

june 2020

THE MESSENGER



Central United Methodist Church

CONNECT to God.

CONNECT to others.

CONNECT to the world.

5144 Oak Street
(816)753-1844

| Kansas City, MO 64112
| connectatcentral.com

Sunday Worship @ 10:00am

facebook.com/connectatcentral

A NOTE FROM PASTOR SALLY

Dear Central Friends,

I'm thinking back to the previous three months. The first Sunday in March, I had heard enough about this new virus that was beginning to make its way across the US that we passed the peace by elbow bumps. We served communion by dropping the bread into your hands as you knelt, and we used individual cups for the first time in ages. (In fact, we actually had to scramble to purchase a couple of communion servers that used individual cups, having given ours away long ago.) The following week, we stopped passing the offering plates, and instead provided stations in the sanctuary where you could drop your offering during the service. It was halfway through the third week in March that we realized that we needed to cease holding in-person worship in the sanctuary.

Not too long after that, the President announced that churches ought to be open by Easter, and I confess that I rolled my eyes at that statement. Secretly, however, I hoped we'd be back by Pentecost. Surely, I thought, we'd be done with the pandemic and be able to restart everything once again. With Pentecost being the birthday of the church, I thought it would be a lovely day to finally see each other face to face again.

My, how naïve I was back then.

(You'll see elsewhere in this newsletter an article that details our current thinking about how and when to reopen our sanctuary for in-person worship. The short-hand summary of that article is, "We don't know, but we're going to do all in our capacity to do the right thing at the right time, because that's what we think Jesus wants us to do.")

Now it's three months later. This Sunday is Pentecost, and we won't be sitting together in the sanctuary. There is a part of me that is deeply saddened by that reality. However, there is a part of me that has learned so much about church in these past three months. That part of me rejoices in how Christ has taught us, and continues to teach us, that being his body has very little to do with our physical building. We are learning the truth of that children's song, "The church is not a building, the church is not a steeple, the church is not a resting place, the church is the people!"

On this Pentecost Sunday, we'll be celebrating our birthday as the body of Christ from our own homes. Together, we'll reflect on what the church means to us, and what Central in particular has meant to us in our faith journeys. (Feel free to start thinking about these things, as there will be moments for congregational sharing during the sermon.)

No, we won't be together in the sanctuary for the birthday of the Church. Instead, we'll be in our homes and neighborhoods. We will be every bit as together as if we had been in person, and we will be the church fully and faithfully. Christ has never been contained by any building or tomb, and Christ makes us one even when we are separated from one another.

So, I'll see you Sunday, and together we'll celebrate the birthday of Christ's church!

Blessings,
Sally

UPCOMING SERMON SERIES

“Three Simple Rules”

Living in pandemic times has raised many challenges about how we each should choose to live. Where can we find guidance for these days? The very best of our United Methodist heritage can be summarized in three simple rules, known as our General Rules. The timelessness of the rules demonstrates the very best of our shared heritage as Wesleyans, and they offer wisdom and guidance in these pandemic times. Join us for this sermon series and allow this wisdom to shape your own behavior. You might want to get the small book upon which this sermon series is based, *Three Simple Rules: A Wesleyan Way of Living*, by Rueben Job, available through Amazon and other bookstores. After worship each week, we'll have a Zoom coffee hour to discuss the ways that we've lived (or not) these principles during the previous week.

June 14: “Do No Harm”

June 21: “Do Good”

June 28: “Stay in Love with God”

FINANCIAL UPDATE

Your generosity has gotten us off to a great start for 2020, the importance of which we could not have known at the beginning of the year! Thank you so much for your ongoing support as we continue through these challenging times in 2020.

	AS OF APRIL 30, 2020	Percent of Budget YTD (currently at 33% of year)
INCOME		
Member Support (Pledges and all offerings)	\$171,281	40%
Proceeds from other sources (Building use, quarterly distributions, etc.)	\$84,731	38%
EXPENSE		
Apportionments (District and Conference)	\$6644	8%
All Expenses (Salaries, utilities, program Expense, etc.)	\$204,521	31%
NET INCOME (What we have received vs.	\$51,491	

NOTES FROM OUR CENTRAL/KUOMBA REOPEN FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP TEAM

Our Guiding Principle:

As John Wesley said, “First, do no harm.” We continue to see churches that have resumed worship in their sanctuaries, even some that have followed existing guidelines, and have become sources of new infections. We are in no hurry.

Things We Will Consider:

- Infection rates in our immediate vicinity.
- Congregational survey, to be conducted closer to a potential reopen.
- Experiences of other churches as they resume in-person worship.

What We Will Do Before We Resume in-Person Worship:

- Insure that we can clean and sanitize our worship space and bathrooms adequately.
- Acquire hand sanitizer stations.
- Be able to provide masks for anyone who doesn't bring one.
- Purchase and install cameras, software, etc. to be able to continue quality online worship.
- Create a covenant for those persons who will worship with us in person, making clear the expectations regarding masks, social distancing, etc.
- Communicate those expectations in advance through every avenue possible, including signage at our entrances.
- Have an action plan if someone refuses to abide by our expectations.

What In-Person Worship Will Be Like Initially:

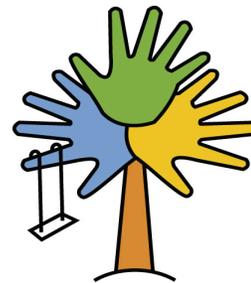
- It is possible that reservations would be required, to assure that we meet occupancy requirements.
- All attendees will wear masks at all times, except for when someone is actively leading worship from the chancel.
- Enter through the back of the sanctuary. Access to other parts of our building will be restricted.
- Be ushered to a pew, at least 3 pews apart. Kuomba will move their sanctuary chairs 6 feet apart.
- No hymns or responsive readings.
- Leave via the front of the sanctuary, ushered out by rows.
- No coffee or conversation in the Connect.
- No nursery or children's programming.
- No small group meetings.
- In-person worship will feel very different, especially in the early days. We will be isolated from one another, and there will be no opportunities for singing or speaking aloud. The online worship experience will continue to be more complete and will include hymns and responsive readings. For a season, we might provide in-person worship on Saturday night, adhering to the above guidelines. The worship team would then be able to compile the in-person worship elements along with the musical elements, to be broadcast on Sunday morning.

Another Important Consideration:

How can we stay connected during this time? Each member of this congregation needs to be attentive to who might be missing and reach out to them. We have begun online sign-ins, with limited success, so we still do not know reliably who is online with us each week. Please help us keep connected!

If you've got questions or comments, email Sally

at Sally@ConnectatCentral or Shari Lawrence at ShariLawrence@outlook.com.



PHASE ONE REOPENING AT CENTRAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

Central Early Childhood Center reopened its doors, so to speak, on May 18, 2020 for the last week of the school year. During phase one of the reopening changes have been made in order to limit exposure and to keep the students and ECC staff safe and healthy. After an abundance of research and advice from others including conversations with the Pastor and CFAB board chair, Maggie Holley, the CECC Directors made the decision to reopen under some new protocols. In place are reduced hours of service to 8:30am to 4:00pm in order to maintain stable groupings that do not require children to merge at the beginning or ending of their day. With these hours cross-over of staff between classes has also been reduced or eliminated. Currently only enrolled children and ECC staff are allowed in the education area and on the playground. Families are greeted at the Connect door and children are assisted to and from their classrooms by ECC teachers or directors. Staff are taking extra precaution; wearing masks and gloves and performing extra cleaning between families. Extra cleaning and sanitizing are also happening during the day throughout classrooms, halls, restrooms and the playground.

The summer program will also see changes in place as we open just 5 classrooms. The first change affected the traditional open house orientation that could not be held due to group size restrictions and the desire to reduce exposure for all. Families were provided the usual written program and classroom information via email. Teachers recorded video orientations for each classroom. Group sizes will be smaller this summer as some families have made the decision to reduce their enrollment or withdraw due to a variety of reasons caused by the COVID-19 pandemic. The usual withdrawal fees for summer were forgiven due to the current unforeseen circumstances. Policies for the school year program remain in effect.



PRIDE AWARD

Central is extremely excited to announce that we are the recipient of The Collaborative Excellence Award 2020, given by LGBTQIA+ Programs and Services at UMKC.

Their annual Pride Awards recognize outstanding individuals on campus and in the community who have sought to better our LGBTQIA community through education, support, programming, or activism. These awards honor those who have contributed to the areas of service and outreach, establishing a safer and more welcoming environment. Specifically, we have been selected for the Collaborative Excellence Award. This award recognizes departments or organizations whose collaborative efforts have resulted in new or improved resources and services for LGBTQIA+ students, faculty, staff or community members.

This award validates that Central UMC is committed to ensuring the church to be inclusive and affirming of all gender and sexual identities. We put up flags and posters to tell the community that the church is on the LGBT+ side and that the community is welcome. We organized a CUMC Community Dinner where students from UMKC were welcomed in the church to discuss LGBT+ concerns, goals and get to know students. We are planning an educational panel with speakers from the trans community, UMKC, PFLAG, and the medical community to help us learn how to be better advocates. Central offers resources for students regardless of their spiritual or religious identities. UMKC says "They truly care about students finding a place where they can be authentically themselves."

Congratulations, Central! Thank you, UMKC! This is a recognition to be proud of. And one to continue working to live up to.



SCHOLARSHIPS AVAILABLE

If you are interested in applying
for a scholarship,
applications are available
on our website.

WELCOME TO OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

We are pleased to announce that Ash Mason has accepted the position of Director of Educational Ministries!

Heyo! My name is Ash!

I'm an old soul stuck in a mid-twenties body who loves coffee, people, outdoorsy adventures, and finding the sketchiest looking restaurants to take my friends to. (They don't like this part of me as much, but whatever. They get somewhat decent tacos out of the deal...usually.)

I graduated with my Bachelor of Arts in Ministry back in 2017. I am in my final semester of my Master of Arts in Pastoral Leadership, of which I will complete in August of 2020 (So just come hug me if you see me crying because GOOD GOLLY THE LAST SEMESTER IS WILD). Shortly after this completion, I'll immediately move into a Master of Arts in Counseling with an emphasis on Clinical Mental Health, which is a competitive and intensive 33-month program. I deeply value any and all education and am well aware this is one of the main ways the Lord helped to move me from an extremely toxic life to a healthy, God-honoring one! This being said, I have the utmost honor to serve as the Director of Educational Ministries here at Central! While we won't have tests to take and essays to write together (unless you're into that), we will seek to walk in stride with the Lord as we see the image of God within self and other, even when they cannot yet see it.

For hobbies I enjoy what's listed in the first paragraph as well as nerding out with Cognitive Neurophysiology studies, Metaphysics and the Holy Trinity, and hanging out with my furry kiddos (Don't even ask for a picture unless you're ready for an album. Just kidding!...Kind of).

All in all, I find it to be a deep joy to love others and am in constant awe whenever I learn about the depth of the heart of God through our youngest worshippers. Know that I'm covering you in prayer, and am "wagging my tail" (haha...dog mom jokes!) for the day that we are able to meet in person!

Grace & peace,

Ash

JUNE BIRTHDAYS



6/2: Laura Wesche; **6/3:** Amanda Wesche; **6/4:** Suzanne Hunt; **6/5:** Pam Cutelli, Mark Muehlberger;

6/6: Tim Bruce, Russell Dugan; **6/10:** Alexis Mayes; **6/11:** Wilmagene Noonan; **6/13:** Ann Leabo;

6/14: Ian Coy, Adam Cutelli, Beverly Lindsey, Christopher Wesche; **6/15:** Marie Green; **6/16:** Maggie Holley,

Jen Snyder; **6/20:** Tim Fonseca; **6/21:** Lawrence Hamel, Daniel Weber; **6/22:** Jim Stevens, Betsy Weigel;

6/24: Isaac Coy, Janis Smith; **6/26:** Brian Petrie

central

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5144 Oak Street
Kansas City, MO 64112
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Sunday Worship @ 10:00am via Facebook Live
facebook.com/connectatcentral

CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST STAFF

Rev. Dr. Sally Haynes | Pastor
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Betty Tracewell | Business Manager
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Donna Brown | Dir. of Early Childhood Center
central_ecc@yahoo.com

Justin McCoy | Director of Music/Organist/Pianist
justin@connectatcentral.com

Sunday Worship @ 10:00am via Facebook Live

Ash Mason | Director of Educational Ministries
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Mark Costanzo | Worship Coordinator
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Erin Case | Admin. Asst./Graphics
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Britney Costanzo | Children & Families
britney@connectatcentral.com

Lisa Wynn | Receptionist