

December
2023



CENTRAL IS A RECONCILING IN
CHRIST CONGREGATION

THE CENTRALITE

CENTRAL LUTHERAN MISSION STATEMENT

TO BE THE HANDS AND FEET OF JESUS BY:

*LOVING GOD AND ONE ANOTHER
NURTURING FAITHFUL LIVING
SERVING THOSE IN NEED
SHARING THE GOSPEL*

Central's Staff

Pastor Laurie A. Jones
pastorlaurie@
welcometocentral.org
(206-354-6756)

Pastor Ben Nickodemus
pastorben@welcometocentral.org
(208-290-1165)

Campus Minister/Christus House
Deacon Clare Josef-Maier
clare@begoodsoil.org

Organist/Choirmaster
Dr. A. ElRay Stewart-Cook

Assoc. Organist/Children's Music
Dr. Lindsey H. Rodgers

Parish Administrator
Kristi Hoiland

Financial Manager
Cindy Culpepper

Minister to Children, Youth &
Families for CUE
Crystal Miller

Video & Tech Support
Thomas Stine

Church Council

President, Jean Clancey
Vice Pres, Debbie Knebel
Secretary, Jack Bennett
Treas, Brent Moeller
Ron Fenchak
Teri Gillis
Matt Haugen
Howard Kallinen
Jill Liedtke
Todd Shorack
Chuck Swenson



**Christmas Eve Manger Service
4:30pm**

**Christmas Eve Festival Worship
9:30pm**

**Christmas Day Worship
Monday, December 25th at 9am**

For a complete list of our Advent &
Christmas schedule see page 7.

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR LAURIE

[From Paul's letter to the Philippians] "I thank my God every time I remember you, constantly praying with joy in every one of my prayers for all of you, because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now." (Philippians 1:3-5)

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I have heard it said that on a typical day Martin Luther would spend an hour or more in prayer, but on a really busy day he'd spend even more! Here is the quote attributed to Luther, "I have so much to do that I shall spend the first three hours in prayer." Apparently the "busy-ness" of life isn't all that new.

In fact, many of us tend to over-schedule ourselves and the lives of our loved ones. Many among us live hectic lives—full of appointments, demands, expectations, and tasks. If you're looking at your December calendar and finding it's so full you can't even begin to imagine how you will accomplish everything on your "to do" list, then you are in good company! So, what are we to do?

For starters, we must make choices. Accepting the reality that we simply can't do everything, we are encouraged to prioritize what is most important to us. During this season of Advent perhaps we might reframe this by asking ourselves: what is most important **for** us? For our families? For our community? For our relationships? Greater still, what is most important **for** our relationship to the God who desires to be in relationship with us and who is always **for** us!

In the hustle and bustle of our busy lives, this season of the Church year, perhaps more so than others, offers us space to quiet our hearts and minds to be in the presence of God and one another. We gather together in places of worship to sing and pray, to hear the Word of God, to share in the Lord's Supper, and to be strengthened for the journey as we go in peace to love and serve the Lord.

And so, I hope you will join me in taking time to prayerfully consider what God desires **for** you and for your loved ones. And during this hectic and busy season, know that I will be praying for you, and for us!

To God be all Glory!
Pastor Laurie

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR BEN

“Thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: Take these deeds, both this sealed deed of purchase and this open deed, and put them in an earthenware jar, in order that they may last for a long time. For thus says the Lord of hosts, the God of Israel: houses and fields and vineyards shall again be bought in this land.” Jeremiah 32:14-15

Dear family of God at Central,

The prophet Jeremiah is directed in around the year 588 BC to purchase a field belonging originally to his cousin. This wouldn't normally be very surprising, but Jeremiah has been preaching his entire career that there is no future in the land of Israel and that the people would be taken into exile in Babylon. Indeed, by this time of the prophet's career already 10,000 of the societal elites have already been taken into Babylon and Jerusalem was besieged with no clear hope for respite. It would only be two years later in 586 BC that Jerusalem would be finally destroyed and all the people taken off into exile. So, why does Jeremiah buy this plot of land? It is a symbolic action to show that despite the present collapse, there is hope. It is not hope that can be understood logically, but simply the hope that comes from the trust in who God is for the people of Israel. While the present is difficult, there is always hope for the future.

We enter the season of Advent and our theme for our midweek services and classes this year is on hope. Our situation is nothing like the catastrophe that Jeremiah faced. Yet, in our lives, we also are seeing a broken world where much does not make sense to us. Some have been reminded recently of the constancy of war, violence, and destruction. Others have been discouraged and frustrated with the seeming constancy of medical crises, suffering, broken relationships, and isolation. Just as Judah for Jerusalem, we too are a people who need the hope that passes all understanding.

The meaning of “Advent” is “coming” – Jesus is coming to us. That is the hope we hold and share that just as Jesus came at his incarnation into the world in Bethlehem, so too is Jesus coming to us at all times. I invite all of you to come to our new Tuesday night Advent schedule beginning Nov. 28: 5pm Soup Supper, 5:30pm Holden Evening Prayer Service with readings on hope, and 6pm adult education on hope in our lives as well as Children's Choir rehearsal.

Please join us!

Pastor Ben

**Dinner Group Christmas Party, December 10, 2023, 2:15pm
at the Hatleberg home, 88000 Heather Dr, Springfield**

All dinner groups are invited. Please call your group leader for your food choice. Hatlebergs will provide ham, German Potato salad, punch, and coffee. You're welcome to bring a wine of your choice.

Any questions, call Rosie at 541-726-5694, for directions to Hatlebergs you can email them at rhodleberg@pacwest.net.

Don't forget your "white elephant gift"



JOIN US FOR "MIDWEEK COFFEE HOUR"

on the 2nd Wednesday of the month
December 13th from 1:00-2:00pm
in the Terrace Room

(Note: We will be taking a break this month on the 4th Wednesday, Dec. 27th.)

SINGERS OF ALL AGES

**Following the 11am worship service on
December 17, stay for lunch, and then a
caroling we will go...**



The Central Lutheran Foundation is looking for church members to serve on the board starting in 2024. Please contact Brent Moeller at 541-868-5376 if you have questions or interest.

Established in 1979, The Central Lutheran Foundation is a non-profit Corporation. As stated in the bylaws, "The Foundation's primary purpose is to support and extend the ministry of the Central Lutheran Church of Eugene, Oregon based on Christian stewardship and Scriptural teachings." The Foundation receives and invests gifted funds in perpetuity and distributes the earnings from those funds to deserving Individuals or organizations.

CENTRAL, UNITED, EMMAUS (CUE) CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS

On Sunday, December 3rd our Youth group will be delivering and/or setting up trees for members of our congregations who would find this act of service helpful. Please let Crystal know as soon as possible if you would like a tree or help with your artificial tree. Our youth group is looking forward to this service project!

All are invited on Saturday, December 16th to gather for some fabulous Christmas Caroling. We will meet at The Springs (1282 Goodpasture Is. Rd.) at 3:50pm and carol for a short bit for some of our CUE congregational members and residents of the Springs, then head over to United for a community soup supper. After warming our bellies, we will head out into the neighborhood to carol some more. This is an all ages, intergenerational event. All are Welcome! Help is needed with organizing the caroling/music as well as providing soup. Contact Crystal if you can help.

On Sunday, December 17th at noon we will have an all-ages Christmas gathering with a shared lunch. Please join us for some cookie making and decorating, fellowship, fun, and of course Christmas spirit. If you are able to help provide some of the cookie supplies please let Crystal know. This is a family-focused event—all ages and abilities are welcome!

Toy Collection for First Place Family Center This Advent season we will be collecting toys for the kids staying at First Place Family Center. We are working on this project with our partner congregations Central, United, and Emmaus. Each congregation is being asked to sponsor 13 kids. Please look for the wish list tags in the Narthex starting Dec. 3rd. We invite you to take a gift tag and then bring back the listed item to the church by Dec. 17th. If you'd rather not do the shopping, monetary donations are always welcome and we will do the shopping for you!

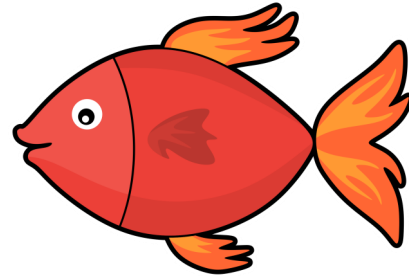
Looking ahead... Saturday, January 6th we will be having an all-ages Epiphany party. We will gather from 10am-1pm at Central to celebrate the coming of the Wisemen as we conclude the Christmas season. Please mark your calendars and let me know if you are available to be an adult volunteer for this event! Contact: crystal@unitedlutheran.org or call/text 503.320.4055.

SERVING THOSE IN NEED

For I was hungry, and you gave me something to eat; I was thirsty, and you gave me drink; I was a stranger, and you welcomed me."

Matthew 25:35

FISH Sunday December 10, 2023



FRIENDS IN SERVICE to HUMANITY (FISH)

is an all-volunteer, inter-denominational, church supported, non-profit, community service organization. FISH is primarily geared to meet emergency needs. FISH provides food boxes, propane and help with prescription medications. FISH is supported by 17 churches, various organizations, and private individuals. Checks can be made payable to FISH.

NEEDED FOR OUR FISH DRIVE:

Food items: oatmeal, pancake mixes, soup, rice, peanut butter, jam, canned meats, macaroni, noodles, spaghetti, tuna, canned stews, canned fruits and vegetables, powdered milk, canned milk, dry food and cereals, dried beans, peas, and complete dinner mixes.

LET'S FILL UP THE FOOD BOX FOR FISH!

If you are looking for a volunteer position for a few hours a week or have questions regarding FISH please contact Steven or Norma Edman, 541-912-7348.



DURING THIS SEASON OF GIFT GIVING, CONSIDER GIVING THE GIFT OF BLOOD

Contact Bloodworks Eugene to schedule an appointment (541) 484-9111

Advent & Christmas Schedule 2023



Together Tuesdays (December 5, & December 12)

- 5:00-5:30 Soup Supper (Parish Hall)
- 5:30-6:00 Holden Evening Prayer (Sanctuary)
- 6:00-6:45 Children's Choir (Nicki Hanson Choir Room)
- 6:00-7:15 Adult Class (Library)
- 6:45-7:15 Junior Cantors (Nicki Hanson Choir Room)

Lessons & Carols – an evening of scripture and carols featuring the Chorale, Handbell Ensemble, Instrumentalists, Children's Choir, & Junior Cantors - Sunday, December 3rd beginning at 4:30pm followed by a Soup Supper after

Blue Christmas – a gentle, contemplative service designed especially for those who find the holidays difficult due to grief, loss, loneliness, etc. Tuesday, December 19th at 7:00pm (no soup supper)

Sunday Morning Advent Worship Services

(December 3, 10, 17 at 8:30 & 11am and *December 24 at 9am)

Christmas Eve Manger Service (Dec. 24th at 4:30pm)

Christmas Eve Festival Worship & Communion (Dec. 24th at 9:30pm)

Christmas Day Worship (*Dec. 25th at 9am)

7th day of Christmas Sunday Worship (*Dec. 31st at 9am)

*Note time change and only one service at 9am on 12/24; 12/25; & 12/31; all services (except Holden Evening Prayer) are available on livestream or can be viewed later as a podcast on our website (welcometocentral.org).



BOOK CLUB NEWS

The CLC Book Club will meet via Zoom on Monday, Dec. 11, 2023, at 7:00pm to discuss *American Born Chinese* by Gene Luen Yang. This "young adult" graphic novel is a read that all ages can learn from and enjoy. The book weaves the story of Jin Wang wanting to fit in and is bullied in school, the Chinese fable of the powerful Monkey King who wants to be a god, and a nasty stereotype character of Chin-kee who keeps ruining cousin Danny's life with his annual visits. These three tales converge with a twist. There is even a Christian message buried in the book. Being a graphic novel, it is quite a different format from our usual selections, and we anticipate it will be a quick(er) and enjoyable read! The discussion will be led by Arlene Dietz.

Looking Ahead: The CLC Book Club will meet via Zoom on Monday, January 8, 2024, at 7:00pm to discuss *The Beauty of Dusk: on Vision Lost and Found* by Frank Bruni. One morning New York Times columnist Frank Bruni woke up with strangely blurred vision. He wondered at first if some goo or gunk had worked its way into his right eye. But this was no fleeting annoyance, no fixable inconvenience. Overnight, a rare stroke had cut off blood to one of his optic nerves, rendering him functionally blind in that eye—forever. And he soon learned from doctors that the same disorder could ravage his left eye, too. He could lose his sight altogether. In this memoir, Bruni recounts his adjustment to this daunting reality, a medical and spiritual odyssey that involved not only reappraising his own priorities but also reaching out to, and gathering wisdom from, longtime friends and new acquaintances who had navigated their own traumas and afflictions. The discussion will be led by Ginger Bopp.

New members are always welcome! If you have questions or would like to be on the CLC Book Club email list, please email Betsy Berg rb24berg@aol.com. The repeating ZOOM link is sent out before each meeting and appears in the church email, "Central Lutheran Weekly Events."

WE KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS



Karlyn & Larry Campbell, Terry Chap, Chuck Dietz, Dal & Gaye Haverland, Doug & Jody Martin, Morgan McCrory, Marni Reinmuth, Gretchen & Jeff Simas, Merrily & Larry Sutton, and Shirley Watson

Prayers of comfort to the families and friends of John Piper and Connie Rattenborg upon their deaths.

Click [here](#) to submit a prayer request. Or, email: prayers@welcometocentral.org.

INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

Individual prayer is available in the chapel on the **first Sunday of the month** (December 3rd) directly after the 8:30 service. You are invited to join one of our prayer ministers for one-on-one prayer in a private setting.

HIGHLIGHTS FROM CHURCH COUNCIL

(Full Church Council Minutes are available upon request at info@welcometocentral.org)

The Church Council met Nov. 16, 2023

Finance Report: See last page

Action Items:

1. The Council approved a request by the Central Lutheran Foundation to increase the liability coverage for directors and officers from \$1 million to \$2.5 million on our existing Church Mutual Insurance policy. Currently the Central Lutheran Foundation does not have liability coverage for its directors and officers. It will be less expensive to add the CLF to our existing church policy than for the CLF to take out a new policy. The estimated increase of \$192 per year will be paid by the Foundation.
2. The Council approved the appointment of Chuck Swenson as director and chair of the Central Lutheran Memorial Courtyard and Columbarium Board. Joanne Miksis, who has faithfully served in that capacity since its inception, has resigned.
3. The next Semi-Annual Meeting of Central Lutheran will be held Sunday, January 28, 2024 between services. A budget presentation will be held between services the previous week—January 21st.

Central Lutheran Church

Jan-Oct 2023 Income:Expense to Budget - Jan-Oct 2022 Income:Expense Summary

	Jan-Oct 2023	YTD 2023 Budget	Variance to Budget	Jan-Oct 2022
Regular Envelopes	\$ 458,637.45	\$ 529,166.70	\$ (70,529.25)	\$ 454,457.52
Other Offerings	\$ 6,350.30	\$ 6,500.00	\$ (149.70)	\$ 5,042.74
Holiday Offerings	\$ 10,084.00	\$ 13,733.68	\$ (3,649.68)	\$ 9,154.00
Other Income	\$ 124,161.63	\$ 31,066.70	\$ 93,094.93	\$ 61,458.86
Departmental Income	\$ 112,043.73	\$ 98,692.20	\$ 13,351.53	\$ 80,173.15
Total Income	\$ 711,277.11	\$ 679,159.28	\$ 32,117.83	\$ 610,286.27
Total Expenses	\$ 747,961.32	\$ 712,359.54	\$ 35,601.78	\$ 667,463.49
YTD Net Income	\$ (36,684.21)	\$ (33,200.26)	\$ (3,483.95)	\$ (57,177.22)
Prorated carryover- Previous Year	\$ 27,562.50	\$ 27,562.50	\$ -	\$ 31,815.00
Net after carryover applied	\$ (9,121.71)	\$ (5,637.76)	\$ (3,483.95)	\$ (25,362.22)

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
1857 POTTER STREET EUGENE 97403
541-345-0395

WEBSITE: WWW.WELCOMETOCENTRAL.ORG