



Central Press

JULY & AUG 2020

Central Presbyterian Church ■ 3501 Campbell ■ Kansas City, MO 64109

Calendar

July 14

B & G meeting 5 p.m.
AT CHURCH

July 22

Session

July Birthdays

Andrew Barger	5
Heidi Peterson	15
Jeff Clayton	15
Chuck Curry	16
Becky Chamberlain	24

July Anniversaries

Mary & Rebecca Merola	16
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August Birthdays

Will Borge	5
Robbie Levi	8
Michael Foiles	19
Mark Thurman	25

Showing Up

On Friday evening, June 19, sixteen friends and members of Central met in the church parking lot to walk together to Troost Ave. to participate in 'prayfortroost', a community action to draw attention to this racial dividing line and invoke prayer for healing. Thanks to all who participated.

The State of the Church

It has now been four months since COVID-19 interrupted the way we do ministry and worship. Still, it has not interrupted who we are as a church family, and how we are part of our community.

Our online worship services have been faithfully attended via live stream. We have had participation beyond the rolls of our membership during these services. Committees continue to be active thanks to Zoom meetings. Session is continually thinking of ways for us to share experiences and stay connected to one another.

The question that comes up repeatedly is "When are we going to be able to use the building again?" That decision remains a difficult one. So far the Building and Grounds Committee is the only group that has determined they can meet safely, appropriately distanced from one another in person at church. Session still meets via Zoom. With the uptick in known COVID cases and the renewed city mask-wearing mandate, the time of gathering for worship in our sanctuary may be further off than we initially imagined. The decision will be made based on recommendations of the medical and scientific communities as well as state and local government. We may find that as a church we will move more cautiously than the government, schools, and businesses. While there is room in the sanctuary for physical distancing, that is not the sole factor in the equation.

In any case, it will be quite some time before we use the building in exactly the same way we did before the pandemic. We will only be comfortable resuming full use of the building when the most vulnerable among us can safely return. Even when we re-convene, we plan to devise a way to continue live streaming worship for the

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Worship Life

As most of you have discovered by now, it is not necessary to have a Facebook account to be able to access the church worship service on the Central Presbyterian Facebook site. If you miss the weekly service at 10:30 a.m., you may access it at any time thereafter, as it is archived on the site. We are delighted that special music is now a part of our weekly worship—solos both vocal and instrumental. We plan to continue live streaming even after we are convening to worship in person.

*On July 19 our member and ministry candidate **Tony Beyer** will be our preacher.*

In looking for a way the whole worship and music staff could have a week off, there may be a Sunday in August we simply offer a link to another service/preacher. This is TBD.

Dear Friends...

"...let us run with perseverance the race that is set before us, looking to Jesus the pioneer and perfecter of our faith..." Hebrews 12:1-2

As the current global health crisis continues, we all feel the effects of not weeks but months of disruption and isolation from our normal routines and our friendship circles. As the country struggles to open up once again, we watch nervously to see what the latest statistics are on new COVID cases, hospitalizations, and deaths.

Your Session continues to monitor the situation and prayerfully consider what is in the best interest of the health and welfare of all our members. In the meantime, ministry is happening, inspired by the Holy Spirit and the faithful energy of the people of Central. Our pantry is open weekly and the garden harvests provide uncommonly fresh organic produce for our patrons. We continue to worship together weekly through our live-streamed service. Each week's service offers the Word of God and music for our souls. The Mission & Service Committee is responding to the increased needs of some of our neighbors through the pastor's discretionary fund, and by supporting local ministry partners. I am beginning to visit some members face to face in brief, physically distanced ways.

Our membership has been faithful in participation and generous in giving. Truly the body of Christ is not tied to a place or a moment in time but to the relationships of love and care that bind us together. The present circumstance calls for perseverance from us all. It can be hard to keep up the energy to find new and creative ways to be the church. But that is exactly what God is calling us to do.

Thank you for all you are doing to stay connected to each other as the body of Christ.

Heidi

Pantry News by Julie Smith

As the weather has turned hot and humid the food pantry has been operating with many changes in our processes. I am grateful for the support of David Aguiar, Stephanie Stowe, Rebecca Merola, Ray Hill, Phil Utton and D.L. Lee who have all been a tremendous help during the pandemic. Sonja Carlson and Susan Borge have helped by prepacking socks and underwear to distribute weekly along with food items.

We served over 150 people in the last 6 weeks and have had 30 households entering our services for the first time. The garden has been producing green, white, and red onions, mustard and collard greens, green and hot peppers. Okra and garlic are also in the garden and we anticipate those, as well as tomatoes which will be ripening to supplement what we have to distribute from Harvesters. We are so glad to have fresh and healthy choices from the garden and the patrons are enjoying our bountiful offerings. Thanks to the hard work and direction of Rebecca Merola the garden is producing a tremendous amount of fresh vegetables. Sara Boyd, Susan Borge, David Aguiar, and many others have helped her in this work and it is especially rewarding to be able to offer these to our patrons. We have been planning to be able to start opening the doors and, allowing for social distancing, letting a few patrons in to the building at a time. As of right now we are still operating without permitting patrons to enter the church building by meeting them outside the door and communicating their choices to the volunteers inside, who then hand the groceries out. Our patrons are very grateful for the generosity offered by Central Presbyterian, in this time of unusually high need.

Thanks

To **Cheryl Cornett** and **Mary K Marxsen** for coming to the church building every week during this lock down in order to keep the church current financially by signing checks, making bank deposits and tracking payroll.

To **Chip Barger** who has been interfacing with the workers tending to masonry repairs on the building.

To **Ray Hill** who sealed a breach in our exterior east wall that had been serving as a tunnel for mice to enter and feast in our food pantry.

To **Louise Desmarteau** who has facilitated whatever progress has been made to update our church website.

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wider community we have attracted to our services during the pandemic, and for the comfort of anyone who is uneasy about larger, in-person gatherings.

In the food pantry and in the church office (where hours are still irregular) we adhere to guidelines of physical distancing, wear masks and use hand sanitizer. Even with limited building use, our capable cleaning service is paying particular attention to bathrooms, surfaces and door handles.

The Session, your church staff and I offer each of you a heartfelt thank you for the ways you have adjusted to and continue to support faith life “beyond the walls” of Central Presbyterian Church.

