



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter

February 22, 2021

Sunday, February 28th: Second Sunday of Lent. Pastor Jack continues our *Words To the Cross* message series with "A Late Word of Valor."
From your computer or smartphone, watch at facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live.

Hello Church,

Last Wednesday, Ash Wednesday, we began a new season of the church calendar called Lent.

Lent is a forty-day season where we prepare our hearts for Jesus' death and resurrection. Like Advent, Lent has certain traditions we might use personally or in worship to observe this season. It is common in Christianity for people to practice fasting during Lent. Fasting, most commonly from food, but also from another practice or obsession, "reveals our excessive attachments and the assumptions that lie behind them. Food is necessary to life, but we have made it more necessary than God. How often have we neglected to remember God's presence when we would never consider neglecting to eat! Fasting brings us face to face with how we put the material word ahead of its spiritual Source," writes Marjorie J. Thompson in *Soul Feast: An Invitation to the Christian Spiritual Life*. Others choose to observe Lent by adopting a practice such as writing a daily thank you note, dedicating time for prayer, or keeping a journal.

Another practice you may use is reading or listening to a daily devotional. Below I've listed five suggestions of devotionals for Lent this year:

- Pick up a devotional book from the church during the week when the office is open.
- Subscribe to [#picturelent](#), an intergenerational devotional featuring visual reflections.
- Follow the Michigan Conference's intergenerational Lenten calendar called "[Upside Down Lent.](#)"
- Subscribe to "[Be Still and Go.](#)" a podcast from The Riverside Church.
- Engage in anti-bias/anti-racism work each day with [these 40 prompts](#) by Brittany Stephen, Michigan Conference's Director of Cultural Vibrancy.

It's never too late to begin a Lenten practice! I think you'll find that observing Lent will draw you closer to God and others, making Easter that much more joyful.

Lenten Blessings,
-Rev. Cora

Words to the Cross Study

Wednesdays, 7 pm to 8:30 pm, February 24 through March 31 via Zoom

Often during Holy Week, typically on Good Friday, the church will observe "The Last Seven Words" of Jesus. These are the last phrases Jesus uttered while he suffered and died on the cross. The late Dr. J. Ellsworth Kalas, once a professor of preaching at Asbury Theological Seminary devised a concept of Words to the Cross. These words to the cross, such as a Word of Scorn, the Word of Indifference, and a Word of Testimony will provide the basis for the messages during Lent. Dr. Kalas' work will also provide the basis for this Lenten Study. For detail on the dates, topics and scripture, [visit our website at News=>Words to the Cross Study](#).

To sign up, [email Pastor Jack \(jmannschreck@waterfordcumc.org\)](mailto:jmannschreck@waterfordcumc.org).

An Interview with Aran Kim

Get to know Central's new organist/accompanist by watching this video interview with Music Director Kevin Naeve. You can view the video at bit.ly/AranKim.

Blessings in a Backpack

Blessing in a Backpack plans to pack food on February 24th at 4pm. There is still space for additional volunteers. It takes about 45 minutes to an hour to pack the food. If you would like to help pack this week or in the future contact Rev. Cora at cglass@waterfordcumc.org.

The Creating a Culture of Calling (C3) Initiative

Our church is one of 24 congregations participating in Vibrant Faith's Creating a Culture of Calling Initiative. This project is one of 13 hubs in the US and Canada working with about 350 congregations in the Called to Lives of Meaning and Purpose Initiative.

The Initiative leaders are inviting us to participate in their evaluation and research of the entire Initiative. You can help! Please complete this 20–30-minute survey by March 15, 2021. The Initiative and hub leaders will share the results from our congregation with us. Please help us learn about how our members understand and live out their calling and its role in a life of meaning and purpose.

Your survey responses will be anonymous. We will only know that they are connected to an attendee at your church. Nobody affiliated with your church will see your actual survey responses, and only the researchers will have access to the data. Access the online survey here: https://samford.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_56ghkV305PryL3g.

Questions? Please contact Nancy Going ngoing@vibrantfaith.org.

Jail and Outreach Ministry Collection

Instead of packing Easter baskets, we are collecting funds through March 18th to purchase items for Easter baskets and Easter dinners for families of inmates. Please mark your check JOM on the memo line.

Song of the Week

I hope you are all staying warm and cozy during this cold weather. I am currently wrapped in a blanket on my couch while writing this and counting my blessings for being able to do this task from home rather than venture out in the weather to get my work done today. Let's all appreciate our comfort and connections through technology this week as well as those who are unable to have a remote option to their work and must brave the weather. These little luxuries make our days apart just a little more filled with gratitude and appreciation, I believe.

I have been looking forward to the opportunity to write for you this week as I have been planning to share with you one of my favorite musicians of all time today. An immense talent who was nudged into the popular music sphere by Sam Cooke (who was the subject of last week's Song of the Week), Aretha Franklin was one of the greatest talents of popular music in my opinion, and she shares a special connection with us as a daughter of Detroit. I can't remember a time in my life when I didn't know the music of Aretha. Every family has their movies that are re-watched together countless times over the years, and in my family, it was the *Blues Brothers*. Filled with some of the greats of music from the day, along with actual studio musicians forming the main band, I can't remember the first time I saw that movie, but I can remember that every time I watched it, I couldn't wait to hear Aretha sing "Think" while Jake and Elwood join in the dance steps with the background singers. Even though this was my first introduction to her, that voice would be an influence on me throughout my life and the lives of so many others around the world. While Sam Cooke's smooth tenor gives you a lesson in how to raise your voice and sing, Aretha's instrument is beyond most all of us. I have always wanted to be able to bring her passion, soul, and flexibility to my music, but she accomplished quite naturally what others spend years trying to be able to do. And the moment you try to sing along, you find yourself lost in moments that she makes sound effortless. But if you can't raise your voice with her, it was always OK, because her voice had the strength to lift you up body and soul.

But she was so much more than an exquisite voice, she drew on her gospel roots to explore and influence the direction of popular music and offer something new as she reinterpreted covers of her contemporaries, wrote and co-wrote with musicians in every genre, and used her strength to champion justice for civil rights, for women, and for hunger. There are so many iconic artists who have been directly influenced by her, that it is hard to narrow them down, but to understand how wide her influence stretched, let me share a couple. The Beatles were known to send her demos before they were released in the hopes that she would sing their music while giving her full creative license with each one; she recorded with the Rolling Stones, the Eurhythmics, Rod Stewart, George Michael, and many others; she was a direct influence on Whitney Houston, Mariah Carey, Beyoncé, and Lady Gaga; and constantly embraced opportunities

to bring her gospel sound to other genres of music including country and disco. She stepped in for an ailing Pavarotti at the 1998 Grammy Awards and Freddy Mercury of Queen even modeled parts of *Somebody to Love* on her vocal technique, and was quoted as saying "But I love the Queen of Soul, Aretha Franklin, above all other singers. She must have one of the best voices ever. She sings like a dream. I wish I could sing half as well as she does. It's so natural. She puts her whole emotion into it. Each word she sings is full of meaning and expression. I could listen to it forever." Some scholars of popular music actually divide the genre into before and after Aretha Franklin. And when you see how she makes every song she gets hold of quintessentially her own, it is easy to see why her musicianship and voice are transformational for us all. Her biggest hit, *Respect*, was originally written by Otis Redding in a message suggesting that wives should be subservient to their husbands, but in Aretha's hands, the same song gets expanded with the R-E-S-P-E-C-T chorus and becomes an anthem for women's strength and independence, but also finds universal appeal in the call for respect.

Whatever music you listen to, it has been touched in some way by Aretha Franklin. Perhaps the most exciting voice in all of popular music has, of course, influenced all of our shared culture during her career and after. If you're like me, you've never thought of Aretha as a gospel artist, a soul artist, an R&B artist, a rock artist, or even a black artist. She was simply the Queen of Soul and an iconic figure that has made our lives better. But we should also acknowledge that she was another in a long line of black artists that have enhanced our shared cultures. We sometimes think that we are so different from another culture, but we share so much in common. And Aretha lies at that nexus of our shared culture. Let's recognize all we have in common this week, this month, and this year as we work for the better future that we are all hoping for together.

[Amazing Grace - Aretha Franklin \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGN64GwVIRM\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LGN64GwVIRM)

[Respect - Aretha Franklin \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FOUqQt3Kg0\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6FOUqQt3Kg0)

With Love,

-Kevin

March Birthdays and Anniversaries

Happy Birthday to Our Members Who are Turning 80+:

- Donna Ritchie - 3/4
- John Sawyers - 3/12
- Marjorie Frazier - 3/13
- Richard Britton - 3/23

And Happy 50+ Year Anniversary to the Following Members:

- Walter & Doris Cortese – 3/23, 66 yrs.

Born to Eternal Life

Charles Steeber, October 20, 1925–February 20, 2021

Our prayers are with Charles' wife Marion and his many friends, nieces, and nephews.

Girl Scout Cookies

The Girl Scouts will be selling cookies in Cental's parking lot every weekend through mid-March. Stop by and purchase cookies to support your local Girl Scouts. For specifics on the days and times, [visit the Girl Scout cookies sales website](#).