

april 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,

“Look for the helpers.” These wise words from Mr. Rogers are being circulated widely on social media, offering us comfort and encouragement in these days of pandemic. I’d like to expand on his words, for the Central UMC version. Will you join me in looking at these helpers?

First of all, the amazing Betty Tracewell has done an outstanding job in keeping our church running, and has been even more invaluable in this season of shutting down. With all of the various groups that use our building throughout each week, it takes a lot of work to call things off. She has maintained great contacts with these groups, including a now-rescheduled wedding or two. She’s also the point person in helping us find ways to economize while our building is shuttered. She has come in when she is needed, and she’s even worked to get an exterior, locking mailbox installed so that she can stay away. Kudos to Betty!

A fantastic group of people has been working hard to create online worship in various forms at extremely short notice. Mark Costanzo has spent hours pulling together the tech we’ve needed. Justin McCoy has sung and played songs that have touched our hearts. As we move to worship produced in our homes, we are doubly blessed that Justin has a home studio that we’ll all be enjoying. Jessica Bryon has moderated our Facebook Live comment section. Gary Wesche has brought creativity, stage direction, a wonderful voice for reading, and, of course, Walter. Gary and Walter continue to reach out to the church and community with daily book readings. In coming weeks, Cindy Petrie will be joining in our worship team as she coordinates the in-home media platform.

Our children’s ministry has morphed into something new, and Britney Costanzo has created a Facebook presence that reaches out to our kids regularly. And, again, don’t forget about Walter and Gary as they read

books on Facebook Live. Larri Robinson is working on coordinating our new penpal outreach program, since her regularly scheduled job responsibilities are on hold during the pandemic. Erin Case is working remotely to keep our website current, along with producing the newsletter you’re reading right now.

Shari Lawrence and the entire Leadership Team are doing an outstanding job of responding to issues as they arise. They have been and will continue to meet more often than usual via Zoom, to decisions that affect the ongoing functioning of Central.

Yes, keep looking for the helpers. We are blessed with so many different helpers at Central, and each one of you is crucial in these days. You bring skill sets that we may not have known that we needed before, such as Cindy Wienstroer and her lovely homemade fabric facemasks. You’re bringing ideas on how we can keep connected in this disconnected, isolating time. You’re reaching out to one another, especially those who are particularly at-risk. You are being the church in all of the very best ways that Jesus talked about.

We’ll work and pray our way through our current situation together, as Central always has done. And with our long history, Central knows a thing or two about weathering crises. Civil war, flu pandemic, two world wars, two different devastating fires, and on. . . Through all of these different catastrophes, Central continued to love Christ, love the world, and love each other through it all.

And that’s exactly what we’re going to do now.
Blessings,
Sally

PS: If you’ve got any prayer concerns or would like to contact me, feel free to email me at Sally@ConnectatCentral.com.

UPCOMING SERMON SERIES

“Three Simple Rules”

The very best of our United Methodist heritage can be summarized in three simple rules. In preparation for General Conference 2020, we'll examine these rules to reclaim God's good gifts to us. No matter what happens going forward, we'll be ready to proclaim the power of these principles that belong to us all.

April 19: “Do No Harm”

April 26: “Do Good”

FINANCIAL UPDATE

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

	AS OF FEBRUARY 29, 2020	Percent of Budget YTD (currently at 17% of year)
INCOME		
Member Support (Pledges and all offerings)	\$106,558	25%
Proceeds from other sources (Building use, quarterly distributions, etc.)	\$38,594	24%
EXPENSE		
Apportionments (District and Conference)	\$6,644	8%
All Expenses (Salaries, utilities, program Expense, etc.)	\$105,740	16%
NET INCOME (What we have received vs. What we have spent.)	\$39,412	

THE CHURCH HAS LEFT THE BUILDING

Like Elvis, Central has left the building for the time being. We'll be leading worship from our separate homes, and you'll be able to join in via Facebook Live, as you have been doing. If you're not on Facebook, you can access worship on our website afterwards.

Even if you're Facebook-averse, you might consider joining for the duration. On our church page (Central UMC-KCMO), you'll find our worship services live and after. You'll find Sally's daily meditations at 10:28 a.m. each morning. You'll find Gary and Walter's book readings. Our page "likes" have been increasing, which is helping us reach a broader audience.

One of the gifts of this uncertain season is the opportunity to reach folks who might not ever enter a church building. By having so much content easily-accessible online, we're able to be visible to more people. If you see a service, devotional, or children's book that touches your heart, you might consider sharing it on your own Facebook page, so that your friends might enjoy it too.

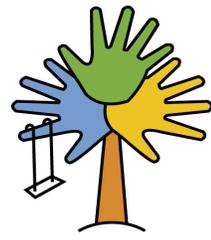
HOLY WEEK AND EASTER

Although we will not be worshipping together in person, plans are underway already for creating meaningful online worship services for Holy Week and Easter. You'll be hearing more via Facebook, but here are a few details:

Palm Sunday, April 5, 10 a.m.: We will be sharing in Holy Communion. Please prepare by having some bread (or crackers or cookies or whatever you have) and some grape juice (or wine or apple juice or Coke or whatever you have). Christ is the one who makes it holy, and Christ can work with anything.

Maundy Thursday, April 9, 6:30 p.m.: If you'd like to be one of the readers (from your own home), please email Sally, Sally@ConnectatCentral.com.

Easter Sunday, April 12, 10 a.m.: Just because we're not together in person doesn't mean that Easter is cancelled! Justin is working to insure that you'll be able to hear the Easter classics from our pipe organ in the sanctuary. We've got a few creative ideas bubbling around, depending on the state of things between now and then. Be sure to watch your Central email and/or our Facebook page for the latest updates to our worship plans. See you (virtually) for these powerful services!



CENTRAL EARLY CHILDHOOD CLOSED FOR NOW

As of Friday, March 20th, CECC responded to the COVID-19 outbreak by closing our program. Over the previous week, attendance had dropped dramatically, and for the safety of the children, families and staff, the directors decided to close until at least April 3rd. However, with the new Stay-In-Place order by Mayor Lucas, that date will most likely be extended. Upon notice to the families, we received overwhelming support of this decision and encouragement to continue to charge tuition so that our staff can receive pay during this closure. Quickly the CECC teachers pulled together to make plans to create two Facebook private groups, one for the PreK classes and a second for the Infant/Toddler rooms. Teachers will use these groups to stay connected to children and families, as well as provide resources, lessons and videos. In the short time these groups have been live, many teachers (as well as both directors) have posted greetings to students, videos reading stories, singing songs and demonstrating activities children and families can try at home. Although this is a new realm for all of us, our staff have really stepped up to the challenge to make the best of the situation. We wish everyone the very best, stay safe, stay healthy and take care!

APRIL BIRTHDAYS



4/1: Clark Achelpohl, Lynn Jameson, Candy Macy; **4/6:** Judy Hunt; **4/14:** Bert Bates, Hallie Dugan;

4/16: Nicholas Hickam; **4/17:** Avery Bryon; **4/18:** Amanda Mayes, Karen Uhlenhuth;

4/19: Jennifer Cummins; **4/23:** Connie Hubbard; **4/24:** Brian Berlin; **4/25:** Viola Pherigo;

4/26: Bob Gamer, Hannah Taft; **4/27:** Ben Costanzo; **4/28:** Anna Sell; **4/29:** Vivian Gilbreth