



The Central Connection

MESSAGES & OPPORTUNITIES FROM CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH TO YOU!

July 2011

God always keeps His promises

... but we do not always keep our promises to God.

Our place in God's church is contingent upon God's promises to us. In Baptism "we are incorporated into God's mighty acts of salvation and given new birth through water and the Spirit. All this is God's gift, offered to us without price." In return, we promise to live forever for God and not for ourselves.

But it is increasingly common for people who have promised to remain faithful to Christ and His church, to stop attending church. Even though our Baptism is into the church, and we have promised to remain faithful members of Christ's church, many people have forgotten or ignored this promise. (This article is not addressed to those who are unable to attend due to illness or infirmity, or to stir up guilt feelings in those who must remain at home to care for family members, or to harass those who must work on Sundays.)

This is for our "long absent members." For those who simply stopped coming, perhaps church participation was a disappointment. Or we stopped attending because of a crisis in our lives and just never came back. Maybe one of God's "saints" insulted us or we got our feelings

hurt, and we became disillusioned about the nature of God's people. Maybe we started participating with zeal and excitement, only to get bored or tired. Maybe we discovered we didn't really love Jesus after all.

But we made vows before God, and our brothers and sisters in Christ, that we would turn from our sins, give our allegiance to Christ's kingdom, profess the faith of the Bible, and serve Christ as Lord—**and** remain faithful members of Christ's holy church and serve as Christ's representatives in the world. Specifically, we promised to participate in the local congregation by our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service.

This is where it gets ticklish: when able-bodied inactive members are contacted about their participation—to see if they've joined another church or to ask if they want their names removed from church rolls—there is frequently a reaction of hostility. No one seems to want their names removed from the rolls of the church—even though they no longer desire to attend. Is our name on the rolls a safety net?

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Are we reluctant to sever ties with the church altogether, because we think that someday we may need the church or God? Maybe we still believe in God, but don't like the pastor, and staying on the rolls is a way to maintain the semblance of a connection.

But we promised to participate by our prayers, our presence, our gifts and our service. If we have broken our promise, it would seem there really is only one option: to ask God's forgiveness and to renew our relationship with the local church, whether Central UMC or another congregation. The simple truth is that when we have been baptized, we are part of the Church, whether we want to be or not: "Through the Sacrament of Baptism, we are initiated into Christ's holy church." And when we are absent from the Church, we deny ourselves the gift of

God's grace that comes to us through worship, Bible study, ministry and God's people. And we deny to the Church the benefit of our gifts and ministry. We need the Church and the Church needs us.

If you are one of our "long absent members"—please pray about your relationship with Christ's church. We would be delighted to talk with you about being reinstated, or transferred to another congregation, if you will contact us. Or if you truly desire to withdraw your membership, for whatever reason, we will honor that request as well—but with sadness. We want to be faithful to our covenant with you and we hope you will desire to renew your covenant with God.

God bless you all, Pastor Stephanie

Note the attached postcard; Please complete and return indicating your commitment.

We appreciate you taking the time to respond.

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.

Pastor..... Stephanie M. Sault
Minister of Music/Organist..... Sherry von Oeyen
Church Secretary..... Dana F. Wade
Child's Play Director..... Jo Ann B. Black
Custodian..... Janet Nuckoles
Retired Missionary Professor..... Hunter P. Mabry
Retired Pastor..... David D. Reed
Professor MBC..... Kenneth A. Beals
District Superintendent..... D. Michael Houff
Resident Bishop..... Charlene Payne Kammerer



Acolyte and Cross Bearer Training, July 24

Children currently serving as Acolytes and /or Cross-bearers, along with others who are interested in both of these ministries, will receive training on Sunday, July 24, during the Sunday School time. Any child, age 5 and up can participate.



Newsletter and Bulletin Announcements

We now have 2 new email addresses for sending your announcements for the newsletter and bulletin. If you have articles, announcements, etc...for the bulletin or newsletter, please consider sending them to the new email addresses so we can organize them separately.

newsletter@centralumcstaunton.org

announcements@centralumcstaunton.org

IMAGINE NO MALARIA

...then make it real!

“It’s time we all join hands with Africa on a personal mission to heal.” The World Health Organization reports there are approximately one million deaths worldwide each year from malaria. The majority of these deaths are African children, most of them younger than five (*Interpreter July/August 2009*). UMCOR (the United Methodist Committee on Relief) is leading an inter-faith effort to raise 75 million dollars, and eradicate the disease by 2015. UMCOR believes we are already making tremendous progress. However, the effort which began with No More Nets, which provided mosquito bed nets, has expanded to a multifaceted effort.

Imagine No Malaria is about more than bed nets. The program focuses on prevention, treatment, education and communication. UMCOR’s work now includes providing bed nets, draining standing water, improving access to medicine, and improving overall sanitation.

The UMMen will be providing a “picnic” luncheon on Sunday, July 31, to raise money for UMCOR’s Imagine No Malaria campaign. The menu will include hamburgers, hot dogs, baked beans, potato salad, dessert, and drinks. Please mark your calendars—we would like to see you at the picnic, and we need your financial support of this worthwhile program.



..... to our GRADS:

- ◆ **Chandler Marshall**, Robert E. Lee High School
- ◆ **Hannah von Oeyen**, Double Major in Music and Geography, University of Mary Washington
- ◆ **Steven M. Yadlowsky**, Irvine High School, Irvine Ca., son of Ann Black Yadlowsky
- ◆ **Nicholas Konchuba**, MS, Mechanical Engineering, Virginia Tech, grandson of Emily Morgan
- ◆ **Andrew E. de Tablan**, Mechanical Engineering, Virginia Tech, grandson of Diony & Luz de Tablan
- ◆ **Shawn Melton**, Mechanical Engineering, with a concentration in motor sports; University of North Carolina, Charlotte

- As you have probably noticed, work continues to repair and replace the mortar on the exterior of the Sanctuary. This process will be ongoing over the next several months, until the whole of the “old” building and two of the walls are restored.
- The church also has a new camera security system which helps protect the office staff and the contents of the church in the event of a break in.
- The new defibrillator has been installed and we will be scheduling a time to train people in its use. If you would like to receive training, please let Ed Smith know.
- Our historical files and records have been placed in storage, but we need someone to help organize the material so that it can be retrieved when needed. If you enjoy organizing things, please call the church office.

Thank you, Trustees, for working for the good of God’s church and being faithful stewards of the resources God has provided.

HOPE OR TRUST?

President Abraham Lincoln appointed Samuel P. Chase Treasury Secretary. One spring, Secretary Chase went to Brown University to attend a commencement exercise. It was there that he was impressed by Brown’s spirited motto: “In Deo Speramus” which is Latin for “In God We Hope.”

Secretary Chase admired the motto so much that he decided to put the motto on our currency. Later, he must have partially changed his mind about the word “hope” because he had “trust” put in its place.

Either statement would have been a wonderful motto. It is indeed true that in God we hope and in God we trust. Both concepts should be true for us.



—Adapted from a letter to the editor of *The Arizona Republic* written by a Brown University alumnae, Ed Powell



We are delighted to welcome Dana Wade as our secretary and as our sister in Christ. Come by the church office when you can, so that you can meet her and get to know her. Dana is committed to being in ministry with us and we are pleased that God has brought her to Central to serve as a member of Central's staff.

Greetings, new friends at Central Church. I am very excited about my new position here as church secretary..

Having said that, being married for twenty-three years and raising two great young men, are my greatest accomplishments (BY HIS GRACE). I met my husband Mark on the softball field in 1986 and with the exception of being apart for one year we have been together every since.

I am the youngest in a family of four children. I have three wonderful brothers; Tim, Bob and Steve and two incredible parents, Bob and Barbara. I was blessed to be raised in a wonderful Christian home and for that I am so thankful..

Mark and I have two sons that we are so proud of and thankful for; Michael who is twenty-one and attending Eastern Mennonite University, playing baseball and studying Sports Management; and Eric who is sixteen years old, a sophomore in high school, who loves basketball, tennis and the outdoors. We are truly blessed and are so thankful.

I am an avid baseball fan, (Go Yankees) and love every opportunity I get to be at the diamond. However, music is my passion and has been one of the most important

mainstays in my life. Beginning with piano lessons at the age of 10 until today, I have been involved in music to varying degrees. Whether I am accompanying someone on piano, singing background vocals or leading worship, I am most thankful for what worship music has done in and through me. Leading worship has been without question one of the most satisfying parts of my life. When you know you are doing what you were created to do on this earth, it is so gratifying!

I am a member of a local Christian band, "Counterpoint", which began playing together in 2008. Initially, we began serving as a worship team at our church. We had all come from diverse backgrounds, musical experiences and styles and had played in many other bands. This time was different though - from the very beginning we felt that God had strategically placed us together as a group. Something just "clicked" and the deep trust and friendship that followed solidified the sense of unity and family.

This really is a special place and I am excited for the opportunity to meet you and serve along-side you.

In Him,
Dana

LECTIONARY READINGS



Baptism and Membership July 17

July 3

Genesis 24:34-38
Psalm 72 (UMH 795)
Romans 7:15-25a
Matthew 11:16-19, 25-30

We will be celebrating the Sacrament of Baptism and receiving new members on July 17. If you would like to know more about Baptism, and or church membership, please contact Pastor Stephanie.

July 10

Genesis 25:19-24
Psalm 25 (UMH 756)
Romans 8:1-11
Matthew 13:1-9, 18-23

July 17

Genesis 28:10-19a
Psalm 139:1-12, 23-24 (UMH 854)
Romans 8:12-25
Matthew 13:24-30, 36-43



Congratulations!!

July 24

Genesis 29:15-28
Psalm 105:1-11, 45b (UMH 828)
Romans 8:26-39
Matthew 13:31-33, 44-52

Jerry Jones was presented the prestigious Vocational Service Award on Tuesday, June 21, at the Staunton Rotary Club for his outstanding service with the area youth.

July 31

Genesis 32:22-31
Psalm 17:1-7, 15 (UMH 749)
Romans 9:1-5
Matthew 14:13-21

We honor Jerry for his commitment to the area youth and congratulate him on receiving this award.

John 8:36

So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed

2 Corinthians 3:17

Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom

Galatians 5:1

It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery