

December
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

Pastor Ben Nickodemus
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(208-290-1165)

Campus Minister/Christus House
Deacon Clare Josef-Maier
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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
crystal@unitedlutheran.org

United & Central Seminary Intern
Vicar Ian Hamilton
vicar.ian@unitedlutheran.org

CHURCH COUNCIL

President: Debbie Knebel
Vice President: Jean Clancey
Secretary: Jack Bennett
Treasurer: Brent Moeller
Dan Buckwalter
Terie Gillis
Matt Hougland
Howard Kallinen
Sue Kilber
Todd Shorack
Chuck Swenson



ADVENT AT CENTRAL

Sundays, Dec. 1, 8, 15, 22: Worship at 8:30 & 11am
Together Tuesdays, Dec. 3, 10, 17: Soup Supper at 5:15pm followed by regular activities and concluding with Holden Evening Prayer at 7pm

Sunday, Dec. 8: A Procession of Advent Lessons & Carols at 4:30pm with soup supper following

Sunday, Dec. 15: Bach Magnificat during worship at 8:30 & 11am

Friday, Dec. 20: Blue Christmas at 7pm

CHRISTMAS AT CENTRAL

Christmas Eve Worship: Dec. 24th (4:30pm)

Christmas Eve Festival Worship with Eucharist: (9:30pm)

Christmas Day Worship & Holy Communion: Dec. 25th (10am)

5th Day of Christmas: Sunday, Dec. 29th (10am)

EPIPHANY AT CENTRAL

12th Day of Christmas/Epiphany: Jan. 5th at 8:30am and 11am

(see page 8 for more details)

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR LAURIE

Dear Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

Sometimes it helps to know the context. Firstly, I happen to be writing this epistle on the Eve of Thanksgiving. Today, I am not only mindful of how much I have to be thankful for, I can't help but think about how much we have to be thankful for as a community of faith bound together as sisters and brothers in Christ. We are blessed with a rich history of faithful people who came before us. We are blessed with a beautiful sanctuary in which we are able to offer praise and thanksgiving to our gracious and merciful God. We are blessed to have four generations worshipping together under one roof. We are blessed with abundant riches with which to share the gospel, serve those in need, nurture faithful living, and love God and one another. Secondly, no matter what circumstances we find ourselves in during these in-between times of the "now and the not-yet," we have the assurance that our God is faithful and just, and abounding in steadfast love for us, and for all people, and all creation.

Sometimes it helps to know the context. In preparation for the season of Advent, I've been reading Luke, specifically the Gospel reading for the First Sunday of Advent where Jesus says, "There will be signs in the sun, the moon, and the stars, and on the earth distress among nations confused by the roaring of the sea and the waves. People will faint from fear and foreboding of what is coming upon the world, for the powers of the heavens will be shaken. Then they will see 'the Son of Man coming in a cloud' and great glory. Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near" (Luke 21:25-28).

Sometimes it helps to know the context. Personally, I think it's safe to say that every generation since Jesus directed those words to his first disciples has attempted to predict the day and the hour of Jesus' return. That is to say, for over two millennia many have observed the world's brokenness as a sign that Christ's return is imminent. But what if there's another possibility? What if instead of focusing on the end times we are being encouraged to focus on what God desires from us in the present age, without so much as expending an ounce of energy on needless worry? What if Jesus' admonition was meant to be a call to action? Stand up. Raise your heads. Be on guard. Be alert. Keep awake.

Sometimes it helps to know the context. Sometimes. But not always. Wasting time trying to predict the end times or spending our finite time on earth worrying about such things only serves to distract us from living lives of gratitude to God for the blessings we have received. Blessings, which incidentally, are meant to be shared: to love and be loved, to forgive and be forgiven, to serve rather than be served. In other words, we can live in the confidence that God's will will be done, on earth as in heaven. In this context we have nothing to fear because our redemption is not only near, it is already here! Thanks be to God!

In Christ's Abiding Love,

Pastor Laurie

FROM THE DESK OF PASTOR BEN

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord." Rom. 8:38-39

Dear family of God at Central,

Advent is upon us and as we enter into the holidays, we celebrate with our families and we live in the joy of one another's presence. However, also at this time, we can't help but remember those who are not present. Some are not able to gather due to distance or circumstance, and some have been separated by death of those nearest to them. The holidays can be a very hard time for many people. The holiday season is a time both of joy and of grief – the complex mix of emotions that regularly fill our lives.

Our Tuesday evening Advent midweek series will be using the beloved Holden Evening Prayer Service, but our theme for our homilies this year will be entitled "The Light No Darkness Can Overcome." In it, we will be recognizing that there is darkness in the world. There is grief. The first week we will have time to recognize the loss of people nearest to us – those who are now in glory with Christ.

The next week, we will have time to recognize the loss of the world as we thought we knew it. Where the world around us was not what we expected it to be. When beloved institutions and traditions we have held tightly to in our life are no longer. The third week we will recognize the burdens and pain we carry in our own bodies. This will all be concluded on Friday, Dec. 20 with our special Blue Christmas Service. We recognize that the darkness that the Gospel of John talked about is very real – the losses we have are very real. Yet, we will also be expressing our hope in Christ. In the passage from Romans 8 above, we recognize with Paul that absolutely nothing will separate us from the light of Christ in our lives. The darkness will not overcome the light. Our hope and our joy are equally as real as the darkness itself and they compel us to rejoice in the Lord at all times – even amidst pain and grief. It will be a wonderfully meaningful Advent series this year – please join us.

Pastor Ben

FROM THE DESK OF VICAR IAN HAMILTON

Greetings,

The first quarter of my internship has already come and gone. Since my move to Oregon a few months ago I have kept myself busy leading worship, presiding over communion, preaching, sitting in meetings, and leading Bible studies. In my first quarter I have preached three sermons, and I am looking forward to preaching again this upcoming week (December 1) at both churches. I will also be preaching a homily at Central's midweek Advent service on December 17.

I have been brainstorming some other ways to get to know and serve your churches and have come up with a new idea. Some point early in the new year I am looking forward to inviting young adults aged 18-35 from all three churches into a monthly Bible study and fellowship event. More information will follow soon!

Alexis and I are enjoying getting to know some of you a bit better on the hiking trail. Just a reminder that the next hike will be held on December 14 at 10am at Delta Ponds. If attendance and demand continue to be met, we will keep the hikes going into the winter. (I am from the snowy shores of Lake Erie after all!)

As we enter the season of Advent, I am pondering how we can prepare for the coming of the Lord. This is often reflected in our lectionary texts, and in the ways we worship this season. We know that Jesus Christ is the Light of the World, and we await him.

"Now when these things begin to take place, stand up and raise your heads, because your redemption is drawing near." (Luke 21:28)

A WALK WITH THE INTERN

Vicar Ian is offering one more session in December for "A Walk with the Intern." It will be held on Saturday December 14 starting at 10am at Delta Ponds Park. Participants should expect to walk about 3 miles. Just input "Delta Ponds" into your phone's directions and it should take you to this location. Hope to see you there!

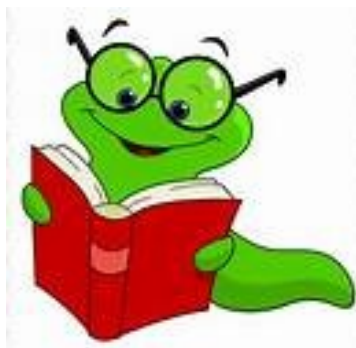
CUE MS/HS YOUTH GROUP SCHEDULE:

Our schedule in December is as follows:

High School Youth Group (grades 9-12) will meet on the 2nd Sunday
December 8th

Middle School Youth Group (Grades 6-8) will meet on the 3rd Sunday
December 15th

BOOK CLUB NEWS



The CLC Book Club will meet via Zoom on **Monday, December 9, 2024, at 7:00pm** to discuss *Christmas by the Book* by Anne Marie Ryan. In small-town England, two booksellers, husband and wife, facing tough times decide to spread some Christmas cheer through the magic of anonymous book deliveries in this uplifting holiday tale. As the town prepares for a white Christmas, the books begin to give the recipients hope, one by one. But with the future of the bookshop still up in the air, they will need a Christmas miracle -- or perhaps a little help from the people whose lives they've touched -- to find a happy ending of their own. The discussion will be led by Gary Wolfe.

Looking Ahead: The CLC Book Club will meet via Zoom on **Monday, Jan. 13, 2025, at 7:00pm** to discuss *The Light We Carry: Overcoming in Uncertain Times* by Michelle Obama. The Light We Carry presents Michelle Obama's ideas for coping in a challenging world. She offers counsel that has helped her, practices that switch off some anxieties, and advice to "go high" when attacked but keep doing the work. She encourages us to let our lights shine. 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, 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."

**JOIN US FOR
"MIDWEEK COFFEE HOUR"**
on the 2nd Wednesday
of the month
December 11th



Serving those in need...
Interfaith Food Hub is Looking for Volunteers

Spend a few hours a week making sandwiches for our unhoused neighbors on Wednesdays at First Christian Church downtown. Click the link for more info: <https://signup.com/go/ErFTQVP>

SAME DAY/DIFFERENT TIME & LOCATION

**Next Chapter (grief support group) will meet on
Thursday, December 12th**

Arlene Dietz has invited the Next Chapter group to meet at her home for lunch at 12:30pm. Arlene's address is 33632 McKenzie View Dr; phone: 541-726-7050.

THE PRAYER MINISTRY LENDING LIBRARY

The Prayer Ministry Lending Library cart located in the Narthex is filled with books to enhance your prayer life. There are a range of books from short reads to somewhat longer ones. Check out the cart, read a book, return it, or pass it along to a friend.

WE KEEP IN OUR PRAYERS



Gwen Acker, Clarine Bremer, Richard Catlin, Terry Chap, Marcy Colvin, Mitch Hammerstad, Gayle Henry, Taylor Irons, Marie Keese, Doug & Jody Martin, Marni Reinmuth, Jeff Simas, Roger Smith, Shirley Watson, and Greg Young.

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

Individual Prayers are available from a Prayer Minister on the 1st Sunday of the month in the chapel following the 8:30am worship service.

A New World of Evangelism: Highlights from our Digital Outreach!

Central's YouTube channel has a variety of things uploaded every week. One of them is primarily educational called "Theology Bits with Pastor Ben." In it, you hear Pastor Ben providing a relatively brief lesson (around 10 minutes in length). You see a "whiteboard" and you hear Pastor Ben discussing a particular topic. Below in the description are questions to guide your viewing. You can find the most recent one here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olvGbYv4m6c> Check it out!



BIBLE STUDIES

Men's Breakfast Bible Study: 8am Wednesdays at the Springs

Pastors' Bible Study: 11am Wednesdays via Zoom

Women's Bible Study: 11am Thursdays hybrid (in the Library and via Zoom)

Tuesday Night Adult Education: 6pm in the Library

Sunday Morning Adult Education: Between Services in the Library

ADVENT/CHRISTMAS SCHEDULE

Together Tuesdays, December 3, 10, & 17

- 5:15-6:00pm Soup Supper & Dessert in the Parish Hall
- 5:45-6:45pm Children's Choir Rehearsal in the Choir Room
- 6:00-7:00pm Adult Education in the Library
- 6:55-7:30pm Junior Cantors Rehearsal in the Choir Room
- 7:00-7:45pm Advent Worship/Holden Evening Prayer in the Sanctuary

ADVENT LESSONS & CAROLS

Sunday, December 8th at 4:30pm

with Soup Supper following

Featuring Central's Chorale, Handbell Ensemble, Brass Ensemble, Children's Choir, Harp, Violin, & Cello

BACH MAGNIFICAT

**Sunday, December 15th during 8:30am & 11am
Worship**

Featuring Central's Chorale with soloists and Central's Chamber Orchestra

BLUE CHRISTMAS

Friday, December 20th at 7pm in the Sanctuary

A contemplative service on the "longest night" designed especially for those for whom the holidays are difficult due to grief, loneliness, anxiety, etc.



CHRISTMAS EVE WORSHIP

Tuesday, December 24th

Celebrating the Christ-child's Birth at 4:30pm

featuring our Children's Choir and other musicians

Festival Worship with Holy Communion at 9:30pm

featuring Central's Chorale, Handbell Ensemble, and other musicians

CHRISTMAS DAY WORSHIP

Wednesday, December 25th at 10:00am

with Carols & Holy Communion

Highlights from Church Council

The Council Highlights show all action items of the Church Council, but not discussion items. Full Church Council Minutes are available upon request at info@welcometocentral.org)

The Council met on Oct. 16, 2024
Treasurer's Report (see last page)

Action Items

Staff health insurance: The Council approved the Personnel Committee's recommendation to offer the Silver + A Benefit Plan with an option for individual employees to upgrade to the Gold Benefit Plan at no additional cost to employees.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR GENEROSITY

**On November 3rd, Central members responded to
Camp Lutherwood's Capital Campaign
with gifts totaling nearly \$58,000!**

***Help is needed at our Together Tuesday
Advent Soup Suppers
(Dec. 3, 10, 17 from 5:15-6pm)***

Can you provide:

A crockpot of vegetarian or meat soup;
Bread/Rolls; or Cookies?

Can you help with:

set-up; serving or clean-up?

If so, please call the church office 541-345-0395 or
email info@welcometocentral.org



A PROCESSION OF
Lessons and Carols
FOR ADVENT

Sunday, December 8, at 4:30 p.m.

welcometocentral.org

Featuring the Central Chorale, Handbell Ensemble, Brass Ensemble
Children's Choir, Harp, Violin, and Cello

Central Lutheran Church
18th and Potter Street, Eugene, Oregon



The Magnificat

Johann Sebastian Bach

Sunday, December 15, 2024
8:30 & 11 a.m. Services

The Central Chorale
with soloists
Central Chamber Orchestra
Dr. A ElRay Stewart-Cook, conducting

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH
18th & Potter Street
welcometocentral.org
Eugene Oregon

Central Lutheran Church

Jan-Oct 2024 Income:Expense to Budget - Jan-Oct 2023 Income:Expense Summary

	Jan-Oct 2024	YTD 2024 Budget	Variance to Budget	Jan-Oct 2023
Regular Envelopes	\$ 499,361.93	\$ 510,500.00	\$ (11,138.07)	\$ 458,637.45
Other Offerings	\$ 5,868.00	\$ 6,500.00	\$ (632.00)	\$ 6,350.30
Holiday Offerings	\$ 4,680.00	\$ 7,800.00	\$ (3,120.00)	\$ 10,084.00
Other Income	\$ 43,402.66	\$ 24,519.98	\$ 18,882.68	\$ 124,161.63
Departmental Income	\$ 178,912.93	\$ 127,869.38	\$ 51,043.55	\$ 112,043.73
Total Income	\$ 732,225.52	\$ 677,189.36	\$ 55,036.16	\$ 711,277.11
Total Expenses	\$ 794,081.44	\$ 767,749.03	\$ 26,332.41	\$ 747,961.32
YTD Net Income	\$ (61,855.92)	\$ (90,559.67)	\$ 28,703.75	\$ (36,684.21)
Prorated carryover-Previous Year	\$ 47,461.70	\$ 47,461.70	-	\$ 27,562.50
Net after carryover applied	\$ (14,394.22)	\$ (43,097.97)	\$ 28,703.75	\$ (9,121.71)



Address changes

Please make these changes in your Directory

Christine Prescott
650 Harlow Rd #148
Springfield, OR 97477

CENTRAL LUTHERAN CHURCH

A CONGREGATION OF THE EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA
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541-345-0395

WEBSITE: WWW.WELCOMETOCENTRAL.ORG