

January  
2024



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

## IMPORTANT ANNOUNCEMENT FOR ALL VOTING MEMBERS

Our Semi-Annual Meeting will be held on Sunday, January 28, 2024 (between services from 9:45am-10:45am) in the Parish Hall. The primary purpose will be to vote on our Mission and Ministry budget for 2024. In addition, the annual meeting of The Central Lutheran Foundation will be convened immediately following our congregational meeting.

Also: Plan to join us for a presentation and an opportunity to ask questions regarding the 2024 budget on Sunday, January 21st, between the services in the Parish Hall..

Pastries and coffee will be served at each of these gatherings.

**MARK YOUR CALENDARS**

***FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR LAURIE***

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

It is now the tenth day of Christmas and I know there are some among us who are ready to take down the decorations and put their houses back in order. There are likely others who made, and perhaps have already broken, their New Year's resolutions. Still others, like me, are left wondering where does the time goes!

I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the many hearts and hands and voices that made the seasons of Advent and Christmas so special this year. From Lessons & Carols to mid-week Holden Evening Prayer to Blue Christmas to the services on Christmas Eve and Christmas Day, it was such a joy to see so many faces in worship and to know that still others were joining us via the livestream. All of it—the music, scripture readings, proclamation of the gospel, prayers, sharing the peace, partaking of the Lord's Supper, Advent wreath, the tree, the lights, the candles, the poinsettias adorning the chancel—contributed to the making of a joy-filled and festive celebration of our dear Savior's birth. So many of the various tasks that go into the "behind the scenes" work of creating sacred space in which to worship and praise God during liturgical seasons often go largely unnoticed. And yet they are noticed. And they are truly appreciated. I give thanks to God for each and every one of you who so freely and joyfully shared your time, your talents, and your treasures as we live into our life together and as we share the good news with those we encounter along the way, even with people we may never know.

I would also be remiss if I didn't acknowledge the generous financial gifts that are given to support Central's Mission & Ministry. The final numbers aren't quite in yet, but it's safe to say we are looking at another amazing year of generosity. Before the end of January you will be receiving your annual giving statement. You should know that confidentiality is strictly maintained. Our Financial Manager, Cindy Culpepper, is the only one with eyes on each household's giving. Meanwhile, our Treasurer Brent Moeller, along with the Finance Committee who faithfully steward Central's money matters, do so without regard to specific names and gifts. So, should you have any questions about your individual giving statement, please feel free to contact Cindy directly by calling the church office or via email.

With gratitude to God,  
Pastor Laurie

***FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR BEN***

"Now the Lord said to Abram, 'Go from your country and your kindred and your father's house to the land that I will show you.'" Gen. 12:1

Dear family of God at Central,

These past several weeks as we have celebrated the birth of Christ at Christmas as a community and in our families, we have gathered with many whom we might not have seen in some time. It has also been a time for our beloved traditions and the deep meanings associated with them. It is a time that invites us to reflect on continuity and change.

On the one hand, there is tremendous continuity in tradition. We continue worshiping the same God Abraham worshiped. We proclaim the same incarnate Christ the Shepherds proclaimed only hours after Christ's birth. And yet, on the other hand, we know that there is change. We don't proclaim the precise same way they did. Those changes, though, do not challenge the fact that this is the same God and our worship is in continuity with all those who have gone before us. In the passage above, God appears to Abraham and presents Abraham with a completely new thing – that worship of God is going to have something to do with a specific place – the land of Canaan. Nothing in Genesis 1-11 would have prepared Abraham for that. And after Abraham arrives in the land, his worship of God his God is related to the land he lives in. Nothing would have prepared him for that either.

Abraham is "being religious" in a completely new way. Further, it turns out being the family of Abraham means something – and the religion is tied into his family life. Again, something completely new. Yet, Abraham is also in connection with those from Genesis 1-11. Abraham worships the same God Noah and Methusaleh did. He addresses God the same way they did. God communicates and relates to Abraham just as God did to them. So that while there is something new, it also is expressing something that is not new at all.

In our Tuesday evening adult education, we will be exploring moments of continuity and change and seeing the way that there does not have to be competition between these two things. We will do so by looking at several episodes of the Old Testament with the overarching question, "Is this a new way of being religious?" We will discover that the answer is both yes and no. Yes, this is something that had not been done before – as it reflects a reality that was not before, but also no – this new thing fits with what had always been done due to the continuity of our God.

We will be exploring this topic in the Old Testament not just as an academic exercise, but as a relevant question for us today. What are the new things we do in our worship life that are in continuity with the past yet also change? What are places we are challenged for change while remaining in continuity? Can we see continuity and change in coordination rather than competition? Join us on Tuesdays as we consider and explore those questions for our lives today.

Pastor Ben



### **JOIN US FOR "MIDWEEK COFFEE HOUR"**

on the 2nd and 4th Wednesdays  
of the month  
January 10th and 24th  
from 1:00-2:00pm  
in the Terrace Room

### **Together Tuesdays at Central Resumes January 9**

- 5:15-6:00pm Community meal in the Parish Hall
- 6:00-6:45pm Music Together in the Gathering Room (children ages 0-5,  
accompanied by a parent/caregiver)
- 6:00-6:45pm Children's Choir in the Nicki Hanson Choir Room  
(Kindergartner-5th graders)
- 6:45-7:15pm Junior Cantors Rehearsal
- 6:00-7:00pm Adult Education in the Library

Registration is currently open for the 10-week Winter Term of Music Together. All classes are available to Central members and friends as well as the general public at [musictogethereugene.com](http://musictogethereugene.com).

### **Hearth & Table Resumes on Thursday, January 11**

Co-sponsored by FOOD for Lane County, Hearth & Table is an outreach of Central Lutheran's Campus Ministry to UO and LCC students to address food insecurity and provide a space for college students to gather in community. Students are invited to come and enjoy a "home-cooked" meal, served family-style, in the Parish Hall, while simultaneously building a sense of community among peers. The meal, prepared and served by Chef Jamie and her crew of Duck Corps volunteers and Christus House residents, is served from 6:30-7:30pm. Or, for students who are unable to stay and eat, a boxed meal is available for take out.

**CHILDREN, YOUTH & FAMILY NEWS**  
**EPIPHANY PARTY**  
**SATURDAY, JANURARY 6th**  
**10am to 1pm**  
**AT CENTRAL**



Children and youth of all-ages from Central, United, and Emmaus (CUE) are invited to an Epiphany Party! We will gather on Saturday, January 6th at Central from 10am-1pm to celebrate the coming of the Wisemen as we conclude the Christmas season.

Please contact Crystal ([crystal@unitedlutheran.org](mailto:crystal@unitedlutheran.org)) or call/text her at 503.320.4055 if you have any questions or to let her know you are available to chaperone this event.

**FRIENDS ARE WELCOME!**



**Men's Bible Study meets for breakfast on Wednesday mornings at 8am at The Springs (1282 Goodpasture Island Rd.)**

### **OTHER OPPORTUNITES TO STUDY THE WORD...**

Sunday morning Education Hour with Pastor Ben between services (9:45-10:45am) in the Library (except on Jan. 21 - budget presentation and Jan. 28 - semi-annual meeting).

Pastor's Bible Study meets via Zoom on Wednesdays at 11am where we study the gospel reading for the upcoming Sunday.

The Women's Bible Study group continues to meet via Zoom on Thursday mornings at 11am.

The link for either of these groups is provided in "Central's Weekly Events" or by contacting Kristi ([info@welcometocentral.org](mailto:info@welcometocentral.org)).



## Junior Cantors leading worship



Pictured: Sam Rodgers, Arya Saks,  
Signe Smith & CJ Strietelmeier

## Children's Choir having fun!





## BOOK CLUB NEWS

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.

Looking Ahead: The CLC Book Club will meet via Zoom on Monday, February 12, 2024, at 7:00pm to discuss ***Lady Tan's Circle of Women*** by Lisa See. Born into an elite family at the beginning of the 15th century Ming Dynasty, Tan Yunzian is taught medicine by her grandmother, one of a handful of female doctors in all of China. An underlying theme is not only how she worked within the system controlled by her mother-in-law and men, but also succeeded in becoming proficient in medicine. One learns about the difficulty of befriending outside your class, practicing an art controlled by men, and the fascinating and painful foot-binding process. The discussion will be led by Arlene Dietz.

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](mailto:rb24berg@aol.com) >. The repeating ZOOM link is sent out before each meeting and appears in the church email, "Central Lutheran Weekly Events."

## A WORD OF THANKS FROM STEVE & NORMA EDMAN on behalf of FRIENDS IN SERVICE to HUMANITY (FISH)

Throughout Advent we collected non-perishable canned goods to help our hungry neighbors in need. Like the story of Jesus feeding the multitudes with a few loaves of bread and some fish, through the generosity of your gifts we were able to multiply many times over the collection of food items. In addition, we received donations totaling \$2,165 to be distributed by the volunteers of FISH. Thank you!





## WE KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS

Terry Chap, Chuck Dietz, Dal & Gaye Haverland, Doug & Jody Martin, Morgan McCrory, Marni Reinmuth, Gretchen & Jeff Simas, and David Zhou's family in China.

Prayers of comfort to the families and friends of Mary Harwood (mother of Deb McCrory) and Dave Fitz (husband of Mary Fitz) upon their deaths.

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

## INDIVIDUAL PRAYER

Individual prayer is available in the chapel on the **first Sunday of the month** (January 7) 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](mailto:info@welcometocentral.org))

The Church Council met on Dec. 20, 2023

**Treasurer's Report:** See last page

### **Action Items:**

1. The Council set the Semi-Annual Congregational Meeting to be Sunday, Jan. 28 between services.
2. Council unanimously endorsed the Oregon Synod Letter of Intent for Deacon Clare's proposed shared call with Emmaus. The Letter of Intent will be voted upon by the congregation at the Semi-Annual meeting.
3. Council endorses increased salary for Lindsay Rodgers for music together and children's choir for 2024.
4. Regarding Endowment fund:
  - a. Council approves the allocation of funds as per the distribution policies of the CLC Endowment funds and recommended by the Endowment committee of \$20,425 (\$20,328 is 3% minimum distribution amount).
  - b. Council approves the extension of the expiration date of the previous Endowment grant 21-017 from 1/26/24 to 5/4/24. This allows for the appropriate use of these allocated funds.
5. Council approved the pastors housing allowance.
6. Council approved the proposal for the 2024 St. Cecelia Fund budget of \$10,960 for music outreach.

## Central Lutheran Church

### Jan-Nov 2023 Income:Expense to Budget - Jan-Nov 2022 Income:Expense Summary

	Jan-Nov 2023	YTD 2023 Budget	Variance to Budget	Jan-Nov 2022
Regular Envelopes	\$ 519,502.59	\$ 582,083.37	\$ (62,580.78)	\$ 495,806.36
Other Offerings	\$ 7,089.30	\$ 7,150.00	\$ (60.70)	\$ 5,434.74
Holiday Offerings	\$ 10,234.00	\$ 14,733.68	\$ (4,499.68)	\$ 10,014.00
Other Income	\$ 126,087.36	\$ 34,170.37	\$ 91,916.99	\$ 63,815.75
Departmental Income	\$ 115,505.73	\$ 106,153.92	\$ 9,351.81	\$ 88,593.67
Total Income	\$ 778,418.98	\$ 744,291.34	\$ 34,127.64	\$ 663,664.52
Total Expenses	\$ 826,473.03	\$ 785,132.45	\$ 41,340.58	\$ 729,022.95
YTD Net Income	\$ (48,054.05)	\$ (40,841.11)	\$ (7,212.94)	\$ (65,358.43)
Prorated carryover- Previous Year	\$ 30,318.75	\$ 30,318.75	\$ -	\$ 34,996.50
Net after carryover applied	\$ (17,735.30)	\$ (10,522.36)	\$ (7,212.94)	\$ (30,361.93)

### CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

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

WEBSITE: [WWW.WELCOMETOCENTRAL.ORG](http://WWW.WELCOMETOCENTRAL.ORG)