

central united methodist church

February 2017

From Pastor Karen

Friends,

I was reminded during this past week of something Mahatma Gandhi said: "I have so much to accomplish today that I must pray for two hours instead of one." Can any of us imagine praying two hours in preparation for an extra busy day? No matter what we do, we are first and foremost God's; we belong to God. And God wants us to be fruitful in all that we do. God wants our lives to be filled with joy. God wants to be connected to us, that is, God wants to be intimate with us. Because of this divine longing for a relationship with us, God is seeking to be connected with us; God is calling us. The question is, why don't we pick up the phone? Do we not hear God ringing us up? The truth is, if we are not regular in prayer, we will not hear God calling. We must take time in silent prayer listening for the voice of God who speaks to us in the quiet center of our souls.

For those who do have a daily practice of prayer, you know the grace of God's subtle voice of love and care. Yes, God's voice is the voice of love, the voice of the First Love. God's voice is the voice of love coming to us as forgiveness and compassionate healing. God's voice is the voice of love which speaks deep within, a sense of hope and peace. Daily prayer opens the "ears" of our hearts to God's loving voice. By this grace we are shown the path of fruitfulness, joy and intimacy with the source of all life.

As our bodies cannot live without the life-force of blood flowing in our veins, in the same way, we cannot live spiritually without the life-force of prayer connecting us to God, the source of all life. I pray that you will be drawn like a magnet to daily prayer and thus discover anew your true home. ~~Pastor Karen

Stewardship Report

The Finance Committee would like to thank everyone who participated in the annual stewardship campaign in November. The campaign resulted in 49 pledges totaling \$146,180.00 which was up from \$127,181.00 in pledges received for 2016. The operating budget for 2017 is \$200,755.00.

Despite the shortfall, we are moving forward in faith that God will provide us with what we need to continue the work of his church in 2017. We have also received a bequest from the estate of Shirley Morris to go toward our Operating Fund. Thank you all for faithfully supporting Central Church with your financial gifts.

~~Penny Thelen, Finance Chair

Youth Group—Can you help?

The Youth Group has been meeting once a month following worship for their Alpha Class. They discuss their class material and are served a light lunch. *We are in need of 4 more volunteers to provide lunch over the upcoming months.* Please sign up on the bulletin board if you can help with this important program.

The group meets a second time during the month for a fun or community-related activity.

Recent Prayer Concerns

Family of Joan King	Mark Shuert	Susan Steele
Family of Allen Adams	Dale Patterson	Sue McDaniels
Family of John Booher	Bob Avery	Deanna
Family of Lyle Dunn	Pamela Coleman	Sue Calkins
Chris & family	Katie Holcomb	Aaron Oosterhouse
Jim Wackerlin	Mary Shoemaker	
Dorothy Barnum	Lee Vroman	
Kayla Blough	Mary & Des Shuert	



Each month our partnership with Feeding America and Cargill allows us to provide fresh food for over 100 families in need. Volunteers are always needed, especially in the colder months when, working together, we can help people get through the line a little quicker.

Our next distribution day is scheduled for Tuesday, February 7, at 2 p.m.

Summer Camp!

It's time to think summer as Michigan Area Camping launches online registration for 2017. Camp registration is now open for summer of 2017. The 2017 Summer Camp Guide is available on the table in Fellowship Hall. It is also available for download on the camping website: www.umcamping.org.

Camp Registrar Pamela Stewart offers these basic instructions: Go to the Online Registration. Find the desired camp and click on "Register." At the log-in screen, returning campers are already entered into the system and may log in with their 2016 email and password. First-time campers may set up an account and proceed.

Grandparents ... a week at a Michigan Area Camp would be a great Birthday gift for the children and teens you love.

Need assistance? Email Pamela Stewart at pstewart@wmcumc.org or talk to Pastor Karen.

Central United Methodist Church is located in downtown Lake Odessa at 912 4th Avenue.

Contact us at 616-374-8861; info@centralchurch-lakeo.org or pastor@centralchurch-lakeo.org.

You can also check out our Facebook page for current activities, weekly dinner menu, and youth activities.

where Christ is central.

New Central Church Website Goes Live!

www.centralchurch-lakeo.org is new and improved!

- ⇒ The name of the website, centralchurch-lakeo.org, has not changed.
- ⇒ As before, you have access to our weekly sermons and bulletins, online giving, announcements and events (*the new calendar still needs to be uploaded*).
- ⇒ If you have visited the site before, you will likely need to clear out your "history" or your "cache." Otherwise it loads what is in memory and it will still look like the old site with an ERROR.
- ⇒ If you still have problems, do a Google search for Central Church, Lake Odessa, and when you find us, click on that link. You can then save that to your Favorites or your Toolbar.
- ⇒ Our email accounts have not changed, so you should not have any problems reaching us via email.

As you probably know, the changes were prompted by the closure of the business supporting our website. But as things go, it was probably time to freshen and renew our site as it was about five years old (*which is old in the life of a website!*)

We hope that you will visit the site and tell us what you think. It is still a work in progress, more Central Church pictures are needed, but much of the information is new. We will update the website on a weekly basis and add pictures as we can.

Celebrations

Birthdays

02/02 Dodie Denman
02/04 Dale Mossburg
02/05 Thelma Curtis
02/06 Lois Goodmoot
02/06 Sam McNeill
02/08 Bill Cobb
02/09 Lori McNeill
02/12 Margot Bailey

02/14 Jessica Harms
02/24 Barbara Wareing
02/26 Blake Zona
02/27 Jonathan Freidhoff
02/28 Lynda Cobb

Anniversaries

Chuck & Leona Rayner 02/14/2008
Philip & Betty Shetterly 02/18/1956
Bill & Pat Wilson 02/18/1955

Upcoming Events

ADULT RESPITE

Thursdays, February 2, 9, 16, 23—1:30 pm

SOUPER THURSDAY COMMUNITY DINNERS

Thursdays, February 2, 9, 16, 23— 4:30 to 6 pm

BLOOD DRIVE

Monday, February 6—12 to 5:45 pm

FRESH FOOD DISTRIBUTION

Tuesday, February 7—2 pm

Volunteers are needed! Please arrive by 1:30.

FRIENDSHIP GROUP

Wednesdays, February 8 & 22—9 am to 12 pm

All are welcome to join in the fun & fellowship.

FAT SUNDAY

Sunday, February 26

More details will follow in your bulletins.

NEWS OF THE UNITED METHODIST WOMEN!!

The beginning of 2017 has been rather quiet, but we are into February with our first meeting. We will have the new program books for this meeting.

On Monday, February 20, we will meet in the lounge at 1:30pm for a business meeting and a program on "A Call to Prayer & Self Denial" given by Elaine Garlock. Refreshments from the officers will follow. Note: If I need to cancel due to weather, I WILL CALL YOU.

Till we meet again.... Take Care, President Helen



Thank-You

Dear friends of Central Church, On Behalf of the Lakewood Community Council, I would like to thank you for your generous \$925.76 donation for the Christmas Basket program. It's support from area churches and community groups that make this program possible.

In addition to purchasing food items and other necessities, we also provide meat/dairy gift certificates to the recipient families. So your donation is most welcome!

We would extend our most sincere thanks for the use of your building again this year. We are so very grateful for the convenience of your facility and for your hospitality!

Again, thank you for your generous gift, which will help us care for Lakewood families in need.

Sincerely,

Kay Barcroft, Treasurer

Upcoming Blood Drive



Our next Red Cross blood drive is scheduled for Monday, February 6.

Times are from 12 to 5:45 pm. If you would like to volunteer to help, please contact Marian Durkee at 616-374-7489.