

Founded 1850



Central Journal

Informing Members and Friends – Encouraging Fellowship and Spiritual Growth

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

February 2017

From the Pastor, Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis

What is essential?

What are the things that make us who we are?
What is the one irreducible truth that we stand on?

These are questions we must ask of ourselves as individuals, as a nation, and as the Church of Jesus Christ. The answers to these questions become the blueprint of our decision-making and our destiny. For instance, we make decisions about our careers and living based on our essential understanding of our passions, commitments and goals for our lives. We make decisions about our nation based on the rule of law and the freedom of our democracy, freedom of speech, and equality and justice for all. We make decisions about the future of our life as a nation based on how commonly held those bedrock beliefs are defended. We stand in a time in our nation where these questions are sharpened and these essentials are tested.

As the Church of Jesus Christ, what is essential is love. Love is our standard, the irreducible truth, the way, the reason to be here. What makes us who we are is the commitment to love in Christ's name by doing good to all we can, to reach out beyond ourselves and offer Christ to people that they may know the love of God. The irreducible truth we stand on is "God is with us in Jesus Christ" because God loves us and loves the world.

We have an anthem we sing occasionally called "*We Are Not Alone*." Its lyric by Pepper Choplin reads simply. "We are not alone, we are not alone, we, are not alone, God is with us." It becomes a mantra, a chant that breathes the faith it declares. But for the church of Jesus Christ, there becomes an additional verse, when we, Christ's body, who know God's presence with us; we become a people of God who sing this: "You are not alone, you are

not alone, you are not alone, we are with you!" When we say the people of God are with you. We are with you, Muslims, Hindi. Buddhist, black, white, gay straight, conservative, liberal, Republican, Democrat, politicians, lawyers, journalists, lonely, or loved, we are with you, and, we call you to love this world as God loves this world. To love it back to life. We are with you, world, for your sake because God made and loves you; and we know that for sure because of Jesus. That is the irreducible truth of why we are here, it is what makes us who we are and whose we are. It is the essential thing that sharpens every question and tests every action; it is love. It makes us who we are.

Standing with you in love's irreducible truth; in love's essential action on behalf of others. Amen.

Rev. Linda Farmer-Lewis, and the staff and people of Central United Methodist Church

Scholarship Applications now being received.

New Scholarship application forms are available at the desk for College and Graduate Students wishing to apply. Deadline for application is May 31, 2017 for the 2017-2018 Academic Year. Applications may be dropped off at the front desk. Notifications for recipients will be made by July 1, 2017.

Missions Cathy Amundsen, Chair

THANKS FROM WILLOW SCHOOL - 63 items from the Mitten Tree were delivered to Mr. Rollins at Willow School. It was a cold nasty day and he was so pleased that he would have some warm things to give to the children in need. Many of the mittens and scarves were hand knit. He said "the girls really like to receive a scarf!" So not only are we helping to keep the children warm but adding to their self-esteem as well.

The total for the **HUMAN RELATIONS DAY** offering on January 15 was \$564.00. This will be used in support of community Developers and UM Voluntary Services in their work with at-risk youth.

COMING UP: February 5th and 12th members of the Mission Commission will be selling hand made **VALENTINES** after church. The proceeds from this project go to the Church World Service Blanket Fund. This fund provides warmth, hope and care during cold and trying times. It might be after a natural disaster, or to a local shelter or a refugee camp. When 80 blankets were delivered to a local shelter near Detroit it was seen as a small gesture, but to those who received the blankets it showed that others were thinking about them and gave them hope. When you buy a Valentine and send it to someone you care about, you will bring a smile to their face AND you support this Blanket Program.

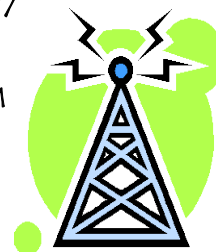
NOISY SUNDAY: February 19

**NOISY SUNDAY
MONEY
HELPS US
HELP OUR
NEIGHBORS
And FRIENDS
IN NEED!**

Now is the time to:
Collect your coins.
Direct your dollars.
Tackle some tens.
Select your silver.
Then....
Bring it all to church
For our **Noisy Offering**
On February 19

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*
Anthony Moran, Jeremy Brown, *Building Attendants*

Office Phone: (517) 485-9477

Office Fax: (517) 485-9772

Website: 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

Send copy to:

farmlewis@aol.com

Linda Farmer, *Editor*

Worship & Music Notes

Caryn Welter, *Director of Music and Worship*

REMEMBER: Stephanie Gewirtz, piano / organ, and Jon Gewirtz, alto and soprano saxophone, will present a fabulous concert in the sanctuary of Central at 4:00 p.m. on **Sunday, February 12, 2017.** This is a class act, for sure. Both instrumentalists are extraordinarily talented, with Stephanie having served as music director for numerous community and professional theater productions, and now serving as organist at Plymouth Congregational Church in Lansing. Jon has a Bachelor's in Music Education and a Master's in Saxophone performance. He is on faculty at LCC, Olivet College, and Hillsdale College, teaching jazz, music appreciation, music theory, and blues history. A reception will follow, provided by Jerrie and Ron Gibbs. We hope to see you!

REMEMBER: Elden Kelly, classical guitarist, singer and songwriter, will perform in Central's sanctuary on **Sunday, March 19, 2017, at 4:00 p.m.** He holds a Master's in Ethnomusicology from MSU and a degree in Contemporary Improvisation from the New England Conservatory of Music. He is a virtuosic and one-of-a-kind artist. Mr. Kelly's TOUCHSTONES provided incredible entertainment for the Christmas Cabaret Benefit in 2015 and 2016, and comments about their music have been rave - always with a call for more! A reception will follow, provided by Diane and Bob Ebersole. Let's show this performer and the community our support for the arts.

JUST A WORD: THE AUDIENCES FOR OUR CONCERTS ARE TYPICALLY COMPRISED OF ONE-HALF COMMUNITY FOLKS AND ONE-HALF CENTRAL PEOPLE. THOSE IN ATTENDANCE ALWAYS REMARK, "I ONLY WISH MORE PEOPLE HAD BEEN HERE. THIS WAS GREAT." *LET'S SEE WHAT WE CAN DO!*

IS THIS ON YOUR CALENDAR? MAY 21 WILL BE THE CELEBRATION OF MUSIC IN WORSHIP, FOLLOWED BY THE MUSIC DEPARTMENT'S ANNUAL SPAGHETTI LUNCH FUNDRAISER, THE BEST LUNCH DEAL IN TOWN!

ENGAGING WORSHIP:

The pre-service coffee time continues to reach more people all the time. As a follow-up to the Leadership Team, Leah Fitch from the Library, and Leslie Prame's (Children's Education Coordinator) meeting with the architect, we await news from him about ways our facility can be made more inviting.

Bell-ringing "wannabes" will meet on Thursday, February 9, with Director Shannon Spasova to get acquainted with the bells and to determine as a group whether / when to continue.

"God Gigs" are now scheduled more regularly, with attendees' gathering at the Sir Pizza in North Town on the second Wednesday of each month. Again, those who go to the gigs seem to really enjoy them.

Lent and Easter – please look forward

FOR LENT AND EASTER:

Wednesday, March 1 – ASH WEDNESDAY
12:00 noon worship, followed by
12:40 soup lunch
7:00 p.m. worship

Thursday, April 13 – HOLY THURSDAY / MAUNDY THURSDAY
6:00 p.m. Holy Thursday dinner and worship, Central UMC. St. Paul's people and choir have been invited.

SUNDAY, APRIL 16 – EASTER SUNDAY!
8:00 a.m. – EASTER BREAKFAST – Egg Casseroles, Breakfast Meat, Pancakes and Juice – Prepared and Presented by the Judy Grove Circle, Sue Kephart and Mike Garcia
9:30 a.m. WORSHIP – Everyone is invited to bring white flowers of their choosing

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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.

STORM DAMAGES

This story starts on the evening and morning of August 15-16, 2016 when the heavy rain of between two to four inches resulted in water entering the 4th floor of the loft in the Temple House. The water set off the smoke and fire alarm system. Water was found in the 4th floor lounge, which also moved to the 3rd and 2nd floors. Many people and organizations were involved in repairing the damage. No repairs could be done inside the building until actions were taken to assure that water would not enter the building again through the roof. As this is being drafted, we are getting near the end of the needed repair work. The damaged wood floor in the north end of the loft has been removed and new flooring installed. Additional work will be done in restoring the entire floor in the loft. Plastering and painting will be done in the ceilings of the loft and in the second floor lounge. Insurance has provided the funds to allow all of the damage to be repaired. It is expected that all of the damage will have been restored within the next few weeks.

In early January of 2017, it was discovered that damage had been done to the wood flooring in the John Wesley Social Hall. Water was under the wood floor and had spread from the south end of the hall to about the middle of the entire room. This is the room that was completely restored last year – walls, ceiling, and floors. Pictures of the restored areas have been shown in issues of the Central Journal. Those who have examined the damage are astounded with the severity of the damage.

The trustees hired a company to examine the damaged areas. The moisture in the floor was measured by instrument (300 is the highest level the instrument measures). In areas near the south end of the hall, measures were 260. Near the middle of the room, the rating was 200. This company used measures to remove water from the room. After

two days, the measures near the south end of the room were 250 and 200 near the middle of the room. Significant amounts of water were accumulated in a large barrel. It appears that water had continued to accumulate in the room. Since then, one company has looked at the floor and has submitted a proposal to deal with water in the room. Several other companies will also be looking at the damage and providing proposals for taking actions that will assure that water will not be entering these areas in the future. At this point in time, we do not know how the water got under the wood floor. It is not clear if any repair costs will be paid by insurance. The flooring that has been damaged may have to be removed and replaced with a new floor. As in many building issues at Central, Swanson Design Studios is playing a major role in helping us understand the problems and finding solutions.

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Worship and Music Notes

in clear vases. Or, you may pay money to the office by Friday, April 7, asking that your flowers be selected by someone else. Then, during the opening hymn, people will take forward their flowers and place them on the chancel steps. In order for flowers to be designated "In Honor Of" or "In Memory Of," the church office needs to be notified in advance, by Friday, April 7. Those who wish to contribute to the Ministry of Kindness are invited to do so, with the same proviso: to be designated "In Honor of" or "In Memory Of," the church office needs to be notified in advance, by Friday, April 7. Those who do not wish to notify the office ahead of time may still bring flowers or contribute to the Ministry of Kindness. Their offerings will be welcome, but just not indicated in the church bulletin.

Joi's Journal

New Lenten Semester "Life Groups" Are Launching in February

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 have already begun in early 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.

Your Valentine

Cupid, the Roman god of desire, liked to shoot people with his arrow causing them to become uncontrollably attracted to the next person they met. Sometimes for fun he would make really bad matches. He was originally a slim young man, but over time, somehow morphed into a chubby winged toddler. During the Middle Ages, he was blended with Christian culture and his association with erotic love was expanded to include friendly and heavenly love. So, where did Saint Valentine enter the story? Actually, there were three of them. One was a priest who married couples against the emperor's wishes. While he was jailed for the offense, he fell in love with his jailer's daughter and signed a farewell note to her, "Your Valentine." (Then they chopped off his head.) Another Saint Valentine was a bishop who was also decapitated. And yet another Saint Valentine was a martyr but not much is known about him.

Then one day... Cupid met the three saints, and they called up Chaucer to invite him over for a drink. To kick the whole thing off, Chaucer wrote a poem about birds picking their mates in February. This was the first mention of the Christian Feast Day of St. Valentine being about romantic love. Note: This did not really happen, except the part about Chaucer's lovebirds poem. There are some theories that St. Valentine's Day was moved to February 14 to replace the pagan fertility festival Lupercalia, which was February 13-15. Men would slaughter animals and dip strips of hide in the blood. Women lined up to be slapped with these strips in hopes it would make them fertile. There was also a matchmaking lottery which lasted for the duration of the festival, or longer if it worked out. 18th century England popularized the tradition of hopeful admirers and lovers giving cards, candy and flowers on St. Valentine's Day, as well as to children to ward off seizures (St. Valentine is the patron saint of epilepsy). Hand-made cards often depicted Cupid, his bow and arrow, and hearts, which we still see today. Valentine's Day... What a confusing mess! Ah, well... Such is love.

Stephanie Hall

Among Friends

Addy Coleson ~ home
Tom Kephart ~ home
JoAnn Klein ~ home
Lee Ann Stutes ~ home
Hannah Boley ~ home
Bob and Stephanie Westerfield ~
Independence Village of Grand Ledge

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

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Prayers

Our prayers and sympathy go out to the family and friends of:

Lorraine Matter, former member, who died in January
Mary Earnestine Bintz, who served Central with her husband Rev. Neil Bintz, who died in January
Cindy Malewitz, who's son Jeremy Pierson, died in January
Joyce Brendahl, who's daughter Kim Farley, died in January

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Submitted by **Pat Mort**

Judy Grove Circle meets February 13, at 6pm for a potluck dinner. We will be continuing planning the Easter Breakfast and working on a service project. If you'd like more information, please contact Pat Mort. Thank you. All are welcome.

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Benjamin's mailing address for his semester abroad:

Oseas Benjamin Hudy-Velasco
C/O IAU College
8, rue de Littera
BP30970
1 3604 Aix-en-Provence
cedex 1, France

If you send him something, packages should have a declared value of less than \$25 and should be marked with "articles usages pour etudiant"

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On January 20, 20 persons gathered in Fellowship Hall for a pot luck following the United Methodist Board of Church and Society initiative called **"Reclaiming the Common Good."** Dialogue centered on 2 questions: What is the common good; and Who in our community are we most concerned about. Engaging, fruitful conversation followed and plans for a follow up meeting and pot luck were scheduled for March 10. The event was sponsored by Central's Church and Society committee.

February

2 Thursday

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

5 Sunday ~ Holy Communion

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

6 Monday

10am Staff

7 Tuesday

6pm Church and Society

9 Thursday

6pm Central Youth Basketball
6? Bell ringer wannabees
6 Trustees
6:30 Spirit Singers
7:30 Chancel Choir

12 Sunday

9:30 Worship
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour
4pm Gewirtz & Gewirtz in Concert
5:30 Vespers

13 Monday

6pm Judy Grove Circle

15 Wednesday

10am Day Trippers Stay-Cation
6pm God Gig

16 Thursday

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

19 Sunday

Monthly In-gathering for South Lansing Food Bank
9:30 Worship
10:30 Fellowship Coffee Hour
5:30pm Vespers

20 Monday

Closed

23 Thursday

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

26 Sunday

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

27 Monday

10am Staff

March

1 Wednesday ~ Ash Wednesday

12pm Chapel Service
12:40pm soup lunch for those who wish to stay
6pm Soup supper
7pm Service

2 Thursday

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

5 Sunday ~ Holy Communion

First Sunday in Lent

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

February 2017						
S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28				

The Central Journal is published monthly by Central United Methodist Church, 215 North Capitol Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933. The March issue deadline is Wednesday, February 22.

Please submit your article to the editor at farmlewis@aol.com by that date. Thank you.



The Heart of Christ in the Heart of Lansing

lansingcentralumc.org

215 N. Capitol Avenue, Lansing, MI 48933
(517)485-9477

In the last Central Journal Win Anderson officially announced her "retirement" from Chairperson of the Library Task Force. During some of those seventeen and a half years, she worked with others to build and care for the library, and during other times, she did the work alone. So, on behalf of the people of CUMC, I want to express sincere gratitude and deep appreciation for her work which has been of a greater magnitude than one might imagine if you have not also been actively involved to realize all that it takes to keep the library in good shape. Win has agreed to be considered Chairperson Emeritus since I know I will need to ask for her expertise and advice. I offered her twice last year's salary, but she knows the answer to two times zero, and her service to the church library had nothing to do with remuneration. My expression of gratitude seems miniscule after more than 17 years, but she thinks she has reached "the age of full retirement."

Several persons have agreed to help with various duties on the Library Task Force, but if another Central member would like to offer their assistance with various tasks, I would be happy to have their participation. All it requires is Central Church membership and an interest in books. Please contact me to see how you could be involved with continuing this great legacy.



The magazine and newspaper subscriptions (all of which were donated last year) have expired. Several persons have contributed their recent issues of magazines. That is greatly appreciated and others are encouraged to do the same. Many members have contributed books in the last several months and we are grateful for those additions to the collection as well. Win processed and catalogued them all so you and I can thank her for that too.

Submitted by Leah Fitch on behalf of the Library Task Force