

july 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](http://connectatcentral.com)

**Sunday Worship @ 10:00am**

[facebook.com/connectatcentral](https://facebook.com/connectatcentral)

# A NOTE FROM PASTOR SALLY

Dear Central Friends,

Some days, it feels as if the world is shifting underneath our feet. Our nation's continued failure around racial equality has been brought to the forefront in recent weeks with the painful videos showing the murders of George Floyd and Ahmad Arbery. Most chilling for me is the certainty that, if the video testaments had not existed, the true stories of these men's deaths would have gone untold. How many other deaths have been died in silence, without a video to witness to the facts?

And then there's Amy Cooper, the white woman whose dog was illegally off-leash in Central Park on May 27. When Christian Cooper, a black man, asked her to leash her dog, her response was to tell him that she was going to call the police and tell them that a black man was threatening her life. Once again, video saved the day and possibly a man's life. While Christian stood calmly and filmed her from about 20 feet away, she made her threat to him and then sobbed hysterically into the phone as she spoke to the police. Her fake tears could have gotten him killed.

Only one of those examples involved police malfeasance, but all three of them involved malfeasance on the part of white people. Clearly, the divisions in our nation along race lines run deep. But, what about the rest of us, we who have not murdered someone or called the police on someone because of the color of their skin? Are we part of the problem?

Our studies of the book *White Fragility* are teaching us that to be white in this nation means that we have been privileged as a result of the color of our skin. Even if we haven't done anything actively to harm someone who is black, we have benefitted in countless ways simply because we are white. This understanding is a difficult one, but it's an important starting point to moving forward.

I invite you to join me in considering how we can move forward in a positive way in these days. I am heartened that so many of you have joined in our book studies. It was an honor to stand alongside about 30 of you as we prayed on Troost. Our partnership with Kuumba provides us a concrete way to build relationships across color and culture. Our United Methodist bishops have helped lead the way, including creating a service of lament that is a wonderful use of an hour of your time. You can find it at <https://www.umc.org/en/content/dismantling-racism-service-of-lament>.

There is so much work to do together, and we will not get it done in a month or in a year. One of the challenges of this time is that we have to learn to be satisfied with lack of closure. We will not necessarily see the results of our work together, or be able to say with satisfaction that our work is complete. However, our work is important and worth our time and attention and very best efforts.

So, thank you for joining me in taking some steps along this journey. May Christ use us to bring light and love to the world in whatever way we can.

Blessings,  
Sally

# CENTRAL T-SHIRTS AVAILABLE!

We had such a positive response to the Central T-Shirts that we created for Pray on Troost that we're going to do another printing. Yes, you can get one of these shirts for your very own, and for friends and family members. Shirts are \$12 each and available in sizes from infants to XXXXXXL. To get a shirt, fill out this Google form by July 15:

<https://tinyurl.com/centralshirts>

## Love Thy Neighbor...

**Thy Black Neighbor**

**Thy Brown Neighbor**

**Thy LGBTQIA Neighbor**

**Thy Immigrant Neighbor**

**Thy Disabled Neighbor**

**Thy Anything-Else Neighbor**

**...JUST LOVE**



## 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.

	MAY, 2020	YTD	Percent of Budget YTD (currently at 42% of year)
<b>INCOME</b>			
<b>Member Support</b> (Pledges and all offerings)	\$18,466	\$189,747	44%
<b>Proceeds from other sources</b> (Building use, quarterly distributions, etc.)	\$7,365	\$92,366	42%
<b>EXPENSE</b>			
<b>Apportionments</b> (District and Conference)	\$20,000	\$26,644	31%
<b>All Expenses</b> (Salaries, utilities, program Expense, etc.)	\$49,109	\$253,630	38%
<b>NET INCOME</b> (What we have received vs. What we have spent.)	\$28,484		

# UPDATE ON PLANS TO REOPEN FOR IN-PERSON WORSHIP

The Church Reopening Team met recently. After discussing the continued increase in COVID cases in our area and the number of churches that have reopened and become sources of contagion, the team has decided to reopen for in-person worship no sooner than August. They will meet in mid-July to assess the situation at that point.

Even though we are not meeting together for worship, Central is still open! The high-quality worship you see each week is the result of much energy and enthusiasm from our staff and volunteers. About 30 of us participated in the “Pray on Troost” event. Our White Fragility study has about 40 participants for these weekly sessions. Other small groups have continued to remain in contact. Our ECC is back in session, providing childcare and education for the children of our community. Home Delivery Meals continues to operate out of our building daily, providing food and socialization to homebound persons.

A video/livestream team of Central people is working actively to purchase and install video equipment, to enable us to continue to provide quality online worship once we resume worship in the sanctuary. We are taking this time also to move the sound desk to a more optimal place in the sanctuary. Our reopen team continues to identify what best practices we will implement once we resume in person worship at Central.

Yes, Central is still open, and we are still being the church, even as we are apart from one another.

## NEWS FROM KUOMBA

We rejoice in Mama Riziki having attained her Local Pastor’s License! This license is a result of much hard work on Mama Riziki’s part, including completing challenging coursework in a language that is not her native language. Her perseverance means that she is now licensed to serve communion, perform baptisms, and officiate weddings at Kuomba. Officially, she is now an Associate Pastor of Central, serving as Campus Pastor for our Kuomba site

Pre-COVID, we had planned to have Mama Riziki preach at Central and serve communion to us on July 5, followed by a celebration with our two congregations together. Although we are no longer able to come together as we had hoped, Mama Riziki will still be preaching and co-officiating communion for our July 5 worship.

Kuomba’s leadership, after much prayer and consultation with the Central reopen team, has decided to reopen Kuomba for in-person worship on June 28. They will be following all of the guidelines available, including taking temperatures, moving the chairs apart, having hand sanitizer available, etc. We recognize the different cultural needs of this congregation, including the fact that all of the other African churches in their area have reopened already, and we respect the decision-making of their leadership.

If you’d like to send a note of congratulations to Mama Riziki, you may send it to her in care of Central, 5144 Oak, KCMO, 64112.



## SUMMER AT CENTRAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CENTER

CECC is up and running on a limited scale this summer. It is much quieter at Central than most years. Due to the pandemic, fewer students are enrolled, and some have chosen not to begin attending just yet. As a result, attending students are getting lots of one on one attention. Teachers are intentionally addressing the variety of social/emotional needs children have during this strange time in all our lives. The library's Books-to-Go program has not yet resumed service, so the program directors have purchased some new titles that are specifically targeted to address anxiety, diversity, race, and other current issues. We will continue to look for ways to help us all understand and cope with our current situation.

Staff are also spending extra time sanitizing, cleaning, and reorganizing. The art and recycle closets look amazing right now thanks to Ms. Jerri Taylor. Ms. Pam Cutelli has been working on our large storage room. Some aged and broken items are being purged; others are waiting for repairs. Trina's dad, Clark, remains a valuable resource when a repair needs more expertise than ECC staff can manage.

Led by Maggie Holley, CFAB chair and church member, an action group made up of church members, Pastor Sally and the ECC directors are working on plans to remodel restrooms in the education wing. Tom Holley lent his expertise as a retired architect to create rough drawings. Action group members are contacting local architect firms to start the bid process. The hope is to have the project completed during the first 2 weeks in August when CECC is out of session but in reality, it might have to wait until another break in the schedule.

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## VIRTUAL CHURCH CLEANUP

Do you have some extra quaran-time on your hands? Would some fresh air be good for your soul? Do you own a pair of gardening gloves and aren't afraid to use them? Our church yard needs some TLC, and we are looking for people who would be willing to "adopt" areas of our property. You would come weed/trim/etc. on your own time and at your convenience. Our biggest needs at the moment involve weeding of: the planted circles in the drive by the portico; areas near the west door; and the berms between the parking lot and trolley trail. We could also use some light trimming of tree branches that brush cars parked on the west side of our lot. If you're interested, please email Betty at [Betty@ConnectatCentral.com](mailto:Betty@ConnectatCentral.com).

Although we're not meeting in the sanctuary for worship at the moment, it's important to keep our property cared for and welcoming for our neighbors and those who are using our building. Thank you for helping to keep us looking good!

# CHILDREN & FAMILY NEWS

Our families have been finding unique, fun ways to connect during these times! I've talked with kiddos who have told me about a "drive-in movie" in their backyard with a white sheet and a projector, some have taken on the hobby of writing up-and-coming books, some are learning to bake, and some are trying to train their goldfish. Whatever it is, I'm so glad everyone is finding ways to have fun during this time!

-Ash

**Central is seeking a Sound and Media Ministry Coordinator for 10 hours/week. The full job description can be found on our website. Please contact Sally at [Sally@ConnectatCentral.com](mailto:Sally@ConnectatCentral.com) if you've got any questions.**

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## JULY BIRTHDAYS



**7/4:** Quinlan Cochran; **7/9:** Laura Coy; **7/10:** Jonathan Rand, William Wesche; **7/12:** Greg Cutelli, Amy

Fisher, Lori Beth Hamline; **7/14:** Bill Hubbard; **7/15:** Amanda Philhour, Nathan Wesche; **7/17:** Matt Bryon;

**7/20:** Norma Stevens; **7/23:** Chad Philhour; **7/25:** Allan Fischer, Joseph Okafor, Judy Vickrey;

**7/26:** Christian Cochran, Robert McGuire; **7/30:** Tammy Adams, Paul Cutelli, Lisa Wynn

# central

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5144 Oak Street  
Kansas City, MO 64112  
connectatcentral.com

Sunday Worship @ 10:00am via Facebook Live  
facebook.com/connectatcentral

## CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST STAFF

Rev. Dr. Sally Haynes | Pastor  
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Lisa Wynn | Receptionist

Sunday Worship @ 10:00am via Facebook Live