious expression in Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue? I personally think so. The use of the B-A-C-H motif alone may convey a spiritual meaning as many have argued that this four-note motif resembles the shape of a cross. Religion played an important part in Liszt's life and music, and he wanted to create a different kind of religious music that would be direct and moving rather than sentimental. I feel the presence of religious and spiritual expression in this piece, not only in the theme itself but also in the illustration of a spiritual battle between good and evil and between darkness and light from the dramatic contrasts in the music. However, this is a completely different expression of religion. The obsessive repetition of the four-note motivic cell in different rhythms and disguises and the flashy technical devices unique to Liszt make this a more personalized belief and religion, a deeply romanticized one that embraced individuality.

According to David Ledbetter, the combination of separate prelude and fugue in Bach's mature works was traditionally seen as the result of a loosening and eventual separation of the 17th c. compositions such as toccata, preludium, and canzona into two component parts. Since fugue writing was one of Bach's main interests, it is possible that his elaboration of this element resulted in a corresponding expansion of the prelude to form a matching element in a contrasting manner. In earlier composers'

preludes and fugues, there is usually a clear break between the two movements and no musical elements connecting the two besides the employment of the same key. However, in Liszt's hands, and in many later Romantic as well as 20th c. composers' works, the prelude and fugue form which was the separation of a composite in an earlier time is showing a tendency of becoming a united whole again. In Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue, he built a stronger sense of unity and connection by using the same musical materials in the two parts and by blurring the boundary between the fantasy and fugue sections. The prelude does not end in a strong cadence but slowly disappears with a long descending chromatic scale. After the descent, and with a brief breathing moment, the fugue starts with a two-note sigh motif repeating the last two notes of the prelude.

At the same time, Liszt explicitly added much virtuosity to his Fantasy and Fugue. With pervasive running octaves in a fast tempo, dazzling arpeggio passages, and rapid hand crossing, the composer transformed the traditional prelude and fugue into concert music.

While paying homage to Bach and an older compositional genre in his Fantasy and Fugue, Liszt also added his personal touch with new ideas, interpretation, piano techniques, and thematic transformation, which brought revolution to music composition and performance in the 19th century. Looking at this piece at this special time of the year, I feel inspired to reflect on the past and plan to make better choices and changes in the new year. I hope you do too:)



I will share with you a video of my performance of Liszt's Fantasy and Fugue on B-A-C-H. It will appear on our Central Facebook Page and on my YouTube channel (Shiyu Wang Piano.)

Blessings,
Shiyu



United Women in Faith 2023 Missions

United Women in Faith puts our mission dollars to work in our community by donating over \$3,000 in 2023 to local non-profits. The money was divided among the following organizations:

A Better Way (formerly known as Genesis), **Refuge of Hope** (women's homeless shelter), **Every Child Can Read**, **Communities In School**, **Birth to Five**, **NATCO Community Empowerment Center**, **Community Food Pantry**, and **CUMC Early Childcare Development Center**

UWF also filled 25 cloth bags with laundry detergent, dryer sheets, paper towels, and dish soap for the Free Friday giveaway program at A Better Way here in Richmond. Their clients can come in on Fridays and chose from a variety of household items to take home.

UWF will not meet in January, but will start meeting again in February, on the **SECOND** Thursday of each month at 1:00pm in Fellowship Hall. **All women are welcome. Bring a friend!**



Resolution to Serve in 2024

Whether you've served in the many areas of ministry at Central or not, make your New Year Resolution to serve during worship in 2024! In the main hallway, there are sign-up sheets for

Greeters (Contact Carol Hinshaw)

Communion Servers (Contact Carla Gillespie)

Ushers (Contact Electa Berk)

Media (Contact Stephen Flores)

All of these areas help our service run smoothly. If you have any questions, please contact the office at 765-962-8543

Happy New Year from the Kempfers!

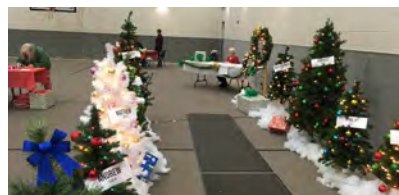
It's the new year and the time is now to put your trust in Jesus. God has called every one of us to seek and serve Him and to live with real faith. Join us in this new year as we begin a ministry for those looking to consent more deeply to the gospel message in practical, everyday life. Visit PowerfullyHealthy.org to receive more information and a free gift!

Creative Hands

There will be no Creative Hands meeting in January. We will meeting again on Thursday, February 8th from 9am thru lunch. If you have any questions, contact Shanron Rider

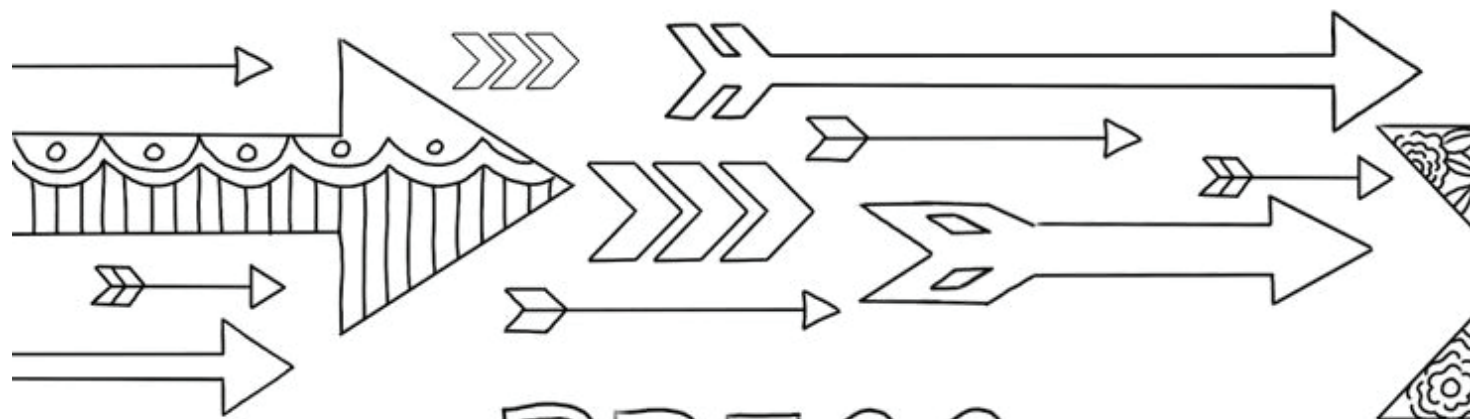
Communities in Schools Angel Tree

Thank you to everyone who purchased a gift from the Communities in Schools Angel Tree. Central was able to supply 80 gifts to 15 families!



Our Neighborhood Christmas Festival

Thank you to everyone that had a hand in Our Neighborhood Christmas Festival. Everyone had an impact on our community from helping guests are the craft tables, praying with them at the prayer station, serving them dinner, and everything else in between. If you would like to get involved for the 2024 Our Neighborhood Christmas Festival, contact Christin Hampton at christin@richmondcumc.com

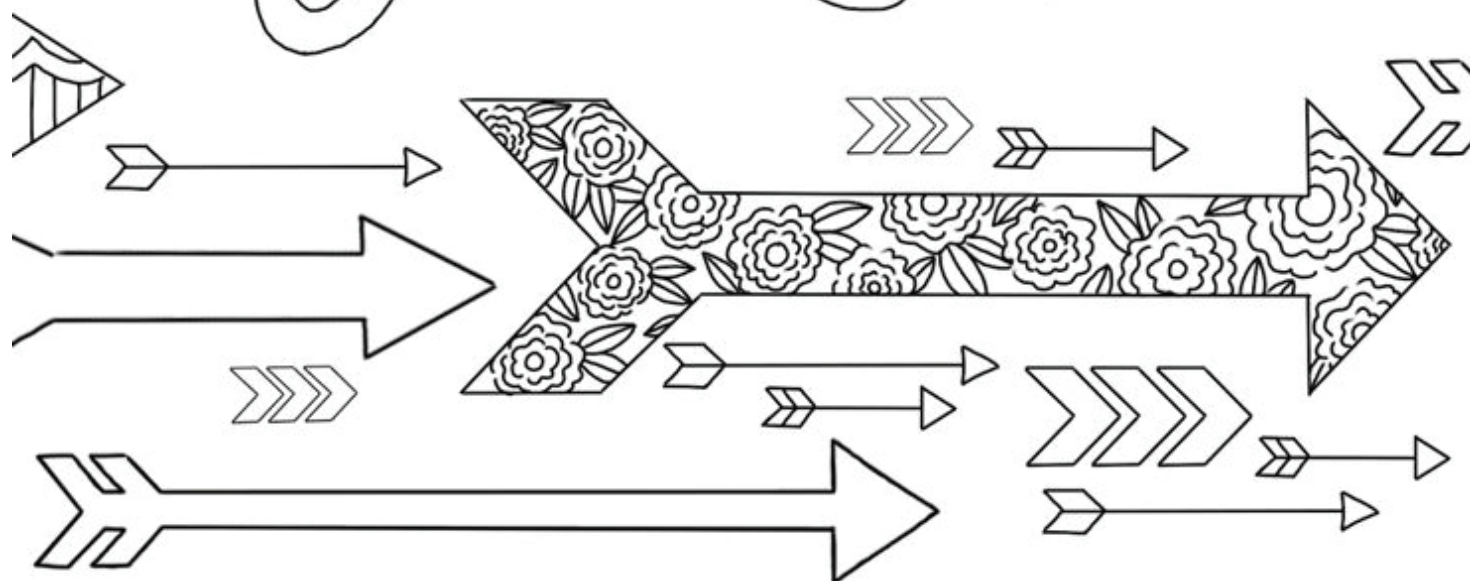


PRESS
FORWARD



faith

2 Nephi 31:20



JANUARY 2024

	1 CLOSED Happy New Year!	2	3	4 Low Vision 10:30am	5	6
7	8 Mon. Morn. Connection 9am	9	10	11	12	13
14 Food Pantry Sunday	15	16	17	18 Friend Circle 10am	19	20
21	22	23	24 Lunch Bunch 11:30am	25 Ad Council 6:30pm	26	27
28	29	30	31 LL Assembly 10:00am	Sundays Sunday School 9am Worship & Children's Church 10am TRIBE 5pm		

Weekday Gatherings

Mondays

Women's Prayer 12:00pm
Bible Study 1:30pm
Brianna's Hope 6:45pm

Wednesdays

Men's Prayer 12:00pm
Wesley Ringers 5:30pm
Chancel Choir 6:30pm

Tuesdays

Benevolence Team 1:00pm

Fridays

Wisdom Study 10:00am

Central United Methodist Church
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