



Connecting with God,
Connecting with Others,
Changing Our World With Christ's Love

12.03.23

UPCOMING IN WORSHIP

Sunday, December 3rd. First Sunday of Advent. Pastor Jack's message is *Fully Human, Fully Divine—The Foundation of Hope*. It is also Baby's First Christmas. Worship is in person or online at [Live.WaterfordCUMC.org](https://www.Live.WaterfordCUMC.org)

Dear Friends,

When do you "get into the Christmas Spirit?" That's a strange question that is asked in a variety of ways. We might say, "Have you caught the Christmas Spirit?" as if it is a contagion that is transferred from others. Perhaps you've heard someone say, "The Christmas Spirit just hasn't hit me yet." as if the Spirit is somehow an assault on your inner being. What I am asking you is when do you feel that you are connected to what Christmas is all about?

That last question has changed for me over the seasons of my life. When I was a child the Elks Club had a family gathering on the first or second Saturday in December. My father, who was very proud of being an Elk, would load up the family to go to the lodge to be with other families, eat a yummy meal and meet with Santa to receive the first gift of Christmas. I was always amazed how Santa would know just what to get each child in attendance that day. Then we would go home and that was always the evening when *Rudolph the Red-Nosed Reindeer* was televised (the one with Hermey the Misfit Elf and Yukon Cornelius). What a day!

As a teen, I enjoyed Christmas Eve the most, which was a little late for catching the Christmas Spirit. The Candlelight Service with the choir and singing was always a treat. As I moved into adulthood, I have tried to get into the Christmas Spirit early and often; a particular hymn or Christmas song will usher in that Spirit which lightens my mood and creates within me a joyfulness grounded in the hopes of Christ being born once again into our world and my life.

As I have written before, during Advent we are utilizing the work of Whitney R. Simpson, a Deaconess in the United Methodist Church and founder of Exploring Peace Ministries. Whitney is certified in the area of Spiritual Formation and seeks to help people fulfill their greatest potential. I have prepared some experiential moments during my messages in Advent and it is my plan that these will help our congregation embody a meaningful and deeply felt Spirit of Christmas. Simpson writes, "Embodiment means that we give life to an idea. It requires that we take on that idea and personify it in ourselves. In the context of our faith, embodiment means that we give shape to our thoughts, actions feelings, and intentions through our physical self." (*Fully Human, Fully Divine*, page 17).

It is my prayer that you will "get into the Christmas Spirit" so the ideas of Hope, Peace, Joy and Love will become your thoughts, actions, and intentions as enter this Advent Season of 2023! I look forward to seeing you in worship. May God bless you!

Because of Christ,

Pastor Jack

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Year-End Stewardship Snapshot

By Pastor Jack

In my message on November 17th I shared these words about trusting the market over our maker (or master, to use the words of the parable from which I was sharing the message): “We make that mistake ourselves, don’t we? We fail to trust our God who has given us such amazing talents to use in our personal and congregational lives. So often, we do not appreciate the abilities we have been given to tutor a child, encourage a friend, plan a budget, cook a meal, teach a class, coach a team, mentor a colleague, play an instrument or do a repair for a neighbor. The use of these gifts can enhance our own lives and advance the mission and ministry of Jesus. And that is what we need here are Central United Methodist Church; your talents—and to be clear I’m talking about both definitions of talents for today—both your abilities and your financial resources. For years, we’ve trusted the market here at Central Church and our budget has run on a deficit for decades; we have what was once a very healthy endowment. While I would have to say that it is more than what a lot of churches have in reserves, it is not what it used to be. And the last two years the market has been unkind to us; the market has been unkind to us all.”

People have wondered about the financial future of Central Church and I have three questions to ask our members and friends.

1. Is there a way in which you can give beyond your Generosity Pledge? This giving could be a year-end gift from your Required Mandatory Distribution from an IRA account. Or, could you make a plan in 2024 to gift some of your tax return to Central Church?
2. Is Central Church in your will? As you have made plans for your property and financial resources to go to family and friends and perhaps some organizations that are important to you, have you considered leaving some of those resources to your church?
3. Can you increase your Generosity Pledge for 2024?

I ask these questions not from a perspective of desperation but rather from the perspective that I know that Central Church is near and dear to the hearts of our members and friends. As I said during our Generosity Campaign in October, your giving toward the ministry of Central Church in 2024 means that you believe in the future of Central Church. I do too! I want you to know that our staff is dedicated to that future. I am dedicated to that future. We invite you to join us in our hope and plans for a God-blessed and directed 2024!



PrimeTime
Holiday Melodies
Thursday, December 7
1:00 p.m

Come and listen to songs of the season and join in carol singing. Cookies and Coffee will be available. All are welcome!

Sponsored by PrimeTime (Senior Ministry).

The poster features a string of green stars at the top and a decorative border of red and white flowers and greenery at the bottom.



Advent By Candlelight
Saturday, December 2
2:00pm - 4:00pm

Please sign up in the Narthex to host a table. You can also sign up if you would like to attend and you will be assigned to a table.

The poster features a large gold bow and a decorative border of greenery and red berries at the top.



CHRISTMAS WORSHIP

Blue Christmas
Wed., December 13th, 7:00pm

Family Christmas
Sat., December 23rd, 5:00pm

Christmas Eve
Sun., December 24th
10:30am—Advent Worship
8:00pm—Carols & Candlelight

The poster features a decorative border of yellow and white snowflakes and gold stars.

2024 Men's Summit Coming in February—Let's Get Ready!

For well over a decade our Men's Summit has been a wonderful opportunity for men to gather for the purposes of connecting with each other and God. Our 2024 Men's Summit will be later than previous years, February 16-18. We usually meet at the Summit site, go out for dinner at a local restaurant and then return to the Summit site for an evening of fellowship—movies, games, etc. Saturday morning we begin our study and conclude on Sunday morning.

Ken Cortese and Pastor Jack are working on the program for next year and we will get that information out to you as soon as possible. Some like to purchase the book connected to the program and read it ahead of the retreat weekend. We usually utilize a video-based program and others have found over the years that it is enough to come to the weekend experience and simply enjoy the videos and discussion. Whatever your preference, we will share that program information soon.

Our Summit this year will again be at Skyline Camp & Retreat Center (5650 Sandhill Rd.; Almont, MI 48003). It is about an hour away from Waterford Central and is a beautiful setting for our time together. We will have our own lodge in which to have our program and fellowship time. The cost of the weekend (two nights stay, four meals, breakfast Saturday to breakfast Sunday) is \$130. If you register and pay before the end of this year, you can save \$5 and the price goes down to \$125. What a deal! Plan on being a part of our 2024 Men's Summit!

For more information, contact Ken Cortese or Pastor Jack.

Thursday Evening Advent Study: The Great ADVENTure

November 30—December 21, 6:30 to 7:30pm

It's not too late to join us for this study! You and your family are invited on an adventure around the world; no luggage needed! This is an experiential ADVENTure and fun for the whole family as we discover how Advent is celebrated in different countries.

Holiday Mission and Giving

Clothe-a-Child

Help clothe children from the Waterford school district by making a monetary donation. Make checks payable to the church with "Clothe-a-Child" in the memo.

Food Pantry Reverse Advent Challenge

Pick up a calendar or download it from <https://bit.ly/reverse-advent-23> and collect one item each day in December, then donate them in January to Central's Food Pantry.

Compassionate Christmas Cards

Purchase Christmas cards from November 26th through Sunday, December 17th for a donation of \$5 per card. Donations will go to various Central missions. Cards can be purchased in the Chapel hallway or from the church office.

Sponsor a Student at C. W. Duncan School in Liberia

Did you know that a donation of \$300 will send a student to the C. W. Duncan School in Liberia for an entire year? To sponsor a student in honor of a loved one, mark donations "C. W. Duncan Scholarship." Cards are available in the church office to give your honoree on Christmas morning.

Christmas Wishes for Methodist Children's Home

Once again Central will be donating RaiseRight gift cards so the Cottage parents can purchase gifts. Please give in denominations of \$25 at the RaiseRight table on Sundays, or drop off or mail a donation to the office by December 3rd. Mark checks MCHS on the memo line.

Hats and Mittens/Gloves

Donate a matched set of a hat + mittens/gloves after December 1st to go to Waterford School children through the Clothe-a-Child program (please no scarves).

Advent Mission Project

Central UMC will tithe a portion of our Christmas Offering to local missions The Baldwin Center and Open Door—Waterford.

Invite a Friend to Christmas Worship

Most people visit a church because they were invited, and Christmas is a great time to reach out. So, this Christmas, invite a friend to worship! There are postcards in the Narthex that you can give to friends and family.

Giving Envelopes Are Available

If you requested giving envelopes for 2024 they are available in the Chapel Hallway.

Sympathies

Our deepest sympathies to Marshall and Jan Rice on the passing of Marshall's brother, Frank Warren Rice, Jr., on November 10th, 2023, and also to Frank's niece, Kristi Cornish.

Sympathies also to Rev. Cora Glass on the passing of her mother, Patricia Glass, on November 15th, 2023, and to Mike Glass on the passing of his wife.

Our prayers are with the families.

Thank You

Dear Central Church,

On behalf of Waterford Youth Assistance (WYA), we would like to thank you for being a collection site sponsor for our 4th annual Shoe Drive Fundraiser. We surpassed our goal and collected well over 2,500 pairs! We appreciate your participation in this event; without you, we would not have reached our goal. With your support and contribution we are able to continue our programs offered to the youth and families of our community.

Sincerely,

-WYA Fundraising Committee

Dear Central,

Thank you for opening your doors for our community health screening in your area. It is because of your generosity that Life Line Screening is able to bring these health screenings into your community and for that, we are very appreciative.

We look forward to working together again.

Sincerely,

-Julie Liptak, Health Service Coordinator

Advent & Christmas Events

Advent By Candlelight–Saturday, December 2nd, 2:00-4:00pm

A special afternoon for the women of the church. Host a table and invite friends, or sign up and we will place you at an open table. Sign up in the Narthex or contact Kathy Chao at jkchao@sbcglobal.net.

Baby's First Christmas–Sunday, December 3rd During Worship

A joyous celebration of our new babies.

Jackson Chorale Concert–Saturday, December 9th, 7:00pm

An evening of Christmas Music with the Jackson Chorale. Visit JacksonChorale.org for tickets.

Tuesday Musicale Concert–Tuesday, December 12th, 7:30pm

A free holiday concert by the Tuesday Musicale Chorus and Adele Thomas Bell Ensemble.

Carols & Beer–Friday, December 15th, 6:00pm

Stop by Rustic Leaf Brewing Company (7200 Highland Rd, Waterford Twp, MI 48327) for a festive Christmas carol sing-along.



Congratulations to Central's newest 50-year members (from L.) Don Carter, Diana Carter, Jill Tomyn, and Richard Kuhn Jr.

The next issue of the *Chimes* will be dated December 17th. Please have any articles submitted by Thursday, December 7th.