

august 2020

# THE MESSENGER



Central United Methodist Church

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**CONNECT** to the world.

5144 Oak Street  
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| [connectatcentral.com](http://connectatcentral.com)

**Sunday Worship @ 10:00am**

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# A NOTE FROM PASTOR SALLY

Dear Central Friends,

It seems like there are new things to pray about every day. At Central, there are dear people about whom I care deeply who are facing severe health challenges. Their partners/spouses/caregivers are having to deal with stress that is complicated due to COVID restrictions on visiting. As of this writing, three separate members of our Central family have tested positive for COVID.

Our nation remains divided deeply about race. Four groups at Central have completed studies of *White Fragility*, giving us new ways to speak about and understand racism. We'll be starting another study in August, using the book *How to Be an AntiRacist*, which you'll see described elsewhere in this newsletter. I hope you'll join in this study, even if you didn't participate in an earlier study.

This election season is particularly momentous. There are items of significance on the August ballot, such as Medicaid expansion, and then, of course, the presidential election in November. The lead-up to any presidential election is always fraught with anxiety wearing the garb of anger and hatred, and this year seems particularly so.

How we choose to live together in this pandemic is creating division across the usual lines. For myself, I don't see exactly why one's political party would affect whether or not one is willing to expose oneself or others to a life-threatening virus, but apparently that's the case. People are threatening others with guns about whether or not to wear a mask in a store. Lord, have mercy.

On a positive note, Central has hired two key staff members, Ash Mason and Caitlyn Henson. These young women bring great energy and faith to Central. However, starting a church position during a pandemic brings its own set of challenges.

Yes, there is a lot to pray about these days. I'd like you to take those words seriously today. How is your prayer life? In quarantine, it can be hard to keep up with regular practices, such as exercise and healthy eating. It can also be hard to keep your prayer life going. What if you used this time to focus on your spiritual life? Since you can't go outside, what if you chose to go deeper inside instead?

I'd like to invite you to join me in expanding your prayer life. Would you join me in prayer daily for our church, our community, our nation, and our world? Would you ask God to give the pastor and staff of your church a clear vision of who we are called to be in these days? Would you pray for the people around our church, that God will show us how to reach them with love? Would you pray for our worship ministry, that our online presence will continue to help us reach people who couldn't join us otherwise? Would you pray for wisdom for when we should resume in-person worship? Would you pray for Mama Riziki and our Kuumba ministry?

Would you pray for members of our church community who are going through challenging times? Would you pray for people in our neighborhood and our city, that we will be able to offer them hope during their own challenges? Would you pray for people whose work is essential to the running of our world, from the research scientists and healthcare professionals to the service workers whose low pay does not reflect how essential their work is? Would you pray for the teachers and students and parents who are facing an uncertain school year?

Would you pray for healing and compassion and faith and hope and love?

This type of praying isn't the quick-after-thought-while-you're-brushing-your-teeth type of prayer. I'm asking you to devote time daily to praying specifically for these things. Would you join me in praying this way during the month of August?

As I pray, I'm going to allow the book of Psalms to guide my prayers. I plan to read through the entire book of Psalms in August. That plan would average 5 chapters per day, but some chapters are longer than others. If you'd like to join me in reading the Psalms also, that would be great. Most of all, though, I hope you will pray with me.

What if, as we one day look back on this pandemic time, we remembered how authentic and rich our spiritual life was? Would you join me in making that dream a reality?

On Sunday, August 2, my sermon will be "Why Faith?" I'll share with you some of how my faith has sustained me in different seasons, including this one. My hope is to encourage each one of us to nurture and cling to a faith that is personal and deep, to sustain us in this season and forever.

Praying along with you,  
Sally

# UPCOMING SERMON SERIES

## **August: Four Things that Will Destroy Your Relationships.**

This pandemic era has brought our closest relationships into focus. Quarantine has meant more time together than ever before; for others, quarantine has meant more time apart than ever before. Either way, now more than ever, we need to nurture meaningful relationships as the good gift of God that they are. Join us in worship in August to strengthen your ties with the people you love the most by avoiding these four things that will destroy your relationships:

**August 9:** *Leftovers*

**August 16:** *Expectations*

**August 23:** *Leaving God Out*

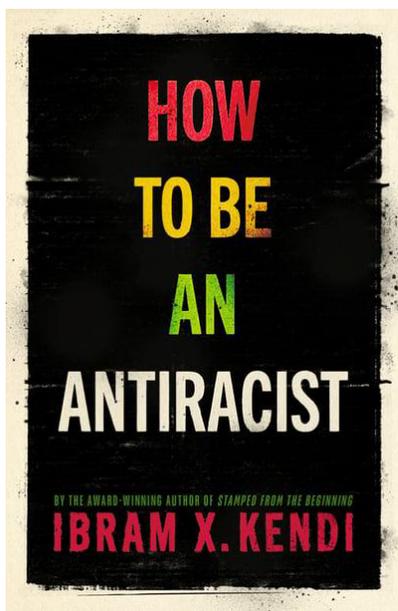
**August 30:** *Failing to Forgive*

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## NEW STUDY STARTING AUGUST 18

*How to Be an Antiracist* is the second book that Bishop Farr has recommended for study, and Central will be beginning a 4-week study of this book beginning on **Tuesday, August 18**. Groups will meet via Zoom at 10 a.m., 4 p.m. or 7 p.m. on Tuesdays, and also at 2 p.m. on Sundays. If you'd like to sign up, email me at [Sally@ConnectatCentral.com](mailto:Sally@ConnectatCentral.com).

You'll hear back from me with more details in early August, but go ahead and purchase the book from whatever source you'd like.



## UPDATE ON RESUMING IN-PERSON WORSHIP

We will not resume in-person worship before Labor Day. Our team has made that decision based on the continued upswing in infection rates in our area. In the meantime, a group of people has been hard at work in the sanctuary, moving the sound desk to the back of the sanctuary and installing cameras for livestream worship. This work is essential to allow us to continue to offer online worship once we're back in the sanctuary.

We will meet next in mid-August to assess the situation and will keep you informed as matters change. Be sure to check out the information about our August 16 Worship on the Lawn.

## CHILDREN & FAMILY NEWS

Our families are rapidly adjusting to new ways of life as they learn of educational developments. I've been so proud as parents and guardians not only lean into these changes, but also seek to reconcile with the overlooked as they recently completed a study of "White Fragility". We are in some strange yet exciting times, and our crazy, intelligent kiddos are leading the way!

Much love,  
Ash

## WORSHIP ON THE LAWN: AUGUST 16

**Mark your calendar for 8:45 a.m. on Sunday, August 16.** We're going to have worship on the south lawn of the church! We are asking everyone to wear masks and bring your own chairs to create generous space between family groups. Members of our Leadership Team will be available to remind people about masks and distancing. Please note the earlier worship time, intended to help us avoid the heat of the day. **Our online worship will occur at 10 a.m. on that day and permanently into the future, even after resumption of in-person worship.**

## SYMPATHY

The sympathy of Central UMC is given to the family and friends of Bea Kamp, whose funeral was July 11, 2020. Bea and her husband Bill were long-time members of Central and the Mather Class.

## MISSIONS ARE STILL HAPPENING AT CENTRAL

Hello to everyone! Our small but mighty kitchen crew whipped up 72 servings of chicken pasta salad and accompanying green salad yesterday. Huge thanks to Lori Beth, Warren, Marie and Leslie. Cooking is easy, but packaging up meals is a lot of work.

Also thanks to Deborah and Warren for supplying LOTS of chopping veggies, and to Isabelle, Kevin, Leslie and David for providing the chips, bananas and water. Only a great team effort can keep this ministry going in these strange times.

We will get a little break in August. Several of us will be away or busy, so I will see if I can arrange for Sarah Berlin's Great Harvest Bakery to prepare sandwiches, and have someone from the Woo Crew pick them up. They can take care of the extras for a month. And in September? Who the heck knows. But we'll think of something.

-Barb Shelley

## WELCOME OUR NEWEST STAFF MEMBER

We are pleased to welcome Caitlyn Henson to the staff of Central UMC. Caitlyn is our new Sound and Media Ministry Coordinator. She comes to us with a great deal of soundboard and media experience at Nazarene churches in the area. She is a music performance major at Mid-America Nazarene University. She loves playing jazz drums and piano. You'll see her at the sound desk at the back of the sanctuary once we're back together for worship. In the meantime, she'll be hard at work behind the scenes, making sure that our online worship helps you connect with God in meaningful ways.

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## AUGUST BIRTHDAYS



**8/1:** Scott Leigh, Doug Sell, David Weigel; **8/3:** Dustin Cooper; **8/4:** Russell Bradley, Maryann Williams;

**8/7:** Josephine Lenger; **8/8:** Terry Moore, Matthew Warriner; **8/9:** Erin Case; **8/11:** Grant Andersen,

William Lemon; **8/12:** Janice Chronister; **8/14:** Hilary Lemon; **8/15:** Roger Hunt, Montell Justice;

**8/17:** MaryKay Brooks, Diane Hunter; **8/18:** Milton Adams, Rik Bellmer, Clark Glass; **8/20:** Galen Wienstroer;

**8/21:** Brandon Cummins; **8/22:** Barbara Warriner; **8/24:** Suzann Chester; **8/25:** Avery Mayes;

**8/26:** Larry Taft; **8/29:** Jacquelyn Clevenger; **8/31:** Emily Taft

# central

UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

5144 Oak Street  
Kansas City, MO 64112  
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Sunday Worship @ 10:00am via Facebook Live  
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## CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST STAFF

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Sunday Worship @ 10:00am via Facebook Live