



The Central Connection

MESSAGES & OPPORTUNITIES FROM CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TO YOU!

February 2009



Pastor's Message for Lent

This year Lent begins February 25 on Ash Wednesday. Lent is the season of 40 days, excluding Sundays, which helps us prepare for a right celebration of the resurrection of Christ on Easter Sunday. Lent is traditionally a time of fasting, penance, prayer and sacrificial giving—some of us “give up” things for Lent as a spiritual exercise in self-denial. Lent can also be a time of “taking on” new spiritual practices, such as study and acts of mercy, or service, and giving to the needs of the poor.

During worship on Ash Wednesday, you will be invited into the observance of Lenten discipline with these words: “I invite you, therefore, in the name of the Church, to observe a holy Lent: by self-examination and repentance; by prayer, fasting and self-denial; and by reading and meditating on God’s Holy Word.” The imposition of ashes is part of the service (thus the name, Ash Wednesday), which reminds us of our mortality and is a sign of repentance.

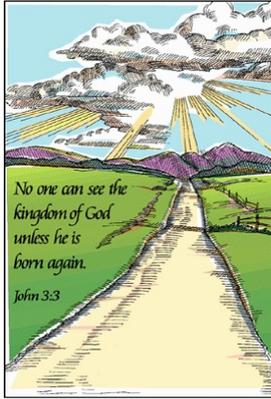
The performance of spiritual practices during Lent does not make us holy, but spiritual practices whenever we do them place us before God, who makes us holy. When we practice such things as prayer, study, fasting and service, God’s grace comes to us. That is why we call these spiritual practices “means of grace”—they are the means by which God’s grace flows within us.

Here are some suggestions for meaningful spiritual practices this Lent:

- “Fast” from watching television, and read a devotional book or your Bible instead
- Tithe – give 1/10 of your net income to God’s Church
- Participate in a small group study (like “Exploring the Way”)
- Attend Holy Week services on Maundy Thursday and Good Friday
- Forgive someone or forgive yourself
- Do good deeds anonymously
- Give blood and meditate on Christ’s sacrifice for us
- Donate your time in the church or community
- Pray daily at noon as well as in the morning and evening
- Take a prayer walk through your neighborhood, praying for the people in each house or business
- Fast one day a week (with your doctor’s OK) from everything except liquids, and meditate on what it means to hunger and thirst for God’s righteousness, and/or pray for the world’s hungry
- Read through the book of Mark and record in a journal what God tells you

Lent is a wonderful time to let God draw you closer.

See you on the journey,
Pastor Stephanie



LENTEN STUDY

***“Exploring the Way:
an Introduction to the Spiritual Journey”***

“If you have ever wondered what the spiritual journey is about or wished you understood better the language of spirituality. . .” this study may be for you. As part of a small group we will explore questions and issues of faith and practice six spiritual exercises for the journey. This is a six week experience that will begin Monday evening, March 2 at 7:00 pm. and will be led by Pastor Stephanie.

FOOD PANTRY

The Food Pantry planning and organization is proceeding nicely, and we are now ready to receive donations of nonperishable food items. A receptacle is available in the Gathering Area and across from the Church Office.



Suggested items include:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------|
| Beef Stew (can) | Peanut Butter |
| Juice Boxes | Rice (any type) |
| Mac & Cheese | Dried Beans |
| Vegetables (in cans) | Pork 'n' Beans |
| Chili & Beans | Cereals |
| Spaghetti Sauce | Pasta |
| Jams, jellies | Soups |
| Fruit | |
| Tuna Fish and other canned meats | |

Along with the regular-size items, the individual-sized servings with pull-off tops are also helpful to people in transition.

Thanks for your prayers and generosity to this community ministry!

The Central Connection is the monthly newsletter of Central United Methodist Church, Lewis and Beverley Streets, Staunton, VA.

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IN MINISTRY

The Mission of Central UMC is to make disciples of Jesus Christ.

- Resident Bishop. Charlene Payne Kammerer
 District Superintendent. Kathleen Overby Webster
 Pastor..... Stephanie M. Sault
 Lay Assistant to the Pastor..... Donna R. Huffer
 Retired Missionary Professor..... Hunter P. Mabry
 Professor MBC..... Kenneth A. Beals
 Minister of Music/Organist..... Sherry von Oeyen

Single Mingle

Sunday, February 8
Lunch following Worship Service

(Maria's Italian Restaurant,
Greenville Avenue)

All single adults are invited to an informal gathering and a delicious meal ("dutch-treat"). Please invite a friend or two!



JOIN US FOR A FREE PRAISE & WORSHIP CONCERT!

Where: Central UMC

When: Saturday, Feb. 21
12:00 Noon to 1:30 p.m.

**Featuring: Full Circle,
Praise & Worship Band from
Floris UMC, Oak Hill, Virginia**

Come, join us for a free family-friendly concert featuring contemporary worship music that is sure to keep your hands clapping and arms swaying!

Please invite your family and friends!

For more information please contact Pastor Stephanie Sault.



THE CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST WOMEN ARE ON

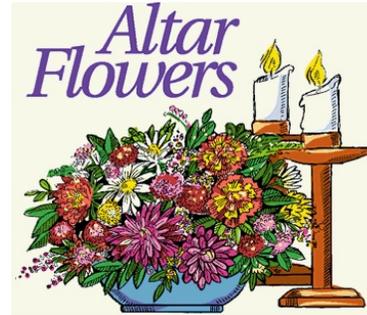
Our local United Methodist Women have started the year right. They held their first Executive Committee meeting after the church service on January 11. The attendance was a bit low, but understandable, with some of the women still busy catching up with Christmas season celebrations, family visits, and other church functions. What a wonderful way to stay connected and to keep our Christian family tradition of being together during the Christmas season and New Year.

The Committee approved the date of June 11, 2009, as requested by the Augusta Free Clinic to serve dinner to their volunteers by our UMW. Eleanor Andrew, our Unit Treasurer, and Deborah Reed, Leader of the Elizabeth Circle, suggested the menu to be served. The three circles will be contacted before their meetings on May 12 concerning their contributions for the lunch.

The second Executive Committee meeting will be held on February 8 to plan the Unit activities for the year. We are looking forward to having most of our Executive committee members available for that meeting.

The Executive Committee Members are:

Luz de Tablan	Ann Spotts
Esther Mabry	Eleanor Andrews
Emily Morgan	Anita Jackson
Deborah Reed	Caroline Jones
Rev. Dr. Stephanie Sault, Ex-officio	



In the United States, over 30,000 people a year, many of whom are children, are diagnosed with diseases for which a bone marrow transplant may be the only cure. Over 70% of these patients will not find a donor match within their family, and so they turn to the National Marrow Donor Program Registry. Each day, more than 6,000 patients search the Registry in hopes of finding a life-saving donor match.

Every year, students at the College of William & Mary dedicate themselves to raising enough money to cover the cost of entering over 1,000 potential donors into the NMDP Registry (each test is \$52). On **February 12th, 2009 from 4:30-9:00pm**, the Alan Bukzin Memorial Bone Marrow Drive will be holding a Registration Drive in **McCracken Hall at Trinity Episcopal Church, 214 W. Beverley St, Staunton**. The process takes about 15 minutes, and involves filling out paperwork, doing a set of simple cheek swabs, and enjoying some free food and music. No pre-registration is required—strictly walk-in. Registrants must be between the ages of 18 and 60. If you would like to know more, please contact Julia Pentz at julia.pentz@gmail.com.

Editor's note: This organization is run entirely by students in partnership with the National Marrow Donor Program. They report that in their organization's 17 years they have entered over 12,000 people into the Registry, which has led to over 275 matches and over 90 successful procedures. This year's goal is to enter 1,500 potential new donors.

Quote:

God accepts no love that includes him and excludes our fellow human beings. This is the identifying mark of a Christian. Does the world recognize you as such?
—Anonymous

Our Altar Flower Calendar has various Sundays available during 2009. You're invited to place flowers in honor of a special occasion, in memory of a loved one, or "just because" you enjoy the beauty of fresh flowers on the altar!

You may sign up on the Flower Calendar, located in the South Narthex, and Sandra Clemmer will contact you with details. Or you may contact her at 885-5453 for more information.

We appreciate all those who participate in this part of our church life. We are blessed by the beauty and sentiments you share.



CHILDREN & WORSHIP

The Worship Committee and some of the parents would like the children to be more present in worship. Therefore, beginning Sunday, Feb. 1, we invite children and their parents to begin worship together at 11:00 in the Sanctuary. Following the Children's Focus, children under the age of 6 years may return to the play room. Later, during the Doxology, the children will be brought back into the Sanctuary to participate with their parents in the Great Thanksgiving and receiving the Lord's Supper. We welcome this increased participation of the youngest members of the family of faith.



The United Methodist Men's February meeting has traditionally been a time when we invite our spouses, or other guest, to accompany us to our breakfast meeting. Once again we want to invite our regular members, as well as any men of the church, to join us at **8:30 am Saturday, February 7, at Mrs. Rowe's Restaurant**; and please bring a guest. We will enjoy a breakfast buffet, a brief meeting, and good fellowship. If you have any questions contact Jim Printy, 885-6838.



**YOUNG ADULTS:
WHAT DO YOU NEED
FROM YOUR CHURCH?**

All young adults are invited to a potluck dinner at 5:00 p.m. on Sunday, February 15, to discuss with one another and your pastor how Central Church can better meet your spiritual, fellowship, and ministry needs. Those with children are invited to bring them, and we will have someone in the Nursery/Toddler Rooms after dinner, so we can have a time of conversation.

The church will provide "chicken tenders" and drinks. Each family is asked to bring a side-dish (salad, veggies, mac-and-cheese, casserole, etc.) with enough for your family plus two more. We will be meeting in the Gathering Area for our meal.

Please let me know if you will be coming; I'm looking forward to our time together!

—Pastor Stephanie

**FIVE PRACTICES
OF FRUITFUL
CONGREGATIONS**

A Five-Week Study
(Begins March 1)

- Radical Hospitality.
- Passionate Worship.
- Intentional Faith Development.
- Risk-taking Mission and Service.
- Extravagant Generosity.



Please join us as we study Bishop Robert Schnase's book, *Five Practices of Fruitful Congregations*, and explore why people are searching for churches with these qualities.

The five-week Sunday School study will begin on March 1 at 9:30 a.m. in the Fellowship Hall. The class will include DVD presentations, selected readings, and lots of discussion; and will be led by Steve Huffer. No reservations needed—hope to see you there!

NEW FEATURES

Be sure to check our website—we are now able to access our weekly worship bulletin online, including some of the insert announcements.



We also plan to publish excerpts from our monthly newsletter on the website. We will not include the birthday list or certain other personal information that could be misused by the unscrupulous.

We'll continue mailing the complete newsletter to all members of our church family for whom we have current addresses.

By the way: 1) Please let us know when you have an address change, so we can keep up with you!

2) Newsletter Deadline = 3rd Friday each month.

3) Bulletin Deadline = Wednesday each week.

(Deadlines may be adjusted for holidays/vacations.)



Central United Methodist Church

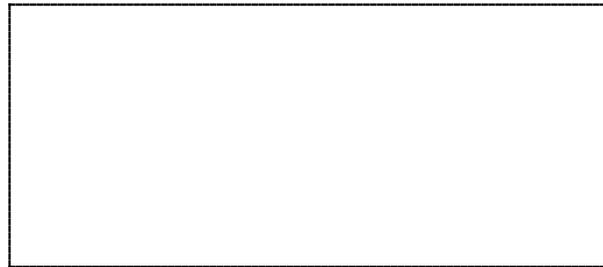
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**JESUS
LOVES
ME!**

February 2009

Return Service Requested



Standing in line at a bookstore, a customer happened to notice two best-selling books the person in front of her was carrying and about to purchase:

Conversations with God and
How to Argue and Win Every Time

—via Rev. Karl R. Draft, *Joyful Noiseletter February 2008*

* * * * *

Sign outside Covenant Moravian Church,
York, PA:

“I love you! Be my Valentine! –Jesus

Puppy Love:

A teacher at St. Joan of Arc School in LaPlace, LA, found a little girl crying and stopped to comfort her. She asked the five-year-old why she was so upset, and she answered, “My boyfriend broke up with me. I loved him so much. We were going out and everything.”

The teacher put her arm around the kindergartner and asked, “How long have you been going out?”

The girl replied, “Since lunch.”

—via Jeff Totten, Hammond, LA, *Joyful Noiseletter February 2008*

February 2009

(C = Connections Classroom; FH = Fellowship Hall)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 9:30 am Sun. School 11 am Worship	2 5 pm Weight Watcher	3 9:00 Child's Play 9:30 Staff Meeting 7 pm ACPJ (C)	4 10 am Food Pantry 1 pm Women's Study 6 pm Women's NA 7 pm Bell Choir	5 9:00 Child's Play 7 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm NA	6 NA Groups: 1pm 6:30 pm, 8:15 pm	7 8:30 am UMMen
8 9:30 am Sun. School 11 am Worship Single Mingle Lunch	9 9:30 am Staff Meeting 5 pm Weight Watcher	10 9:00 Child's Play 10:00 Rebekah Cr. 6:30 Susannah W. Cr. 7:00 Elizabeth Cr.	11 10 am Food Pantry 1 pm Women's Study 6 pm Women's NA 7 pm Finance (C) 7 pm Bell Choir	12 9:00 Child's Play 7 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm NA	13 NA Groups: 1pm 6:30 pm, 8:15 pm	14
15 9:30 am Sun. School 11 am Worship 5 pm Young Adult Social	16 9:30 am Staff Meeting 5 pm Weight Watcher	17 9:00 Child's Play 6:30 WE CARE (FH) 7 pm Worship Com.	18 10 am Food Pantry 1 pm Women's Study 6 pm Women's NA 7 pm Bell Choir	19 9:00 Child's Play 7 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm NA	20 Newsletter Deadline NA Groups: 1pm 6:30 pm, 8:15 pm	21 12:00 Noon Praise & Worship Concert
22 9:30 am Sun. School 11 am Worship	23 5 pm Weight Watcher	24 9:00 Child's Play 7 pm Church Council	25 10 am Food Pantry 6 pm Women's NA 7 pm Ash Wed. Service	26 9:00 Child's Play 7 pm Chancel Choir 7 pm NA	27 NA Groups: 1pm 6:30 pm, 8:15 pm	28 6:30 pm NA