

CONNECT CENTRAL

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MAY 2021

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THROUGH THE LENS OF HISTORY

[BY REV. CAROL REED]

On a Monday in mid-April, I had taken the day off to spend with friends. Our first stop was Minneopa State Park just outside Mankato, where we saw a herd of bison the state maintains in a large grassy enclosure in one part of the park. We then went to see the double waterfalls where we also discovered wildflowers in abundance.

Since we were in Mankato, I wanted to visit the site of the hanging of the 38 Dakota men in 1862. I grew up

in Minnesota and had studied the state's history in school. But we had learned history from the perspective of the white settlers. I do not recall learning about the largest public hanging in the United States that occurred in Mankato. It has only been in the last ten years that I have been studying the history of our state from the perspective of our indigenous brothers and sisters, a difficult history scarred by broken treaties and promises.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 4

UPCOMING WORSHIP

This month, our music ministry leaders will be sharing many pieces, yet to be determined.

Stay tuned!

Sunday, May 2

The passages for today talk about God's amazing love for us, and having experienced that love, how we live that love in our lives. Jesus used the imagery of a growing vine to describe the life of faith and God's love for us.

Sunday, May 9

Our contemporary culture uses the word love casually. Jesus told us we are to love one another as God has loved us.

Sunday, May 16

John's gospel tells us in the moments before Jesus' arrest, he was praying for the faith of those who follow him, saying our joy will be made complete in him.

Sunday, May 23

PENTECOST

Pentecost is sometimes referred to as the birthday of the church. We listen through the account of Acts of the Apostles to hear how the Holy Spirit came upon the believers, empowering them to go and share the Gospel with others.

After watching live-stream worship, head over to Central for our Fellowship on the Lawn event! (See page 7).

Sunday, May 30

The Trinity is central to the Christian faith, yet often misunderstood. On this Sunday, the church calendar has named it Trinity Sunday as we consider the persons of the Trinity.

Join us
for worship each
week as we stream
live online at

www.centralforgood.org/stream

New to Central?
Drop us an email and
say hello. We'd love to
connect with you!

office@centralforgood.org

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Peter Evarts, Dishwasher

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ANTI-RACISM & BEACON GROUPS JOIN FORCES

[BY LEON OMAN]

The Anti-Racism Task Force (ARTF) and the Beacon Leadership Team have come together to look at racism in housing. Discussions between the members of both groups have spurred further interest in advocating for changes in housing policies. ARTF members Barb Swanson, Doug Throckmorton, Casey Wells and Leon Oman are part of the Beacon Leadership Team along with Maggie Gordon, Heidi Jernstedt and Lynne Severson. Two other Task Force members participated in March at the monthly statewide gathering for Beacon, "Rent is Due" – a short workshop leading to easy contact with state legislators.

Partnering with Central's Beacon Leadership around low-income affordable housing is a great fit. Anti-Racism and affordable housing are joined at the hip. We are excited about working together.

Our Task Force has read and discussed the book, *How to be an Anti-Racist* by the contemporary writer and educator Dr. Ibram Kendi. Dr. Kendi is now the Director of the Center for Antiracist Research at Boston University. One of the main takeaways of his book for us is his insistence on identifying and then actively working on specific policy changes.

A Beacon workshop on Racism and Housing reveals startling disparities in Minnesota.

The average Black family in the Twin Cities area earns less than ½ of the median white family income – an

inequality gap that is second in the nation only to Milwaukee.

Minnesota has a documented history of redlining that effectively keeps people of color out of mostly white neighborhoods. Discriminatory loans do the same. Consequences spill into next generations.

"The way to heal the soul of the nation is to pass policies that heal the body of the nation. It's the just thing to do. That's how we as a nation can together move

forward."

- Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II, pastor of Greenleaf Christian Church in Goldsboro, N.C. and President, Repairers of the Breach.

The ARTF urges members of Central Presbyterian Church to join with the Beacon Leadership Team in advocating for affordable housing – like creating a program for rent subsidies and increasing funding for housing bonds - and to be anti-racists on other policy issues to be addressed in upcoming months.



CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS

[BY CHRISTIE RACHELLE]

This time last year, you helped us celebrate *Little Bits of Good News* by sharing photos and videos of people and great things happening in our community. This year, we have a new call for you!

Help us showcase God's beautiful creation in a virtual art exhibit that will run for the rest of the year. Are you enjoying the sight of new spring

flowers? Joyful children playing? Moments in nature and community that draw a pause? If you see something that inspires your heart, snap a photo and send it to us!

We will begin sharing your images (and short videos) in our worship services, our social media, and all sorts of fun places! To submit your contributions, simply email them to submit@centralforgood.org.

AN ARTISTIC VIEW [CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1]

Reconciliation Park is a small park on the edge of downtown Mankato. Approaching it, you first see a statue of a bison. There is also a large scroll with the names of the 38 men who were executed there in 1862.

We visited Mankato the day after the death of Daunte Wright, an unarmed young black man killed at a traffic stop in Brooklyn Center. As I stood reading the names of the 38 Dakota men who had died at that place, I was aware of the juxtaposition of these two events. All these years later, we live in a state where racial injustice still scars the lives of individuals, families, and so many communities.

It is hard to know how to respond to this latest tragic event. I know we need to continue examining and confronting the root cause of the racial injustices. I know we need to continue praying and working together. There are no easy answers, nor quick solutions.

The last stop my friends and I made that day was to view the Silo Art Project. A short distance from Reconciliation Park, 135-foot-tall grain silos are covered with murals.



An artist from Melbourne, Australia spent nearly a year painting the mural. The artist decided on the image after visiting the Mahkato Wacipi, a pow wow honoring the 38 Dakota men executed in Mankato. At the pow wow the artist saw an Indigenous girl teaching a group of middle-school children a dance, an image that is depicted on the mural. In the midst of uncertainty about how to respond, the mural's image served to remind me that in acknowledging our past

we are working towards a future where we truly come together.

God, led us, that we may stand firm in faith for justice.

Teach us love. Teach us compassion.

Above all, out of love and compassion, teach us to act.

Amen.

[PRAYER FROM THE IONA ABBEY WORSHIP BOOK]





Central CONNECTION CIRCLES

Join Others Weekly!

Looking for a fun, guided conversation with others from Central? The Deacons are continuing their connection circles as avenue for people to meet online and check in with each other. These casual Zoom events offer a means for our community to gather and connect with people of all ages and backgrounds.

Connection Circles run every Thursday from 5:30 - 6:30 p.m.

The following information is the same for all Connection Circles.

VIA VIDEO ON SMARTPHONE, COMPUTER OR TABLET:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/87229900980>

OR VIA PHONE CALL IN:

(312) 626-6799, then enter Meeting ID: 872 2990 0980#

See you in the circle!



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WATCH VIDEOS ON YOUTUBE
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VOLUNTEER TO HELP
centralforgood.org/volunteer

COFFEE TIME



Save the Date

After watching our live worship on Sunday mornings, head over to Zoom for a casual coffee time with others from Central. Coffee Time is offered on the 1st and 3rd Sundays of the month from 11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. with the same Zoom link for all.

VIA VIDEO ON SMARTPHONE, COMPUTER OR TABLET:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82541611955>

VIA PHONE CALL IN:

(312) 626-6799, then enter Meeting ID: 825 4161 1955#

Kiera Faye will leads us each week, with opportunities and fun conversation starters to share in break-out groups. This is a fun way to connect with others you don't often get to see, or talk more with those you do!

THE CONTINUED SEARCH FOR A PASTOR

[BY MEL LEACH, ELDER]

This article lays out in big picture terms the steps to hire a permanent pastor. This process typically takes 12 to 18 months and was developed to give maximum opportunity for involvement. It also has shown to give maximum likelihood for a successful hiring of a new pastor.

The major steps are:

- Complete a "Ministry Study" and gain Presbytery approval,
- Elect a Pastor Nominating Committee (PNC),
- PNC prepares a Ministry Information Form,
- PNC reviews candidate Personal Information Forms (resumes),
- PNC selects and nominates a candidate,
- Presbytery, Congregation and Minister accept the call.

Two of the above steps, the Ministry Study and the PNC, warrant more detailed discussion.

Our First Step

The purpose of the Ministry Study is to capture the essence of who Central has been, who we are today, and what we want to be. The reason for capturing this is such that the PNC can write a Ministry Information Form that reflects ourselves to a prospective candidate. Then, when candidates submit a Personal Information Form, the PNC can assess accurately whether the prospective candidate meets

Central's needs. The methods by which we prepare the Ministry Study are currently under evaluation by Session but will include as many voices as wish to be heard. It is likely that some activities may be able to be done in-person but others will use remote technology. We will share details of how to get involved and progress in future newsletters. The Ministry Study will build on the "Rebranding Study" completed in 2018; however, it may need to go further and be updated for all the changes in the church and the community that have occurred since then. One final comment on the study. Such a study is often called a mission study but we believe Ministry Study is a better descriptor of the expected product.

Understanding the PNC

You may have noticed the key steps for finding and selecting a candidate are performed by the Pastor Nominating Committee. The PNC cannot be formed until the Presbytery approves the Ministry Study. This is not only a reflection of the importance of the study but is an essential element in selecting the members of the PNC. The PNC will be selected to represent this congregation not only in the traditional areas of diversity but also in the diversity of desires and goals for the future of Central. Only in that context can the PNC select the right minister for Central. Being a member of the PNC is an arduous but fulfilling task. It involves reviewing documents, listening to sermons, and deliberating with

other PNC members; all the while seeking God's guidance to find the best person for Central. During the PNC deliberations Pastor Reed will not be allowed to intervene but we will have a Presbytery advisor assigned.

Stay Tuned

Look for future newsletters and the website to give updates on current activities and opportunities for involvement.

4 WAYS TO GIVE



Donate Online

www.centralforgood.org/give



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500 Cedar St, St. Paul, MN 55101



Recurring Transfer

Set up an automatic bank transfer



Deliver In-Person

Contact the office to arrange a day/ time for drop off.

QUESTIONS?

Call (651) 224-4728 ext. 100

Join us for a
Celebration of Pentecost
as we join for

FELLOWSHIP ON THE LAWN

Sunday, May 23
11:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m.

Pentecost is coming soon and we are planning a party! A short worship service will live stream at 10:30 a.m. After watching from home or your device, we invite you to join us at Central on the lawn for a time of fellowship, celebration, and conversation starting at 11:30 a.m.

Share socially distanced conversation
with others who will be masked from Central.

Bring a lawn chair or blanket to get
comfortable and enjoy the beautiful day.

Come over anytime during the hour
for this open house style event.

Enjoy ice cream refreshments.

In the event of rain, this
event will be rescheduled.



WE LOOK FORWARD TO SEEING YOU!

MUSIC MINISTRY NEWS

[BY JENNIFER ANDERSON,
DIRECTOR OF MUSIC MINISTRY]

Behind-the-Scenes of Live-Streaming!

Many thanks to all who have remained flexible and encouraging as we've made our way through the new adventures of livestreaming! It is unique - as so much of the last 13 months have been - and each week brings something new to learn!

A huge thanks to Kiera Faye and Josh Voelker whose expertise has made it go as smoothly as possible, and to our musicians who are needing to navigate being amplified in a space that typically does not require that. We are grateful to worship leaders who have stepped

up to lead in liturgy and everyone who has remained patient as we've worked out any glitches. And of course, thank you to those of you who tune in and join us virtually, and who contribute financially even in these unusual and difficult times. It is such a blessing to be in a community that is continually supportive! Thank you!

End-of-Year Music Party

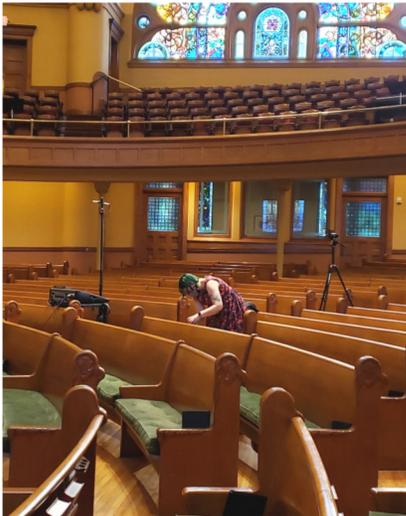
Here's the bad news: I'm not sure when it will be yet. But here's the good news (and why I'm unsure): I hope it will be in person!!! I think that if we wait just another month or so we might be able to gather in person (outside and following all the guidelines) and

that will be such a huge gift! I'm hoping we might be able to even do a little singing! So, stay tuned! I'm so looking forward to seeing you!

Bells!

What a treat it has been to be able to have some handbell rehearsals and recording sessions -- we are able to do it safely and provide beautiful recordings to use in worship. Sincere thanks to both the bell ensembles for offering their time and talents to our worship services.

Are you intrigued by the bells and want to give it a try? Consider joining us for our next rehearsal and recording! You do need to be able to know how to count music and how to find notes on the staff. But we can



teach you how to ring the bells!

Our next rehearsal will be in the evening on Tuesday, May 4 and then a rehearsal/recording session on Tuesday, May 11.

Send me a note as soon as possible to let me know if you'd like to give it a try! (I'll give an exact time when I have a sense of how many people are participating.) We will be masking and social distancing, and limiting the number of people in the space at a time.

LOOKING FOR A LAPTOP

Have a spare laptop taking up space in your home? Central is in need of a laptop (HDMI-compatible) for holding hybrid meetings that will allow for simultaneous Zoom / in-person events.

Thanks to a technology grant from the Presbytery of the Twin Cities

Area, Central purchased an "OWL" conferencing audio-visual camera that allows in-person meetings to have virtual participants.

If you have a laptop you would like to donate, please contact Anna Sanchez at (651) 224-4728 or office@centralforgood.org.

VOCALPOINT NEWS

[BY JENNIFER ANDERSON, ARTISTIC DIRECTOR OF VOCALPOINT]

VocalPoint is planning to hold our 11th Season this winter! And, we hope it will be a real (not virtual) one! We know that things are changing on a weekly basis and so we continue to follow the science and the guidelines of the CDC, but we are planning on choosing a beneficiary organization and to support their work in our winter concert. The concert itself may or may not look exactly like past years, but in some ways this is true for all of our concerts: they are each unique and responsive to current events.

Curious what we look for in a partner organization? Here are our requirements:

Organization is **reviewed via a reputable monitoring organization**, such as Guide Star, Charity Navigator and/or the Minnesota Charities Review Council.

Organization does work that can be **measured in tangible or concrete ways**.

Size of the Organization: We want the amount that we raise to make a difference for the organization. Huge organizations aren't a great fit for us; we like to support the underdogs! However, we do need the organization to have capacity to meet our collaborative needs.

Nondiscriminatory: If there is a religious connection, it must be interfaith.

Marketability: How do we sell this idea and this organization to those who are not "in the know"? Can we tell a powerful story in 120 minutes? Can we articulate to others the importance of what this group is doing?

Musicality: VocalPoint strives to put together a concert that is interesting

and diverse yet accessible. Is there a global connection with the music, or a cultural one? Does the music lend itself to a concert of 120 minutes? Are there guests we can invite to help tell this story?

Location: While the non-profit does not need to be local, we do want there to be a local connection. Are there supporters in the Metro area or is there a way to connect with our community? Also, if it's not a local organization, it must provide a service that is unique. For example, we would not choose to support a food shelf in Ohio; there are food shelves here that we would instead support.

Think you know of a good organization we should consider? Go to www.vocalpointchorus.org/apply to learn more about our application and selection process.

CHILDREN & YOUTH NEWS

[BY KATIE MORRIS]

Fellowship Opportunities

As we turn toward nicer weather, we're hoping to do more regular picnics and outdoor gatherings! Be sure to join our weekly email list to learn about the most up-to-date information and times. If you would like to be added, send Katie an email to katiem@centralforgood.org.

Camp & College Scholarships

We know this summer may still hold much uncertainty, but if your family is

planning to attend any summer camp activities, remember that we have scholarship opportunities!

Thanks to funds given to Central, youth scholarships are available for camp or college from the Nella Jury - Edna Larson Fund. Requests up to \$300 will be considered, with final awards depending on the applications received. If interested, please submit a one page letter by May 28th. The letter should outline your connection to Central and how you plan to use the scholarship funds. The letter should be sent to Central (500 Cedar Street, St Paul, MN 55101), to the attention of the Children & Youth committee, or

emailed to Katie Morris at katiem@centralforgood.org.

Calling All Graduates

We want to celebrate all those graduating from high school, college, and apprenticeship programs! Please call or email Katie Morris, katiem@centralforgood.org to let us know about any graduates no later than May 12th. Include information on where they are graduating from and what is next. We look forward to celebrating this group for making it through these last few years of school that looked so different from what they imagined.

A BEACON BRIEF

[BY BARB SWANSON]

Did You Know?

550,000 Minnesotans – too many of them children – live in households struggling every single month to pay their rent. In addition, people of color are disproportionately affected by the rent affordability crisis.

One financial crisis – a hospital visit or the car breaking down – could tip them over the edge and into eviction. Families are barely hanging on. This instability of home is a crisis for our state. It is a moral issue.

As a member of Beacon Interfaith Housing Collaborative, Central is joining forces with over 100 other



Beacon
INTERFAITH HOUSING COLLABORATIVE

Twin City area congregations in pressing our MN state legislators to solve this housing crisis. Beacon's solution is rent subsidies for all low-income renters so no one pays more than 30% of their income on housing.

This is a bold initiative that requires increasing support from legislators - and they are signing on!! But we need to keep showing them that we won't let up insisting this is the right thing to do to solve our housing crisis.

Please support Central's Beacon work by participating in upcoming

30 minute "Rent is Due" events on the first of the each month. The goal is to show our legislators that an increasing number of people of faith support a home for all.

Thank you!!

How to Get Involved

Stay tuned to the weekly eConnect email for announcements and event registration links as they become available. Have questions regarding this initiative or Central's work with Beacon? Please contact Maggie Gordon and Barb Swanson via email to office@centralforgood.org.

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Women’s Networking Group

[BY SUE HOFFMAN]

We had a great discussion at our April gathering. We are hopeful to be able to gather outdoors soon. Until then, we have decided for our next gathering to be in June.

Watch for information about our June networking group. To get added to our mailing list, please simply women@centralforgood.org to be added to our mailing list to receive networking group details.

Volunteer Opportunities

[BY SHARON ZOPFI-JORDAN]

The Coordinated Mission Committee

has scheduled the dates for 2021 volunteer opportunities to serve the lunch meal at the St Paul Opportunity Center/Higher Ground from 11:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. on the following dates:

- Saturday, May 8th
- Saturday, July 10th
- Saturday, September 11th
- Saturday, November 13th.

St. Paul Opportunity Center/Higher Ground is part of Catholic Charities and is located at 422 Dorothy Day Place St. Paul, MN 55102. We are looking for 8-10 volunteers for each meal service date. Volunteers must be at least 16 years old and should wear appropriate closed toed footwear.

If interested in volunteering please sign up at our website at www.centralforgood.org/volunteer. Please reach out to Anna Sanchez in the Central office if you have any questions.

Upcoming New Members Class

[BY KIERA FAYE]

If you know someone - or are someone! - who would like to learn more about Central Presbyterian Church and what it means to be a member, please reach out to the office or the New Members and Volunteers Committee. The next New Members Class will take place over Zoom, and scheduling is flexible based on interest.



Happy Birthday!

Join us in wishing a another joyous *Happy Birthday* to all who are celebrating birthdays this month.

- Cort Peterson..... 5/1
- Leif Greibrok 5/2
- Richard Swanson 5/2
- Julianna Johnson 5/3
- Elizabeth Brzoska 5/5
- Paul Gulsvig 5/8
- Charlene Fleck 5/10
- Susan Hoffman..... 5/11
- Marlyss Wolf..... 5/11
- Dorothy Canfield 5/15
- Jon Pearce..... 5/15
- William Zopfi-Jordan 5/15
- Mark Vance..... 5/19

- Jessica Jones 5/21
- Braylen Lawson..... 5/21
- Kathie Pate 5/22
- Josh Voelker 5/22
- Richard Kinde 5/23
- Christine McCarten 5/23
- Adam Wolf Gips 5/26
- Gavia Endres 5/27
- Murphy Pyan..... 5/27
- Catheryne Turner 5/28
- Michele Patton 5/29
- Sebastian Rich 5/29
- Audrey Thompson-Amarteifio . 5/29

If we missed you, please send us a note to office@centralforgood.org so that we can correct our records and share birthday wishes with you, too!



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CENTRAL IS *in the city for good!*

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Central has again committed to providing volunteers to serve lunch at the St. Paul Opportunity Center for several dates in 2021!

If you haven't yet volunteered, this is your opportunity! To learn more, see page 11.