

CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCH
 111 EAST SPRUCE STREET
 SAULT SAINTE MARIE, MI 49783-2189

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THE FLAME

Monthly Newsletter
 for

Central and Algonquin United Methodist Churches

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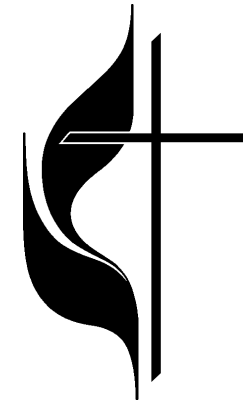
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FEBRUARY 2024

REFLECTIONS FROM THE PASTOR



I don't know about you, but I'm still riding on a high from our Christmas Eve services. I felt that things just clicked that evening, making it a magical and inspirational time for all who attended. I will long remember the sights of seeing so many candles in each sanctuary as we all sang *Silent Night*. I can hardly wait until we do it again in 11 short months! And speaking of short months, can you believe that the season of Lent will soon be upon us? For the next few paragraphs, I'd like to offer a few thoughts on how to make this year's Lent a meaningful one.

All too often we associate Lent with giving up something that we REALLY like, such as coffee or chocolate. Supposedly, our time of denial helps us prepare to celebrate the resurrection. Unfortunately for me, it seems to have an opposite effect. I find myself resenting the time and fight urges to cheat all too often. (Note to the reader, you *really* do not want to be around me if I haven't had coffee!) Now, if this routine of denial has proved to be meaningful for you in your spiritual journey, keep it up. If it hasn't then consider adopting one or more of these practices.

Simplicity. We all willingly live complicated, involved lives that seldom give us the opportunity to be still and know God. For example, have you taken time to count how many times you'll pick up your phone in an hour? Or, how often you have an electronic device such as a TV, radio, or Alexa on? How about taking inventory of all of the "stuff" you've accumulated and now have to manage and store? The discipline of simplicity invites us to unplug from the busyness of the world, to sort out all of the stuff that we once thought we needed, and to learn to enjoy stillness in the presence of the God who adores you.

Addition. As I mentioned above, we often think of removing something from our routine for Lent. Instead of giving up something, how about adding something that you already feel you should be doing? Many of us feel that it would be good for us to read more of the Bible or spend more time in prayer. Lent gives us the perfect reason and opportunity to put these urges into practice. I think it's perfectly acceptable to include phone calls or visits into this category too. Is there someone on your mind you've been meaning to call or visit? Commit it to the Lord and make it happen.

(Continued on the next page)

In This Issue

Pastor's Reflections	1-2
Prayer Wheel	2
Notes/Noteworthy	3
Bazaar Update	4
Stewardship	5
Poinsettia List	6
Birthdays/Anniv/Thanks	7
Christmas Program	8
Family Night	9
Algonquin UMC	10
Recipe/Condolences	11

HOW CAN I SAY "I LOVE YOU?"



Jesus said we are to love one another even as He loved us. His intention was not just for one day a year, but for every day. For those who might be struggling with this thought, here are a dozen ways of saying, "I love you!!"

Cambodian:	Bon sro lanh oon	Hungarian:	Szretiek
Chinese:	Wa ai ni	Italian:	Ti voglio bene
French:	Je t'aime	Norwegian:	Jeg eisker Dem
German:	Ich liebe dich	Polish:	Kocern cie
Greek:	S'agapo	Russian:	Ya vas luibliu
Hebrew:	Ani ohev otahk	Spanish:	Te quiero

The Pastor's Perspective Continued:

Gratitude. We are instructed to rejoice evermore, pray without ceasing, and to give thanks in everything. Unfortunately, we live (and sometimes participate) in a world that complains, bemoans, criticizes, and even curses. As the beloved of God, we are invited to see things through a different lens and to offer our trust and thanks, even in the midst of great difficulty. We've all experienced what it's like to be in the presence of a grateful person...it's heavenly! May we consider adding a daily dose of gratitude to our routines. It'll make a difference for us and those around us.

The season of Lent will officially start on Wednesday, February 14. We will have an Ash Wednesday service that evening at 6:30 pm at our sister church, Algonquin. I hope you consider adopting one or more of these disciplines during your Lenten journey.

The Lord bless you and keep you!

Pastor Marty

**ALGONQUIN AND CENTRAL UNITED METHODIST CHURCHES
MISSION: CONNECTING ALL PEOPLE TO GOD BY BUILDING
BRIDGES OF CARING, OUTREACH AND ACCEPTANCE**

PRAYER WHEEL FOR OUR MILITARY

Lord, hold our troops in your loving hands. Protect them as they protect us. Bless them and their families for the selfless acts they perform for us in our time of need. We ask this in the name of Jesus, our Lord and Savior. Amen.



Sawyer Ball, the son of Carl Ball and Marcia-Jenkins Ball, is with the U.S. Army and assigned to Fort Carson in Colorado Springs, Colorado, where he lives with his wife Sherry and family.

Captain Brent Johnson is a pilot stationed at Dover, Delaware with the U.S. Air Force. He is married to Catherine, who is now retired from the Air Force. His grandparents are Gayle and Bob Johnson.

CW4 Sam Morgan is stationed in Savannah, Georgia and is the commander of a Black Hawk helicopter. His parents are Virginia and Terry Morgan and he is the nephew of Tom and Harriette Robinson.

We would like to extend prayers and recognition beyond our church family to anyone who would like their loved ones, friends or acquaintances mentioned for special prayers in this space. We welcome anyone to make your newsletter editors or our church office staff aware of them.

RECIPE ROUNDUP CORNER

(We know we have many wonderful cooks in Algonquin and Central churches. We invite the sharing of your favorite recipe. Just write them out, include your name, and turn them into the box marked for "the Flame" outside of our secretary's office, or email them to Barb Larson at blarson1517@charter.net. It can be desserts, entrees, beverages, appetizers, etc.)

STRAWBERRY PRETZEL DESSERT

Mix together and spread in 9x13 pan and bake 8 minutes at 400 degrees and then set aside:

2 cups crushed pretzels (or Ritz crackers) and 3/4 cup oleo

Mix together and chill until thickened and then set aside:

6 oz. pkg. strawberry Jell-O, 2 cups boiling water and 20 oz. frozen strawberries

Mix together: 8 oz. cream cheese, 1 medium Cool Whip and 1 cup sugar.

Spread Cool Whip mixture over the cooled pretzel layer and then spread the thickened strawberry mixture over that. Chill until firm.

This recipe was given to me years ago by **Betsy Demaray**, so it is offered here in her memory. Also, the red color of the strawberries makes it a good dessert for Valentine's Day.

Submitted by Barbara Larson



WE EXTEND OUR CONDOLENCES.....



Lynn LeCureux passed away on November 30, 2023 after a very brave battle with a number of illnesses. Lynn was born in Holland, Michigan on December 25, 1948. Her Memorial Service was held at Central UMC on January 6, 2024, presided over by Pastor Marty Johnston.

Lynn was a member of CUMC and sang in the Chancel Choir. And, in past years, she organized and directed a youth choir, the Celebration Singers, who sang at many area events. She and husband, Bob, had 6 children: Stephanie, Becky, Barbara, Bethany, Brenda, and Joe. Plus, 13 grandchildren and 8 great grandchildren. The following verse was printed in her Celebration of Life program:

AS I SIT IN HEAVEN

As I sit in Heaven and watch you every day,
I try to let you know with signs I never went away.
I hear you when you're laughing and watch you as you sleep.
I even place my arms around you to calm you as you weep.
I see you wish the days away, begging to have me home.
So I try to send you signs, so you know you are not alone.
Don't feel guilty that you have life that was denied to me.
Heaven is truly beautiful, just you wait and see.
So live your life, laugh again, enjoy yourself, be free.
Then I know with every breath you take you'll be taking one for me.
.....And God will wipe away every tear from their eyes.....Revelation 7:17b

ALGONQUIN UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

1604 W Fourth Avenue
Sault Ste Marie, MI 49783

Our Worship Servants for this month are:

February 4: Communion Steward Bernita Sibbald and Greeters Todd and Mary Beth Vollick

February 11: Liturgist Bev Atkins and Greeters Ed and Grace Rousseau

February 18: Greeter Jim Atkins and Coffee Hour Jim and Bev Atkins

February 25: Liturgist Bev Atkins and Greeter Rachel Pratt

News To Share:

The Algonquin congregation gave out twelve \$50.00 Walmart gift cards in December from our October and November Change Jar offerings, and \$237.00 was given to Chippewa County Animal Shelter from our December Change Jar offering. The January Change Jar offering will go to the Pink Ribbon Fund at the Chippewa County Health Department. This fund gives assistance with travel expenses and other needs not provided by insurance to patients dealing with breast cancer. The February offering will go to Special Olympics of the EUP.

The congregation collected 8 winter jackets and 4 pairs of snow pants (picture to the right) to give away to kids in need. We also donated hats, mittens, sweat pants and non-perishable food to Washington School.



Christmas Poinsettias were Donated in Memory of:

Ken and Alma Fowler, Jim Wilson and Richard Scott by Lillie Dost and Janice Wilson

Guy and Lorayne LaCross by Sharon Bennett

Randy Bennett by Sharon Bennett

Howard and Maizie Atkins by Sam and Marcia White

Ronald Harwood by Bev, Jerry, Jackie and Ashley

Howard Vollick and Tom and Alice O'Neil by Todd and Mary Beth Vollick

Jeannie O'Connor and Eugene and Clara Atkins by Family

Lorne and Bev Sibbald and Arthur and Donna Greinier by Bob and Bernita Sibbald

Submitted by Bernita Sibbald

NOTES AND NOTEWORTHY

Wednesday, February 14 is **Ash Wednesday** and the first day of Lent, and it is always 46 days before Easter Sunday. Lent is a 40 day season, not counting Sundays, leading up to Easter.

**ASH WEDNESDAY SERVICE FOR BOTH CHURCHES
WILL BE AT ALGONQUIN UM CHURCH
ON WEDNESDAY, FEBRUARY 14, 2024 AT 6:30 P.M.**

NEW MEMBER AT CENTRAL



We welcome new member, **Teri Lamoreaux** to Central UMC. Teri is married to Clyde Lamoreaux and have three children, Jason, James and Joseph. They also are grandparents to 8 grandchildren and 2 great-grandchildren. Teri is the sister of Lori Horner, and has been active in Rebecca Circle and the craft workshop.

CHURCH DIRECTORY UPDATE

As of January 11, 2024, the second proof for our new Church directory was received and reviewed for approval. Several corrections had to be made which delayed our projected arrival of the directories before Christmas. Now that everything has been corrected, and the project is moving forward again, we should be seeing our directories in a few weeks.

Thanks so much for your patience!

Jenny Shelley

SANCTUARY PAINTING UPDATE

National Painting Contractors of Sault Ste. Marie began work on Central's sanctuary walls, repairing cracks, sanding and painting, shortly after the start of the new year. The paint will be much the same color as we have at present. They have been very careful to clean as they go along and Larry Rogers and Tom Brown (thank you, guys!!) have cleaned also, particularly to prepare for when any special service is to be scheduled. There is no completion date as of yet, but we will be able to have all of our Sunday services in the sanctuary without interruption.

Central's monthly **SOUP LUNCHEON** will be held after the morning service on **February 4, 2024**. Join us for a great time of good food and fellowship. If you are able to bring soup or a dessert, please feel free! Help is always appreciated in the kitchen too.

THE MITTEN AND SOCK TREE



The Mitten and Sock Tree is located just inside the Court Street entrance by the elevator on the 2nd floor of Central UMC. The tree has recently been emptied and items brought to the Lincoln and Middle schools. They were very happy to receive them and they are much needed. The tree will remain up for the season so we urge that it be refilled with your donations. A suggestion: very gently used and clean items would also be welcomed! So, come and refill the tree!! It is much appreciated!

Submitted by Diana Morgan

IT'S A WRAP!!

The 2023 Christmas Bazaar, "Over the River and Through the Woods," is in the books. Church and community members journeyed over the river and through the woods to visit such places as Grandma's Attic, Grandpa's Workshop, Nana's Cookie Walk, Gigi's Bakery, and many more places with enticing treasures and treats to make the day one of fun and feasting.



The day provided a net profit of \$3,094.38 for the coffers of Women in Faith to use in supporting missions throughout the community, state, country and world.

Let's review a few of the highlights of the bazaar:

82 guests enjoyed tea and sandwiches in the late morning and early afternoon.

Many guests also enjoyed the morning coffee, which was brought back to the bazaar and served buffet style through the early morning hours.

We were able to find a new supplier for the bread to make sandwich loaves. For the 1st time in many years we had red and green bread to create the sandwich loaves. The bread was very tasty, and we received many compliments.

Chicken pot pies were a hit at the bake booth! Jackie and Kathy are either going to have to teach more of us how to make them, or going to have to go into the chicken pot pie making business.

Many participated in the bazaar with their finely crafted wares. It was great to have them join us.

There were many, many other high lights that occurred throughout the day. It was a joy to watch the fellowship of the workers as they guided our guests through the multitude of opportunities presented at the bazaar. We would like to thank everyone (again) for their hard work and fortitude in planning and implementing the bazaar. We might have been the chairpersons of the bazaar, but it would not have happened without each one of you!

Submitted by Bev Proulx and Sherry Hutchins

A REMINDER: The deadline for material to be submitted for our next *Flame*, the March 2024 issue, is **February 15, 2024 at noon.**



Central United Methodist Church FAMILY NIGHT

Wednesday, February 21, 2024

"Share Wisdom"

5:30-7:00 pm

Join us for dinner and fellowship as we continue an 8-part multigenerational practice on what it means to Make Peace and Practice Generosity.

Upcoming Remaining Family Night Dates:

Wednesday, March 20, 2024 - "Share Justice"

Wednesday, April 17, 2024 - "Share Power"

Wednesday, May 15, 2024 - Overview

ALL ARE WELCOME!

Children's Christmas Program at Central United Methodist Church

On December 17, "Just a Little Christmas" program brought Joy to all in the congregation and those who also watched online. Thank you to all our participants: Marah Bell, Kinley Bell, Diane Bell, Ray Bell, Larry Rogers, Phillip Rowland, Kimberly Rowland, Lily Rowland, Lochlan Rowland, Reagan Smith, Mary Arfstrom, Meeah Griffin, Nora Baier, Mallory Baier, Aidan Shelley, Stephen Shelley, and Cathy Wilkinson. And, thank you to Jenny Shelley, Terri Bush, Shelly Hutchins, and Bev Proulx for all of their hard work in organizing the Christmas program



CENTRAL'S 2024 STEWARDSHIP EMPHASIS FINAL REPORT

The figures below show a comparison for the years 2022, 2023 and the total numbers for 2024.

	<u>2022</u>	<u>2023</u>	<u>2024</u>
Number of pledges	57	58	50
Pledged to General Fund	\$112,416	\$137,496	\$111,669
Pledged to Building Fund	11,722	9,732	6,781
Pledged to Apportionments	10,900	7,372	15,849

The Finance Committee is currently developing the 2024 budget based on the figures above, and when completed will be presented to the Administrative Board for their consideration. Our total projected income is presently calculated at \$145,518, which includes pledged offerings, loose offerings and other income.

The following is a breakdown of the proposed expense budget:

General Fund expenses include salaries, utilities and insurances for the church and parsonage, allotments to the various committees, professional services and office expenses. At present that figure is \$164,004.

The Apportionment figure is determined by the Detroit Conference, and that is \$ 27,506.

The Building fund is not part of the general budget and is a separate account.

That leaves us currently with a budget of \$191,510, so we are working again this year with a deficit. The Finance Committee and the Administrative Board, along with the committees and work areas, will need to make some difficult decisions throughout the year, and will work together to try to keep our expenses current.

The Finance Committee asks the members and friends of Central to keep them in their thoughts and prayers as we enter 2024.

Submitted by the Finance Committee



WORDS OF WISDOM

God doesn't call the qualified; He qualifies the called.

He who kneels before God can stand before anyone!

Plan ahead. It wasn't raining when Noah build the ark,

"Pray" is a four letter word that you can say anywhere.

We're too blessed to be depressed.

CHRISTMAS POINSETTIAS GIVEN AT CENTRAL UMC

In Memory of:

Joel Arbic by Colleen & Bernie Arbic
Dale Hoonstra by Tom & Susan Brown
Grandpa Knowles by Jerry & Barb Cook
Lester Garza, Sr. by Abby Abrego
Joanne Sweeley by Gary Sweeley
Vera Spence by Terri Bush
Lynn Duciewicz by Ray, Diane & family
Our parents by Pastor Marty & Tina Johnston
Dr. James H. Fyvie & Raymond Arfstrom by Jamie, Mary & Bob Arfstrom
Bonnie Arfstrom & Grandpas by Jamie, Mary & Bob Arfstrom
Alvin & Marquerite Ball by Carl Ball & Marcia Jenkins-Ball
Keith & Betty Rutledge by Norla Rutledge, Nicole & Natalie
Our parents: Margaret & Robert Proulx and Donna & Emil Bourque by Bev & John Proulx
Dale Hoonstra - Husband, Father, PaPa by wife, Rhonda, and family

In Honor of:

Our Grandchildren by Colleen & Bernie Arbic
Gary Sweeley by John & Cathy Wilkinson

Our Grandchildren by Ben & Sharon Jones
Bob Noble by Hazel & Hollis Taylor

For the Glory of God:

Hazel & Hollis Taylor

For the Glory of Christmas:

Lori Horner
Kristin Donarski



SOMETHING TO THINK ABOUT

*You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer and even once say "I."
You cannot pray the Lord's Prayer and even once say "My."
Nor can you pray the Lord's Prayer and not pray for one another.
And when you ask for daily bread, you must include your brother.
For others are included in each and every plea.
From the beginning to the end of it,
It does not once say "Me."*

BIRTHDAY AND ANNIVERSARY BLESSINGS AND WISHES

Central Birthdays

February 1 - Jerry Bell
February 4 - Pat Bennin
February 12 - Robin Myers
February 13 - Carissa Bell Vicente

February 14 - Kathy Larson
February 14 - Barbara Larson
February 17 - Tom Harris
February 24 - Kim Harris

Central Anniversaries

February 10 Diana and Ron Morgan (65th)



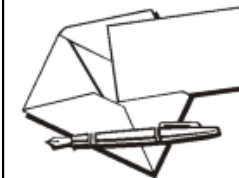
Algonquin Birthdays

February 28 - Sam White

Algonquin Anniversaries

February 14 - Woody and Laura Anderson

THANK YOU NOTE RECEIVED



The Board of Directors and the staff of Soo Theatre are very grateful to Central United Methodist Church for the use of the sanctuary, some rooms and the Fellowship Hall. The sanctuary worked so well for our Christmas recitals in early December. We nearly filled the pews twice with parents and friends of those students playing at the recitals.

During the winter months, when it is too cold to be on stage, our string groups and our symphonic orchestra rehearse at Central. We do not have a room large enough (and warm enough) at the Soo Theatre for our group programs.

Thank you to the members of Central Methodist for providing a welcoming space for our students and teachers.

Colleen Arbic
Executive Director
Soo Theatre

Nancy Kirkpatrick
President, Board of Directors