



THE CENTRAL CONNECTION

MESSAGES & OPPORTUNITIES FROM CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST
CHURCH TO YOU

September 2011



“Animals have a Special Place in our Hearts”

I bet you didn't know that our Book of Worship has a service for the Blessing of the Animals: “Blessed are you, O Lord of the Universe; for the sake of our comfort you give us domestic animals as companions. May God, who created the animals of this earth, continue to protect and sustain us all, now and forever. Amen.” St. Francis is the patron saint of animals and prayers are offered to him for protection of our animal friends.

This year, Central UMC will be participating in Staunton's Pets in the Park event, September 17 from 9-2 at Gypsy Hill Park. I invite everyone in the congregation to provide me with a picture of their pet or pets, so we can post them on a display in our booth at the park. We will also provide information about our church and offer a blessing for any pet whose owner requests it.

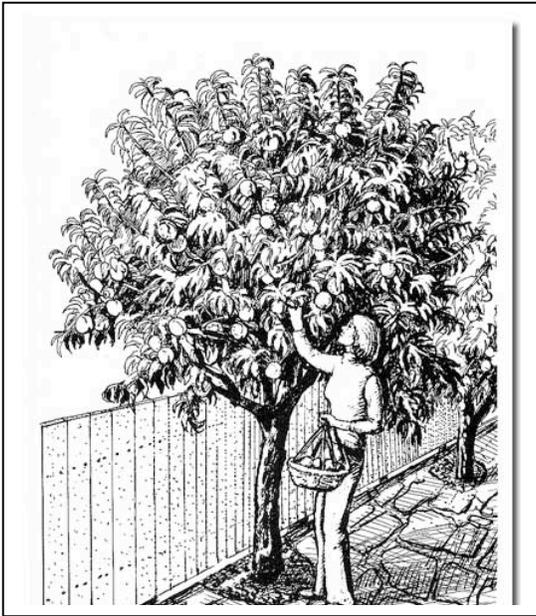
Animals have a special place in our hearts and in God's creation. The fact that God saved the animals in the ark shows that God values them. It's also significant that in the word-pictures of the coming Kingdom of God, the animals are mentioned as living at peace with one another:

The wolf will live with the lamb, the leopard will lie down with the goat, the calf and the lion and the yearling together; and a little child will lead them. The cow will feed with the bear, their young will lie down together, and the lion will eat straw like the ox. (Isaiah 11:6-7)

I grew up with cats and dogs, birds, goldfish and turtles, chickens, geese, and rabbits—and horses. We currently have two cats, a dog, some goldfish and a horse. I can't imagine living without some kind of animal friend, but I know not everyone feels as I do. Nevertheless, God has given us the responsibility of caring for animals, whether they are pets or in the wild. A recent article in *National Geographic* highlighted the needs of baby elephants, orphaned by poachers. We're concerned about the future of polar bears as the ice pack recedes. The SPCA works locally to assure that domestic animals are protected from cruelty and neglect. Our pets are great companions, unconditionally loving, forgiving and eager to please (dogs especially!).

Please share a picture of your pet(s) with me, and join us in the park on September 17 for a blessing of the animals.

In Christ, Pastor Stephanie



“FRUITFUL BRANCHES”

*“This is my Father’s glory, that you bear much fruit,
showing yourselves to be my disciples.”*

A week ago I woke up early and decided to go down to our backyard. I cut the wild vines that were covering the lattice and trimmed the branches of the plants growing around the fence. After I cleared the wild vines, I decided to trim the tree by the swing because it was covering our “Roses of Sharon” from the sun. The branch was small enough to cut myself so I didn’t need to ask for help from my husband. While cutting the branch, my husband told me I had a phone call. I put down the trimmer and went inside to take the call. The call was from a relative who lives in California. Every time she calls, I have to prepare myself for an hour or more conversation on the phone depending on what kind of news she will be sharing with me that day. She lives alone so long conversations are a treat for her. After we finished talking it was noticeably hotter outside so I decided not to continue working. Two days later while raising our window blind, I saw the branch I had started trimming on the ground, and all the leaves were withered. I had totally forgotten about the branch, and somehow that branch found its way overnight to the ground.

While I was still by the window looking down at that branch I said to myself that when that branch was connected to the tree the leaves were fresh and the branch was strong and healthy. I was reminded of the scripture in the book of John, Chapter 15:4-8 which says.....

“Abide in me as I abide in you. Just as the branch cannot bear fruit by itself unless it abides in the vine, neither can you unless you abide in me. I am the vine, you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing. Whoever does not abide in me is thrown away like a branch and withers; such branches are gathered, thrown into the fire, and burned. If you abide in me, and my words abide in you, ask for whatever you wish, and it will be done for you. My Father is glorified by this, that you bear much fruit and become my disciples”.

God said that to be fruitful we need to stay connected with Him. Then we will bring forth holiness and we shall have firmer confidence, richer joy, greater stability and greater delight in the Lord our God. If we do not stay connected, we become like the branch of the tree in my yard: the leaves withered because it was no longer connected with the source of life.

Before I cut the branch it was so beautiful, strong and fresh, but I harmed the branch because of my selfish desire to trim the tree. Sometimes we hurt ourselves by doing things that will not please God, so we become detached from the source of life, which leaves us fruitless and barren.
Con't

I believe that the Lord's simple requests are often steppingstones to life's most wonderful blessings. God has given us simple laws by which to govern our lives—just obey Him, and so stay connected. He said that when we obey Him we will experience His blessing. When we don't, we will miss out on that blessing. I think the more familiar we become with God's Word, the more we will understand what God wants us to enjoy, so we can follow His guidance toward the bounty in life—fruitful and blessed. The Bible also teaches that we will reap what we sow and when we obey, we always get the best; when we don't, life will be harder.

Members of the United Methodist Women are also like branches of trees. Every one of them is committed to the Lord in His way. They have experienced that life becomes very full. Their dreams and goals for the children, youth and women with whom they are in mission, have more meaning when they ask God to place all of them within His specific will and purpose. They have also learned by reading the Scriptures that God wants us to yearn for fellowship with Him more than for the material things of this world. They desire in everything they do to glorify God. They believe that there is no such thing as happiness apart from Jesus and no real contentment without the right relationship to Christ. They are all good disciples and good servants who are surrendered to Christ. They bear fruit in season because they are like trees planted by the streams of water which yield their fruit in season (Psalm 1:3). They trust and obey God, and so stay connected to the vine. The mission work and service they render are expressions of their love for others. They also believe that to be fruitful they need to remain in God's loving arms, doing all good things for "the least of these" regardless of consequences. They believe, too, that if we commit to seek God's will and trust Him to give us the desires of our hearts, we will step into the rich purpose for which we are created.

-Luz de Tablan,
United Methodist Women



The UMMen have had an active summer and are looking forward to our fall activities. The men normally meet the first Saturday of each month at 8:30am at Mrs. Rowe's Restaurant. However, due to the Labor Day weekend, we will not meet on Sept 3.

The UMMen will host their next 5th Sunday luncheon on Oct 30. The proceeds from the luncheon will benefit the Society of St. Andrew's, and the luncheon will also be in celebration of Stewardship Sunday. Several of our members participated in a mission trip to Pulaski in July, and we will be returning to Pulaski the weekend of October 21. In addition to our work in Pulaski, there are a number of work projects around the church for the men to complete.

The men are always glad to welcome new members to our group. If you are not already an active participant, please consider joining us for breakfast, or one of our work projects.



September Birthdays

- 6 James Borrell
- 7 Eleanor Petty
- 7 Susan Sutton
- 7 Rosa Bosserman
- 9 Hazel Richardson
- 12 Eva Rodgers
- 13 Esther Mabry
- 15 Leigh Ann Carter
- 15 Jennifer Hanger
- 17 David Sault
- 17 Cheryl Kent
- 18 Steve Stroop
- 19 Audrey Moyer
- 22 Hannah Fauber
- 24 Will Patterson
- 25 Jessica Mims
- 27 Stephanie Sault
- 27 Evan Lilly
- 29 Andra Borrell
- 29 Jane Jackson
- 30 Betsy Gutshall

May God Bless Your Special Day with Joy and Love!!!

*Please contact the church office if

Single Mingle

Lunch
Lunch
Time & Place
Time & Place

Sunday, September 11
Lunch following Worship
(Baja Bean- Restaurant)

All single adults are invited to join the group for a delicious meal and some great conversation, with a few laughs thrown in! Please invite a friend to join you for Worship and Lunch!

Jeremiah

29:1,11-14

¹NOW THESE are the words of the letter that Jeremiah the prophet sent from Jerusalem to the rest of the elders in exile and to the priests, the prophets, and all the people whom Nebuchadnezzar had carried away captive from Jerusalem to Babylon.

¹¹ For I know the plans I have for you,” says the LORD. “They are plans for good and not for disaster, to give you a future and a hope. ¹² In those days when you pray, I will listen. ¹³ If you look for me wholeheartedly, you will find me. ¹⁴ I

Lectionary Readings

Lectionary Readings



September 4

Exodus 12:1-14
Psalm 149 or Psalm 148
Romans 13:8-14
Matthew 18:18-20

September 11

Exodus 14:19-31
Exodus 15:1b-11, 20-21
Romans 14:1-12
Matthew 18:21-35

September 18

Exodus 16: 2-15
Psalm 105: 1-6, 37-45 or Psalm 78
Philippians 1:21-30
Matthew 20:1-16

September 25

Exodus 17:1-7
Psalm 78:1-4, 12-16
Philippians 2:1-13
Matthew 21:23-32

Ecumenical and Interfaith Service

September 11, marks the tenth anniversary of the worst terrorist attacks on US soil in our nation's history. This is a rare and wonderful occasion for us to join together to bear witness to our common commitment to God's mission for justice and peace in God's world.

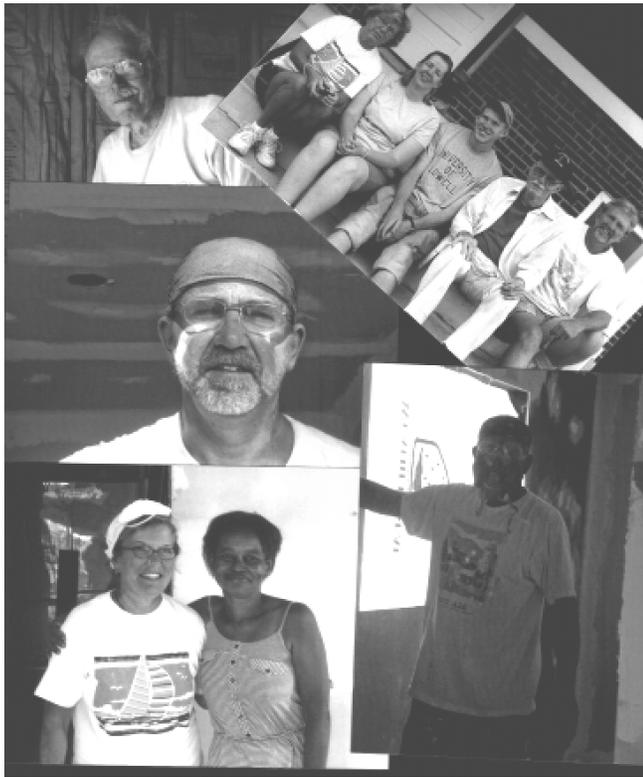
Trinity Episcopal Church is hosting a "***Service of Prayer and Remembrance***" on the evening of Sunday, September 11, 7:00 p.m.

This will be a "vigil"-type service, which would comprise a series of readings from scripture, interspersed with music and prayers, and beginning with an invocation and ending with a benediction. I believe this 9/11 anniversary could be a powerful moment for our faith communities, and for our whole community of Staunton and Augusta County- a moment for faith to address society and speak a word of

peace

A Prayer for those in Authority

Dear Lord, whose glory is in the entire world,
We commend this nation to your merciful care,
that, being guided by Your Providence, we may dwell secure in your peace. Grant to the President of the United States, the Governor of this Commonwealth, and to all in authority, wisdom and strength to know and to do your will. Fill them with the love of truth and righteousness, and make them ever mindful of their calling to serve this people in your fear; through Jesus Christ our Lord.



Central Actively Supports Mission/Outreach

I have often heard Central described as a “mission church”, and have come to appreciate how wonderfully the church responds to those in need. Over the past several months I have witnessed many examples.

The UMMen have sponsored luncheons in May and July to benefit UMCOR relief to Japan, our Food Pantry, and the *Imagine No Malaria* campaign. We assembled 100 birthing kits to send to Annual Conference in June. Our Food Pantry continues to serve many needy families in our area, and our members are supporting this ministry faithfully with contributions of food, money, and many volunteer hours. In July, Ken and Jackie Beals travelled to Guatemala on a mission trip, and six of our members worked in Pulaski on tornado damaged homes. Recently we collected school supplies to distribute to local children as they prepare to begin a new school year. The Christian concern and generosity of our members is always inspiring.

The Mission/Outreach Committee thanks you for your support of these deserving projects. As the committee prepares to review our goals for 2011, and plan for 2012, we would like to challenge ourselves individually, and as a church to respond even more to the needs that exist all around us. We are seeking to add new members to our committee for 2012, if you are interested in serving in this area. On Sept 18, we will have a mission emphasis during our worship service; on the weekend of Oct. 21 we will be returning to Pulaski to continue the cleanup process, and on Oct 30, the UMMen will sponsor a luncheon to benefit the Society

of St Andrew's. Please watch the bulletin and newsletter for additional information about ways we can continue to express our Christian faith through mission.

"Music Notes"
from:
Your Director

> Save the Date <
Organ Benefit Concert
Sunday, October 16 at 4:00 P.M.

Larry Taylor will be giving an organ concert at our church, Sunday, October 16, 4:00 P.M. It will be a wonderful program and a free-will offering will be taken to support the organ fund. Several years ago, we discovered that the organ would soon need re-leathering and major cleaning. This special fund will help pay for this work. You may also contribute to the fund any time you wish. We have a fine organ and want to keep it in good shape for years to come. Please see more information about Larry below. I will keep you posted about the concert.

Dr. Larry Taylor is associate professor of music at Bridgewater College in Bridgewater, Virginia where he teaches piano, organ, music theory, and the history of American music. He also serves as music director at Luray United Methodist Church. Larry holds a Doctor of Musical Arts degree in organ from the

University of Cincinnati (where he won the Strader Organ Competition), Master of Music degrees from Emory University and Notre Dame, and a Bachelor of Music degree from Seton Hill University in Greensburg, Pennsylvania. The choir at Luray UMC has performed two Christmas cantatas composed by Dr. Taylor, and his staged song cycle "Marie Curie" (text by Tom Noe) was premiered in 2009 by Dr. Dorothy Madison, associated professor of voice at James Madison University. In addition to solo recitals on piano and organ, Larry has arranged and performed accompaniments on organ for the silent films "The Gold Rush" and "One Week".

Larry's latest composition, an opera called "Eros and Psyche" (with libretto by Tom Noe), had its first performance at Bridgewater College in 2011. A second performance is scheduled at James Madison

University on Tuesday, September 13

in the Forbes Center.



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#usca34308

-*Sherry von Oeyen*

Director of Music

“TIME”

“What is time anyway and why do we care so much”?

My first thought is that time is not God’s issue but it is certainly ours. Let’s face it; our lives require clocks, calendars and all kinds of electronic gadgets to make sure that we get to where we need to be at a specific time on the right day, month and

even year. Imagine being a month late for a doctor’s appointment or showing up at church on a Saturday morning at 6 am!! Instead, they use their cell phones to keep track of the time.

In early Biblical there were no clocks. In fact all time was marked by the sun and phases of the moon. (No daylight savings time to worry about). In fact the days of the week, months and years did not exist as we know them. So, who was better off? Are we better off because we are so tied to time-keeping? By the way, those of a certain age don’t use watches.

There are lots of things that occupy us and therefore occupy our time. If that is the case are we consumed or pre-occupied with things other than what God would have us do?

One of the things that we do yearly is to make New Year’s Resolutions. This year I decided that I would read the Bible from cover to cover. I have a NIV Chronological Bible and started out enthusiastically on January 1st. Then life happened as it always does. It was difficult to get March 1st reading done on March 1st. In addition I had some problems with some of things that I read. To be honest there was a lot of repetition of bad behaviors. On any given day with whichever king, I was reading about the behavior was the same kind of behaviors that are on the nightly news.

Is today’s time measured by calendars, clocks and cell phones any different or better? The primary issue is how the time is used, not how it is measured. As

usual it is about the journey. I do not want my journey to be about calculating time but rather experiencing what God places in my path. Oh, I believe that I will complete my New Year's Resolution by the early next year, because it is really about the commitment, learning and reflection of the experience along the way.

For my reading today there is yet another King of Israel in trouble because of the worship of Baal .There is more war because of the turning from God and another plea for forgiveness.....different Time but same problem!!!

Thank goodness that we are covered by Grace given us by God though Jesus Christ. Ah, time in this instance makes a difference.

Anita Jackson, Lay Leader

Food Pantry

July Totals

232- Individuals served from 100 households, including.....

9- Elderly
and
77- Children

Thank you for blessing our community with your generous weekly donations to the Food Pantry. We would also like to thank all the volunteers who give of their time, resources and gifting on a weekly basis as they serve the wonderful clients that we see each week. Together we make a difference. All Glory and Honor go to our God, Savior and King for his wonderful provisions.



Volunteers

Needed for Refreshment

Sunday mornings following worship we have the opportunity to fellowship through the sharing of refreshments

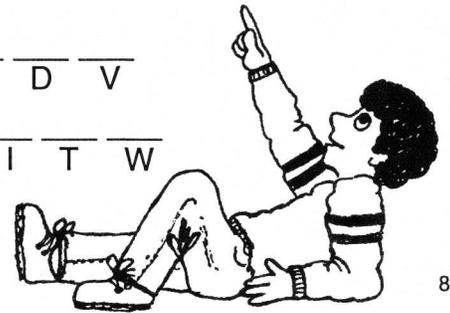
Unscramble

Answer:

"For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected, provided it is received with thanksgiving."

“ O F R V R T I G N H Y E E E T D C A E R
 Y B O D G S I O D O G ' D A N
 H N I O N T G S I O T E B
 D E E J T E C R ' I P D R E O D V
 T I S I V C D I E E E R H I T W
 T N H G K N S V G I I A ”

Timothy 4:4



8-99

Color the Squares

- 1 is red
- 2 is yellow
- 3 is orange
- 4 is green
- 5 is gray
- 6 is purple
- 7 is blue
- 8 is black

1	1	7	7	5	5	6	6	7	7	7	7	7	7	1	1
1	7	7	5	5	6	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	7	7
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5	7	7	5	7	7	5	5	5	7	7	7	5	5	5	7
7	5	5	7	7	7	5	5	5	7	7	7	5	5	5	7

Church Picnic

Saturday, September 10

Time: 4:00 P.M.

Place: GYPSY HILL PARK

Between Bandstand & Park Entrance

>> Tableware, drinks & chicken will be provided <<

Please bring your favorite picnic foods, lawn chairs & a friend or neighbor

*Games for children and free train rides provided



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Return Service Requested

**September
2011**



From Your Secretary

Thank you is just not enough to express how grateful I am for all of you. Since beginning this job, I have had the opportunity to meet so many wonderful people. This really is a special place and I appreciate all the kindness that has been extended to me since becoming your secretary.

I also thank you for your patience as I learn Central's procedures and practices. I know I have already made some mistakes, and for those I apologize. Thank you for extending me grace! It is my intent to be excellent at my job, and represent you in the best way possible. I look forward to meeting all of you.

In Christ and for Him - *Dana Wade*

