

Central Presbyterian Church
Where Love and Justice are Central
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Central Press
January and February 2024

From the Pastor

Merry Christmas, Friends!

If you have tuned in with us this season, you know we've been responding to the question, "How does a weary world rejoice?" It can be tempting to dwell in our weariness, especially as the hustle and bustle of Advent winds down into the days of Christmas and this last week of the year. But even in our weariness (or wherever else we are dwelling these days), Christ comes into the world.

Over the next two Sundays (December 31 and January 7), we will continue to respond to this question with these themes: "we root ourselves in ritual" and "we trust our belovedness." I believe that these two themes will help us find places we can return to when we are feeling weary, or grieving, or unsure if God will ever really show up, and be reminders that Christ comes into the world and dwells among us every day, forgiving us, loving us, reminding us that we are beloved.

So, wherever you are dwelling these days, however you are feeling this Christmastide, may you be reminded that God is, once again, revealing Godself. God is, once again, from the waters of creation to this very moment, entering into the world. I hope you will join us as we continue to ponder this together.

Christmas peace,

Rev. Jenny Wells

Central Presbyterian Staff

Rev. Jenny Wells, Pastor
Dr. Cynthia Sheppard, Director of
Worship & Music
Dr. Ann Marie Rigler, Organist
Amy Smick, Admin. & Comm.
Coordinator
Marisa Grady, Audiovisual Tech/Operator
Lori Raye Erickson, Facilities Coordinator
Colleen Simon, Pantry Coordinator
Shelly Spiegel, Pantry Coordinator

Central Presbyterian Session

David Alonzo	Anna Lisa Lawton
Susan Borge	Rebecca Merola
Cheryl Cornett	Clerk of Session:
Sara Hirsch	Terry Miller

Congregational Meeting

The annual congregational meeting will be held on Sunday, January 28 after Worship. The meeting will take place in the Fellowship Hall, and lunch will be served.

Special Offering

Starting in February, the Church Life Committee will be partnering with the Pantry for special offerings during Worship to take place throughout the year. We will provide more information leading up to each event.

Pantry and Clothes Closet



Shelly Spiegall (they/them) joined us as our new Pantry Co-Coordinator in November. A Kansas City transplant originally from Omaha, NE, they moved to KC about 5 years ago and are so happy to now call this wonderful city home. Shelly & their partner Teresa have 5 kids. Before Central, Shelly worked for various churches and non-profits over the years. Most recently for Kanbe's Markets - where a lot of our wonderful produce comes from! When not working, you can find Shelly gardening, reading, playing guitar, crafting, and spending time with the kids.

We thank our former Pantry Co-Coordinator Amanda Loesch for her service this past year. Her kindness and compassion for our neighbors shined through, and we are grateful for the time and talent she brought to our neighborhood's table.



In November, we received a generous donation of toilet paper for our pantry from our friends at Sidekicks Saloon. An annual tradition in honor of Robert "Buddy" Taylor's birthday, toilet paper is donated by his friends and patrons. We are grateful for the support we have received from them over the years!

During Advent, our pantry continued to serve over 60 families each week! We held a special shopping experience leading up to Christmas. Central's "elves" helped neighbors pick out toys, housewares, and other trinkets for the holiday season.



The pantry is still accepting cooking and baking staples along with warm clothes for the winter.

Other Central Snapshots



We had a great turn out at our Holy Happy Hour events at Sidekicks and Big Rip Brewing, Co.! We enjoyed making new connections and seeing familiar faces. A special shout out goes to Café Jo'el and Hawg Jaw for their excellent food. Our next Holy Happy Hour will be Thursday, January 11 from 4:00-6:00pm at Casual Animal Brewing (1725 McGee), and we look forward to seeing you there!

As we gathered together this Advent season, we acknowledged our weariness, found joy in connection, allowed ourselves to be amazed, and sang stories of hope.

We observed The Longest Night in worship with our neighbors from St. Mark Hope and Peace Lutheran Church and Trinity United Methodist Church. We had a night of reflection, contemplation, and prayer. The candles represented what is heavy in our lives, what burdens us, the warmth of love known, and hope for the future.



You may have noticed some changes around the building. Our Women's Parlor and the Davis Room are receiving upgrades. We are excited to open the doors to new possibilities as we create warm and welcoming spaces for all who visit Central.

We can already hear our friends cheering during football games, laughing over a hot cup of coffee, pondering the latest passage during Bible Study, and turning dreams into goals as we anticipate a bright future for our community.

