

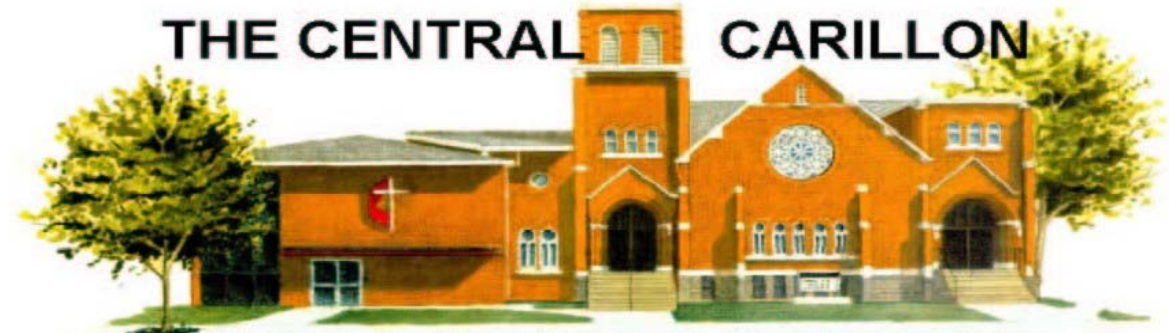
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*In Downtown Lake Odessa*



# THE CENTRAL CARILLON



**CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH OF LAKE ODESSA**

March 2012

[www.CentralChurchIsAlive.org](http://www.CentralChurchIsAlive.org)

Kim Stoepker, Editor

## FROM THE HEART OF THE PASTOR

*Let us test and examine our ways, and return to the LORD.  
Let us lift up our hearts as well as our hands to God in heaven.  
Lamentations 3:40-41 (NRSV)*

I love the season of Lent. I believe most pastors do. It is the season when we, as pastors, are given the “go ahead” to talk about the cost of discipleship. We live in a culture that tends to focus on the “least common denominator.” For the church that means being a member but not being a disciple. That isn’t what Jesus calls the people of faith to be about. We are called not to church membership but to Christian discipleship.

Every year during Lent each of us is given the opportunity to examine our relationship with Christ. There are several indicators that demonstrate a vital life of discipleship. Four of the key indicators are regular attendance in worship; participation in an intentional faith growth experience (i.e., Sunday school, DISCIPLE Bible study, BSF, an Emmaus Fourth Day Group); participation in some form of ministry to others; and giving of our resources (time, talent, and treasure) to God in response to what we have received from Him.

If you have found yourself distant from God, let me encourage your focusing on one of these four key indicators during Lent. It isn’t the doing of these things that draws us to God but it is in the actions that we are given a greater opportunity for God to draw closer to us. If you haven’t been regular in worship, make the commitment to be in worship during Lent. If you haven’t been in Sunday school or attending any faith growth study, come to Sunday school in Lent. If you haven’t been serving others, why not consider volunteering to tutor at one of the local schools or coming on Thursday and helping prepare and/or serve at Souper Thursday. And if you haven’t been practicing tithing, consider giving 10% of your income during Lent to the ministry of Christ’s church here at Central UMC of Lake Odessa.

Your fellow traveler and pastor,

*Eric*



Our e-mail addresses are:  
 locumc@CentralChurchIsAlive.org  
 ebeck@CentralChurchIsAlive.org  
 kim@CentralChurchIsAlive.org  
 prayer@CentralChurchIsAlive.org

<http://www.centralchurchisalive.org>

Are you tired of waiting for the snail mail to deliver your news? Go on-line the 1<sup>st</sup> of the month and read it on our website!

**Deadline for submitting your information for the newsletter is the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month prior to its issue.**

\*\*\*\*\*

## Regular Worship Schedule



Disciple Discovery Bible studies begin at 9:00 a.m. Worship service starts at 10:30 a.m. immediately followed by coffee fellowship time.

\*\*\*\*\*

The sacrament of Holy Communion will be celebrated on **Sunday, March 4, and Thursday evenings, March 1, 8, & 15.**

\*\*\*\*\*

### Our Mission Statement:

*“Central United Methodist Church Glorifies God through the Work of Ministry and the Making of Disciples of Jesus Christ.”*

**In case of a pastoral emergency, the parsonage phone number is 616-374-8294.**



### Attendance in January 2011

Average Attendance in Worship **102**  
 Average Attendance last year 110

Avg Attendance Disciple Discovery **49**  
 Avg Attendance last year 51

### Our Offerings in January

Received for Weekly Budget:

01/01/2012	\$2,819.10
01/08/2012	\$4,197.92
01/15/2012	\$2,839.82
01/22/2012	\$2,099.49
01/29/2012	\$2,369.40

### Operating Fund Summary

<b>BALANCE 12/31/11</b>	<b>\$ 6,728.57</b>
January Receipts	14,325.73
January Expenditures	\$18,079.52
<b>BALANCE 1/31/12</b>	<b>\$2,974.78</b>

\*\*\*\*\*

### Church Office Hours:

Monday thru Thursday 8 a.m. to 2 p.m.

Friday – Closed

\*\*\*\*\*

**Dr. Beck will be on vacation from Thursday, March 22 through Saturday, March 31. In case of a pastoral emergency, please contact Staff-Parish Chair Tony Barcroft (269-945-4518), Marian Durkee (374-7489) or the church office (374-8861).**



### Alethian News

On a cloudy but pleasant Valentine's Day, 15 members and friends enjoyed a potluck dinner in Fellowship Hall. Tables were decorated with roses and valentines that Phylis Armstrong had received as a child and her mother saved over the years. Following the delicious meal, we retired to the basement for fellowship.

Our next meeting is Tuesday, March 13, at 2:00 pm in Fellowship Hall. Hostess is Bernice Hamp, co-hostess is Virginia Decker, and the program will be by Elaine Garlock.

If you wish to know more about Alethian's Class, feel free to ask one of the officers: Holly Bandfield, John Gentner, Dale Mossburg, or Helen Good.

\*\*\*\*\*

### January Designated Giving and Earnings

Building Fund	\$1,120.00
Sanctuary Roof Improvement	\$6,209.98
Copier Fund	\$10.00
General Missions Fund	\$338.38
Coffee Hour Fund	\$83.05
UMCOR	\$5.00
Food Pantry Fund	\$161.01
Work Camp Pie Sales	\$63.00
Work Camp Snack Sales	\$1,186.00
Advent Fund	\$9.00
Human Relations Day	\$185.00
Manna's Market	\$40.00
Souper Thursday Fund	\$928.15
Endowment Fund	\$8,031.10
Disciple Discovery Fund	\$91.00
Sr. High Youth Fund	\$38.00
Jr. High Youth Fund	\$38.00
General Worship Fund	\$1.00

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*“It is not faith in Christ that saves you (though faith is the instrument); it is Christ's blood and merits.” --Charles H. Spurgeon*



### News from United Methodist Women

Our UMW Unit met on February 13 in the Church Lounge with a short business meeting with announcements and then a program on “A Call to Prayer and Self Denial” presented by Elaine Garlock. Refreshments and fellowship followed.

Applications are now available for the Spiritual Growth Retreat coming up on April 27-28 at Wesley Woods Campground. Please see a UMW officer to get an application that will need to be submitted by April 15. Dates for the School of Christian Mission have been announced for July 12-15 at Central Michigan University in Mt. Pleasant. New this year are separate Drive-In-Days for each district. Our Lansing District Drive-In-Day will be August 25 at Mason United Methodist Church.

The next Ruth Circle meeting is on March 15 at Leah Abbott's home at 1:30 pm, and the Evening Circle meets on March 27, hosted by Helen Good, at 7 pm.

\*\*\*\*\*



## Highlighting our Church Family...

Hi, I am Thelma Curtis. I grew up here and attended kindergarten through graduation all in the same building. I knew Blaine "Bud" Curtis most of my life as we rode the same school bus. He was three years older. After he finished his stint in the Army, he came to Braden's Drugstore where he had worked when he was in high school. I worked there after school and weekends. He asked me out to a movie and he turned out to be the love of my life. Many years later I heard that his mother had said there was a nice girl at the drugstore he should meet! We married on August 15, 1958, after my graduation. We were blessed with three lovable, beautiful children: Sally, David and Sandy. I was a teacher's aide at Woodland, a cashier at Fates grocery store, a "green beaner", then a bookkeeper and "phone lady" at Union Bank for 20 years. I retired from full-time at Union Bank in April 2004 but still work there a few hours a week and also at Koops Funeral Chapel. I worked Art in the Park many years, still work at local elections, and am a member of the Lake Odessa Area Historical Society. The Lake Odessa High School Banquet/ Reunion keeps me busy too. When Bud died on November 1, 1996, we needed a minister for his funeral as we had no church. Emmett Cadwell was suggested, I didn't know him at all. When I called, Emmett never waivered, he just asked where I lived and came right over. I wanted to be with people like Emmett so here I am since that time.

I serve on Fellowship and Caring Committee, Thursday Souper Suppers, and Chancel Choir. My children are Sally and Patrick, David and Laurie Ann, and Sandy and Brian. My grandsons are Luke and fiancé Lauren, Brenden, Bret and Travis. My family is very precious.



I like Clark Gable movies, Elvis memorabilia, Cobalt blue glass, NCIS, Home and Garden TV and Masterpiece Theatre. I am a 24+ year Breast Cancer survivor. I am still here because of God's Grace and Love. Apparently, he still has plans for me.

\*\*\*\*\*

### Request From Our Financial Secretary

Please help our counters by filling out your offering envelope carefully. If your contribution is designated for the General Fund and any other funds (Building Fund, Missions Fund, etc) please clearly note the designations on the offering envelope. If an offering is received without an envelope, a substitute envelope is prepared. If the distribution is written on the check only, it has a chance of not being noted by the people who count the offering and prepare the bank deposit. Yet another person enters the offering into the computer program, and he or she relies solely on the notations on the offering envelopes. We want your contribution to reflect your wishes, so please use care to assure the monies are distributed according to your wishes. Thank you!

\*\*\*\*\*



J. & Jennifer Elliott proudly announce the birth of Preston Ayres Elliott, born Friday, February 3.  
Our congratulations to the Elliott Family.

Our congratulations to Kyle & Abbie (Walker) Riffel on the birth of Vada Mae Riffel born Saturday February 11.  
She weighed 7lb., 2 oz.

## Upcoming Sermons

### March 4, 2012 – Second Sunday in Lent

*Scripture:* Genesis 17:1-7,15-16; Mark 8:31-38  
*Sermon Title:* **THE YOU TURN: SAYING NO TO HUMAN THINGS**

*Sermon Theme:* God's will vs. the human will  
*Sermon Text:* *But turning and looking at his disciples, he rebuked Peter and said, "Get behind me, Satan! For you are setting your mind not on divine things but on human things."* Mark 8:33 (NRSV)

### March 11, 2012 – Third Sunday in Lent

*Scripture:* Exodus 20:1-17; John 2:13-22  
*Sermon Title:* **THE YOU TURN: SAYING NO TO CORRUPTION**

*Sermon Theme:* Christ confronts corruption in the Temple  
*Sermon Text:* *Making a whip of cords, he drove all them out of the temple, both the sheep and the cattle. He also poured out the coins of the money changers and overturned their tables. He told those who were selling the doves, "Take these things out of here! Stop making my Father's house a marketplace!"* John 2:15-16 (NRSV)

### March 18, 2012 – Fourth Sunday in Lent

*Scripture:* Numbers 21:4-9; John 3:14-21  
*Sermon Title:* **THE YOU TURN: SAYING YES TO CHRIST**

*Sermon Theme:* The Gospel in Miniature  
*Sermon Text:* *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may have eternal life."* John 3:16 (NRSV)

### March 25, 2012 – Fifth Sunday in Lent

The Rev. Brian Rafferty will bring the morning message.

\*\*\*\*\*

*"Christ distributes courage through community; he dissipates doubts through fellowship."*  
—Max Lucado



## Baptisms

On Sunday, January 29, we celebrated the reception of Anthony Curtis Wilson and Dominic Jevon Wilson, sons of Curtis Wilson and Stephanie Anderson, as part of the body of Christ. "Heaven itself comes down and surrounds a child at a Baptism, surrounding all with God's Love."

\*\*\*\*\*

## Confirmation 2012

Three youth have made a covenant to be a part of this year's Confirmation experience. The youth are Sam McNeill, Sam Kostanko, and George McNeill. Mentors are being assigned to journey with the confirmands. The goal is to make disciples of Jesus Christ. Confirmation Sunday will be on Pentecost, May 27. Please keep these youths and their mentors in your prayers for the next three months.

\*\*\*\*\*

## Spring Fever

Four high school students afflicted with spring fever skipped their morning classes. After lunch, the boys told their teacher they'd had a flat tire.

Much to the boys' relief, the teacher smiled and said, "Well, you missed a test, so take seats apart from one another and take out a piece of paper."

Still smiling, she waited for them to sit down. Then she said, "First question: Which tire was flat?"

## Finance is Moving!



The Finance Committee will begin meeting on the **second Tuesday of the month** beginning March 13, 2012.



**Ushers**

Allen Decker, Brian Decker, Brendan Klynstra

**Greeters**

**North Ent:** Lloyd & Bev Corston  
**South Ent:** Lynda Cobb

**Acolytes**

**March 4** Sam McNeill  
**March 11** Carson Scobey  
**March 18** Sidney Klynstra  
**March 25** Mackenzie Thelen

**Nursery Workers**

**March 4** Lori McNeill  
**March 11** Open  
**March 18** Open  
**March 25** Open

**Coffee Fellowship**

**March 4** Becks  
**March 11** Open  
**March 18** Open  
**March 25** Open

**Altar Flowers**

**March 4** Phylis Armstrong  
**March 11** Open  
**March 18** Open  
**March 25** Open

**Worship Assistants**

**March 4** Jackie Cunningham  
**March 11** Jackie Cunningham  
**March 18** Lori McNeill  
**March 25** Lori McNeill

**Communion Stewards**

Jim & Holly Bandfield

**Souper Thursday Phase III – THE KIDS**

Starting Thursday, April 5, in conjunction with our weekly community dinner, we will start offering free childcare. Hours will be from 4:00 to 7:00 PM in the downstairs level, supervised by Leona Rayner.

Plus, there will be a Parking Lot Ministry on Thursdays from 5:30 to 8:00 PM supervised by Jeff Rasche. Its goal is to get church members and community (young and old) to do fellowship outreach through sports activities and games. Outdoor activities include shuffleboard, basketball, football, kickball, handball, four square, Frisbee, croquet, bean bag toss, lawn darts, and washer toss; or indoor activities like Trivia, Apples to Apples, Crap or Fact, paper football, band ball, shuffle board, bean bag toss or cards.

Volunteers will be needed to do these fellowship outreach activities. If you would like to help or volunteer or have any questions, please feel free to talk with Leona or Jeff.

\*\*\*\*\*

**Prayer Calendars**

To help encourage the prayerful support of members of our Central family, prayer calendars for the next two months are included with this newsletter. Please take out the prayer calendar and include the names on it in your daily prayer practice.

\*\*\*\*\*



*We all have one or more days that are important to us throughout the year. Why not sign up for altar flowers to celebrate a birthday or honor a loved one? Or volunteer for Coffee Fellowship to celebrate an anniversary? Now is the time to reserve your dates and sign up before they're gone. Committee chairs are encouraged to fill in those dates that events are planned to avoid conflicts.*

**RECENT PRAYERS FOR HEALING**

Family of Tom Gilliland	Bonnie Leak
Family of Shirley Aho	Ron Atwell
Beulah & Hank Beland	Abby Thompson
Ed & Carole Reiser	Betty Logan
Kim Duffield	Becky
Bryan Brock	Unspoken
Jennie Decker	Ruth Shanks
Jon Faulkner	Beth Chase
Heather Corey	Tim Tromp
Rayna Hutchinson	Jan Kiel
Jim Bandfield	Scott Reed
Brian Harkey	Terri
Bobby Shears	Lynne Miller
Henry Carpenter	Jane Leazier
Terri Spaulding	Joey Jackson
Sarah Gallagher	Tom Parks
Nathan Shaddick	Archie
Kenny DeCaan	Bette Makely
Josh Richardson	Heather Beck
Rev. Mary Soderholm	Bobby Hays
Doreen and her family	Jean
Diane Scheidt Meyers	Rosie McDowell
Doris Pishko	Linda Hyatt
Robert Gale	Gene Schrauben

**Ongoing Prayer Concerns**

**For Peace For our troops and their families  
 For the innocents, our leaders & world leaders**

C.P.O. Lauren Ashley Ely	Kathy Carpenter
S.F.C. Nick Ludema	Sharon Brink
P.F.C. Jonn Carpenter	Dena Chase
P.F.C. Branden Curtis	Jodi Farman
SPC Tony Fraccarolli	Gatlyn Schrock
Jean Mulford	Ann Larsen
Ginny Kruisenga	Unspoken
Bea Fedewa	Unspoken
Tech Sgt Kevin Durkee	Fred Morris
Rev. Chuck & Ruthie Richards	Gavin Hoople
Brynlee Ludema	Randy Ames
Steely Family	Cure for cancer
Connie Shuert Seavolt	Unspoken
Rolland & Peggy Balk	Marge Erickson
Nancy Hickey	Evan Pung
Cheryl Storey Mills	John Weaver
Margaret Sesselmann	Bill Kneale

**Special Friends**

*Please pray for our Special Friends:*

Leah Abbott	Robert Beard
Henry & Beulah Beland	Karen King
Madelene Goodemoot	Lois Goodemoot
Betty Logan	Elaine Mitchell
Ruth Montague	Shirley Morris
Ruth Shanks	Henry Smith
Norma & Perry Stowell	

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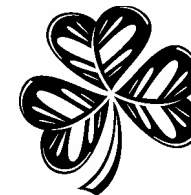
**Thank You's**

*Words cannot adequately express our gratitude for the multitude of kind words, prayers and actions during the final days of our husband/father's/grandfather's life and after his passing. We truly felt the prayers being lifted on our behalf. A special thank you to Dr. Eric Beck for his visits and uplifting words that helped us deal with the heartbreak; knowing that we will indeed see our loved one again one day. A big thank you goes to the United Methodist Women of Central UMC for the wonderful luncheon that followed the funeral service. You saw to our every need, and it is truly appreciated. May God richly bless each one of you. In Christ's love,  
 ~~The family of Tom Gilliland*

Leona and her staff who do the Souper Thursday suppers want to say a big "thank you" to Leah Abbott for her sincere praise and generous donation.

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**Shamrock**



St. Patrick used the shamrock to teach people about the Godhead. Holding up a shamrock, he challenged them, "Is this one leaf, or three?" Inevitably, people replied that it was both, prompting St. Patrick to draw the analogy that so, too, is God: one God in three Persons — the Holy Trinity.



### YOUTH GROUP @ Central

The youth of Central UMC met the first Sunday in February at the parsonage for a Super Bowl Party. Together we watched the first half of the game with all the commercials. Earlier in the day for the Souper Bowl of Caring, youth collected \$461 that will be given to Manna's Market, a local food pantry. Admission to the Super Bowl party at the parsonage was a canned good. Those will also be given to Manna's Market.

On February 19, the youth met at the McNeill home. The original plan was to have an outdoor event with sledding. However, the weather did not cooperate and with no snow on the ground, the youth had a game night.

For March the youth will meet on **Sunday, March 4 and March 18**. On March 4 we will be attending the musical "Seussical" at the high school. More information about the time will be coming. Details about the March 18 gathering will also be available through the mail and in the bulletin.

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*Our love and sympathy to Jackie Gilliland, her family & friends following the loss of her husband, Tom Gilliland.*

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**Junior & Sr. High Fundraiser: Your pop cans and bottles help fund our junior and senior high youth programs. Collection containers are located in the basement.**



### Let's go to camp!!

*(Excerpts from Weekly News article by Rev. Benton Heisler)*

The colorful brochures are in your homes and churches. The Conference website is ready and receiving registrations even as you read this today! Will you be going? Will you help encourage someone else to go?

I am part of a four generation church camp family. Camp Mack was the site of my grandmother's early experiences. My first camp experience was there as well as part of a Labor Day Family Camp. Polar bear swims, cinnamon toast, popcorn in an iron kettle over the open fire, funny skits, singing and quiet vespers worship as the sun set over the lake. Popcorn kernels were in my teeth but seeds of faith were planted in my heart!

I received my call to ministry at a fire bowl worship service at Lake Louise. At one point I even applied to be one of the directors of our camps, only to have that process confirm the call was to ordained ministry. Amazing, now as the Director of Connectional Ministries, that same camp is one of my extended responsibilities along with the four others.

I have heard it repeated many a time. "A week at camp accomplishes more faith development than a year of Sunday School."; or "Most commitments to follow Christ happen before the age of 18 and most of those commitments happen in a camping or retreat setting."

We have a treasure of five West Michigan Conference Camps and a shared treasure with the Detroit Conference in the Lake Louise Christian Community.

Send a child or youth to camp and you'll change their life. Send yourself to camp and you'll be transformed! Let's go to camp!!



### Taking a Lenten Journey

The season of Lent begins with Ash Wednesday and concludes at sundown on the night before Easter Sunday. Traditionally Lent has been a season where believers in Christ take stock of their faith and the practice of faith. It has also been a time to focus on the "inner life" of discipleship. The focus includes regular prayer and Bible study, receiving the Sacrament of Holy Communion as often as possible, fasting, and giving alms to the poor (see Matthew 6:1-18). An additional opportunity to join with other disciples will take place on Thursday evenings during Lent from 6:30 to 7:30 pm. Beginning on Thursday, March 1, a Service of Evening Prayer and Praise will take place. The Sacrament of Holy Communion will be offered on March 1, 8 and 15 with our pastor, Eric Beck, presiding. The next two Thursdays, March 22 and 29, the service will be led by our Lay Leader, Von Goodemoot.

In the liturgy for Ash Wednesday in *The United Methodist Book of Worship* is this "Invitation to the Observance of Lenten Discipline":

**Dear brothers and sisters in Christ: the early Christian observed with great devotion the days of our Lord's passion and resurrection, and it became the custom of the Church that before the Easter celebration there should be a forty-day season of spiritual preparation. During this season converts to the faith were prepared for Holy Baptism. It was also a time when persons who had committed serious sins and had separated themselves from the community of faith were reconciled by penitence and forgiveness, and restored to participation in the life of the Church. In this way the wholly congregation was reminded of the mercy and forgiveness proclaimed**

**in the gospel of Jesus Christ and the need we all have to renew our faith. 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.**

You are encouraged to observe a holy Lent. Several opportunities are available for your practice. Scripture readings for each day in Lent are available, as well as Sunday worship, Sunday school, Thursday Evening Prayer and Praise, to name just a few of the opportunities.

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### Honoring Those Who Serve & Protect

We continue to collect names for those who are currently in public service. We thank our congregation for supporting this project and we feel privileged to show our gratitude and honor our service people in this way.

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### CONGRATULATIONS!

### Confectioner of the Year

Thelma Curtis was the big winner at our first ever Fat Tuesday Celebration on February 21. There were 12 tasty entries from which to choose and they were all terrific. Our thanks go out to all cooks and bakers and to all those who attended. It was a fun event for everyone."





**March**

- 03/01 Earl Strater
- 03/02 Terri Catt
- Scott Beck
- 03/03 Bev Corston
- Kendra Friend
- Ian Shears
- 03/04 Ray Dykhouse
- Abbie Riffel
- Clarence Sanderson
- Nathanial Brooks
- 03/07 Kaden Rohrbacher
- 03/08 Randy Klein
- 03/09 Chelsea Backe
- 03/10 Lynette Rohrbacher
- 03/12 Julie Nelson
- Pam Shears
- 03/13 Gabriel Harkey
- 03/14 Tony Barcroft
- 03/15 John Reed
- Ethan Cavanaugh
- 03/16 Ashley Barcroft
- Charlie Reiser
- Joshua Osborne
- Evan VanderPlas
- 03/17 Lorraine McMillen
- 03/18 Shirley Morris
- 03/19 Bradley Anderson
- Lily Kostanko
- 03/22 Terry Hall
- 03/23 Matt Decker
- 03/25 Harold Dennie
- Jeanna Everett
- 03/27 Shawn Hutchison
- Eunice Goodemoot
- 03/30 Jared Bickford
- 03/31 Joey Decker

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**Monday, April 23, 2012 12:00**  
to 5:45 p.m.  
Fellowship Hall



**March**

- 03/01/1963 John & Carolyn Jackson
- 03/06/1955 Bill & Jewel Eckstrom
- 03/16/1996 Paul & Ronda Shetterly
- 03/28/1980 Bill & Tina Walker
- 03/30/1991 Von & Sharlene Goodemoot
- 03/30/1996 Bob & Rachel Cobb

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**Special Dates in March. . . .**

- 2 World Day of Prayer
- 11 Daylight Savings Time begins
- 18 One Great Hour of Sharing
- 22-31 Dr. Beck on Vacation
- 25 Noisy Offering

**Looking Ahead to April. . . .**

- 1 Passion/Palm Sunday
- 5 Maundy Thursday
- 6 Good Friday
- 8 Easter Sunday
- 14 UMW Spring Breakfast
- 22 Native American Ministry Sunday
- 29 Noisy Offering

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**Don't be late for church! Remember to change your clocks when you go to bed on Saturday, March 10.**

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**The Friendship Group**  
**Wednesday, March 14**  
**Wednesday, March 28**  
**9:00 a.m. - Fellowship Hall**

All are welcome to attend for fun & games. For more information, call 374-3021 or 374-8080.

**Message from Missions:**

*"Let them thank the LORD for his steadfast love, for his wonderful works to humankind." --Psalm 107:8, NRSV*

Children and adults from various communities had already assembled and were eagerly waiting, when the UMCOR delegation finally reached remote Mutumbami, Zimbabwe. Today was the day the children would take home school supplies from UMCOR's Sager Brown depot.

As the contents of the kits were announced, the eager crowd reacted: notebooks (smiles, clapping), scissors (smiles, clapping), an eraser, a ruler, crayons (more smiles and clapping), pencils (**LOUD CHEERS!!!**). "Never have I seen such excitement about six pencils!" said UMCOR's Melissa Crutchfield, moved to find something so commonplace in her homeland was so prized in this struggling community.

This year marks UMCOR Sager Brown's twentieth anniversary of bringing joy and hope in the form of relief kits to communities around the world—whether school supplies to children in Africa eager to study, or cleaning buckets to families in the United States mucking out their homes after a hurricane, flood or tornado.

**God's Steadfast Love**

So much of what UMCOR does is about revealing God's steadfast love for humankind. For more than 70 years, UMCOR has brought hope and solidarity to communities both at home and abroad in the wake of disaster, and support and expertise to those on a path to development. UMCOR's relief-supply ministry is part of those efforts, gathering the goodwill of selfless volunteers to assemble much-needed relief kits and cleaning buckets to ship to those seeking to become self-

sufficient or to rebuild lives and communities following an emergency.

**One Great Hour Of Sharing is March 18, 2012.** Join United Methodists everywhere by participating in the special offering that supports UMCOR's vital work. Your gifts to **One Great Hour of Sharing** lay the foundation for UMCOR to manifest God's steadfast love throughout the world. Please give generously.

*Note from the Pastor: If you only choose one special offering to support, this should be the one. Last year we collected \$879. I hope we can collect \$1,000 for 2012. Please join me in achieving this goal.*

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**Meeting Needs in Jesus' Name**



Have you ever written to a politician or organization, urging increased support for the poor, children, the elderly or other people Christ calls us to serve? How about 18,000 letters — many quite long — in one year?

Annie Armstrong (1850–1938) did just that, long before e-mail, because advocacy was central to her faith. She traveled extensively to view needs firsthand and to distribute food, clothing and Bibles. She also urged churches to persevere in prayer, giving and missions.

Armstrong's efforts led to the founding of the Woman's Missionary Union, which rallies Christian women to serve local missions, and to two ongoing annual initiatives: the Week of Prayer for North American Missions and the Easter offering named in her honor. The offering goes toward missionary salaries and ministry supplies throughout the United States and Canada.

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## News from Worship Committee:

- \* We have a **new large print Bible** for the lectern, which will make reading the scriptures much easier for the Worship Assistants. It was given by a member in memory of Annette Keller who, through her teaching, brought the Bible to life for many at Central from 1980-1984.
- \* The Worship Committee will be looking at alternatives to the "**Children's Bulletin**" which has been used for many years. If you have children who use the bulletin, or have used them in recent years, we'd love to hear from you for some guidance.
- \* The Worship Committee is using a new sign-up chart on the coffee hour serving table in Fellowship Hall for **altar flowers** and **greeters**. There is also still an altar flower chart in the North Narthex. Feel free to use either one. In collaboration with the Education Committee and Missions Committee, the sign-up chart in the Fellowship Hall also includes charts for Nursery caregivers and Coffee Hour servers. All these are vital ministries in the life of Central Church. Thank you for participating in these ministries.
- \* We will be working on updating the pages in the hymnals to match the new wording in the Baptismal Covenants.
- \* Our **offering plates** have recently been refurbished by Jeff Rasche. They look beautiful and we appreciate this gift! They will be a reminder to give God our best. Thank you, Jeff!
- \* You may have noticed the Christmas/Winter floral arrangement in the North Narthex. Work is in progress toward having seasonal arrangements for both the North and South Narthex. We look forward to seeing what the spring arrangements will be.
- \* The **Worship Design Team** for the lenten season has been largely comprised of youth. We look forward to seeing what they have in store for us!

## World Day of Prayer Friday, March 2

World Day of Prayer is a worldwide movement of Christian women of many traditions who come together to observe a common day of prayer each year, and who, in many countries, have a continuing relationship in prayer and service. It is a movement initiated and carried out by women in more than 170 countries and regions.

The Sanctuary at Central Church will be open on Friday, March 2, from 1 to 3 pm for anyone who would like to meditate and pray.

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### Noisy Offering

Noisy Offering for the month of March will be collected on Sunday, **March 25**. The designated recipient is *Lakewood High School's Project Graduation* which is a post-graduation party that is a safe bet for graduating seniors. Kids will be fed all night long, have numerous activities to keep them busy, get a small gift and receive many memories.

All we're asking for is your spare change, because your spare change could change a life. **Noisy Offering March 25 - please come prepared!**

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*Audio copies of Sunday worship services are available by contacting the church office.*

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### DISCIPLE DISCOVERY:

### Sunday School For All Ages

**Sunday; at 9:00 a.m.**

**All are welcome!**

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## Meet our Missionary: Paul Webster



Assignment: Director, Mujila Falls Ag Project

Location: Mujila Falls, Zambia

Birthday: January 12

Advance #: 11865Z

Paul Webster has been a missionary of the General Board of Global Ministries of the United Methodist Church since 1995. When his wife, Roxanne, became ill with cancer, the Websters returned to Wisconsin in 2002. Roxanne died in October 2003 and during that time Paul served as a local pastor there. He returned to Africa in November 2005.

Paul's work as a rural economic development specialist serves the needs of the poor, rural peoples in Zambia and the Democratic Republic of Congo. Each project promotes major programs in education, health, sustainable agriculture, community development, evangelism, and church construction. The projects strive to empower participants.

"As a rural development specialist I am attacking the root causes of poverty, disease and hopelessness through education and training in small animal husbandry, cattle culture, goat milking, animal traction, tree nurseries, fruit and fish culture, and research." Paul adds, "The goals are families who can provide balanced nutrition for themselves and an income from small scale, family-based production."

Born in New Richmond, WI, Paul was a volunteer in the United States Peace Corps from 1980 to 1984 as an agricultural extension worker in Guatemala. He is a graduate of the University of Wisconsin in Superior, has done advanced study towards a master of planning degree at the Hubert H. Humphrey Institute, University of Minnesota. Paul notes, "My

recent education and experience as a parish pastor in Wisconsin should compliment the technical skills already obtained as I go back to work with the people in Africa."

Paul and Roxanne have one daughter, Summer, and a grandson, Aaron.

Our Missions Committee has pledged to support the work of Paul Webster. Designated gifts through church offerings will be added to the church's donation. Please designate your gifts to **Missionary Paul Webster**. Your gifts are greatly appreciated.

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### ENRICH of Ionia County

ENRICH was established in 1997 by a group of human service professionals, agencies, area churches and concerned community members. They are a tax-exempt, non-profit organization which serves over 250 Ionia County families each year in need of furniture and appliances. They are located at 343 West Main Street in the City of Ionia. The back door is located by the Farmers Market at the corner of Steele St. & Adams.

ENRICH always needs donations of useable household goods, volunteers to assist with programs, truck drivers, store workers, office help, and board and committee members to help carry out their work. They especially need financial donations to help support those things that can't be supplied through volunteer labor or donated goods—the heat and light bill, the land contract payment, insurance, staffing and supplies.

If you have household items you would like to donate, or if you can help in any way, please call 616-522-1126 for their open hours, to arrange pick-up of items, or to volunteer your time. You can also visit their website for more information: [www.enrichioniami.org](http://www.enrichioniami.org). Your support would be very much appreciated.

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