



Central Press

MARCH 2021

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

Calendar

March Wednesdays

Pantry & Clothes Closet

March 9

B & G Committee

March 9, 23

Staff meeting

March 17

Session

March Birthdays

John Ditch 8

Thomas Thurman 9

Charlotte Thurman 17

Carol Marley 29

Doug Tilton 30

Holy Happy Hour

will be by Zoom again
this month on Tuesday,

March 23 @ 5:15 p.m.

Watch for the link in
your email .



Lent, Mutual Care and Prayer

February 17 was Ash Wednesday, the beginning of Lent. We did not have our regular Wednesday food Pantry distribution because of snow and extreme temperatures. Even if we had been open, we could not have offered the imposition of ashes or shared prayer due to Covid precautions. Still the pantry ministry aligns with the Ash Wednesday scripture readings concerning self-sacrifice, and caring for the poor; choosing to fast, not from food, but from injustice.

*Is not this the fast that I choose:
to loose the bonds of injustice,
to undo the thongs of the yoke,
to let the oppressed go free,
and to break every yoke?*

*Is it not to share your bread with the hungry,
and bring the homeless poor into your house; when
you see the naked, to cover them,
and not to hide yourself from your own kin?*

*Then your light shall break forth like the dawn, and your
healing shall spring up quickly...*

*Then you shall call and the Lord will answer;
you shall cry for help, and God will say, 'Here I am.'*

Isaiah 58:6-9

Lent is traditionally a time of repentance and introspection, marked by the liturgical color purple. Lent calls us to be mindful of the love and justice of God and to bear witness to the grace of Jesus in every interaction, every intention, every day. May God bless our walk through this holy season of Lent.

Sympathy

To Lynda Raner and Don Haring on the death of Lynda's cousin Carmelita "Corky" Blackwood.

Thank you

to Anna Lisa Lawton for keeping us current with our certification as a PC(USA) Earth Care Congregation.

to the principle music staff of the church as we mark the one year anniversary of worshiping together/apart on a virtual platform. Cindy Sheppard and Sarah Jacobs are present weekly during worship. Their creativity and support of the not-in-person worship process and their undeterred joyfulness in gathering the community of faith for the praise of God, in whatever way we are able to do that, is a gift to our congregation.

Dear Friends . . .

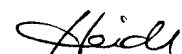
Most of you received a letter from me in the mail sometime within the last 10-12 days sharing with you what I had already told the Session; namely, that I intend to retire from ministry at Central Presbyterian sometime this summer. After 38 years in the ordained ministry, 21 of which I will have served happily as pastor of Central Church, I will ask Heartland Presbytery to grant me the status 'Honorably Retired'.

The last two decades have been full of changes for the church and for all of us. I have had the privilege of memorializing many devoted members whose affiliation with Central Church long preceded my own birth. You have honored me by inviting me into your lives to walk with you in sacred times of joy and heartbreak.

In these days when we are necessarily still observing Covid precautions that preclude gathering all in one place, I hope sharing my plan now allows ample time for us to have 'ending' conversations. Change is rarely welcome. Yet it always brings with it opportunity.

We have no bishops in the Presbyterian Church. Congregations self-determine the direction they wish to go and the kind of pastoral leadership that best fits their own congregation's practical and spiritual needs. One of the blessings of Presbyterian polity is that the connectional nature of the denomination assures that Central will not be left on its own to figure out a way forward. Two members of Heartland Presbytery's Commission on Ministry Transition Team will work with the Session on next steps. Meanwhile I am present to continue fulfilling my pastoral role among you.

Central is small in number and rich in vitality. Central's membership is resolute in commitment to one another, to the mission of the church and to serving God and neighbor. God has given you all the gifts and faith needed to meet this exciting and challenging time. The future is open and though the next steps are not yet charted, you can begin to make the way smooth for whatever is to come by praying for Central and for whoever it is who is, even now, unknowingly preparing to be your next pastor.



Pantry News *by Julie Smith*

As we entered this New Year we were busy helping the neighborhood pantry patrons with food, produce, and household items. In 2020 we served 1,046 different households with a total of 1,832 individuals. We obtained 139,432 pounds of food and supplies from Harvesters and some from private donations.

So far this year (Jan-Feb) we have served 137 households, 223 individuals. Harvesters is no longer charging agencies a handling fee (.16/lb.), which is an added benefit. This vital service helps some of the most vulnerable in society, those who live in food deserts where sources of healthy food is limited. Many different demographics comprise our patron population. Most of them belong to groups of people who are often invisible in our society. But here, they are seen.

During the last year we have had to adjust/change many aspects of our distribution of food and supplies, and our interaction with patrons because of Covid and cold weather. We've been able to provide this ministry thanks to our dedicated volunteers who come nearly every week: Rebecca Merola, David Aguiar, Sonja Carlson, Susan Borge, Sandae Custard, Ray Hill, Cindy Sheppard, DL Lee, Stephanie Stowe, and Phillip Utton.

Lenten Devotions

Many thanks to everyone who has given time and thought to writing an E-devotion. During Lent we continue to send out devotions created 'in house', sharing with one another inspiration, story and reflection on faith and life. If you need a prompt to get started, ask Cindy Sheppard or Heidi Peterson for a nudge. We will send out devotions as many days as we can, depending on how many we all write and submit.

A devotion can be a memory you have of Lent or Easter past; it can be the sharing of a scripture passage or a quote that is meaningful to you. It could be a short synopsis of a book you have read and want to recommend to others. The format is flexible. The only requirement is that the reflection come from you.

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Central Church

*Serving Jesus with
Good Energy
More Light
Musical Worship
Radical Love
Justice*

One Great Hour of Sharing

In the church season of Lent we collect a special mission offering: **One Great Hour of Sharing**. The funds are divided between:

Presbyterian Disaster Assistance (32%) which works alongside communities as they recover and find hope after the devastation of natural or human-caused disasters;

Presbyterian Hunger Program (36%) which takes action to alleviate hunger and the systemic causes of poverty so all may be fed;

Self-Development of People (32%), which invests in communities responding to their experiences of racism, oppression, poverty and injustice and educates Presbyterians about the life-diminishing impact of these societal ills.

It is easy to make a gift to OGHS through our website centralpreskc.org

Central Presbyterian Church Staff

Heidi Peterson, *Pastor*
Cindy Sheppard,

Director of Music

Sarah Jacobs, *Organist*

Jan Powell, *Secretary*

Julie Smith

Director Community Ministries