



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter

January 25, 2021

Sunday, January 31st, 2021

**Rev. Cora continues our *Doxology* message series with
"Embracing the Awe of Creation."**

From your computer or smartphone, watch at facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live.

Dear Central Church Family,

This past Sunday, [I shared an interview with Gary Miracle](#) who was born here in Pontiac and grew up in this area until his family moved to Florida. Gary is the grandson of Lavonne Long, a member of Central United Methodist Church for many years. As was shared during the worship service, on New Year's Eve in 2019, Gary was very ill with strep throat and the infection entered his bloodstream and he was rushed to the hospital and air-lifted to Orlando. As a result of the infection, Gary's arms and legs were surgically removed.

I shared the interview as an incredible testimony of Gary's faith. Gary hopes and believes that God will be glorified through his life, now forever changed. He has been fitted with prosthetic arms and is in physical therapy strengthening his body in preparation for prosthetic legs. Gary plans to walk again in 2021! Gary's goal of walking this year gives to each of us the opportunity to focus our prayers for him. I encourage you to pray for Gary so that he can glorify God; not for what Gary no longer has, but for the blessings he has and will receive.

Focused prayer. While I encourage you to pray specifically for Gary and his plan to walk again this year, I want to also ask that you pray for our church as we are making plans to return to some normalcy in our faith community. This next Saturday, January 30, a small leadership team will be meeting to form a vision for Central United Methodist Church that will require the development of plans that will involve an ever-growing group of leaders. I would ask that you pray for what our worship life will look like in 2021. Pray for what our programming will include as we seek to address meaningful issues in 2021. Pray for the process of bringing our community back together as we emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic.

As the vision for our future develops, we hope to create a 12- to 18-month plan for Central Church. Right now, that is as far out as we are comfortable planning. If COVID-19 has taught us anything, there are just some things for which we cannot fully plan! We will look further into the future as we are able to recover and return to some of our usual practices.

Let me end with a reminder to meditate and perhaps memorize the scripture that has been the theme through our messages so far this year: "Now to him who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen." (Ephesians 3:20-21) Our God is able! God bless you and stay safe. I look forward to "seeing you" in worship.

Because of Christ,

-Pastor Jack

Outdoor Prayer Service

Thursday, January 28th at 7:15 pm

In response to this month's violence at the Capitol, political unrest, and racism throughout our country, we will gather for a short service of prayer in our parking lot. Come worship from the comfort of your car. We will broadcast the service to your car radio so you can hear clearly. During the service, we will lift up concerns, lament, share joys, and hear scripture's words of hope for the future.

Winter Coat Collection to Benefit Refugees

Waterford Central, in partnership with the Waterford Refugee Welcome Alliance, is collecting new and gently used adult and kids winter coats, hats, scarves, and gloves. Donations will be taken through March and can be placed in the blue collection tub in the Chapel hallway. Thank you for helping local Waterford-area refugee families.

Song of the Week

The work toward a kinder world is never done. If you find yourself needing a break in the upcoming weeks, allow yourself time to take it. We all need time to recharge, and it is important to safeguard our mental health while we are still awaiting vaccine distributions, trying to stem the spread of COVID, and hopefully healing from the recent turmoil. But if you are ready to continue the work, there is much yet to be done. The political landscape is changing, and as we install a new administration, we will still have many calls to work for justice and compassion in the world. Many of you are already doing that work within the church and through a variety of organizations. Many of you will get back to that work when vaccines make safety more readily available. But there are still big issues that need to be addressed and a nation that needs compassion and the opportunity to surmount the challenges that we have been facing. It is my sincere hope that we will find, sometime over this next year, a way for our representatives to listen to us more fully and become our partners in that endeavor, while also entering into thoughtful compromise over the issues of the day, and in doing so begin to rebuild trust across the aisle that working together in governance is better for us all. But in order to arrive there, we must continue to demand such things of them. The news cycle and political funding systems will work at odds with us, but a widespread call to civility and partnership would be a fresh new idea in our America, wouldn't it?

As I was searching for a song this week, I came across an artist who has done many diverse projects and had a long career in the music industry, but I didn't know of him until this week. Inspired by blues legend Robert Johnson, and reggae legend Bob Marley, Ben Harper shows a wide range of talents both in his own music and in the artists he has worked with and produced over the years. But more than that he shows, in the Bob Marley vein, an understanding of the power of music as a force of change in the world. His messages are full of a recognition of the world in the state that is in currently, but also hope for what the world can be. In the song I have included for you today, *With My Own Two Hands*, he speaks to our own individual power to change the world. To me, that is one of the most powerful messages that we can convey. You have the capacity and power to make a better world. And if you choose to pursue those ends, imagine what we can achieve together! As we look to the next phase of America, this is a message that speaks to me deeply, and I hope that it does to you as well.

[With My Own Two Hands - Ben Harper \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEnfy9qfdaU&feature=youtu.be\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aEnfy9qfdaU&feature=youtu.be)

With Love,
-Kevin

February Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy birthday to our members who are turning 80+:

- Daniel Aldrich - 2/2
- Janice Caldwell - 2/6
- Marshall Rice - 2/10
- Joyce Clarkson - 2/12
- Phyllis Liming - 2/25
- Dawn Davis - 2/25

And Happy 50+ Year Anniversary to the Following Members:

- Lewis & Judith Bradbury – 2/1, 62 yrs.
- Russell & Barbara Jacobson – 2/12, 66 yrs.
- Robert & Marcia Swartz – 2/22, 52 yrs.
- Larry & Doris Quick – 2/25, 60 yrs.

Connect with Central

Central's Facebook Page - <https://www.facebook.com/waterfordcumc>. Find the upcoming live stream worship service and recordings of previous services, faith development videos and daily inspirations.

Central's YouTube Channel - https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCn5n6YzaUUu9lqei6z-bg_g. Find recordings of past services, choral and dance recordings, Pastor Jack's weekly devotionals and more.

Central's Facebook Group - <https://www.facebook.com/groups/waterfordcumc/>. A private group that allows members to support one another with posts and inspiration.

Central's Website - <https://www.WaterfordCUMC.org>. Find recordings of sermons, upcoming events, the latest COVID re-opening plan, Central's member directory (login code CUM51) and the worship attendance form.