

Founded 1850



# Central Journal

Informing Members and Friends – Encouraging Fellowship and Spiritual Growth

*A monthly publication of Central United Methodist Church, Lansing, Michigan*

January 2017

**From the Pastor, Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis**

## “And to follow the star wherever it went.”

Happy New Year! As we leave Advent and Christmas, to journey with the wise men to Epiphany, we embark upon another year of faithful discovery, adventure and change. The dawn of a new year makes us more acutely aware that we are pilgrims on a journey, not arrivals at a conclusion. What will happen in this coming year, we can't know. What we can know is, that God is with us in it.

Like the wise men made calculations from studying the star's course and then setting out to follow it, our church has been gathering information, studying with other wise ones to see what course will we set forth to follow where the star of Jesus points us to.

We have already discovered this: ***that building relationships with others is the key to sharing the Good News; that building our capacity to engage others meaningfully before and after our worship is the single most important thing we can focus on, moving forward.*** There are other challenges and steps we will also make, but moving toward others, with a heart for them, with an ability to listen for the ways we can be Christ's love for them and responding, is what God is calling us to be about in 2017.

Following a star, especially the Jesus star, can call us into unfamiliar territory. There will be obstacles, terrain to navigate, we might get lost in a fog of indecision. But the star is still there to guide and direct us, until we come to the place where our Lord meets us; in the middle of where people are

waiting for us to bring the gifts of faith to life.

In 2017, we will look upward toward a star, outward toward others and find the Christ we seek will be where we share love, new friendships and hope in the relationships we build when we are open to receive the people God is calling us to share with. Every relationship is a journey, every person is a gift to know, every heart a room of welcome for Christ and others to meet, all under a God-sent star.

May we follow with joy the light of Christ.

*Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis*



## *Missions* Cathy Amundsen, Chair

### MISSIONS: THANK YOU

**November 27th UM Student Day.** Our own Benjamin Hudy was presented with a Certificate indicating he is a recipient of a UM Scholarship. He is a student at Western Michigan University. This is where part of the UM Student Day offering is used. The total UM Student Day offering on November 27th was \$140.00.

**Giving Tuesday.** This world-wide day is observed the first Tuesday after Thanksgiving. Folks around the world are urged to give to a charity of their choosing. The total received by The UM Board of Missions was \$853,909.78. This was designated for 156 missionaries and 446 UM-related mission projects. Way to go, UMs!

**Special Christmas offering for PET** (Personal Energy Transportation). The total for this offering was \$1500.00. This will pay for the building and shipping of 5 PETs. THANK YOU. Now 5 more children will be able to get up off the ground and be mobile with dignity.

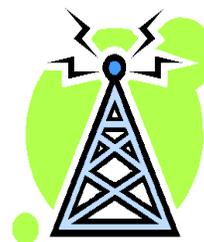
**COMING: January 15, 2017 Human Relations Day offering.** As we observe the world around us today we have a great need to learn how to relate to each other in Jesus' name. This offering supports neighborhood ministries through Community Developers, UM Voluntary Services and work with at-risk youth through the Youth Offender Rehabilitation Program.

**February 5th and 12th.** Plan to buy your Valentines here with the proceeds going to Church World Service for Blankets.

**TEE SHIRT DRESSES.** Bob Pena and Anita Gamble have both worked at an orphanage in Haiti with a group of UM Volunteers. Living there are children who have come from the streets and now are being cared for by Mrs. Eddy. Some folks elsewhere in Michigan have made Tee shirt dresses to send to the girls in the orphanage. I would like to make some dresses to send with them this year. Watch for a display in Fellowship Hall in January. I am using the guidelines from a website Dress A Girl Around the World. If you are interested in sewing (very easy) or contributing to the cost please see me. I am keeping the cost below \$10.00 per dress.

Sponsor a radio broadcast  
Call 485-9477

WJIM-AM  
1240



## Church Directory

**Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis,**  
*Senior Minister*  
**Rev. Bill Amundsen, Ret.,**  
*Minister of Spiritual Formation*  
**Joi Tennant,** *Small Group Coordinator*  
**Leslie Prame** *Director, Children's Education*  
**Caryn Welter,** *Director, Music and Worship, Organist*  
**Alyssa Cossey,**  
*Director, Chancel Choir*  
**Shannon Spasova**  
*Director, Bell Choir*  
**Annalisa Poco, Nathan Hartges,**  
**Cody Harrell, Amy Voorhees-Hall**  
*Chancel Choir Section Leaders*  
**Patricia Mort,**  
*Administrative Secretary*  
**Stephanie Rave,** *Financial Secretary/Bookkeeper*  
**Bruce Newton,** *Facility Manager*  
**Edward Pea, Anthony Moran,**  
**Jeremy Brown,** *Building Attendants*

**Office Phone: (517) 485-9477**

Office Fax: (517) 485-9772

Website: [lansingcentralumc.org](http://lansingcentralumc.org)

Facebook: Lansing Central United Methodist Church *and* Central United Methodist Church: What's Happening

**Sunday Worship – 9:30 AM**

Fellowship Hour – 10:30 AM

Sunday School - All Ages—11:00 AM

**Radio and Television** The worship service is broadcast live at 9:30 AM on WJIM-AM (1240) radio and telecast Tuesday and Thursday at 4 PM on Lansing Comcast Cable channel 16.

The **Central Journal** is published monthly by Central United Methodist Church, 215 North Capitol Avenue, Lansing, MI. 48933

# Worship & Music Notes

Caryn Welter, *Director of Music and Worship*

Many, many thanks to all who in any way contributed to the huge success of the **CHRISTMAS CABARET BENEFIT**. Your superlative efforts grossed \$4,683.25 and, after expenses, allowed us to divide the resulting \$2,275.26 between the Methodist Children's Home and Central UMC's music program. Way to go, Central families and friends!

Your Engaging Worship Team's efforts at piloting the **PRE-SERVICE COFFEE TIME** in the Library have caused these things to happen:

1. People appear to be more energized when they come into worship, allowing them to be more fully engaged at 9:30 a.m.
2. More and more people come into the Library each Sunday.
3. Some people come into the Library just to mingle and connect with others.
4. The Library location of the pre-service event has allowed immediate access to it from both the Capitol Ave. and Ottawa Street entrances.
5. More and more people are availing themselves of coffee, hot chocolate, tea, and cinnamon rolls.
6. The Keurig coffee will appeal to some in our target populations, but appeals to our "own" people, as well, with 33 people gravitating to it on the last Sunday of Advent.
7. When asked, pre-service attendees respond very favorably about the value of the pre-service gatherings.
8. When asked at Connect Card time, congregants respond very favorably about the value of the pre-service gatherings.
9. Some people who were reticent about our piloting the pre-service coffee time in the Library are now themselves participating.
10. Although the project has been primarily implemented by the families of Engaging Worship Team members, it has also involved others.

## **ADVENT BREAKFASTS / SIP 'N' SING**

Sincere thanks go to all who attended, sang and rang, savoring what the fabulous chefs prepared.

These people went above and beyond in providing marvelous breakfasts: Annette and Victor Asbury; Mike Garcia, the Hudy family; Faye and Bill McCracken; Bob Pena, and Gene Welter. We've been asked to evaluate whether the outcome is in keeping with the effort that's expended. Let us know what you think by writing on your Connect Cards.

## **SMALL GROUPS IN MUSIC**

As was stated back in September, the small groups called Spirit Singers and Chancel Choir meet on Thursdays, at 6:30 and 7:30, respectively, beginning again with the Chancel Choir's singing on Sunday, January 8, and both groups' rehearsing on Thursday, January 12. The Central Bell Ringers will begin their next session on Thursday, March 16, at 5:30 p.m. Bell ringing "wannabes" will have an opportunity to meet with Director Shannon Spasova on February 9. ALL are WELCOME. Oftentimes, folks say they wish the choirs were bigger. Guess how we could make that happen!

## **OTHER SPECIAL DATES IN MUSIC / WORSHIP:**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 22, 11:00 A.M. – ENGAGING WORSHIP TEAM MEETS**

**SUNDAY, JANUARY 29, 10:30 A.M. – MUSIC COMMITTEE MEETS**

**SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 12, AT 4:00 P.M. – STEPHANIE GEWIRTZ, PIANIST / ORGANIST, AND JON GEWIRTZ, SAXOPHONIST, WILL BEDAZZLE YOU WITH THEIR SANCTUARY PERFORMANCE**

**WEDNESDAY, MARCH 1, 7:00 P.M. – ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE**

**THURSDAY, APRIL 13, 6:00 P.M. – HOLY THURSDAY / MAUNDY THURSDAY DINNER / SERVICE AT CENTRAL; ST. PAUL'S PARISHIONERS HAVE BEEN INVITED**

**FRIDAY, APRIL 14, 12:30 P.M. – GOOD FRIDAY SERVICE AT CENTRAL**

**SUNDAY, APRIL 16, 9:30 A.M. – EASTER DAY SERVICE**

**SUNDAY, MAY 21, 9:30 A.M. – CELEBRATION OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP**

# Trustees

**Larry Beckon, Chair, Board of Trustees**

*The role of the trustees is to supervise and maintain all the property belonging to the congregation so that the ministries of the congregation can be effective.*

**New Trustees:** Mike Garcia and Linda Towsley are now members of the Board of Trustees.

**Use of Endowment Funds in 2016:** Endowment funds were used for three main purposes in 2016:

\*Support of Central's General Fund which funds Central's ministries and operations

\*Restoration of John Wesley Social Hall (including restoring wood floors, walls, and ceilings as well as entries to the Social Hall)



\*Restoration of Scott Temple House Window (more than 100 windows)



**Planning for 2017:** At the January trustee meeting, the chair and vice-chair for 2017 will be selected. Possible 2017 projects will also be suggested. If you have suggestions for possible projects, please share your suggestions with a trustee – Dick Bates, Howard Sewell, Kathy Prout, Mike Garcia, Gene Welter, Mike MacLaren, Peter Hudy, Linda Towsley, Al Grofvert, or Larry Beckon.

**Local Historic District:** The Lansing City Council's Committee of the Whole approved a resolution to establish the Central United Methodist Church Historic District Study Committee. Penny Zago represents Central on the study committee. Being a historic district is a way of providing legal protection for insuring that the historic exterior of a building is retained. The study committee gathers data, holds a public hearing, writes a report of its findings, and can conclude its work by recommending to the City Council that a new historic district be established. The work of the study committee may take up to six months.

**Damage Repair:** The damage caused by the water entering the Temple House into the loft in late August is now ready for repair. We were not planning to have repairs done until the area that allowed the rain to enter the building was permanently fixed, which has now been done. The next step is to have the damaged loft wood floor restored. It is expected that work will start in January. When the floor has been restored, plaster repair and painting will be done in the loft and in the second floor lounge. The contractors doing the work are the same contractors that did the restoration in the area formerly called the dining room.

**Downspout Replacement:** This important project has now been completed. Damage has occurred inside the building because of the size and location of the previous down-spouts. Using larger downspouts and elbows will allow water to be quickly and safely moved away from the buildings. During the work, Borner found several places where repairs were required. Borner also checked all the heat tapes on the roof (used to melt ice) and replaced the tapes as needed.

**Social Room Furniture:** Funds from memorials will be used to purchase ten round tables and about 40 chairs.

## Joi's Journal

### New Lenten Semester "Life Groups" Sign-up Begins in January

An all-new roster of Life Group opportunities will be offered to Central's members and friends as we enter the New Year. We have had so many positive reports from members and leaders of our 5 fall SIMPLIFY Life Groups. The new semester of Life Groups begins mid-February, and we hope even more people will get on board as our church continues to discover the new life that this vital new initiative brings to our entire congregation. As of this writing we have a nice variety of groups on the way. Some of them are:

- Jerri Gibbs leading a "Caps for Preemies" knitting project group.
- Joi Tennant leading a discussion group based on the book, C.S. Lewis: A Case for Christ, and weekly interviews from the C.S. Lewis Institute. This group will begin in early March.
- Shannon Spasova teaching Beginning Bell-Ringer Basics, just for fun, for ages 10 to 80. No performing! You will have the option of joining the church bell choir at a later time if you are interested.
- Bill McCracken leading a "Great Courses" DVD study, in Bill and Faye's home, "Earth's Changing Climate."
- Rev. Bill Amundsen offering a Friday evening book study -- to be announced -- in Cathy and Bill's home beginning in January.
- Pastor Linda leading a series of film discussions, "God in the Movies" beginning with Downton Abbey. First class will be February 7, 7p.m. at 946 Harrison Rd. Sign up and details will be forwarded to you.

**"Sign-up" for groups begins Sunday, January 8 in Fellowship Hall.** You may indicate your interest in a group, and we will contact you by Feb. 1 to try to accommodate the most people with the best time, date and location that can be arranged, according to the best option for each group leader.

## Children's Education Notes— From Leslie Prame

We begin the New Year and kick off our winter with 'Christian Virtue' Bible Stories. These stories piggy back on our Fruit of the Spirit lessons and include topics of Honesty, Forgiveness, Obedience and Responsibility. These wonderful messages are taught by our dedicated (and creative) teachers: Nancy O'Shea, Estela Hudy, Kathy Hicks, and Leslie Prame. A Heartfelt THANK YOU! to each of them as well as Pastor Linda who delivers such inspired, delightful children's messages each Sunday.  
SPOTLIGHT! ON TEACHERS



### Rainbow Café Opening

The Lansing LGBTQ Christian Alliance will be hosting a Rainbow Café Coffee house on January 18<sup>th</sup> from 6:30 to 8:00 in the Library and Social Hall for fellowship and to hear a report from Alliance member Denny Stoneman on his recent trip to Pittsburg and the National Gay Christian Alliance Meeting. All are welcome at this event. The Alliance is for all people, gay or straight who want to support gay people in their Christian walk and support the dignity of gay people everywhere. This is the second event Central has hosted and has gotten great response. The Alliance is supported by Central, First Presbyterian, Space for Grace, St. Paul's Episcopal and clergy leaders from across the city of Lansing. Be a part of "Reflecting God's grace, building safe bridges to Wholeness" with the Alliance.

*Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis*

## Among Friends

Hannah Boley ~ home  
Tom Kephart ~ home  
JoAnn Klein ~ home  
Harold Leeman, Jr. ~ home  
Lee Ann Stutes ~ home  
Bob and Stephanie Westerfield ~  
Independence Village of Grand Ledge

Under hospice care ~ Beverly Boudreau, Maria Inez Garcia, Bob Myers

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Our family greatly appreciates all you did to make Wilma's service and luncheon so beautiful. We appreciate all the memories (good ones) we were given. Thank you for your continued prayers and support for our family and the good care you take of Howard.

*Sincerely,*  
*The Wilma Sewell Family*  
May God continue to Bless you

++++  
Dear Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis,  
Thank you for your support and solidarity. We are not going to let the actions of few ignorant people divide us. We are treating this as an isolated act of ignorance and are offering education and information to anyone that is seeking it. We are grateful to have wonderful friends in the Greater Lansing community and we will



*Submitted by* **Pat Mort**

Judy Grove Circle meets January 9, at 6pm for a potluck dinner. If you'd like more information, please contact Mary Beth Pifer. Thank you. All are welcome.

The soup and sweets mixes in a jar, made by Judy Grove Circle, brought in \$641 for Central's budget! Thank you to all who helped prepare them and all who bought them.

continue to work towards strengthening the friendships between our faith communities.

Peace and love,  
*Thasin Sardar*  
Outreach Coordinator  
on behalf of Imam Sohail Chaudhry and the members of the Islamic Center

++++  
My Brothers and Sisters in Christ and Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis,

It is with profound joy in your generosity that I give thanks to you. To be in communion with you on this project is what the Lord asks for us all. Jesus said..."whatsoever you do to the least of these you do for me." This Advent as we await the Birth of Jesus will be our manger as we await our sisters and brothers to shelter them and give them a glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven. We'd love to have you "come and see" if you are able to, "The Little House" as you and I get ready to welcome those in need. I'm hearing they will probably not arrive until Mid-December but with your love and kindness we will be ready to welcome and support them in their new life. Rich blessings upon your congregation this Advent Season and for the Joyous Season of the Lord's birth yet to come.

Sincerely in the service of the Lord,  
*Fr. Bill Lugger, Pastor*

St. Casimir Parish

++++  
***From the Library Task Force***

The Library Task Force welcomes Leah Fitch as the new Librarian of the Ralph Goodell Memorial Library.

Leah has been a caring, faithful member of Central's family since 1992. She has been active in many areas in the church's life.

After seventeen years working in the Library with Janet Hamilton, Lois Perkins and Ed Spink, Win Anderson is retiring as librarian. She will be an Emeritus member of the Library Task Force.

With Leah's creative ideas and enthusiasm, the church library will continue on as an important and integral part of Central church's future.

## January

### 1 Sunday ~ Happy New Year

9:30 Worship  
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour

### 2 Monday

*Closed*

### 5 Thursday

6pm Central Youth Basketball  
6:30 Spirit Singers  
7:30 Chancel Choir

### 8 Sunday

9:30 Worship  
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour  
5:30pm Vespers

### 9 Monday

12:30pm Staff  
6 Judy Grove Circle

### 10 Tuesday

5pm Finance

### 11 Wednesday

6pm God Gig

### 12 Thursday

6pm Central Youth Basketball  
6:00 Trustees  
6:30 Spirit Singers  
7:30 Chancel Choir

### 15 Sunday

*Monthly In-gathering for  
South Lansing Food Bank*

9:30 Worship  
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour  
5:30pm Vespers

### 16 Monday ~ MLK Day Observed

*Closed*

### 18 Wedesday

6:30pm Rainbow Café  
Lansing LGBTQ Christian Alliance

### 19 Thursday

6pm Central Youth Basketball  
6:30 Spirit Singers  
7:30 Chancel Choir

### 22 Sunday

9:30am Worship  
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour  
11 Engaging Worship meeting  
5:30pm Vespers Class

### 23 Monday

10am Staff

### 26 Thursday

6pm Central Youth Basketball  
6:30 Spirit Singers  
7:30 Chancel Choir

### 29 Sunday

9:30am Worship  
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour  
5:30pm Vespers

### 30 Monday

10am Staff

## February

### 2 Thursday

6pm Central Youth Basketball  
6:30 Spirit Singers  
7:30 Chancel Choir

### 5 Sunday ~ Holy Communion

9:30am Worship  
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour  
7pm Vespers Class

January 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

The Central Journal is published monthly by Central United Methodist Church, 215 North Capitol Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933. The February issue deadline is Monday, January 23.

Please submit your article to the editor at [farmlw-is@aol.com](mailto:farmlw-is@aol.com) by that date. Thank you.



*The Heart of Christ in the Heart of Lansing*

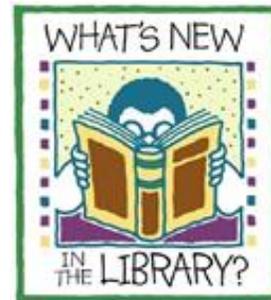
**[lansingcentralumc.org](http://lansingcentralumc.org)**

215 N. Capitol Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933  
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## ***The Boys in the Boat* Book Review**

In my family, we are evenly split with half of us preferring fiction to nonfiction. Though I am normally the one in the family who always has a novel at hand, my favorite book in the past several years is *The Boys in the Boat* by Daniel James Brown, which is the true story of nine Americans and their quest to win the 1936 Olympics in Berlin. During the Depression, a group of young men attending University of Washington are selected for the school's rowing team. All of them are from modest backgrounds—they are sons of farmers, loggers, and shipyard workers. However, they possess a determination and resilience that is representative of a unique work ethic specific to that particular era. No one expected them to beat the elite East Coast rowing teams, but they did. Through sheer will and determination, they were named the U. S. Olympic team and went on to represent us on the world stage.

I know next to nothing about rowing, let alone competitive rowing, but the heart of this wonderful story is getting to know nine young men who were able to stun the country and then the world. What set this



group of unlikely athletes apart was their willingness to endure every challenge they faced and their ability to visualize winning it all. It has been a long time since I have rationed myself to no more than a chapter a night—just to prolong the enjoyment—but I did not want this book to end. Stop by the CUMC library and pick up a copy. You won't be disappointed!

*Catherine Hibbard*