

THE CENTRALITE

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Join us for Worship at the Garden
in Springfield, Sundays at 11am,
June 21st – September 27th.
(Photo taken on a summer evening)

Central's Mission

Central Lutheran Church, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Oregon Synod, is a Reconciling in Christ community: We affirm that Christ has made us one body with many members, all sharing in God's wondrous grace and unconditional love.

We celebrate both the human variation and inclusive unity of God's family. Following Jesus' example, we embrace all of God's people regardless of ethnicity, physical and mental abilities, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, gender expression, economic circumstance, and we firmly commit to racial equity.

With welcoming hearts, we invite you to join us in worship, education, fellowship, and service. Our mission is to be the hands and feet of Jesus by loving God and one another, nurturing faithful living, serving those in need, and sharing the Gospel.

Central Lutheran Staff

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“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens...” (Ecclesiastes 3.1)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

The writer of Ecclesiastes wisely knew there is indeed a time and a season for everything... And I suspect those of us who have more seasons behind us than ahead of us also know that truth.

Yet, let me remind you, it is also most certainly true that in all times and in every season, we are called to be the hands and feet of Jesus by: loving God and one another; nurturing faithful living, serving those in need, and sharing the gospel. While our Chorale & Handbell Ensemble and our Children’s Choir & Junior Cantors are on hiatus for the summer, and while many of our programs are on break until September, there is still much happening in our faith community. The pages that follow highlight some of the activity of God in our midst. Some events have already happened, others are ones we look forward to, but through each and every season, our God is present with us—in the waters of baptism, in bread and wine, in worship, in fellowship, in service, and in our learning and growing into the people God intends us to be, both individually and as a community rooted in Christ’s resurrection promise.

So, by all means, enjoy a summer of rest, renewal, and recreation, and join us in giving thanks and praise to God, the Creator of all.

In Christ’s Abiding Love,

Pastor Laurie

Central Lutheran Church News

At the semi-annual meeting on June 14, 2026, Terie Hansen Gillis and Todd Shorack were elected to a second 3-year term, along with newly elected first term council members, Stephen Keese and Becky Shurson. We also offered thanks and praise to God for the gifts of Sue Kilber, our only outgoing church council member. On June 17, the church council elected the following members to serve as officers:

President: Todd Shorack
Vice Pres: Debbie Knebel
Secretary: Dan Buckwalter
Treasurer: Brent Moeller

Members at large:

Jean Clancey
Terie Hansen Gillis
Matt Hougland
Howard Kallinen
Stephen Keese
Becky Shurson
Chuck Swensen

In addition, at the semi-annual meeting, the following people were elected to serve on next year's nominating committee: Lisa Berg, Jean Clancey, Debbie Darst, Chris Henry, Michael King, and Larry Sutton. Also elected were the delegates to the 2027 Oregon Synod Assembly. They are: Alex Hougland (youth rep); Sue Mathisen; Karie Shorack; and George Steene.

Finally, a word of thanks to the 2026 Nominating Committee for their diligent work: Ben Brown, Arlene Dietz, Jeanne Savage, Becky Surmon, and Gary Wolfe. (Due to the death of her father, Dawn Susuico, was unable to serve.)

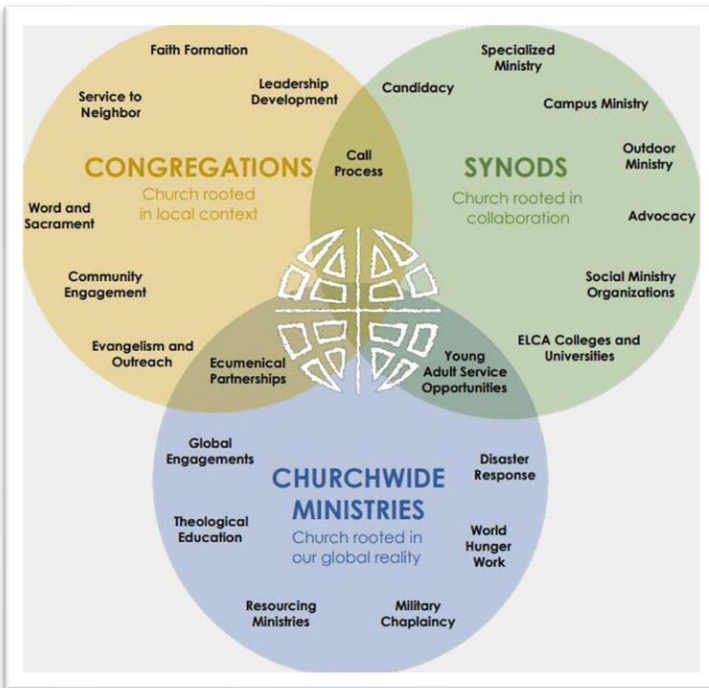
Celebrating our Ministries

Christ is alive and active among us! In this section of the Centralite we highlight different ministries at Central and a few of the ways we are seeking to live into our mission of being Christ's hands and feet in the world.

Opportunities to participate in our various ministry endeavors abound as we celebrate both longstanding and newer ministries that continue to spread the Good News of Christ's love to one another, the community, and the world.

Oregon Synod Assembly & Worship Recap

Brought to you by your delegates: Betsy Berg, Drew Haugen, & Pr. Laurie



This year's Oregon Synod Assembly was held on Saturday, May 30th via Zoom. The morning began with a meeting to adopt the Synod Mission Spending Plan (budget) for fiscal year February 1, 2027 – January 31, 2028. Once again Central's Campus Ministry outreach, along with Campus Ministry at OSU are designated to receive \$20,000 each in mission support. In addition, Central member, Becky Shurson completed her 2nd and final 3-year term on Synod Council (way to go, Becky!) and our newly elected representative

for the Emerald Cluster is Grace Weidemaier from Emmaus. The meeting concluded with Synod-wide Worship and celebration of the Eucharist with Bishop Laurie Larson Caesar preaching. (The diagram above shows how ELCA congregations, synods, and churchwide ministries intersect to do God's work together in mission.)

Holden Evening Prayer Around the World celebrated in April



Emmaus Lutheran Church hosted Central, United and Emmaus, for the *Holden Evening Prayer Around the World* on April 29th. HEP Around the World is a global celebration of the 40th anniversary of the beloved Lutheran vespers (evening) service, inviting communities everywhere to sing and pray together. The service is available to [watch on YouTube](#).

Holden Evening Prayer, composed by Marty Haugen during a 1985–1986 musical residency at Holden Village, is a simple Lutheran vespers service that blends traditional liturgical form with contemporary and inclusive language. The service intentionally honors twilight, dusk, night, and darkness as sources of blessing and renewal, weaving themes of creation, justice, and the holiness of all bodies. It has become a cherished worship practice across congregations, campus ministries, small groups, and households worldwide.

Together Tuesday Wraps up at Hendricks Park



Over forty Central members gathered together on Tuesday June 9th for one last Together Tuesday of the 2025-26 program year. Since University Park is closed for renovations, we held a potluck picnic at the main shelter at Hendricks Park. With a beautiful evening, tasty dishes shared, and lots of outdoor space for the children's choir to run around—we'd have to say it was a successful end to this program year! Stay tuned for Together Tuesday's return date in Sept.

Can you count how many kids are climbing in this tree at Hendricks Park?!

Central Children & Youth off to Camp Lutherwood this summer:

Louisa Barrett
Trinity Carmichael
Alex Hougland
Evelyn Neckels

Greyson Neckels
Piper Neubert
Sam Rodgers
Arya Saks

Signe Smith
Emma Stalie
C.J. Strietelmeier

CUE Youth Updates

New Youth Room!

Central youth are so excited to have their own space once again (located upstairs in the education wing)! Thank you to the following families for responding to the request and donating gently used couches. Donors: Jeanne & Kent Henriksen, Stephanie & Paul Riess, Jason Dietz, and Ron & Genie Fast.



Summer Service Trip to Appalachia

Our CUE Youth Group will be going on a summer service trip to Lee County, Virginia and partnering with the Appalachia Service Project to help provide safe and dry homes for the community. The trip will be July 5th-11th and 6 teens and 2 adults will be embarking on this wonderful travel opportunity. A recap of the trip will be included in the Fall Centralite!

If you know a teen who is interested in joining our youth group activities, please let CUE Youth Minister Crystal Miller know. Plus, we can also always use adult volunteers, so let Crystal know if you would be open to being on a volunteer list for future youth group activities.

GOD'S GREAT CIRCUS: A Place For All CUE Vacation Bible School was enjoyed by all!



VBS took place at Central the week of June 22-26, with classes for students aged 3-years through 5th grade, with lots of volunteer support from middle-high school youth and adults from Central, United, and Emmaus.



Crystal emphasized the theme and key bible verse at closing worship each day before sending the children on their way to share God's radical love and grace.



Pictures from left to right: Storytime in the Library; Singing in the Gathering Room; Closing worship in the Gathering Room; Enjoying snacks in the Courtyard—so much fun!



Music Updates

Recap of Spring's Pocket Concert with Jack McGaughey and Sam Rodgers

By Sam's dad and Chorale tenor Steve Rodgers

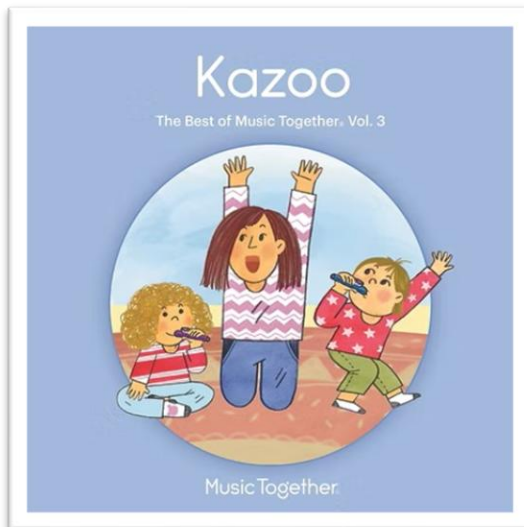


On May 12, Jack McGaughey and Sam Rodgers teamed up for a bird-themed Pocket Concert (along with Victor Lawton II on clarinet and Maiken Schmidt Van Acker on bass clarinet). Jack—who just graduated with a master's degree in music composition from

the UO (congrats Jack!)—had written three pieces for clarinet and bass clarinet, each one inspired by a local bird: the Western Grebe, the California Scrub-jay, and the Great Blue Heron. Jack had the idea of teaming up with 13-year-old Sam, who hosts a bird podcast called “Bird of the Day.” The result was “Bird of the Day LIVE!” Sam shared fun facts about each of these birds—their distinctive appearance, sounds, behaviors, habitats, and more. (According to Sam, you haven't fully lived until you've seen a pair of Western Grebes do a “rushing ceremony,” a courtship dance where they skip across the water like synchronized swimmers.) After hearing about each bird, the audience got to hear live performances of Jack's pieces: The Grebe's Waltz, The Scrub-jay Swing, and the Heron's Lament. The result was a multimedia treat for bird lovers of all kinds. Here's hoping this is the first of many Jack and Sam collaborations!

Music Together program for young children hosted at Central

Did you know that Central has been the host site for Music Together® for several years? MT is an early childhood music and movement program for children ages 0-5. There are four-five classes of 10-week terms throughout the year, and the summer term is just around the corner, beginning July 14th. If you are a parent, grandparent or caregiver for a little one and would like to experience Music Together – visit the website at www.musictogethereugene.com for registration information. (Children must be accompanied by an adult.)



Thank you note from Friends In Service to Humanity (FISH)

Dear Central Lutheran,

Thank you so much for your amazing, ongoing support of FISH. As you can imagine we have been busy. We have provided 19% more meals so far this year compared to 2025. And, food prices continue to rise.

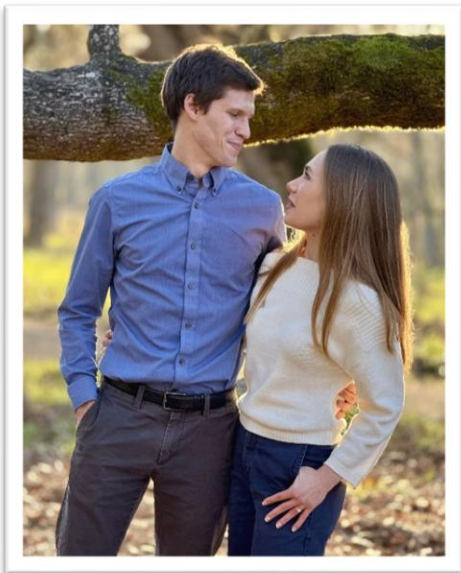
Thanks to our faithful supporters such as you and our tireless volunteers, we are able to continue assisting those in need. Thank you. Del, Coordinator

Celebrating our Members & Friends

This section of the Centralite celebrates accomplishments in the life of members and friends of Central. Do you have something you would like to celebrate in the next issue of the Centralite? If so, you can submit it to the church office.

Congratulations!

Lin Bruce & Mike Henry were married in Central's chapel on June 17th with Pastor Laurie officiating. Their witnesses were Betsy & Mike Kelm. Some of you may remember Lin and her sister Betsy were long-time Central members, along with their mother, Marty Madden, who died in 2019.

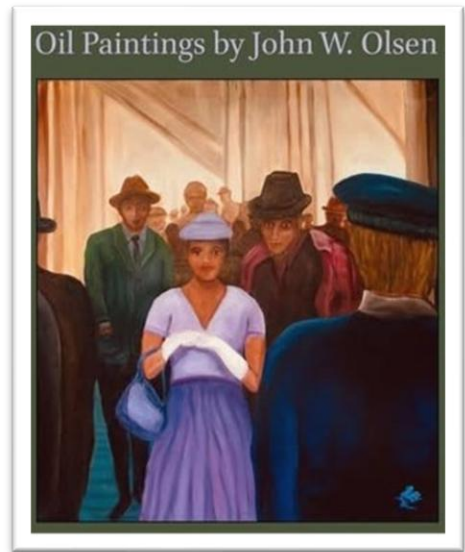


Congratulations Mr. & Mrs. Anna & Jerik Embleton

Anna & Jerik were united in marriage at Central on Saturday, June 27th at 3pm with a cake reception following the ceremony. Jerik is the son of Linnea & Dave Embleton and grandson of Carol & Roger Welch. Anna is the daughter of Stan & Michelle Mercer of Creswell.

John Olsen paintings for view at Oregon Wine Lab

"Artistic Endeavors" an Art Exhibition by CLC and Chorale member, John Olsen, will showcase his oil paintings in the Oregon Wine Lab throughout June and July. One of John's oil paintings is beautifully hanging in the Narthex of the church. Check it out!



Anders Smith qualified for Middle School State Track meet

Anders Smith, one of Central's confirmation students, qualified to run the 100m hurdles at the Oregon Middle School State track meet in Corvallis on May 15th. Even with a strong headwind, Anders improved his standing by moving up 14 places to a 25th place finish. Way to go, Anders! Next stop: South Eugene High School.

CLC Foundation supports Soaring Spirits Therapeutic Equestrian Center

Pictured on horseback is Central Member John Rodgers, son of David and Mary Ellen. John is a beneficiary of Central Foundation's financial support to Soaring Spirit Therapeutic Equestrian Center. Soaring Spirit is an equine-assisted services organization based in Oregon, offering therapeutic riding and horse-centered programs designed to support individuals with physical, cognitive, and emotional challenges.



Shout out to Howard Kallinen who continues to shine a light!

Long-time Central member Howard Kallinen, who serves on Church Council, the Property Committee, and Central's Maintenance crew, fulfills another important duty in shining the copper baptismal font until it gleams!

Greetings from the Itchoaks at Kigiqtaq

by Roben Itchoak, mom to Kenny, Aisonna, Qunuyuk and JosLynne, and wife to Irv, former members of Central



Hello from Kigiqtaq, Shishmaref, Alaska. It is hard to believe we are ending our 7th school year here! Irv and I left Eugene around June 15, 2019, with two kids, and arrived here August 1st to start an entirely different life with four kids. We are blessed! I have been teaching high

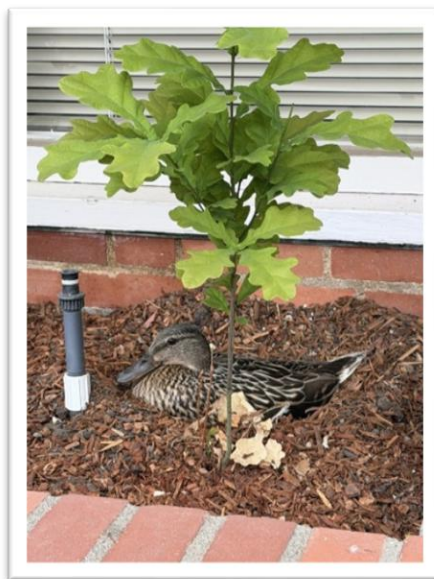
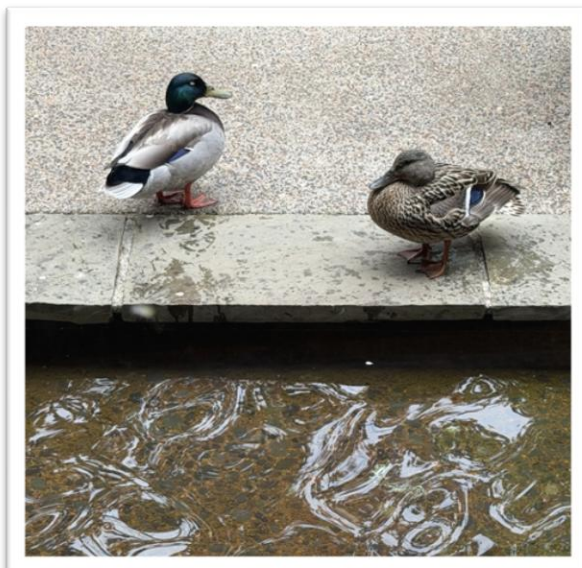
school social studies. Irv is almost done building his mechanic shop. Kenny finished his first year of high school and Aisonna her first year of middle school—Qunuyuk joins her next year. JosLynne is cruising along in elementary school. Shishmaref Lutheran Church is the one and only church’s here. We cherish all our lessons and experiences at Central Lutheran Church and do our best to continue them here. We have quilting and a simple supper once a month. We long for vibrant children’s and music ministries, but do our best with what we have. The children are doing very well and have excelled in the activities of their choosing. We always have room for anyone who wants to visit!

Hugs, love, and gratitude from the Itchoak Family

(Editor’s note: In 2024 Roben received honorable mention for her **Personal Experience (short format)** in *Gather*, the magazine of Women of the ELCA. Click on the link to check it out! [“Living faithfully: Honoring and protecting the earth,”](#) Roben Itchoak, author; Elizabeth Hunter, editor; Cindy Novak, managing editor. Congrats, Roben!)

New ‘Oregon Duck’ family joins Central this Spring

This spring, Mr. and Mrs. Mallard made their home at Central. On Thursday, June 4th, we celebrated as they welcomed their young ones. By Friday morning, Daisy Duck and her 12 ducklings were heading toward Duck Country. Thanks be to God for all of God’s creatures great and small!



Finally, after weeks of anticipation, the ducklings began to arrive—and what a sight to behold!

We’re hoping Daisy will return to nest here again next Spring!

SUMMER WORSHIP SCHEUDLE

**8:30am Worship at the Sanctuary (or via livestream)
11am Sunday Worship at The Garden**



On Sunday, June 21st Central's 11am Sunday worship service returned to the Garden (2345 Laura St. in Springfield) for our 7th year! Parking is located across the street at Oregon Neurology. Worship with us is in an open-air, covered building with chairs and glean from the produce after services!

Events Coming Up

Free Tickets to the Drifters Baseball Game Sunday July 26th

Members and friends of Central are invited to the July 26, 4:35pm game of the local Springfield collegiate wooden bat baseball team, the Drifters. Grab a free hot dog or hamburger and beverage while cheering on the home team alongside your church family! Reserve your tickets by calling or emailing the church office.



FREE CONCERT

GRAMMY AWARD-WINNING

LOS ANGELES CHILDREN'S CHORUS

DIRECTORS:

FERNANDO MALVAR-RUIZ, ERIC LIFLAND



FEATURING

THE STANGELAND FAMILY YOUTH CHORAL ACADEMY

Tuesday June 30
2:30 pm

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
1857 POTTER STREET



Mid-week *Season of Creation* Vespers returns July 1, 8, 15, 22, & 29 at United Lutheran at 7pm



Members and friends of Central, United, and Emmaus (CUE) are invited to an outdoor “*Season of Creation*” vespers service each of the Wednesdays of July. This brief worship service will be hosted on the lawn at **United Lutheran at 7pm!** Chairs are provided or you may bring your own.

Oregon Bach Festival: On the House Concert at Central

On Friday, July 10, join Central’s Organists: Dr. Lindsey Henriksen Rodgers and Dr. A. ElRay Stewart-Cook, performing an *Organ Interlude*, at 2:30pm in Central’s Sanctuary. This concert is free and open to the public. Invite your friends!

