



CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Weekly Newsletter

March 8, 2021

Sunday, March 14th @ 10:30am: Fourth Sunday of Lent. Pastor Jack continues our *Words To the Cross* message series with "A Word of Faith."

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

Remember to change your clocks to "Spring Forward" on Saturday night so you're not late to Sunday worship!

Dear Central Church Family,

Yesterday, during the message, I mentioned that a possible reason for the Roman soldiers to gamble for Jesus' tunic was to break up the horrific and tedious task of overseeing Jesus' crucifixion. In no way am I excusing the brutality of the actual act of four human beings crucifying another human being.

Their words, "Let us not tear it, but cast lots for it to see who will get it." were words of indifference. They were preoccupied with their duties as soldiers and insuring that they divide up the only compensation for doing the task; that meager compensation was the clothing of Jesus.

It's an odd world in which a piece of clothing is valued while the life of another human being is forfeited. We can say that our world—and we—are so different than in Jesus' time, however, if my suggestion that the soldiers who put Jesus to death were in part dealing with their task by being thoughtless and preoccupied, then we might at least have that in common. We get preoccupied and can't take the time to listen to our children who want to tell us a story or share "big news." While sitting at a stop light we lower our eyes so as to not look into the eyes of the homeless person on the corner holding a sign that reads, "Homeless and Hungry." We allow a task to remain undone because it isn't something we like doing; instead, we might do a dozen other lesser tasks and tell ourselves we're so busy.

This is an issue of mindfulness, that is, being fully present and aware at specific times and places in our lives. As followers of Christ, being mindful involves seeking God's guidance, involving God in our daily lives and decision-making.

I'd like to share a story of how mindfulness played a part at a crossroads in my ministry. I was the youth pastor at a church where the Senior Pastor was retiring and a new Senior Pastor had been appointed to the church. The new pastor invited me to a retreat with Parker Palmer, a Quaker activist, spiritual director and author. We were in the middle of a time of silence, as is the Quaker way. In that silence I became aware of the furnace in the basement clicking on and off—it was spring, a difficult time to regulate the heat. When I consciously wondered what God may be saying to me at that moment and through that irritating cycle of the furnace firing up and the blowers turning on, I decided that I needed to reclaim the "fire in my belly and heart!" With this significant change in leadership at the church, I wanted to reclaim my ministry with renewed energy and the hope for growth in that ministry.

What is God saying to you at this time and in the places of your life? If you were mindful—fully present and aware—how might your life be guided by God's Holy Spirit? I invite you to pray about these questions as we enter the second half of Lent. In the meantime stay safe and God bless you.

Because of Christ,
-Pastor Jack

Happy 31st Birthday to Purple Threads!

This vital prayer and study ministry was formed on March 6, 1990 when a small group of women gathered for Bible study. The group grew from that modest beginning; one hundred and three (103) women have participated (there are currently 28 in Purple Threads) and the group has completed 46 studies.

After a few years of study, the group created a prayer list and let those on the list know they were praying for them. The group averages 360 notes a year and in 2020 they sent out 400. Purple Threads meets for two studies a year (except during pandemics) and the prayer list is sent out twice a month all year long. Members of the group have adopted those on the homebound list and regularly send birthday cards, holiday cards and notes throughout the year.

Special thanks to Janice Caldwell for her guidance in forming the group, and to the many teaching leaders over the years, including Sue Shipley, who is still leading the flock!

Blessings,
-Diana Carter

Scholarship Applications Are Available

Scholarships applications for high school, college, and skilled trade students can now be accessed on our church website at [WaterfordCUMC.org/forms/](https://www.waterfordcumc.org/forms/). The application deadline is May 3, 2021. These scholarships help Central Church members reduce the financial burdens of their continued education and are funded by memorial gifts and generous members. If you would like to establish a continuing education scholarship in your name, please contact the church office at info@waterfordcumc.org or (248) 681-0040.

Finding Worship on Sunday Mornings

Please be aware that Facebook has (slightly) changed the location of our Livestream Sunday worship. Worship services can be found under the "Event" menu item in the left-most menu on our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/waterfordcumc/>). Once you get to the Events page,

1. Click on the Sunday worship Event
2. Click on the main graphic; this will take you to the live video
3. Use the comments to say "hi" and let us know you're worshipping

Please note that you won't see the live video until 10:25am, which is when we begin the announcements. You can also continue to access live worship at the "Live" menu option or at <https://www.facebook.com/waterfordcumc/live>, but you will only see the past archived videos until we have begun streaming. And, as always, you can access worship from the Facebook notification (click the bell icon at the top of the screen) once we have begun the live service.

Have You Stopped Getting the Friday Morning Email?

On Friday we send out an email with links to the prayer list, the order of worship and the message notes. We've had reports that a few people have stopped getting this email. It appears that the email is going into their junk/spam folder. If you've stopped receiving this email, check your junk/spam folder, and once you find it make sure to mark it "not junk" so that you get future emails.

Family-Friendly Easter at Home

Is your family looking for a resource to help you prepare for Easter at home? Register to receive a Holy Week Box!

Holy Week remembers the days from Palm Sunday to Easter (March 28-April 4). In the Holy Week Box, families will find a short and very simple daily devotion guide adaptable for families with children from preschool to middle school. Each day, participants will read scripture, affirm a truth, embody a tangible ritual, wonder about the story, and pray. These acts can be done over a meal, as a morning daily ritual, or the final ritual before going to bed each day during Holy Week. The box will also include some small items to serve as symbols of the week. Delivery to families within 15 miles of the church will happen before Palm Sunday. A digital version will be emailed to those outside the delivery radius. [Sign up for your Holy Week Box \(http://bit.ly/holyweekbox21\)](http://bit.ly/holyweekbox21) by March 23.

Lenten Devotionals by Our Bishops

Each week of Lent and every day of Holy Week, a United Methodist Bishop will offer a short devotion. These times of reflection will challenge us to confront the sin of racism, renew our faith, and remember the promise of Easter—that redemption, reconciliation and liberation are possible. If you would like to view these devotionals, please visit <http://bit.ly/bishopdevotionals21>.

Spring Lay Leadership Events (Including a Retreat with Rev. Cora)

The Michigan Conference is offering three events this spring for laypeople (a fancy church word for a non-ordained member of a church) to grow in faith. The final offering on June 11 & 12 is a rest and renewal retreat with Rev. Cora. You can sign up for one or all three events for just \$15. For more information and to register visit: <https://michiganumc.org/laity/laity-events/>.

Blessings in a Backpack

Blessing in a Backpack packs food on every Wednesday at 4pm at Riverside School. It takes about 45 minutes to an hour to pack the food. If you would like to help pack contact Rev. Cora at cglass@waterfordcumc.org.

We are also looking for volunteers on the first Tuesday of each month at 9am for about an hour to take delivery of the food that is distributed to the students. We need eight volunteers to receive the delivery. Consider adding yourself to the delivery volunteer list; you won't need to work each delivery. You'll receive an email about a week before asking if you can help out. To be added to the volunteer delivery list, please email Rachel Pierre at info@waterfordcumc.org.

Thank you for your commitment to this important local ministry!

The Creating a Culture of Calling (C3) Initiative

If you haven't taken a few minutes to complete our Creating a Culture of Calling survey, please do that this week. Surveys need to be complete by Monday, March 15th. Your survey responses will be anonymous. Access the online survey here: https://samford.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_56ghkV305PryL3g. Questions? Please contact Nancy Going ngoing@vibrantfaith.org.

Song of the Week

I hope you are all well and finding the season leading you in growth in the ways that are most meaningful for each of you. Today, I want to remind us all of ways in which we can choose to grow beyond our past decisions by highlighting an author that I love.

Last week was Dr. Seuss' birthday, and I was struck by reading that it was announced that Dr. Seuss Enterprises has chosen to pull six books from sales and publication. The books in question portray minority characters in a racist light, and it was the right decision to pull them from circulation. In a statement from one of their representatives, they write that "These books portray people in ways that are hurtful and wrong. Ceasing sales of these books is only part of our commitment and our broader plan to ensure Dr. Seuss Enterprises' catalog represents and supports all communities and families." Now, if you're like me, you grew up loving Dr. Seuss and probably don't even remember these depictions. Perhaps you even think it's not that big of a deal because it doesn't factor into your memories with these stories. And clearly, the good outweighs the bad, because I have learned so many lessons about inclusion from Dr. Seuss. With crazy characters and inventions, soft spoken heroes like Horton, a champion of the forest in the Lorax, the redemption of the Grinch, or the very poignant lesson of the Sneetches, who were effectively identical but found a way to bully each other because of their stars or no stars, we were taught lessons about acceptance and doing the right thing. But these lessons cannot be separated from the rest of who he is. He also wrote political cartoons with blatantly racist themes. It was a part of who he was, and here he has a lesson to teach us as well. He may not have overcome his prejudice during his lifetime, but Dr. Seuss Enterprises took the time for self-reflection to choose what their legacy would be. The choice to correct our course and admit culpability for past behaviors is a profoundly courageous choice for anyone. They chose to see all of those lessons about kindness, responsibility, inclusivity, and bravery, and live those lessons in their choices.

It is hard when we have a beloved author, musician, artist, friend, or family member whose behaviors are hurtful towards individuals or groups of people. We might instinctively want to defend them or our love of them. I certainly felt a twinge of that in reading about Dr. Seuss. I was a voracious young reader and his were my favorite early books. I could deflect, defend, or bring up how much good he had done, but in the end his behaviors hurt people. And if he couldn't rise above it in his life, I can still take his lessons and use them to rise above it in mine. It takes courage to reflect, correct, and move beyond past behaviors, and this season is exactly the right time for that kind of self-reflection.

[Man in the Mirror - Michael Jackson \(https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PivWY9wn5ps\)](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PivWY9wn5ps)

With Love,
-Kevin

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.

Address Changes

Please note that there is a new address for Daniel Hosler: Canterbury on the Lake, The Meadows Apt. 29, 5601 Hatchery Rd., Waterford, MI 48329.

Last Call to Pick Up Envelopes!

Offering envelopes will be available through Easter Sunday, at which point we will put them in storage. Please pick your envelopes up by then. At this point we have over 60 sets of envelopes that have not been picked up. There is a cost to print these, so if you are giving electronically or otherwise do not need offering envelopes, please contact bookkeeper Sue Newill (snewill@waterfordcumc.org), if you haven't already, and let her know so that we do not need to pay to have envelopes made for you next year. Thank you!

Thank You

Dear Church Family,

Thank you all for the beautiful birthday cards! God has blessed us all.

-Phyllis Liming

Dear Central United Methodist Church,

We rely on donors, volunteers and community partners so much, which is why your donation of \$675 on 2/10/21 is truly appreciated. Thank you for believing in the work we do! It is a privilege to partner with you in bringing our vision to life

Warm Regards,

-Elizabeth Longley, Executive Director, Baldwin Center

Dear Central Church,

Thank you so much for your help with my car payment and groceries. You really came through for me in my time of need.

Love,

-Carrie (recipient of Good Samaritan funds)

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.