



UPCOMING IN WORSHIP

Sunday, January 12th. Baptism of Jesus Sunday. Pastor Jack's message is *The Voice of Truth*. Come and remember your baptism. Worship is in person or online at Live.WaterfordCUMC.org

Dear Central Family,

On Sunday, November 17, I offered a Message titled *Disconnected? Disillusioned? Dechurched?* My interest in presenting that message was sparked by an article I read that was based on a book titled *The Great Dechurching*. The subtitle of the book is *Who's Leaving, Why Are They Going, and What Will It Take to Bring Them Back?* Even though I had everything I needed from the book in the article I read, I bought the book to study further this phenomenon that has affected all Christian faith traditions. To quote the book about the second phase of the author's research, "Phase 2 found that no theological tradition, age group, ethnicity, political affiliation, education level, geographical location, or income bracket escaped the dechurching in America." (Page xxiii – Introduction)

At the end of my message on November 17, I mentioned that I'd like to have three sessions in January, February and March that would study this phenomenon a little more deeply. To that end I will stay after church on the third Sunday of each month to have a discussion that will ultimately help our church leadership and me to devise some ideas of how to reach the "dechurched."

The sessions will be:

- January 19 – Who are the Dechurched?
- February 16 – Engaging the Dechurched.
- March 16 – Final Lessons for our Church and Embracing the Dechurched.

We will spend about an hour for each of these sessions and informational handouts will be provided. What I really want from these times together is to elicit your response to the material within the book that I will summarize for attendees. If you would like the book, you can purchase it on Amazon for \$16.69, on Kindle for \$14.99 and currently free to customers of Audible Audiobook.

I am excited for the possibilities of this New Year and I hope you will join me for these conversations for the purpose of reaching others for the Kingdom of God on earth as it is in heaven. In the meantime, I look forward to seeing you in worship!

Because of Christ,

Pastor Jack

Human Relations Sunday: January 19th, 2025

Human Relations Day is a denomination-wide special Sunday set aside to celebrate and raise awareness to further improve human relations by involving congregations in community and youth outreach. This special offering is taken the Sunday before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday (observed). Gifts received for the offering benefit programs such as Community Developers and

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United Methodist Voluntary Services and Youth Offender Rehabilitation Programs. To give, mark your offering "Human Relations Sunday," or select "Special Offerings" at WaterfordCUMC.org or in the Vanco Giving app.

Thursday Study: The 8 TLCs.

January 9–February 27, 11:00–Noon and 6:30–7:30pm

Join Coach Patty for a journey beyond Tender Loving Care and how lifestyle changes can help you achieve health and happiness! All are welcome. This study will be held on Thursday mornings, then repeated on Thursday evenings to accommodate a variety of schedules. For more information, contact Patty Stroup (pstroup@waterfordcumc.org).

2025 Men's Summit Coming Soon

January 31–February 2, 2025

Join us for a great weekend of fellowship and study. We will again be at Skyline Camp & Retreat Center (5650 Sandhill Rd.; Almont, MI 48003). This year our theme is *Stuck – The places we get stuck and the God who sets us free*. This video study by Jennie Allen will help us identify and overcome areas in our lives where we feel we need spiritual guidance and growth. The cost is \$150 and includes housing for 2 nights, 3 meals for Saturday and breakfast Sunday morning. Participants will need to bring their own bedding or sleeping bag, a Bible, a notebook, snacks and beverages to share. Participants should also anticipate the cost of going out for a meal together on Friday night at a local restaurant. It's not too late to sign up and join the men of our church for this great time of fun, food, fellowship and learning!

PrimeTime Trip to Cranbrook

Thursday, January 23rd @ 10:30am

Join us for a day of learning and adventure. We will meet at the church at 10:30am to carpool to Cranbrook. We will spend time at the Institute of Science and/or the Observatory. Admission to the Institute is \$10.50 and to the observatory is \$5, payable to Cranbrook when we arrive. We will enjoy lunch on site; please bring money to purchase lunch from the restaurant. Sign up in the Narthex. For questions, contact Dan Arnold at danieljarnold15@gmail.com.

Hope Shelter Update

Thank you Central Church friends who are dropping items at the Hope Shelter donation box. In November of 2024 we delivered socks, underwear, undershirts, hats and two boxes of hygiene items (soaps, lotions, shampoos, etc.). They were appreciated!

When these items were delivered to Hope Shelter in Pontiac, we learned the current shelter needs include travel-sized toothpaste, earbuds (to listen to music), and ear plugs (foam plugs used to block out sound when sleeping). Also, they can always use men's boxer underwear and men's undershirts in sizes medium to 2X. Please leave the items in the Hope Shelter wood donation box outside of the Chapel at Central Church and they will be delivered to Hope.

Hope Shelter was founded in 1998 in Pontiac as a seasonal warming center following the death of an individual from hypothermia who was not able to access a shelter because he had been drinking. HOPE began providing year-round low-barrier shelter (no sobriety requirement and no background check) in 2014. A second recuperative shelter was opened in 2015. It is a "discharge to home" option from the hospital when an individual is homeless.

Over the years Central Church has supported HOPE Shelter by providing home-cooked meals and donations of clothing and hygiene items. Visit the Hope Shelter website (www.hopeshelters.org) to learn more about the services offered and current needs.



BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE

Richard 'Dick' Lund

August 10, 1935 - December 13, 2024

Member Since June 5, 1977

Thank You

To the Early Explorers Academy on Dixie Highway, who collected food from their families and donated two full carts of food to Central's Food Pantry in December.

To the Members and Friends of Central Church

Thank you for the generous Love Gifts. And thank you so much for being a space and a congregation that fills us with JOY the whole year through!

-The Staff of Central Church and Little Sprouts

Happy Holidays from WYA

As we come to the end of 2024 we would like to wish everyone a happy holiday season and extend our THANKS to those who participated in our events and programs, gave us your time and talents, and donated in support of Waterford Youth Assistance's mission. We hope you will join us again in 2025.

-The Staff of Waterford Youth Assistance

Dear Central Church

Thank you for your donation of Amazon gift cards made on 12/6/24. Your support allows the children and families we serve to rewrite their stories and envision a more peaceful time. Your thoughtful gift directly impacts the many children and families that we serve each year. Because of our amazing community of supporters, last year MCHS was able to serve more individuals than ever before in our 107-year history!

-Kevin Roach, CEO, MCHS Family of Services

Dear Ladies of the Rummage,

Thank you so much for the generous gift of \$500 as well as the donation of clothing, boots, shoes, etc. from your rummage sale. Your gifts support our efforts to help our guests move from homelessness to housed. We appreciate you!

-Brian Wright, Executive Director, and Karen Plants, COO, HOPE Shelters



BORN TO ETERNAL LIFE

Beatrice 'Bea' Blomquist

October 26, 1935 - December 16, 2024

Member Since September 23, 2021

Dear Friends in Mission,

The dear people you helped with your \$4,177 in gifts to UMCOR (\$1,250 to disaster recovery and \$2,927 to scholarships) may never have the opportunity to meet you, but if they did, I am certain their response would be thank you! Together may we continue to reveal the love of God for men, women and children of all ethnic, racial, cultural, and national backgrounds and to demonstrate genuine love for our neighbors.

-Roland Fernandes, General Secretary, UMCOR

Please note that the office will be closed on Monday, January 20th in observance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. The next issue of the *Chimes* will be dated January 26th and will go out on Tuesday, January 21st. Please have any articles submitted by Thursday, January 16th.

Christmas Season at Central

Top: *KidVenture Kids lead the Lord's Prayer during worship on Heritage Sunday.*

Middle: *The Central Boomwhacker Band performs during Family Christmas*

Bottom: *Pastor Jack and Megan and Shawn Riley on Christmas Eve during the dramatic reading of "Simeon's Prayer and Anna's Praises."*

