



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter

February 8, 2021

Sunday, February 14th, 2021: Scout Sunday and Valentine's Day! Pastor Jack wraps up our *Doxology* message series with "True Love Connections."

From your computer or smartphone, watch at [facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live](https://www.facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live).

Greetings Central Church Family,

British mathematician and philosopher, Alfred North Whitehead, wrote "The art of progress is to preserve order amid change and to preserve change amid order." This quote from Whitehead represents exactly what we've been attempting to do throughout the COVID-19 pandemic. We have worked hard to keep the mission and ministry of Central Church going amid great and unexpected change. The many changes we've made toward that goal have led us down a path that will prevent us from returning completely to the way things were.

Amid the many unexpected changes we've had to make is the replacement of the sign in front of our Sanctuary. That sign was destroyed by a motorist who had a health challenge and, as a result, lost control of his car and hit the sign, damaging it beyond repair. It was estimated that the driver of the car was going 85 mph when he entered the woods just to the east of the front yard where our church building sits. It was a blessing that the young man was not killed or seriously injured.

The process of replacing the sign has been a challenge to say the least, but a new, smaller design was selected. When the estimates to replace the sign as it previously existed were received, our leadership as well as the insurance company just couldn't justify spending literally tens of thousands of dollars on that sign, especially since we've had our new electronic sign for nearly seven years now. We should have the new sign in front of our Sanctuary sometime this spring, including the replacement of a tree and two shrubs that were also destroyed.

Other changes to our church building have also been underway. The parlor renovation project is nearing its completion; the new carpet, window treatments, lights and paint have really freshened up this wonderful gathering space. The small kitchen ceiling adjacent to the parlor and the ceiling in the Children's Library have been repainted. The lights in the parlor and in the Children's Library are now on a dimmer which is a nice feature of the space.

As I mentioned during worship yesterday (February 7), one of our boilers was replaced and will be operational by the end of this week. As I said yesterday, the staff and leadership of Central Church are working toward a day when we return to fully utilizing our building for worship, meetings and ministry as well as allowing the many groups that use our building to return as well.

Along with the leadership of our church, I wanted you to know that we look forward to that time of returning fully to our building, but at present we want you to be safe and not let our guard down as we emerge from this pandemic fog that has settled over us. In the meantime, it is a pleasure to worship with you. If there is anything you need from me or our very capable staff, do not hesitate to contact us!

Because of Christ,
-Pastor Jack



Rendering of Central's new sign.

Ashes for Ash Wednesday

On February 17 we will be celebrating Ash Wednesday, which is the beginning of the Season of Lent. We want to offer you a suggestion of how to make your own ashes. Think of something you'd like to change in your life—a transformation you'd like to work on in your life or a bad habit you'd like to overcome. Write that hopeful transformation or bad habit on a piece of paper. Place the paper into a fireproof bowl and burn the paper. Crush the burned remains with the back of a spoon. To place the ashes on your forehead, wet your finger with a little olive or mineral oil, dip your finger in the ashes and then rub them gently on your forehead. You can apply ashes on your forehead early in the day as a means of witnessing to your faith throughout the day, or you can wait until our Ash Wednesday Service (7 p.m.) to participate in the placing of the ashes on your forehead. May we be blessed as we enter this season of Lent in 2021!

Lenten Small Group: Vital Conversations on Race, Culture and Justice

Eight sessions on Mondays 7-8:30pm beginning February 22nd and ending in May

This program, designed by The General Commission on Race and Religion of the United Methodist Church (GCORR) is offered as a way to begin a dialogue, face our misconceptions and fears, and move deliberately to spiritual, community and social transformation.

This small group is designed to help participants learn about systemic racism, identify racism in themselves and others around them and to begin to develop tools and techniques to compassionately address racism. Co-hosted by Rev. Cora and Robin Danek.

Learning will be cumulative for participants, so to get the most benefit we recommend you commit to a majority of the sessions. We will skip weeks with Monday night church meetings.

To sign up for this small group, please visit <https://www.bit.ly/vitalconversations1>. For more information, contact [Rev. Cora](#) or [Robin Danek](#).

Welcome Central's New Organist/Accompanist, Aran Kim

Born and raised in Dae-Jeon, South Korea, Aran received her Doctor of Musical Arts in Piano Performance from the University of Arizona in May 2019. Her musical education journey in the States began when she started at Kilgore College, TX as a freshman piano major. While studying at Kilgore, she won Anne Dean Turk Piano Concerto in 2004 and received the Friends of Music Scholarship. She was chosen as the Most Outstanding Music Student by the music faculty and graduated with honors. In 2008, Aran graduated Magna Cum Laude from Texas A&M University-Commerce where she was the recipient of the Music Excellence Scholarship, the Ferrell/Freeman Distinguished Musicianship Award, the Carl & Frances Hyatt Endowment Scholarship and the Transfer Academic Scholarship. Aran earned her Master of Music in Piano Performance, Magna Cum Laude at Texas A&M University-Commerce in 2011, where she worked as a full-time piano and applied lesson instructor, and was accompanist for the University Chorale and Chamber Choir, as well as the Wind Ensemble. In 2010, Aran won second place at the Texas Music Teacher's Association Young Artist Competition in Arlington, TX. In the summer of 2010, she was selected to attend the prestigious Chautauqua Music Festival in Chautauqua, NY, where she was the finalist in the SAI Piano Concerto Competition. In Spring 2011, Aran won the Annual Concerto Competition at Texas A&M University-Commerce and performed Grieg Concerto with the Wind Ensemble. In May 2013, Aran was invited as a distinguished alumnus of Kilgore College and performed Tchaikovsky Concerto with the East Texas Symphony Orchestra. Currently, Aran is an accompanist for the Jackson Chorale and teaches privately in her piano studio.



Blessings in a Backpack

Blessing in a Backpack plans to pack food on February 10th at 4pm. There is still space for additional volunteers. If you would like to help pack this week or in the future contact Rev. Cora at cglass@waterfordcumc.org.

CF Rock Bake Sale Fundraiser

Thursday, February 11th, 3–4:30pm at Central Church

Stop by and pick up some delicious sweets for your Sweetie, just in time for Valentine's Day! All proceeds go to support the CF (Cystic Fibrosis) Rock Foundation and Rock CF Run. If you are interested in participating in this year's run, visit letsrockcf.org.

Cleaning Supply and Diaper Collection to Benefit Refugees

Waterford Central, in partnership with the Waterford Refugee Welcome Alliance, is collecting cleaning supplies and diapers through the month of February. Please place donations in the blue collection tub in the Chapel hallway. Thank you for helping local Waterford families.

Song of the Week

As we begin February of this new year, my mind is still reviewing the events of the past year and especially the Black Lives Matter movement. We are now beginning Black History Month and I think you all know how I like to celebrate the contributions of black churches to our music and church culture, as I have every February since I have entered music ministry. However, that doesn't seem like enough this year. I think it's important that we think beyond our church and try to understand how our church and our lives are connected to and influenced by black voices throughout history in so many more ways than we often realize. I have always believed very strongly that we are all one body and when we lift up others, we lift up ourselves, and if we put down others, we also are lowering ourselves in both practical and spiritual ways. Let us appreciate each other more now than ever.

I knew I wanted to speak to Black History Month today, but I didn't know what I was going to include or what I was going to say as I was thinking about it this week. However, today I read a story of a man that has truly inspired me, and I think exemplifies what we lose through denying the voices of people of color as well as how much those voices contribute to what we consider our culture here in America. They called him the Black Sparrow, but his given name was Eugene Bullard, and I never knew his story before today. You can learn more about him and read a summary of his extraordinary story at <http://jaxexaminer.com/they-called-him-the-black-sparrow/>.

But I'm going to share just a few highlights. Along with an illustrious military career and being honored repeatedly for his valor, he was a jazz drummer and club owner in Paris between the two world wars. If you haven't studied your history in a while, Paris was the center of the arts and music world in the first half of the 20th century. Many of our most famous painters, authors, and musicians made Paris their home during this period, influenced each other, and spent time at Bullard's club. And though it is possible that Hemingway, Picasso, Fitzgerald, Hughes, Chaplin, Astaire, Porter, and Armstrong may have met and interacted elsewhere, they were all regular patrons at the club of a Black man in Paris whose family escaped slavery in Haiti. His club was important enough that Hemingway wrote about it specifically in *The Sun Also Rises*. This author, who is almost quintessentially white and American, would not have produced the same art were it not for this Black man. We are all interconnected. In fact, Sam of *Casablanca* fame is inspired by Arthur Wilson from this exact club. How different would this piece of classic American cinema have been had it not been for Bullard? We are all interconnected. The story of the Black Sparrow is so much more than just this moment where he touches the arts, and I hope I have inspired some reading for you this week. We are all better with each other, and we make each other better by lifting each other up. I hope that this week you will contemplate how many ways your life has been influenced by people of color you may not even know about, and find a way to feel grateful to them and each other over this next year and beyond.

[I Love Paris - Cole Porter \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNlzljejjA\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JNlzljejjA)

With Love,
-Kevin

Thank You From the Methodist Children's Home Society

Because of your kindness and generosity nearly 250 children and families within our growing programs woke up to a warm celebration surrounded by those who love and care for them—whether that's a biological or foster family, an adoptive family, or our team of heroes and essential staff at MCHS. The stress of previous holidays melts away with each gift, hug, or Christmas carol they experience...many of them, for the first time.

Thank you for your donation of \$3200 in Amazon gift cards, which enabled the staff of MCHS to purchase gifts. These gifts demonstrated your level of love and care, and brought laughter and joy to many boys on Christmas morning.