



THE OUTLOOK

Central United Methodist Church

Volume 125 Issue 11

Build Love or Built Love—Which is it?

~Juanita Joiner

#BUILD
LOVE

We recently created a “Brand Promise” for Central to *try-out!* We even made a logo that will promote this “promise”... a promise that will get people excited about attending Central. A promise people will look forward to and count on from us as a church. Pastor Rob even did a worship series on “Build Love” during October with sermons entitled: *A Spiritual House, What Love Costs, The Household of God, and The Master Builder*. If you have missed any of these wonderful sermons, I encourage you to listen to them on our YouTube Channel. Even if you have already heard them, it’s worth listening again. Click [HERE](#) to go to our YouTube Channel.

I posed a question for you in the title...Build Love or Built Love? To be honest, I think it’s both! When we use the verb *build* in the present tense, it means happening now or to happen in the future. When we use the verb *build* in the past tense (*built*), it means our actions to build have already been completed. Here’s another question...do we build on the past or do we leave the past behind and start completely over? I say we need to do both! Simply put, where would we be today if our church hadn’t already *built* love? We should never forget that love has already been built into the very foundation of this church, but we also need to take that past and build something new that will take us into the future...a future that will always hold our past but also reaches to the future.

During September and October, I experienced first-hand what “built love” means to two different individuals who contacted the church office. I had the husband of a lady that had been raised in our church return to fulfill his deceased wife’s wishes...some of her ashes needed to be in our columbarium beside her parents. Parents who *built* love for this church in their daughter’s heart. Together Rob and I had a wonderful time with this man as we dedicated her ashes back to our church and with the parents who loved her and the church that love had built.

My second experience came with a daughter who returned to pay her respects to her parents who also raised her in the church that had built love...love that still lives in her soul. During her visit she shared how her parents were on the committee to select the perfect stained-glass window as a memorial to Chase Hammand after his sudden passing. How they, along with others, had traveled to Traverse City to meet with the artist who would eventually design and install “The Creation Window” for our balcony. I told her that window had been the inspiration for our new church logo and even after all these years, the light and color from this beautiful window is still speaking to us. Her stories only continued about all the spots in this church that are still here because of the people who had built love. After she left, I sat at my desk and thought about the words build and built and decided that we couldn’t have one without the other. Our future couldn’t happen without both. Our hearts and souls need both.

I think Sue Zack hit the nail on the head when in her Centering Thoughts on October 5 she said that it was love that was building us into a spiritual house with Christ as our cornerstone. Look at the form of the word *build* used in her sentence. It wasn’t build or built...it was building...*the process of constructing, shaping, developing, or forming a particular thing*. She went on to say these profound words in her closing remarks: *No matter what each of us has to bring to our church as we venture into our next tasks, whether God gives us a carpenter’s hammer, a sledge hammer, or even a plastic hammer, we can all join together with our gifts, whatever they may be, to do His work in downtown Muskegon with open hands, open hearts, and open minds. After all, God says ... “You brought **you**, and that’s all I’ve ever wanted.”*

So, let’s prepare ourselves to “build love” for Christ together. Let’s Build Love at 1011 Second Street, in downtown Muskegon, in our community, and in the hearts of those we have yet to meet. Don’t you think we have had some wonderful “teachers” over the years that showed us how it was done?

Our past is now giving us permission to BUILD the future ... OUR FUTURE!



Mission Possible for November 2025 (Weekly offerings)

♥ Mission of the Month Hope Project

Let's be the church that is caring, and "GIVES LOVE" to this project that began in 2006 as an outreach program to educate and inform the community about the chronic issue of human trafficking. Their vision is to end suffering. Their core value is LOVE...motivated by the love of Christ.

♥ Helping Hand Fund (Supporting people in need.)

Mission Accomplished September 2025

Mission of the Month

CROP Walk \$1,075.00

Helping Hand Fund \$466.00



Unified Voice "Knitting For The Homeless"

This group has invited Central to join them on November 21 in Central's Parlor from 6-8 p.m. They knit socks, blankets, scarfs, hats and mittens for the homeless.

Please bring your own supplies.
Hope to see Central participate.




"Creating safe spaces
for growth and community
in Christ."

#BUILD
LOVE

CENTRAL LIVES UP TO THEIR BRAND PROMISE WITH THESE GREAT OPPORTUNITIES

♥ Muskegon Rescue Mission Has a Request for Central

The mission has asked Central to collect 225 LARGE (40 oz) cans of yams for their Thanksgiving baskets. You are welcome to purchase your own or donate money so our mission team can buy cans in bulk at a better price. Let's see if Central can reach this goal. There will be a large blue tub in the Narthex where you can put your cans. We are aiming for November 15th as our deadline for all donations. **We can do this!** Be a blessing and help our neighbors enjoy their Thanksgiving.

♥ Chrismon Tree

Come one, come all! Anyone interested in watching/helping with our wonderful Chrismon tree, come to the sanctuary on Saturday, November 29 at 9 AM. There will be stand up and sit down tasks available. Can't come that day but still want to participate in our Advent decorating? Contact the church office to leave me a message. There are many other days and ways that you can be of help. *Julie H.*

♥ Church Tours

Coming soon! The Mix & Match Team along with a small group of volunteer guides will begin hosting church tours on the fourth Sunday of each month following our worship service. These groups will be small to allow participants to ask questions and to provide the opportunity to get to know each other more. Please indicate on your Care Card if you are interested, and we will call you to schedule your date.

♥ Commitment Sunday — November 23rd

Commitment Sunday serves as a time for congregations to declare their faith, express gratitude, and support the church's ministries, including missions and community outreach.

♥ Beginning November 30th!

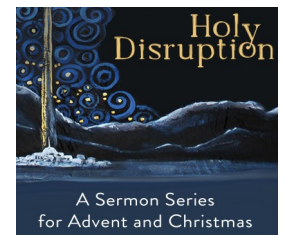
The First Sunday in Advent is November 30th. Pastor Rob has chosen "Sharing Our Stories and Our Gifts" as his Sermon Series. This series will be based on a book you may want to order to also read and study. The book is available [HERE](#) from Cokesbury. Order your copy today.

♥ Cookie Crawl 2025

Central has been given a chance to "show off"! On December 13 the City of Muskegon is holding their second annual Cooke Crawl. It is the perfect chance to give people the opportunity to see Central's building on the "inside". People will purchase tins and then travel to various businesses and churches to tour the buildings. Each person who purchased a tin will receive a cookie made by someone at Central. They have requested 300 (twenty-five dozen) that are either homemade or purchased at a bakery. Please **NO** store-bought cookies.

We need a lot of help reaching this goal and want you to consider helping us reach that goal. Please sign-up in the Narthex or during Coffee Hour. Build LOVE!

Central will have their doors open for this event from 10 AM to 3 PM.



Worship at Central

Available online: **LIVE**

<https://www.facebook.com/muskegoncentralumc>

And on our YouTube Channel: **LATER IN THE DAY**

https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZUQe2i7Fzj_tcwwSG7Ednw/videos?view=2&flow=grid

This is a perfect page to “keep” for reference.

Beyond the Walls Team - We Focus On: Love, Justice, Service

~ Liz and Keith Krol

Newspaper boxes

We were granted an award from the Conference for the purchase of three newspaper boxes, including contents to get started with this project. The boxes will be installed outside our church and possibly two other area UMC churches, to help with the “unhomed” persons living in our area.

What are they? They are repurposed newspaper boxes with a shelf and a see-through door.

What will we do with them? We will fill them with seasonal items starting with winter items such as blankets, emergency sleeping bags, Blessing bags which include - gloves, hats, socks, women’s products, etc. The spring- fall seasons games, sun block, books, hygiene kits, bug spray, women’s products, summer clothing items, etc. If you have any of these types of items that you want to donate, please contact us.

Request List for Winter:

Hats, gloves, blankets, socks, scarves, women’s products (preferably individually wrapped), personal hygiene items (hand sanitizer, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant (all small sized), body washing cloths **and** shelf stable food with a long *Use By Date*, i.e. March 2026. We also want food items to be *individually* wrapped

Request List for Spring-Fall:

Books, sunscreen, sunhats (baseball too), bug spray, hygiene items (hand sanitizer, toothbrushes, toothpaste, deodorant, (all small size), body washing cloths and women’s personal products.

We also accept monetary donations through your church giving. Please note “Beyond the Walls” with your donation.



church center

“CHURCH CENTER APP” WILL KEEP YOU “CONNECTED” TO OUR CHURCH!

Below please find the information about downloading this app to your cell phone or tablet.

We “promise” to help you during this time of “change” as we Build Love as a church.

HOW TO DOWNLOAD THE CHURCH CENTER APP:

Step 1: Go to the Google or Apple Store on your phone and choose the Church Center App. Download this App.

Step 2: When you have it downloaded, tap on it and type in Central United Methodist Church. Be sure to choose our church! There are many Central United Methodist Churches in the U.S. Our new logo will show.

Step 3: You will be asked to receive a code via text message when you first log into the App. This means you need to type in your mobile phone number to receive the text. You may or may not be asked to enter your email address. If you type in your email, the code will be sent to your email account. Be prepared to write down this code so it can be entered into the App.

Step 4: Once you have submitted the code, your profile information will show. Please confirm your information is correct. Your information was entered from the Information Cards we collected in the spring.

Step 5: Choose the Directory tab at the bottom of your phone. Find your name - You can Edit your information and add a picture from the Photos saved in your camera. Follow the prompts!

Step 6: Add a picture! This is what we will use for the Directory. You can change the picture anytime you wish. If you don't have a picture saved in your phone, we can take a picture from your phone after worship.

Across the bottom of the Church Center App, there is also a Calendar tab. You can see the church calendar here.

The Directory tab shows the names of anyone who already has the App up and running. You will be able to email anyone from this tab provided permissions have been given (you will see that in your profile).

During the month of November, someone from the Mix & Match Team will be available in Parish Hall to assist anyone who would like help. Our goal is to have everyone's information and pictures completed by the end of November. ~Jody Wightman



The Joyful Journey: Gratitude and Grace

~Bishop David Bard, November 3, 2021

As followers of Jesus, we do not require a national proclamation to encourage thankfulness. Long before there was a United States, the apostle Paul wrote to the early Jesus community at Thessalonica: "Rejoice always.... Give thanks in all circumstances" (I Thessalonians 5:16, 18).

I confess that these words of Paul can sometimes sound shallow and superficial. I enjoy language and poetic language—rhythm, rhyme, alliteration—and find that the rhyme "attitude of gratitude" often grates. I think of the words of Anne Lamott in her book "Help, Thanks, Wow": "It is easy to thank God for life when things are going well. But life is much bigger than we give it credit for, and much of the time it's much harder than we would like". Sometimes, the phrase "attitude of gratitude" doesn't account for how messy, painful, and difficult life can be.

Perhaps I struggle with the phrase because Paul's words "give thanks in all circumstances" get mashed into the notion that we should give thanks not *in* everything but *for* everything. Eugene Peterson's rendering of the phrase leans in that direction: "Thank God, no matter what happens." God may want to have a talk with me, but I don't see myself thanking God for a cancer diagnosis, a hurricane, the death of a loved one, the dissolution of an intimate relationship, violence done against someone for their race, ethnicity, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation, or maybe just out of spite. Certainly there are often surrounding circumstances in such instances for which I can be grateful—the care offered in the face of illness, the compassion shown after a disaster, the awakening that can happen in the face of injustice or violence, the repentance undertaken by a person who has committed a grievous wrong.

I can get to gratitude, but the phrase "attitude of gratitude" does not well describe the process. It seems to short-circuit seeing fully the horror, pain, injustice, and tragedy people experience. Please know: If the phrase works for you, don't let me discourage you. My experience is that I can get to gratitude for the good in life because there is an underlying openness to the wonder, beauty, mystery, and joy of life even as I am open to the pain, devastation, tragedy, and wounding in life. That underlying openness to life is rooted in a deep sense of the unlimited, unfathomable, wild grace of God as I know it in Jesus Christ, a grace for which I am always grateful.

Etty Hillesum, a Jewish woman deported from the Netherlands to Auschwitz where she died, captures something of this complex relationship between grace and gratitude when she writes in her diary: "There must be someone to live through it all and bear witness to the fact that God lived, even in these times." Grace and gratitude are also captured in the journal entry of Orthodox priest Alexander Schmemmann: "The knowledge of the fallen world does not kill joy, which emanates in this world, always, constantly, as a bright sorrow." Both of these writings are found in an anthology edited by the poet Christian Wiman called "Joy: 100 Poems." I bought it around Thanksgiving 2017.

Friends, sometimes I get tired of reminding us of the difficulties, complexities, sorrows, pains, wounds, and injustices in the world—a pandemic, denominational division, national anger and impatience, faith communities declining, the persistence of racism and the resistance to struggling with it. To refuse to see them, though, is to partially shut our eyes, obscure our vision. Anne Lamott is right: "We and life are spectacularly flawed and complex". We need to see it all. Someone just sent me an essay in The Atlantic, written by an Episcopal priest, where the author admits her struggles figuring out church while the pandemic waxes and wanes—how best to gather, how to counter a trend started before the pandemic of declining religious participation. "I'm sick of innovating and pivoting," she writes, and we can feel her pain.

And there is the unlimited, unfathomable, wild grace of God. No easy answers, but grace. Anne Lamott writes, "Grace can be the experience of a second wind, when even though what you want is clarity and resolution, what you get is stamina and poignancy and the strength to hang on".

Grace as a second wind, as stamina. And grace is often more. It is the beauty of a sunset or a painting. It is a gentle touch. It is music, it is poetry, it is dance. It is a walk in the sunshine, or sometimes the rain. It is holding a child. It is the strength to see pain and respond. It is bright sorrow. It is an icon of Jesus that pierces your soul. It is bearing witness that God lives and is gracious.

I carry within me a deep sense of the unlimited, unfathomable, wild grace of God, as I know it in Jesus Christ, a grace for which I am always grateful. You might say I have an underlying attitude of gratitude, even if I wouldn't. Make time this month for thankfulness and gratitude, and know I am grateful for you, for your partnership in ministry.

Editor's Note: *I couldn't let the month of November pass without adding a "Happy Thanksgiving" to each of you from your Central Staff. May each of you know how much we are thankful for you and the love and support you give to our beautiful church and the wonderful people who worship here. I also wanted to share these wonderful words I found written by our Bishop while also serving as interim bishop for the MN Conference. ~Juanita*



Central Cares

NOVEMBER BIRTHDAYS

6 — Dorothy Robbins
 7 — Dan Melinn
 8 — Eric Coulon
 12 — Don Vanderlaan
 14 — Huey Husted
 15 — Valerie Lundholm
 16 — Nicholas Lundholm
 20 — Javan Terpstra
 21 — Eileen Schrader
 23 — Michael Potgeter
 25 — Erika Paulson
 27 — Doug Clarke
 30 — Bill Brookstra



Share their joy:

- ♥ Congratulations to Abby and Dexter Larabee on the birth of their son, Harrison Peter who was born on September 22 and weighing in at 7#11oz. This special child of God is the grandson of Brad and Katie Cotton and great-grandson of Mary Oakes and Donna Cotton.

Share their grief:

- ♥ Family and friends of **Dave Beattie**, brother of Dale (Sue) Beattie who passed away on October 17. Please keep Dale and Sue in your thoughts and prayers during this difficult time.



All Saints' Day

November 2, 2025

BLESS OUR SAINTS

Martha Giacobassi
 Thomas Hippchen



Experience Clearer Sound in the Sanctuary Using AudioFetch!

1. Connect to our Guest WiFi (Password: Welcome!)
2. Download the AudioFetch App (Apple and Android)
3. Connect your hearing aids or headphones to your phone or tablet.
4. Open the AudioFetch App and start listening!

Works GREAT!

Click [HERE](#) to learn how to setup and use this app.

Church Office Hours

Our regular office hours at the church.
Tuesday — Thursday 9 a.m. — 2 p.m.

NOVEMBER CALENDAR

- 2 — Worship 9:30 a.m. (In-Person & Virtual)
 Holy Communion and All Saints' Day
 Going Deeper 5:00 p.m. (Conference Room)
- 3 — Joy Bells 5:30 p.m. (Choir Room)
- 5 — Staff Retreat 9:30 a.m. (The Corner)
- 6 — Blood Drive 11:00 a.m. (Lower Level)
- 9 — Worship 9:30 a.m. (In-Person & Virtual)
 Called To Prayer 11:00 a.m. (Conference Room)
- 10 — Joy Bells 5:30 p.m. (Choir Room)
- 13 — Romeo's 8:30 a.m. (Carmen's Café)
 Juliet's 9:00 a.m. Cherokee Restaurant
- 16 — Worship 9:30 a.m. (Sanctuary)
 Beyond the Walls Packing 11:00 a.m. (Parish Hall)
 Going Deeper 5:00 p.m. (Conference Room)
- 17 — Mobile Food Pantry 4:30 p.m. (CUMC Parking Lot)
 Joy Bells 5:30 p.m. (Choir Room)
- 18 — Outlook Deadline 8:00 a.m.
 Book Club 10:00 a.m. (Library)
 Building Team Mtg. 11:00 a.m. (Conference Room)
 Planned Giving Mtg. 5:15 p.m. (Conference Room)
 Finance Team Mtg. 6:16 p.m. (Conference Room)
- 20 — Blood Drive 11:00 a.m. (Lower Level)
- 23 — Worship 9:30 a.m. (In-Person & Virtual)
 Commitment Sunday
 Called To Prayer 11:00 a.m. (Conference Room)
- 24 — Joy Bells 5:30 p.m. (Choir Room)
- 25 — Outlook Mailed 9:00 a.m.
 Volunteer at KFB 10:00 a.m. (2330 Barclay Street)
 Mix & Match Team Meeting 11:00 a.m. (Library)
- 27 — Happy Thanksgiving
- 29 — Chrismon Tree (see info on page 2) 9:00 a.m. (Sanctuary)
- 30 — Worship 9:30 a.m. (In-Person & Virtual)
 First Sunday of Advent

Special Request:

- ♥ Please keep Connie in the church office updated on any of the prayer requests you have made on behalf of your friends and family.
- ♥ **Where to send important information!**
Please send to all addresses.
- ♥ Juanita Joiner for the Newsletter:
jjoiner@muskegoncentralumc.org
- ♥ Connie Jones for the Church Calendar:
connie@muskegoncentralumc.org

Central United Methodist Church



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MUSKEGON CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST

For faster and more
convenient giving.



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Have news for the Outlook? See page 3 for submission addresses. Next Outlook deadline is **November 18**. Thank you!

WELCOME OUR NEW CHURCH BOOKKEEPER

We are pleased to introduce **Tiffanie McCleary**, our new Church Bookkeeper. Our prayers are with her, her husband, Jeromy, and their children Jud, Hannah, Hudson, and Archer as she begins her new position. Welcome her whenever you have the opportunity!



UPPER ROOM NOW AVAILABLE

Your November/December Upper Room is now available at the Welcome Desk in the Narthex. **Pick your copy up soon.**



CENTRAL "BUILDING LOVE" AT OUR MOBILE TRUCK



Each month we
distribute food and
love to those in
our community.
PLEASE JOIN US

