Central United Methodist Church March 2021

The Outlook

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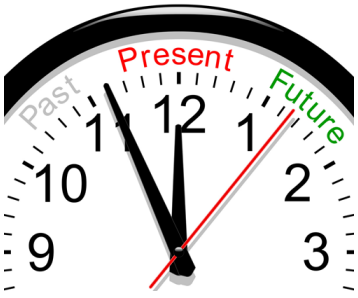

The Past is a Present...Open it!

~ Juanita Joiner

It was Valentine's Day. I had a project to complete in the sanctuary before our Worship Arts Team arrived on Tuesday to prepare for Lent. I thought it would be easy to complete this and be on my way. As I turned on the lights and walked towards the altar, I saw an empty church, felt a cold sanctuary and for a moment, I was taken back to a previous Lent … the Lent we spent *Time In The Wilderness*. The closer I got to the altar I could hear the tick tock of all those clocks that filled the altar that year. Ticking away the seconds, the minutes, and hours in our lives as we searched for the meaning of what was going to happen in our personal life and in the life of Jesus. If there ever was a year when we have felt like we were in the wilderness and time stood still… this was the year.

I sat down instead of hanging the banner. I needed to get a grip on of all the emotions we all have felt this past year … feelings of being alone, perhaps even forgotten…feelings of fear and those of doubt. But as I sat quietly in that freezing cold sanctuary, I heard the voice of my Grandma Kight say…*oh my precious Juanita, God is YOUR refuge and YOUR strength!* What I was feeling was exactly what you have been feeling and exactly what Jesus was feeling when he spent time alone in the wilderness with the *unknown.*

Just before arriving at the church my hands had touched a Bible that belonged to my Mother's family in England. A Bible that had been brought over with them when they traveled to Canada. A Bible that had been printed in London in 1884, cost two pence, and had such tiny print that even with a magnifying lens I couldn't read. In this Bible someone had listed several Bible verses…1 Peter 2:9 was at the top of the list. ***But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God's own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of him who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light.*** I wonder if this was a verse my ancestors held onto during their time of fear, doubt and more than likely, loneliness. During their time of leaving a country that had left them poor and without a future … without hope. A trip that had them leave parents and siblings behind to have the opportunity for a "new life".

While working in the church office last week I received a phone call from a sweet church member who wanted me to know just how special the cards, letters, and calls have meant to her during this time. As we spoke, she told me that sometimes these beautiful words arrived on days when she was down. She went on to say … but Juanita, isn't that just like Jesus? He's there to give us comfort when we are down and celebrates with us when we are happy. I'm a lucky lady even at this time. I hung up the phone and sat as the tears ran down my cheeks. You see … her words were the words I needed that day and at that time … just like my ancestors needed to be reminded about going from darkness into his marvelous light during their time in the wilderness.

This year I picked a word for the year instead of making a New Year's resolution. My word is a verb and will require action on my part. The word came almost spontaneously…it was just there waiting for me. The word? CONNECT! Daily I have tried to connect in a special way with my many friends and forgotten family, but the most powerful way I have used my word has been connecting with myself and the plans God has for me. This is proving to be enormously powerful.

Did I ever get the banner hung? Yes, but it took several attempts. This was <u>not</u> a heavy banner, but I think the first three attempts had me still burdened by the wilderness. On that fourth and final attempt it flew up with the greatest of ease as I broke into song singing the chorus from a hymn we used to sing in my old Evangelical United Brethren Church during Sunday evening services…**Love Lifted Me!** That chorus solidifies everything I had been thinking about today and worrying about this past year into one HUGE emotional hug from those who had been with me that afternoon while alone in the wilderness … friends, family and most importantly, God!

When you see the altar during Lent…think about my thoughts on that cold Sunday in February and prepare yourself to be blessed with the journey Pastor Rob will take us on during his Lenten series entitled … ***New Life!*** A series that will focus on these key words: ***Healing, Sin, Justice, Grief, Belief, Failure, and JESUS!***

…but the Master of the sea heard my despairing cry…from the waters lifted me <u>NOW SAFE AM I</u>.
Love lifted me…love lifted me…when nothing else could help…LOVE LIFTED ME!

What present will YOU open this Lent?

Join us virtually each Sunday during Lent for Pastor Rob's Lenten Series "New Life".

Your GIFT of SONG

A Methodist pastor in England sent this link to a childhood friend of mine in Maryland. She told me it was the best Christmas gift she has ever received! I'm thinking it just might be the best blessing we need right now. If you miss singing in church, the words of this song are at the bottom so you can sing to your heart's content. ***To God Be the Glory***

Click HERE to start your blessing from the London Royal Albert Hall recorded in 2014.

Central United Methodist Church

Proclaiming Christ,
Growing Disciples,
Transforming Lives!

Dear Church Family,

I want to thank each and every one of you for your prayers, support, and participation, especially during a time when we have not been able to meet in person.

We hope and pray we will be entering a new season in the near future. We have a new audio/visual system in the sanctuary (Praise God!), and once we learn how to use it we will be able to return to live-streaming our services. A livestream will allow us to eventually go back to in-person worship if the numbers stay down. I will be meeting with the Reboot Team to consider when we can safely gather in the sanctuary again. Please pray for that day!

Let's also prepare for that day. We are already a new church, and as we come out of this pandemic we will have a unique opportunity to reach people who are hungry for relationship. This will also be a time for us to embrace God's vision for the long-term future of our church. Although some of our teams and committees have still been active, many of our teams are taking a sabbatical this year. So we will be relying on these teams in particular to help us live into this new season:

Vision Team
Naomi Garcia has agreed to be our facilitator for a conference sponsored visioning process called Unique Church (https://michiganumc.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CU-Marketing-Brochure.3.1.2020.pdf). She has also agreed to serve as my coach over the course of the next year. We are grateful for her prayerful support and direction. We will be forming a new vision team who will meet with Naomi regularly over the next several months and beyond. These meetings will likely be over Zoom, although we do hope to find ways for people to participate in-person. We hope these visioning meetings will lead to larger congregational meetings when it is safe again for us to gather in-person together.

Reboot Team
Our reboot team can do more than reopen the church. We can restart our congregation prayerfully and strategically. As we come out of this pandemic, how can we reach more people for Christ? How do we get people from our community into the building, and people in the building out into the community? A reconfigured reboot team will be taking on a new role in helping us answer some of these questions.

Prayer Team(s)
We need prayer! Honestly, I am not just saying this because we are a church. All of our actions and decisions need to be grounded in prayer. Not because prayer changes God, but because prayer changes us! We already have one prayer team that meets every Tuesday morning on Zoom at 10:00 a.m. (https://zoom.us/j/97416064466?pwd=cXF1M2JKaWJzVlpnYy9vWnRHVjNSdz09 Meeting ID: 974 1606 4466 Passcode: 281577). We may form more prayer teams that meet in other ways, and in other times and places. Please join us in praying for our church, community, nation, and world during this pivotal time!

There will be many ways to get involved in the weeks and months ahead. Please join us! We pray a new season for our church will soon begin, and as always, we will find new life in Christ together.

Grace and Peace, Rob

Worship at Central

Available online:
https://www.facebook.com/muskegoncentralumc

And on our YouTube Channel:
https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZUQe2i7Fzj_tcwwSG7Ednw/videos?view=2&flow=grid

OPPORTUNITIES TO SHARE IN OUR FUTURE

Each month we will be sharing a story about people who have donated to our Endowment Fund at Central United Methodist Church.
We hope these stories will keep this opportunity visible to our congregation.

The Finance Team has requested to hear the stories behind the names on some of our Endowment Funds. These histories are an important part of our legacy; they should be shared and these benefactors not forgotten.

Fran and Everett Husted met on a blind date many years ago. Fran was originally from Traverse City, and Everett was from Grand Haven. Fran worked for many years as a bookkeeper and Everett as an engineer for what was formerly known as General Telephone. They built their home in Glenside in the early 1940's, and then welcomed two boys, Don and Huey. The Glenside neighborhood was close-knit, with neighbors keeping an eye on each other's kids, and enjoying many coffee gatherings at each other's homes. Lifetime friendships were built there.

The Husted's square danced and enjoyed playing cards. Everett golfed and bowled, and Fran was the baker and knitter, event-planner and homemaker. They were a 1-car family, that is, until the boys started to drive, and then there was always a car in the driveway or at the curb, being fixed or otherwise improved upon. We are not sure when the family began attending Central, but it was a long time ago. There are Baptists in the family history, but we don't talk about that! Everett loved blueberries and baseball, and Fran was an avid bird-watcher.

We lost Fran in 1997, and Everett in 2009. Their ashes are in our Columbarium and now their gift to the church, the ***Frances and Everett Husted Endowment Fund***, continues to help support us today.

~ Huey and Julie Husted

OPPORTUNITIES TO IMPROVE OUR FUTURE

NEW AUDIO/VISUAL SYSTEM IN THE SANCTUARY

A new audio and visual (a/v) system was installed in the sanctuary over the last couple of weeks. Vizidef company and Northern Electric with help from our Dan Melinn did a great job of installing the system. One of the goals was to bring in the monitors with minimalized distraction from the overall ambiance of the sanctuary.

The system consists of incorporating video screens with the current sound equipment and new speakers and a camera. The controls have been moved to the balcony; they are no longer in the alter area. New speakers were added under the balcony for better sound in that area. A new camera that can be zoomed into different locations has also been installed. All this can be controlled by either the computer in the balcony or by iPads. The program and equipment will allow us to better live stream the service, display videos and music during worship, show photos during wedding and funerals if the families wish, and many other programs that we have yet to come in the future of Central UMC.

If you have any questions, please reach out to myself or Rob. We will be happy to answer them for you.

~ Keith Krol, Trustee Chair

MISSION POSSIBLE FOR MARCH

MISSION OF THE MONTH
UMCOR SUNDAY

UMCOR Sunday was formally known as One Great Hour of Sharing. This is a means of seeing that there are funds available for immediate assistance in the wake of natural and human caused disasters and helps support on going ministries of food, shelter, health and peace. The key word here is "immediate". Give as though you may need this assistance someday.

Together We Can and WILL Help Others!

PANTRY
EMBRACE BOOKS

The founder of Embrace Books had a vision in 2014 and that vision became a reality in 2015 when they opened their doors with 2,000 books. They now give away more than 50,000 books annually. They are located in the All Shores Wesleyan Church on Southern Ave. They believe that reading is vital to developing ourselves as members of the community, critical thinking skills, and equipping ourselves with the tools to help us succeed in life. **Help continue their vision.**

HELPING HAND FUND Kindness Jars are usually placed at the back of the Sanctuary every third Sunday and the dollars collected enable Pastor Rob to meet the needs of persons in the community and in the congregation. ***During this time when we are not meeting in person donations to this cause can still be made by putting a note on your check or envelope with money enclosed. There is truly a need for us to continue reaching out in love.***

LOCAL MISSION
CALL 211

Dialing 211 is a simple way for people to connect with important health, human, and community services available within their own community. It is free and available 24 hours a day and 7 days a week. Some of the things they have information on are food, housing, clothing, utility assistance, and transportation. As you can imagine, demand for this service is very high right now. Let's show our love for their service.

....it is more blessed to give than to receive. Acts 20:35

HUNGER/UMCOR
MOBILE FOOD PANTRY

For many years we have sponsored two mobile food trucks a year in partnership with Mount Zion and St. Paul's. Within the last year Pastor Bennet was able to get a monthly food truck and this has continued through the pandemic. Individuals have financed some of the latest trucks. We will continue to build our fund for Mobile Food Trucks in the future and monetarily support when needed right now.

Remember Matthew 25:35 —
For I was hungry and you gave me something to eat.

When we serve them, WE SERVE HIM

MISSION OFFERINGS
JANUARY 2021

Mission of the Month—Solid Rock Housing Support
$450

Local Mission—Pathfinders
$335

Helping Hand Fund
$530

Hunger/UMCOR—Water, Sanitation and Hygiene
$335

Pantry— Meijer Gift Cards for MAP
$65

Missionary Support Offering
$155

United Methodist Women
FAITH · HOPE · LOVE IN ACTION

- ★ Atwell Pecan Products **(Peanut Oil FREE) are still available at $11/pound.** We have ONLY 5 pounds available. These freeze great!
- ★ **Apple dumplings** can still be ordered in packages of 4's or 6's at $2.50 each. *Delicious!* Call Erika at 231-759-0648 to order.
- ★ Even though the UMW is not meeting right now, we continue to see that we have a "prescience" at the church. Thank you for being a part of who we are.
- ★ **Till we meet again...eventually WE WILL!**

~Erika Paulson

Central Cares

MARCH BIRTHDAYS

1 — Benjamin Clarke, Jake Lofgren
4 — Nancy Kieft
6 — Sheila Justice
8 — Thomas Cotner
11 — Kathryn Alexander, Bill Dye
16 — Sue Brookstra, Jim Johnson,Tim Lundholm
17 — Joshua Cherry
19 — Jean Anderson, Cathy Brubaker-Clarke, Tiffany Dugger, Kevin Youngquist
23 — Nick Baker, Richard Wallace
24 — Darlene Johnson
25 — Lori Arthur
26 — Carol Higginson, Kathy Hines
30 — Brayan Clarke, Leah Neal
31 — Abigail Larabee

MARCH CALENDAR

1 — Small Group—7 p.m. (ZOOM)
3 — Small Group—9 a.m.. (ZOOM)
3 — SPRC Mtg.—5:30 p.m. (ZOOM)
4 — Red Letter Christians 9 a.m. (ZOOM)
7 — Worship—9:30 a.m. (VIRTUAL ONLY)
7 — Going Deeper— 5 p.m. (ZOOM)
10 — Finance Mtg.— 6 p.m. (ZOOM)
14 — Worship—9:30 a.m. (VIRTUAL ONLY)
14 — Small Group—11 a.m. (ZOOM)
15 — Food Truck 4 p.m. (3 p.m. if working)
15 — Small Group—7 p.m. (ZOOM)
15 — Trustee Mtg. — 7 p.m. (ZOOM)
16 — Outlook Deadline
17 — Small Group—9 a.m. (ZOOM)
17 — Church Council Mtg.—7 p.m. (ZOOM)
18 — Red Letter Christians—9 a.m. (ZOOM)
21 — Worship—9:30 a.m. (VIRTUAL ONLY)
21 — Going Deeper 5 p.m. (ZOOM)
23 — Outlook Mailed
28 — Worship—9:30 a.m. (VIRTUAL ONLY)
28 — Small Group 11 a.m. (ZOOM)
29 — Small Group 7 p.m. (ZOOM)

Care Notes

Share their grief:

- Family and friends of **Wendell Bradfield** (brother of Larry Bradfield) who passed away on January 30, 2021. Due to COVID, the family held a Graveside Service on February 4.
- Family and friends of **Paul Twork** (grandfather of Patrick and Andrew Twork) who passed away on February 2, 2021.
- Family and friends of **Gorden Vogal** (father-in-law of Dan Melinn who passed away on February 4. A Grave Service was held by the family.

Church Office is STILL Closed!

Messages will still be received by the church office via phone and/or email. Or contact Pastor Rob directly via his cell phone number: (231)-557-4507

We will keep you updated when this changes.

Special Request:

- Please keep Patty in the church office updated on any of the prayer requests you have made on behalf of your friends and family. We want our bulletin to be not only accurate but up-to-date.
- **Where to send important information! Please send to all addresses.**
- Juanita Joiner for the Newsletter: jrjoiner@comcast.net
- Patty Dahlman for the Church Calendar and Bulletin: pdahlman@muskegoncentralumc.org

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United Methodist Church

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Muskegon Central United Methodist

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- Dan Melinn, Facilities Coordinator
- Carl Chapman, Custodian

Have news for the Outlook? See page 5 for submission addresses. Next Outlook deadline is **March 16**. Thank you!

ANOTHER BLESSING TIMES 100

It was last summer and Sue Zack was determined to share some of her yarn stash with others. And SHARE she did. Sue donated 5 large bags of yarn to Blake and Mary Duram.

What can you do with 5 bags of yarn? You make 100 hats! That's right...100 hats. This week Sue picked up the hats and will now share with the school children in the Muskegon Public Schools.

It was when Sue picked these hats up she found out that Blake had knit all 100! Thank you Blake for this wonderful gift and Mary for raising such a loving and giving son. They just proved what it's like to be a Christian during these days of the unknown and much uncertainty.

There are going to be 100 special children whispering a thank you to their personal "angel". Central also wants to join in with our "thank you" to our personal "angels".